

# Arewa, Ijaw youths battle over Tompolo's contract

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Ijaw youths and some of their counterparts from the North are feuding and in fact have drawn the battle line a crude oil surveillance contract awarded by the

Federal Government to foremost former Niger Delta freedom fighter, High Chief Government Ekpemupolo (aka Tompolo). Arewa Youths Assembly want the contract revoked.

The leadership of Ijaw Youths Council (IYC) also cautioned the Northern group

over the use of derogatory comments against Tompolo. The leaders also declared that the Northern youths lacked the right to fault the NNPC and the Federal Government decision on the award of the oil surveillance contract.

They said that the Arewa youths  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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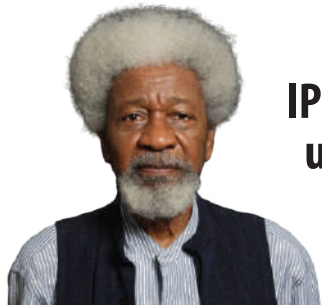
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**Ban Miyetti Allah like IPOB, Soyinka urges Buhari**

→ 24

**EDITORIAL**  
**Impeachment notice to President Buhari**

→ 12



**Nigeria, USA sign agreement for return of fresh \$23.4m Abacha loot**

→ 24



**Obi meets with Southern leaders**

→ 24

# Tinubu, Wike's team intensify talks

Groups canvass support for Lagos ex-gov, other APC candidates

PDP eyes S'West chieftain to replace Ayu → 2



Tinubu



Wike

# Tinubu, Wike's team intensify talks

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE, Abakaliki

**A**l Progressives Congress (APC) presidential candidate Bola Ahmed Tinubu is intensifying his parleys with the camp of aggrieved Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) henchmen led by Rivers State Governor Nyesom Ezenwo Wike.

The APC torchbearer is said to have met in London with Wike and two other PDP governors, Samuel Ortom (Benue State) and Seyi Makinde (Oyo) to boost his chances in next year's general election.

Tinubu left Nigeria on Monday for Europe on a week's break and did not attend the NBA conference to which he and other presidential candidates were invited.

"Yes, we left Nigeria to meet with Tinubu on Monday. We initially thought it would hold in France because that was where Tinubu went the last time he left the country. We however got signal close to our time of departure that we should proceed somewhere else.

"Governors Ortom and Makinde who have been supporters of Wike from the beginning were also on the trip," the source told a newspaper.

The source confirmed that the meeting was connected with the APC candidate getting Wike's support for Tinubu in next year's election: "Yes, the discussion was centred on the 2023 election. The Tinubu camp know how important votes from Rivers State are and are

looking for how to get Wike to work for them."

While it may be hard for Wike to leave the PDP because of some of his followers who are already contesting for elections in the party, the Tinubu camp is expecting him to use his influence in the state to work for them and deliver Rivers for the APC.

Since Wike lost the PDP presidential primaries to former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, he has allegedly rebuffed moves by party leaders to placate him.

He has also allegedly threatened members of the PDP in the state who are loyal to Atiku, closing down some businesses owned by them.

Efforts to also reconcile with him have become hard, as the meetings between his camp and Atiku's team ended in deadlock.

Tinubu's government will be fair to all if he wins, according to the Director-General, APC Youth and Students' Council, Mazi Ezenwa Onyirimba. He said this during a sensitisation visit to Connected Development (CODE), on Tuesday in Abuja.

He said Nigerian youths should adopt Tinubu as consensus candidate for the 2023 presidential election for youth and national development.

According to him, Tinubu's antecedents indicate that ran a government that was highly adjudged as inclusive in terms of the demography, the religion and the background of political appointees.

"When he (Tinubu) was



Ayu

the governor of Lagos, the greater percentage of his cabinet members were under the age of 40. It was a good development for the youths of Lagos at that time. The structure of his cabinet also showed that he picked people from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. At the end of the day, they collectively succeeded," Onyirimba said.

Responding, the Chief Executive of CODE and founder, Follow the Money, Mallam Hamzat Lawal, upbraided the nation's leaders for embezzling the commonwealth of the people, thus plunging it into deep woes.

"The current script is not working. There is a global campaign by the UN SDGs which talks about flipping the scripts. I think that it should even start from Nigeria. Our current script is not working, if we look at our current challenges which insecurity and unemployment," Lawal said.

He, therefore, urged all presidential candidates to reserve at least 50 percent of all intended cabinet positions for the youth in the spirit of inter-generational equity and national development.

"It is important that as we grow as a people, we must stop the blame-game. The older generation continues to see the youths as the problem and vice versa. Honestly speaking, Nigerians want a president whose cabinet is made up of under 40's. Because we are an upwardly mobile and technologically driven generation.

"It will only be fair that if we constitute over 50 percent of the eligible voters, we should also make at least 50 percent of the cabinet members," he said.

Also, Deputy Director-General of the visiting body, Alhaji Taoheed Ozigi, said that statistics and INEC register showed that youths were more than half of the nation's

population and were the highest registered group in the voter register.

Ozigi said that the group searched for the candidate to use the numerical strength of youths to support based on their plans for them and found Tinubu qualified.

Also, a support group, Patriotic Movement for Asiwaju 2023 (PMA) has kicked off what they described as House-to-House campaigns for Tinubu and all other candidates of the party in Ebonyi State.

Speaking during the flagoff, the National Secretary of the group, Mr Uchechukwu Okafor, noted that the South East zone is very strategic for the realization of Tinubu's presidential ambition.

He noted that the choice of Ebonyi state for the flag off of the event was due to the landmark achievement of the APC led administration in the State.

The group's National scribe expressed optimism that Tinubu would address all the security challenges confronting the Nation and revamping all the critical sectors in the country.

"Today is not a day for long speeches. We have come to flag off House to House campaign for our presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu in Ebonyi state. Where ever you go, tell people about the potentials of having Tinubu as our President in 2023. We have to support him and APC candidates in Ebonyi state".

"Ebonyi state is

strategic in National politics especially the emergence of Tinubu's Presidency. We are overwhelmed with the achievements of the APC government in Ebonyi and it has become a campaign point in Nigeria".

"The administration of Engr David Umahi in Ebonyi State has marketed the fortunes of APC beyond political campaigns, Okafor said.

Ebonyi State Coordinator of the Group, Mr Darlington Okpoto applauded the National Campaign Council of the APC for appointing Governor David Umahi as the Southern Coordinator of Tinubu's Presidential campaign.

He noted that Tinubu's aspiration has become a movement in the zone and further assured that he would galvanize support for the emergence of all candidates of the party in the zone.

Okpoto who is also the South East Supervisor of the group noted that APC will also capture Abia and Enugu States in 2023.

He further called on leaders of the Party in the zone to close ranks and work harmoniously for the victory of the APC presidential candidate in 2023.

Meanwhile, indications are emerging that the PDP's national chairman, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, may succumb to pressures on him to resign as party officials consider some Southwest candidates as his possible replacement.

Sources within the PDP said that though the issue is yet to be decided, some party leaders

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# Arewa, Ijaw youths battle over Tompolo's contract

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

should be ashamed that Tompolo and others are protecting the source that feeds the nation while they are idle and allowing insecurity to fester in the Northern states.

According to the IYC, despite the vexatious and provocative nature of the comments and threats of protest by the Arewa group, the youths of the six states of the Niger Delta are totally in support of the decision to award the contract to Tompolo. It affirmed that his capacity can never be questioned by meddling interlopers, such as the Arewa youths.

In a statement, the IYC

National Spokesman, Comrade Ebilade Ekerefe, warned that instead of the Northern Youths becoming hired hands for criminal elements involved in the oil theft in the region and castigate the person or leadership of High Chief Government Ekpemupolo, they should channel their energies to support the security agencies in tackling of the rising cases of kidnapping, banditry, terrorism in the northern part of the country.

"While the likes of Tompolo and many sincere youth leaders were working to protect the peace and security of the Niger Delta, what are they doing to contribute to the needed

security in the north?"

The statement added: "High Chief Tompolo has worked tirelessly for the peace in the Niger Delta and will continue to sustain and protect the wealth of the nation in collaboration with other stakeholders."

But protesters, under the auspices of Amalgamated Arewa Youth Groups, on Tuesday stormed the headquarters of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited, demanding termination of the multi-million dollar pipeline contract awarded to the former militant leader.

The demonstrators, a coalition of some youth groups in the North,

warned that they would paralyse activities at NNPC headquarters if the contract was not revoked in seven days.

The protesters brandished banners with inscriptions such as, "How can a fugitive be in charge of national assets", "Chief of Defence Staff militarising other zones but romancing Niger Delta militants", "revoke the pipeline contract now," among others.

Spokesperson for the groups, Victor Duniya, said the implication of the contract was that "a private citizen like Tompolo will be allowed to handle not just light but sophisticated weapons to be able to ward off possible

attacks from vicious oil bunkering cartels."

The Federal Government had reportedly renewed the pipeline surveillance contract to Tompolo, who was Commander of the defunct Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND).

According to Duniya, the development is coming at a time the North is bleeding profusely due to activities of terrorist elements, while youths are not allowed to get weapons to defend their communities.

He, therefore, called on President Muhammadu Buhari to sack the Minister of State for Petroleum, Timipre Sylva, Chief Executive Officer of NNPC Ltd., Mele

Kyari and Group Executive Director, Upstream, Adokiye Tombomeye, over the roles they allegedly played in the contract procedures.

Duniya added: "We are aware that Tompolo and his boys are major beneficiaries of the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), wherein the Federal Government under the leadership of the late Umaru Musa Yar Adua extended same to the restive youths of the Niger Delta.

"Till date, supposed agitators are being sponsored to world-class universities, others are being trained to acquire skills, while those with established businesses are constantly being empowered."



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# Atiku clarifies statement at NBA conference

■ Won't hand over federal varsities to states ■ Education will remain on concurrent list

Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and former Vice President of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar, has decried alleged "mischievous misinterpretation of what he said at the plenary of the 62nd annual conference of the Nigerian Bar Association as it relates to education and how to address the crisis in the sector."

A statement by Paul Ibe, Media Adviser to Atiku Abubakar, said: "For the avoidance of doubt, Atiku did not say that he will handover Federal Universities to state governments if he is elected president come February next year."

