



**Kizz Daniel releases anticipated 'Buga' video**

→ 21

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**DO CHANGE OF NAME, ADDITION TO NAME, CONFIRMATION OF NAME FOR BVN, EMPLOYMENT, VISA AND OTHER PURPOSES IN THE TRUMPET**

**EDITORIAL**

**CCTV cameras and national security**

→ 12



www.thetrumpet.ng

# The Trumpet

P A T R I O T I C V O I C E

@TheTrumpetNig  
@thetrumpetng  
@thetrumpetngr

JUNE 25-26, 2022  
VOL. 1 NO. 062

N250

## Weekend

# S'Court stops Buhari on electoral law

■ Strikes out suit, says President's request violates constitution → 2



Despite politically-motivated ethnoreligious tensions, there is still unity in the streets.

**President Buhari Will Complete 2nd Niger Bridge – Keyamo → 17**

# S'Court stops Buhari on electoral law

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**,  
Politics Editor

Interpretation of Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act 2022 that had been the bone of contention between the executive and legislative arms of government was on Friday resolved by the judiciary. The Supreme Court struck out a suit by President Muhammadu Buhari and Justice minister/Attorney General of the Federation (AGF), Abubakar Malami, seeking to void the provision.

The seven-member panel of the apex court unanimously held that Buhari cannot approbate and reprobate the Electoral Act having assented to it by turning around to fault its provisions, in particular section 84 (12).

The court ruled that the request by Buhari to the National Assembly to delete the provision amounted to constitutional violation.

In the lead judgement delivered by Justice Aokmaje Agim, the court upheld the objections raised by the National Assembly and other defendants against the suit. It declared that the apex judicial organ lacked the jurisdiction to hear it and that the suit was an abuse of court process.

"There is no provision in the constitution that vests the president the power to challenge the constitutionality or desirability of a legislation after he has assented or denied his assent. In this case, the president gave his assent, "The president has no power to request or compel the national assembly to amend any part of the Act of the National Assembly in which he has participated in its making,

"This suit cannot be entertained by this court under section 1(1) (a) of the Additional Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court Act," Justice Agim ruled.

With the judgement, the legislators have won in the politics surrounding the controversial Section

84 (12).

Section 84 (12) completely hobbled a section of the political class with the attendant result of making participation in the Executive arm of government most unattractive.

According to Section 84 (12): "No political appointee at any level shall be a voting delegate or be voted for at the Convention or Congress of any political party for the purpose of the nomination of candidates for any election."

The consequence of an infraction of the section is set out in the following subsection 84 (13) thus: "Where a political party fails to comply with the provision of this Act in the conduct of its primaries, its candidate for election shall not be included in the election for the particular position in issue."

It is obvious that members of the legislature, executive or political class generally are most concerned about the people in the electoral process.

Underlying struggles between the two arms of government are for dominance within the political parties, which is a game of the survival of the fittest.

The crisis is rooted in the Constitution which inexplicably gives a monopoly to parties in the political architecture of the country.

By law and the constitution of every political party, all persons holding elective positions such as local government chairmen, states and National Assembly members, governors, their deputies, the President and Vice President are automatic delegates at all levels of congresses and conventions.

By their sheer number compared to only the Local Government Chairman, Governor, Deputy Governor, President and the Vice President, there is no doubt that this favours the legislators.

In other words, elected members of the Executive from the



**Buhari**

Local Government to the National level, otherwise called 'Elected Delegates' are not affected. But other Executive members such as Local Government Supervisors, Commissioners, Ministers etc have to contest to be delegates at all levels of the internal democracy of the party.

During the recent primaries across political parties, these 'statutory delegates' were not allowed to participate, thereby drastically reducing the numbers of those that voted in presidential primaries. For instance, 2322 delegates voted in the APC primary and 736 in PDP's.

So, also were the numbers affected for national and state assembly seat primaries.

Many serving legislators were badly affected because they lost outright to their states' executive governors who are in charge of party structures and strictly produced delegates lists.

But it is clear that the deed has been done. The legislators cannot reinvent time and events.

Their only hope lies in future elections, should the executive not embark on a renewed challenge to the provision in of Section 84 (12) of the Electoral Act 2022 with fresh arguments.

Buhari on February 25 assented to the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, though with a caveat.

He asked the National Assembly to delete Section 84 (12) from the Act, which reads: "No political appointee at any

level shall be a voting delegate or be voted for at the convention or congress of any political party for the purpose of the nomination of candidates for any election."

A legal firework was, however, ignited on March 18, 2022, when a Federal High Court in Umuahia, Abia State, in a suit filed by Nduka Edede, a member of the Action Alliance (AA), ordered the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) to immediately delete the section on the grounds that it violates the provisions of the constitution.

The ruling was challenged by an appellate court which said section 84 (12) of the Electoral Act, 2022 is unconstitutional. But it still voided the judgment of the lower court on technical grounds.

The three-member panel of appeal court judges said that, nonetheless, the provision violates the rights of a section of people. The court, however, held that if the suit had been properly instituted, it would have ruled that the provision is unconstitutional because it violates section 42 (1) (a) of the constitution and denies a class of Nigerian citizens their right to participate in elections.

On April 7, a three-member panel of the appeal court led by Rita Nosakhare Pemu granted the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) permission to file a suit as an interested party against the March 18 judgment.

Background

When in December last year, the President withheld his assent to the Bill amending the Electoral Act in his opposition to clause 84 (2) wherein the National Assembly sought by legislation that only by direct primary shall any political party determine its candidate for election, we queued behind him. A piece entitled, "Much Ado About Primaries," published on December 29, 2021, stated that "political parties should be allowed to freely exercise the right of choice in deciding which of direct or indirect primary to adopt in the conduct of their primary elections as their respective realities may permit."

The National Assembly members invariably surrendered and painfully deleted that most undemocratic section, not because of any altruistic consideration in so doing but only because it was impossible for them to muster the required two-thirds majority of members to override the President's vote.

Having successfully set the public against the President for his veto and knowing that the obstinacy which is not strange to the President would eventually kill the bill, the National Assembly members acted on the side of caution and deleted the obnoxious clause.

In the article under reference we had admonished that "rather than seek solidarity from the hapless masses and the unsuspecting members of the civil society, let the NASS members and their cohorts in the Executive arm brace up to the games enacted by them", insisting that "in any case, those who control the party structures will continue to be in charge of whichever internal procedures may be adopted," especially in Nigeria where no party has any membership register properly so called.

With the victory scored by him in boxing the NASS to a corner and

making the members back down on Direct primary, willy nilly, it was strange that the President did not see the greater evil in Section 84 (12) to have included as one of the reasons for withholding his assent ab initio.

As for the judgement of the Federal High Court Umahia, I agree with many who submit that reference to political appointees in Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act is not the same as the provision of the constitution requiring public servants to resign 30 days to the date of the election they wish to contest in.

In this regard, I adopt the submissions of my erudite aburo, Dr Kayode Ajulo that the judgement was delivered per incuria, particularly in the light of the decision in Oni v Fayemi (2019) LPELR-466 CA where the Court of Appeal held: "It is noteworthy to restate that the post of Minister is a political office, whose appointment is at the pleasure of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, hence not a person in the Public Service of the Federation.

The cumulative interpretation of Section 182(1)(g) and Section 318(1) of the 1999 Constitution (as altered), is to the effect that the term public officer should only relate to the holder of offices/ reflected in Section 318 being employees whose appointments enjoy statutory flavour because it is only them that have conditions of service and or letters of appointment stipulating how many years they are to spend in service, at what age they should retire, number of months to be given as notice etc.

Hence even though a Civil Servant is a Public Servant, it is not every public servant that is a civil servant. A Minister is therefore not a public officer who should resign his position before contesting in an election within the contemplation of the aforementioned section of the Constitution.



Restaurant & Rooftop Bar,  
Conference Room, Banquet Hall,  
Cybercafé, Gym, Car Hire,  
Laundry, WIFI

Elomaz Hotels ultra-modern complex is strategically located in the tranquil environment of Maryland, with easy access to Mobolaji Bank Anthony Way and Ikorodu road, the main artery to Lagos Island, and 15 Minutes drive to/from the local and international airports at Ikeja. It is the ideal place to stay when you are in Lagos for business or pleasure.

**Elomaz Hotels**

Address: 3/5 Emmanuel St, Maryland Lagos  
Tel: 0802 318 2295, 07053339183, 08141161113



# Afghanistan earthquake death toll surpasses 1,000

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

The death toll from an earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan early Wednesday has surpassed 1,000, while more than 1,500 people were injured, a provincial official said, adding that the number of casualties might rise further.

"More than 1,000 people were killed and 1,500 injured as a result of the earthquake and subsequent landslide in two districts of Gayan and Barmal of Paktika,"

Mohammad Amin Haddifa, chairman of the provincial directorate of information and culture.

Villagers rushed to bury the dead on Thursday. Men dug a line of graves in one village as they tried to lay the dead to rest quickly in line with Muslim tradition.

The villagers also dug through the rubble of their homes in search of survivors.

In the neighbouring Khost province, at least 25 people were killed and 100 others wounded after more than 600 houses, mosques, and shops were destroyed

by the quake, according to Khost provincial officials.

The quake was Afghanistan's deadliest in two decades. The disaster inflicted by the 6-magnitude quake comes as Afghanistan continues to struggle with a severe economic crisis since the Taliban took over, as US-led international forces withdrew following two decades of war.

The takeover led to a cut-off of vital international financing, and most of the world has shunned the Taliban government.

U.S. President

Joe Biden offered condolences over the earthquake and had promised assistance. Biden on Wednesday ordered USAID and other federal government partners to assess U.S. response options to help those most affected.

"We ask from the Islamic Emirate and the whole country to come forward and help us," said a survivor who gave his name as Hakimullah. "We are with nothing and have nothing, not even a tent to live in."

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

said the global agency has "fully mobilized" to help, with UN officials confirming the deployment of health teams and supplies of medicine, food, trauma kits and emergency shelter to the quake zone.

Two South Asian nations, India and Pakistan have sent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

India said it has sent a technical team to the Afghan capital, Kabul, to coordinate the delivery of aid, while trucks of food and other necessities arrived from Pakistan.

Obaseki on vacation, hands over to Deputy Gov Shaibu

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Edo State Governor Godwin Obaseki has proceeded on his annual leave. He has transferred powers to Deputy Governor Philip Shaibu.

In a statement, Special Adviser to the Governor on Media Projects, Crusoe Osagie, said the governor has written to the Edo State House of Assembly on the development.

This would be the second time the governor has transferred power to his deputy, further cementing the administration's respect for democratic ideals as enshrined in the 1999 constitution, the statement added.

Lagos ranked world's second worst liveable city

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

A global business intelligence, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has said Lagos, Nigeria's foremost commercial city, is the world's second least liveable urban area.

EIU ranked Lagos 171 out of 172 countries in the list of most liveable cities in the world for the first quarter of 2022, according to the latest 2022 Global Liveability Index.

This report makes the Nigerian best city the worst in Africa as Damascus (Syria) and Tripoli (Libya) continue to anguish at the bottom of the list along with Lagos (Nigeria) as they face social unrest, terrorism and conflict.

The least liveable cities were Damascus in Syria, Lagos in Nigeria, Tripoli in Libya, Algiers in Algeria and Karachi in Pakistan, which scored 30.7, 32.2, 34.2, 37.0 and 37.5 respectively.

"The EIU further highlighted the top five most liveable cities in the world which are Vienna, Austria scoring 99.1; Copenhagen, Denmark with 98.0; Zurich, Switzerland with 96.3; Calgary, Canada had 96.3 and Vancouver, Canada with 96.1.

However, most of the cities in the bottom 10 have improved their scores compared with last year, as COVID-19 pandemic induced pressures," EIU stated.

The EIU, which is a sister organisation to The Economist, ranked 173 cities around the world on a variety of factors, including health care, crime rates, political stability, infrastructure and access to green space.

The EIU examines the quality of health care, education, infrastructure, stability, and culture when assessing living conditions of each city.

More than 30 factors are taken into account when calculating each rank, which are then compiled into a weighted score between one and 100.

From the indicators used for the ranking index, which were stability; healthcare; culture and environment; education and infrastructure; Lagos scored 20.0, 20.8, 44.9, 25.0 and 46.4 respectively which dragged its score to 32.2 from a total of 100.

# Ekweremadu's UK arrest: Fresh document shows organ donor is over 21 years

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

Fresh facts have emerged on the travail of the former Deputy Senate President, Senator Ike Ekweremadu and his wife, Mrs Beatrice Nwanneka Ekweremadu, over their alleged role in human trafficking and organ harvesting.

The prosecutors told the court on Thursday, that the Ekweremadus were being charged for bringing the 15-year-old boy from Nigeria to the UK with the claim that he was to be given a better life in the UK but was actually to harvest his organ.

The prosecutors told the court that the former

Deputy Senate President procured a passport for the boy and claimed he was 21 years old but discovered that he was 15 years old.

The Trumpet gathered that the organ was not harvested after the boy truthfully disclosed his age to the doctors at the Royal Free Hospital in the UK. The doctor cancelled the procedure and the boy was immediately taken into the custody of the family who according to the prosecutors treated him like a slave until he escaped and found his way to the police where an investigation started, leading to the arrest of the couple.

But contrary to the claim by the British



Ekweremadu

prosecutors Ukpo David Nwamini's official National Identification Number, NIN shows that he's truly not underage and above 21 years.

According to the

document sighted by our correspondent, the donor

was born on the 12th of October, 2000. This means he's over 21 years and corresponds with the claim

on his visa application. Also, from his Facebook profile which he has taken down, David is from Izzi in Ebonyi State and is already in a relationship according to his profile on the social media account. Also, the claim of trafficking was nullified by the letter written by Mr Ekweremadu to the British High Commission in Nigeria in support of a visa application for Ukpo David. In the letter, Ekweremadu disclosed that the applicant was travelling to the UK for medical examination to possibly donate a kidney to his daughter, Sonia.

He said the examination would be carried out at the London Royal Free Hospital.

# USA Supreme Court ends 50 yrs constitutional right to abortion

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

Millions of women in the United States will lose the constitutional right to abortion, after the Supreme Court overturned a 50-year-old ruling that legalised it.

The US Supreme Court on Friday ended the right to abortion in a seismic ruling that shreds half a century of constitutional protections on one of the most divisive and bitterly fought issues in American political life.

The conservative-dominated court overturned the landmark 1973 "Roe v Wade" decision that

enshrined a woman's right to an abortion and said individual states can permit or restrict the procedure themselves.

"The Constitution does not confer a right to abortion, Roe and Casey are overruled and the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives," the court said.

In the majority opinion, Justice Samuel Alito said "abortion presents a profound moral issue on which Americans hold sharply conflicting views."

"The Constitution does not prohibit the citizens of each State

from regulating or prohibiting abortion," he said.

The ruling will likely set into motion a line of new laws in roughly half of the 50 US states that will severely restrict or outright ban and criminalise abortions, forcing women to travel long distances to states that still permit the procedure.

The opinion shredded the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling by the nation's highest court that said women had the right to abortion based on the constitutional right to privacy over their own bodies.

A draft version of the ruling written

by conservative Justice Samuel Alito indicating the court was likely to overturn Roe was leaked in May.

"The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision," Alito wrote in the ruling.

Barricades have been erected around the court to keep back the protesters gathered outside.

The court's ruling goes against an international trend of easing abortion laws, including in countries like Ireland, Argentina, Mexico and Colombia where the Catholic Church continues to

exert considerable influence.

The ruling represents a victory of 50 years of struggle against abortion by the religious right but the anti-abortion camp is expected to continue to push for an outright nationwide ban.

Friday's outcome is expected to lead to abortion bans in roughly half the states.

Abortion is likely to remain legal in liberal states, some states currently have laws protecting abortion rights. Numerous Republican-led states have passed various abortion restrictions in opposition of the Roe precedent in recent years.

## U.S. Soybean Export Council, Nigerian Stakeholders meet to strengthen soybean value chain

The United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) met with Nigerian soybean stakeholders, agribusiness experts, importers and executives of local soybean processing and milling companies to discuss agribusiness strategies aimed at improving Nigeria's soybean value chain which is an important element of food security in Nigeria.

The reception which was hosted in Lagos provided an opportunity for U.S. agribusiness experts and their Nigerian counterparts to explore possible areas of collaboration in training and capacity-building programs to meet increased protein demand.

Counsellor for Agricul-

tural Affairs at the U.S. Mission to Nigeria, Gerald Smith, noted that Nigeria and the United States enjoy a long-standing relationship in the agricultural sector.

Smith explained that the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Mission is committed to enhancing collaboration to enable Nigeria's agribusiness industry to meet the country's vision for nutrition and food safety.

He added that the Nigeria Soy Excellence Center supports Nigeria's soybean value chain by enhancing the capacity of Nigerian enterprises in the soy-protein value chain.

"Our partnership to improve Nigeria's soybean value chain is mutual

and a win-win for the United States and Nigeria, especially as regards increase in production and ensuring that quality products are produced to meet demand," Smith said.

In his remarks, USSEC Chairman, Doug Winter, reiterated the council's commitment to supporting local efforts to increase Nigerians' access to healthy and nutritional food.

Dr Ayo Oduntan, Founder and Director, Amo Byng Nigeria Limited, a poultry feeds and concentrate-producing company, commended USSEC's partnership with local agribusiness experts and its commitment to supporting sustainable solutions to achieving

food security in Nigeria.

"This meeting reinforces the fact that we need each other to grow. Through our partnership, we can build a Nigeria, where we can enable nutrition and food security for families and communities in Nigeria," Oduntan said.

