



Baba-Ahmed confirmed LP's VP pick, Tinubu to run with another Muslim

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JULY 9-10, 2022
VOL. 1 NO. 068

N250 **Weekend**

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Ram on display at Ipaja-Ayobo Ram Market, in Lagos



Some former and current governors and others during a visit to Nigeria's top political bride, Rivers State helmsman Nyesom Wike in Port Harcourt on Friday.

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Security strengthened for Eid-el-Kabir

By PAUL MICHAEL
(Abuja) and FRIDAY
OMOSOLA (Akure)

Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, has charged the leadership of all commands to beef up security and prevent any breach in their Areas of Responsibility (AoR) throughout the Eid-el-Kabir season and beyond.

Nigerian Muslims are joining others worldwide to mark Sallah.

Baba, in a statement signed by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, also assured the general public of the efforts of the police to improve safety and security across the country.

Insecurity has worsened across the country in the last few months with critical infrastructures and other major facilities such as worship centres, airports, security bases, schools and marketplaces among others, being targeted.

According to Adejobi, "The IGP equally charged Commissioners of Police (CPs) and Tactical Commanders in all the States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and their supervisory Assistant Inspectors General of Police (AIGs), to beef-up security ahead of the Eid-el-Kabir celebration, to prevent any untoward situation in their Areas of Responsibility (AoR) throughout the Eid-el-Kabir season and beyond."

He further stated that the IGP directed the supervisory AIGs and their respective CPs to ensure adequate deployment of officers and assets to prevent the occurrence of crimes and criminality, as well as build confidence amongst the citizens.

"The police boss charged officers and men of the Police to engage in critical assessment of threat prone areas, thorough stop and search, raids on black spots and other anti-crime strategies capable of sustaining peace and public safety in Nigeria.

"The IGP equally warned that personnel deployed must be professional and mindful of the fundamental rights of the citizens, and discharge their responsibilities with all sense of decorum and alertness," he stressed.

Congratulating the Muslim faithful on the occasion of Eid-el-Kabir celebration, the IGP enjoined them to celebrate and enjoy the beauty of the religious festivities while remaining security-conscious.

He equally urged them to report all suspicious individuals, movements, or activities to the police for prompt intervention. He admonished them to cooperate with operatives of security agencies deployed on

duty at strategic places for the Eid-el-Kabir celebrations.

Sokoto State Police Command assured residents of adequate security in worship centres, major highways and recreational centres during the Sallah celebrations.

State Commissioner of Police, CP Muhammed Usaini Gumel, gave the assurance in a press statement signed by the spokesperson of the Command, DSP Sanusi Abubakar, on Friday. He disclosed that security strategies in synergy with other security agencies have been revised.

"CP Muhammed Usaini Gumel FIPMA, psc wishes to assure members of the public that adequate provisions are being put in place to provide elaborate security to locations that include: worship centres, major highways, recreational centres, entry and exit routes and other strategic locations before, during and after the celebration to the people across the state.

"The police command is also mindful of the volume of human and vehicular traffic occasioned by the Sallah festival and advised members of the public to cooperate with policemen deployed for traffic control by police and the relevant security agencies deployed on duty to ease such traffic congestion in the city and other locations across the state," Abubakar said.

The command implored members of the public to be vigilant, watchful of their wards, and children and to report suspicious activities to 07068848035 for a prompt response.

In the same vein, CP Ari Muhammed Ali of the Delta State Command has assured all Muslim faithful in the State of a hitch-free Sallah celebration.

According to the Public Relations Officers of the Command, DSP Bright Edeafe, in a statement, Ali has ordered a massive deployment of officers to ensure adequate security across the State.

"The CP warns cultists and mischief makers to steer clear as the Command will deal decisively with anybody who is found wanting. To this end, the CP has ordered a massive deployment of personnel which includes special constabularies across the State for the purpose of providing adequate security in all Muslim prayer grounds and strategic locations in the State.

"The CP also directed all DPOS to intensify raids of criminal hideouts and black spots within their areas of responsibility. The CP adjured the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of operations, Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers, and Tactical Operations Officers to employ means of ensuring thorough supervision of personnel



IGP Alkali

deployed for the actualization of peace and tranquillity during and after the celebration," Edeafe said.

On a philosophical note, President Muhammadu Buhari on Friday, urged Nigerians to end the orgy of evil in the land, saying no amount of religious pretence could win the love of God, without genuinely practising the injunction of true love for humanity, which all faiths preach.

The President in his Eid-el-Kabir message to Nigerian Muslims and other citizens, while admonishing the people to put the interest of the country above selfish ones, said they must use religion as a motivation for the love of our common humanity.

His words: "If we are putting the teachings of our religions into practice, most of the evils afflicting our society would have been solved. Religion shouldn't just be used as a mere badge of identity, but as a motivator for doing good for our country and humanity.

"The exploitation of the people by traders and the stealing of public funds by civil servants and other holders of public trust is a reflection of the abandonment of the teachings of our religions.

"Our society is a bundle of contradictions. People display external religiosity without fear of God; they make life difficult for others; money becomes their god; leaders abandon their oaths of office by taking money meant for the welfare of the people and divert it to their private pockets," he said.

Buhari congratulated the Muslim Ummah in Nigeria and the world and particularly saluted "the brave men and women in uniform fighting terror on many fronts and their families, as well as others held hostage and kept away from their families by wicked and heartless terrorists."

He urged Muslims to reflect on the significance of the sacrifice epitomised by Eid.

The President, who flew to Dakar, Senegal shortly after two significant security scares in the country, first, with the attack on his convoy and invasion of the Kuje Prison in Abuja, were

the harrowing experience Nigerians, are facing.

"I congratulate Muslims in Nigeria and across the world on the occasion of the Eid-el-Kabir celebration. As we celebrate, I wish to remind that the essence of the celebration of the Eid-el-Kabir is about sacrifice, love, and hope for a peaceful coexistence in our dear country, and the world at large," he said.

"The purpose of the celebration has a bold reflection on Nigeria. Our country is broken and insecurity has become a daily menace staring all our compatriots in the face.

"The hardships in the land and the harrowing experiences that people go through to survive, and the pervasive lack of unity amongst Nigerians, are the reasons why we must do a sober reflection on the State of our Nation, as we mark this year's Sallah.

"Therefore, selfless sacrifice and communal love as exemplified by Prophet Ibrahim and his son, Ishmael, should guide us, as we submit ourselves and needs to the Will of Allah.

"If we emulate the righteousness and great virtues of the Holy Prophet, mankind shall no doubt receive the reward of Allah's love and mercy. Meanwhile, the privileged and wealthy ones amongst us need to intensify their acts of charity to the less privileged. There's love in sharing.

"Let's work in concert to purposefully lessen the hardship facing our brothers and sisters. Let's love our neighbors as ourselves. I wish to also task the government at all levels to play its Constitutional role, by being upright and dutiful and prioritize the needs of the people they have taken an oath to serve. The unity, security and development of our country is sacrosanct.

"The expression of love and sacrifice symbolized by the Eid-el-Kabir celebration has a strong effect in the relationship between the government and the governed. It is incumbent on the government to optimally discharge its responsibilities to the people. It is only when this is done that there can be love between the government and the governed.

"Love is a pre-condition for God's mercies and blessings, and truth must guide all relationships, especially between the government and the people. As stakeholders, the citizens too, should take a lesson from the celebration of Eid-el-Kabir by being up and doing in their civic responsibilities.

"As we inch towards the deadline on the on-going voter registration exercise, the people must ensure that they play their roles by not just getting their Permanent Voters Card (PVC), but casting their votes for the best candidates in the election

next year. Above all, I pray for peace during and after the Eid celebration even as I task Nigerians to work even harder in ensuring unity of all peoples, tribes and faiths in the country."

Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, has felicitated with Muslims.

He, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr Yinka Oyebo, urged the Muslims Ummah to uphold lessons of love, loyalty and sacrifice which are the foundation of the festival, during and after the festivities.

The Nigeria Governors Forum Chairman noted that the Eid-el-Kabir became a symbolic event following the bountiful reward Prophet Ibraheem received for his demonstrated perseverance and absolute faith in God by holding tenaciously to his faith during a trying period.

Fayemi said this year's Eid-el-Kabir festival offers another opportunity for sober reflection and spiritual renewal which Allah demands from the faithful.

He urged the Muslim faithful and adherents of other faiths in the country to make peaceful coexistence their watchword and work together for a more peaceful, united and prosperous Nigeria.

According to him, Nigerians need to imbibe the lessons of commitment, dedication and obedience to higher authority as demonstrated in Prophet Ibraheem's willingness to sacrifice his son in deference to the will of God, which Eid-el-Kabir commemorates.

"This symbolic Islamic festival is a constant reminder to us that, there will always be great rewards when we have abiding faith and patience during trying periods and remain persistent in prayers.

"It also reminds us of the sacrifice we are to make not only for spiritual fulfilment but for the development of our society and advancement of humanity. Development and progress would only be achieved in an atmosphere of peace, unity and mutual respect. We must, therefore, eschew situations that can further divide us as a people."

He also urged Muslim faithful to pray for peace in the country, as they perform the Arafat rites, noting that the fervent prayers by various religious bodies and individuals have accounted largely for the relative peace and progress recorded in recent times.

"I extend warm greetings to the Muslim Ummah in Nigeria as they celebrate Eid-el-Kabir Sallah festival. I wish the good people of Ekiti State and Nigeria the joy, peace and blessing of the season.

"As we celebrate, let us remember the poor and the needy in line with God's

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Baba-Ahmed confirmed LP's VP pick, Tinubu to run with another Muslim

Reactions trail emergence of Obi's running mate

By TUNDE JOSHUA, Abuja

Presidential candidate of Labour Party (LP), Mr. Peter Obi on Friday officially announced the choice of a businessman and politician, Dr. Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed, as his running mate for the 2023 presidential election.

This announcement confirmed The Trumpet report of Baba-Ahmed's choice during the week.

Obi had initially forwarded the name of former presidential spokesperson, Dr. Doyin Okupe, to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as a 'place holder' pending the choice of a substantive running mate.

Okupe on Thursday wrote to INEC to withdraw his candidature as the party's vice-presidential candidate.

Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed is reportedly the son in-law of General Aliyu Gasau, one of the kingmakers in the country. He is also the younger brother of Dr. Hakeem Baba-Ahmed, who tweeted about Peter Obi on June 24, 2023.

Hakeem Baba-Ahmed is the Spokesman of the Northern Elders Forum while Prof. Ango Abdullahi who last month said Atiku and Tinubu can't fix Nigeria is the Chairman.

Senator Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed said the only reason for accepting to be the LP's vice presidential candidate is to rescue Nigeria with Obi.

Baba-Ahmed, a 46-year-old academic, businessman and politician stated this in his acceptance speech, shortly after he was unveiled in Abuja.

He said he believes in the

genuineness, integrity and capacity of Obi to rescue Nigeria and he had no choice but to be part of the movement.

Baba-Ahmed, who praised the Almighty Allah for making it possible, thanked Obi and his team for finding him worthy to be his running mate in their journey to rescue Nigeria.

"I wish to begin by uploading my endless praises to Almighty Allah who gives power to whom he wills, when he wills and how he wills.

"Also, I will remain ever submissive and indebted to my leader and my principal, the President (Peter Obi) and his team who worked diligently, researched and found me worthy. I will remain forever humble and appreciate him for this honour. My task is simple to accept this nomination at

this time, but in doing so, I will normally give justification as follows:

"The undeniable, unchallengeable fundamental reason for being on this ticket is to rescue Nigeria. And the whole logically and without saying it that you can only rescue that which you are involved in for Nigeria to be able to transform. I cannot afford not to be part of this movement to rescue Nigeria.

"The second reason is that I believe in the greatness of Nigeria, I believe there will be peace and prosperity, I believe that Nigerian people will unite; in fact, let me say that having come from educational background; I belong to the system where you walk into the classroom, after one hour you come out a changed person.

"Ever since I met his Excellency Peter Obi, I have been changing every day," he said.

He said Obi told him that the land mass in the North is the "crude oil of Nigeria."

"How much more nationalist can you be? How much more detribalised can you be? I see a brighter future for Nigeria from such comments," he said.

"Then I want to justify it, who was motivated by success in the private sector and fought ...and after those eight years, has maintained his integrity and honour till this day, is the one that will not fail in his campaign promises, Mr Peter Obi.

"Someone who believed in financial propriety will not engage in financial rascality. He who believes in credibility and integrity no matter who he associates with will not mismanage personal, human and public resources and he is Peter Obi.

"This is the high point in my life, in my career and I think this is pure. Having said this with all trust to Almighty Allah; with my belief that I am doing this for the sake of Nigeria, with all humility, I accept your generous invitation to be your running mate."

Reactions have followed Baba-Ahmed's emergence.

All Progressives Congress (APC) chieftain Joe Igbokwe and activist Deji Adeyanju dismissed Baba-Ahmed as a political paperweight. However, Adeyanju said the LP presidential ticket is truly progressive.

But Igbokwe said: "It is political suicide to pick a VP candidate who cannot deliver something as ordinary as his LGA for you in a presidential election. Anyways, everyone will wake up from the social media delusion soon. Kwankwaso can deliver his state and many former Govs will also do well. When we criticize, we are doing

so with deep understanding of Nigeria. One thing is clear now, this is nothing serious but just a social media good feeling presidency dream."

Reacting, Obi's media adviser, Val Obienyem, remarked: "Oh, Uncle Joe Igbokwe is thinking about the success of Mr. Peter Obi otherwise how else do we explain this his post? From his post, it appears he actually prayed that Obi should choose a person that would deliver for him so that he wins the election. Does he not appear dejected that Obi made the wrong choice?"

"If you are close to Uncle Joe, tell him that 'Obidients' are not looking for a person that will deliver his ward, a local champion, but a person that will deliver the totality of Nigeria.

"Should he be patriotically concerned with the man's ward or his pedigree and competence? Has it not bothered Joe that Nigerians are now looking for those that are healthy and competent to withstand the rigours of governance, while he is still stocked at the elite descriptive quip: 'He cannot deliver his ward', a veiled imprimatur for old, corrupt, turn-by-turn politicians.

"Look at the the VP's age, what else shall the youth demand from such a choice? This is a clear sign of the desire to break away from the past and allow the youth take over their country.

"Have you listened to the VP speak? He is among the most perceptive and penetrating mind. Together with Obi, they will certainly represent a progressive force we need in this country. A force that will establish political stability, restore morality, protect lives and property, end banditry, reassure the people, aid industry and transform the country from consumption to production.

"So far as we know, Obi's choice is the representative of the desire of what those clamouring for the combination of two hot and practical intellect have seen been longing for and not the roistering cry of delivering his ward."

Relatedly, Kano State Governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Ganduje, on Friday, said the presidential torchbearer of the APC, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, had agreed to pick a Muslim as his substantive running mate.

He made the comments during a gathering of about 100 clerics at the Kano state government house as part of activities to mark Eid-El-Kabir.

"We have advised him to pick a Muslim deputy and he has agreed," Ganduje said.

"A Muslim-Muslim ticket is a reality. It is not something new in Nigeria."

Ganduje asked the clerics to pray for Tinubu to emerge as Nigeria's president in 2023.

He also urged them to offer prayers for his administration's peace and progress.

Ganduje asked the clerics to pray for his Deputy Governor, Yusuf Gawuna, who emerged as the APC governorship candidate in Kano State for the 2023 elections. (Channels TV)



LP National Chairman Julius Abure (middle) at the unveiling of Senator Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed (right) as running mate of its presidential candidate Peter Obi (left) in Abuja.

Security strengthened for Sallah

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injunction to be our brother's keeper. Quite importantly, it is also a time to pray for our dear country to overcome current security and economic challenges", he added.

Ondo State Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu has stated that the Nigeria Police Force is overstretched, understaffed and lacks the capacity to adequately protect the citizens of the country.

Akeredolu spoke in his office while receiving the new Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Zone 17, AIG Yunnus Mohammed Akeera. He reiterated the need to have State Police to effectively secure the lives and property of the people.

He said a single police command in Abuja could not adequately secure the country. His words: "As you know, Zone 17 is probably one of the newest. When the Zone was created

the State Government had to shoulder a lot of responsibilities. When we got you a location, you had to renovate it.

"We do not run away from the fact that the Police is overstretched. In the same way, we do not run away from the fact that a single police command in Abuja will not be adequate to police the large populace of the country. This has led to our demand for State Police.

"We can complement each other. I have had Senior Police Officers who agreed on State Police. Maybe they can't say it in public. Go to Ekiti and even here in Ondo State, most of the Police Stations have no vehicle. Look at the unfortunate incident that happened in Owo, Police said they had no vehicle to pursue the perpetrators.

"Let us all sit down and agree that we should have a system that will create division of labour. We can have the Federal Police and then, the State Police.

You can face up to a major task like intelligence gathering and pass it to the State Police to work on. What is happening, if not for lack of intelligence people will not go to Kuje and attack the place in Abuja. We need your cooperation too in this our cry for a dual Police System that can work together.

"People are moving down south to take refuge in our forest. You don't have the men and officers to secure the country. The Police Force is understaffed. We appreciate your limitations in terms of men, ammunition and so on."

Meanwhile, the presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Bola Tinubu, has condemned Tuesday's attack on the Kuje Medium Security Custodial Centre in Abuja by terrorists.

Tinubu stated that the incessant terror attacks plaguing the country were worrisome just as he called on Nigerians to remain vigilant

and united behind constituted authorities.

The former governor of Lagos State said this via a statement issued on Friday by his media aide, Tunde Rahman.

The Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) confirmed that four inmates of the Kuje correctional centre died in Tuesday's attack, while hundreds of prisoners escaped.

The NCoS said the assailants broke into the correctional centre using explosive devices through the main entrance and the fence of the facility respectively.

The Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) terrorist group had claimed responsibility for the attack.

Reacting to the attack, Tinubu said: "Tuesday's terror attack on Kuje Medium Security Custodial Centre is worrisome. These incessant attacks on government's institutions and innocent citizens is a sad reminder that we still have

a lot to do to put these evil forces in check.

"I totally condemn this dastardly attack. The government must immediately go after the attackers and fleeing inmates of this facility.

"While also calling for full investigation of the incident and the possible failure to act on intelligence, we must all remain vigilant and united.

"This moment calls for national unity and deep introspection.

"We must continue to support the President Muhammadu Buhari administration in its battle against insurgents and determination to confront these agents of darkness.

"I commiserate with the families and relations of those who lost their lives in the attack. I also call on the government to continue to provide succour and medical attention to those injured," the APC presidential standard-bearer stated.

120 inmates gain admission into National Open University in Enugu

By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**

No fewer than 120 inmates of Enugu Correctional Centre have gained admission to study at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) special study centre at Enugu Custodial Centre.