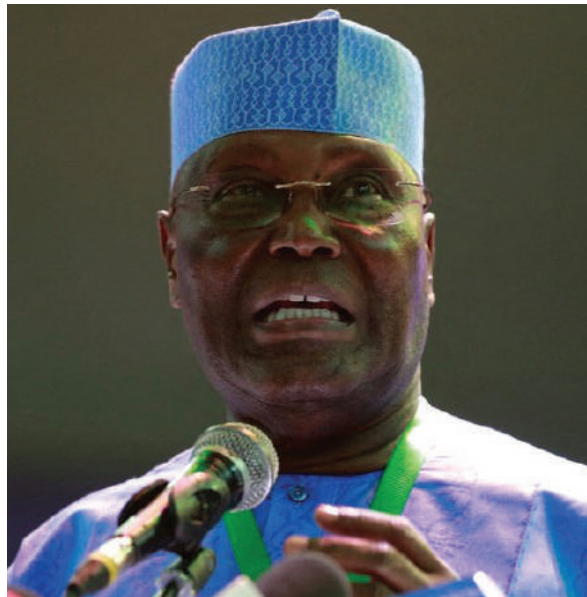
"The report is false, untrue, unfounded and not a true reflection of

what Atiku Abubakar said while responding to a question on devolution of powers, a key component of his policy framework.

"What the PDP presidential candidate referred to was his plans for a phased devolution of power to the federating units."

"The report in some sections of the media is therefore a misleading and false account of what transpired when the PDP Presidential candidate fielded questions as a panelist at the opening ceremony of the NBA conference."

"In answering the question posed to him, Atiku Abubakar merely recalled his engagement with a university professor where he argued that the United States of America shared similarities with the



Atiku

first set of universities in Nigeria which belonged to the regional governments and noted that with proper planning and phased devolution of power, federal universities that have now become

unwieldy could be made to work better under the component federating units. He also maintained that education would remain in the concurrent list under his administration when elected.

"The report was clearly a misleading one designed to cast aspersion on the person of the former Vice President and to create an impression that he will shirk his responsibilities if he is elected president in the next presidential poll due in February 2023."

"We wish to restate Atiku Abubakar's avowed commitment to education as a game changer for socio-economic development and national security. He remains concerned about the prolonged strike by university teachers and restates his position that under his watch the ASUU-FG imbroglio will be better managed in the interest of both the students and academic staff."

"To underscore

his commitment to address the structural deformities in our system, the former Vice President also disclosed that he had empanelled a committee of judiciary experts to draft a presidential position paper which will guide his administration, if elected, from day one, on the terms and conditions of transfer of power and resources to the other layers of government aimed at making the federal government leaner and more effective in its core functions."

We implore media organisations to be wary of unfounded stories in the course of carrying out their constitutionally guaranteed responsibility of informing, educating and entertaining the people."

# Tinubu, Wike's team intensify talks

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2**  
are recommending a Southwest person to replace Ayu, emphasizing that the consensus opinion of members is that Ayu should resign. He revealed that party stakeholders are considering whether to empower the National Vice Chairman (South), Ambassador Taofeek Arapaja, to act as national chairman pending a mid-term convention or draft former governor of Ondo State, Olusegun Mimiko, who is known to be an ally of Wike.

"When the various leadership caucuses meet in the coming week, decision would be taken on the matter. But, for now, it is general opinion of members that Ayu should go in the interest of the party. We have a tradition; so, whether Arapaja is to act or somebody else would come in does not matter. We need to unite and move the party forward," he said. This position, however, poses its own crisis as using the party's Constitution to address this matter may yield nothing, because if Ayu were to go, Ambassador

Umar Iliya Damagun, Deputy National Chairman (North), will be the one to step in until a convention is held to properly constitute another executive, according to Section 45 (I and II) of the party's Constitution.

Chairman, PDP Board of Trustees, Senator Walid Jibrin, gave the hint about Ayu's possible resignation on Sunday, when he appeared on Channels Television programme, Sunday Politics. While confirming that it was not right for the PDP presidential contender and the party's national chairman to come from the same Northern region of the country, the BoT chairman revealed that a report on the matter is being awaited by the party's national leadership.

Expressing his determination to ensure that peace and genuine reconciliation returns to the party, Senator Jibrin announced his readiness to even leave his post to create way for PDP to achieve cohesion to win the forthcoming general elections. He said that the report on the crisis

would be addressed by the leaders next week, stressing that "when we find out that somebody is wrong in what has happened, we will come up openly to tell the party that it is wrong."

"Whatever we can do, we will do it in the interest of the party to make the party remain as PDP. To tell the truth, it will not be fair for the president of Nigeria to be from the north, the chairman of the party from the north and the BoT chairman from the north."

As the party's national caucus, BoT and National Executive Committee (NEC) plan to convene any moment from now, it was also gathered that the recommendation of the various reconciliation committees will guide action on the issue.

It was also learnt that while the Wike camp made Ayu's leave their cardinal demand, some members faithful to Atiku Abubakar emphasized that only through a mini convention after the general elections could Ayu be replaced. Attempts to get Arapaja's response to the development failed as the

National Vice Chairman did not pick calls or reply to SMS sent to his phone line. However, when contacted, the National Publicity Secretary of the party, Debo Ologunagba, said he was yet to know.

"Well, I am not aware of this. If it is happening, I will be in a position to know and it would be a decision of the organs of the party. And there is no such thing to my knowledge at this time."

"I am sure the NWC (National Working Committee) would have to meet, that is an organ of the party. Most likely, the NEC (National Executive Committee) will meet. The last meeting of NWC was last Thursday, the next one will be next Thursday and there is nothing like that on the agenda to my knowledge as of now," Ologunagba said.

Barely four days after the Umaru Fintiri-led PDP peace panel met in Port Harcourt to address the two stalwarts of the party, an atmosphere of unease and anxiety has overtaken the party.

The camp of the Rivers governor has not just emphasized that Ayu

should resign, it is also requesting to be allowed to produce the next chairman.

A check at the PDP national secretariat in Abuja on Monday disclosed that the issue of the peace meeting dominated talks among several groups of party leaders and officials.

The Port Harcourt meeting, according to a member of the NWC, is "the beginning of the end" for the rift, because the embattled leaders have laid bare their demands.

"What has also emanated from the meeting is that the speculation about the call for the resignation of Ayu as national chairman has been formally brought forward."

"It is now left for the other camp and the entire leadership of the party, including NEC to weigh the pros and cons and take a decision," he said.

It was also gathered that the reconciliation process is being delayed by a new tussle over which camp produces the replacement to Ayu

should he resign. A NEC member revealed that some followers of Atiku prefer a member of their camp to be made chairman if Ayu resigns, but the Wike camp wants to produce the next chairman since the Atiku camp has already produced the presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Walid Jibrin emphasized on Monday that Northern domination of the leadership of the party is unfair to other party leaders from the South.

Explaining the statement he made on a television programme on Sunday night, Walid made it clear that it is not right for the PDP to have its presidential candidate, national chairman and BoT chairman from the Northern part of the country.

At the moment, Atiku, Ayu and the BoT Chairman are all from the North. Even the deputy national chairman (North), who is constitutionally empowered to take charge should Ayu resign, is also from Yobe in Northeast.

# On slave trade day, Obaseki urges global efforts against trafficking

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

Edo State Governor Godwin Obaseki has urged stakeholders to step up global efforts to end the scourge of human trafficking and all other forms of modern slavery.

He made the call in commemoration of the International Day for the Remembrance of Slave Trade and its Abolition. It is marked on August 23, every year, by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), to remember the transatlantic slave trade and its abolition.

Obaseki, who noted that the state has made considerable progress in the campaign against human trafficking, added that the government was implementing reforms and legislation to sustain the gains recorded in combatting the scourge, especially in the rehabilitation and resettlement of returning illegal migrants.

Describing this year's theme, 'Stories of Courage: Resistance to Slavery and Unity against Racism,' as apt, the governor however reiterated the need to strengthen transnational ties to end modern slavery and other ills, which benefit from human trafficking.

He further called on the international community



Gov. Godwin Obaseki

and other stakeholders to continue to support the state government's effort to end human trafficking and all other forms of slavery.

According to him, "On this day, it is important to reiterate the need to strengthen global efforts and partnerships to end the scourge of human trafficking and all other forms of modern slavery.

"For us in Edo, we have

recorded milestones in the fight against human trafficking and all other forms of human exploitation on the back of our robust partnership with the private sector and international development organisations.

"With their support, we have been able to substantially contain the scourge of human trafficking and irregular migration, which once pillaged our youths,

who are our most valuable resources. These partnerships must be sustained if we are serious in realizing the global vision of totally eradicating human trafficking and modern day slavery, as well as all other forms of human exploitations."

Obaseki noted that "Apart from the various programmes implemented by the state's skills development agency, EdoJobs to create more jobs

and equip youths in the state with in-demand skills to be globally competitive, we have set up the Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking; enacted the Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Law and set machinery in motion for top-of-the-range basic and technical education in the state, as part of revved up efforts to curb the trend of human trafficking."



WAEC boss, Mr. Patrick E. Areghan

## Edo emerges best state in 2021 WAEC exams

Edo has emerged the best state in the 2021 diet of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) examinations, recording 92.8 per cent pass rate among pupils who sat for the test in the state.

The state also came second in the ranking of the pass rate among public schools who wrote the examination across Nigeria in 2021.

This was contained in a release by WAEC and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) published by data firm, Statisense on its Twitter handle.

According to the data, Edo came first in the national tally with 92.8% passing the ex-

ams with five credits, including English and Mathematics, followed closely by Enugu State in the second position with 92.7%; Anambra ranked third with 92.2%; Benue fourth with 91.5%; Ebonyi, fifth with 90.5% and Cross River sixth with 90.2%.

In the ranking of the performance of public schools which presented candidates for the examination, Enugu came first with 93.9%; Edo, second with 93.5%; Benue came third with 91.7 percent; Ebonyi, fourth with 91.3% and Anambra, 91.3 per cent.

The Governor Godwin Obaseki-led

administration has over the years implemented far-reaching reforms across the education ecosystem, beginning with the basic education sector. The reforms are percolating to the other aspects of the state's education space, with a number of the teachers in public schools in the state receiving national awards for their devotion to service and innovation in the classroom.

He was awarded the NUT Governor of Year by the Nigerian Union of Teachers in 2019 in recognition of his multifaceted reforms and initiatives in the state's education sector.

## Call for Orton's impeachment won't distract Nigerians from APC's misrule, says aide

● *Alleges it's plot to cover up failure of Buhari's govt*

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, ABUJA

**C**alls by the Benue State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for the impeachment of the state governor, Samuel Ortom has been described as an effort in futility which cannot stand the test of time.