USSEC is a non-profit US trade group representing US soybean producers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses, and agricultural organizations. The group's main goal is building preference, improving the value, and enabling market access for the use of U.S. Soy for human consumption, aquaculture, and livestock feed in 82 countries across the world.



Gerald Smith

## PANDEF to woo Ohaneze, Middle Belt in struggle for self-liberation

By ISAAC JOB, Uyo

The Pan Niger Delta Frontiers (PANDEF) has said that it will woo other socio cultural organisations such as Ohaneze and minorities in the Middle Belt of Nigeria in the struggle for self-determination.

Delivering a keynote address in Uyo on Friday during a one-day workshop on Niger Delta Alternative Convergence, Professor G. G. Edgara said the struggle to liberate Niger Delta region from further enslavement must involve other groups outside the region who are equally suffering from neglect and underdevelopment before it can succeed. Edgara, a senior lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, University of Port Harcourt, while delivering the address before the adoption of "Niger Delta Manifesto for Socio Ecological Justice" at the workshop noted that the region has taken its stance never to support or accept Vice Presidential slot in the 2023 general election adding that youths in the region must be included in the agitation for resource control.

He assured people of Niger Delta that when all the recommendations in the Niger Delta Manifesto for Socio Ecological Justice are adopted, the concept of Nigeria would end and give way for true federalism and control of resources. Edgara observed that 200 years ago, Niger Delta was the

most populated region in the world but the population was reduced through slave trade and the entire status of the region was brought down after Nigeria independent in 1960.

"We need to design a manifesto that will free Niger Delta from Northern oligarchy. We have to plan for Niger Delta as an autonomous region of its own or make it a nation," he said.

Former governor of Akwa Ibom State, Obong Victor Attah, in his goodwill message noted that the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) has received trillions of naira since it was established but cannot account for it. The former governor urged Nigerians to change the framework (the Constitution) for better results. He advised Nigerians to return to a generating nation instead of sharing economy which according to him promotes laziness among the component states.

"There is nothing bad in having a big nation. But let there be autonomy of each federating state controlling their resources."

He appealed to the people of Niger Delta to secure their Permanent Voters Card (PVC) and vote for a presidential candidate who will restructure Nigeria socio ecological system. He, therefore, adopted the Niger Delta Manifesto for Social Ecological Justice adding that it will serve as a blueprint for agitation in the region.

## Rivers NSCDC parades 11 suspects arrested with 5 boats, vehicle conveying vandalized pipelines

By CHRIS EZEONOH, Port Harcourt

Eleven suspected crude oil thieves have been paraded by the authorities of the Rivers State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). Two of the suspects were arrested by operatives of the NSCDC, while nine others and exhibits found with them were arrested and handed over to the NSCDC by the Nigeria Navy Ship, Pathfinder in Rivers State.

Acting State Commandant, DC Claire Okpo, who paraded the suspects at the headquarters of the Command in Port Harcourt on Friday said:

"The anti-vandal Border Patrol Team arrested Tochukwu Uzoigwe, Male (25years) whose accomplice is still at large for pipeline vandalism, unlawful tampering with Nigeria Agip Oil Company pipelines, conspiracy and sabotage of critical national assets and infrastructures. Okpo, who recently took over the Command leadership, affirmed that the Command under her watch would sustain the already existing standard in the fight against crime in the State.

She said the suspect was arrested while conveying already vandalized oil pipelines in a Toyota bus with registration number

Anambra NSH 252 YY at Mbiama Road in Ahoada West Local Government. She added that the Marine Team of the Command, anti vandal Squad patrolling the waterways impounded an abandoned wooden boat containing Automated Gas Oil, AGO, while 9 suspects, 2 wooden boats and 2 fibre boats were handed over to the command by the NNS PATHFINDER based on the existing interagency collaborations and synergy.

Okpo further disclosed that preliminary investigation report showed that one of the suspects arrested in connection with the sabotage of critical national assets

and infrastructures negotiated about 320,000 and paid 250,000 for the vandalized pipelines. She said that the Command Marine Team on waterways patrol along Bakana open river impounded a wooden boat with 8 horsepower engine laden with locally refined Automated Gas Oil, AGO.

According to her, the suspects upon sighting the NSCDC Marine Team dived into the River and abandoned the wooden boat with its contents. She affirmed that all the 11 suspects would be charged to Court of competent jurisdiction while application for forfeitures of the products and mode of conveyance would be made and proceeds remitted to the Federal Government coffers.

"Let me reassure the public that we will not relent in our commitment to combating the menace of illegal oil bunkering both on land and waterways especially as such condemnable act often leads to environmental degradation, pollution and economic sabotage of the nation.

"Our synergy with sister security agencies remains very robust; we enjoin the public to continue to give us credible intelligence that would assist in nipping in the bud all perpetrators who definitely will not go unpunished," she solicited.



NSCDC boss, Ahmed Abubakar Audi

## Two robbery suspects burnt after failed operation in Oyo

By ALEX OLISE

Nemesis has caught up with two suspected armed robbers who specialized in motorcycle theft as they were caught and set ablaze by an angry mob in Ijokodo-Sango Area of Ibadan, the Oyo State capital.

The suspected bike

snatchers met their Waterloo in an attempt to snatch a motorcycle at the Ologuneru area of Ibadan according to an eyewitness account.

They were allegedly burnt by a mob who happened to be bike riders at WAEC junction opposite LAPO Microfinance Bank.

One of the eyewitnesses, who pleaded

anonymity at the scene of the incident, stated that the suspected bike snatchers were three in number, claiming that the third person who had a gun in his possession managed to escape the scene.

He said "the thieves were chased from Ologuneru area to the

spot where they were burnt. They were three in number and the third person who escaped was the one with a gun.

"It was the Okada men that carried out the jungle justice. When they caught them, they beat them mercilessly and the Police passed the scene without intervening, which prompted the

Okada men to quickly burn them."

Another eyewitness claimed that a bike man in his area was killed on Tuesday and they collected his bike which he reportedly got on hire purchase.

He added that his body was later found but he cannot really say if it's these burnt suspects that killed the bike man on Tuesday. He, however, said that

he loved the way the suspects were burnt because all of them are the same thieves, and if not killed, they will continue to terrorise society.

The gory bodies of the burnt suspects were still at the scene at the time of filing this report and an effort to reach the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Oyo State Command, Adewale Osifeso, proved abortive.



Amanyanabo of Twon-Brass, King Alfred Diète-Spiff (left); Amanyanabo of Nembe, King Edmund Daukoru; Amanyanabo of Opu-Nembe; King Josiah Biobelemoye, Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri and the Ibenanaowei of Ekpetiama Kingdom, King Bubaraye Dakolo, during the unveiling of the construction of the Nembe-Brass Road project.

## Nigerians groan as prices of foodstuff continue to soar

Prices of all food products in Nigeria have continued to rise in spite of Federal Government's assurances. Latest report of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed that prices of selected food items increased tremendously in May 2022, this fact is contained in NBS in its statement.

The report, which was released on Thursday, stated that the average price of 1kg of beans rose on a year-on-year basis by 37.22 per cent from N382.37 in May 2021 to N524.70 in May 2022, while it increased on a month-by-month basis by 1.09 per cent from N519.05 in April to N524.70 in May.

It also showed that the average price of 1kg of a tuber of yam tuber increased by 37.87 per cent from N269.98 in May 2021 to N372.23 in May 2022, stating that on a month-to-month basis, the average price of yam increased by 3.05 per cent in May 2022 compared to April last year.

Also, the average price of 2kg pre-packaged wheat flour rose by 34.92 per cent on a year-on-year basis from the value recorded in May 2021 at N785.86 to N1,060.26.

On a month-on-month basis, it increased from N1,047.74 in April to N1,060.26 in May 2011 indicating a 1.20 per cent rise.

It further showed that the average price of a bottle of palm oil increased by 42.81 per cent from N593.36 in May 2021 to N847.39 in May 2022, while the average price of 1kg of beef rose by 34.11 per cent on a year-on-year basis from N1,513.42

in May last year to N2,029.59 in May 2022.

The NBS report added that the average price of groundnut oil stood at N1,040.88 in May 2022, an increase of N47.99 per cent compared to N703.36 in May 2021, just as it rose on a month-on-month basis by 3.29 per cent from N1,007.65 in April 2022.

In the same vein, the price of brown beans, garri, rice, bread and other foodstuff increased between April 2021 and May 2022.

At the state level, the NBS report showed that Ebonyi State recorded the highest average price of beans at N899.79 for 1kg, while the lowest was reported in Borno at N345.78.

"The highest average price of 1kg of a tuber of yam was recorded in Akwa Ibom State at N804.44, while the lowest was recorded in Bauchi at N134.17. A further analysis showed that Abia recorded the highest price of 2kg pre-packaged wheat flour at N1,393, while Gombe State recorded the lowest price at N754.03," it stated.

At the regional level, the South East recorded the highest average increase in the price of beans at N34.93 per kilogramme, followed by the South West at N569.06 per kilogramme, while the North East recorded the least at N295.20.

Similarly, the South West recorded the highest rise in the price of average tuber of yam at N535.27, followed by the South-South with N450.12, while the lowest was recorded in the North East at N114.10.

## Group harps on early diagnosis, treatment of cancer

By ATHAN AGBAKWURU, Owerri

A group of cancer survivors in Imo State have identified early diagnosis and treatment of cancer as key to overcoming the killer disease.

The group said this in Owerri, at a cancer sensitisation programme, organised by the Federal Medical Centre, FMC, Owerri, in collaboration with Nigerian Cancer Society and the Walk With Us Cancer Foundation as well as other collaborating NGOs like Onyebuchi Chris Ifediora Foundation and Glad Women and Children Health Initiative.

Speaking at the occasion, Mrs Florence Chibueze, a cancer survivor, stated that

early detection of the disease was the secret behind her survival. The survivor disclosed that she stayed in a wheelchair with oxygen support for two months while undergoing chemotherapy and thanked the doctors and family members for detecting the disease on time and taking expedient measures to assist.

Another survivor, a retired teacher, Mr Chukwuma Etonyeaku, said he underwent eight chemotherapy sessions in one year. Narrating his own experience, Mr Patrick Opara, father of a five year-old survivor, Miss Pamela Chima-Opara, hinted that his little daughter was diagnosed with leukaemia in May 2021 but is now in the final

stage of maintenance as a result of early detection.

They thanked health-care providers for detecting the disease on time and providing requisite medication that made their recovery possible. Speaking on the theme: "Close The Care Gap - Surviving Into The Future," Dr Damian Oparaocha, a physician, thanked the survivors for sharing their experiences pointing out that their testimonies have shown that cancer is not a death sentence. Oparaocha however warned against the activities of quacks who pose as medical experts stressing that they complicate diagnosis and treatment because of their inexperience and lack of professional know-how to manage such complex

ailments.

On behalf of the Glad Women and Child Initiative, Mrs Judith Enisire called on women to take advantage of the NGO's free cervical cancer screening and other services. In her speech, Chairman of the Work With Us Cancer Foundation, Dr Okechukwu Duru, represented by his Programme Manager, Miss Chiamaka Onuoha, disclosed that 60 persons had already benefited from the foundation's free cancer screening.

Earlier in her remark, the Chairperson, Imo chapter of the Nigerian Cancer Society, Dr Rita Okeredi, called on the government at all levels to subsidize cancer treatment and procure vaccines for the prevention of cancer.

## Why my respect for Buhari could not stop me from leaving APC - Katsina senator Kaita

Fondly called 'Buhari's Senator' in the Red Chamber for representing Katsina North senatorial district, Senator Ahmed Babba Kaita, a staunch member of the All Progressive Congress (APC) dumped the ruling party for the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). In this interview granted to newsmen during the week, he says his love and respect for Buhari couldn't change his determination to leave the party because of seeming undemocratic practices in the party and what he called the overbearing power of APC governors. Politics Editor, **TUNDE JOSHUA** brings excerpts.



President Buhari



Senator Kaita

*You have formally left your party, the APC despite your strong affiliation with President Muhammadu Buhari whose senatorial district, Katsina North, you represent in the Senate. It came as a surprise. What really happened?*

Well, in politics, nothing is surprising because politics is local. My defection had to do with the crisis of APC and gladly, it's not only me but so many people who are part and parcel of the foundation of the APC. We came with the intention of reforming the ills that were done by the PDP, but we have surpassed PDP in those ills as of today. You will agree with me as Nigerians who have been participating in the political development of this country what the APC as a party has done. I regretted my action of defection because of only one person (Mr President), otherwise, the decision I took is for the good of the people I represent, the good of the Senate and the good of my country. I believe APC will collapse, it's just a matter of time. I'm not speculating; I have been in this game for almost 20 years now and I know that the same road that PDP took to its sudden death is the same route APC is taking now. So, there is nothing APC can do at this point to salvage itself. It has so many chances of redeeming itself, but all the warning signs they have just deliberately decided to ignore.

You know power usually corrupts and that is what is happening in APC. Part of the reason why APC found itself in this mess is the failure to check its governors in various states. This is the result. Those who are really concerned

about the fate of APC and what will become of it, we are cautioning here and there that anything that did not lead PDP who were lucky to have a lot of resources, who found themselves at the time Nigerians were yearning for democracy could not survive it, what more of us who came when there were little resources and people are even wondering what this democracy is all about if we cannot get food on our table. We enjoyed enormous goodwill from Nigerians, but unfortunately, Mr President has people who are supposed to help him. We have so many challenges today. I'm a very blunt person, my loyalty is to the people first before anybody. I have always operated like this. So, I'm not new to this kind of decision. I decided to fight my governor, only me alone because I will not yield to any power; the seat here does not concern me, what concerns me is the legacy I leave in the state.

I'm satisfied and my people can testify. Whether I come back or I don't come back, I want to be judged by history that at a very critical point I always take the most popular decision not as an individual, but with the people. If we have anything to do in future, it is not to allow governors to hijack the party and secondly we should be accountable to our constituents. Recall that I was among the few people who were championing the cause of direct primaries because that would have really produced the kind of candidates that the populace wants, but all the things you see today are mostly sham primaries. I'm afraid to say this has gone beyond APC. In other political

parties too, this is the trend. Let's be very honest here, but as a ruling party, you are supposed to lead by example. If you fail to deliver on your moral calling then you should expect others to follow suit. So, I'm glad I'm under PDP, I was given a ticket free, though I didn't want a free ticket. I wanted to contest, but there was no opponent. I didn't leave APC because I could lose the election. I left because I was trying to run for governor and there was a deliberate plot by the sitting governor to make sure that he sideline me. Of course, when I went to PDP, it was late then, but I got the Senate ticket. I said to PDP I will never accept any ticket that was given to me on a platter of gold. I wanted to compete, but then all the aspirants decided that I'm a good candidate to run. I'm grateful to them.

Though your defection could be hung on the failure to realize your gubernatorial ambition, there is the bigger picture that the defection waves in APC to other parties, particularly the PDP, is a tip of what to be expected in the nearest future. Where will this leave the APC and the chances of its presidential flagbearer in 2023.?

Well, I won't say no, but let me again insist that all politics is local and in politics the only permanent thing is interest. People who feel sidelined in their parties, especially after so much investment in the party. I was in Congress for Progressive Change, CPC before I joined APC and so many other chieftains, but you can look at one very sad point, if APC cannot protect its leader, the leader that led it in the

National Assembly, who is supposed to have influence all over the nation, the party cannot protect him and cannot even provide a level democratic field that he can even compete, then you know something is fundamentally wrong. This kind of development is the trend in every state because the governors will want to use their power to choose who they want even to the detriment or against the wish of the people. That is not a party. I think PDP will take advantage of that, no doubt. There will be more defections in the coming weeks on the floor of the Senate, that I can guarantee you. This is mostly not selfish because every politician wants to be given a level playing field, especially if you are doing well. Most of these senators are doing well. I know we have some bad eggs among us, but majority are doing very well. So, why will a governor sit at one corner of his house and say so, so person ... I'm sure you have seen a video clip going round where a senator knelt down and was begging one of the governors who I'm sure is far senior and was in the political arena before he emerged, yet the governor was telling him no. This is the biggest problem of APC and starts right from the ward level to the national level.

*So, the APC lawmakers are protesting against the leadership of the party?*

Yes, in a way they are registering their protest, but beyond that, you see politics is local; if your interest is blocked without justification, it is only natural for you to seek an alternative. This is what took us out of the party.

## 2023: Gale of defection and the 10th Senate

By TUNDE JOSHUA, POLITICS EDITOR

Seeking renewal of mandate by selected officials in the executive and legislative arms of government is one of the cardinal features of democratic government all over the world. In Nigeria, this is done every four years in a general election.

This gives the electorate the power to assess their representatives at various levels and decide whether to renew their mandate or withdraw it and give the same to other people.

But critical to the general election is the primary elections by political parties to determine who gets their tickets for different positions.

During the last rounds of primaries, the fate of office-seekers was largely determined by delegates in an indirect mode of election which is one of the selective processes outlined in the Electoral Act 2022.

The Senate which is the upper legislative chamber is no exception. Most of the 109 distinguished senators raced against all odds to book their place in the 10th Senate.

Results of the exercise across major parties have indicated those who will not return to the upper chamber in 2023.

A few of them are not coming back because they chose to seek higher offices.

Senators in this category include the Senate President, Ahmad Lawan who contested APC presidential primary and lost. Though, in a controversial manner, his name has been submitted by the APC as the candidate for Yobe East senatorial district without contesting the party primary.