The Controller General of the Nigeria Correctional Service, Mr Haliru Nababa, said that a total of 11 inmates were performing

their convocation.

Nababa, who was ably represented by the Controller of Corrections in Enugu State, Mr Nicholas Obiako, said that the inmates were graduating with flying colours from various courses at the university.

"My administration is focused on using education as a viable tool for reformation and re-orientation of the inmates.

"The Nigeria Correctional Service (NCoS) under my

watch has committed available resources to ensure that inmates develop themselves while in custody to ensure public protection.

"I will want to use this occasion to thank non-governmental organizations, faith-based organisations and NOUN for their partnership over these years," he said.

Speaking, the Vice Chancellor of NOUN, Prof. Olu-femi Peters, represented by the Director Enugu special study centre, Prof. Alexander

Onyia, administered the oath of allegiance to the newly admitted inmates.

Peters cautioned the matriculating inmates to be of good behaviour and shun acts capable of truncating their educational pursuits. The Vice-Chancellor also presented first degree certificates to 11 graduating inmates of the centre.

Officer in charge of Enugu Custodial Centre, Mr Joseph Usifo, commended the inmates for the educational

feat they have attained.

Usifo, who is a Deputy Controller of Corrections, urged other inmates to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the Controller General of Corrections to better their lots educationally.

The Assistant Controller of Corrections, Mr Kevin Iloafonsi, who is the desk officer of the study centre, said that the study centre started with 11 inmates but now has over 500 students.

Iloafonsi said the study centre had created a platform where inmates can realise their educational dreams,

adding that no inmate who passed through the programme comes back to jail.

Present at the event included representatives of the state Ministry of Justice, National Directorate of Employment, state Ministry of Education, Federal Road Safety Corps and Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA).

Others are: Rev. Fr. Ambrose Ekereoku, Executive Director of Carmelite Prisoners' Interest Organization (CAPIO) and Dr Clinton Kanu as well as Theophilus Adeniyi.

PIA: Deputy Senate President seeks Women's inclusion in host communities fund utilization

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

The Deputy Senate President, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege has called for the inclusion of women as beneficiaries of the Host Communities Fund component of the Petroleum Industry Act.

He emphasised that women's inclusion in the implementation of the Petroleum Industry Act's three percent Host Communities Fund is a sure path to development.

Senator Omo-Agege stated this on Thursday in Abuja when he hosted a delegation of Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group, a statement by his Special Adviser, Media and Publicity, Mr Yomi Odunuga said.

Represented by his Chief of Staff, Dr Otive Igbuzor, the Delta Central lawmaker advised that the advocacy be extended to the Executive arm of government since it is the final authority in implementing the Act.

"I am gender sensitive. I support the inclusion of women in the development process. So you can be assured of our support in terms of your demand for women inclusion in the relevant structures of the Petroleum Industry Act.

"But you also need to continue the advocacy, especially to the Executive arm of government because they are the ones that will make the final appointment. And they are also responsible for the implementation of those areas. But you can rest assured of our commitment to continue to push for women inclusion in development and justice for women", he said.

Earlier, the leader of the delegation, Mrs Glory Bassey called for the inclusion of women in the application of the three percent Host Communities Fund of the Petroleum Industry Act.

She said the group was founded in 2005 with a mission to promote



Sen. Ovie Omo-Agege

transparency and accountability for consolidation of Nigeria's democracy.

She asked the federal lawmaker to lend his voice for the inclusion of women in the application of the Petroleum Industry Act 3 percent Host Communities Fund.

She lamented that gender inequality is one of the

oldest and most pervasive forms of inequality, adding that about 153 countries have laws that promote gender discrimination.

She said: "In tackling the problem and advocating for women's economic inclusion in the Niger Delta with the Petroleum Industry Act as an enabler, our organisation is embarking on a 30% campaign that focuses on ensuring female participation in extractive - resource - governance, making sure women participate strategically in local governing structures and extractive industry boards, community development committees, governing organs of petroleum companies, governmental entities, and communities trust funds, where decisions on resource allocations and management are to be made in consultations with other gatekeepers in the oil and gas host communities in line with the Petroleum Industry Act".

Oborevori, PDP hint on appeal as uneasy calm greets Okowa's camp over Judgement

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO, Asaba**

The Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevori and the Delta State chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, have called for calm following the judgement of the Federal High Court sitting in Abuja against the candidate of the party for the 2023 governorship election. PDP in a statement signed by the State Publicity Secretary of the party, Dr Charles Osuoza and released to newsmen says that the party, "received the judgement of an Abuja Federal High Court, against our gubernatorial candidate for the 2023 general elections, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevori, on the grounds of discrepancies in his documents.

"We have already engaged our team of legal experts to critically study the ruling and explore grounds on which we can confidently approach the Court of Appeal. We

want to therefore enjoin our teeming supporters and loyal party faithful to remain calm, unperturbed, and law-abiding, and assure them that we are quite confident in our conviction, that justice will be done and we will get judgement at the Appellate Court. There is no cause for alarm", the statement added.

In a Press Statement by Oborevori's Chief Press Secretary, Mr Dennis Otu, the Speaker called on all his supporters and indeed all Deltans to remain calm and steadfast in the face of the judgement, saying that there was no cause for alarm. According to the Statement; "I wish to appeal to all my supporters, political associates and well wishers to remain calm and law abiding over the Judgement of the Federal Court. There is no need to panic, all is well. We will certainly appeal the Judgement and so let us maintain the peace as all hope is not lost. All is well

and it will end in praise to the Glory of God Almighty.

"The courts have always been part of our democratic experience, and our confidence in the judiciary, which is the last hope of the common man is unwavering. So, as we embark on the appeal process, our supporters and indeed Deltans should kindly note and be rest assured that Rt. Hon. Sheriff Francis Orhowodor Oborevori remains the gubernatorial flagbearer of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Delta State for the 2023 general elections. The Sherification Movement is well and alive and, by God's grace, we shall overcome," he added.

"Once again, I want to appreciate God Almighty for giving us victory at all times, and we will certainly not stop praying for more victories because Delta State is in God's hands and be reassured that He will take us to the Promised Land at the end of the day. We also wish to thank our

teeming supporters for their steadfastness," the Speaker said.

Meanwhile following the judgement by the Federal High Court, Abuja, against the candidature of Sheriff Oborevori who was strongly backed by Governor Ifeanyi Okowa that led to his emergence as the governorship flag bearer of the PDP, uneasy calm has greeted the governor's camp.

One of the media aides to the governor who craved anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter confided in The Trumpet that the judgement was Okowa's greatest and only fear on his choice of Oborevori. He pointed out that, ever since the certificate scandal of Oborevori emerged, the governor had never hidden this fear, adding that, at a point, the governor wanted to drop him for someone else but had to succumb to pressure from the Delta Political Vanguard (DPV) and other close political associates.

9 absconded NYSC corps members to repeat service in A' Ibom

By **ISAAC JOB, Uyo**

Nine corps members out of 1,522 posted to Akwa Ibom in 2021 will repeat their service for absconding after their orientation exercise in the state last year.

Speaking during the passing-out ceremony of batch 'B' stream 1 corps members in Uyo on Friday, the State Coordinator, Mrs Chinyere Ekwe said that eight other corps members who indulged in several forms of misconduct will also undergo various forms of extension between two weeks and four months respectively.

"I am proud to report that during the last year, this set of corps members under my watch, was not only committed to their assigned daily duties, but they were active in both group and individual Community Development Service activities.

She said that Corps members are leaving their various host Communities better than they met them and have lived harmoniously in these locations without conflicts

She disclosed that a total number of 1,522 corps members were qualified to exit service this year.

Ekwe explained that out of 1,522 corps members posted to the state, nine absconders were recorded and have been booked to repeat the service year.

She said eight others who indulged in acts of misconduct, ranging from absenteeism, unauthorized journeys, and other misconducts shall serve various degrees of extension ranging from two weeks to four months.

She commended the state government for their support and the National Governing Board of NYSC for visiting the camp to ensure that all the basic

needs of corp members were put in place.

Akwa Ibom State Governor Udom Emmanuel urged the corps members to leverage the Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development to develop themselves and become self-reliant with capacity to employ others.

Emmanuel, who was represented by Mr Emmanuel Akpabio, Director of Youth Development, Ministry of Youths and Sports, said that the state would continue to be committed to the scheme.

"Our resolve to sustain our welfare package to corps members has remained sacrosanct. Apart from ensuring regular and timely payment of monthly stipends, the culture of ensuring the provision of transport fare to corps members at every orientation exercise has been maintained." Emmanuel said.

In a related development, Governor Udom Emmanuel has provided relief materials to Youth corps members who were attacked by armed robbery in Uyo recently.

Udom, who was represented by Commissioner for Youths and Sport, Sir Monday Ebong Uko said it was necessary to provide succour and all necessary assistance to the Corpers adding that the robbery incident was unfortunate and unacceptable.

FELICIA

I, formerly known and called: **MISS DURUOHA CHINASA FELICIA**, henceforth wish to be known and called: **JOEL-ONOWAKPO FELICIA**. Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public to take note

IFUNANYA

I, formerly known and called: **EMORDI PRISCILLIA**, henceforth wish to be known and called: **EMORDI CHERISH IFUNANYA**. Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public to take note

Robbers invade NYSC lodge, female victim alleges rape in A'ibom

•As coordinator refutes rape rumour of corps members

By ISAAC JOB, Uyo

Armed robbers have attacked the residence of Corps members along Udo Ekong Ekwere Street, off Information Drive and dispossessed them of their valuables, *The Trumpet* gathered.

The incident occurred on Wednesday night as the robbers stormed the area by 1 am in a tricycle ransacking all the rooms where 21 youth corps members lodged in Uyo.

An eyewitness in the neighbourhood who pleaded anonymity said items carted away include laptops, cell phones, and an undisclosed amount of money.

Some of the corps members who spoke with *The Trumpet* on Thursday morning lamented that there was no help in sight during the attack despite their cry for help.

One of the Corps members who identified himself as Emeka Emmanuel said, "They arrived on a tricycle, popularly called Keke and immediately started operation. They beamed high-intensity torchlight

everywhere and pounced on every door with heavy iron and threatened to shoot us if we failed to cooperate."

A female Corps member, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, while fighting back tears, said her phones, laptop, and cash were forcefully taken away from her after the hoodlums gained entrance into her room from the back door.

"You know at that time of the night, most of us females, we used to sleep naked and the suddenness of the attack caught us unprepared. They beamed the torch through the window and threatened to shoot if the door was not quickly opened," she explained.

Another female Corps member alleged rape while saying targeting serving Corpers was totally out of place and unheard.

"I have never heard of this anywhere in Nigeria, even in the North, where insecurity is at the highest peak, that Corpers could be deliberately targeted, raped, and robbed by criminals at gunpoint. Is it because we are not from Akwa Ibom that no one could hear our



Fadah, NYSC boss

shouts and come to save us?", she lamented.

Mr Nsikak Ibang, a night guard at the State Secretariat of the Nigeria Union of Journalists which is located opposite the Corpers lodge said, "I raised alarm by hitting the supporting pillars holding the reconstructed NUJ auditorium," but "the sound reverberated across the whole area but no response."

Another neighbour, Bassey Offiong, said "when I heard the attack and the outcry of the Corpers, I quickly

reached out to the Police at Ikot Akpanabia Command, which is very close here, but they arrived a little late after the criminals had finished and left with their tricycle."

Also, the Youth Leader of the area, Comrade Godwin Okpo, blamed incessant criminal activities around communities on the collapse of internal security organized by the local residents.

"I used to go round from house to house to collect monetary contributions for the night vigilante group to secure the area at night, but suddenly they started accusing me of embezzling their money. So there was nothing I could do again," he said.

Meanwhile, the State's Coordinator of the National Youth Service Scheme in Akwa Ibom, Mrs Ekwe Chinyere has debunked rumours making the rounds across the country that female Corps members were raped during the operations.

According to a statement issued and make available to newsmen in Uyo on Thursday, Mrs Ekwe in the company of the Commissioner of Police, Olatoye

Durosinmi visited the Corps members' lodge for an on-the-spot assessment, adding that no Corps member was raped.

"While there, it was confirmed that 21 Corps members occupy the said property. The interaction with the Corps members further revealed that an

attack on them was actually carried out by thieves at about 1 am this morning," the statement said.

The statement, however, confirmed that the invaders took valuables including phones, laptops, and some cash during the operations adding that no bodily harm was meted on the victims.

Bayelsa, Cuba Consortium sign MoU on vaccines, pharmaceuticals factory

By AHERHOKE OKIOMA, Yenagoa

Bayelsa State Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BioCubaFarma Consortium of the Republic of Cuba for the establishment of a vaccines and pharmaceuticals production plant in the state.

This was the fallout of a three-day investment visit to Cuba led by Governor Douye Diri.

At the ceremony in Havana, the Cuban capital, which was witnessed by Governor Diri, the Bayelsa Commissioner for Health, Dr Pabara Igwele and the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investments, Barrister Patience Abah, signed for the government while the First Vice President of BioCubaFarma, Dr Mayda Mauri Pérez, signed for the consortium.

A statement by the Director, New Media to the Bayelsa State Governor, Dr Kola Oredipe, noted that the partnership is in furtherance to an earlier bilateral agreement between the Nigerian government and that of Cuba on scientific cooperation, technology transfer, academic collaboration and the co-production of vaccines and other pharmacological products in the country.

Igwele said the partnership deal marked a milestone in the quest of the government to attract investments into the state.

"This is a good development for us in Bayelsa State. The vaccines and other pharmaceutical products are in high demand in Nigeria and beyond. With the centre, Bayelsa can serve other states and nations in the West Africa sub-region. In the next few months, the technical teams from both sides will work out further details of the agreement with the technical teams from both ends," he stated.

The Commissioner for Health said the vaccines and pharmaceuticals production factory would provide job opportunities, build expertise of Bayelsa people and also ensure technology transfer for sustainability of the plant.

Also, as part of the visit, the Bayelsa delegation met with Deputy Governor of Havana Province, Mrs Yanet Hernandez Perez, and the Vice Minister for Trade, Matanzas Province, Ms Deborah Rivas Saavedra to explore other business opportunities, including discussions on sugar production, renewable energy, ICT and exchange programmes for students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Others who joined the governor at the various meetings and witnessed the signing ceremony include the Nigerian Ambassador to Cuba, Benaoyagha Okoyen, Dr Fred Agbedi, member representing Sagbama/Ekeremor Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Prof. Ebitimitula Etebu, Vice Chancellor, Bayelsa Medical University, Yenagoa and Major Lancelot Anyanya (rtd.)



Douye Diri

How women participation can bridge digital gender divide - Wema Bank MD

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

With growing concern over the participation of women in the tech industry, it has become imperative to establish a roadmap that will help draft more women into the sector.

Speaking at the 2022 edition of SheCan Conference in Lagos, Chief Digital Officer of Wema Bank Plc, Olusegun Adeniyi, identified various areas where women could participate in the growing digital economy to stem the current female under-representation in the sector.

Speaking on: She Can Do More In Technology, Adeniyi said more women's participation would address

the imbalance and gender diversity in the digital space and create greater prosperity in the world.

He established opportunities for women in the digital sector to include cloud computing, green economy, sales, product development, content production and writing. Other opportunities, according to him, are marketing, e-commerce, product development, and digital healthcare services, among others.

Quoting the World Economic Forum's 2018 report on the "Future of Jobs," he said we could create about 150 million new technological jobs globally in the next five years, but lamented that women were

grossly underrepresented in the digital sector in developing countries.

"The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Digital Gender Divide Survey reports that women using the internet are 12 per cent fewer than men and are four times less likely to use digital technology," he said.

Noting that more traditional jobs would become technological jobs soon, he advised women to embrace science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to play well in the digital sector.

Adeniyi also called for the eradication of the stereotype that only men can play in the sector and stressed the need for women to be encouraged and supported to close the

digital gender divide.

More importantly, he canvassed a paradigm shift among women to use technology and for them to gain critical thinking skills, interaction, leadership, self-awareness and other skills that would immune them from machine replacement.

Wema Bank's partnership over the past few years has resulted in the empowerment of over 5,000 women across various locations in Nigeria. The bank, through its Sara by Wema proposition, has led the frontier for women empowerment through initiatives like Shecan Nigeria, while also providing financial support through loans, business advisory, discounted health plans and networking opportunities.

Again Wike in secret meeting with opposition politicians

•Confers with Govs Fayemi, Akeredolu and Sanwo Olu

By CHRIS EZEONOH, Port Harcourt

Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike Friday evening met behind closed doors with some chieftains of the All Progressive Congress, (APC), at his country home in Port Harcourt.

Those in the meeting were Governors Kayode Fayemi (Ekiti), Babajide Sanwo Olu (Lagos) and Rotimi Akeredolu (Ondo).

The details of the meeting were not made public as no journalist was allowed into the venue, neither did any of the actors speak to journalists as they marched out from Wike's mansion.

The silence of Wike since he was skimmed out as the PDP presidential running mate to Alhaji Atiku Abubakar and the secret meetings he has been having with opposition politicians

are said to be unsettling the PDP hierarchy.

Meanwhile, Governor Wike has sued for peace in the country to enhance her stability and growth.

Wike gave the advice in a statement signed by his Special Assistant Media, Kelvin Ebiri while congratulating Muslims on Eid-el-kabir celebration.

The State Chief Executive wished all Muslim faithful across the country happy Eld-el-Kabir.

He urged Muslims to always emulate the lifestyle of Prophet Mohammed, stressing that Prophet Mohammed symbolised peace and tolerance.

Governor Wike prayed for peace and wisdom in solving the challenges facing the nation, especially the insecurity, and urged all Muslim faithful in the state to remain peaceful as they join their counterparts all over the world to celebrate Eid-el-Kabir.

The Governor, who reminded Muslims of the significance of the celebration which is selfless sacrifice, total commitment and loyalty, enjoined them to first consider the interest of the nation before any other.

He assured that Rivers State Government will continue to protect the rights of every citizen in the State and also guarantee the freedom of worship and association as enshrined in the constitution.



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3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
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9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97	9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86	9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11	7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93	
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86	10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21	10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02	8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40	
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11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89	
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5	11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24	11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19	FP14.5 X 6	379,943.00	408,438.72	
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Countering claims revealing more secrets of Mr Peter Obi

● *“We shall respond to THEIR FALSE Allegations in CAPITAL LETTERS”*

By IGBO KWENU

APGA cannot mourn the exit of Mr Peter Obi with all these secret findings surrounding him.

1. Those who knew Peter Obi will attest to the fact that he has been a drug dealer beginning from his days as an undergraduate at UNN. He hardly attended lectures and only managed to graduate with a third class in Philosophy after spending 12 years in the University.