This is as a former governor of the state and serving senator of the APC, George Akume, was asked to address the total failure of his party under the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in all aspect of governance.

An aide to Governor Ortom, Mr Terver Akase said members of the ruling party, including Akume should have been more concerned about how to revamp the country from the brinks of collapse which an APC government has driven Nigeria, than engaging in petty futile exercise of trying to unseat a performing state governor.

According to him, the current move by ex-governor Akume to unseat Ortom will suffer same defeat and disgrace as in 2018 when he sponsored eight out of thirty members of the Benue State House of Assembly to impeach governor Samuel Ortom for dumping the APC for PDP.

Akase, the Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the Benue State governor, lamented that the fresh call by the APC

and its chieftains in the Benue State for Orton's impeachment, is coming at a time when the APC government at the centre failed to tackle insecurity of terrorism and banditry. He said such calls was just "to cover up their failure."

In his reaction to the call for impeachment of his principal, he noted that the APC's press conference which was addressed by its State Publicity Secretary, was a clear attempt to divert attention from the concerns, fears and focus of Benue people and other Nigerians on the disturbing matters of insecurity occasioned by the failure of the Federal Government which Governor Samuel Ortom has constantly been speaking about.

While saying that the lame distraction of APC was long expected, he fingered the APC leader in Benue, Senator George Akume as the mastermind of the statement made by the APC Publicity Secretary in the state.

Akase, in a statement made available to the media said "we are aware that the APC press conference in Makurdi on Friday was a ridiculous response to Governor Ortom's recent call for the impeachment of President Muhammadu Buhari on account of his inability to lead the country.

"Their outing was also an attempt to divert attention from the plethora of

problems facing the APC in Benue State arising from their yahoo yahoo primary elections which aftermath is the court cases instituted by aspirants of the party, as well as their deepening crisis over the choice of a deputy governorship candidate.

"APC is in shambles in Benue State and the only way for them to breath is to launch media attacks on Governor Ortom.

"An attack on the Governor earns them instant 'commendation' from the Villa.

"We expected APC to address the confusion within their party and not raise infantile allegations over local government administration. A party that thrives on imposition and marginalization while abhorring justice and equity lacks the moral standing to question anyone on accountability.

"Our response to APC's allegation that Governor Ortom has been mismanaging local government funds is simply that he who accuses should provide proof.

"We challenge APC to publish evidence to back their claim that the Governor has turned local governments to his private use and has been diverting funds meant for the councils.

"They should spare Benue people of the stress in searching for the proof. It is on record that in the last seven years, under the Ortom administration, three different local government elections have been conducted

and three sets of council chairmen duly elected.

"The APC should be worried that it was unable to field candidates for the last local government election in Benue. How was Governor Ortom responsible for the party's failure to present candidates for the council polls?

"It can be confirmed that Governor Ortom has ensured that leaders of the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees, NULGE, the Nigeria Union of Teachers, NUT and several labour unions, as well as the association of local government councilors are members of the Joint Account Allocation Committee in Benue State.

"The unions know precisely how local government funds are administered. APC in Benue State has every reason to be desperate owing to the mass defection of its members into the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP as the 2023 elections draw closer.

"A party which suffered a devastating defeat in 2019 and is now facing another defeat in 2023 has justification for distress.

"The pain of the impending defeat of APC is inevitably similar to circumcision. The cry of a baby does not stop it. Governor Samuel Ortom remains committed to serving his people and standing with them.

"He will neither be discouraged nor distracted by the sponsored media assault."

## Obi, Tinubu, Okowa, others meet at burial of Nduka Obaigbena's mother

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**, ASABA

Eminent Nigerians and top government functionaries, including presidential candidates of Labour Party and All Progressives Congress, Mr Peter Obi and Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, and Governor Ifeanyi Okowa were among the dignitaries that attended the burial of Princess Margaret Obaigbena.

The late princess of Owa Kingdom is mother of Prince Nduka Obaigbena, Publisher of THISDAY and Arise Television.

The funeral service was held on Saturday at St Andrews Anglican Church Owa-Oyibu, the headquarters of Ika North East Local Government Area of Delta State.

Other dignitaries at the ceremony were state governors; Dr. Kayode Fayemi, Ekiti, Godwin Obaseki, Edo; Chukwuma Soludo, Anambra, Dapo Abiodun, Ogun; Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Lagos and Atiku Bagudu, Kebbi State.



Also in attendance were Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Lucky Irabor; Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Mr Godwin Emefiele; business moguls, Aliko Dangote; Jim Ovia; Tony Elumelu and ex-state governors; Chief

Olusegun Osoba of Ogun, Donald Duke of Cross River and Adams Oshiomhole of Edo, among others.

In his sermon, Bishop of Ika Diocese, Anglican Communion, Rt. Rev'd Godfrey

Ekpenisi, said Dame Margaret Obaigbena lived a life of humility and commitment to the service of God.

Bishop Ekpenisi disclosed that the deceased octogenarian lived an impactful life, adding that Nigerians should love one another by being charitable towards the promotion of humanity.

According to him, Nigerians should wholeheartedly embrace God in their daily lives by shunning anything capable of severing their relationship with God.

Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, while speaking at the service eulogized the deceased for her invaluable service and significant contributions towards advancing the cause of humanity.

He described the matriarch of the Obaigbena family as a woman who spent her life time serving God and humanity.

"Mama was a mother to all and I am truly part of the family because I do remember our early days in life. She was always there for us.

## Breach of power rotation will affect Atiku's 2023 Presidency, VON's DG claims

By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**, ABAKALIKI

As the 2023 general elections draw closer, a Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr. Osita Okechukwu has disclosed that the breach of the power rotation principle is affecting the chances of the Presidential candidate of People's Democratic party (PDP), Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. The Chieftain said according to the APC Northern Governors' letter to President Muhammadu Buhari dated June 4, 2022, there was an evidence that the rotation of the presidency between the North and South is intended to unite the country.

He quoted the governors saying, "After careful deliberation, we wish to state our firm conviction that after eight years in office of President Muhammadu Buhari, the presidential candidate of the APC for 2023 election should be one of our teeming members from the southern states of Nigeria.

"It is a question of honour for the APC, an obligation that is not in anyway affected by

the decisions taken by another political party. We affirm that upholding this principle is in the interest of building a stronger, more united and more progressive country."

Okechukwu also recalled former President Olusegun Obasanjo's statement on the matter: "I am very much aware that it's the turn of the South to produce the next President of Nigeria. I was part of the meeting when the agreement was made between Northern and Southern Leaders. I am even surprised PDP gave her ticket to another North candidate.

"It will be an injustice to the South if the North retains Power after 8 years of rule."

Consequently, Okechukwu, who is also the Director-General (DG) of Voice of Nigeria (VON), remarked that it would be a herculean task for Atiku in his mission to divide North and South to defeat the APC Northern Governors' Forum, President Muhammadu Buhari, former President, Olusegun Obasanjo and a host of other unifier patriots like Afenifere Leader, Pa Ayo Adebajo, Governor Wike, Chief Edwin

Clark and uncountable unifier patriots who support power shift from North to South.

The Enugu State APC chieftain, who spoke to journalists on Sunday, added: "My take is that Atiku is not a unifier and cannot defeat the Northern Governors' Forum, Buhari, Obasanjo, Adebajo, Clark and sophisticated northern electorate by his mission to win by dividing the north and the south.

"It is an unforced error to think that he can manipulate our fault lines and the abundance of unifier patriots of the north. The Northern electorate are very sophisticated. They voted for Zik, Abiola and Obasanjo.

"Truly, take it or leave it, Governor Nyesom Wike's main grouse is Atiku's violent breach of PDP's Constitution, manipulation of Governor Aminu Tambuwal and our fault lines.

"My bet is that the wound of Machiavellian dosage Atiku infested the PDP is not likely going to heal before 2023 presidential election.

"These unifier patriotic forces won't allow him no matter his gusto to trample and rubbish

the good works of patriots who sacrificed their presidential ambition and instituted the rotation convention in our political firmament."

Responding to suggestions that Atiku may be running on the trajectory that democracy confers right to vote and be voted for, the DG VON noted that although democracy provides for freedom as one of its ethos, if others had engaged in unforced error breach of rotation convention, and division of north and south, Obasanjo could have imposed Sir Peter Odili as President in 2007, instead of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua.

He stated further: "Obasanjo as a unifier nationalist dropped Odili to maintain the unity of north and south. Atiku has the freedom to cherry-pick the laws and convention of his fancy; however, the truism is that Atiku is not a unifier, because he failed to adhere to federal character principle, which is our own variant of affirmative action that is observed in liberal democracy globally. This is the yard stick of measurement of character.

# Sanwo-Olu receives, tasks Igbo leaders in Lagos on peace

## •Ohanaeze chiefs restate commitment to gov's re-election, Tinubu's presidential bid

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has urged residents of Lagos to continuously ensure that it remains politically stable for continuous peace, which it currently enjoys as the most peaceful state in Nigeria.

He made the call during his meeting with leaders of the state chapter of Ohanaeze Ndigbo led by its president, Chief Solomon Ogbonna, and Ohanaeze Political Forum led by its chairman, Chief Chris Ekwilo, at Lagos House, Marina.

He said the 2023 general elections for Lagos residents, especially the Igbo people should be about who has their best interest of the nation at heart, a person, who over the years has created opportunities without consideration for tribal interests and who has given a genuine platform for people to thrive, live and work well.

"There is no part of this State that one form of development is not happening. We will continue to push development in every nook and cranny of the state. This is the most peaceful state in the country. We spent so much on security to keep all of us saved on a daily basis. So, if people now come and want to divide us, we shouldn't let that happen.

"We all have a responsibility to continue to ensure that Lagos continues to remain politi-

cally stable for all of us so that we can continue to enjoy the peace that we are all experiencing. All the things we are doing are natural for us to do because God has created us to make life better for our fellow human beings.

"Don't let us begin to divide what has held us. Let us be careful and let our people know that what is holding us together is bigger than wanting to divide us. For me, it is not just about coming back; it is just because we want the development to continue in Lagos. We will do our best. We will convince and carry everybody along and make sure we give everybody a space. Don't change something that is good and working," he advised.

Sanwo-Olu also commended the leadership of Ohanaeze in Lagos, saying Ogbonna is passionate about his kinsmen and the welfare of the Ndigbo in the state.

Ogbonna commended Sanwo-Olu for his support for Ndigbo in Lagos and assured the governor that the Igbo will support his second term because he has fulfilled all the campaign promises he made in 2019 to them.