Similarly, the Deputy Chief Whip Ajayi Boroffice (Ondo North) and Senator Ibikunle Amosun (Ogun Central), contested APC presidential election.

Senators who have won governorship slots are; Deputy Senate President Ovie Omo-Agege (APC, Delta State); Uba Sani (APC, Kaduna State); Teslim Folarin (APC, Oyo State) and Senator Sandy Onor (PDP, Cross River State); Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa State) and Emmanuel Bwacha (APC, Taraba State).

Some senators who crashed out of the governorship race in their states include; George Sekibo (PDP, Rivers State); Gershom Bassey (PDP, Cross River State); Senate Leader Yahaya Abdullahi (APC, Kebbi State); Yusuf Yusuf (APC, Taraba State); James Manager (PDP, Delta State); and Senator Ike Ekweremadu (Enugu State).

Those who didn't contest primary at all include Senators Yakubu Oseni (Kogi Central), Prof Nora Daduut (Plateau South), Theodore Orji (Abia South) and Senator Oluremi Tinubu (Lagos Central), wife of APC Leader who did not contest, obviously to give her husband the needed support for his presidential bid.

While Senator Abdullahi Adamu and Abubakar Kyari are now APC National Chairman and Deputy National Chairman (North) respectively and Hassan Mohammed Gusau is Zamfara state deputy governor.

Those who won their primary include; Stella Odua (PDP Anambra), Uche Ekwunife (PDP Anambra) Enyinnaya Abaribe (APGA Abia), Tokunbo Abiru



Ahmad Lawan

(APC Lagos), Solomon Olamilekan (APC Ogun), Orji Uzor Kalu (APC Abia) and Tanko Almakura (APC Nasarawa).

Those who lost their tickets are; senators Ibrahim Yahaya Oloriegbe (APC, Kwara Central); Tolu Odebiyi (APC, Ogun West); Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi (APC, Niger North); Bulus Amos (APC, Gombe South); Bello Mandiya (APC, Katsina South); Barkiya Abdullahi (APC, Katsina Central); Olubunmi Adetunmbi (APC, Ekiti North) and Frank Ibezim (APC, Imo North).

Others are; Danjuma La'ah (PDP, Kaduna South); Cleopas Zuwohge (PDP, Bayelsa Central); Matthew Urhoghide (PDP, Edo South); Ayo Akinyelure (PDP, Ondo Central); Nicholas Tofowomo (PDP, Ondo South); Smart Adeyemi (APC, Kogi West); Ezenwa Francis Onyeawuchi (PDP, Imo East) and Danlandi Sankara (APC, Jigawa North West).

Majority of those that lost their tickets did so because of power tussle with their state governors. They thought their party should have protected their interests by giving them right of first refusal to retain their seats in the parliament.

Senators in this category took the offence beyond their governors and are hell-bent on taking revenge on the party by pulling out with their supporters to any other party where their interests could be well taken care of. Hence, the massive defection currently taking place in the Senate.

Within the last two weeks after the primaries, more than five senators have crossed carpeted in the Senate.

The defection started with two prominent members of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senate Majority Leader, Yahaya Abdullahi, and Adamu Aliero, who officially defected to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Both lawmakers represent Kebbi North and Kebbi Central



Omo-Agege

senatorial districts, respectively.

The Senate Leader, in his letter titled, "Defection From APC to PDP And Resignation As The Majority Leader Of The 9th Senate", said his decision was informed by the democratic challenges and deficits faced by the APC in Kebbi State.

The text of the letter reads, "I write to inform you of the withdrawal of my membership of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and consequently resign from my position as the Majority Leader of the 9th Senate.

"I came to this decision after a very hard struggle with my conscience and emotions. It is either to remain on the side of my people or to selfishly look the other way. All politics is local. I cannot therefore in good conscience, continue to work for the success of this administration at the centre while the people of my state, my primary constituency, continue to wallow in abject poverty and destitution under the misrule and manipulation of a despot.

"I have therefore decided to pitch my tent with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in order to join forces with my compatriots at home who are struggling against incompetence, imposition and violation of democratic norms, principles and practices.

"The democratic challenges and deficits in my state, Kebbi State, did not just start from the last congresses, but right from July last year when the governor illegally decapitated the State Leadership of the Party, imposed unelected ward, Local government and State executives of the Party.

"This matter was brought to the attention of the caretaker committee of the Party who failed to bring the Governor to order.

"Efforts by all well-meaning indi-

viduals including Your Excellency, Mr President, were equally spurned. The North-West Zone Governors' entreaties were ignored. The defunct Abdullahi Adamu-led National Reconciliation Committee's intervention to find amicable resolutions failed. All primarily due to the manipulative intransigence of the Governor."

Also, the Senate Minority Leader, Enyinnaya Abaribe, defected to the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) from PDP and exited as Minority Leader of the 9th senate. Though he blamed his defection on the crisis within the Abia State chapter of the PDP, but it was obvious that the senator left because of the inability to realize his gubernatorial ambition.

Three other senators of the ruling APC also dumped their party through letters sent to the Senate President. They are Senators Ahmed Babba Kaita (Katsina North), Lawal Gumau (Bauchi South) and Francis Alimikhena (Edo North).

While Senators Ahmed Babba Kaita and Francis Alimikhena joined the opposition PDP, Lawal Gumau joined New Nigerian People's Party, (NNPP)

The senators cited marginalisation, injustice and lack of internal democracy as some of the reasons they dumped their former party.

The latest set of senators to jump ships were Dauda Jika (Bauchi Central) defected from APC to NNPP and Ezenwa Onyewuchi (Imo East) who defected from PDP to Labour Party (LP).

Apparently threatened by the gale of defection which is gradually depleting the number of members of APC senators, the national chairman of the party, said that the party was worried about the wave of the defection among the APC senators though noted that defection was a usual occurrence during election period.

At an emergency meeting he held with APC senators at the National Assembly, Adamu said "it is an unfortunate development when it happens", adding that "this is the season for all manner of behaviour in the political space in the country"

The APC chairman added that "in every election year, this kind of thing gives cause for stakeholders to sneeze and Nigeria is not an exception so is the APC, not an exception. I don't care about what is happening in other parties, my focus is on the APC. But we all know that the occurrence is not only happening in the APC, it's happening across other political parties too. And because we are the ruling party, our problems are exaggerated before the public."

"There is no responsible leader that would not be worried when he loses one member not to talk of two. At the moment we are faced with the stark reality of our problems. I have committed my colleagues at the National Assembly to face the problem squarely and see the problem as solvable.

"We are in politics, I don't know what would happen tomorrow, nobody does".

Though he may not say what would happen tomorrow, proactive steps must be taken to stem the gale of defection because a source said not less than 20 other APC senators are on queue to dump the ruling party. Only time will tell.



## Okowa's VP emergence tears Traditional Rulers Council apart

•Pitches traditional rulers against SMLBF

By GABRIEL OMONHINMIN

As political activities leading to next year's general elections gather momentum, political manoeuvring has forced some traditional rulers in Delta North, who are expected to be apolitical to throw their hats into the nation's political arena.

This has fractionalized the Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum and has pitched the two factions against each other as the political interest and integrity of their son, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, is at stake and needs to be defended.

Okowa, who is the Chairman of the South-South Governors' Forum, was on the 16th of June, 2022 nominated by the main opposition, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as Vice Presidential candidate to the party's flag bearer, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar after intense horse-trading and consultation.

Some leaders from the southern part of the country attributed Okowa's emergence as an act of betrayal and disrespect to the Southern and the Middle Belt regions of the country.

Leaders of the Southern, Middle Belt Leaders' Forum (SMLBF) on June 16, 2022, issued a damning statement accusing Okowa of the infamous and betrayal role he played during the PDP presidential primaries which earned him the VP slot.

The statement was jointly signed by Chief Edwin Kiagbodo Clark, OFR, CON, who is the leader of the Southern, Middle Belt Leaders' Forum and PANDEF, Chief Ayo Adebajo, leader of the Pan-Yoruba Movement, Afenifere. Dr Pogu Bitrus, President-General, Middle Belt Forum and Ambassador (Prof) George Obiozor, the President-General of Ohaneze Ndigbo Worldwide.

The statement reads in part; "It is unspeakable and quite disappointing that Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, who is currently Chairman of the South-South Governors' Forum, and a native of Owa-Alero in Ika North-East Local Government Area (one of the Igbo-speaking areas) of Delta State, would exhibit such barefaced unreliability.

"It bears recalling that the 17 Governors of the Southern States of Nigeria, both of the Peoples' Democratic Party, PDP, and the All Progressive Congress, APC, under the Chairmanship of the Ondo State Governor, Alakurin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN, met in Asaba, the capital of Delta State on May 11, 2021, and took far-reaching decisions, based on the principles of fairness, equity and justice, the presidency should rotate to the south, at the end of the statutory eight years of President Muhammadu Buhari's tenure. And this very Governor Okowa was the host of that historic meeting. The Southern Governors later met again in Lagos, on July 5, 2021, where they reaffirmed their decision, and again in Enugu, on September 16, 2021, to restate the call that the presidency should rotate to the south in 2023.

"It is essential to underline that the Southern, and Middle Belt Leaders' Forum, applauded the meeting of the governors, given its significant representation and the gravity of the outcome; we followed up and issued a similar statement after



Chief Edwin Kiagbodo Clark

our meeting in Abuja on the 30th of May, 2021, asking that the presidency should rotate to the south. And went further, on several other occasions, to caution political stakeholders from the South, including serving and former governors, not to, on any account, allow them to be appointed or nominated as running mate to any presidential candidate, if the presidency is not zoned to the south and that we will work against such person or persons.

"It is, therefore, most unfortunate that the Governor of Delta State, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa, who should know better; accepted his appointment as running mate to Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. We do not have anything personal against Ifeanyi Okowa but his action is treacherous and tantamount to despicable pawning of the political future of the people of Southern Nigeria." The statement added.

Okowa in a carefully worded statement responded to the statement of SMLBF: "I want to respect our leaders; I believe that they have their opinions. I do also believe that they are well-meaning leaders, so I don't want to join issues with them. But the important thing is that I belong to a political party and I was part of the decisions of the political party and we did agree that the best pathway for us to rescue this nation and rebuild this nation was to throw open the presidential race in our party.

"I had submitted myself to be a politician, to belong to the Peoples' Democratic Party PDP and ruled by the policy of that party as it is. And since we had all committed to throw the presidential candidacy open and through the process, Atiku Abubakar, a former Vice President emerged as the Presidential candidate.

"The Onus for us is to support him to win. We were not expecting to have a candidate from the north and also have a Vice President from the north. That will lead to further division of the country, and we are talking about rebuilding this country, rebuilding our unity and to a large extent, we had to make the right decisions. And within our party, I think that having submitted myself to be a member of the Peoples' Democratic Party, I would have to submit myself to the decisions of the party and that was what has happened." He added.

In a quick reaction, Obi of Owa, and Chairman of Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum, His Majesty, Dr Emmanuel O. Efeizomor 11, JP, OON said, "Instead of aggravating the already tensed and porous political atmosphere in the country, he aligned with the cautious approach of Governor Okowa in this particular matter and maintained that there is need for all concerned to exercise caution, tact and discernment.

But a fraction of the Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum, led by His Royal Majesty Obi (Prof.) Chike Edozien, the Asagba of Asaba, did not seem to agree with the position of Obi Efeizomor II and took a swipe against the southern leaders.

The factional Vice Chairman, Obi of Abavo, HRM Uche Irenuma, on June 17, 2022, in his palace, described the SMLBF attack on Governor Ifeanyi Okowa as malicious and a calculated attempt at smearing the good image of Okowa.

He said "The decision of the SMLBF to declare Senator Ifeanyi Okowa persona non grata was uncalled for and unacceptable to the majority of the people from this region.

The Obi of Abavo was flanked by other traditional rulers from that region, including HRM Daniel Ogbudo, the Obi of Atuma-Igan Kingdom, the factional Secretary of the Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum.

"The action and outburst of SMLBF, which was supposed to protect the interest of its people, depicts personal hatred against the person of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, who holds elders, especially Chief E.K. Clark in high esteem. Thus, accusing SMLBF of acting as a script for its paymasters. He further alleged, that "The aims and objectives of the Southern and Middle Belt Leaders' Forum were not to cast aspersions on deserving and worthy sons and daughters of the region, adding that Governor Okowa's acceptance of the PDP Vice Presidential slot does not amount to betrayal of his people.

Another first-class traditional ruler from the Southern part of Delta State, who pleaded anonymity, said, "It is unfair and inappropriate for Chief Edwin Clark, to have presided over the meeting where SMLBF reacted to Governor Okowa's nomination as PDP running mate /Vice Presidential Candidate to Atiku Abubakar, the PDP flag bearer in the forthcoming election the way and manner they did.

He maintained further, that when Timipre Sylva, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources of Nigeria, bought the APC Presidential expression of interest form, the first person he went to see with his form, was Chief E.K. Clark, who happily prayed for the Minister on national televisions.

He asked "if Sylva, a fellow Ijaw man like Chief Clark had been picked or nominated as Bola Ahmed Tinubu's running mate, would Chief Clark preside over a meeting where Sylva would have been condemned and called names, and tagged a betrayal of the Southern and the Middle Belt regions of Nigeria? The answer is NO!"

"With the precarious economic and political situation facing the country, as President Buhari approaches the end of his disastrous eight years' tenure as Nigerian President, what is required now, is for Nigerians to vote in a leader, who is compassionate, knowledgeable and focused, who also has what it takes to take Nigeria and Nigerians out of its present political and economic quagmire."

While this tussle continues, Trumpet Newspaper reliably gathered that the Delta State Traditional Rulers Council led by Orodje of Okpe Kingdom, Major-General Felix Mujakperuo (Retired) called a meeting to handle the crisis bedeviling the Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum. The Council deliberated extensively on the fractionalization of the Delta North Traditional Rulers Forum and the disagreement among its leadership, especially as it relates to Governor Okowa's nomination as the running mate to the PDP Flag bearer, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

The first Vice-Chairman of the Council, His Royal Majesty, Pere S.P. Luke-Kalanama VIII JP, confirmed that the matter was indeed one of the issues on their agenda at the meeting they held on Wednesday. He, however, declined to give further details of their deliberations saying, "I do not have the authority of the council, to speak on this matter."

# Best Western Plus Elomaz Hotel, Asaba.

Address: Plot 22 A/B -27 Core Area, DBS Road,  
GRA, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria.

Tel: +2348038193264



# COAS charges personnel of CSA to be resolute in defending Nigeria

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

Personnel of the Combat Support Arms (CSA) of the Nigerian Army have been charged by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt Gen Faruk Yahaya, to be resolute, focused, and committed to achieving assigned tasks in defence of the country.

The COAS gave the charge while declaring open, a three-day Combat Support Arms Training (COSAT) Week 2022 at the Command Officers Mess 1, Asokoro Abuja on 21st June 2022.

The program, which ended on Thursday featured presentations from all the Combat Support Arms and

interactive sessions, during which far-reaching decisions were taken by the Force.

In a statement on Friday, June 24, 2022, Director of Army Public Relations, Brig-Gen Onyema Nwachukwu said that Gen Yahaya disclosed that the training was an avenue to learn and re-strategize for value addition in pursuit of peace and national security. Adding that the CSA has continued to be innovative in their respective roles and has over time improved its capabilities.

According to him, the COAS explained that the theme of the Training, "Building Competencies in Combat Support Arms towards Optimizing the Utility of Indigenous Technology in Support of NA

Contemporary Operations", was meant to create a platform for personnel of CSA of the Army to cross-fertilize ideas and intellectually stimulate themselves to enhance the operational efficiency of the Force.

In his remark, the Honorable Minister of Federal Capital Territory, Mallam Muhammad Musa Bello, who was the Special Guest of Honour, appreciated the Nigerian Army for hosting the Combat Support Training Week in the FCT while urging the participants to take advantage of the training week to proffer practicable solutions to national security challenges in the country.

On his part, the Chief of Military Intelligence (CMI), Maj Gen Ibrahim Salihu, while



Lt Gen. Yahaya

delivering a welcome address, stated that the Combat Support Arms Training Week is an annual event that provides the platform for personnel of the

CSA to constructively engage, share ideas and experiences to enhance Army's operational efficiency in tackling defence and security issues.

## Police arrest three traffic robbers in Lagos

By **ALEX OLISE**

Operatives of the Lagos State Police Command have arrested three suspected traffic robbers terrorizing the metropolis and recovered a mobile phone, dagger, and cash.

The alleged robbers were caught by detectives along Mobolaji Johnson, Ikeja area of the state.

In a press statement e-signed and made available to The Trumpet, the Command's Spokesperson, Benjamin Hundeyin, a Superintendent of Police (SP) stated, "Officers of Alausa division of the Lagos State Police Command have arrested one Usman Mohammed 'm', Azeez Adeleke 'm' and Solomon Odiya 'm' while they were trying to escape with their loot after robbing their victims."

According to Hundeyin, "The suspects were arrested on Sunday, June 19, 2022, following a distress call received by the police about an ongoing robbery attack at Mobolaji Johnson Ikeja.

"Items recovered from the suspects include 1 Tecno mobile phone, 1 dagger, and Five Thousand, Four Hundred Naira cash."

Preliminary investigations reveal that the suspects have previously operated in the area a couple of times, snatching belongings of unsuspecting passers-by.

Hundeyin said the suspects will be arraigned in court at the conclusion of investigations.

Meanwhile, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, CP Abiodun Alabi, once again assured Lagosians that the Command would continue to do everything operationally possible to ensure the safety of life and property in the State.