ANSWER: PETER OBI ATTENDED UNN FROM 1980 TO 1984. HE GRADUATED WITH SECOND-CLASS HONOURS AND DID NOT HAVE ANY EXTRA YEAR. SOME OF HIS CLASSMATES WERE MR. MIKE UDAH (09038375614), MR. CASMIR UGWU (081075880840), STANFORD UWADHWE (08022204048). THE CLASSMATES ARE STILL KNOWN, UNLIKE OTHERS WHOSE CLASSMATES ARE NOT KNOWN.

2. His brother-in-law who incidentally is one of the hirelings used by him for his nefarious drug trafficking business is currently languishing in jail in faraway London. This is the major cause of strain between Obi and his in-laws. It is on record that his closeness to Dubem Obazie was because Dubem served a jail term for drug trafficking because of Peter.

ANSWER: OBI HAS NEVER HAD ANY STRAINED RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS IN-LAWS SINCE HE MARRIED. DUBEN OBAZE? WAS PETER CONVICTED AND HE DRAFTED OBAZE TO SERVE FOR HIM OR WHAT? PUERILE LIES!

3. Obi should explain his relationship with former Military Administrator, Governor Ibim Princwill and Col Earnest Kizito Attah of Cross River State whom he helped as a conduit to fleece Cross River State government thus contributing to the underdevelopment of the state.

ANSWER: WITH WHAT THEY WROTE, WOULD THEY BELIEVE IF OBI DEFINES THE RELATIONSHIP AS CORDIAL. WHOEVER HAS DEALT WITH OBI WOULD ATTEST THAT HE IS FAITHFUL TO EVERYBODY AND BECAUSE OF THAT NO SINCERE PERSON, WHO HAS EVER RELATED WITH HIM DOUBTS HIS CHARACTER NOR WOULD SEE REASON NOT TO BELIEVE OR HAVE TRUST IN HIM.

4. Obi should explain to Ndi Anambra the circumstances surrounding his father's death which remains his best kept secret. Before then we can reveal that Obi's father was drowned to death by Obi's associates in the drug trade whom he short-changed in a business deal prompting the mafias to kill the old man whom they drowned bounded hands and feet with bricks round his neck.

ANSWER: THE WRITERS OF THIS STUPIDITY ARE PROBABLY NOT AWARE THAT OBI'S FATHER DIED IN 1968 WHEN OBI WAS JUST SEVEN YEARS. THAT WAS WHEN THEIR LAST CHILD WAS ALSO BORN, DURING THE WAR.

5. Given the level of insecurity in Anambra state, "Saint" Peter Obi should explain how he expends his security vote since it is on record that he collects over 470 million naira per month as security vote (220 million naira from Local Government and 250 million Naira from the state FAC accounts)

ANSWER: EXCEPT FOR SECURITY-CHALLENGED PERIODS LIKE ELECTION TIME, OBI'S SECURITY VOTE WAS AN AVERAGE OF 200M. HE WAS AMONG THE LOWEST. IT WAS FROM THERE THAT HE BOUGHT OVER 700 VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE, ARMOURED PERSONNEL CARRI-



Peter Obi

ERS, ARMOURED PATROL VEHICLES, PAID 1ST CLASS GRADUATES, PAID ELDERLY PEOPLE, AND PAID VIGILANTES OF ALL THE TOWNS, AMONG OTHERS. HE ALWAYS SAID HE WAS READY TO ACCOUNT FOR THAT IF CALLED TO DO SO.

6. Just as Peter Obi professes his Catholicism for political expediency, we ask him to summon moral courage and explain to the Catholic faithful his relationship with the Olumba Olumba Obu (OOO) Cult sect where his wife is a known member. It is also on record that Peter Obi met his wife at a nightclub in Auchi. The lady had two children from two different men - an Albino and a Ghanaian. The affirmed Catholic is yet to wed his wife in the church.

ANSWER: THIS IS STRANGE. COULD THE WRITERS POST THE PICTURES OF THOSE CHILDREN? OBI IS A COMPLETE CATHOLIC, HOWEVER WITH REFINED RESPECT FOR OTHER RELIGIONS.

7. Obi is yet to explain the mystery behind the N250 million that was found in the possession of his aides. He is yet to produce the contractor and publish the contractual agreement that stipulates that this very contractor will be paid in cash and also a reference to any other known precedents. Not even the famous late

Barkin Zuwo of Kano State paid contractors in cash.

ANSWER: WHEN THE ISSUE OF N250 MILLION AROSE, MR. PETER OBI, IN A GESTURE OF A MAN SURE OF HIMSELF, CANCELLED THE SOUTH-EAST GOVERNORS' FORUM MEETING BILLED FOR THAT DAY AND CALLED THE ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL OF THE STATE TO GO TO THE OFFICE AND FURNISH HIM WITH ALL THE PAPERS PERTAINING TO THAT TRANSACTION. HEAVILY FORTIFIED WITH EVERY HANDY DETAIL, HE PERSONALLY TRAVELLED TO LAGOS. AT THE OFFICE OF THE THEN LAGOS STATE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, MR. MARVEL AKPOYIBO, TENDERED THE DOCUMENTS DETAILING THE ENTIRE TRANSACTION. TO MAKE MATTERS CLEARER, THE INVESTIGATING POLICE OFFICER (IPO) REQUESTED TO SEE THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE COMPANY INVOLVED IN THE TRANSACTION - GLIZ AUTOMOBILE, LAGOS, PROBABLY EMPLOYING THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE. ASTONISHING TO THEM, STILL, WAS THAT THE MD TURNED UP SHORTLY WITH CORRESPONDING PAPERS, MATCHING THE NUMBER OF CARS AND AMOUNT INVOLVED. FACED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A PLANNED DEAL GONE AWRY, THE POLICE WENT TO GLIZ OFFICE THE SAME DAY AND COUNTED EXACTLY EQUAL NUMBER OF CARS PARKED IN THEIR PREMISES AND READY FOR DELIVERY TO THE ANAMBRA STATE GOVERNMENT. THE EXPLANATION OF PREFERRED CASH TRANSACTIONS THAT REDUCED COSTS FOR OBVIOUS REASONS WAS CLEARLY PROVED AND UNDERSTOOD.

MOREOVER, MR. PETER OBI, UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SET-UP WAS INITIATED THEN, AS NOW, BY ELEMENTS THAT WANTED TO AID HIM TO SIN A LITTLE AND USE IT TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIS SECOND TENURE OR HIS PRESIDENTIAL QUEST AS THEY NOW DO, PROMPTLY WROTE TO THE THEN PRESIDENT MUSA YAR'ADUA, HE SET ASIDE HIS IMMUNITY AND REQUESTED FULL INVESTIGATIONS. FOR DAYS, OFFICERS FROM THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COMMISSION (EFCC) AND THE POLICE WERE IN ANAMBRA STATE, QUESTIONING

AND RUMINATING OVER DOCUMENTS. FOLLOWING THE DIRECTIVES OF THE THEN INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE, MR. MIKE OKIRO FOR A THOROUGH JOB, THE INVESTIGATING POLICE TEAM EVEN CAME WITH FORENSIC EXPERTS!

THE FOREGOING WAS EXACTLY HOW OBI REACTED. BUT WITH THE AIM OF WRESTLING HIM DOWN, ANOTHER MISCHIEVOUS WRITER CRYPTICALLY WROTE THAT HE REACTED THUS: "THE MATTER ROILED OBI, CUT SHORT A TRIP, PUT TOGETHER SOME MEDIA MEN TO HUSH THE STORY. BUT SOME REPORTERS CRAVED IT LIKE SHARK SNIFFING BLOOD BECAUSE IT WAS A PIP OF A STORY." WHAT THESE MERCHANTS OF LIES DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT THE MEDIA WERE PUT ON NOTICE SUCH THAT THE STORY WAS BROKEN ALMOST AS IT HAPPENED?

8. Obi should explain why he has continued to loot the resources of the state using his brother, Ndibe Obi, Ejike Onwusogbulu and a certain Chidi Agbapu - a Lagos-based stock broker as a conduit for money laundering while the youths in Anambra remain unemployed;

ANSWER: IT WOULD BE BETTER EXPLAINED BY THE WRITERS. WHY SHOULD OBI FINISH WHAT THEY HAVE STARTED?

9. Obi was elected governor on the platform of APGA and it is on record that he never convened an APGA meeting thereby destroying the entire party structure. Obi should explain to party faithful and loyalists why he destroyed the party;

ANSWER: OBI IS NOW IN LABOUR PARTY. HE WISHES GOOD LUCK TO APGA.

10. Obi should explain to Ndi Anambra what happened to the state and local government allocations and why Anambra under Obi is the only state in Nigeria without elected local government officers in place?

ANSWER: WHY IS OBI THE RIGHT PERSON TO EXPLAIN THIS?

In view of the foregoing, we demand his immediate resignation or face further disclosure of his criminal past and present.

ANSWER: RESIGNATION FROM WHICH POST?

*Edwin Chukwujekwu
Chairman
Nonyelum Nwokoye
Secretary*

Someone NEVER to have as a friend

In this piece, Fr. Kelvin Ugwu picked on one of Peter Obi's critics, Reno Omokri, describing him as a "Manipulative Emotional Blackmailer".

"Who first shared Peter Obi's picture printed on a Muslim mat and made it go viral? Reno

Who used the mat and picture and tried to instigate a Muslim Vs Christian fight with arguments on tolerance and intolerance that even led to Peter Obi making a disclaimer? Reno

Who started the false story of Peter Obi leaving PDP to join NNPP? Reno

Who edited a picture of Peter Obi and Kwankwaso and came up with the false story that Peter Obi is trying to sideline Kwankwaso in "his own party"? Reno

Who is trying so hard to make Peter Obi look merely like an Igbo project? Reno

Who is the one trying to gaslight Peter Obi's supporters by emotionally blackmailing them and accusing them of Cyberbullying?

Reno

Just this recent interview that Peter Obi granted with Arise news in which he used a driver-pilot analogy to explain how we need to start hiring the right and qualified candidate for the job without the primitive consideration of tribe and religion. . . who is trying to turn his analogy upside down to cause tension and division between Muslims in the North and Christians in the South by playing a mind game on the Northerners even to the extent of making the post in the Hausa language? Reno

Who will come out to still post pictures of himself and Peter Obi and make videos claiming to be Peter Obi's friend? Reno

Who is the man that claims to be a Christian Pastor yet does not believe that Jesus is God? Reno

What is the best word that we can use to describe the person and actions of Reno Omokri?

Please, if you have an idea, help me. . . "



Reno Omokri,

Ooni displays Drum dexterity at Ayan-Agalu Festival

By GABRIEL OMONHINMIN

At the closing ceremony of this year's Ayangalu festival which was held in Ile-Ife, in Osun State, participants in the annual event were stunned when Ooni of Ife, His Imperial Majesty Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, the Ooni of Ife, held the crowd spellbound for about half an hour with the display of his hitherto unknown talent as a drummer.

The Ooni dazzled participants at the event when he took up the symbolic African talking drum called 'IYA ILU'.

The first-class traditional ruler told the cheering crowd that he has decided to beat the traditional drums to their delight, as a mark of peace and tranquillity in Nigeria especially now that the country is gradually approaching another round of elections. Thus, pleading to politicians to continue to exhibit utmost restraints in all that they do during this period.

He described the African talking drum as a vital tool for communicating peaceful coexistence globally.

The Ooni had earlier during the flag-off ceremony of the festival, held on Wednesday, June 29, 2022, said the Oduduwa race was the first tribe to beat the drum in the entire world.

Ooni said, "This festival has to do with the rhythm of the drum, which has to do with our connection to the spiritual connotations. Globally, people usually called our ancestors animists, because they had a strong relationship with them.

"The Ayangalu festival has been in existence from time immemorial as one of our deities. No matter the tribe, black, white or brown, the world cannot do without the drum. The whole world has enjoyed and will continue to appreciate the rhythm of drums as it concerns them.

"We are just remembering our ancestors and giving them the honour that they deserve. I, therefore, urge the Oodua race worldwide, especially the Yorubas in particular, to jointly continue to celebrate the Ayangalu festival to let the whole world know that the drum originated from us here in Africa".

He emphasized the roles played by Orunmila in the drumming communication being the deity that first decoded the meaning of the drum and things that had to do with it.

"Our ancestors used drum majorly for communication, for it goes beyond entertainment and till date, Yoruba people use the drum for communication and as a vital tool for preaching peace and harmony.

"By the spirit of Ayangalu festival, we use the rhythm and tone to communicate peace and peaceful coexistence to our people.

"We are like the barometer in



the next electioneering campaign in Nigeria, Osun gubernatorial election is coming up in the next two to three weeks and that will lead to a major election in Nigeria by next year, January." Ooni Ogunwusi stated.

Also, the Ayangalu Ambassador, who doubles as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Adire Oodua Hub, Princess Ronke Ademiluyi, commended the Ooni for celebrating our female deities and other heroines such as Moremi, Olokun, Osun, Osara and Ayangalu among others.

Ademiluyi said that Ayangalu was a patron deity of drumming, who deserves to be celebrated. She also lauded Ooni for championing gender equality by letting the whole world know that Ayangalu was a female deity.

Ms Ayoola Ibukun Bisola, popularly known as Bisola Omoge Bata, who is

the Face of Ayangalu Festival 2022, expressed her gratitude to the Ooni for making her Face of the Festival and enjoined Nigerians to show more interest in showcasing the African drumming tradition to the world.

Ms Bisola is the Ogbomosho born Award-winning Nigeria's first female "Bata" drummer. She explained that the Ayangalu festival essentially celebrates the uniquely significant communicative aspect of Yoruba culture, as manifested in the use of proverbs, which are associated with the sounds of the drums in their various forms and components.

A foremost African female talking drummer, Miss Aralola Olamuyiwa, popularly known as ARA, who was appointed six years ago as the Cultural Ambassador to the Ooni, described African Drum as inherent importance of communication, which is valued by

the indigenous African people.

Over 200 drummers and performing groups attended the event, out of which the Ogunjimi Cultural Group from Osogbo came first and got a one million Naira prize.

Ayangbaya Bata came 2nd and got five hundred thousand naira (N500,000), while Esin Oye Cultural group from Ile-Ife came 3rd with Two hundred and fifty thousand naira (N250,000) cash prize.

The dignitaries that graced the occasion include the Olofin Iseri Awori, HRM Oba Adekunle Bamgbade, Apetu of Ipetumodu, HRM Oba (Prof) Olugbenga Oloyede, the Salu of Edunabon, HRM Oba Kehinde Oladepo, the Atta of Ayede-Ekiti, HRM Oba Abdumumini Orisagbemi, the Alara of Araodaye-Ife, HRM Oba Olusegun Layade and Atayero of Aramoko Ekiti, HRH Olusegun Aderemi.

Osun 2022: Ooni assures INEC of neutrality, support

By **GABRIEL OMONHINMIN**

The Ooni of Ife, His Imperial Majesty, Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi Ojaja II, who is the Co-Chairman of the National Council of Traditional Rulers of Nigeria (NCTRN), on Tuesday pledged that the traditional rulers in Osun State are prepared and ready to assist the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to achieve a credible gubernatorial election in the state, just as he promised that traditional council will be neutral.

Ooni, who is also the Permanent Chairman of the Osun State Council of Obas & Chiefs, gave this assurance during a special meeting with the INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmud Yakubu, and members of traditional rulers across the state at his Palace in Ile-Ife.

Ooni explained that the traditional institution remains a critical part of nation-building as it is the closest institution to the people, adding that the electoral commission has a lot to gain from its association with the state monarchs.

He added, "We the traditional rulers share a similar feature with your commission, which is independence and neutrality. We are not politicians and that is why we have control of all our subjects including politicians regardless of their parties."

"I must commend INEC for its daily introduction of technology into our electoral systems, which has made rigging almost impossible. To cap it all, we now have an electoral act amendment, which complements the advancement of our leadership selection process."

"Look at the one INEC calls BVAS, the introduction of that singular device has turned around the political fortune of our dear country. With the BVAS, the result of the just concluded Ekiti State Gubernatorial election was declared in less than 24 hours. This has never happened in the political history of our dear country."

The Ooni further stressed, "Luckily for Nigeria and Nigerians, we now have an INEC Chairman, who is patriotic and well behaved. My advice, therefore, is for the commission and its leadership to continue to make Nigeria their biggest project."

Earlier in his address, Professor Yakubu, lauded the Ooni-led Osun State Council of Traditional Rulers, for their roles in peacekeeping and the creation of an enabling environment in the state for the forthcoming election to hold.

Prof. Yakubu said, "We are aware that you have done a lot, I was here in 2018 during the last governorship election in Osun and I can see clearly that the atmosphere is calm, serene, quiet and I am absolutely convinced in my mind that you have done a lot to give us what we are seeing today in the state."

"We kindly enjoin Kabiyesi to continue to talk to the political gladiators in Osun State; alongside the politicians and their supporters, to learn how to play by the rules of the game as there can never be a credible election in an atmosphere of rancour."

The INEC Chairman continued "Politicians and their followers must give peace a chance for the election to be conducted and concluded promptly during the

remaining days of the campaign and after the election.

According to him, "We have put all necessary measures in place to ensure that the Osun people will be allowed to decide who their next governor will be. We did it in Ekiti State and we are prepared to repeat the same feat and

achieve more successes in the July 16 Osun gubernatorial poll.

The Osun State INEC boss, who doubles as the Osun State Resident Electoral Commissioner, Prof. Ganiyu Raji led INEC staff members to the Ooni's Palace and described their visit as the Commission's strategic engagement.

Traditional Rulers present at the Ooni's palace during the visit, are the Orangun of Ile Ila, Oba Wahab Adedotun, Timi of Ede, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal, Aragbiji of Iragbiji, Oba Rasheed Olabomi, Orangun of Oke Ila, Oba Abolarin Aroyinkeye and other Osun State monarchs.

Edo bans activities in disputed areas between Iguomo, Ikhuenbo communities

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**



Osarodion Ogie Esq.

The communal crisis between Iguomo and Ikhuenbo communities in Edo State has taken a new dimension prompting the state government to adopt some measures to address the issue one of the measures is the suspension of activities in a disputed area between the communities in Uhumwode Local Government Area of the state, pending the resolution of the dispute in the communities.

In a statement, Secretary to the State Government, Osarodion Ogie Esq., directed security agencies to enforce the directive of the government.

He noted, "It is hereby announced for the information of the general public, particularly community members and developers that Edo State Government has banned all activities in the disputed area between Iguomo and Ikhuenbo communities, both in Uhumwode Local Government Area of Edo State, pending the resolution of the dispute."