He said: "So, we must support him and APC. If we have a governor of APC in Lagos and the same party at the federal level, it will be in the interest of the Igbo people.

"Our PVCs will give us the voting strength

in APC. We will support Sanwo-Olu's second term in Lagos because Sanwo-Olu is extraordinary. In 2023 elections, we will support Sanwo-Olu for second term and Asiwaju Bola Tinubu for president."

Ekwilo, who described the governor as 'best among equals' said Igbo

people will work for the victory of Tinubu and Sanwo-Olu in next year's elections.

"We are doing everything possible to convince our people in Lagos that anything outside APC is a waste of votes. And because of the critical elections, we are facing,

we have collapsed all the political groups of Ndigbo in Lagos APC into Ohanaeze Political Forum. We are going to join forces with the Ohanaeze chairman to reach out to our people in Lagos. Sanwo-Olu's second term is a done deal," he said.

Ekwilo also appreciated Sanwo-Olu's support for Igbo people in Lagos State through the Ohanaeze Ndigbo, especially the assistance he rendered to them during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing a lot of relief materials to cushion the effect of the pandemic on the people.



Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu flanked by President, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Lagos, High Chief Solomon Ogbonna (left) and Lagos APC Chairman, Hon. Cornelius Ojelabi (right) with other members of the group during a meeting with the Governor, at the Lagos House, Marina, on Sunday, 21 August, 2022.

## Lekki Port to generate 112, 000 jobs for Nigerians, says Sambo

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

Minister of Transportation, Muazu Sambo, has hinted that the Lekki Deep Sea Port project will create no fewer than 112,000 jobs for Nigerians when completed.

Sambo stated this while speaking with newsmen in Jalingo, Taraba State,

maintaining that the port, which is a Deep Sea Port, would generate more tonnage and revenue to the port and entire country.

He further said the importance of the project would impact positively on the nation's economy, adding that the Lekki Deep Sea Port project remains a major infrastructure in-

tervention in the maritime sector of the economy.

"It is significant because the largest ships in the world can berth at the port. That means more tonnage, more cargoes and revenue for the port and country. It means more economic activities.

"And above all, the creation of the Lekki Deep

Sea Port will provide an estimated 112,000 direct and indirect jobs. This will be in the few years and as time goes on, and activities expand, the number of the jobs will multiply and that is good for us.

The more jobs we have, the more our ability to put food on the table of Nigerians," he said.

## Six die in Ondo auto crash

By FRIDAY OMOSOLA, Akure

Six people have lost their lives while three others sustained injuries in a crash involving a truck and a bus at Ajue on the Ore-Ondo expressway in Odigbo Local Government Area of the state.

The six passengers that died on the spot were one male adult and five females one whom was an infant, The Trumpet gathered.

Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC, Unit Commander in Ore, Babafemi Alonge, said the accident occurred when a Howo truck marked Lagos MUS 321 YF lost control due to brake failure and collided with a Nissan Vannette bus

registered Ondo RGB 487 XA.

He said: "The accident involved 10 people, six people died; one male adult, four female adults, and a female child with three other injured passengers; one male adult and two female adults.

"Others who sustained various degrees of injuries were rushed to the hospital by our men."

Babafemi said the bodies were taken to the General Hospital morgue in Ore where the injured are also receiving treatment.

He added that the vehicles had been towed to Ajue Divisional Police Station, cautioning motorists to maintain full concentration to avoid crashes.

## Ondo govt seeks partnership with FUTA on teachers' training

By FRIDAY OMOSOLA, Akure

Ondo State Government has declared readiness to partner with the Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure, in training teachers in the state, particularly in Science and Technology.

Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu stated this on Tuesday while playing host to the Principal Officers of FUTA, led by the new Vice Chancellor, Professor Adenike Oladiji, in his office in Alagbaka, Akure. Governor Akeredolu said his administration would continue to encourage Continuing Education to improve the

standard of education in the State.

"A number of our teachers need what I will call 'Continuing Education' and you can help us in that area, particularly our Science teachers. They can be with you for two weeks for training.

"A few of them have forgotten what they have learnt. So, continuing education will be very important to us. We have a policy that you don't earn a promotion until you have added a degree or additional qualification. We also have our own Institute (PSTI) in Ilara-Mokin, and there can be collaboration."

He added that the

state Tech Hub at the University, which is an incubating center, has continued to train several people in diverse areas. While congratulating Professor Oladiji on her appointment as the first female Vice-Chancellor of FUTA, he expressed confidence in her ability to do well in the new position.

The governor also lauded the VC for supporting BEMORE, an initiative of the First Lady, Mrs Betty Anyanwu-Akeredolu.

Earlier, the VC commended the Governor over the appointment of FUTA alumni in his cabinet including the Chief of Staff to the Governor,

Chief Olugbenga Ale. She described them as worthy alumni making the institution proud.



Gov Rotimi Akeredolu

## NPF, PSC disagree on constables recruitment

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

**N**igeria Police Force (NPF) has said it has not commenced the 2022 constable recruitment. This is contrary to the position of the Police Service Commission (PSC).

In a Daily Sun Newspaper publication on August 11, 2022, the PSC announced that the 2022 Police Constable recruitment is open for interested Nigerians to apply.

However, the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, in a statement forwarded to The Trumpet on Monday night, said the NPF is not currently recruiting.

Adejobi urged Nigerians to disregard

the said publication by the PSC while adding that the advert by the PSC has no connection with the NPF and is not also in tandem with the police recruitment process.

The police spokesperson further disassociated the NPF from the website provided by the PSC, saying the official recruitment will be announced on the usual e-recruitment portal – <https://policerecruitment.gov.ng>.

Adejobi said, “The Nigeria Police Force wishes to inform well-meaning members of the public that it has not commenced the 2022 Police Constables recruitment into the Nigeria Police Force contrary to a publication on Page 21 of Daily Sun Newspaper of Thursday August 11, 2022 by the Police Service

Commission (PSC).

“The Police similarly states unequivocally that the advert has no connection with the Nigeria Police Force nor is it in tandem with the Police recruitment process, and should be disregarded in all its entirety. The website to which the publication refers intending candidates – <http://www.recruitment.psc.gov.ng> - is not associated with the Nigeria Police Force.

“The Nigeria Police Force hereby calls on all stakeholders and intending applicants to discountenance the information in both the newspaper and on the portal as the website is not the official portal for Police Constables recruitment.

“The Nigeria Police Force thereby assures well-meaning Nigerians



IGP Baba Alkali

that the commencement of the 2022 recruitment exercise will be announced via the official police e-recruitment website – <https://policerecruitment.gov.ng>, the Nigeria Police

Force official website – <https://www.npf.gov.ng>, and advertisements on national dailies and official police social media accounts as and when due.”

## Troops kill many terrorists in Sambisa forest bombardment

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

Many terrorists have been reportedly killed by a Nigerian Air Force (NAF) jet under Operation Hadin Kai (KAI). It followed the bombardment of terrorists' hideouts in Sambisa forest and the Tumbuns in Borno State.

Troops while acting on credible intelligence were said to have directed NAF aircraft to a location in Sambisa forest believed to be the enclave of a notorious terrorist, Fiya Ba Yuram, the current Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) leader, who succeeded Abubakar Shekau.

According to a source, the title ‘Fiya’ connotes the most senior position in the terrorists' militant hierarchy.

The source noted that Yuram was an ally of Shekau and switched allegiance to ISWAP after his death.

The source disclosed that on arrival at the location, the soldiers observed activities, hence, air bombardments were carried out on the location on Monday.

It added that after successful strikes on the location, many terrorists were reportedly killed, though it remained unclear if Yuram was among the casualties.

In a similar development, air strikes were also undertaken in the Tunbuns near Lake Chad after suspicious activities were observed in the area believed to be terrorists' training camp. The targets reportedly went up in flames.

After the airstrike, there was pandemonium at the location, as surviving terrorists took cover under nearby trees, which were later struck by the aircraft, a source said.

The source further said the ability of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) and other security agencies, alongside their foot soldiers, to pick out key terrorists' targets for elimination is also indicative of the credibility of the intelligence provided.

When contacted, NAF Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet, confirmed the strikes, adding: “Yes, strikes were carried out on some specific targets in the Tunbuns and Sambisa with varying degrees of successes recorded.”

## Police in Sokoto State begin crime mapping, mass deployment of officers over insecurity

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

Sokoto State Police Command has started crime mapping, identification of vulnerable points, and mass deployment of officers on motorized and foot patrols as well as intelligence gathering on targeted locations where several raids on criminal hideouts were undertaken.

The Commissioner of Police in the State, CP Muhammed Usaini Gumel, stated this during a press conference held with police operational and tactical commanders at the Police Officers Mess in Sokoto on Monday.

CP Gumel said the development is in accordance with the directives recently given by of the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, to all strategic

commanders at the Force Headquarters in Abuja.

He said critical infrastructures within the State, particularly the Nigeria Correctional Services would be properly protected by the State Command against attacks by criminal elements.

“Recently, the Inspector General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba psc(+), NPM, fdc had convened a conference with all strategic commanders at FHQ Abuja where strategies towards enhancing police operational response and stabilizing the security order were re-evaluated.

“This followed IGP’s directives to all Commands and Formations to immediately commence a special visibility policing operation across the country. In compliance with this directive, Sokoto state police command

began crime mapping, identification of vulnerable points, and massive deployment of personnel on motorized and foot patrols in addition to the utilization of intelligence on targeted locations where several raids on criminal hideouts were undertaken.

“In the same vein, this police command is determined to secure critical government installations and most importantly the Nigerian Correctional Service facility in the state and it is on this note that had already jointly conducted a review of the existing security architecture, and identified the gaps and vulnerabilities at the Custodial facilities and currently complementing the Service strength in its determination for upscaling security in and around such facilities and never

to allow any avoidable security breaches.

“The security situation in recent times shows a concerning trend of an increase in the threat posed to the nation by terror elements which include bandits, kidnappers, and other highly organized and mobile violent criminal syndicates. On the foregoing, let me keep assuring members of the public that the police in the state are currently strengthening the existing levels of collaboration and synergy with the military and other relevant security agencies to reverse the current internal security slide.

“We cannot achieve this goal all alone without stakeholder’s engagement so that we can defeat these criminals who are our common enemies and hell-bent on altering our values

for communal peace and security.

“Discipline and professionalism remain the bedrock of the current IGP and the Force Management Team. It is on this note the Nigeria Police Force under the leadership of the IGP is continuing charging all police officers to protect the citizens with integrity and to always serve them with compassion.