## Police arrests two producers of fake vehicle documents in Lagos

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

Two men who dupe unsuspecting Nigerians by producing forged vehicle documents have been arrested by detectives of the Lagos State Police Command.

The suspects, a 45-year-old Owoade Olushola and a 33-year-

old Salaudeen Sherif have been in the illegal business since February 2021.

Police Public Relations Officer of the Command, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, in a statement on Thursday said Salaudeen, a security man at the Lagos State Electricity Board Ikeja was arrested for aiding and abetting by allowing Olushola to use his security post to

run his illicit business.

Hundeyin said, "Detectives of the Lagos State Police Command have arrested one Owoade Olushola 'm' aged 45 and Salaudeen Sherif 'm' aged 33 in Ikeja.

"The duo was arrested following credible intelligence that they duped innocent Nigerians by producing fake vehicle documents

and impersonating officials of the Lagos State Vehicle Licencing Office.

"Salaudeen, a security man at the Lagos State Electricity Board Ikeja was arrested for aiding and abetting by allowing Olushola to use his security post to run his illicit business. Investigation reveals that the suspects have been in the business since February 2021.

"Items recovered from the suspects include 1 laptop, 1 printer, fake Inspector General of Police letterheads, fake tint permits and fake vehicle particulars."

According to the spokesperson, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, CP Abiodun Alabi, has directed that the suspects be arraigned in court after investigations.

## NSCDC releases over N200m to families of 60 fallen heroes

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

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has paid over N200m to the next of kin of 60 personnel who died during active service.

The cash, which is a backlog of NSCDC group life insurance benefits, is said to be part of the fulfilment of the Commandant General's promise to prioritize the welfare of the personnel of the Service.

Director of Public Relations, DCC Olusola Odumosu, in a statement obtained by The Trumpet on Friday, said the NSCDC CG, Dr Abubakar Audi, handed the cash to the respective beneficiaries in a brief ceremony held at the Corps National Headquarters in Abuja.

While presenting the cash, the NSCDC Boss said research has shown that in order to achieve results on set goals, the workforce must be cared for adequately, adding that this will enable them to put in their best in achieving set goals.

According to the CG, the operatives recognized were just a few amongst the backlogs recorded by the Corps.

Dr Audi said, "Chief among the priorities of my administration is to improve the welfare of personnel and one of such efforts is geared towards remembering our colleagues who served meritoriously and paid the supreme sacrifice in the process, leaving their families behind.

"We will continue to make serious efforts to encourage staff to put in their best while still in active service, we will work alongside the Head of Civil Service of the Federation to ensure the payment of others on the waiting list.

"If you didn't hear the names of your persons, don't feel left out because we have a huge backlog and we are trying to see how it could be sorted out in due time."

The CG thanked President Muhammadu Buhari and the Head of Service for attending to the needs of the Corps by ensuring that the pain and suffering of dependents left behind by deceased personnel are alleviated.

He congratulated the beneficiaries and charged them as next of kin to make judicious use of the money received to better the lives of the immediate families of the deceased so that

the death of their loved ones would not be in vain.

Speaking on behalf of the recipients Okeji Olusegun Ojo, thanked the Commandant General and his management team for recognizing their sufferings since the demise of their loved ones and ensuring they get their benefits after a long

time. He said it is a laudable achievement and would remain fresh and indelible in their memories for a long time.

Meanwhile, the representative of the Head of Service, Abubakar Mai jam'ah, assured the Corps of their continuous support and partnership, stating that all

Defence Advisers of 17 countries accredited to Nigeria have lauded the efforts of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) for the successes recorded in tackling terrorists around the Lake Chad region.

The Defence Advisers gave the commendation when they paid a working visit to the headquarters of MNJTF at N'Djamena Chad on Wednesday 23rd June 2022 for an on-the-spot assessment of the operational activities of the troops in the Lake Chad region.

MNJTF's Chief of Military Public Information, Lt Col Kamarudeen Adegoke, in a

statement obtained by The Trumpet on Friday, said the Defence Adviser stated that the tasks carried out by the troops are huge, exemplary, and in line with global best practices.

He said, "The Defence Advisers are from Uganda, Zambia, Gambia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Cote D'Ivoire, France, India, Morocco, Poland, Sierra Leone, South Korea, Ukraine, Denmark, and Algeria. The visit was basically to have an on-the-spot assessment of the operational activities of the MNJTF in the Lake Chad region.

"The team was led by the Director Foreign Liaison (DFL), Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), Maj Gen ES Buba, who commended the MNJTF and her troops for their efforts in degrading the criminal elements in and around the Lake Chad region.

"General Buba further stated that the tasks carried out by the MNJTF are huge, adding that it is exemplary and in line with global best practices."

While responding the Force Commander (FC), MNJTF, Maj Gen Abdul Khalifah Ibrahim, thanked the Defence Advisers for the visit, saying it signified recognition of the work of the MNJTF. He added that a lot has been achieved in the fight against insurgency in the Lake Chad region.

According to him, "the successes recorded were

through robust coordination and collaboration among the Troop Contributing Countries."

He praised the conduct of Operation Lake Sanity, which he said was conducted in close coordination with Operation Desert Sanity in Nigeria.

"A lot of pressure was imposed on the Boko Haram/ISWAP criminals in the Lake Chad Islands and settlements known as Tunbuns," he added.

Gen Ibrahim thanked the troop-contributing countries of Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad while also appreciating the EU, UK, and China among others for their support to the MNJTF.

Defence Advisers from 17 countries laud MNJTF's efforts in tackling terrorists

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

# CCTV Cameras and National Security

The recent call by Kwara State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Tuesday Assayomo, for the installation of CCTV cameras and deployment of local guards around places of worship underscores the gravity of the security situation which the nation currently faces. In view of the prevalence of such violent attacks, such installations ought to be extended to all public spaces and even private ones where it is possible to do so. In February this year after a two-day retreat of the Nigeria Police in Uyo that was attended by the Inspector General of Police and 148 senior officers the Police called for a legislation that would compel private citizens, including government agencies to install CCTV on their facilities. CP Assayomo's call therefore appears to be a reiteration of an earlier point made by the Police High Command.

Worshippers of God now realize that they cannot depend on faith alone. The days when we would say "God will protect us" and leave things there are over. We are currently dealing with godless individuals who have no regard for the sanctity of places and human life. Nigerians must face up to the fact we must sit up and play an active part in our own protection while praying to God for divine assistance. Unusual times call for unusual measures. The minor argument that CCTV is an infringement on people's privacy cannot hold water given the very real security threats that plague Nigeria daily. Besides, given the very real advantages of having the CCTV installed, there ought to be a rethink.

The truth is that security in Church premises and Mosques cannot be left to church and Mosque leaders alone. Government has an obligation to install surveillance cameras in all major towns and cities in the country. So, while cameras installed by faith and business organisations could cover their premises, those in the streets will cover all other areas. We

are baffled that the CCTV installation projects designed for Abuja and Lagos did not take off. Are there some powerful interests that do not want the land secured?

Criminals would think twice about committing a crime if they knew they would be caught on camera during their nefarious activities. People can be identified not only by facial recognition but by gait, body size, clothing, voice, etc. This will go a long way towards helping security agents to identify perpetrators, making it easier to catch them. This will not only improve public safety, reduce crime rates, and help in catching criminals, but it will also serve as evidence when criminals are brought to court.

There are more than 1800 CCTV cameras

in the city of Nairobi alone monitored at the Kenya National Police Services Traffic Command and Control Centre pointed at strategic places across the city. Nigeria has no such thing. The CCTV project begun in Abuja fizzled out due to fraud and corruption. It has therefore become pertinent for corporations and individuals to take some of the responsibility and cost for CCTV around public places such as places of worship, malls, shopping centres, banks and so on. Nigerians can no longer afford to leave every aspect of its security to the authorities.

It is now necessary for Nigerians to learn the basics of self-defense and survival tactics. Given the typically delayed response of our security operatives, self-defense and survival tactics might mean the difference between life and death. Everyone must also learn to be vigilant. We must all activate the "amebo" in us and be quick to notice unusual situations, unfamiliar faces, and suspicious behaviour.

Churches and Mosques can easily raise funds for CCTV around their premises. We are the most religious nation on earth – we should therefore, put our money where our mouth is. Wealthy corporations such as Dangote, BUA, Elumelu Foundation, and banks could contribute by funding CCTV cameras for public hospitals and markets as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Indeed, this will benefit the economy in the long run since foreign investors will be attracted to Nigeria.

We are also in a campaigns' season. Our politicians could add this item to their campaign manifesto to show their commitment to public safety. On the individual level, people with the means should install cameras in their premises. The government on its part should do the same along our local roads, highways, around schools and other public institutions. Security is everybody's business. But the buck stops at the desk of government, both the federal and state governments.



## THE TRUMPET

PUBLISHER/CHAIRMAN: JOEL-ONOWAKPO THOMAS

GMD/VICE CHAIRMAN: GLORIA JOEL-ONOWAKPO

EDITOR/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: OMOKIOJA JJK ETO

WEEKEND EDITOR/DEIC: OBAH SYLVA

## ELOMAZ COMMUNICATIONS LTD

DIRECTOR: NDUBISI FRANCES

MANAGING DIRECTOR: ENDURANCE EDAFEWOTU

## EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

CHAIRMAN: CHIEF JOHN ARAKA

ASSOCIATE CHAIRMAN: PROF. HOPE EGHAGHA

MALLAM LAWAL MOHAMMED HAMIDU

DR. PROMISE ADIELE

DR. KAYODE EESUOLA

ASSOC. PROF. SAMSON ALHAJI SHAIBU

DR. RALIA MAIJAMA'A ABDULLAHI

PROF. OGHENEKARO OGBINAKA

EMAIL US @: [trumpetng@gmail.com](mailto:trumpetng@gmail.com)



## Christian stewarding in God's estate

A steward is a person who administers the property, house, finances, etc. of another person who may be their superior. The 'Dake's Annotated Reference Bible' defines a steward as a "house agent, managing the house and servants, assigning task, being responsible for the goods of his master, and training of the heir." No doubt, in most Christian Churches today, a common encounter with the word 'steward' is when we hear of the phrase 'guild of stewards.' They are usually persons who act as ushers during services in our churches. They ensure that worshippers are orderly. They collect offerings during worship services. They are a visible body of workers on Sundays and others days of worship. They welcome members and guest worshippers, they make people comfortable and see to their worship needs, they do the recording of attendance population as well as those of offerings, etc.

But we are not referring to these stewards here. From our definition, stewardship entails two things. A superior master or lord and a subordinate who serves as his employee. Stewardship involves a relationship of employer-employee. At the time of Jesus Christ, a steward was a house agent who was responsible for the administration of his master's property. It was the responsibility of the steward to organise other workers in the employment of the master. The office of a steward was very important. It was a high position - in status and privilege - to hold. The steward was the caretaker of his master's estate. He could employ other servants and supervise them. More importantly, the steward trains and mentors the heir of his master's estate.

In Genesis 15:2-3, we read that: "But Abram said, Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless and the

heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" This underscores the importance of a steward's position. He could inherit his master's wealth if there were no heir. Here, Eliezer would have been the inheritor of Abram's estate and wealth. God has promised Abram that his offspring would fill the earth. Consequently, God assured Abram in verse 3, "And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."

God's promise to Abram concerning who shall be his heir did not diminish the status and importance of a steward's office. The fear of Abram was that Eliezer - one who was not a biological child - may end up becoming his promised child! Before the birth of Isaac, Eliezer was charged with sensitive and important roles by Abram. At old age, Abraham had to rely on him to secure a wife for his son, Isaac (Genesis 24:1-3). There are two lessons to be learnt from the stewardship of Eliezer. He was the head servant of Abraham and he ruled over the wealth of Abraham. He was ultimately charged with securing a wife for Abraham's son and heir.

Given the importance of a steward in the life of his master, due diligence is often required before they are recruited for the task. It is an exalted position. It is important for a steward to be a diligent person. He must be loyal and obedient. Stewards are expected to be accountable, resourceful, faithful and trustworthy persons. Stewards must possess all these qualities. No master would compromise any of these essentials. "He also said to His disciples. "There was a rich man who had a steward, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his



Dr. Karo Ogbinaka

goods. And he called him and said to him, "What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward" (Luke 16:1-3).

The office of a steward is no mean position to hold. When the brothers of Joseph got "caught" with money hidden in their sacks, the one to whom they explained their situation and pleaded their case was described by the Bible as "the steward of Joseph's house." "So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon. Then the man did as Joseph ordered ..." (Genesis 43:15-17).

The fact that in the verses that followed Joseph's brothers pleaded their innocence to the steward, addressing him 'sir', points

out to the high regards that was given to the position or office of stewardship. The "steward of Joseph's house" assuaged their fears thus: "Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God, and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money" (Genesis 43:23).

Believers are all called to the office of stewardship in the Vineyard of God. It is unfortunate that many of us, even in the secular world get offended whenever we are required to give account of resources under our care. No Christian should take offence of being called to be accountable of their stewardship. A disloyal person have no business in the house of God. Stewardship is a high office of responsibility and trust. It is a privileged position to occupy. A steward has a tremendous responsibility in the estate of God, the Church. They are charged with the souls of men. They should organise people into becoming candidates for heaven. It is expected of stewards that they will use this office rightly and diligently. Only the uninformed and uneducated look down on the steward's office as 'ordinary' 'mundane,' and 'pedestrian.' Believers' authority and power; their commission and status are derived from the one who called and engaged them to be His steward, Christ Jesus is our Master. He reserves a commendation for us if we do well. "His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21).

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

## Man's Journey to perfection

Jesus Christ clearly stated in the book of Matthew chapter 5: 44 -48 that we should be perfect even as our heavenly Father is perfect. There is need to take this message seriously because many have zeroed their minds that perfection is only for God and not for men.

Jesus said that we can live a perfect life and He cannot lie, therefore all we need is to see perfection as the target and work towards it.

The journey to perfection in Christ is a journey of shedding off the weight of sin and iniquity as we move on after receiving Christ in our lives. This is the reason after receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, the next thing to do is to study the word of God and listen to genuine sermons from the Bible and live by the truth of God always.

Jesus Christ did not condemn the woman caught in adultery but said she should go and SIN NO MORE. The man who was born blind but healed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ also got the same admonition of SIN NO MORE.

So, the journey to perfection in Christ is a journey of "now that you are saved, go and SIN NO MORE". Hence, if you were involved in sexual immorality before you surrendered to Christ, the journey towards perfection is to forsake fornication and live righteously going forward. If you were a liar before met Christ, the journey to perfection means to forsake lying and cling to truth in line with the



Dr. Agbodo

Word of God. If you were somebody who finds it difficult to forgive others when they offend you, the journey to perfection means you should jettison the spirit of lack of forgiveness and embrace forgiving others no matter the wrong they may have done.

Recently, I was chatting with a businessman and was stressing the need to do holy business without lies and dribbling customers and he replied that everyone is a sinner because no one is righteous according to the Bible. Yes, it is true that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God but God has made it clear that the time is now to repent and live a righteous life. Then, who is now

righteous or perfect? This is a very big question because how can we evaluate who is righteous and perfect today in this world that is laced with sin everywhere.

It is to this effect that we must understand that perfection is a journey and what God is interested in is our resolve to shed off the weight of sin and unrighteousness, so that we can become perfect. It is not for us to say nobody is sinless, hence we should continue to dwell in our own sin.

God did not create humans to be semi-perfect but to be perfect in all things just as God is perfect in all things. Adam was created as another God and that is why all angels were commanded to bow down for him after his creation (Hebrew 1).

But how can one be perfect in this unholy world? First and foremost, you must be born again to start the race and to be born again means to receive the Holy Spirit, the breath of God afresh.

Adam received the breath of life and became a living soul but Jesus Christ has brought the Holy Spirit again to quicken us into a living soul.

The Holy Spirit, the breath of God is back to man us to be living souls and that is why Jesus Christ, the second Adam is referred to as a quickening Spirit

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God is the lamentation of Apostle Paul in the book of Romans 3:23 in the Bible and this lamentation

was to caution those who thought they were holy and did not need any form of repentance among the Jews living in Rome. Many Jews believed then that righteousness is only according to the law of Moses but never knew that the law of Moses only prepared them to get to the stage of real righteousness and to attain the perfection that was in Adam and Eve before they sinned in the Garden of Eden.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ admonished His disciples and indeed all mankind to be perfect the way our Heavenly Father is perfect. In essence, every man on earth is on earth to attain perfection according to the Will of Almighty God.

Adam and Eve were great and perfect in all their ways until they began to have a second thoughts about the Word of God after being deceived by the fallen Angel Lucifer the devil through the serpent.

Our journey on earth is to gain perfection and it is possible because Jesus Christ has made it possible. Therefore, our business as followers of Christ is to always look forward and never go back to our past sins when we forsake them and gradually we will surely get to the mark of perfection in Christ Jesus. God bless in Jesus Name.

•Pastor Esanerovo Trinity Agbodo is a Contributing Editor with The Trumpet Newspaper and can be reached on eagbodo@gmail.com

# Junior Oshoffa leads rebirth of Celestial Church

By **GABRIEL OMONHINMIN**, Culture and Religion Editor

Pastor Samuel Bilewu Joseph (S.B.J.) Oshoffa's foray into Christianity was indeed remarkable. He changed the face of Christian religious practices in the entire West African region, Africa and the world during his lifetime.

The Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) was founded on the 29th of September 1947 in Port- Novo in Dahomey now the Republic of Benin by Pastor, Reverend, Prophet and Founder, S.B.J. Oshoffa. Following a divine visitation. Pastor Oshoffa immediately established a hegemony at the top of the church administration.

Pastor S.B.J Oshoffa, had 40 days of divine revelation in the forest of Dahomey, after which he was commissioned to do signs and wonders. Although a local carpenter by training, his prayers of deliverance and healing of the sick, who came to him in droves and the occasional raising of the dead alongside the liberation of the oppressed, made people from all over West Africa. Without leaving the shores of West Africa, Pastor S.B.J. Oshoffa's fame spread worldwide, though there was no internet.

But just like every living mortal, Pastor S.B.J. Oshoffa died at the age of 76 years on September 15, 1985, as a result of a road accident, which opened another page and era in the history of the Celestial Church of Christ.

In the past 37 years, the story of CCC worldwide has been full of drama, intense rivalry and intrigue. Just when one expects the end of one episode another opens. This invariably resulted in the huge cracks in the once united Celestial Church Empire, which the late Founder left behind.

It was therefore not a surprise that at some point in the church's history, they paraded different factions that seemed only united by the white garment uniform the church congregation wore with several litigations in various courts.

In March 2001 amid this acrimonious and tense situation, Pastor Philip Hunsu Ajose, who was the then Pastor of CCC worldwide died. In December of the following year, His Eminence Reverend Emmanuel Mobiyina Friday Adebawale Abiodun Vihan Oshoffa, an animal biological Scientist was installed as the head of the large organization worldwide.

20 years down the line, after the assumption of office of the present leadership led by, His Eminence Reverend Emmanuel Mobiyina F. A. A. V. Oshoffa, as Pastor and Spiritual Head of the Celestial Church of Christ worldwide, the toxic relationship and rivalry that formally bedevilled the

church, seem to have suddenly died down and phased out.

The Trumpet Religious Desk had a chat with Superior Evangelist Kayode Ajala, Spokesman for the Celestial Church of Christ Worldwide to know the reason behind the sudden unity.

Ajala said, "There was nothing extraordinary in it, except that His Eminence, the new Pastor and Spiritual Head of the Celestial Church of Christ, decided to streamline the activities of the church and got so many people involved in the day-to-day administration of the church. With this singular act, most members of the church began to get more insights into what is happening in the church hierarchy. With this, there was no longer room for rumours and liars.

"Most people now settled to work for the general improvement of the church. As it is the nature and characteristic of the new leadership of the church, without prompting, His Eminence, Reverend Emmanuel Oshoffa, pushed the church administration further to the people, who were earlier advocating that the church be restructured. With this, there was nothing to complain about as everyone now had a role to play in the church's affairs and growth.

"Each head of these Dioceses, both foreign or local, makes their contributions directly to the church headquarters, where final decisions on matters concerning the church are taken daily. Despite this, we have six reconstituted committees, which look into various issues such as security, finances, administration and what have you. All these innovations have brought about purposeful leadership in the church.

"With all these improvements, splinter groups began to retrace their steps, Oshoffa is never known for frivolities. He readmits these people back into the family without asking any questions, so long as they are ready to abide by the rules and regulations that have been guiding the church for decades now. And



His Eminence Reverend Emmanuel Mobiyina Oshoffa, Pastor and Spiritual Head of Celestial Church of Christ Worldwide.

for anyone to be truly aligned with the CCC worldwide.

"He intends to bequeath one united, stronger Celestial Church of Christ worldwide that will be universally accepted as one united body of Christ."

Oshoffa, is the Spiritual Head, of the Celestial Church of Christ worldwide, eldest son of Prophet Pastor and Founder of CCC worldwide, S.B.J. Oshoffa.

He was born on December 25th 1948 at Kpave, Dahomey, now Republic of Benin. His name Mobiyina literally

translated as "I have given birth to this" was an attestation to the fact that his late father, Pastor SBJ Oshoffa, gave birth to other children, which did not live. Thus compelling him to hinge his hope on God, for his survival.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Biological Science in 1976 and later proceeded to Nance in France in 1977 for a Master's Degree in the same discipline and was appointed the head of the Celestial Church of Christ Diocese of France in the year 1997.

## Amotekun nabs suspects in connection with Owo church massacre

By **FRIDAY OMOsula**

The Ondo State Western Nigeria Security Network, codenamed Operation Amotekun, has revealed that some of the suspects involved in the June 5, 2022, terror attack at Saint Francis Catholic Church, Owo, have been arrested.

The Amotekun Commander, Akogun Adetunji Adeleye, disclosed this while parading 71 suspected criminals at the command's headquarters in Akure, the state capital.

He disclosed that the vehicle used in carrying out the attack was also

retrieved as well as some of the instruments used. He said all those involved in the attack will be arrested.

"A number of people have been arrested concerning the Owo issue as well as equipment. On that day, we pursued them to the point that we recovered the vehicle and we are still pursuing them. I can you that we will not rest until we get to the root and all the perpetrators and their sponsors are brought to book."

Adeleye said the 71 suspects paraded at the headquarters of the command were arrested within the last one month for various offences ranging

from armed robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping, raping, fraud and human trafficking.

"The 71 suspects were picked while committing offences and others were tracked to their hideouts in the forests. We have been able to get a cartel that specialises in stealing and dismantling motorcycles for 18 years which we all know as okada. Also, we were able to recover over 50 bikes during the operation from these criminals.

Adeleye, who revealed that investigation is ongoing, did not give a figure for the suspects arrested in connection with the attack.



## Prospects, challenges of FG, CBN's financial inclusion initiative

*It is common knowledge that most Nigerian adults do not have bank accounts or engage in any financial relationship with commercial banks. This realisation is partly responsible for the financial inclusion initiative of the Federal Government and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in 2012, with the expectation that by 2020, the banks would have achieved financial inclusion of a higher percentage of Nigerian adults. To examine why the policy had not recorded much success, STANMEG Communications, publishers of Oriental News Nigeria, assembled experts to review the policy. A decade after the policy was initiated, financial experts and those for whom the policy was targeted, say the initiative had not achieved much of its desired goals, JOHNMARK UKOKO writes.*

In the United States of America from which Nigeria copies most of its policies and programmes, over 90 per cent of the adult population are financially included in the banking system. In the European countries, the figure is close to what is obtainable in the United States, as most of their adult populations have bank accounts and one insurance policy or the other.

Most of them also actively participate in capital market activities in addition to pension arrangements in their various countries, all of which are carried out with the aid of functional bank accounts.

However, in most African countries, only about 50 per cent of the adult populations are financially included, as their adult citizens have bank accounts or have one insurance policy or the other, as against Nigeria where majority of its adult population are usually not active in the country's financial sector.

Research conducted by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in 2010, showed about 39.2 million or 46.3 per cent of the 84.7 million Nigerian adult population at that time were excluded from the nation's financial system. That meant that 45.5 million or about 53.7 per cent of the country's 84.7 million people were included in the financial system.

This realisation led the CBN to launch the country's financial inclusion programme about a decade ago, precisely in 2012.

To determine how far the country has gone in the policy. The management of STANMEG Communications, publishers of Oriental News Nigeria, a leading online platform, recently brought together financial experts, artisans, traders, persons living with disabilities and others in Lagos to examine the issues and proffer solutions to the country's slow progress in its determination to integrate a greater number of adults into the financial system.

During the event with the theme: *Engaging With Critical Groups To Develop Effective Financial Inclusion Initiative*, Chairman of the occasion and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bank Customers Association of Nigeria (BCAN), Dr Uju Ogubunka, said the Federal Government and CBN's financial inclusion programme was geared towards ensuring that no Nigerian was short-changed in its financial intermediation policies and economic development plans.

He disclosed that the government was concerned that a large percentage of its citizens were excluded financially, hence it set a target to change the narrative with a view to engaging more adults in the country's financial system.

Ogubunka, a former Registrar of the Chartered Institute of Bank-

ers of Nigeria (CIBN) and retired senior executive of a new generation bank, lamented that a decade after launching the policy, the number of financially excluded adults has increased.

"When the financial inclusion policy was unveiled in 2012, Nigerian adults were a little over 84 million, but sadly, the number of the unbanked population has also increased remarkably. If such huge a population remain outside the financial system, the economy will not develop at a fast pace," he said.

He pointed out that financial inclusion begins with the opening of a bank account, which facilitates and factors the account holder towards benefiting from government's financial support, as the account drives other transactions of the account holder.

"Also, there is the need to have insurance policy, investment accounts in the capital market, pension accounts and other life and businesses that enable transactions driven only by the financial system to be financially included," he stressed.

Findings of the CBN research had shown that about 39.2 million or 54.4 per cent of the financially excluded adults were females, meaning that 17.9 million were males. On the other hand, males accounted for higher number and percentage of the financially included in the nation's financial system.

In his presentation, Managing Director of APT Securities and Funds Limited, Mallam Garba Kurfi, who was represented by Rotimi Olubi, said the government's financial inclusion policy, if properly harnessed, will help to ensure that funds that would have been outside the financial sector find their way into the formal sector.

He stressed that the huge number of people outside the financial sector meant that their funds were being kept in their homes instead of being channelled into the country's financial system.

"Some of the people outside the financial sector have thriving businesses, but because they don't have bank accounts, can't access bank financial credit facilities. And so, if they don't have bank accounts, there is no way they can access bank credits. If they keep their cash at home, their businesses cannot grow beyond the ordinary level.

"If we don't put our money in the banks, the economy will not grow. There are many financial products and services the financially excluded people can't benefit from," he stressed, stressing that if all the huge funds in the informal sector could find their way into the country's financial sector, the nation's economy will grow in leaps and bounds.

On why the initiative had



David Anyaele

not achieved the desired results despite the Federal Government and CBN's efforts to drive the financial inclusion faster, Executive Director of the Centre for Citizens with Disability (CCD), David Anyaele, said the apex bank and commercial banks should be blamed for the slow pace of the financial inclusion initiative.

Anyaele said the banks make it difficult for people with disability to access banking halls, adding that his members in wheelchairs were unable to access the banking halls because the banks' entrances were too narrow.

He added that his members with sight impairment and walk with iron rods could not go through the bank's entrance doors, adding that his members, who managed to access the banking halls were usually treated with contempt by some bank officials.

"I lost my two arms to the Sierra Leone war. When I returned to Nigeria, I struggled to find money to buy artificial arms, before I could do that I went to the bank to open an account and because I couldn't sign my signature, I was denied the opportunity.

"I pleaded with them to allow me thumbprint, but the bank refused. I went home very sad. I have to practise so many times before returning to the bank to open the account. Most of my members are subjected to one form of discrimination or the other on daily basis.

"The obstacles before the physically challenged people have kept many of us out of the banking halls," Anyaele stated.

He also berated the CBN and the banks for not being honest with persons with disability, adding that on several occasions, they heard that the government has intervention funds for people with disability, but whenever they approach banks to access it, the banks usually say there was nothing like that.

Anyaele pointed out that most of his members no longer want to save their money in the banks because of high inflation to the extent that if one keeps money in the bank, the money loses value within a month, adding that banks no longer pay interests on deposits, therefore, there are no incentives for savings.

Arguing that the building laws do not consider the physically challenged persons in the banks' buildings or offices, he said in most countries of the world, buildings or offices that do not make provisions for easy entrance of people with disability were heavily sanctioned.

"The banks and other financial institutions don't consider physically challenged persons in their design and buildings. Our situation is not our making and anyone can become one of us anytime. Our laws are not friendly to persons with disability," he said.

On why the country's financial inclusion was not growing fast as expected when the CBN launched the policy a decade ago, Chairperson of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Mrs Adeola Ekine, said women have been marginalised hence most of them are excluded from financial services.

Ekine said most women in

North and some other parts of the country are denied education, and as such they do not have jobs or money to open bank accounts, adding that even women, who are privileged to get some education on their graduation are asked to marry and bear children before they could go out to hunt for jobs, while their male counterparts must have gone far.

Stressing that the issues of financial inclusion would become a mirage in the country as long as women were not empowered, she maintained that employers also deny women jobs on the excuse that they either do not have experience or were above employment age.

Further lamenting the women condition, she asked: How can an uneducated woman have money to save in the bank? How will such women have money to achieve financial inclusion?

Convener of the conference and Editor of *Oriental News Nigeria*, Mrs Yemisi Izuora, said the idea of the conference was conceived after a painstaking study on the progress and prospects of financial inclusion in the country.

Izuora disclosed that planning for the conference and the groundwork began about two years ago, adding that feedback generated from the grassroots prompted the organisation to host the event.

"The conference was organised given that over the past couple of years, the Federal Government and stakeholders in the financial sector have had to deal with expanding financial services to large communities of underserved populations.

"We strongly believe and we are convinced that the conference will help to advance inclusive financial systems for the identified groups, including community-based people, artisans, low income groups, market men and women and persons with disabilities, among others, who undertake financial transactions in various locations, as well as displaced persons who were represented at the event," she stated.

On why banks failed to open branches in rural areas to bring Nigerians resident in those areas and were even closing some branches at the community level, representative of the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) said the commission was spreading Internet facilities to remote parts of the country to enable Fintechs, Point of Sales (PoS) and bank agents to continue to serve their customers and Nigerians alike.

Respondents, who commended the STANMEG Communications and *Oriental News Nigeria* for organising the event, charged other media houses to emulate the organisation to embark on similar projects with a view to boosting the country's economy.

# Senate sets up panel to probe Shell's alleged violation of JV agreement

## •Seeks refund of \$200 million to FG

Stories by EDU ABADE, Business Editor

The Senate has constituted an Ad-Hoc Committee to investigate the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) of Nigeria Limited over non-compliance with the Petroleum Industry Act and violation of Joint Venture (JV) agreement with the Federal Government.

The committee was mandated to investigate the Oil Mining Lease (OML) granted to SPDC between 1959 and 1989 and from 1989 to 2019 under the

SPDC and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Joint Venture (JV) agreement.

President of the Senate, Ahmad Lawan, who constituted the committee during Wednesday's plenary, named Senator Sabi Abdullahi (APC Niger) as Chairman and senators George Thompson Sekibo (PDP Rivers); Abdullahi Yahaya (PDP Kebbi); Bassey Albert Akpan (PDP Akwa Ibom); Solomon Adeola (APC Lagos); Smart Adeyemi (APC Kogi) and Aishatu Ahmed (APC Adamawa) as members.

Consequently, the Senate is demanding a refund of \$200



Senate President, Ahmad Lawan

million, being the amount short of what SPDC paid, including penalties and interests under the lease agreements to the Federal Government.

The resolution was reached after considering a motion sponsored by Sekibo titled: "Non-Payment of \$200 million accruals from the Oil Mining Lease (OML) by Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) of Nigeria Limited under the SPDC/NNPC Joint Venture Agreement, Illegal Renewal of Oil Mining Leases by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) contrary to the provision on paragraph 10 of the First Schedule to the Petroleum Act 1969 (now Section 86(1) and 86(6) of the Petroleum Industry Act 2022."

Sekibo, in his lead debate noted that the JV agreement was in contravention of the provisions of the Petroleum Act 1969 by the defunct Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) and the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, which granted a 30-year Oil Mining Lease from 1959 to 1989 to the SPDC and NNPC.

He observed that doing so constituted an illegal extension of the Oil Mining Lease by 10 years in the first instance, instead of the prescribed term of 20 years, without recourse to the provisions of the Petroleum Act 1969 in paragraph 10 of the first schedule.

He said upon the expiration of the initial Oil Mining Lease in 1989, SPDC and NNPC JV, was granted another 30-year Oil Mining Lease from July 1, 1989, to June 30, 2019, by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and DPR instead of the 20-year lease prescribed by the Petroleum Act, which he said, was contrary to paragraph 10 of the first schedule of the act.

He revealed that in the initial additional 10 years OML of 1969 to 1989, which was illegally granted to the SPDC and NNPC

JV by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and DPR, the Federal Government lost \$120 million from fees, taxes, rents and royalties, adding that He stated that in the second instance of the extra 10 years, the Federal Government also lost another \$80 million, amounting to \$200 million.

Sekibo, who said the loss of \$200 million, an equivalent of N83.130 billion, could have added more value to the economy, expressed concern that the trend of illegal extension of JV agreements from 20 years to 30 years lease period without recourse to the Petroleum Act might have also applied to other JV agreements with the International Oil Companies (IOCs) and should be investigated.

He disclosed that a whistleblower petitioned the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on the need to recover the fund from SPDC for the illegal extensions by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and DPR and to further investigate other JV agreements that involved the IOCs.

Sekibo further noted that the power of legislation vested in the National Assembly by the 1999 Constitution (as amended) also encompasses the power to make laws for the promotion of national prosperity and a dynamic, self-reliant economy as provided in section 16(1)(a) of the constitution.

He pointed out that the constitution also empowered the National Assembly to investigate misapplication of the laws enacted by the National Assembly, as provided in section 88 of the constitution.

When contacted through SMS sent to his mobile telephone for Shell's response to the development, the Spokesman of the company, Bamidele Odugbesan, did not respond to *The Trumpet's* inquiry as of the time of filing this report.

## MAN, UNIDO, others canvass energy efficiency

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and other organisations involved in manufacturing have canvassed the need to embrace energy efficiency in the country.

They stated this recently at a one-day capacity-building workshop on Reporting Techniques for Commerce, Industry, Energy and Environment Correspondents on Industrial Energy Efficiency (IEE), Energy Management System (EMS), Energy System Optimisation (ESO), as well as Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production (RECP) Methods in Nigeria.