"All Security Agencies and in particular, the Divisional Police Officer, Okhuaihe are hereby directed to ensure strict enforcement of this directive."

World Igbo leaders task South-East Governors on Nnamdi Kanu's release

By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**

The Igbo World Union (IWU) has called on the South-East Governors to boldly take a step and approach the Presidency for the release of Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the proscribed Indigenous Peoples of Biafra, IPOB.

They also pleaded with the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to ensure that willing and eligible voters are not disenfranchised in the forthcoming general election.

President-General of the group, His Imperial Majesty, Mishak Nnanta said this in an interview with newsmen in Umuahia, Abia State.

Nnanta also appealed to President Muhammadu Buhari to extend his milk of human kindness to Ndi Igbo by applying a political solution to resolve Kanu's case.

The group affirmed that though an unconditional release of Nnamdi Kanu runs contrary to the doctrine of separation of powers between the Executive and Judiciary, President Buhari could use his prerogative to release Kanu from detention.

Nnanta regretted that the continued detention of Kanu had introduced the monstrous and retrogressive 'sit-at-home' order with the attendant massive deterioration of the security situation and

debilitation of the South East economy.

Also, the Abia state Governorship Candidate of African Democratic Congress, ADC, and founder, Vision Africa International, Bishop Sunday Ndukwo Onuoha called on the Federal Government to seek a political solution in Nnamdi Kanu's case to reduce tension in the South East.

Bishop Onuoha, who was a member

of the 2021 South-East delegation led by first republic minister, Chief Amaechi Mbazulike, to see President Muhammadu Buhari, appealed that the case of the proscribed IPOB leader be given a political solution.

Weekend Trumpet recalls that Kanu is facing trial over an alleged treasonable felony and has been in the DSS custody in Abuja.



Nnamdi Kanu

Prison, security officers are accomplices in Kuje's attack – Senate President

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

■ Commanding prisons' lack of security cameras

The Senate President, Ahmad Lawan, has alleged that terrorists of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), who attacked Kuje Medium and Maximum Security prison on Tuesday night have collaborators within the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS).

Lawan made the assertion after an assessment visit to the damaged custodial centre on Thursday, adding that security agencies in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) must have gotten wind of the operation during the planning stage or when the terrorists were on their way to invade the facility on foot.

According to him, the attack on the facility could only be possible with the help of insiders.

"An attack on the Kuje Medium Security Custodial Centre can only have been possible with the collaboration of insiders within the nation's correctional system.

"The attack on this correctional facility is

symptomatic of the failure of security architecture. The attack is only a culmination of the failure," the Senate President said.

Over 300 Islamic fighters stormed Kuje late Tuesday, shelling the facility relentless with rockets propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices, an operation that led to the escape of over a thousand inmates, including many top commanders of terrorists who had been held captive in the facility for years.

Speaking further, Lawan said "We were told that an estimated 300 suspected terrorists attacked this facility. They came on foot and I believe they should have been detected.

"In the first place, 300 people will not come for an operation like this without planning. Planning must have taken a week, a month or a bit more.

"I believe that our security agencies should have picked this from their tracking systems in the FCT," he added.

Lawan also expressed disappointment over the lack of Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras in the facility. He, therefore, directed the NCoS to make provision for CCTV cameras in all Correctional Centres in its 2023 budget to tackle reoccurring attacks in the country.

"Having gone round the facility itself, we are disappointed that this facility does not have CCTV cameras, something that would record and give you details of what is happening and sometimes record the events.

"This is a medium-security custodial centre, how on earth in the FCT facility of this magnitude we don't have CCTV? It means we can say that all other medium security centres across the country do not have CCTV.

"We have asked the Comptroller General of Correctional Service to ensure that the request for CCTV at the maximum and medium custodial centres of the country are included in their 2023 budget



Lawan

because this is essential and indispensable.

"Now, as this facility lacks a functional CCTV, there's no record of what happened, except narration. But if we had CCTV, at least the records would have been there and analysis made, and arrest will be based on the information from the CCTV," the Senate President stated.

Lawan tasked the security agencies to ensure that the inmates who escaped from

the centre were brought back.

Earlier, the Commanding Officer of the Nigerian Army Battalion in Gwagwalada, Lt Col Adisa, told the Senate leadership that over 300 suspected insurgents attacked the facility on Tuesday.

"Only a total of 50 security personnel were on the ground when they came armed with Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and other weapons," Adisa stated.

Troops kill 5 terrorists, rescue boat that lost propelling ability for 32 hours

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

Troops of the Nigerian Army have killed five Boko Haram terrorists in Gamage village of Borno State, recovering assorted weapons like AK47 rifles among others.

Director of Defence Media Operations, Major General Benard Onyeuko, in a statement optioned by The Trumpet on Thursday, confirmed the killing while adding that troops also rescued a 16 meters surfer passenger boat, MV NUE SWIFT, which lost its ability to propel for about 32 hours.

According to Onyeuko, the crew and boat which drifted at Agbara platform while transiting from Forcados to Bonny Mooring on July 5, 2022, were handed over to Forward Base Operation Bonny the following day.

He said, "On 3 July 2022 troops of 24 TF Brigade Operation HADIN KAI made contact Boko Haram terrorists at Gamage Village in Borno State, after the encounter 5 terrorists were neutralized.

"Items recovered include 2 x AK47 rifles, 3 x dane guns, 2 x AK47 magazines, 70 x rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, 7 x locally fabricated rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, 4 x cell phones, 3 x ATM cards and several bags of assorted foodstuff.

"In compliance with its role of search and rescue as well as responsibility towards the safety of lives and property in the Nigerian Maritime environment. The Nigerian Navy Ship OKPABANA of Operation Delta Safe on 5 July 2022 responded to a distress message about the propulsion of a boat on transit in a swift reaction to the message located and rescued the 16 meters surfer passenger boat MV NUE SWIFT belonging to Lagos-based oil service company.

"The boat lost its propelling ability at Agbara Platform while transiting from Forcados to Bonny Mooring and drifted for 32 hours before being rescued by its own troops. Accordingly, the crew and boat were handed over to Forward Base Operation Bonny on 6 July 2022."

The Army General further stated that the military high command while commending troops on the frontlines for their timely interventions, also encouraged the members of the public to avail troops of credible and timely information on criminal activities.

Taraba security worsens, soldiers, police now bandits' targets

By **SURU CHARLES**,
Jalingo

■ Government abandons citizens for 2023 elections

The security situation in Taraba State is growing worse on a daily basis with uniform men becoming bandits' prime targets, The Trumpet reports.

This was lucidly demonstrated last week when no fewer than seven soldiers were killed in an ambushed by bandits in Karim-Lamido Local Government Council.

The killing of the seven soldiers came barely two months after six soldiers and a mobile policeman were gruesomely murdered in Tati village of Takum Local Government.

Apart from the security personnel whose lives are being wasted by bandits, who have taken over the entire forests surrounding the State, our correspondent learned that the lives of innocent citizens are as well going down the drain daily in Taraba with no help in sight.

Recall that over 30 members of the Reform Church of Christ for Nations (RCCN) were recently slaughtered in night attacks

by militias at Kwenten and other communities in Ussa Local Government Council of the State.

The same goes with the Muslim worshippers, as several numbers of them were noticed to have been abducted from different Mosques during the just-concluded Ramadan.

The bandits who have been having a field day in the state know no religion or tribe as members of both religions have continued to fall prey to their attacks.

Leaders assigned with the responsibility of building walls of protection around their subjects seem to have failed in their responsibilities, as the people have begun to seek alternative areas of domicile and protection.

While the bandits have continued to make life more cumbersome and burdensome for the people, the leadership of the State that ought to show concern for the lives being wasted daily were noticed to have been busy plotting how to achieve their political ambitions in 2023.

Though the security personnel, especially the police and soldiers, are putting in their best, however, their best seems not to be good enough, as the much-desired support, especially in the area of logistics, has not been forthcoming from both the state and the federal governments.

Piqued by what is happening in the State, a third Republic senator, Ibrahim Goje, who was not comfortable with the way and manner Governor of the State, Darius Dickson Ishaku is handling governance by dabbling into the traditional institution affairs of Gassol council, beckoned at the governor to concentrate in addressing the security challenges bedeviling the state.

Some of the Council Chairmen who also admitted that their councils are gradually being overtaken by bandits are caps in hands seeking help from governments at the state and federal levels.

The Trumpet gathered that the help, which is not forthcoming has compelled

some of them to relocate to Jalingo, the State capital.

One of the Council Chairmen who spoke with our correspondent on the condition of anonymity admitted that he now oversees the affairs of his council from Jalingo, the State capital.

"Though I am aware that even Jalingo is not safe, I still prefer here to my Local Government Council because of the numbers of security operatives we have here," he said.

The council boss who also agreed that the state government is not doing enough to arrest the situation, also felt sad that the government at the centre has on its part "neglected Taraba because it is not an APC state."

While those who have the well wither, have begun to relocate from their areas of domicile to Jalingo metropolis, the Have-Not, whom the government of the day seems not to be bothered about, have on their parts resolved to seek help from the local Vigilantes who are as well doing their best.

Reeling out the numerous efforts so far put in place to checkmate the activities of bandits, the State Commissioner of Police, CP Abimbola Shokoya, said their efforts have begun to yield results, as some suspects that are allegedly connected to the various bomb explosion in the state have been arrested.

According to him, a 37-year-old man, who specialized in making bombs has been nabbed by the men of the command.

Shokoya, who also spoke on the mapped-out strategies to frustrate bandits from resurrecting their ugly heads during and after the Sallah celebration, said over 3,500 officers and men of the Command have been deployed to ensure a hitch-free celebration.

Reiterating his determination that the Sallah celebration will "be peaceful in Taraba", he beckoned at the people not to hesitate to reach out to the security operatives with genuine information that would assist the security agencies to track down the bandits.

As Muslims mark Eid El Kabir

Nigeria, like many countries around the globe will on Saturday 9th July celebrate Eid-El-Kabir, also called the “Sacrifice Feast”, which is the second of two Muslim festivals. It is considered the holier of the two and honours Prophet Ibrahim’s willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael – an act of obedience to God’s command. On Eid El Kabir, Muslims demonstrate their obedience to Allah by sacrificing an animal.

The holiday is inspired by a story from the Quran that is also known to Christian and Jewish faithful. Although Eid – El - Kabir traditions vary from country to country, there are some common elements. The day usually starts with a communal prayer (Eid Salaah). Muslims congregate at the local mosque after sunrise to say special Eid prayers and hear a sermon. Following the prayer, people wish one other Eid Mubarak, meaning Happy Eid or Blessed Eid. They may embrace each other and exchange small gifts.

In commemoration of the event, many millions of animals are slaughtered on this day. By some estimates, over 10 million animals are sacrificed each year in Nigeria alone. Sharing and charity play a large part on Eid, and many people give money to charitable causes on this day, in addition to sharing the meat of the slaughtered animal with people in need.

Though Eid El Kabir involves actual animal sacrifice, its underlying meaning is based on a more symbolic and selfless interpretation of the concept. Muslims are encouraged to sacrifice personal desires and share their wealth with those that are less fortunate. Simply expressed, Muslims are enjoined to give up something they hold dear, just as Prophet Ibrahim did when he showed willingness to sacrifice his own beloved son. The fundamentals of the celebration approximate love, togetherness, and harmony.

It is against this background that 2022 Eid

El Kabir remains relevant to all Nigerians now more than ever. Owing to the hyper – inflation that is afflicting the country, the poor state of the national economy, ASUU unending strike, banditry and general state of insecurity, the celebration will be low-key this year. The occasion should be used to send special messages to the leaders and the led in the society.

For the leaders, we are using the occasion to remind them that obedience, as manifested by all Nigerians in these trying times, deserves to be compensated with good governance. Government should be mindful of its contract with Nigerians as enshrined in the Constitution. Leaders must eschew the temptation to dip their hands into public treasury for self – serv-

ing needs. The spirit should be to serve the less fortunate in society. The slide into decay as manifested by wanton killings of human beings must be arrested. It is instructive that even God did not allow Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice a fellow human being.

For the led, the obedience to authorities by Nigerians is commendable because in other jurisdictions the level of inflation presently witnessed in the country is enough to topple a government, not to mention the pervading insecurity and general hardship. However, we plead with the citizens to actively cooperate with the government to secure the polity by providing information on suspects and criminals. Issues of micro-nationalism or agitations to break away from the federation, which are legitimate rights, should not be personalized to the level of pointing fingers at certain ethnic groups. It is a national issue that can be resolved at a Conference table. In the same vein, ethnicity and religious intolerance should be discouraged and taken away as far as possible from the arena of politics because we are a federation of many groups and two major religions. Until the federation is dissolved, we must learn to stay together in harmony.

For Muslims, this celebration is a reminder of the notion of loving one’s neighbour as oneself irrespective of faith. We call on all Muslims to rekindle this assertion in their minds and extend an olive branch to all wherever they may be.

Finally, we call on leaders to imbibe the spirit of sacrifice while serving the people. The people have made a lot of sacrifice, hoping that things will ultimately be better. For adherents of other faiths, despite the notoriety of so-called Muslim terrorists’ groups, profiling all Muslims on that basis would not serve the nation well nor would it engender good neighbourliness and the love required to build a virile nation. All Nigerians must join hands to rid the nation of the menace of these pretenders. Eid Mubarak!



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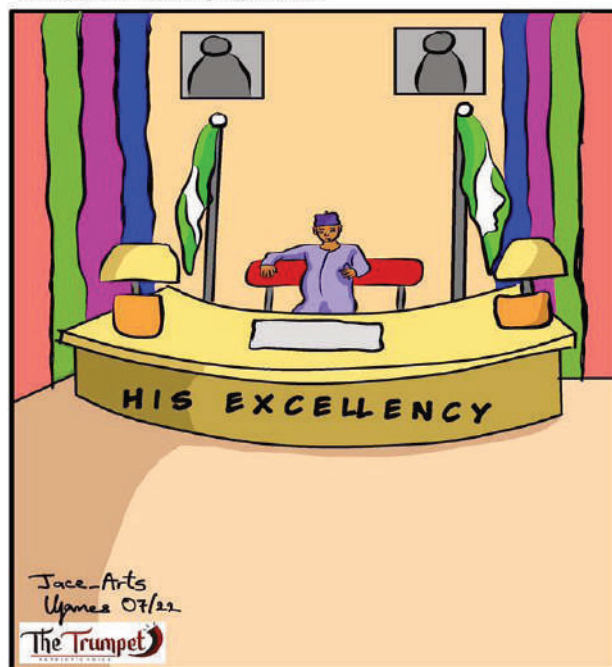
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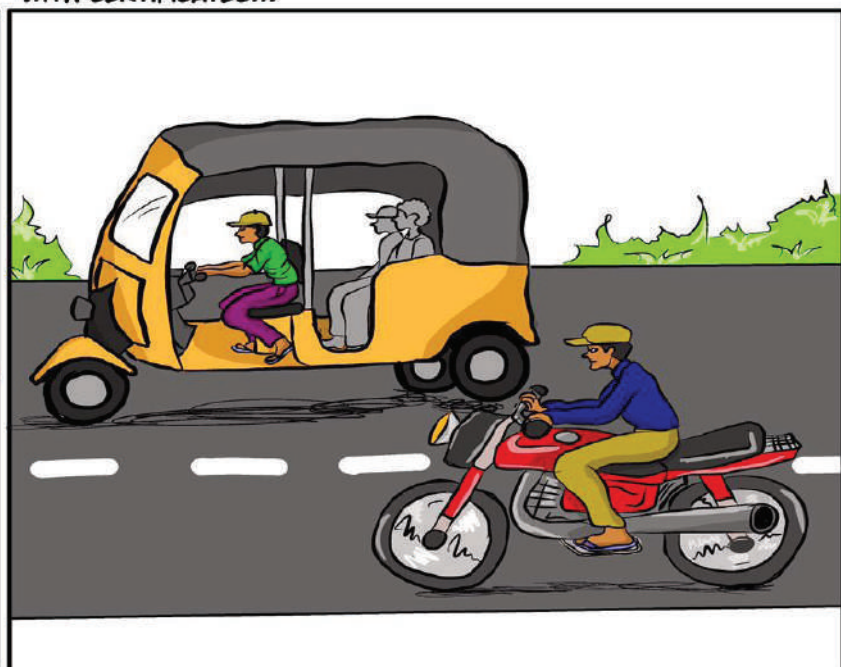
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WITH CERTIFICATES...



Settling in locations outside God's will

Then the Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land which I shall tell you" (Genesis 26:2). In many ways, the writings and words of the Holy Bible are cast in poetic language. The instruction of the Lord to Isaac is one of such. Isaac was commanded not to go down but to live in the land where God will show him. We go down if we do things out of the purview of God. We live if we put ourselves in the sight range of God.

Our prayer is that we shall be where God has marked for us as our location. Between Isaac and his father Abraham, there were two famines. Consequently, there is nothing we are undergoing today in terms of hardship and lack or scarcity that the people of God did not undergo in the Bible. However, in all this, our relationship with God matters a lot.

The experiences of human lack and deprivation may lead to desperation. The account of Esau (Genesis 25:29-34) is instructive. Hunger made Esau so weary that his reply to his brother, Jacob's request was "Look I am about to die; so what is this birth right to me?"

Hunger can be 'weaponized.' Why do you think unscrupulous politicians keep their people poor in a state of destitution? In the face of death, shame, failure, and poverty, we naturally become eager and desperate. This state makes us devise human ways that we may figure as the way out. There is nothing wrong with using human reason to solve daily problems that we face. But we must seek the divine face in every situation. Isaac

needed to look up to God.

Our human ways should not be outside the divine will of God. Our today's experience can be

likened to the famine faced by Isaac. In spite of the resources and structures we see everywhere, both human and non-human, we are enmeshed in poverty, unemployment,

dying industries and firms, decaying health and education systems, and even in areas with huge budgetary votes, we are still shamefully in dire need of help. Look at our oil sector, look at our security, etc. People manning these areas cannot complain about the lack of resources and finance. "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain who builds it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain" (Psalm 127:1). It is not late in the day for us to seek the face of the divine Builder and Watchman in our human affairs.

There are many impediments we encounter in our life's journey. They come in our workplace, family, spouses, children, and businesses. We should strive to be victorious over these challenges and obstacles. Only those who stand up to confront and put these obstacles down are called overcomers and conquerors (Romans 8:37). In our text today and based on the experience of Isaac (Genesis 26:1-33), as a victim of a natural evil – famine - Isaac needed to look up to God. His situation can only be turned around when he could find water. But not water in just any location! The natural place to seek water was Egypt. The Nile was there. But God told him otherwise. In the Bible, Egypt is a metaphor for bondage, slavery,



Dr. Karo Ogbinaka

and punishment. Are you living in plenty but in punishment, bondage, and slavery?