“It is on this note that recently, three policemen were dismissed who were caught on viral videos dignifying and justifying extortion, violently abusing the right of citizens they had sworn to serve and protect. In a like manner, all Policemen of Sokoto State command are seriously warned against such misconduct, and any erring officer found wanting will be viewed seriously,” CP Gumel said.

## NSCDC impounds allegedly stolen petroleum products hidden in parks

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

Cross River State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has impounded 16,000 litres of stolen petroleum products.

Commandant of the Service in the State, Samuel Fadeyi, said the stolen products which are mainly Automotive Gas Oil also known as diesel, were stored in

drums and gallons and hidden at trailer parks across the state.

Fadeyi said this while speaking with journalists on Monday in Calabar and inspecting the seized petroleum products. He said the search became necessary following an instruction from the Commandant General of NSCDC that some illegal activities were going on in parks.

He said it was discovered upon their

arrival at the trailer parks in Cross River that the hawkers had stored and hidden a lot of the petroleum product in drums.

“Some of the places we went to, we met a lot of hostilities, so we make sure that we destroy the capacity of the perpetrators from continuing in the business and quickly exit the area to avoid human casualties.

“Some of these hawkers work like

cartels, once they see security officials they attack and escape but we make sure we impound the products,” Fadeyi said.

He further disclosed that he had contacted the leadership of the parks and their unions for a meeting because of the negative impact the activities of the hawkers have on their integrity.

He said the operation wasn’t a witch-hunt but to send a strong

message because of the negative impact of the activities of the hawkers on the nation’s economy and the environment through smuggling and adulteration.

Faseyi commended the Nigerian Navy Ship Victory and Sector 4, Operation Delta Safe, for joining the corps during the operation to impound and arrest smugglers of petroleum products from Nigeria to Cameroon.





## Call 'Obidients' inconsequential at your own peril, Fani-Kayode warns APC, PDP

● *They're far more dangerous to our collective cause as a ruling class, he says*

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, ABUJA

Nigeria's political elites as well as their supporters in the larger parties have been warned to be weary of the cult-like growing followership of the presidential candidate of Labour Party, Mr. Peter Obi.

Flamboyant politicoan and former Aviation minister under the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) administration, Mr. Femi Fani- Kayode otherwise known as FFK who sounded the warning said the swelling popularity of Obi and the Obidient Movement of his followers is a big threat to the interest of the ruling class ahead of the 2023 election in the country.

Rather than casting aspersions on the movement, he said the loading political revolution at the instance of the Obidients may consume elitist politicians.

Projecting the movement as a generational and paradigm shift in Nigerian politics, Fani-Kayode in an article, titled: "Who Are These Obidients", posted on his verified Facebook page noted that the movement is capable of riding Nigeria of the old order and usher in the new.

He went ahead to instil fear in elitist politicians that they should be ready to vacate the country, if the LP candidate becomes Nigeria's next president, saying: "If they ever get power, many heads will roll and many of today's and yesterday's leaders will run into exile or go into hiding. This is especially so of those who have something to hide or who have skeletons in their cupboards.

"They want a real and fundamental change and not a fake one. They want to pull the whole house and system down with everyone in it and rebuild a new one in their own image, with their own values and on their own terms.

"Most important of all they want to see the back of those of us that are in any way associated with the old order or that have been in Government or the corridors of power at ANY point in time over the last 62 years. That desire and sentiment is the force that is driving and propelling them and that is kindling their fire and swelling their ranks.

"That is what makes them so threatening and I repeat, those of us that are in the larger political parties or that are members of the existing and ancient ruling class underestimate them, ignore them and display disdain for their firm resolve and rising anger at our own peril."

Ignoring the movement and regarding the Obidients as being an inconsequential bunch that only exist on social media, he said, will be dangerous.



Peter Obi

FFK said: "most of my political associates, friends and colleagues across party lines tend to dismiss them with contempt. They regard them as being inconsequential and argue that they only exist on social media. I beg to differ. I see them in the streets and I see them in the Churches.

"I see them amongst my staff and amongst those that regard themselves as being amongst the oppressed and downtrodden. I see them amongst the professionals and those that are bankers, lawyers, doctors and artists. I see them in the North, West, East and South. I see them everywhere and not only on social media.

"I see them as being a very powerful and potent rising force which, if properly managed, will develop into a major political power over the next few years with a strong ideological and electoral foundation and massive structures. That is the potential that they have and that is how dangerous they can be.

"The sooner those of us that are in the larger political parties get off our high horses, display a little humility, try and understand their mindset, reach out to them, take them more seriously, appreciate their anger, restore their hope, make the necessary concessions and try and abate their rage and rising angst the better it will be for us all. They may not have today but if we do not play our cards right they may end up having tomorrow."

Saying that the movement is gradually gaining ground in every part of the country, he stressed: "those that are the supporters of Peter Obi, the Labour Party presidential candidate, are known as 'Obidients' and they are EVERYWHERE. Those of us in the larger political parties like the ruling



Fani-Kayode

APC and the opposition PDP, treat them with contempt and ignore them at our own peril.

"The truth is that they are far more dangerous to our collective cause as a ruling class than many of us can possibly conceive or appreciate. Only the discerning can appreciate this and know precisely where this whole thing may be heading.

"They may not have structures or elected representatives in the legislative and executive arms of Government but they have IDEAS and VISION coupled with a clear ideological and philosophical bent which can and will endure for far longer than mere political platforms and structures.

"Unknown to them as well as virtually everyone else, therein lies their power. As they say, an idea whose time has come cannot be stopped. Long after we are all gone they will still be here because structures and political alliances rarely endure but IDEAS and VISION last forever.

"Again they will outlive and outlast us all because they are not a political party in the true sense of the word but rather a growing national movement which scales and spreads across ethnic, religious, political and regional lines and traditional boundaries.

"They also represent a generational and paradigm shift which is increasingly attractive to many and they are bound tightly together by a common purpose, common cause and common objective: namely to rid Nigeria of the old order and usher in the new. That is really what they want to do and that is the primary and strongest source of their inspiration and motivation.

"They are far more dangerous to what

the French describe as the 'Ancien Regime', the old political class and the entire system itself than anything we have ever seen before because most of them, bar their leader and a small handful of political tried and tested veterans and old war horses around him, are NOT politicians and have never ventured anywhere near the political arena or the circles of power.

"In the main they are an innovatively aggressive and frightful array and association of angry and determined young men and women who clearly have the courage of their convictions coupled with the audacity, fury, daring, rage and firm resolve of those that were involved in the Endsars protesters and the fiery footsoldiers that effected the 1917 Russian Bolshevik revolution led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

"There is also something Rawlingesque and intimidating about them. That is to say they are like the late, great and mighty son of Africa and leader of Ghana, President Jerry Rawlings, who also led a successful revolution in his country in 1979 and who, on his second coming in 1981 when he toppled yet another Government said, 'if there is no justice there can be no peace!'

"That is the spirit that is in the Obidients and that is what moves them. Yet though they do not like to hear it their chances of winning the presidential election next year, short of a miracle, are very slim and deep down they all know it even if they refuse to publicly acknowledge it. .

"Despite that they are determined to fight to the end, hope for the best, work hard and give it their best shot and, of course, therein lies their victory. In this game courage is the key. As they say, 'he who dares wins'. Again as they say, 'fortune favours the bold' and these young people are both daring and bold.

"That they can challenge the status quo and vie for the sacred and awesome power that has been shared by the two major political parties or their ancestral variants over the last 62 years is commendable in itself. I am not part of them but I certainly commend and applaud their efforts.

"They too have a right to fight for their rights and future and to be heard. They too have a dream and a story to tell and we must never begrudge them that. Yet if the truth be told they are not only interested in winning an election but, perhaps even more importantly, they are interested in making a profound and defiant statement, registering their protest against the status quo and the powers that be and triggering and engendering a full scale, comprehensive and all-embracing social, cultural and political revolution.

"They are like the Robspiers and the Marats of the bloody French revolution between 1789 and 1799 whose battle cry was "liberty, equality and fraternity", who brought an end to the French monarchy, Royal family and nobility, chopped off their heads and established a proud and strong new order and proud Republic.

"Like Robspier's tiny cabal of French revolutionaries they are led by a small cell of intellectual and idealistic hardliners and are bolstered, girded and supported by a volatile, massive and increasingly dangerous support group and power base who threaten violence and hurl insults at their perceived detractors at the drop of a hat and as a consequence of years of pent up anger and frustration."

## Delta Deputy Speaker's brother dumps PDP for APC

● *Promises support for Omo-Agege*

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Younger brother of Deputy Speaker of Delta State House of Assembly, Christopher Ochor has dumped the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC).

Felix Ochor popularly called Ibori of Ukwuani announced his defection Monday in Asaba after meeting with Deputy

Governorship candidate of the APC, Rt. Hon. Friday Osanebi.

The Vice President of Ikolobia Ndokwa said he made the decision because of the antecedents of Osanebi in Ndokwa Nation, adding that Omenosa has no rival in Ndokwa politics.

According to Ochor, Osanebi's emergence as Deputy Governorship candidate of the APC has energized youths of Ndokwa Nation and they will rally round him and

the APC to win by landslide in Ndokwa Nation. Also, a youth leader from Obiaruku community, today announced his defection from PDP to APC.

Asabo Solomon said he is joining the APC to support the aspiration of the Deputy Governorship candidate of the party, Rt. Hon. Friday Osanebi.

He promised to mobilize massively for the party's governorship candidate, Ovie Omo-Agege.

# Of Reptiles, Primates, Insects and Statecraft

By TUNDE OLOSUNLE

By the time the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari winds up on Monday May 29, 2023, it would have taken our country through every conceivable insanity and ridiculousness.

Beyond the time-worn, tripod possibilities of "the good, the bad and the ugly," Nigerians have gone through what the iconic afrobeat musician, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, described as experiences in "crazy world."

Just name it: record-breaking killings in peace time; freestyle abductions even under the daylight nostrils of security forces; unabated insurgency, unceasing terrorism. Festering banditry, bestial butchery of hapless and innocent folks by psychopathic marauders, mindless arson, deliberate violence and vandalism, headline the manner of deathly motions our despairing people have gone through, these past 87 months.

Earlier this year, "SBM Intelligence," a socioeconomic research firm in its "Media Reported Killings in Nigeria" submission for 2021, put the death toll of Nigerians lost to insecurity within the period at 10,366. Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari personally received the report. The death toll was attributed to "violent incidents including attacks from Boko Haram, militia herdsman, abductions, gang clashes and terrorism."