The training drew stakeholders from the country's manufacturing sector, experts from UNIDO and other stakeholders, who are keen on ensuring that the country embraced Industrial Energy Efficiency (IEE), as well as Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production (RECP) project.

Speaking during the opening session, Director-General of MAN, Segun Ajayi-Kadir, who was represented by the Director, Corporate Services, Ambrose Oruche, said the manufacturers' group was desirous that all its members should embrace IEE and RECP in their production processes.

He noted that despite Nigeria's huge population, the country currently generates a paltry 4,000 megawatt of electricity, which is

grossly inadequate and urged local manufacturers to restructure their processes to reduce wastages, proper energy usage and cleaner production processes.

The MAN commended UNIDO and other partners for the project and urged that journalists should be trained on the programme to adequately educate the manufacturers and members of the public to ensure that the project succeeds.

In his presentation, National Project Coordinator, Oladipo Jacob, said the scheme was sponsored by UNIDO and the International Energy Technology (IET) to enable local manufacturers to utilise energy more efficiently and reduce wastage.

Jacob noted that energy usually takes a large part of production costs, adding that the journalists selected for the training were expected to use their various media organisations to disseminate the right messages to manufacturing firms on energy cost saving measures, cleaner and safer production processes to protect people, their operating environments and the future.

He disclosed that the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Ministry of Environment, the Economic Community of West States (ECOWAS) centre for renewable energy, Bank of Industry (BoI), National Universities Commission (NUC), Nigeria Investment Promotion Council (NIPC) and other stakeholders were partnering to ensure the success of the project.

Jacob said the food and beverage, iron and metal, textiles and garments, petrochemicals and one other sub-sector were in this first phase, adding that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Medium and Large Enterprises in the South West, South-South, South East and the North were involved, adding that the project was domiciled at MAN's Secretariat in Lagos.

In his presentation, representative of UNIDO, Oluyomi Banjo, said the training for media practitioners was borne out of the fact that the media remained crucial to the success or otherwise of any project, stressing: "The media is the biggest and most reliable source of getting information, hence we are doing this capacity training to enable journalists to report the

project accurately."

He disclosed that industry consumed about a third of the total energy available and that UNIDO was out to support 75 industries in five different sectors.

Banjo, who represented UNIDO's Country Representative, John Bagoli, said: "The media has the ability to build or destroy, but with proper training like this one, the Nigerian media can be the best in the world."

On his part, Okon Ekpenyong of the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN) disclosed that the project ought to have started in 2020, but had to commence in May 2022 due to some reasons.

Ekpenyong, who was represented by Deola Fabiyi, disclosed that the project involved industries in Abuja, Lagos, Benin City, Warri, Sapele, Port Harcourt, Kano and other cities and that it will help to actualise the IEE, RECP and ESO among the country's industries.

The media were drawn from the print, electronic and online platforms with participants from Lagos and Abuja, who were awarded certificates of performance at the end of the training.

## SMEDAN sets to reposition MSMEs for economic growth

The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) has pledged to reposition the country's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as engine of socio-economic transformation.

Director General of the agency, Olawale Fasanya, who was represented by Dr Friday Okpara, said this at media briefing to herald the 2022 World MSMEs Day, maintaining that capacity to drive employment generation and wealth creation were enough reasons to celebrate MSMEs, as globally recognised drivers of socio-economic transformation in developed and developing economies.

"They provide the opportunity to drive employment generation and wealth creation, as well income redistribution within societies. The relevance and importance of the sub-sector is further demonstrated as revealed

by 2020 SMEDAN's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) national MSMEs' survey.

"The survey showed that the estimated 39.65 million MSMEs operating in Nigeria contribute 46.31 per cent to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employ 87.9 per cent of the labour force and account for 6.21 per cent of the country's exports," he stated.

According to him, the expectation of SMEDAN is to digitally reposition the sub sector to be regionally, continentally and globally competitive and to make Nigeria a dominant player in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

"It is, therefore, based on the relevance of MSMEs that the United Nations (UN) set aside June 27 every year to recognise and celebrate the contributions of MSMEs globally," he said.

Fasanya, who said the chal-

lenges confronting the MSMEs subsector could be surmountable if proper policies and programmes were put in place, listed poor entrepreneurial management capacity of operators in successfully running MSMEs and weak financial management, as some of the challenges.

He also identified poor stats of infrastructure and inability to access affordable finance, saying: Access is a major change hindering the growth of MSMEs. They need steady power supply, water, roads and market for effectiveness," he said.

He said the agency would undertake an awareness campaign, as part of the celebration to sensitise Nigerians on the relevance of MSMEs in growing the economy, adding: "As we are ready to celebrate the MSMEs day, we recognise the strategic importance of the MSMEs sub sector."



Segun Ajayi-Kadir





# President Buhari Will Complete 2nd Niger Bridge - Keyamo

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

The Hon. Minister of State Labour and Employment, Olorogun Festus Keyamo, has assured Nigerians that the President Muhammadu Buhari administration will complete and commission the 2nd Niger Bridge before the end of this administration. He made this known to newsmen immediately after the commissioning of the Uzere-Aviara 7.85 km Ring Road.

According to him, "I can speak for my colleague, the Hon. Minister Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Babatunde Fashola, we have spoken about it at the Federal Executive Council meeting, yes, before this administration will leave office we shall commission the 2nd Niger Bridge.

"We are very excited about the project. The project was from the previous administration which they could not attend to. But President Buhari's administration created a special fund to complete the project."

He reiterated that "I can assure you that we shall accompany Mr President to commission that project before the end of this administration."

On the non-completion of some federal projects, Keyamo said, "Most of the projects have been brought to federal executive council, we have also approved but the federal government is also constrained with paucity of funds.

"It is also important that people understand that perhaps some of this budget provision and proposal are also hampered by the National Assembly. They are drastically also cut down by the Ministry of Works and Housing.

"We are still appealing so that some of these budget proposals for projects whenever they get to the National Assembly they are kept as they are. Especially those that are earmarked for some specific projects."

Keyamo lamented that, once they cut the fund for some projects, they have no option but to execute the one the budget



Festus Keyamo

can carry for that year.

On Academic Staff Union of Universities(ASUU) strike, the

Minister confirmed that the federal government is negotiating seriously with ASUU but

he cannot give details of the negotiation, noting that soon the details will be made public.

## Fashola to flag-off Nembe-Brass road project in Bayelsa

By **AHERHOKE OKIOMA**, Yenagoa

The Minister of Works and Housing, Mr Babatunde Fashola, will on Thursday flag off the construction of the Nembe-Brass Road Project in Bayelsa State.

The long-awaited project, which had been on the drawing board of the federal government

for decades, is being undertaken by Governor Douye Diri's administration in the state and has awarded its construction to Setraco Nigeria Limited. The first phase covering a distance of 21 kilometres with 10 bridges is estimated at N54.1 billion.

Governor Diri said on Wednesday during the 79th state executive council meeting in Government House,

Yenagoa, that the project had a historic significance and economic importance to the state and the country.

Located on Brass Island is an oil export terminal operated by oil major, Nigerian Agip Oil Company(NAOC) as well as the ongoing Brass Fertilizer and Petrochemical Company Project.

The governor called on well-meaning sons and daughters of

the state as well as leaders of Bayelsa East Senatorial District to be present at the flag-off ceremony.

"Let me use this medium to invite and call on all of us from the Eastern Senatorial District, particularly communities in Nembe and Brass, as we kick-start the construction of this historic road project," he said.

## Sanwo-Olu appoints new LSDPC Executive Director

By **BLESSING OZIWO**

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has appointed Mr Adeniyi Nehemiah Aromolaran as the Executive Director, Enterprise Services, Lagos State Development and Property Corporation, (LSDPC).

Aromolaran is a Fellow and Council Member, Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM), a certified IFC/LPI sustainable and performance development facilitator/trainer.

He is an advocate and champion of national/public sector reforms, private sector self-leadership and people empowerment.

Aromolaran, a Finance and Banking graduate of the University of Lagos, has over 30 years experience.

He founded Nehemiah Resources Limited, an MSME consulting firm, to provide enterprise developmental support for start-ups across Africa.



Babatunde Fashola

# Sanwo-Olu flags-off reconstruction of Falomo Towers

Stories by **BLESSING OZIWO**

As the Lagos state government continues its major urban renewal projects, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has flagged off the reconstruction of Falomo Tower, which will restore the aesthetic landscape of the commercial suburb of Ikoyi in Lagos State.

This is happening after 10 years of debate on the property.

Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC) sealed a joint redevelopment partnership with Afriland Properties Plc, a private developer, to turn former Falomo Shopping Complex into a premium sky-high real estate that will enhance the socio-economic outlook of the neighbourhood.

Falomo Towers, being developed on 11,950 square metres of land, will offer a blend of green amenities that will promote quality living.

Afriland Properties Plc is a subsidiary of Heir Holdings, owned by Tony Elumelu, a foremost entrepreneur and banker.

Sanwo-Olu, at the sod-turning ceremony held at the project site, said the construction flag-off ended a decade-long discussion with the developer to revive the project and build iconic towers that would turn around the fallow land for the benefit of the public.

The Governor said the project was another milestone achieved by his administration to renew urban amenities, stressing that the strategic implementation of the Lagos Masterplan had been dependent on the Government's ability to forge a workable partnership between the public and private sectors.

"This is a phenomenal project that will bring back the lost ambience of Ikoyi. When this partnership was initiated 10 years ago, I was the Managing Director of LSDPC. It is interesting to note that we've all gone through arbitration but we didn't throw a wrong punch. We agreed this project must not be thrown away. Today we are making a transaction that is bigger and better than what was initially proposed 10 years ago.

He said: "This testifies to the uniqueness of public and private sectors in ensuring things can be made a lot better when we sit and agree. This is a clear example of what the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model is out to achieve when partnerships and collaborations are pursued and implemented with seriousness. When we put our minds of possibilities to ideas, great things happen. This aptly describes the story of today's flag-off of the construction of Falomo Towers".

Sanwo-Olu described Afriland Properties as a tested, trusted and reliable developer, saying the Corporation had found the right partner for the redevelopment project.

The Governor reiterated that the State Government would remain committed to ensuring the investors get full value for their investments while promising to continue to pursue business environment reforms, including automation of land and property records to scale up transparency

and efficiency that catalyse sustainable investments.

Elumelu said the partnership was another testimony to the Lagos State Government's belief in the private sector as a key development driver in the State, praising the Lagos political leadership for setting the pace of private sector inclusion in governance.

For surmounting obstacles that delayed the take-off of the partnership, Elumelu said Lagos remained the most hospitable environment to investors seeking a profitable return on their investments.

He said: "I commend Governor Sanwo-Olu and the political leaders of the State for believing in the private sector. What we are

witnessing today attests to their beliefs in the private sector as a driver of development in the State.

"For private sector to do well, the political leadership must create the right environment. Lagos has set the pace in this direction. This partnership is a celebration of dialogue and this makes Lagos remain the most hospitable environment for investors."

Ayodeji Joseph, CEO, LSDPC, said the project site evoked memories of a glorious past for Island dwellers in the 1970s, noting that the Corporation took an informed decision to turn around the site by building residential apartments to provide additional

accommodation to the growing middle class, business professionals and the swelling rank of young citizens.

"Over forty years down the line, the Corporation in its decision to renew some of its facilities has deemed it fit to redevelop the site of the shopping complex, taking into consideration the realities of today's needs as well as the environmental impact implications.

He added: "To achieve this purpose, we decided to mobilise finance from the private sector. This decision will free resources that could otherwise be tied down to this project, for other pressing needs. In addition, it will allow the project to benefit from the

competitive efficiencies for which the private sector is better known".

Chief Executive Officer of Afriland Properties, Mrs Uzo Oshogwe, noted that the redevelopment project was a revival of a landmark, saying: "With the project, we tend to give Ikoyi back its aesthetic landmark, creativity, beauty in the Lagos Skyline.

She said the iconic project would enhance and beautify Ikoyi skyline, adding that the partnership would be creating economic opportunities and social wealth that would transform the state and the country.

The project development is expected to be completed in December 2024.



Lagos ranked second worst city in the world

## FG to address 17 million housing deficit

### •FHA committed to housing provision

The federal government is leaving no stone unturned to address the estimated 17 million housing deficit in Nigeria

President Muhammadu Buhari is doing everything possible to reduce the housing deficit in the country before the end of his administration.

This assertion was made by the Managing Director and Chief Executive, Federal Housing Authority (FHA), and Chairman Board of Directors, FHA Mortgage Bank, Senator Gbenga Ashafa during the unveiling of Expressview Estate, a partnership between Federal Housing Authority Mortgage Bank (FHAMB) and Mixta Africa in Lugbe, Abuja.

Ashafa, who said there is no actual data on the housing deficit in Nigeria, noted that the Buhari administration has done a lot in delivering houses to both the low and the high income earners.

He said the data on housing

deficit in Nigeria do not always capture unoccupied houses, adding that housing projects like the one flagged off in Lugbe which is seating on a 1.5 hectare of land where 58 terrace flats would be built are not mostly captured.

The FHA MD said the agency has just completed about 300 houses in Zuba for the low income earners, adding that a lot of houses have been delivered to Nigerians within a short period.

Making reference to the position of the Minister of Works & Housing, Babatunde Fashola on the much touted figure, Senator Ashafa said: "What the Minister of Works and Housing have been saying right from the onset, was that we have not been able to come up with specific deficit figure.

However, if you look at the project we are embarking on now, are we going to count the units as part of the houses

in existence? What about the number of unoccupied houses everywhere, are we counting them?

"If you go round, you will see a lot of unoccupied houses, due to the cost put on them by the developers and the negative effect of the present economic realities".

"We know we have a lot of work to do but the Buhari administration is doing a lot to ensure that we reduce the number of Housing deficit in the country"

Also speaking, Hayatudeen Awwal, the Managing Director of the FHA Mortgage Bank said the partnership with Mixta Africa will transform the Expressview Estate in Lugbe.

"Any development in Lugbe along the road is for the Federal Housing Authority. Lugbe belongs to the federal housing authority. We delivered Gwarinpa, Karu, Maitama, Asokoro, Kubwa Estates and now we are here

"The entire project will be funded to deliver Houses with ease. We carefully selected the partners. We would have commissioned the project but the mask on the plot of land delayed the process," Awwal said.

On her part, Sade Hughes, the Country Director, Mixta Africa, said the developer has been leading the development of Africa, adding that it decided to expand its business to Abuja in partnership with FHA Mortgage Bank.

In his remarks, Ugochukwu Ndubuisi, Mixta's Executive Director of legal and corporate services said the partnership was a welcome development as Mixta Africa takes pride in building communities.

"We have built properties in Lagos and Port Harcourt and now, we are in Abuja and we will use the Expressview Estate project in Lugbe to showcase our capability. We will complete this project on time and move to other ones," Ndubuisi said.

## ICPC speaks on raid of alleged ex-COAS Buratai's Abuja property



Buratai

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has cleared the air on an alleged raid of an Abuja property belonging to former Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Buratai, where over a billion Naira, luxury wristwatches, and some vehicles were said to have been recovered.

It was reported that operatives of the ICPC last week conducted a raid on the said property following a tipped-off about the cash haul by the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) during a probe of a man identified as Kabiru Sallau.

"NFIU discovered that N500 million was paid into Sallau's account at once and quickly flagged it.

"When Sallau was queried, he said he was a military contractor, but he was unable to show any evidence of carrying

out any contract for the military," a source told newsmen.

The source added that subsequently, the NFIU transferred the matter to ICPC, which deployed its operatives to conduct additional investigations and it was reported that an estimated N1.85 billion was recovered among other valuables during the raid.

The property in Abuja was thereafter linked to who was said to have quickly left his diplomatic base in the Benin Republic to resolve the matter, leading to the release of Sallau.

"We discovered that the place is owned by Buratai and he has been working with the man to loot military funds for many years. It is unfortunate that Nigerian soldiers are suffering at the war front due to lack of equipment," another source stated.

Reacting on Friday, the spokesperson of ICPC, Azuka Ogugua confirmed that ICPC operatives raided a property in

Wuse 2 of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, on Thursday, 16th June 2022 in suspicion of money laundering.

Ogugua did not mention if the property belongs to the former COAS. She, however, said the property is owned by the owner of K Salam Construction Company, a military contractor.

According to her, cash amounting to N175,706,500 and \$220,965, as well as G-Wagon, 2022 editions of BMW and Mercedes Benz cars, customized mobile phones, and several designer wrist watches, which include three Rolexes, and some property documents were recovered during the raid.

Ogugua said, "The Commission wishes to state that ICPC operatives raided a property in Wuse 2 of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, on Thursday, 16th June 2022 between 5:00 pm and 12:00 am in suspicion of money laundering. Facts available for the time being indicates that the property is owned by the owner of K Salam Construction Company, a military contractor.

"The Commission recovered money and other items from the property viz. N175,706,500; \$220,965; G-Wagon; 2022 editions of BMW and Mercedes Benz cars; customized mobile phones; several designer wrist watches, including three Rolexes, and some property documents.

"The Commission arrested the Managing Director of K Salam Construction Company Nigeria Limited, Mr Kabiru Sallau, and the investigation is ongoing," Ogugua stated.

She added that the Commission is yet to conclude its investigation, as such would prefer not to preempt its outcome and also avoid the frenzy of a media trial.

## SEC's staff arraigned for N4.4m contract fraud

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

A staff of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Mr Nelson Oleghe, has been docked by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) for allegedly receiving N4.4 million in kickbacks from contractors.

The Commission in an 8-count charge filed before Justice M A. Madugu of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court, sitting in Bwari, Abuja, accused Oleghe of abuse of office and conferring undue advantage on himself.