Many are in such situations here and outside Nigeria.

God has since delivered His people from Egypt and would not want them to return to this experience again. Isaac became his own barrier. He failed or chose not to follow God's leading. He did not go down to Egypt, but he did not go the way of God either. Isaac went to the land of Gerar. He met Abimelech, the King of the Philistines. But the men of the place 'asked' about his wife (Genesis 26:6). Isaac had to resort to falsehood for the fear of death.

He ran away from one death to another death. The king rescued Isaac from this first disaster.

The story says further that Isaac sowed in this land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold "and the Lord blessed him. The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous" (Genesis 26:12-13).

Nevertheless, Isaac became an object of envy due to this prosperity and wealth. The same King Abimelech issued Isaac a quit notice. "So the Philistines envied him" (verse 14) "and Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we" (verse 16).

Isaac only got material blessings in a location that was outside the will of God. He had no rest! He opened blocked wells. He had good harvests. His flocks increased. But so were the quantum of envy, hatred, and enemies that surrounded him. At the Valley of Gerer, Isaac opened all the closed wells of Abraham, giving them the same names his father gave them thus: Esek (contention, v. 20); Sitnah (hatred, v. 21), and Rehoboth (there is room, v. 22).

God did not appear to Isaac in any of these places.

We must go to locations where God would appear to us. This will be a place of worship, prayer, and where God gives his people rest. It is in such a place we can chant, "O come, let us worship the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms" (Psalm 95:1-2). God

desires our worship. We cannot be truly blessed where we cannot worship God truly.

God bless and Shalom!

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

Flee from sin, enjoy God's blessing

All the problems in this world including personal, communal and national started from sin. So, if you want to defeat the devil and demons always and overcome all problems in your life, there is need to depart from sin and iniquity and serve God in Holiness. Challenges will surely come to all humans but with God, you will surely overcome all challenges and problems.

In fact, the state of every society today is a function of its obedience or disobedience to the word of God whether they know it or not. Europe and the United States of America served God with all their hearts many centuries ago and today they are leading the world. Today, there are many words of God that have been turned into national policies and they are reaping the benefits. Social Security policy to take care of the underprivileged is the Word of God that says we should not forsake the poor, and countries that are adopting this word of God are having the



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benefits whether they are Christians or not. The word of God says Give and it shall be given unto you in greater measures (Luke 6:38) and anyone can benefit from this word of God if you give to others cheerfully.

If you do good, you reap good and if you do bad, you reap bad.

But when you obey the complete

Word of God including believing in Jesus Christ as the Messiah/Saviour of mankind from sin and the devil, the gate of Heaven will be opened to you in addition to having the blessings of other words of God on earth.

If you obey other words of God but don't believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour, you will get the benefits of those words you believe in on earth but the gate of Heaven will not be open for you.

Psalm 119:1-3 says, "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with their whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways."

I John 3:9 also says "whoever that says he or she is born again do not commit sin as long as the seed of the Holy Spirit lives inside.

Taste Jesus Christ yourself. Don't go through any man. Just accept Him and confess Him as the Messiah/Saviour sent by God to save humanity and

that you are ready to follow Him and be loyal to him, and He will reveal Himself to you. Jesus Christ is the perfect replacement for Adam in human history. Adam failed but Jesus Christ succeeded and redeemed all humans potentially to God. All you need is just to acknowledge and accept the salvation won for you and you will be saved instantly. Every human inherited spiritual and physical death and problems from Adam but if any human is willing, he or she will inherit eternal life and a prosperous life from Jesus Christ. These are the only two ways of humanity in relation to God, and Jesus is the only successful way back to God.

So, be born again, depart from sin and iniquity, remain holy and enjoy your life on earth and also beyond.

God bless us in Jesus Name.

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

Encounter with trans-generational greatness

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

The grand finale of Christ The King Rescue Global Ministry's annual seven-day special events which took place on 29th June 2022 attracted a large crowd of worshippers.

The large crowd was an indication that something special is in the offing. The worshippers for that day were made up mostly of women, young and old trooping into the church auditorium in Yewande area in Ifo LGA of Ogun State.

This attracted the Trumpet Religion Desk's curiosity.

At the parked auditorium, Prophet Gabriel Onaolapo, the President of CK-REGLOM as the church is fondly called, whose turn it was, to minister on that day in appreciation, reeled out the names of the six Pastors, who had earlier ministered the previous Wednesday.

With the opening remarks, the entire church went into a frenzy of prayer sessions for the country and congregants. Then this breathtaking sermon lasted for one hour and twenty minutes.

INTRODUCTION -There is what is referred to as Jewish phenomenon, Greatness is ingrained in you. Greatness is in your DNA. It's part of your heritage because you are made in the image and likeness of our Great God. Not to be great is an aberration.

Failure is an insult to who you are. Ignorance, Indolence, blurred vision, refusal to act on ideas and divine leading can prevent you from becoming great. But as human beings, we need to understand greatness as it relates to our life's assignment and purpose so that we don't keep chasing shadows and die as miserable people. To buttress his point further, Prophet Onaolapo said, "A cow can't pray and plans to be pumped to be as big as an elephant."

He stressed, whatever the greatness in an individual isn't for him alone, neither must such greatness end with such an individual. Rather, such inherent gifts are transferable as they are usually transgenerational and continue even after one's death.

Greatness has nine dimensions:

1. Chief is usually the head, boss, ruler, commander, leader, primus inter pares first among equals.
2. An eminent man: is high, exalted, elevated, awesome, big, mighty, glorified, magnified, ennobled and enthroned.
3. Excellent: is well. Dandy, bully, tough, solid, stunning.
4. An important man: significant, superior, world-shaking, grand, substantial.
5. Large: mega, big, goodly, bumper
6. Famous: a person of note, celebrity, notable, hero, luminary, worthy, figure.
7. Reputable: outstanding, elevated, eminence.
8. Authority: prestige, influence, prominence, weight
9. Giant: huge, intimidating

RELEVANT STORY OF FATHER ABRAHAM - PROGENITOR OF JEWS.



Prophet Gabriel Onaolapo and wife

Prophet Onaolapo stressed that due to the importance of Abraham, his name was mentioned in the Bible 232 TIMES; while ABRAM was mentioned 50 TIMES.

In the same breath, the DAVID name appeared 904 TIMES in the Bible. While the name of our Lord JESUS APPEARED 1,341 TIMES in the Bible.

MOSES had his name mentioned 799 TIMES in the Bible.

Although Abraham had

1. Late marriage
2. No child. Prolong delay Cf Gen.11:28; 22:20ff
3. No stable abode. No accommodation
4. No direction
5. No property, Acts 7:3
6. He was not doing well in his native land, Ur in Chaldeans (Iraq of today) as he needed to relocate at the age of 75, while his wife was 65.

THE SECRETS OF A TRANS-GENERATIONAL INEXHAUSTIBLE GREATNESS

1. Radical faith
2. Blind trust
3. Walking with God faithfully
4. Raising Godly children. Gen.18:18
5. Audacity or risk-taking
6. Purpose discovery
7. The presence of God. Gen.26:28
8. Seeking the good of others. Esther 10:3
9. Covenant relationship
10. Favour of God. Daniel 5:18

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SIGNS OF ABRAHAM'S GREATNESS PASSED ONTO THE JEWS. Gen.12:1-4

1. Great name
2. Great nation
3. Great posterity
4. Great prosperity
5. Great and global influence
6. Great possessions
7. Great spirituality
8. Great faith
9. Great achievements
10. Great discoveries
11. Great blessings
12. Great power
13. Great honour
14. Great army
15. Great covenant

16. Great and eternal legacies
17. Great revelations and insights
18. Great miracles
19. Great victories. Gen.14:14-20
20. Great heritage or inheritance. Psalm 16:6
21. Great inventions
22. Great population. Exod.1:7

BIBLICAL FIGURES THAT PROVED TRANS-GENERATIONAL GREATNESS OF ABRAHAM

1. Pa Isaac. Gen.26:12-14
2. King David II Sam.7:8-13; Psalm 89:27b
3. King Solomon. II Chron.9:6
4. Mordecai, Esther 10:1-3
5. Nehemiah
6. Ezra
7. Daniel. Daniel 6:1-5
8. Mary the mother of Jesus.

YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE GREATNESS IN RELATION TO YOUR LIFE'S ASSIGNMENT OR PURPOSE.

TYPES OF GREATNESS

1. Inconsequential greatness
2. Phenomenal greatness
3. Astronomical greatness
4. Sectoral or Career greatness
5. Contagious greatness
6. Local greatness
7. National greatness
8. Global greatness

FACTORS THAT PREVENT GREATNESS

1. Ignorance
2. Error or sin
3. Indolence
4. Lack of direction
5. Disobedience to Express Revelations
6. Lack of faith
7. Wrong Companionship
8. Curses-inherited or self-inflicted
9. Poverty
10. Lack of vision.

CONCLUSION: The bible said, "all things are possible to them that believe". If you believe in trans-generational greatness, God is able to do it for you. He concluded the sermon and the Church rose.

Odumeje, security personnel in a faceoff over Church demolition

There was a melodrama at popular church premises known as the Land of Freedom in Onisha Anambra State when the presiding Pastor of the church Prophet Chukwuemeka Ohanaemere aka Odumeje engaged in a face-off with the Anambra State Task Force over an attempt to demolish part of his church.

The Anambra State Task Force had earlier stormed the Mountain of Holy Ghost Intervention and Deliverance Ministry to enforce the demolition of part of the church building encroaching on a huge canal.

The Trumpet gathered that the building housing the generating set and security office of the church was what

the Anambra State Task Force tagged 'illegal structures' and marked it for demolition when ODUMEJE decided to prevent them from carrying out the demolition exercise.

The Task Force rough-handed and wanted to whisk the Prophet away after resisting them.

Monsignor Bakeni Ordained as Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Maiduguri

Despite the heightened tension over the safety of Christians in northern Nigeria, the Catholic Church has conducted the episcopal ordination of Monsignor John Bogna Bakeni as the Auxiliary Bishop of Maiduguri Diocese.

Maiduguri, the Borno State capital remained the epicentre of Boko Haram, ISWAP terrorist groups. The Catholic

Church used the occasion to call for prayer from NIGERIANS for Monsignor Bakeni.

In a statement, the Church stated "We pray for him that despite his own unworthiness; he may faithfully fulfil the office of Apostle, which Jesus Christ, has entrusted to him.

"We pray that he may become more like our High Priest and Good Shepherd,

the Teacher and Servant of all and so be a genuine sign of Christ's loving presence among us.

"We pray for the Bishops, Priests, religious men and women, lay faithful and eminent personalities that will be honouring the event from far and near, that God will grant them safe journey. Amen."



Bullion Go Neat Global urges FG to fix challenges of manufacturing sector

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

President of Bullion Go-Neat Global Limited, Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyibo, has challenged the Federal Government to assist Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and the manufacturing sector to remain sustainable to enable them create more jobs in the country.

Oguntoyibo, who spoke at a forum organised by the Commerce and Industry Correspondents Association of Nigeria (CICAN) in Lagos, listed lack of long-term, accessible credit facilities for local manufacturers in particular and other businesses in the country.

As a politician, philanthropist and promoter of talents, he also disclosed that lack of stable power supply has dwarfed the country's business sector for years, adding: "The Federal Government's failure to guarantee stable power supply has killed and continued to kill MSMEs, Small and Mediums Enterprises (SMEs), as well as medium and large-scale firms.

"In my company located at Mowe area of the Obafemi Owode Council of Ogun State, the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IEDC) that provides

electricity to the area told us that we will be given electricity at some time of the day. We now programme our operations to it, but unfortunately, they don't keep their promises. Once they restore power and we begin operations, they will switch off power.

"When we put off our generators to continue with production as soon as public electricity is restored, they again plunge us into darkness almost immediately and that happens all the time, which leads to damaging our generators, raw materials and other equipment. That led me to call the IEDC to remove my company and home from their power network. And since then, I run my factory and home with my generators.

"There is also the problem of scarcity of high cost of petroleum products. When you even go to the filling stations to buy diesel and petrol, they ask you to go and bring your generator set or ask for gratification or they will not sell the products to you, even though you express readiness to pay any amount they chose to sell the products," he lamented.

He said government had failed woefully in its responsibility to guarantee public power supply to the business firms and homes

in the country, despite the huge amounts being budgeted on a yearly basis to service the power sector.

The Bullion Go-Neat Global boss also lamented the deplorable state of roads in the country, stressing that the company spends huge amounts monthly to fix the damage bad road network causes his company's vehicles.

Oguntoyibo, who disclosed that he has 80 direct workers on his company's payroll and over 500 indirect workers, blamed the high rate of crime in the country on unemployment and appealed to the government to tackle the issue.

He also lamented multiple taxations, adding that the businesses were being over-taxed in the country.

The company, however, appreciated its customers for

their patronage and pledged more incentives adding that customers of the company, which manufactures alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages stand the chance of getting mouth-watering incentives if they continue to patronise its products.

According to him, the incentives include cash rebates, discounts on orders and brand ambassadorship, stressing that the pack of incentives was a way of appreciating loyal customers and also encouraging new distributors who had desired a franchise arrangement with his company.

He attributed the rising profile of the company to the uniqueness of its brands, especially Coco Samba, which demand, he said, had soared in recent times, adding: "As a company, we have

been particularly thrilled by the wide acceptability of Coco Samba.

"That wide acceptance is the assurance we have that the effort, in terms of research and blend of raw materials we put in Coco Samba, as well as production cost, was not a waste. Coco Samba meets customer's need and we are working to make it even more available to more clients and more consumers."

Oguntoyibo appealed to the Federal Government and its agencies to work towards removing the bottlenecks militating against the manufacturing sector, saying this would not only help in creating additional jobs in the country but also enable the real sector to fulfil its role of job creation, value addition and triggering technological development.

LCCI seeks removal of fuel subsidy over lingering scarcity, queues

The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has charged the Federal Government to be courageous by removing the controversial fuel subsidy once and for all if the country's economy hopes to grow.

President of LCCI, Dr Michael Olawale-Cole, who made the call at the chamber's second quarter economic review in Lagos, also asked the government to curtail if not totally eliminate crude oil theft to enable the government to generate enough funds to provide infrastructure, health, education and other social amenities in the country.

He called for agricultural sector to be supported to boost food production rather than depend on food imports, saying: "There is the need to address structural bottlenecks and regulatory constraints that have contributed to the high cost of doing business in the country.

"A supportive and conducive investment environment is crucial to boosting private sector involvement in the economic recovery and growth process. Government should initiate moves towards having cost-reflective tariffs in the power sector. As this will attract the needed investment to boost power supply and halt the frequent national grid crashes. We should also begin to initiate special purpose interventions in boosting deployment of renewable energy."

He also canvassed more investments in export infrastructure, enhanced and automated port operations, policy to tackle high production costs and boosting foreign exchange supply to sustain the country's trade with other countries of the world.

Olawale-Cole also urged the government to ensure diversification of its exports by boosting local refining capacity, production of petrochemical products and accelerating reforms in the oil and gas sector to attract more foreign investments in the future.

He said the Russia and Ukraine war had lingered contrary to expectations, adding that the crisis was engendering deeper fear about worsening food scarcity and that more Nigerians were falling into poverty.

Noting that the food supply chains were been attacked, thereby making it difficult for the food supply to get to their intended destination, adding that has made foodstuffs become very expensive, he said the most sustainable solution to the high cost of foodstuff is for government to encourage local food production to attain food sustenance in the country.

It would be recalled that the LCCI on a quarterly basis reviews the country's economy to draw the government's attention to the challenges the business community were contending with.



Vice Chancellor, Bayelsa Medical University (BMU), Prof. Ebitimitula Etebu (left); Bayelsa State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Pabara Igwele; First Vice President, BioCubaFarma, Dr. Mayda Mauri Perez; Governor Douye Diri; Nigeria's Ambassador to Cuba, Benaoyagha Okoyen and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investments, Bar. Patience Abah after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the establishment of a vaccines and pharmaceutical production plant in Bayelsa

Bread bakers threaten nationwide withdrawal of services

Edo State chapter of the Association of Master Bakers and Caterers in Nigeria (AMBCN), has declared that its members will participate in the proposed nationwide withdrawal of services as directed by its national body.

Chairman of the Edo State chapter of the association, Benjamin Agbonze, who disclosed this during a media chat with journalists in Benin City shortly after the association's monthly meeting, said the withdrawal of services was necessitated by the incessant increases in the prices of baking materials in the county.

His words: "Our national body has directed that on July 13 to 27, we should withdraw our services in order to rearrange our services to meet up with the current economic realities. A bag of flour that was sold for about N21,000 in January this year has risen to about N30,000. We are not making profit with the continued increments in the cost of materials used in the baking business.

"The national body has resolved that we cannot continue to increase the price of bread, so we are calling on the Federal Government across board to

intervene. We want the government to help reduce the tariff on baking materials and also give flour millers' easy access to foreign exchange.

"People are already looking for an alternative to bread and if we continue to hike prices of bread continuously, it will not augur well for the people and bread value chain business.

"If we continue the way things are, very soon we will go out of business. The national executive council of our association during our June meeting directed its units across the country to embark on two weeks' withdrawal of our services."

Fidelity Bank takes over Benin, Kano, Kaduna DisCos over multi-billion debts

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

Fidelity Bank Plc has taken over the Benin, Kano and Kaduna electricity distribution companies (DisCos) over their inability to repay multi-billion naira loans they obtained to pay for assets acquired in the 2013 privatisation exercise.

This followed Federal Government announcement of the restructuring of the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IBEDC) and Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHEDC).

The actions underline a wave of distress sweeping through electricity distribution companies due to operational losses amid issues about service delivery, bill collections and debts owed gas suppliers.

While the Benin DisCo is owned by Victor Osibodu and his wife, Funke, a former managing director of Ecobank and Union Bank, the Kano DisCo-Alhaji Tajudeen Aminu Dantata, Kaduna DisCo is owned by former Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) commissioner, Alhaji Yusuf Hamisu Abubakar.

The bank has written to the Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE), which oversees the government's 40 per cent stake in the DisCos that it had replaced the board members of the affected DISCos.

The new board members for the Kano DisCo are, Hasan Tukur as Chairman and Nelson Ahaneku and Rabiu Suleiman as members, while the Benin DisCo has K. C. Akuma as Chairman with Adeola Ijose and Charles Onwera as members.

For the Kaduna DisCo, the new appointments are, Abbas Jega (Chairman), while Ameenu Abubakar and Marlene Ngoyi are members, just as the BPE has also nominated Bashir Gwandu (Kano), Yomi Adeyemi (Benin) and Umar Abdullahi (Kaduna) as independent directors to represent government's 40 per cent interest in the three DisCos during the transition period.