The same report observed that nearly one thousand security agents were killed within the period under review. This included 322 police officers and 642 soldiers. Talled together, using the 2021 average, Nigeria might have lost close to 80,000 people to a miscellany of painful deaths and exterminations, under the Buhari regime.

This is the manner of unimaginable waste and ruination of highly prized human capital Nigeria has suffered in recent years, numbers which can successfully drive the socio-economies of some countries elsewhere in the world.

Road travel, hitherto the preferred and most popular means of movement, is spiralling out of the reach of ordinary folks. Increasing commuting costs attributable to fly-away fuel prices, and the potential of highway attacks in various ways, have impacted road travel adventurism in several ways. I have not, for instance, been able to brave a trip to my hometown, Isanlu in Kogi State, hitherto an oasis of sanity and serenity, viciously violated two years ago, by daredevil robbers.

Attacks on segments of the national rail system which is still being developed, has compelled discontinuation of services in parts. Airlines are shutting down because of heightening operational costs. The few airlines keeping afloat, have stuck virtual daggers in the throats of air travellers, one way economy class trips now hovering around the \$200 mark.

Inflation figures pole-vaulted to 19.64%, basically 20%, in the month of July 2022, the highest it has been since 2005. This was when the Peoples' Democratic Party, (PDP), the much maligned opposition party by the ruling All Progressives Congress, (APC), held sway. Foodstuffs, fuels such as diesel and kerosene, have become virtual untouchables.

Nigeria's currency, the \*naira,\* is one of the weakest and worst in the African continent. According to a survey report, the naira ranks "number 24 among the poorest currencies on the continent." It exchanges for about N710 to the dollar in the parallel market, away from N199 to the USD, in May 2015, when the Buhari government came into office. Critics of the administration have

repeatedly enjoined Buhari, to revert Nigeria to its situation and standing as at 2015.

Amidst this very grim and disheartening scenario, Nigerians have, in staccato sequence, been subjected to the wry humour of zoological dimensions to the nation's travails. The monumental heist, the scandalous looting, the quantum stealing which has been perpetuated at various levels, in ministries, departments and agencies under this government, have been casually explained away as atrocities perpetrated by animals of various kinds! Primates, reptiles, insects and the like, have been listed and accused as complicit and culpable in the novel rape on our commonwealth, by today's trustees of our nation's resources and economy.

Hitherto, mindless and spontaneous incineration of sections, departments or whole organisations where mammoth thievery was committed, was the vogue. It was popular expectation in the past, that every other organisation which came under the spotlight of public scrutiny, crashed in an incendiary heap overnight. Every trace of malfeasance, therefore is safely buried beneath the ash dust and rubble of such edifices, sparing no room for forensic inquisition.

These days, however, rapists of our communal resources have upped the ante of their atrocities. It will become expedient henceforth, for codes of conduct and ancillary regulations of public service, to accommodate minimum competence in zoology, as prerequisite for intending public servants.

No financial losses were disclosed when animals first became major stakeholders in the corporate governance and administration of the Buhari regime, back in 2017. Presidential spokesman, Garba Shehu simply told Nigerians that vicious rodents encroached into the office of the president while he was away for nearly four months on his trademark medicals in the United Kingdom, that year.

According to Shehu, the rodents turned Buhari's office upside down while he was away, puncturing office furniture and eating up the pipe network of the airconditioners serving the office. While rehabilitation efforts proceeded, Buhari squatted in a corner of the "Office of the First Lady." This is just how very important rodents and similar animals must be taken in governmental affairs.

Early 2018, a reptile reportedly swallowed a whopping sum of N36 million from the strong room of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, (JAMB). As I write this, there is a news report to the effect that the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission, (ICPC), is investigating massive fraud to the tune of N11 Billion, perpetrated by the same JAMB.

Hopefully, this was not swallowed by a whale or an elephant, which rank in the bracket of the largest creatures. I'm restrained from further comments for now because Ishaq Oloyede, the professor chief executive of JAMB, has had an impressive public service profile thus far. Let's see how this pans out.

Since the N36 million JAMB snake incident, however, phantom animals have grown more and more emboldened and brazen, ever snacking so indiscriminately at public resources. A week later, the sum of N70 million belonging to the Northern Senators Forum, (NSF), and kept in the custody of the present National Chairman of the APC, Abdullahi Adamu, was reportedly ingested by "monkeys."

Adamu, then a serving senator and chair of the NSF, lost his position as leader of the body to mismanagement of the funds.



President Muhammadu Buhari

Earlier this year, however, he was gleefully rewarded with the apex position in the party's hierarchy. This self same Adamu, had in the past, held very enviable senior executive positions, not the least as two-term governor of Nasarawa State, and Works Minister at some point, under the erstwhile military government.

A quizzical question has been making the rounds on the social media lately. It has the images of three creatures, namely: a rat, a monkey and a termite. And the question is: Which is the strongest of these animals? The last in this list, the termite that is, has joined major stakeholders in our current governance system, owing to a very recent development.

A few days ago, documents containing multibillion naira transactions by the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund, (NSITF), were declared missing. Officials of the agency reportedly told a committee of the Senate, that all the files and records bearing the breakdowns of expenditure worth N17. 1 Billion, had been eaten up by termites.

This vermin infestation, according to the government officials summoned to illuminate this unthinkable discovery, was compounded by the rage of the elements, namely the rain in this instance. It completely destroyed the metal container which housed the files and papers, obliterating every record and document. Curiously, the termite in the three-way quiz earlier alluded to, bested its competitors, the snake and the monkey!

This is how ridiculous our country has sunken in the eyes of the world. We are a tragic laughing stock, a caricature for popular, global amusement, even as we continually humour ourselves as "the giants of Africa."

We have in place a government which rode on the horseback of popular sentiments and support. It pledged to do things differently from the preceding government, including the reversal of every misdeed and affliction, hitherto foisted on the country. The high point of its manifesto was its advertised determination to fight corruption and instill accountability in governance.

Yet, back home, our people and troops are forever at the mercy of mean-spirited insurgents, Fulani militias, terrorists, kidnappers, gunmen, each geopolitical zone contending with its own peculiar security issues.

Buhari cannot feign ignorance of the crass kleptocracy which has defined his

administrations in various ways. The dubious "school feeding programme," for which several billions of naira was voted, yielded \*kwashiorkored\* children and robust contractors. What became of the whimsical \*tradermoni\* scheme for which billions of naira was voted under some ill-thought empowerment scheme, which was just a violation of our national treasury? How about the multibillion naira \*COVID-19 palliative programme\* which only delivered severe dis-empowerment for our people?

Didn't I just read about a scheme into which N5.9 Billion was committed in training 177 youths in \*smartphone repairs\*? The programme was reportedly powered by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, headed by Sadiya Umar Farouq as minister. Didn't we receive the news recently that the Federal Ministry of Agriculture expended the sum of N18. 9 Billion on "bush clearing and land preparation?" The former Accountant General of the Federation, (AGF), Ahmed Idris, was recently docked for fraud in the sum of N109 Billion? The fiscal budget of Ekiti State for year 2022, is just N100 Billion.

Mammoth scams and scandals such as we have detailed above, flourish in high places with very little reprimand for defaulters. At the very best, sanctions are all but a slap on the wrist, in what the inimitable Fela described as "paddy paddy" governance in his hit song, \*Army Arrangement.\* And since no one is appropriately and decisively punished, the trend simply blooms and blossoms, prevalent across the broad spectrum in the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government. Entrenched, systemic corruption was the major highlight of the "charge sheet" against the immediate past Chief Justice of the Federation, (CJN), who bowed out voluntarily and has not been questioned ever since.

Other people therefore simply adopt this archetype of slime and sleaze, lock, stock and barrel, confident they can most probably go unnoticed and unpunished. At the very best, they subscribe to a plea bargain which still entitles them to substantial onshore and offshore aggregates, from their monumental hauls. More ingenious rogues enlist their contacts in the judiciary, where they obtain "perpetual injunctions forbidding their arrest and arraignment," even for visibly established crimes and complicity, deserving of heavy forfeitures and long-term incarceration. This is the way the system progressively decays and degenerates.

Contemporary governance, probity and accountability in Nigeria, have become so very susceptible to the whims and wiles of all types of insects, reptiles and different mammals. Shouldn't we formally integrate them into the scheme of modern day corporate administration in recognition of their serial exploits as thieves, robbers and marauders in our body politic? Let's invest them with National Identification Numbers, (NIN), our digitised international passports, plus permanent voters cards, (PVCs), to further legitimise their citizenship.

To do otherwise will be a disservice to these critical stakeholders. On this score, let's, once again, show the whole wide world the way. Despite our globally acknowledged multivariate ingenuity, genius, capacities and positives, we, sadly, so often, also excel in the weird and bizarre.

● *Olusunle, PhD, poet, journalist, author and scholar, is a Member of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, (NGE).*

## EFCC rejects establishment of electoral offences commission

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Nigeria's main anti-corruption agency has opposed the establishment of a separate commission to investigate and prosecute electoral offenders in the country.

An Assistant Commander of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Deborah Ademu-Eteh, made the position of the anti-graft agency known. It was at a public hearing on a bill to establish an Electoral Offences Commission. The hearing was organised by the House of Representatives Committee on Electoral Matters.

Ademu-Eteh said the offences provided for in the electoral offenses bill have already been covered by various laws of the land, including the 2022 Electoral Act.

"Most of the speakers here have come out to support the establishment of the Commission. But we have a different

position.

"The bill for an Act to establish the National Electoral Offences Commission and For Related matters, 2022 seeks to provide for the establishment of a National Electoral Offences Commission which will coordinate the investigation and prosecution of electoral offences.

"A holistic review of the contents of the proposed bill shows that the offences contained therein in Part IV (Sections 13-32) largely constitute offences that have already been criminalized by extant laws such as the Electoral Act, 2022 (See Sections 114-129), The Penal and Criminal Codes, the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Act, 2000; The Economic and Financial Crimes (Establishment) Act, 2004.

"It is apposite to state that these offences are offences that the Nigerian Police, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Economic and Financial Crimes

(EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), and even the Independent National Electoral Commission (in Section 145 of the Electoral Act, 2022) are empowered under our extant laws to investigate and prosecute.

"There is, therefore, no need to create an agency solely for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting electoral offences most especially when our electoral process is seasonal in nature being that elections are held once in 4 years in the Country.