Oleghe was alleged to have had a private interest in contracts awarded to Del-Fingers Nigeria Limited and Aismozz Ventures by SEC, thereby committing an offence contrary to and punishable under Sections 12 and 19 of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000.

According to one of the charges, Mr Oleghe was alleged to have conferred undue advantage upon himself when he and one Oviola Lawrence received the sum of N4,410,000 from the contract sum that was paid by SEC to Del-Fingers Nigeria Limited for the provision of two

billboards for the Commission.

The accused pleaded not guilty when all the charges were read to him.

Counsel to the defendant applied for bail which was not opposed by the counsels to ICPC, Peace Arocha, and Hamza Sani.

Justice Madugu in his ruling granted the accused bail with two sureties who must present their passport photographs, evidence of tax clearance for the last three years, and the sum of N500,000 each.

The trial judge further ruled that the accused must also submit his international passport to the court registrar.

## N25.7bn Fraud: Appeal Court affirms conviction of Ex-Bank PHB MD, CFO

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

A three-man panel of the Court of Appeal, Lagos Division, on Thursday, June 23, 2022, upheld the conviction of a former Managing Director of the defunct Bank PHB Plc, Francis Atuche, as well as the bank's former Chief Financial Officer, Ugo Anyanwu.

Atuche and his co-convict, Anyanwu, had approached the appellate court to set aside their conviction by Justice Lateefa Okunnu of the Lagos State High Court sitting in Ikeja, Lagos on June 16, 2021, over a N25.7 billion fraud.

The panel, comprising Justices Sadiq Umar, Adebukola Banjoko, and Kayode Bada, resolved all the issues in the appeal in favour of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) except the sentencing.

The Appellate Court clarified that when calculated consecutively, Atuche's jail term was 12 years concurrently, rather than the 120 years that was handed down by the lower court.

Also, the panel reduced Anyanwu's jail term from 10 years to eight years and affirmed the discharge and acquittal of Atuche's wife, Elizabeth.

In an abridged ruling read by Justice Umar, the three-man panel upheld the EFCC's arguments and unanimously dismissed the appeal.

It would be recalled that in 2021, Justice Okunnu, while sentencing Atuche and Anyanwu, had upheld the arguments of the prosecution counsel, Kemi Pinheiro, SAN.

Prior to the judgment, the defendants had approached the Court of Appeal, to challenge their trial by the lower court for lack of jurisdiction about three years after their arraignment by the EFCC in 2011.

In a judgment delivered in September 2016, the Appeal Court ordered Justice Okunnu to hands-off the trial but did not quash the number of counts against the defendants.

Consequently, the EFCC approached the Supreme Court to set aside the judgment and order a trial in the matter.

In its judgment, the apex court directed that the case be returned to Justice Okunnu for a continuation of trial. While the trial lasted, Pinheiro opposed Atuche's contention that the funds in dispute were loaned and not stolen.

Delivering judgment, Justice Okunnu had held that "The first and third defendants did not debunk the evidence of the prosecution that the loans were used to purchase shares. They rather contended that the monies granted as the loan could be used for whatever purposes."

The trial court, therefore, sentenced Atuche and Anyanwu but acquitted Atuche's wife.

## ICPC sensitises NDIC's management, staff on Corruption

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

To create awareness and reduce incidences of corruption in the public sector, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) recently sensitised the management and staff of the Enugu State office of Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) on ICPC initiatives and charged them to put in place corruption prevention mechanisms.

Speaking at an event organised by the ICPC Enugu State office, the Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner (RACC) in the state, Mr Kennedy Ebotemen, delivered a lecture on the theme, "Corruption-Prone Procedures: The Role of ICPC in the Fight against Corruption", called for more stringent internal control mechanisms against corrupt practices.

"Prevention, as often said, is better than cure. When we tighten the internal control mechanisms in our systems, put supervisory checks on our officers on the field and office, and sermonize this issue of transparency, live and walk our talk, then we will discover that officers will fall in line and work as a family, good team players and in the end, achieve our mandates," he said.

Mr Ebotemen listed some of the achievements of the Commission in corruption prevention as the tracking of over 400 constituency and executive projects

worth over N3 billion and compelling 326 contractors who had abandoned projects to return to site. He added that the Commission through its system study initiative saved the country about N261 billion from being diverted.

The Commissioner further informed the participants of the punishments accorded to every offence committed against the provisions of the ICPC Act, 2000, and warned participants not to engage in any illicit acts.

In her goodwill remarks, the Zonal Controller, NDIC, Enugu state office, Ms Stella E. Henshaw, commended the Commission for their efforts at ensuring that Nigeria was set free from all forms of corruption and corrupt practices.

Henshaw further stated that the programme would create awareness on corruption in the public sector.



Prof Owasanoye

## Even if the pay is high, I can't kiss in a movie-Kiekie

*Oluwabukunmi Oyebisi Adeaga-Ilori, popularly known as Kiekie, is a show host, skit maker, influencer and all-round entertainment personality, she carved a niche for herself with her unique and lively delivery off and on screen. In this chat with OMONIYI ALLI, Kiekie spoke about her life as an entertainer, why she would reject a kissing role, growing up amongst other sundry issues*

**Q: You have excelled well with skit making, what was the transition like into full length movie?**

**A:** Interestingly, the transition for me was smooth and I give all glory to God because from the skits, a lot of movie directors could see an actor and tell what a person can do. From the skits, the directors saw what I could do and the scripts started coming in. It was a very smooth transition for me, I didn't have to struggle for it or fight for it. They just knew that I could act and they called me to come and do it and I'm enjoying it.

**Q: How did you develop this interesting character?**

**A:** I can't explain it. Five years ago, I didn't think I would be an actor or skit maker. It was Mr Macaroni that asked me to come and do some skits but I always said I was not around. He said I should do it and it would be nice and I did it and it was nice. Other people started calling me and we did a sequel. We had about six or eight skits together and everything was just going viral. Everyone kept asking who this girl is and my close friend Mr Macaroni kept telling me you have to do your own and make your own money. I started doing it and everybody loved me. From there the movie directors came, FilmOne came and they started giving me roles. God gave me new talent.

**Q: Are there moments you have to reject scripts?**

**A:** Of course. I don't like scripts that are too explicit, that involve kissing, bed and other things. Personally, that's a part of me that I'm not ready to let go. Everybody has limits and restrictions.

**Q: Does that have to do with you being married?**

**A:** Even before I got married, I was a brand influencer and some brands wanted me to do some things and I said no. Personally, I don't think my body is for my husband. My body is the temple of the lord and I must honour it in a way that I believe or deem fit. I can't do beyond, outside or inside. For instance, I have a scene with Lateef Adedimeji where we are under the duvet but we didn't do anything. Don't get me wrong, I can act make-believe scenes, but the kissing is what I can't do even if the money is high.

**Q: What is your style in fashion?**

**A:** That's another of my talents. I think style is all about knowing what suits you and what you are comfortable in. Fashion is pain; I agree, however in that pain, there must be pleasure. I want to look good all of the time. The dress code today says epic and dangerous. I can't do dangerous because I don't want anything red or wild so I just went for what epic means. To me epic means cultural and I went the cultural way instead of the traditional way.

**Q: Skit making is gradually taken over the entertainment space; what is your take on this?**



**A:** The space is getting bigger and recently AMVCA just introduced a new category that allows people like me to have an AMVCA nomination. It makes me feel good. There is nobody who is doing something that people appreciate who will not be happy. People are beginning to commercialize the space; they think that it's joblessness. Some of us work hard and spend millions on production. We work with a full production crew; cameramen, sound, light; it's not a joke. Now people understand that we are not playing around and that is why now I'm delighted to categorize myself as a skit maker.

**Q: Describe the Kiekie personality in three words?**

**A:** Crazy, Open and Fashionable

**Q: If you have the power to change something in Nigeria right now, what would that be?**

**A:** Most definitely the entire government; I will change the old government and bring new ones. But I don't know where to find the new government.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your educational background?**

**A:** I went to school a lot. My background is Fashion Designing, with qualifications from London College of Fashion. I hold other certifications which include a B.Sc. in Mass Communications from Bowen University and Masters in Internet and Digital Marketing from London School of Business and Finance.

**Q: What was growing up like for you?**

**A:** Growing up was fun. I am the last born of four and they use to make jest of me that when they were struggling in my house, they had not given birth to me. I have such a great relationship with my dad because my mom went to Saudi

Arabia while I was a baby so I had my dad with me all of the time. My mom is my role model, she's a business mogul. When it comes to business, she's the one that teaches me about business.

My dad is the President General for all Ibadan indigenes so when it comes to Yoruba and cultural things, I am attached. Every time I travel, I wear Ankara and people are chasing me and saying the lady in Ankara. When I was graduating from Fashion College, half of my collection was Ankara and that was how I topped my class because half of my supervisors had never seen those fabrics before in their entire lives. What we have is rich. The shoe I'm wearing today is Dolce and Gabbana and half of it is Damask. I bought it like this. Christian Dior has a full collection in Ankara but Nigeria as a country has not trademarked Ankara. The Scottish fabric is trademarked; any brand cannot go international with that fabric



## Uti Nwachukwu to host 'The Real Housewives of Lagos' Reunion

Showmax has announced media personality, Uti Nwachukwu, as the host for the Reunion of its hit reality show, The Real Housewives of Lagos (RHOLagos) which is set to air on the 1st and 8th of July, 2022.

The Real Housewives of Lagos follows the opulent lives of six of the most glamorous women in Lagos, Nigeria. The women include Carolyna Hutchings, Laura Ikeji-Kanu, Chioma Ikokwu, Toyin Lawani-Adebayo, Iyabo Ojo, and Mariam Timmer.

The show has been entertaining and explosive with the official hashtag #RHOLagos making a constant appearance on the Twitter trend table every week. The cast members also make the trend tables with their individual names trending all day long. The first episode of the show also broke the record for the most first-day views on Showmax Nigeria.

Two notable explosive moments from the season occurred during the fight between

Laura and Carolyna and the fight between Chioma and Carolyna. The latter fight was one the audience did not see coming as the two women had been best of friends until that moment. There was also the off-camera fight between Carolyna and Iyabo which left fans with a lot of questions.

The RHOLagos reunion will see all six ladies sit down to speak to issues that occurred on the show, and situations that also happened outside of the cameras, with Uti moderating the session and drilling in for all the juicy details.

Speaking on the announcement, Uti Nwachukwu said, "The Real Housewives of Lagos has been a huge part of my Fridays since it premiered and I'm so excited to be able to sit down with the amazing cast to talk about the show. Being a lover of reality TV and also an ex-participant of a reality show myself, this feels like home and I will definitely be having a good time speaking to the ladies at this reunion."



Candice Fanguero, Head of Content at Showmax Africa added, "The first season of The Real Housewives of Lagos has been really exciting. The decision to have Uti host the reunion was just perfect as he is a product and lover of reality TV and has the right energy to anchor the show."

### Bisola Aiyeola returns as 'Shoot Your Shot' host

Following a successful first season, MultiChoice Nigeria and Africa Magic have announced the return of the dating reality show, Shoot Your Shot. The show will premiere its second season tomorrow, Sunday, 19 June 2022, on Africa Magic Showcase, DStv channel 151, with Bisola Aiyeola returning as host.

The former BBNaija housemate and AMVCA winner will attempt to match two potential lovers by setting up dates for them to take their relationships to the next level, all while serving us belly laughs, thrills, drama, and memorable moments.

Commenting on the new season, Dr Busola Tejumola, Executive Head, Content and West Africa Channels at MultiChoice Nigeria, said, "We're excited to bring back Shoot Your Shot for a second season. The debut season was very well received, so it's only right that we give our viewers a second season that will excite and entertain them. Our team has worked painstakingly behind the scenes to ensure that this new season not only lives up to but surpasses the entertainment in the previous one, and we absolutely can't wait for our viewers to see it."

### Kizz Daniel releases anticipated 'Bugá' video

Charismatic, talented and award-winning singer and songwriter Kizz Daniel has unveiled incredibly mesmerizing visuals to the smash-hit track and world #1 shazamed tune, "BUGA" featuring Tekno Miles.

The massive hit that got heads of governments in Africa and beyond, among millions of Kizz Daniel fans around the world, grooving to this infectious new anthem is further celebrated in a cascade

of vivacious colours that do justice to the monster hit. Resplendent in colours that primarily celebrate the motherland and bursting with energy from all the characters displayed in these addictive visuals, BUGA the visuals — are what we dreamed of and more.

Where Kizz Daniel's enigmatic presence is undeniable, Tekno brings his original sway which lends an animated personality to an already perfected artwork. This

genius-of-an-artist, Kizz Daniel has stolen our hearts with these visuals and taken us on emotional tourism where everything is rosy, happy and animated.

Directed by TG Omori and shot on locations in Lagos and Abuja, these visuals are all about clean angles and smooth lines, with its visual frames like mini universes of sound and poetry that help us find our way with this beautiful message and music.



### Trendupp Awards 2022: Lasisi Elenu, Kiekie, Aproko Doctor others emerge winners



Instagram sensation Mr Macaroni, Miss Techy, Lasisi Elenu, Kiekie, Aproko Doctor, Pamilerin Adegoke, Enioluwa, Jamesbrown, Mark Angel, Tunde Onakoya, Amazing Klef and Akinfaminu have all emerged as winners at the second edition of Trendupp Awards - Nigeria's first-ever awards for influencers and content creators at an august event held at The Monarch Event Centre, Lagos, Nigeria.

Hosted by Bukunmi Adeaga Ilori fondly known as Kiekie; this year's edition was aimed at recognizing and applauding the outstanding work of influencers, content creators, brands and organisations in Nigeria for their immense contribution to the social media space and encouraging these audacious

individuals and organizations.

All sixteen winners across each category were not only presented with their gold statuettes but also received cash prizes of \$1000 each, while the winner of the Emerging Force category (the only voting category), ShankComics received a cash prize of \$1,500 all courtesy of the event's headline sponsor Chipper Cash App, one of the world's leading financial service providers, as the brand's support to the craft of these leading influencers and content creators in Nigeria. The most coveted award of the night, the "Force of Influence" was clinched by Mr Macaroni making him the influencer with the highest influence in the Nigerian social media space.

Speaking at the ceremony Tiwalola Olanubi, Jnr. CEO, Trendupp Africa, said the awards was created to recognise and celebrate the efforts influencers and content creators put into their craft.

"At Trendupp, 2 years ago we saw the confidence, fearlessness, commitment and creativity Nigerians were putting into the content they shared and we were truly inspired. So, we started building Trendupp; a platform designed to reward them faster and better for their craft, but as we did that, we also noticed another void—they were not getting their FLOWERS, they needed to be celebrated...and that's why we are here at Nigeria's first-ever award for Influencers and content creators - Trendupp Awards," he said.



## Beach AFCON 2022: Nigeria tackle Libya in qualifiers

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

**N**igeria's Super Sand Eagles have been scheduled to play Libya in two-legged qualifying fixtures to join host Mozambique in the finals of the 2022 Beach Sand African Cup of Nations (AFCON).

The draws held in Maputo, Mozambique, and released on Friday by the Confederation of African Football (CAF), saw fourteen African countries fixed to battle for 7 spaces in the Beach football continental tourney.

Following the draws to complete the eight-team AFCON event alongside Mozambique, Sand Eagles will travel to North Africa to confront Libya in the first leg of the qualifiers while Cote d'Ivoire host Morocco with defending



champions Senegal locking horns with Cameroon.

CAF noted that the first match will take place next month from July 22 to 24 with Ghana and Seychelles hosting Egypt and Madagascar respectively.

According to the continental football governing body, 'Nigeria will be eager to make their comeback to the fantastic tournament'

having missed the last edition.

The 2022 Beach Soccer AFCON has been slated for Mozambique from 21 to 30 October.

Meanwhile, the last time the two-time AFCON champions clashed with the Libyans in 2018, they plummeted the North African country 6-3 with Abu Azeez and Emeka Ogbonna, registering a

brace while Emmanuel Ohwoferia and Suleiman Ogodo netting one each.

### BEACH SOCCER AFCON QUALIFYING FIXTURES

Seychelles vs Madagascar  
Comoros vs Uganda  
Malawi vs Tanzania  
Libya vs Nigeria  
Côte d'Ivoire vs Morocco  
Cameroon vs Senegal  
Ghana vs Egypt

## Buhari rescinds 2-year-ban on basketball

The federal government of Nigeria has rescinded its decision banning the nation for two years from all international basketball competitions following the factional crises bedeviling the basketball federation.

President Muhammadu Buhari had on May 12, ban the nation to condone the excesses of the factional leadership melee that has crippled the sport in the country.

In a statement released on Thursday by the sports ministry, it noted that interventions by stakeholders and an appeal letter from Musa Kida on behalf of the Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF) necessitated the revocation.

According to the ministry, Kida apologised for all the embarrassment the federation's imbroglio may have caused the nation in the letter dated June 17, 2022, appealing to the President to rescind his decision.

The statement read

in part: "Following the intervention by concerned stakeholders, former Nigerian International basketballers, well-meaning Nigerians and a letter of appeal by Musa Kida on behalf of the board of the Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF), the decision of the Federal Government to withdraw from international basketball for two years has been rescinded.

However, the sports ministry confirmed that the President's change of decision was further necessitated by the assurance given by the federation to "set in motion the process of the NBBF Statutes review, and the reconciliation of all contending and aggrieved parties both home and abroad as well as committing to work in tandem with the Ministry".