On the Ibadan and Port Harcourt DisCos, a statement jointly signed by the Executive Chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Sanusi Garba and Director-General of BPE, Alex Okoh, explained that the announcement followed Fidelity Bank's activation of the call collateralized shares of KEDCO, BEDC and Kaduna Electric over their inability to repay loans obtained to pay for assets acquired in the 2013 privatisation exercise.

They added that the Assets Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON) would be a placeholder board for IBEDC in temporary capacity, while the PHEDC undergoes restructuring to prevent its imminent insolvency.

The NERC and BPE chiefs said the new boards of the affected DisCos have been approved and

the bureau was collaborating with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Ministry of Power to ensure no service disruptions during the transition.

"Today we were informed by Fidelity Bank that they have activated the call on the collateralised shares of Kano, Benin, and Kaduna (Fidelity and AFREXIM) DisCos and that they have initiated action to take over the boards of the DisCos and exercise the rights over the shares.

"Fidelity Bank's action is a contractual and commercial intervention and is between the Core Investors in the DISCOs and the lender. BPE is involved because of the 40 per cent shareholding of the Government in the DisCos. Fidelity Bank has informed us of the new board members of the affected companies," the statement added.

We have also received assurances that Fidelity Bank will participate fully in all the ongoing market initiatives aimed at improving the sector, especially the National Mass Metering Programme. In the interim, NERC and BPE met on an Emergency Basis and activated the Business Continuity Process and have appointed interim Managing Directors in the affected DisCos.

They explained that the Kano DisCo has Ahmad Dangana as Managing Director, Benin DisCo has Henry Ajagbawa and the Kaduna DisCo has Yusuf Usman Yahaya as managing directors, just as the BPE has obtained approval from NERC to appoint Kingsley Achife as the interim Managing Director with the takeover of the Ibadan DisCo by AMCON.

In a temporary capacity, AMCON will be a placeholder for the Ibadan franchise and will have Ahmed Kuru as Chairman, while Eberechukwu Uneze and Aminu Ismail are members, just as Oluwaseyi Akinwale will represent government interest on the board alongside the Director-General of BPE.

"Lastly, we are re-structuring the management and board of the PHEDC to forestall its imminent insolvency of the entity and as a condition to meet its market obligations, Iboroma Akpana will take over as Chairman of the board, while Emmanuel Okotete, Eyo Ekpo, Ismaila Shuaibu and Director-General of BPE will form the interim Board and Benson Uwheru will take over as Managing Director as part of the changes.

The Government will support the activation of emergency funds through the Nigerian Electricity Market Stabilisation Facility to support the entity while it goes through restructuring and repositioning to serve the citizens of the franchise area better. We are working with the Minister of Power to ensure no service disruptions during these transitions. We remain committed to supporting the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry to serve Nigerians better," the statement added.

Ogun, LCCI to partner on establishment of paper mill

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

The Printing and Publishing Group of the Lagos Chapter of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has sought partnership with the Ogun State government in establishing a paper mill in the state.

Chairperson of the group Mrs Layo Okeowo disclosed this in Abeokuta, the Ogun State capital during the group's visit to the state Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investments.

Okeowo, who said the LCCI had indicated interest to invest in the paper mill value chain, sought allocation of 20 hectares of land from the government as its equity contribution towards the establishment of a modern and functional paper mill in the state.

She revealed that the demand for paper mills and related products in Nigeria has grown to over

three million metric tons yearly, adding that the installed capacity had stagnated at 200,000 metric tons, making importation of raw materials and finished products inevitable.

According to investment analysts, about 4.3 million worth of investment machinery could produce 100 metric tons of paper per day, adding that paper products were being imported with the scarce foreign exchange to meet the country's current demand due to inadequate capacity, weak production and lack of enough investments in the sector.

"LCCI plans to establish a modern and functional paper mill in Ogun State in line with the actualisation agenda and the state government's public, private partnership (PPP) framework. The establishment of the paper mill will create opportunities for inclusive economic participation, as well as

engender direct and indirect jobs.

"It will also support the state government's revenue drive by facilitating income and wealth creation which will sustain the economic development. It will also bolster the industrial profile of the state as the industrial hub of Nigeria," she stressed.

Responding, Commissioner for Industry, Trade and Investment, Mrs Kikelomo Longe, expressed appreciation to the group for its resolve to partner with the government by establishing the firm in the state.

Longe assured the group of government's assistance in ensuring that the business thrived in the state.

According to her, the setting up of a paper mill firm in the state will further strengthen the relationship between Lagos and Ogun and create job opportunities in both states.

Nigeria loses \$10 million daily to oil theft

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Managing Director of TotalEnergies EP Nigeria Limited, Mike Sangster, has said that crude oil theft in the country has assumed the dimension of an organised crime for which Nigeria loses about \$10 million daily in revenue.

Sangster spoke at the Nigerian Oil and Gas (NOG) conference and exhibition in Abuja during industrial leaders' panel session on the future of Nigeria's energy sector in the era of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA).

Sangster noted that the PIA had made provisions for a Host Community Trust Fund, which was a step in the right direction to empower the local communities and ensure a clear and consistent framework in the industry.

He, however, said this would not immediately end the activities of crude oil thieves and pipeline vandals, which had transcended into organised crime and disrupting the operations of oil and gas companies.

The TotalEnergies EP boss said the company had declared a force majeure on its Operational Mining Licence (OML) 58 and had stopped production since February 24 due to the vandalism of its oil and gas infrastructure.



Mike Sangster

"You can see some of the figures in the press. I mean maybe it is up to 100,000 barrels per day being stolen. With crude oil selling even at \$100 per barrel, that means \$10 million per day is stolen, which has been lost and mainly to the country because you know the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has 60 per cent of most of the Joint Ventures (JVs) while the International Oil Companies (IOCs) pay tax at 85 per cent.

"That is a huge loss for the country and so, I think it really needs to be a priority to look

beyond the host communities and how we can address the safety of crude oil and eradicate the theft once for all," he stated.

Sangster, therefore, urged the Federal Government and industry stakeholders to find a lasting solution to the issue of vandalism in order to make Nigeria an investment destination.

Also speaking, Managing Director of Chevron Nigeria's Mid-Africa Business Unit, Rick Kennedy, advocated institutionalisation of the PIA, which would define clear role for industry stakeholders going forward.

Kennedy, who is also Chairman, Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), said traditional oil and gas businesses had a key role to play in Nigeria's energy transition journey.

"We're going to transition to more and gas. I think that we all agree that we agree with that. That's our transition on fuel and with time other sources of energy. They will become economically viable and readily available," he said.

Kennedy said the transaction would happen at a different pace for different countries, adding that Chevron remains committed at present to its traditional oil and gas business.

Senate seeks more support for AMCON's debt recovery drive

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

Chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance and other Financial Institutions, Uba Sani, has restated the willingness of the National Assembly to continually support the debt recovery efforts of the Assets Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON).

He said the support had become critical because AMCON remained a strategic national institution that plays an important and pivotal role in helping to stabilise the nation's economy.

Sani, who was represented by Senator Olubunmi Adetumbi, however, commended the management of AMCON for remaining resolute in spite of being saddled with the tough assignment of recovering nearly N5 trillion owed the country

by debtors, who have been hiding under all manner of technicalities to approach the courts in their bids to stall repayment.

Sani spoke at a one-day retreat recently in Niger State with the theme: Asset Recovery As A Tool For Enhanced Growth And Stability Of The Banking Sector Sustaining The Impact And Bridging The Challenges Of AMCON.

While appealing to other Federal Government agencies to support AMCON's recovery drive, Sani also appreciated the contribution of the inter-agency committee set up in 2019 to ensure that debtors are held accountable.

The committee's work had brought many obligors to the negotiation table through the efforts of the Inter-agency Committee chaired by Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye, who is also Chairman of

the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC).

The committee comprises heads and representatives of agencies including the ICPC, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Ministry of Justice and AMCON. They were expected to review the status of all debts owed AMCON, as well as deliberate on practical, legal and other strategies for the recovery of the outstanding debts.

The Trumpet recalled that it was also in a bid to tighten the noose on the obligors that President Muhammadu Buhari signed the AMCON (Amendment) Act No.4 2010 in November 2021.



Ezuzu bags 3 years jail, loses properties over N5bn investment scam

By PAUL MICHAEL

The Benin Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has secured the conviction of David Wealth Ezuzu, an investment fraudster, before Justice Efe Ikponmwonba of the Edo State High Court, Benin City.

Ezuzu, who is the Chief Executive Officer of Arerben Ventures, an investment company, was arraigned on one count charge of obtaining by false pretence. He was said to have fraudulently obtained over N5 billion from unsuspecting members of the public on the pretext of investment in forex trading.

The charge reads, "That you, David Wealth Ezuzu (trading under the name and style of Arerben ventures) sometimes between 11th January, 2020 and 1st day of March, 2021 in Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court did transfer the aggregate sum of N15,200,000 (Fifteen Million, Two Hundred Thousand Naira) out of the total sum of N5,458,171,996.95 (Five Billion, Four Hundred and Fifty-eight Million, One Hundred and Seventy One Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-six Naira, Ninety-five Kobo) you received in your Access Bank account number: 0795689642 from unsuspecting members of the public as investment into Forex trading to your Guarantee Trust Bank 0114467985 in the name of Ezuzu David knowing that same represent proceeds of Ezuzu David's criminal conduct, to wit: obtaining money by false pretense and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 17 (a) of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2004 and punishable under section 17 (b) of the same Act."

The defendant pleaded guilty to the charge. Following his plea, the prosecution counsel, Francis A. Jirbo, prayed the court to convict and sentence him accordingly.

However, the defence counsel, A. Afamefena, pleaded with the court to temper justice with mercy as restitution shall be made to the victims of the crime.

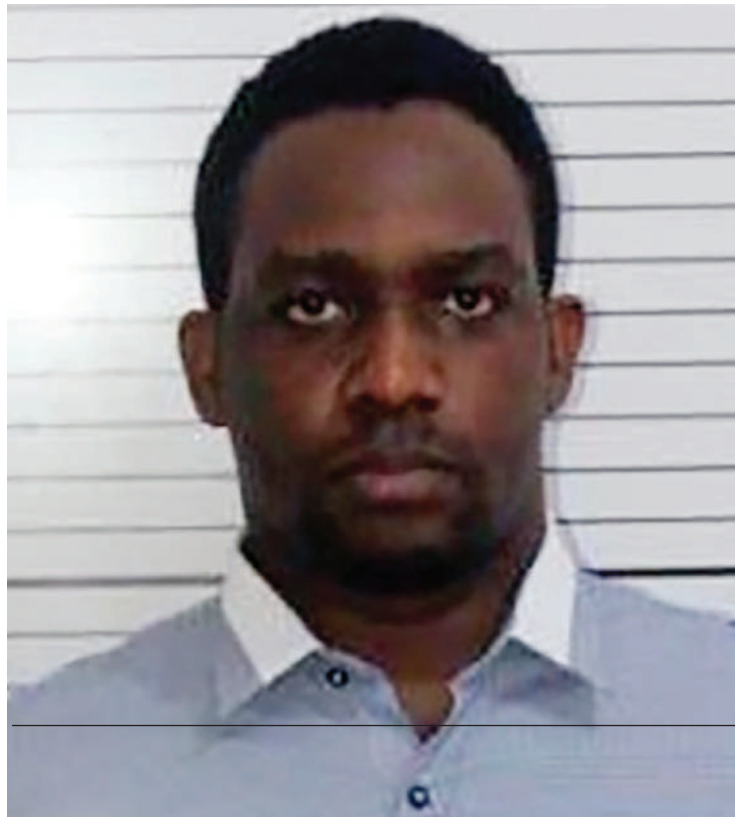
In his ruling, Justice Ikponmwonba convicted and sentenced Ezuzu to three (3) years imprisonment with an option of N 2 million fine, while his company, D.W. Arerben Global Investment, was convicted and sentenced to a fine of N2 million. The company is to be wound up and the balance of N1,099,503.08 in its account forfeited to the Federal Government through

the EFCC for the purpose of restitution of the victims of the crime.

The judge also ordered the forfeiture of N102,131.45 in the defendant's business account and five other bank accounts (David Wealth Ezuzu Zenith bank account no: 2179944006, David Ezuzu Guarantee Trust Bank account no: 0046882751, David Ezuzu Standard chartered bank account no:5005093998, David Ezuzu Wema Bank account no: 025183759; 0620469522; 0620485793; 0620485786; 2009369467 and Prestana Enterprise Sterling Bank account no: 0081931988) to the Federal Government through the EFCC for the purpose of restituting victims of the crime.

The court further ordered that the defendant forfeits to the Federal Government through the EFCC for the benefit of the victims of the crime the following properties:

1. 5 Bedroom duplex and security house situated at Plot 3 Block 7 Kevkagbor Family Layout, Off Ibusa Road, Asaba, Oshimili South LGA, Delta State.
2. Landed property situated at Okotomi Layout, Obadogwugwu Quarters, Okpanam Quarters, Ibusa



David Wealth Ezuzu

Road, Asaba, Oshimili North LGA, Delta State.

3. Landed property at Anieluenonu New Layout, Obadogwugwu Quarters, Okpanam, Asaba, Oshimili North LGA, Delta State.

4. 5 Bedroom duplex with bungalow situated at 12 Okwunze Street, Off Stadium Road, Oshimili South LGA, Delta State

5. Two bungalows of three bedrooms and 2 bedrooms respectively

at Obiaje Family land, Off Asaba, Oshimili South LGA Delta State.

6. Landed property, Plot 27 situated at Umayi Umuezeafadia Family land, Okosolo, Asaba-Benin Road in Oshimili South LGA, Delta State.

7. Bungalow situated along R.N. Okonkwo Street, Ogbewelle Quarters, Okpanam, Oshimili North LGA, Delta State.

8. 26 Hectares of land located at Ngbo Ofuke Village, Asaba, Delta State.

9. Three storey building into 3 places situated at Obduogwu Family land, Opposite NNPC Filling Station, Asaba, Delta State.

10. A piece or parcel of land measuring approximately 200ft by 200ft (1 Acre) lying and situated at Elibujor ogne- of Layout by Benin - Asaba Expressway.

Also ordered forfeited are one leaflet of Keystone bank manager's cheque valued (N400,000), 13 leaflets of Zenith bank manager's cheques valued at N115,000,000, 10 leaflets of Guaranty Trust Bank manager's cheque valued at N61,700,000.00, 28 leaflets of First City Monument Bank manager's cheque valued at N33,550,000 and 2 leaflets of UBA manager's cheque valued at N300,000.

FG to establish wood technology park, mass plantation

By BLESSING OZIWO

The Federal Government has proposed to establish a wood technology park where wood technicians can be trained. This is part of government's youth empowerment initiative and to aid the revitalization of the wood value chain industry.

Concluded plans have been made to embark on the mass plantation of timber across the country.

It is to establish this through its Raw Materials Research and Development Council, as the move will help in the provision of raw materials for the wood and wood products.

Organisers of the Wood Expo Nigeria disclosed this in a communique put together from the WEN 2.0 event in Abuja and made available to journalists at a press conference to announce 2022 edition of the expo coming up in Lagos in November.

The communique read in part, "The Expo noted and commended the Raw Materials Research and Development Council's initiatives of proposing to jointly establish a wood technology park for training of wood technicians.

"It also noted the proposed mass plantation establishment

(by the RMRDC) across the country for sustainable provision of raw materials for the wood and wood products, pulp and paper industries, as well as for environmental protection."

The communique pointed out that the objective of the expo was to promote sustainable use of forest resources as well as wood and wood products through the entire value chain in the sector while working out economic strategies for effective competition in the global market.

The forum noted the increasing environmental threats the country was facing as a result of forest depletion and the need to map out effective strategies to mitigate climate change effects.

The expo organisers noted and lamented that there was currently no certified forest in Nigeria, which queried the legality of forest resources in the international market.

Speaking to reporters at the press briefing in Abuja, the Chairman, Wood Expo Nigeria, Danny Sokari-George, said there was a need to have certified forests to meet the Federal Government's 25 million tree planting policy, which he said was achievable.

He stated that to plant the 25 million trees across the

country, WEN would partner with state governments and engage youths to create jobs from the value chain. He said, "WEN has a vision of partnering state governors to help the Federal Government realise its plan of planting 25 million trees.

"It is not a waste of time to secure land and plant trees

because when you plant trees today, there are ready buyers to buy it off here in Nigeria and abroad. And biologically, it is beneficial to the environment.

"We will engage the youth in planting trees because it will be beneficial to both parties. The youths will benefit economically and it will also help us solve forest depletion in Nigeria."



Danny Sokari-George

Developers, others abandon construction sites over rising cost of materials

There are thousands of buildings and construction sites abandoned by developers because of the high cost of building materials, while many buildings collapse every day because of the use of substandard building materials.

The rise in prices of building materials has posed a major threat to the construction sector, housing development by private developers and independent builders who desire to have a roof over their head.

Building materials, which play a critical role in the construction industry have reacted to the nation's inflationary trend in the last two years. Adding to the woes of the sector are exchange rate, port charges, haulage and diesel cost.

Developers and investors have witnessed materials costs shoot up by over 50 per cent in the last one year with inflation rising to about 17.7 per cent as of May 2022. The most affected material components include cement, reinforcement bar, tiles, doors, gravel, sand, paints, roofing sheets and others.

The 50kg bag of cement that was sold for N2, 600 in 2019 rose to N4, 500; Iron rod increased from N300, 000 per tonne to N415, 000 in the building materials market.

Consequently, most developers had to increase their rent and price by 40 to 50 per cent across major cities, while the abandonment of projects has become a social menace in the country. Many contractors started projects, which have become untenable due to cost variations.

Experts say the preponderance of uncompleted and substandard buildings was not unconnected to the inflation and high cost of building materials, which fuelled fluctuation in the construction cost.

Confirming the trend, the South West Chairman, Real Estate Developers Association (REDAN), Mr Debo Adejana, told newsmen that developers are adopting a wait-see approach to the staggering prices of building materials in the market.

He said: "It is very real but what is happening mostly is that developers are watching the prices, especially for off-plan projects so that cost variation will not totally stall projects."

Adejana said both developers and independent builders are pulling out of site, adding that the way out for most people has been to ask and settle for negotiated reviewed prices.

According to him, in the South West states, Lagos, which is the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria, is the most prominent in terms of abandoned projects due to high cost of materials.

He attributed the development to the fact that Lagos commands the highest number of projects ongoing.

In terms of cost variations between last year and now, he argued that depending on the point in time, the average

variation between last year and now has been between 70 per cent to 100 percent on most materials.