"Furthermore, it is our suggestion that the existing law enforcement agencies should be strengthened to achieve maximum output. Instead of creating a new agency of investigation and prosecution of electoral offences in the light of the ongoing plan to implement the Oronsanye Committee's proposal by the Federal Government of Nigeria," she stated.



Abdulrasheed Bawa

## NBA probes branch secretary over alleged sexual harassment

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA



Olumide Akpata

Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) is probing one of its branch secretaries over allegations of sexual harassment.

President of the association, Mr Olumide Akpata, disclosed this at the Annual General Conference of the NBA in Lagos.

Attorney-General of Ekiti State, Mr Wale Fapohunda, heads the NBA Sexual Harassment Policy Implementation Committee. He officially presented the revised Sexual Harassment Policy of the NBA and the Guidelines for its implementation to Akpata at the Conference.

The Sexual Harassment Policy Implementation Committee was set up in October of 2021. It followed the launch of the "Sexual Harassment Policy" drafted by the NBA Women's Forum.

Receiving the policy, Akpata noted that the NBA will not pay lip service to the issues of sexual harassment within the association or by its members.

Akpata further stated that action is already being taken by the NBA against sexual harassment by or against members, noting that a petition was received by the Association alleging acts of sexual harassment by a secretary of one of the Branches.

According to him, the matter is being thoroughly investigated and upon conclusion, disciplinary action will immediately follow if liability is established.

The NBA president who is about to exit the office, therefore, charged his successor, President-elect, Y.C. Maikyau SAN, to keep up with the implementation of the policy and ensure that the issues faced by any section of the Association are effectively dealt with.

## Muslim youths tasked to eschew corruption

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Youths of Islam have been charged to shun acts of corruption and all forms of financial crimes.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) gave the charge in Abuja while addressing children and youth of the Al-Habibiyah Islamic Society during an excursion to the EFCC Academy, the spokesperson for the Commission, Wilson Uwujaren said in a statement on Monday.

According to the statement, the Assistant Commander of the EFCC, Joseph Ogwiji, Deputy Commandant of the EFCC Academy, Karu, Abuja, who gave the charge, urged the youths to eschew cybercrime popularly known as 'yahoo-yahoo'.

The statement said, "The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Friday, August 19, 2022, called on Muslim Youths to eschew all forms of financial crimes, including corruption. Assistant Commander of the EFCC Joseph Ogwiji, Deputy Commandant of the EFCC Academy, Karu, Abuja, made the plea while addressing children and youth of the Al-Habibiyah Islamic Society during an excursion to the EFCC Academy."

It quoted Ogwiji to have said, "One of the trending crimes we have now that is prevalent is cybercrime also known as 419 or yahoo-yahoo. As you are growing up you may have heard that they make a lot of money, but again they only make such money at the earlier stage in their crime life but they don't end well; most times they end up in prison, so it is something you shouldn't think of doing at all."

Ogwiji charged the youths to instead focus on their studies and imbibe the spirit of hard work, diligence, and determination in order to achieve the level of success that God has destined for them.

The leader of the group, Hajia Rafat said "the society is holding the 10th Teenagers Workshop which is a periodic event designed to expose them to issues of adulthood, morals, education, and the various laws prohibiting drug abuse, economic and financial crimes and how to expose violators of the laws."

The visit to the Academy is to further expose the youth to the operations of the Commission and how they can also become crusaders of the anti-corruption fight.

## TI tasks ICPC on prosecuting voting-buying culprits

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Executive Director of the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre, Nigeria's Chapter of Transparency International, Comrade Auwal Musa Rafsanjani, has commended the participation of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and other anti-graft agencies in restraining vote-buying during the just concluded Osun state election.

Rafsanjani, who stated this at a working group meeting under the "Strengthening Accountability Networks Among Civil Society (SANCUS) Project" recently held in Keffi, Nasarawa State, stressed that the alleged vote-buyers arrested by ICPC and other anti-corruption agencies should be prosecuted and convicted without hesitation.

According to Rafsanjani, "If you look at Osun State elections, you notice rampant vote trading. We noticed anti-graft agencies making arrests and we commend them. However, we need to see the prosecution and conviction of those offenders as well as the politicians sending these individuals on these errands."

In his remarks, the ICPC representative at the working group meeting, Mr Hassan Salihu, an Assistant Director, stated that there were ample examples that political corruption and illicit financial flows have negative effects on the choice of the electorates.

He said the givers and takers of money for vote-buying are all corrupt and are punishable by the ICPC

"The givers and takers of dirty money for vote-buying purposes are corrupt people, whose offences are punishable under sections 8-26 of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, 2000. Nigerians require political integrity as a quality for the election of leaders capable of confronting the menace of political corruption," Salihu stressed.



Comrade Auwal Musa Rafsanjani

# Impeachment notice to President Buhari

Lately, there has been increasing calls for the resignation or outright impeachment of President Muhammadu Buhari. The grounds for the calls are his alleged non-performance in office and the scary state of security in Nigeria. The recent call, which was first mooted by the Senate, is prompted by security breaches which the Federal Capital Territory suffered. Islamic terrorists successfully “rescued” their colleagues from the Kuje Correctional Facilities without suffering any loss. Their actions forced the federal government to close down a number of schools in the FCT, they attacked the Presidential Guards Brigade at Bwari-Kubwa Road, killing seven members of the guard. The fact that terrorists and members of ISWAP could threaten to kidnap a sitting President and Governor, was the last straw that jolted members of the National Assembly from their slumber. It suddenly dawned on them that Abuja was “surrounded” by terrorists!

Al Jazeera reported that “Nigerian opposition senators are pushing for President Muhammadu Buhari to face impeachment, less than a year before the end of his second term in office, over the country’s spreading security problems.” The earlier move by the Senate was scuttled by the Senate President when he closed the Senate Chamber for a recess. It however resurfaced in the House of Representatives where many members of the opposition party with a few members of the ruling APC threatened on July 27, 2022 that the President will be removed from office if the security situation in Nigeria did not improve within six weeks.

For the avoidance of doubt, by provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic (as amended) “impeachment” implies the outright sacking of the executive – governor or president – from office. Ideally, impeachment

means a query for gross misconduct by these officers. Impeachment may therefore provide grounds for their removal from office. Since this is not so in Nigeria, impeachment is a serious matter. In the Senate, for example, two-third of the 109 Senators will be required to get the President impeached. Given the seriousness of this process, and the constitutional bottlenecks it would entail, it is rational to ask why it has taken the legislators such a long time to perceive the failure of the federal government in the fight against terrorists, bandits, kidnapers, unknown gunmen, Boko Haram and ISWAP.

Many believe that the fight by the government against these criminals is half hearted. There have been heightened calls for self-defence.

Governors have set up various forms of local internal security units and some have gone on to advocate that citizens should bear arms to defend themselves.

It is generally believed that the NASS has only woken up because Abuja is no longer a safe haven for them. Their recent call is perceived to be a form of self-defence from a group of people that has been careless about thousands of Nigerians who have killed and displaced by these criminals let loose upon citizens like a plague on a cursed people. It is our view that this move has come too late in the day. The NASS does not have sufficient time between now and the elections of 2023 to carry out the threat. The leadership of President Buhari cannot be scored high in the sectors of education, health, economy, corruption and security. He has in the past taken measures that in normal circumstances would amount to gross misconduct. Nevertheless, members of the National Assembly looked the other way.

It is the general opinion of citizens that the President and his team should be led out of the scene with the 2023 election like a drunkard in a china store. Carrying out any action that would upset the democratic processes in Nigeria would be more damaging. Attempts to impeach the President amounts to this! And this is exactly what this impeachment portends. We call on the leadership of the APC, members of the National Assembly to rather pressure President Buhari’s government to do all it can to put the economy in a better stead, solve the ongoing crisis in the education sector, annihilate all internal threats to the lives and property of the indigenous people of Nigeria, tackle the food crisis and put a check to what is becoming a run-away inflation. The National Assembly cannot play ostrich or Pilate on these scores. They cannot exonerate themselves by threatening the President – who is as guilty as they are – with impeachment.



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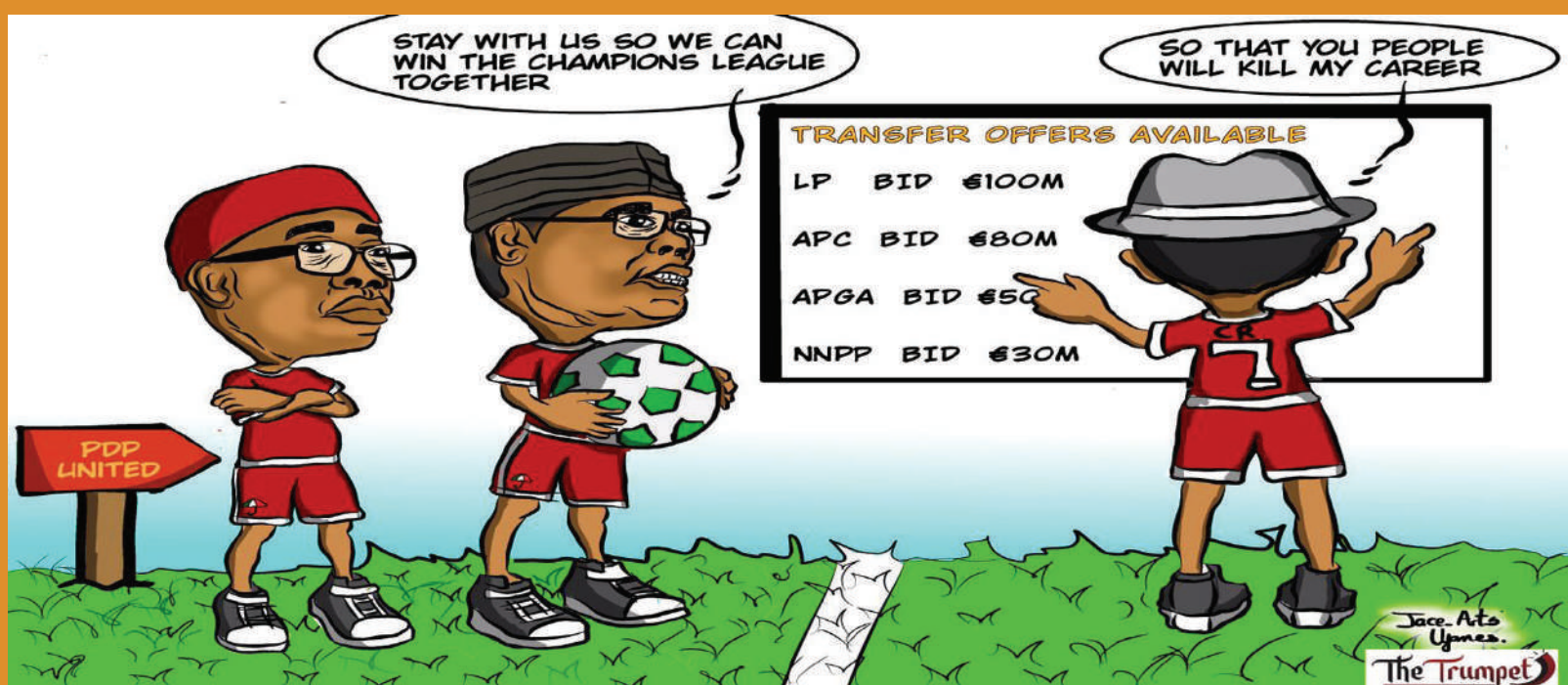
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## 2023: Will Nigerians wait in vain?