Nevertheless, the ministry also stated that Buhari considered the love of Nigerians for sports in the spirit of national interest.

## Brighton want Moses Simon in England

Nantes forward Moses Simon has caught the attention of Premier League club, Brighton and Hove Albion which need to bolster their attack for next season.

The Super Eagle joined the French side from Spanish Levante and won the French Cup last season.

Reportedly, the Seagulls are amazed at the player's profile and believe he can support the club process their Premier League campaign.

According to reports from France, the Super Eagle, who still has a contract with Nantes, also commands interest from Ligue 1 clubs, Nice and Marseille

respectively.

The report noted that Brighton manager Graham Potter and his crew will continue negotiating with Nantes to officially sign the Super Eagle to the English Premier League.

However, the report disclosed that Newcastle United had previously indicated an interest in snapping the player to England but have made a quick turn towards Leverkusen's Moussa Diaby.

Simon joined the Canaries permanently antepenultimate seasons ago after a season-long loan spell and netted six goals last season from



34 appearances in all competitions while lifting the Coupe de France.

More so, Nantes President Waldemar Kita, willing to do a deal with the English side, has pegged the asking price

for Moses at about €10m - €15m but reportedly, Seagulls are not deterred as they look to find a replacement for Yves Bissouma, who recently switched to Tottenham Hotspur.

## Enyimba's Victor Mbaoma joins Algeria's MC d'Alger

Enyimba Football Club striker, Victor Mbaoma, has signed two years contract with Mouloudia Club d'Alger, a North African club in the Algerian league topflight division.

Mbaoma, who got his first call up to the Super Eagles under Coach Jose Peseiro and a joint top scorer in the Nigeria Professionals Football League (NPFL) this season, joined the club on a free transfer.

The player has scored 16 goals this season in 28 appearances with one assist which has complemented

the Peoples' Elephant surge towards qualifying for a continental tourney.

Although the 25-year-old was left out of the Super Eagles squad that recorded a historic win against Sao Tome and Principe in Morocco, the move to the Algerian league will, however, boast a possible recall to the national side.

In a statement by Enyimba striker, who will be linking up with his new teammates next month, he claimed that the deal reveals the quality embedded in him and added that it is a dream cum reality.

The former Akwa United centre-forward, who scored 1 goal in 5 appearances for the Ibom side before switching to Remo Stars, stressed that an avenue has been created to get to his next career level.

"It feels great [joining MC Oran]. I feel this is the best chance for me to express the quality in me," Mbaoma declared.

"It is a dream move and it came at the right time. I will use this opportunity to get to the next height of my career. Joining this great club, their style of play will help me grow.

"This is a great opportunity for me and I can't wait to compete in front of the fans in MC Oran," the striker added.

Remarkably, the Enyimba striker got his first call-up to the senior men's national football team in 2022 when Jose Peseiro listed him for two international friendly matches against CONCACAF giants Mexico and Ecuador in the United States on May 29 and June 3 respectively.

Reportedly, Mbaoma was subject to interest from Mouloudia Club Oranais, another Algerian club and Egyptian club Zamalek.

## Assault: Kano Pillars chairman suspended indefinitely

Football Club Owners of Nigeria (Club Owners) have handed an indefinite suspension to the Chairman of Kano Pillars, Alhaji Yahaya Surajo, for assaulting the Assistant Referee 1 (AR1) during the rescheduled NPFL matchday 31 fixture with Dakkada FC in Kano.

The incident which happened on Thursday, saw Surajo assaulting the AR1 in a footage that was sent to the association.

In a statement condemning the shameful act capable of tarnishing the image its image, the Executive Secretary, Alloy Chukwuemeka, underlined that Surajo's actions contravene the dictates and everything the association stands for.

According to Chukwuemeka, the Club Owners comprise members of noble value, character and discipline, who have made their mark in various fields.

"The Club Owners have therefore placed the Yahaya Surajo on indefinite suspension from all activities of the Association forthwith pending the outcome of a detailed investigation into the unfortunate incident." the statement read.

"Club Owners comprises astute football Administrators who have distinguished themselves in several fields of human endeavours with

the expected high level of discipline in the management of their various clubs, hence the action of Surajo did not represent his status as a member of the Association," it added.

Furthermore, the association stressed that the incident is very unfortunate having had stakeholders meeting with the League Management Company (LMC) where a lot of key issues that protect the dignity of the Nigeria Professionals Football League were discussed recently.

The Club Owners stated that President Barrister Isaac Danladi has directed the immediate constitution of a disciplinary committee where Alhaji Surajo would answer to his care before he can be readmitted into the association.



## Transfer slack: Ronaldo considers United's exit

Manchester United forward Cristiano Ronaldo is considering quitting Old Trafford due to the failure of the management to bring in new signings to the club.

The 37-year-old is bordered and expects the club and the new manager Erik ten Hag to exploit the summer transfer window to bolster the squad before the new season begins.

In a report by a Portuguese media, Record, Ronaldo has told his close circle if Manchester United are unwilling to do something tangible in the transfer window he would quit.

This is the second England spell of the player, who scored 24 goals in 37 appearances for the club last season.

With links reportedly

stating that the five-time Ballon d'Or winner could move to Italy with Juventus his probable destination, Ronaldo stressed that there is a need to take the club back to the glory days.

However, Ronaldo is confident that Ten Hag can make history with the club judging by his antecedents with Ajax.

According to the former Real Madrid forward, the Dutch coach needs all the support and time to usher his style of play which if successful, everybody takes the glory.

"What I know about him is he did a fantastic job for Ajax, that he's an experienced coach. But we need to give him time," Ronaldo told United.

"Things need to change the way he wants. I hope we have success, of course, because,



if you have success, all of Manchester is going to have success as well. I wish him the best," he added.

The Portuguese return to England after 12 years saw him win the United's famous Sir Matt Busby Player of the Year award last season.

Meanwhile, reports from Spain say Bayern Munich will

swoop on the player should Robert Lewandowski joins Barcelona who tendered a £40m bid on Thursday.

Although Bavarians are adamant about allowing the Pole to leave Allianz Arena, the club has pencilled Ronaldo as a prime target should their top striker leave for Camp Nou.

## Why Zidane rejects Premier League jobs

France legend Zinedine Zidane was tipped to replace Ole Gunnar Solskjaer in Manchester United last season after the club dismissed the latter in November last year for failure to deliver good results in the English Premier League.

Zidane, who coached Madrid on two occasions was among the candidates listed to take back Manchester United to the glory days.

Following the 1998 World Cup winner's refusal to show interest in the vacant position created by Solskjaer's dismissal, United opted to bring in German Ralf Rangnick in the interim to manage the squad until the end of the season.

All the while, spectators and pundits have been perplexed while Zidane had refused to show interest



to coach one of the world's biggest clubs with a rich football history but recently, an interview granted to a Spanish media by former Los Blancos boss has given insight to the reason.

According to Marca, Zidane said he understands English but does not speak fluently which he explains is one of his prerequisites in managing

a team.

He added that some managers do accept coaching jobs despite being deficient in a particular lingua franca but he is opposed to it.

"Would I want to go to Manchester [United]? I understand English, but I'm not completely fluent in it," Zidane said.

"I know that there are

coaches, who go to clubs without speaking the language, but I work in a different way.

"Many elements come into play in order to win, it is a global context. I know what I need to win," he posited.

Meanwhile, reports have it that France's legendary midfielder is a strong candidate to replace Argentine Mauricio Pochettino, who would be dismissed this month by Paris Saint-Germain.

According to the reports, France President Emmanuel Macron wants Zidane to coach in the Ligue 1 but never stated which French topflight club he prefers the France legend coaches.

President Macron is a fan of Marseille, a rival club to Parc Des Princes but Zizou, who was born in Marseille, has been strongly linked to replace the former Tottenham boss.

## India 2022: Flamingos play Germany, Chile and New Zealand in group stage

Nigeria's U17 girls, Flamingos, have been placed in Group B of this year's FIFA U17 Women's World Cup finals in India, alongside women's football powerhouse Germany, Chile and New Zealand.

At the draw ceremony done on Friday by FIFA in Zurich, Switzerland, hosts India are in Group A with powerhouses United States of America and Brazil, as well as African representatives Morocco. Cup holders Spain, Colombia, Mexico and China make up Group C while Group D has Japan, Tanzania, Canada and France.

India and the United States of America will

kick off the tournament officially inside the Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar at 8pm India time on Tuesday, 11th October.

The Flamingos, who missed the last tournament in Uruguay in 2018, will have a great re-integration party as they confront Germany at 8pm India time on Tuesday, 11th October (same time as the opening match) at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Goa.

Nigeria's other matches are against New Zealand on 14th October (4.30pm) also at the Nehru Stadium in Goa, and against Chile at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on 17th October (4.30pm).



## Costa Rica 2022: Danjuma invites 30 to Falconets' camp

Head Coach Chris Danjuma has invited 30 players to the camp of Nigeria's U20 girls, Falconets, to kick off preparations for this year's FIFA U20 Women's World Cup finals in Costa Rica.

Nigeria has never missed a FIFA U20 Women's Championship since the competition began as an U19 Championship in Canada 20 years ago, and will play France, Canada and Korea Republic in Group C of this year's tournament scheduled for Costa Rica, 10th - 28th August.

All invited players are to report at the Chida Hotel, Abuja on Sunday, 26th June.

The Falconets overcame the challenges of Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Senegal to qualify for the World Cup, at which they have been runners-up twice

(2010 and 2014) and reached the semi finals in 2012.

### ALL THE INVITED PLAYERS

**Goalkeepers:** Nelly Ekeh; Monle Oyono; Inyene Etim; Peace Obidinma

**Defenders:** Oluwatosin Demehin; Omowunmi Oshobukola; Rofiat Imuran; Jumoke Alani; Motunrayo Ezekiel; Rihanat Kasali; Oluwabanmi Oladeji; Oluchi Ohaegbulem

**Midfielders:** Bashirat Amoo; Esther Onyenezide; Adoo Yina; Chidinma Ogbuchi; Chinyere Kalu; Amarachi Odoma; Chioma Olise; Favour Emmanuel; Deborah Ajibola

**Forwards:** Joy Jerry; Mercy Idoko; Flourish Sebastine; Taiwo Lawal; Precious Vincent; Blessing Okpe; Juliet Adebawale; Joy Omewa; Chiamaka Okwuchukwu

## Morocco 2022: Waldrum picks Ebi, Oshoala, Plumtre and 22 others

Head Coach Randy Waldrum has picked Captain Onome Ebi and 24 other players to represent Nigeria at the 12th Women Africa Cup of Nations taking place in Morocco from 2nd to 23rd July.

The list of the nine-time champions is an interesting mix of the old guard and new blood, with veterans Tochukwu Oluehi, Ebi, Rita Chikwelu, Osinachi Ohale, Francisca Ordega and Ngozi Okobi-Okeoghene on board, as well as defenders Ashleigh Plumtre, Nicole Payne and Michelle Alozie,

midfielder Regina Otu and forwards Vivian Ikechukwu, Gift Monday and Ifeoma Onumonu.

Dropped from the contingent that made the camp in Abuja were goalkeeper Rita Akarekor, defenders Chidinma Okeke, Ngozi Emenayo and Opeyemi Sunday, midfielders Suliati Abideen, Amanda Uju Mbadi and Charity Adule, and forward Anam Imo.

The Super Falcons will confront South Africa's Banyana Banyana in their first match of the tournament on



Monday, 4th July before other games against Botswana (7th July) and Burundi (10th July).

All four semi finalists at the championship in Morocco will qualify to

represent Africa at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

The Falcons' contingent will depart Nigeria for Morocco on Monday, 27th June.





## Nigeria win WAFU B U17 Championship

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

A few weeks after claiming the WAFU B U20 Championship, Nigeria again underscored her undoubted strength in youth football when she swept to the U17 title in the region, as five-time world champions Golden Eaglets edged the Young Stallions of Burkina Faso 2-1 on Friday's final at the Cape Coast Stadium in Ghana.

Forward Abubakar Abdullahi had threatened the Burkinabe rear as early as the 8th minute when his low drive streamed away from goal, but in the 22nd minute, he rose highest in the box to powerfully nod Emmanuel Michael's perfect delivery into the net for Nigeria's first goal.

In the 34th minute, Abdullahi missed a golden opportunity to make it two for himself and for Nigeria, but he fluffed his lines, allowing the Stallions a respite. The miss would knock hard seven minutes later, when Abdulramane Ouedraogo, also with a header, equalized for Burkina Faso.

Two minutes into the second half, Abdullahi got his second and Nigeria's second, taking the Golden Eaglets to a 2-1 lead. However, 12 minutes later, he should have made it a hat-trick and Nigeria's third but he lost the opportunity.

That loss could once more have proved costly, as the Stallions broke forward, only to see Nigeria goalkeeper Richard Odoh come up with a magnificent save.

In the 67th minute, Ebube Okeke rocked the crossbar from 25 yards, but there



were to be no more goals and Nigeria collected a second regional diadem at youth level five weeks after the U20 boys defeated neighbours Benin Republic in the final to win the WAFU B competition in Niger Republic.

Nigeria goalkeeper Richard Odoh was selected as the Man-of-the-Match. His compatriot Emmanuel Michael won the prize in all three previous matches against Ghana, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire.

### 'Orient grassroots athletes on sexual harassment, anti-doping'

President of Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC), Habu Gumel, has called on the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and Nigeria Athletes Commission (NAC) to orient grassroots' athletes on sexual harassment and anti-doping.

Gumel made this statement on Tuesday, June 21 in a two-day seminar organised by the Nigeria Athletes Commission in the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

According to him, having highlighted the importance of the initiative to the growth and performance of Nigerian Athletes on the international stage, he opined that much concentration should be given to the grassroots athletes.

The NOC President, represented by the former Director of Grassroots Sports Development, Ademola Are, said he is aware several athletes are unable to speak after being sexually harassed because of fear of being ostracised from the team.

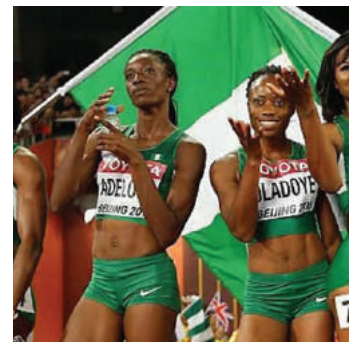
"It's high time the necessary authority bring more enlightenment for them, especially from grassroots; most of them, the elite athletes, are aware of this," Gumel said.

"We found out that when athletes are harassed and sexually abused, they are unable to talk because of being intimidated. They are afraid of being dropped from taking part in the sports Programmes or activities," NOC President added.

Furthermore, Gumel asseverated that there is need to return to the grassroots which is the building block in athletics to set up a formidable foundation for future benefits.

"We need to go back to the grassroots levels because it's very important to lay that solid foundation to secure their future in the sports and the career they choose," he said.

The seminar started on Monday, June 20 and ended on Tuesday, according to NAN.



## Taiwo Awoniyi's return to England

Super Eagle striker Taiwo Awoniyi is set to undergo medical to join Nottingham Forest which recently gained promotion to England's top-flight division.

The Forest gained promotion last season in a play-off against Sheffield United and have turned attention to Awoniyi, who was at the forefront of Union Berlin's attack last season.

According to reports from England and Germany,

Nottingham Forest agreed on a deal worth £17.5m to bring the Super Eagle who scored 15 goals in 31 Bundesliga appearances last season.

If he completes the medical and finalises the move to England, it will be a homecoming after one year of leaving Liverpool permanently to join Union Berlin in Germany.

The Super Eagle started his senior career in 2015 after he

joined Liverpool but never featured for the Reds before he was sent on loan to FSV Frankfurt where he scored his first goal.

After the 24-years-old ended his spell in Germany, the Merseyside club sent him to Belgium where he featured for NEC, Mouscron, and Gent in successive seasons before returning to Germany to play for Mainz 05 which precedes Union Berlin's era.



## S'Eagles' AFCON snub, pointer to Basse's upswing

Rangers defender Calvin Basse said his surprised omission from the Super Eagles squad for the January Total Energies African Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Cameroon was instrumental to his upsurge in development.

The 22-year-old Scottish defender, who was very influential in Gers' defence this season and sprouted intermittently in both centre-back and left-back, has been a point of attraction for top European clubs looking to swoop in on the promising world star.

Reportedly, Basse surprised improvement happened during the

winter transfer period and since then, the player has helped Giovanni van Bronckhorst's side to the Europa League final where they lost 5-4 penalties to Eintracht Frankfurt at Ramón Sánchez Pizjuán, Seville.

Speaking with Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), the Super Eagle expressed his disappointment over his omission from the national squad and stressed that the act motivated him to work harder to improve on his game.

He stated that his improvement within the period earned him a call to the national team.

"Obviously it was very disappointing," said Basse.

"I knew I just needed to work harder and just try out my game and hopefully I'm guessing that's why I'm here.

"Hopefully I've done that and caught the coaches' eyes," he grinned.

The Nigeria international, who started his football career at CM Futsal Academy, joined Rangers from Leicester City two seasons ago and has earned 6 caps for the Nigeria Super Eagles where he made his debut in 2022.

The Gers' defender has featured in two positions at Ibrox, centre and left-wing backs but reiterates he plays anywhere he is assigned to and ensures he does his best at that.

He said, "I always get asked this but me, I just like to play football.

"So wherever the manager puts me, striker, I am going to go there and give everything I have got," Basse added.

The defender is under the radar of English Premier League club, Aston Villa, with former Rangers boss Steven Gerrard hovering around Ibrox to flick him away.