An independent builder located in Okota area, Mr Godwin Eze told newsmen that the increase in prices of materials has become too alarming as he had to abandon construction work of his three units of two-bedroom flats because of a hike in the price of roofing sheets, which almost doubled in recent times.

"You can imagine buying a bundle of roofing for over 17, 000 naira and I will require more than six bundles. I have to concentrate on more pressing needs first like payment of my children's tuition in school. Let me survive first by eating well with my family. I hope the price will come down soonest, then I may consider resumption of work on the project," he said.

The Managing Partner, Refin Homes Limited, Kazem Owolabi, also said it is unfortunate that abandonment

of projects has become the reality of today's market. He said: "Lots of projects are left either uncompleted or uninhabitable due to high cost of building materials and this usually leads to project overrun. Projects are uninhabitable in the sense that most developers are drastically reducing the quality of materials and project specifications just to break even. You then see that the market isn't responding to such developments and this has now further compounded the housing shortage."

"Most independent builders are now developers. The only difference is in the structure. Rise in the cost of building materials affects all, however, the direction being taken now is to increase the property price rather than totally abandon the site. Invariably what this means is that we now have fewer people with the capacity to purchase properties."

He added: "I'd say all Southwest states are victims

of these. However, the rate at which it affects each state differs. Unlike other states that have unregulated physical planning and urban development policies, these states are expected to have lots of abandoned sites with no consequences attached. However, due to strong regulatory policies in Lagos, site abandonment is an offence and can lead to the confiscation or a 'seal-off' of the site by the government. So, rather than face such heavy sanctions, developers will ensure that they complete construction regardless of the cost of construction materials."

Owolabi said in terms of percentage variations between last year and today, it has been a bitter pill to swallow daily but only a few developers found a sound strategy around this.

He said: "Back then, it was far easier to plan according to construction prices in the market as they were stable."

Unfortunately, the volatility in the market has made it quite

tough for most developers to plan ahead. When project analyses are done with certain market prices on Monday, you'd be amazed that the prices have fluctuated by Thursday. An average of 30 to 50 per cent unprecedented hike in prices of construction materials from last year up till now has sent many developers packing."

Speaking on the issue, the President, Nigerian Institute of Building, Prof. Yoahanna Izam called for improved production of local building materials with some of them significantly insulated from inflation that is related to importation.

He argued that the government must lead by example in using local materials for housing for instance, while others like the private sector should copy such moves.

Izam said: "This will serve as a better shock absorber to some of the expenditures. But we will need a long time to research such local products."



Abandoned projects at Lagos Airport

Building code: Lagos govt holds sensitisation workshop

The Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning & Urban Development, with support from the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development within the framework of the Nigerian Energy Support Programme, on Wednesday, held a one-day sensitisation workshop for stakeholders in the state's built environment.

The sensitisation exercise, which focused on modalities of domesticating the National Building Code for Lagos State, had participants cutting across building professionals' bodies, academia and building regulators.

The awareness workshop served as a forum for stakeholders to deliberate on a

methodological approach toward the domestication of the National Building Code and the integration of the Building Energy Efficiency Code and green building principles to the code.

Delivering the address of welcome to participants, the Commissioner, Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning & Urban Development, Dr Idris Salako, said the domestication of the National Building Code and its eventual launch as 'Lagos State Building Code' would deliver another national milestone from Lagos State.

"The Code will ensure that buildings are more resilient to disasters such as floods, fire outbreaks and collapse, by specifying requirements for structural

stability, durability and energy efficiency," he said.

The Special Advisor to the Governor on e-GIS, Dr Olajide Babatunde, stated in his speech that, "Lagos as a front runner in the country is taking the bold step to regularise its building standards which, in addition to protecting its people and property, would lower construction costs and drive economic development."

The Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning & Urban Development, Eng Abiola Kosegbe, in her remarks, urged the participants to leverage the expertise gained from previous training, to incorporate energy efficiency and green building principles in the design and construction of buildings in

order to achieve energy savings.

If implemented, Lagos State would become the first state to domesticate the National Building Code while also adopting the BEEC and other sustainable building measures to support the goal of transforming the state into a sustainable, smart city.

The NESP also provides technical advisory and capacity development to private developers and building professionals on improved energy-efficient building design and construction.

The Head of Programme, NESP, Mr Duke Benjamin said, "NESP is committed to supporting Lagos State to implement its Code domestication plan and would provide technical assistance throughout the process."

Fake Army General bags 7 years jail term for N266.5m fraud

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Justice Oluwatoyin Taiwo of the Special Offences Court sitting in Ikeja, Lagos, has convicted and sentenced one Bolarinwa Abiodun, a fake Army General to seven years in prison on a 13-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence, forgery of documents and possession of documents containing false pretence to the tune of N266,500,000.

The offences are said to be contrary to Section 1 (3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006, Section 363 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State 2015 and Section 6 of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Act No 14 of 2006, respectively.

The defendant, who was prosecuted by the Lagos Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), posed as a General in the Nigerian Army and made false representations to the complainant, Kodef Clearing Resources, that the President, Muhammadu Buhari, had short-listed him and one other to be appointed as the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and that he needed a short grant to "press and process the appointment."

Abiodun, who was arrested at his house in the Alagbado area of Lagos State on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, was also accused of forging a letter of appointment as COAS purportedly signed by the President and showing the same to the victim to further prove his claim.



Bolarinwa Abiodun

In the said letter, he claimed that he needed to pay a certain amount of money into the coffers of the Federal Government of Nigeria, as part of the requirements for the appointment as COAS.

Abiodun was also accused of forging a

Nigeria Army Identity Card with serial number 387140, claiming the same to have been issued to him from the Nigerian Army, and another forged Letter of Recommendation purportedly signed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo recommending one Adebayo Rasaan Adebola, with recruitment No 77RRI/OG/556/0032555 and Adeogun Emmanuel Adesola with recruitment No 77RRI/OG/352/0123751 for employment into the Nigeria Army.

He was also accused of being in possession of a forged Certificate of Confirmation dated November 7, 2018, purporting the same to have emanated from the Nigerian Army Headquarters.

He was also accused of being in possession of a forged document titled 'Letter of Authorization', purportedly signed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo permitting one Bamidele Olusegun Safiriyu of De-Rock Maritime Resource Ltd to enter Apapa Port freely and load their truck.

One of the counts reads: "Bolarinwa Oluwasegun Abiodun, between 15th June 2020 and 31st December 2020 in Lagos, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent to defraud and whilst holding yourself out as a General in the Nigerian Army, obtained the sum of N111,400,000 from Kodef Clearing Resources Limited, under the pretence that the sum represented part of the amount expended to "press and process" your incoming appointment by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, as the CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF of the Nigerian

Army, which pretence you knew to be false."

Another count reads: "Bolarinwa Oluwasegun Abiodun, sometime in May 2020 in Lagos within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, knowingly forged LETTER OF APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF dated 20th May 2020 and purported the said document to have emanated from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which document you know to be false."

When initially read before him at his arraignment on April 11, 2022, Abiodun pleaded "not guilty" to the charges.

Justice Taiwo had also on April 25, 2022, denied him bail, holding that the facts presented by the prosecution showed that he was a flight risk, and ordered an accelerated hearing instead.

In the course of the trial, the prosecuting team, Rotimi Oyedepo, A.O. Muhammed, S.I. Suleiman and E.K. Uduak presented six witnesses and tendered documentary evidence to prove the case against him.

The prosecution opened its case on April 25, 2022, and closed its case on June 20, 2022.

Thereafter, the defendant was ordered to open his defence.

However, at the resumed sitting on Thursday, July 7, 2022, the defence counsel, Otunba Ogunleye, informed the court that his client had decided to change his plea, "rather than going through the rigours of defence".

Continue online at www.thetrumpet.ng

EFCC rescues alleged kidnapped yahoo apprentice in Abuja

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) have rescued an alleged kidnapped yahoo-yahoo apprentice in Abuja.

A statement by the EFCC spokesperson, Wilson Uwajaren, on Thursday said the 17-year-old Destiny Peter was rescued on Friday, 1st July 2022, from an apartment in Mpape, a suburb of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

It was gathered that Peter had on July 1, 2022, contacted the EFCC on its official Twitter handle, @officialEFCC, narrating how some yahoo-yahoo boys kidnapped him and intended to use him for money

rituals.

He was therefore guided to send a screenshot of his location to the Commission, using the Google Location App on his Android phone.

In a series of tweets, Peter wrote: "Good afternoon sir, I called the EFCC number and lay some complaints about some yahoo boys intending to use me for ritual and he said I should send a screenshot of the location

"The house is in Mpape, but don't know the exact place so check google Maps and save the screenshot.

"I'm in the bathroom because I don't want his boys to know what I'm doing.

"My name is Destiny Peter and the place is Mpape. I don't know the actual place but I used google maps and the people in the house now are his boys. Hold on let me try and do a video, sir"

Following his tweets alert, the EFCC quickly mobilized a team of detectives to the area for his rescue, and they found him locked up in a room. They rescued him and arrested 16-year-old Aboaba David, 18-year-old Isaac Johnson, 20-year-old cook, Miracle Moses, a hair stylist, and the leader of the syndicate, a 20-year-old Jamilu Aliyu, popularly known as Jamilu Smith.

During interrogation, Peter said he was threatened by Jamilu Smith, leader of the

gang that if he was not able to cash out (defraud) people within two weeks, he would be sacrificed for rituals.

Under interrogation, David said Smith was their leader and recruited them to join him in scouting for potential online dating victims for fraud. All other suspects also pointed at Smith as their leader.

On his part, Smith debunked Peter's claim that he was kidnapped. He rather said Peter's brother brought him to him willingly to teach him bitcoin and gift card trading.

According to the spokesperson, all the suspects are in EFCC's custody and would be charged to court as soon as the investigation is concluded.

Soludo denies padding budget in Anambra

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Governor of Anambra State, Prof Charles Soludo has denied the reports alleging 'budget-padding' in the State.

Soludo, on Thursday in a press statement by his Press Secretary, Christian Aburime, described the reports as false while adding that the peddlers of the rumour were doing so because they have lost out on milking the treasury of the State.

According to him, "These are the handwork of losers and detractors. The misinformation should evoke pity for the purveyors in the light of the manifest ignorance boldly couched in every paragraph of the hasty piece of distraction.

"Bad as it is, no credible reporter has signed this off, establishing it for what it is; lazy propaganda."

He said for clarity the government is not oblivious of the diversionary antics of those whose lucrative criminal enterprise is being smoked out by the government's renewed fight

against all forms of criminality in the state.

"We want to make the state a liveable and prosperous smart mega city by confronting head-on the infrastructural decay, such as in the area of roads that is clearly in a deplorable situation," he said.

According to him, the government has declared a state of emergency on Anambra roads and infrastructure.

The governor said that giving priority to infrastructure development, the government has allocated about 64 per cent of the capital budget and an ambitious target of flagging off at least 220km of roads as soon as rain abates.

"With this ambitious program and knowing fully, that failure does not exist in our determined minds, the detractors are at loss and are raising the battle cry with the sole aim of trying to scuttle our determination with all manners of blackmail.

"They claimed that the commissioner for works refused to appear before the state As-

sembly to defend the budget. This again is the figment of the imagination of the unknown writers with the intent of creating rancour between the executive and the members of the House of Assembly.

"The Commissioner for Works and infrastructure was, indeed, the first commissioner to appear before the House Committee on the first day of the budget defence exercise being 29th of June, 2022 at about 10.00 AM. This is on record and was captured by the Press," he added.

Meanwhile, the Anambra State House of Assembly has expressed displeasure over a 70 per cent budget slash in Education from N3.23 billion to N1.1 billion in the 2022 revised budget presented by Soludo.

Hon Ejike Okechukwu, member representing Anaocha Constituency II made the assertion during the ongoing 2022 Revised Budget defence of the Ministry of Education on Thursday at Awka.

According to Okechukwu, the budgetary

allocation to the Education Sector is unrealistic and the slash would lower the standard of teaching and learning, as well as the development of students.

Okechukwu, who is also Chairman of the House Committee on Education, said that education was the bedrock of any society and that the legislature had a duty to check the actions of the executive.

"The education ministry is self-sustaining because it generates revenue annually from students' tuition, sports levy and exam fees. These money are paid directly into the government's account.

"It is sad that these funds are not released to the ministry to operate which is why our students are being exploited, they pay these levies twice or three times a year.

"The slash in the budget is unacceptable. We are supposed to be working towards having 10 percent of our budget allocated to education as recommended by the United Nations Children's Fund," he said.

Continue online at www.thetrumpet.ng

Best Western Plus Elomaz Hotel, Asaba.

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Ladies fight over Nollywood actor, Aguba

Nollywood actor, Kenneth Aguba who was homeless is now a hot cake amongst the ladies as two have begun fighting for his love following the positive turnaround in his life. He was recently gifted a house by Omega Power Ministries GO, Apostle Chibuzor Chinyere, who also vowed to get him a wife. This has ignited love from ladies, as they have declared willingness to become Aguba's wife, and one Anastasia Michael was the first.

She wrote: "I heard General overseer OPM is looking for a wife for Kenneth Aguba, please Tell Him, I (Annastasia Micheal Olamma) am willing to marry him, i am ready to be Mrs Aguba I will love him and take care of him very well.

They should come and see my people bikon , I am 24 years old and i am from Enugu state,.. Aguba Deserves to marry me because I am a wife material 1000 yards,I can help him regain his sanity and I will

take very good care of him and feed him well. I can't wait to marry my Agubabym . AguAnna2022 "

However, not long after her post went viral, another lady named Ella Ada also professed her love for the veteran actor. Ella wrote: "I am ready To Marry The Homeless Nollywood Actor, Aguba. I heard that OPM is looking for a wife for Kenneth Aguba please man of God am ready to be his wife I promise to take good care of him wash his clothes serve him a nice meal please sir I am a wife material I'm ready to give him a child Sir @Aguella2022."

Anastasia who felt her position as his wife-to-be was being threatened, took to the comment section of Ella's post to warn her to back off.

She said; "Leave my husband alone. I saw him first and I am the legitimate wife."

Ella fired back: "He have to select which one he love me or you."



E-Money bags NDLEA Ambassador

A Popular Nigerian Successful Billionaire Businessman, born Emeka Okonkwo, professionally known as E-Money, has released new photos of himself and others on social media the moment the NDLEA Boss and his teams visit the office of E-Money to decorate him as their Ambassador for the fight against drugs abuse.

While the Anambra-born business mogul was dropping the post on his verified Instagram page account for the pleasure of viewers, he added the caption below.

"The Chairman of Emmy Cargo Terminal, Chief Dr Emeka Daniel Okonkwo decorated as NDLEA Anti-Drug Ambassador with the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) Badge by the Commander of NDLEA Apapa Special Area Command, Inalegwu Ameh, Commander of Narcotics"

Tiwa Savage to receive 'Doctor of Music' honour from Kent University

Nigerian highly rated musician, songwriter and entertainer, Tiwatope Savage-Balogun, known within the showbiz circles as Tiwa Savage continues her rapid rise to the top African music celebrity.

The multiple award winning recording and performing artiste is set to be awarded with a honorary doctorate degree from her Alma Mater, The University of Kent on Friday, July 15, 2022.

Tiwa Savage who is currently on her 'Water & Garri' tour has been listed as one of the 10 inspirational individuals to be awarded an honorary doctorate degree by Kent University at its congregation ceremonies this July.

According to a statement from the institution which is based in Kent, United Kingdom, Tiwa Savage 'will be made Doctor of Music in recognition of her inspirational and international career in music industry'.

Tiwatope Savage-Balogun studied Business Administration at Kent University before moving on to study music at the Berklee College of Music.

We want to say a big Congratulations to Tiwa Savage and wish her more fruitful years of musical career.



Frank Edoho celebrates golden jubilee

Popular show host and broadcaster Frank Edoho has shared a hot photo of himself to mark his golden jubilee today, the 8th of July 2022.

The Who Wants To Be A Millionaire show host rocked the photo-sharing app, Instagram, with a dashing photo of himself and a cheering birthday note.

Frank Edoho also credited his wife, Sandra Edoho, for his hotness and stamina because she made him stick to a healthier diet.

He wrote: "Hey. I'm 50 today!

I guess from now on, I have to yield to my wife's @vivabella_designs instructions to stick to a healthier and yuckier diet."

Nigerian entertainment stars, including Basketmouth, Bovi, Arole, Senator Comedian, Yvonne Jegede, VJ Adams, Tochi, Darey Art Alade, Moses Iwang, among others celebrated Frank Edoho's birthday with heartwarming words.

Basketmouth: Happy Birthday. Continue to age in grace.

Neeceboss lady: Happy birthday Frank thanks for being a good mentor to me. Enjoy God always

Senator comedian : Happy birthday Boss man Gods blessings all the way

Sneeze man kind: Happy golden birthday to the broadcasting maestro

himself. Blessings on blessings on blessings bro!

Mbongofficial: Birthday blessings to the best to ever do it!

Kemi Filani recalls that Frank Edoho returned as the host of the popular Who Wants To Be A Millionaire game show.

He was announced to the public at an event at the Federal Palace Hotel, Victoria Island, Lagos, where the organizers revealed that the show would come back since it went off air in 2017.

According to the organizers, the ultimate prize is now N20m, which will be broadcasted for 52 weeks.



Blatter, Platini, cleared of corruption charges

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

Former President of the International Federation of Football (FIFA), Sepp Blatter and former President of Union of European Football Association (UEFA), Michel Platini have been cleared of all corruption charges by the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona, Switzerland.



Blatter held the topmost position in the world football governing body for 17 years while Platini held the helms of the European football governing body for 8 years but one thing is common between both, they were kicked out of office in 2015.

The prosecutors said that the duo who ruled football in the continental and world stages, were charged with a deep conspiracy to swindle FIFA of a huge amount of money.

According to the prosecutors, in 2011, Sepp Blatter in connivance with Michel Platini tried to unlawfully through FIFA, pay the latter the sum of £1.7m.

Reportedly, Blatter had said that the payment followed a 'gentleman agreement' between both of them when in 1998, he asked Platini to be his Technical Advisor.

Following the approval of the stimulated sum to Platini by Blatter, who then was campaigning for his reelection to become FIFA President, Platini was having a feed day to influence Blatter's votes from the UEFA bloc.

The whole scenario was finally unearthed through an investigation carried out by the United States Department of Justice into bribery, fraud and money-

laundering at FIFA in 2015, which culminated into Blatter's resignation.

However, after the victory in court, Platini expressed his happiness over the judgement adding that the it was a battle against lies, deceit and conspiracy for seven years.

"I want to express my happiness for all my loved ones that justice has finally been done after seven years of lies and manipulation," the former UEFA boss said.

"My fight is a fight against injustice. I won a first game.

"In this case, there are culprits who did not appear

during this trial. Let them count on me, we will meet again. Because I will not give up and I will go all the way in my quest for truth.

"Believe me, going from being a legend of world soccer to a devil is very difficult, especially when it comes to you in a totally unfair way," Platini lamented.

Affirmatively, the Swiss Attorney General's Office said that it has noted the decision of the Federal Criminal Court and would decide further on the proceedings after it receives the written reasoning of the court decision.

Wimbledon: Abdominal pain forces Nadal to withdraw in semi-final

French Open champion Rafael Nadal has withdrawn from 2022 Wimbledon, 24 hours before the semi-final clash with Australian Nick Kyrgios after suffering problematic abdominal pains.

The 22 Grand Slam winner in his last match against American Taylor Fritz, struggled in the entire five-set thriller to emerge victorious which at some point, took a break to attend to his predicament.

Although it was believed the 36 years old 2022 Australian Open champion would have recovered from the abdominal setback to continue the All England Club event against Kyrgios, who is in top form, however, Nadal has resigned from going further in the Grand Slam event.

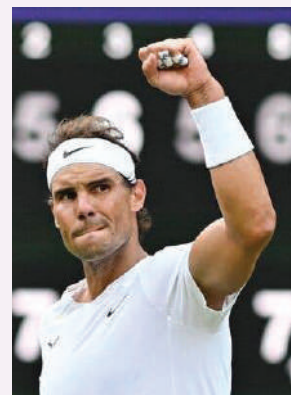
"I have tried a lot of times in my career to keep going but it is obvious the injury will get worse," he

told reporters.

"Throughout the whole day, I have been thinking about the decision to make.

"I think it doesn't make sense to play. I feel very sad to say that," Nadal added.

With the withdrawal of Nadal from the grass-court event, Nick Kyrgios earned a walkover in the semi-final to play, who emerges between Novak Djokovic and Cameron Norrie, in the final on Sunday, July 10, at the Centre Court.



Mali's basketball federation expels 7 players from national team

The Malian Federation of Basketball has expelled seven senior players from its national team for failure to feature in the first and second games of the third window of the 2023 FIBA World Cup qualifiers in Kigali, Rwanda.

The federation noted that the behaviour of the seven players runs contrary to the belief and dignity of the country, adding that their absence from the qualifying games against Uganda and Nigeria brought shame and disgrace to the nation.

In a statement by the basketball federation after reviewing and analysing the video posted on social media to ascertain its claim, decided in a meeting in accordance with articles 49, 50 and 82 of General Regulation to sanction the erring players whose names are Ibrahim Djambo,

Mahamadou Kante, Ibrahima Saounera, Sadio Doucoure, Drissa Ballo, Oumar Ballo, and Ibrahim Sidibe.

The federation also stated that following their removal from the senior men's national basketball team, all the accrued compensation incurred by the national team will be deducted from their match bonuses.

According to other sources in Mali, the players refused to play the first two matches despite an appeal by the relevant authorities following the failure on the part of the federation to pay their bonuses before they departed for Rwanda.

Following their refusal to play the games, Uganda and Nigeria got walkover wins which resulted in Mali's inability to qualify for the final round of the 2023 FIBA World Cup qualifiers in Kigali.



National Sports Festival will be remarkable, says Okowa

■ Sports Minister, Okowa unveil mascot



Delta State Governor, His Excellency, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa has assured of the state government's preparedness to host a remarkable 2022 National Sports Festival taking place later this year in Asaba.

Okowa in the presence

of the Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, during the unveiling of the mascot for the national event on Wednesday, noted that the sports festival will be worthwhile.

According to the

governor, the National Sports Festival is likened to the Olympics Games which the state will ensure it will leave a remarkable experience for everyone.

"The National Sports Festival is Nigeria's version of the Olympic Games and Delta will make it an unforgettable experience for everyone," Okowa assured.

However, the Sports Minister in his remark, stressed that the national sports event has surpassed the stage where it will go unnoticed.

Dare in his speech advised the Delta state government not to limit the National sports event to a level unbecoming of the prestige it has garnered over the years, adding that it must come with pomp, pageantry and made colourful.

"The National Sports

Festival must come with pomp, pageantry and colourful ceremonies. It is no longer a corridor event. It is a classy event reminiscent of the Olympic Games," Dare said.

"Asaba is really ready with the unveiling of the Games Mascot. These are some of the little details obtainable at the Olympics and it is on display here in Delta State," he acknowledged.

The Sports Minister further charged the various committees to ensure that 2022 National Sports Festival delivers a world-class competition that sets a standard for the future through its planning and execution.

The unveiling of the mascot officially flags off the marketing activities of the Games scheduled to hold in November 2022.

NFF call S'Falcons coach to order over unsavoury comment

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

■ I hold Nigeria media in high esteem - Waldrum

Head Coach of Super Falcons, Randy Waldrum has apologized for his statement at Thursday's post-match conference at which he dropped an unsavoury comment about the Nigeria media.

The gaffer had mentioned something about the Nigeria media being 'negative' but the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) had immediately called him to order, saying the statement was uncomplimentary against an institution that is the most vibrant on the African continent, in terms of structure and performance.

"The comments are regrettable and I withdraw them in entirety. Actually, I will say the statement did not

come out the way I intended," Waldrum said.

"I hold the media everywhere, including Nigeria, in high regard and I only wish they could be a little more empathetic to us when we lose or draw matches.

"I know Nigerians love their football teams and want the teams to win all the time. They can still be supportive while criticizing us in a constructive way.

"The truth is that I am keen that nothing distracts the team at this point. I apologize for the way it has come out and the fact that I have hurt a critical sector of Nigeria society," Falcons coach added.

Waldrum insisted that despite earning only three points from two matches, the Super Falcons are not in any



way disoriented and still have the FIFA World Cup ticket and retaining the continental trophy as principal objectives at the tournament in Morocco.

He continued: "We know what the Women Africa Cup means to Nigerians and we remain fully focused despite the opening-day setback.

"We are determined not

only to win a ticket to the FIFA World Cup but also to retain the trophy that Nigeria has won nine times previously," Waldrum reiterated.

The Super Falcons will take on group whipping lots Burundi in Rabat on Sunday, with the minimum win to guarantee a place in the championship's quarter-finals.

Osimhen mentioned as Lewandowski's replacement

Bayern Munich are at crossroads battling to tie down Polish striker Robert Lewandowski from making a move to Barcelona this summer.

It is not a hidden fact that Lewandowski, who has a year left to run in his contract, has bluntly told Bavarian he wants to quit Allianz Arena to unite with Xavi Hernandez at Camp Nou.

Bayern are building their squad for the new season with the new signing Sadio Mané of Liverpool making a switch during the summer transfer window to bolster their attack but Lewandowski seeking to leave the club has left Bavarian unhappy.



Although Bayern Munich have reiterated that they will ensure they fend off any advances from the Catalans, Lewandowski's refusal to heed the club's appeal may resort to the German league giants to look for a

qualitative replacement to complement the squad's attack.

According to reports emerging from Italy, Super Eagles and Napoli hitman, Victor Osimhen, is being considered as the perfect fit for Bayern Munich should

Lewandowski decides to leave for Spain.

Osimhen, who joined Napoli from Lille at a club-record transfer fee to make him the most expensive African player in history, could be on his way to Allianz Arena should Bavarian decides on his fate.

According to Italian sports journalist, Francesco Modugno, Bayern Munich are one of the five clubs in Europe that when they decide to snap up a player, they seamless achieve it without undertaking many surveys.

He added that Bayern Munich's interest in Osimhen would be necessitated by Lewandowski's move away from Allianz Arena.

Marcos Alonso to hand Chelsea a transfer request

Chelsea left-back Marcos Alonso is considering handing a transfer request to Chelsea to make his move back to Spain fruitful.

The player, who has spent 9 years with the Blues and has won six trophies, wants to leave on a good note having achieved a lot together.

Barcelona is considered the destination of the Spanish international, who according to reports, wants

to live close to his family after 12 years away from Spain.

With a stint in Bolton, Fiorentina, Sunderland and Chelsea to elapse a 12-year-spell outside Spain, Xavi Hernandez needs a player who can compete with Jordi Alba in the left-back position.

According to reports from a Spanish media outlet, the 31-year-old needs to leave Chelsea

despite having a year left on his contract but the refusal of the club that has already lost two of their centre-backs to Spanish topflight clubs has given room for a rethink.

Alonso's agent has met with the club's management to fashion out a way to enable the Spanish international, who has 9 caps for Spain's national team, to become fruitful.

However, the body language of Chelsea has

revealed that they do not want to lose the left-back this season and would prefer he finishes the last lapse of his contract at Stamford Bridge.

Should this mellow drama continues, the player, who has provided 21 assists and netted 26 times in 178 Premier League games, would have no further option than to hand in a transfer request to the club to force his move back to Spain.

Aribo to join EPL club for £10m

Super Eagles midfielder, Joe Aribo, would be allowed to leave Ibrox to England if Southampton could trigger his release clause of £10m.

A recent report from Scotland reveals that the Rangers midfielder, who was signed from Charlton Athletic three seasons ago for £300,000, would be given the room to leave this season if any of the clubs on his trail coughs out the stipulated sum.

Aribo has reportedly refused to stay beyond the time when his present contract finishes which is less than a year from now and Gers have resolved to sell him than lose him on a free transfer.

Nobody except the club's hierarchy knew a clause was included in the Super Eagle's deal when he was being signed from the English side but Gers, who are closed to signing Antonio Colak from PAOK recently divulged the information to the public.

Excluding Southampton, Nottingham Forest, Crystal Palace and Fulham are also on the trail of the player, who scored in the final of the Europa League against Eintracht Frankfurt, though the Saints are known to be

leading the chase for Aribo's signature.

A Scottish report added that Joe Aribo has refused to follow the footsteps of Connor Goldson, Steven Davis, Scott Arfield and Allan McGregor to extend his stay with Giovanni van Bronckhorst's side.

With this revelation on his contract clause, the 25-year-old, who has 20 international caps with 2 goals for the Nigerian senior men's football team, could be on his return to England next week.

Last season, Aribo was very instrumental to the club's success, edging other players in performance in the first half of the season but dropped in form after returning from the January TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations in Cameroon.



Nick Kyrgios risks 2-year jail term over alleged assault

Australian tennis star, Nick Kyrgios has been allegedly involved in assaulting his former partner, Chiara Passari, The Trumpet gathered.

Kyrgios, despite qualifying for the Wimbledon's quarter-final risk two years behind bars if culpable of committing the said crime.

According to The Canberra Time, the Aussie would appear before the court next month in August, to defend his innocence.

The report further stated that the said incident took place last year and Kyrgios, who defeated Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in a four-set thriller in the round of 16 to schedule a quarter-final tie with Chilean Cristian Garin, is already aware of the summon.

Canberra Time further cited the Australian police statement over the incident to exacerbate the situation.

A part of the police statement reads: "ACT Policing can confirm a 27-year-old Watson man is scheduled to face the ACT Magistrates Court on the 2nd of August in relation to one charge of common assault following an incident in December 2021."

Recalled that Kyrgios started a relationship with his estranged partner in July 2020 after he broke up with his girlfriend and Russian tennis player, Anna Kalinskaya in April 2020.

According to his lawyer, Barrister Jason Moffett, who confirmed to have received the summon, said his client takes the allegations very seriously.

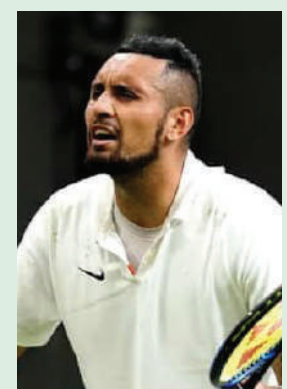
He added that he will restrain himself from making further comments as the matter is before a competent court of jurisdiction.

"It's in the context of a domestic relationship," he told The Canberra Times.

"The nature of the allegation is serious, and Mr Kyrgios takes the allegation very seriously.

"Given the matter is before the court. He doesn't have a comment at this stage, but in the fullness of time we'll issue a media release."

According to Australian law, as reported by Sun Online, 'a person may be issued with a summons if police believe they have committed an offence but don't see it as necessary to arrest the person'.





De Jong to leave if Barca have no choice'

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

Barcelona President Juan Laporta has said Manchester United's prime target, Frenkie de Jong, will only leave Camp Nou if the Catalans have no choice.

Laporta, who recently said the Dutch midfielder was not for sale and would do everything within his powers to see the player determined to continue with the Blaugrana, is made to stay. According to the President, De Jong is one of the best midfielders in the world and the club do not want to lose him for any price.

Manchester United need the player to reunite with Erik ten Hag, who once coached him in Ajax and with Tyrell Malacia switching to Old Trafford from Feyenoord, and Christian Eriksson and Ajax defender Lisandro Martinez

in the loop, the Red Devils are set to accelerate their business in the transfer market.

However, United are not finding the negotiations to snap their prime target to Old Trafford easy as Laporta has continued to insist the player is not for sale.

On Saturday, Laporta during a tribute to Johan Cruyff stressed that "There are clubs that want him, not just United. We have no intention of selling him, he wants to stay.

"Frenkie is considered as one of the best midfielders in the world by all the experts. We are happy to have him.

"I'm going to do everything I can in my power so that Frenkie stays here, but there's also a salary issue and that would have to be adjusted," he stated.

To further affirm his position regarding De Jong's presumed move to the English Premier League, Laporta on Wednesday said Barcelona



will only allow the player to leave if they are faced with no choice.

"Frenkie de Jong is a Barcelona player, we don't want to sell him unless we have no other choice. Of course, we know there are offers for de Jong but we don't want to sell him," Laporta declared.

According to a Spanish

journalist, Gerard Moreno, yesterday, Barcelona needs about £64m for the midfielder upfront with an additional £10m as add-ons.

Barca had previously pegged their price for De Jong at £56m plus add-ons but the recent development will have Manchester United go back to the drawing board to bring forward a better offer.

Jack Wilshere leaves Danish Superliga club

Former Arsenal and West Ham midfielder Jack Wilshere has left Danish Superliga club, Aarhus GF, on mutual consent after five months in Ceres Park.

The former England international joined the club in February and played 14 games for the club last season after being out of the club since he was released by Bournemouth last summer.

To keep fit, the 30-year-old trained with Arsenal and Italian club Como before he was offered a contract with the Danish Superliga side five months ago.

However, the player and the club have parted ways in what is understood to be the best interest of both parties.

Wilshere's footballing career has been threatened with injuries intermittently, with the midfielder making 302 club appearances, prodding in 20 goals coupled with 43 assists in his career.

In a statement to call it off with Aarhus GF, Wilshere appreciated the fans for their support and love despite the results they needed were not forthcoming.

He said, "My time at [Aarhus GF] has come to an end. Myself and the club have mutually agreed it's best for me to move on.

"I would like to thank everybody at AGF for the support and confidence they gave me from day 1.

"The club showed trust in me that not many others were willing to give. Although results were hard to come by the fans' support of me and the team was unbelievable.

"Thank you guys for welcoming me into your club and city. I wish you all the best in the future. Personally, I am considering all of my options," Wilshere added.

The club, however, has released a statement to that effect commending the former England international whose contract with the Danish Superliga club ended in June.

The club further added that it was in the best interest of both parties to discontinue the talks over a possible contract renewal of Wilshere.

"AGF and Jack Wilshere have agreed not to extend the partnership," the club said.

"In the spring, AGF benefited from Jack Wilshere's great footballing and human qualities on a deal that expired at the end of June.

"There has subsequently been a dialogue on continuing the cooperation, but after careful consideration, the parties have jointly come to the conclusion that the agreement will not be extended," the club added.

Wilshere, before he joined Aarhus GF, played 44 games for Bournemouth where he provided three assists while scoring two goals in the last two seasons.

Arnaut Danjuma in talks with West Ham

West Ham United have recently contacted Villarreal striker, Arnaut Danjuma over a possible switch to the English Premier League, The Trumpet gathered.

Danjuma has been on the radar of the Hammers with the player's agent insisting that the deal may not sail through owing to disagreement on personal terms.

"It is very unlikely that Danjuma will go to West Ham," the player's agent, Michael Moses told Cadena SER.

The 25-year-old joined Villarreal

last season's summer from Bournemouth for a fee reportedly circa €23.50.

Danjuma since joining the Spanish club has featured 54 times and has scored 17 goals in all competitions.

The striker, who opted to play for the Dutch national team ahead of the Nigerian Super Eagles, netted the lone goal against Bayern Munich in the first leg of the Champions League quarter-final match last season.

Although the player was

unable to find the back of the net against Liverpool in both legs of the Champions League semifinal clashes, he netted 16 times in 34 appearances for the Yellow Submarine last season.

However, a report has revealed that the West Ham boss, David Moyes has blocked an impending move for the player, who is not his prime target on his list of transfers.

According to a report from an English media outlet, Moyes needs a striker to compete with Michail Antonio in the

centre-forward position with the Chelsea's Armando Broja emerging as a prime target.

In Moyes' list, former Manchester United Jesse Lingard and Sevilla Youssef En-Nesyri are reportedly linked with a move to Goodison Park.

Nevertheless, Danjuma, who has also been linked with the likes of Manchester United and Liverpool according to Sports Mole, is now valued at around €45m (£38.8m) by the La Liga club.

Chelsea loanee, Babayoko seek Milan exit

Following the unsatisfactory performance of Chelsea loanee, Tiemoué Bakayoko for Milan last season, the French midfielder was in Italy to discuss a possible exit from the club.

Babayoko has only played one out of the two loan seasons in Milan but a drop in form saw him making only six starts last season for the Rossoneri.

With the player unhappy and looking to explore other options to

further his career, he met with some of the directors in Milan to fashion a possible solution.

Milan are willing to allow the midfielder leave and will hold a meeting with Chelsea to find a solution since the player still has a year left to run in his contract with Milan and also Chelsea.

According to reports from Italy, the 27-year-old should he leave Milan, would not benefit from the Growth Decree law, which only

comes into effect for players who stay at least two years.

More so, one of the player's agents is presently in Lombardy to discuss with the Rossoneri about a possible exit for the player in the best interest of all parties, Calciomercato reported.

Chelsea signed Babayoko from French Ligue 1 for a fee reportedly about £40m which made him the second-highest signing for the club after Spanish Fernando Torres at that

time.

He made his debut in an away match against Tottenham where the Blues won 2-1. In that season, the Frenchman featured 29 times for Chelsea and scored two goals.

However, he was loaned to Milan for two seasons before moving to Napoli. Chelsea sent him on a second two-year loan spell to San Siro but the player has inarguably unimpressed Stefano Pioli, warranting him to seek a move out of the club.