The waiting game is on. With measured apprehension and nervous presage, Nigerians are waiting for 2023 to arrive quickly. The reason is obvious – they want to extinguish the raging APC inferno misnamed government. Nigeria's ruling political party APC, under the watchful eyes of President Muhammadu Buhari, forced on Nigerians by Bola Ahmed Tinubu, has submerged the country beneath a furnace, further into an existential crucible. Yet some people inexplicably want a continuation of the same conditions, an unjustifiable mindset difficult to ascribe to a person of balanced cognition. How on earth would anybody of sane mental capacity want APC to continue to steer the ship of the Nigerian state? How is it possible that someone wants Nigerians to continue in these pathetic, rueful conditions? Although the Holy book admonishes that "affliction shall not arise the second time", some people are invoking the spirit of APC's second affliction on the Nigerian polity. It is unfair.

Nigerians are currently battling with hellfire experience. Those who deny the hellfire experience are deluded, but very soon, the geography of victims will extend to include those who think they are protected by power and money. As the wait for 2023 continues, it appears Nigerians are wasting their time since current events negate the possibility of a safe, conducive atmosphere for the election to take place. Waiting for 2023 inevitably reminds me of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* where two vagabonds Estragon and Vladimir waited in vain for a mysterious Godot that never came. Beckett's play has since become a concise manuscript

for interpreting the Absurdist Theatre which encapsulates the futility of human endeavour.

Presently, politicking has divided Nigerians into different groups with funny appellations coined from the names of the three front runners for the office of the president towards 2023. Those supporting Nigeria's latest political sensation and former governor of Anambra State, Peter Obi of the Labour Party, call themselves Obidients. Those supporting septuagenarian APC leader and former Lagos State governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu call themselves Batists. Those supporting Nigeria's serial presidential aspirant and former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar of the PDP prefer to be known as Atikulated. Of course, the neutrals have keenly and critically looked into the future and, given Nigeria's current exertions, are circumspect about the reality of 2023. Surely, it can only take the most optimistic person in Nigeria to believe that the 2023 elections will hold. The signs are ominous. It does not portend well that the seat of power Abuja, which ordinarily should be the most fortified and protected, is currently under siege by terrorists. Yet, millions of Nigerians are hopeful that 2023 will witness the installation of a new government elected by the people. Their hopes are valid because there is a huge possibility of the emergence of a New Nigeria under Mr Peter Obi of the Labour Party. Of a truth, never in the history of this country has there been a groundswell of support for a new beginning led by one man. This underscores the value of the Obi Phenomenon. But will election hold next year? If the activities of terrorists

and bandits continue unchecked across the country, then Nigerians should prepare to kiss 2023 goodbye. Terrorists are daring, bold, and unrelenting. While the APC government watches with paralyzed interest, these goons gradually take over the length and breadth of Nigeria. First, they filed into Abuja in a majestic convoy, unchallenged and comfortably attacked the Kuje Correctional Facility for more than three hours while the commanding heights of the Nigerian Army slept or pretended not to see. Again, they attacked the presidential convoy nearly hurting Mr President in the process. Still, they brazenly attacked the National Guard, one of Nigeria's most sophisticated security arms, killing two soldiers and wounding about six others. Nothing happened. Nobody was queried or sacked. Emboldened by the lack of resistance from any quarters, they threatened to kidnap Mr President and the governor of Kaduna State Mallam Nasri El-Rufai. They also threatened to invade and attack major cities in the country including Lagos, Port-Harcourt, and Enugu. At the moment, the government has shut down all schools, both primary and tertiary in Abuja indefinitely, an open admission by the APC Buhari administration that they cannot guarantee the lives of Nigerians. Gradually, terrorists and bandits are taking over the country, just gradually.

If these conditions continue unabated as they are likely to do, will elections take place in Nigeria next year? I flinched after watching a video of some army officers admitting that their superiors instructed them not to go after the terrorists. The all-important question is - will

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there be an election in Nigeria next year? Is the Buhari APC government committed to handing over to a democratically elected government or bandits and terrorists? Why would anybody instruct soldiers not to fight terrorists? On what planet does that happen? That is the same sentiment echoed by a gallant officer Gen. Segun Adeniyi when he made a video complaining that military authorities were sabotaging their fight against terrorists by denying them a supply of ammunition. Well, the army authorities redeployed him for his courage and no one heard anything about him again.

Mr Buhari's attitude to these developments in the country is dispiriting. It is inconceivable that having sworn on oath to protect and defend the integrity of Nigeria, Buhari will capitulate so shamefully before a rag-tag terrorist invasion. Many people have insinuated that Buhari and his government are complicit in the current terrorists' macabre dance of death given the kid gloves with which he treats their excesses. To succumb to such a narrative will be advancing the devil's plot. Yet, there is cause to worry about the future of Nigeria under Buhari. Given the President's recent admission that he is 'eager to go', it follows

that he admits his failure as the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces Federal Republic of Nigeria. If indeed he is eager to go, one would expect him, as an apostle of integrity, to resign immediately. Of course, Nigerians are also eager to see Buhari go. If the legislature succeeds in impeaching him, it will be good riddance to bad rubbish.

While the Obidients, Batists, and Atikulated square up in media warfare, let them pause and ask - will elections hold next year? In a previous essay titled "2023: To be or not to be" I argued that 2023 is not yet certain. I remember vividly that Pastor E.A Adeboye declared to a bewildered congregation that God has not told him if the election will hold next year. If terrorists eventually take over the reins of power in Nigeria, what options do we have? That Mr Buhari donated \$1,000,000 (One Million US Dollars) in a show of solidarity to the terrorist government in Afghanistan immediately after they sacked a democratically elected government is a testimony of how his mind is working. Let those who know better than us kindly interpret the Nigerian scenario for us because it appears that Nigerians, like Estragon and Vladimir, will wait for 2023 in vain. God forbid.

By  
**Eric TENIOLA**



*Continued from Monday edition*

After seven years on a long, winding road to civilian rule, the Transition hit a dead end. The election winners sat down in conference halls and hotel suites to negotiate away their electoral victory with the same people who voided their victory.

On August 2, Lt-General Ibrahim briefed senior officers at the Command Mess, 1 Marina, Lagos. Senior officers were asked to submit recommendations on the ING's composition. The officers considered three structures for the ING: (i) a full civilian government with equal representation from the SDP and NRC (ii) a hybrid military and civilian government, or (iii) a full military government.

Shehu Yar'Adua demanded that a civilian should head the ING, and that Babangida, Aikhomu and all the service chiefs should resign. The demand was accepted with one exception. General Abacha was the only military officer named to serve in the ING. Obasanjo was asked

to head the ING but declined. He contacted Yar'Adua and urged him to stand firm and resist Abacha's retention in the ING. Yar'Adua reluctantly agreed to Abacha's retention as he did not want to give Babangida a pretext to remain in power.

The Tripartite Committee recommended an ING to be led by civilians, but with military representatives. The head of the ING was to be the head of state and chairman of the ING. Nebulously, the ING chairman's powers as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces were to reside in the National Defence Council and the National Security Council. The ING was to commence on or before August 27, 1993, and would stay in office until December 31, 1994.

However, its duration was shortened, with its terminal date being brought forward to March 1994. The NDSC accepted the Tripartite Committee's recommendations with a few amendments.

A small band of hardliners urged Babangida to stay on. Some planned

## Ernest Shonekan as a footnote (3)

to use the Senate to pass a motion calling for an extension of Babangida's tenure. The Senate president, Iyorchia Ayu, was

impeached by the Senate for opposing moves to extend Babangida's tenure beyond August 27.9 This was the first time that a Senate president had been impeached in Nigeria's history. Politician

Mohammed Arzika said that "it is a sad commentary on the political environment of the country ... that being principled and honest is considered something unbecoming that should be gotten rid of"

Finally out of options, Babangida announced on August 17, 1993 that he would "step aside" as "a personal sacrifice". The following Tripartite Committee members and stakeholders signed a document agreeing to create the ING.

On behalf of the FMG: Admiral Augustus Aikhomu (retired) - Vice President, Lt-General Joshua Dogonyaro - Commandant of the Command and Staff College, Iaji, Lt -General Aliyu Mohammed - National Security Adviser, Brigadier David Mark - National War College, Abuja

Brigadier John Shagaya - GOC, 1<sup>st</sup> Division, Kaduna, Brigadier Anthony Ukpo - Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Alhaji Abdurrahman Okene - Secretary for Internal Affairs in the Transitional Council.

On behalf of the SDP: Major-General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua (retired), Tony Anenih - SDP National Chairman, Alhaji Sule Lamido - National

Secretary of the SDP, Dr Okechukwu Odunze - SDP National Treasurer, Jim Nwobodo, Alhaji Olusola Saraki, Dapo Sarumi, Dr Patrick Dele Cole, Amos Idakula, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi.

Prominent among those who signed for the NRC were: Dr Hammed Kusamotu - NRC National Chairman, Okey Nzoho - NRC National Publicity Secretary, Tom Ikimi, Alhaji Adamu Ciroma, Joe Nwodo, Theo Nkire, Professor Eyo Ita, Dr Bawa Salka, Prince Bola Afonja

Alhaji Y. Anka, Abba Muritala, Halilu Maina, Alhaji Mukhari A. Mohammed

Other signatories: Alhaji Ramalam, Ahaji Halimu Maina, Joseph Toba

A remarkable aspect of the I G's emergence is that many of those behind its formation were unelected, while the majority of those who had been elected (Abiola, the National Assembly and state governors) played little or no part in its creation. The ING was superimposed on the polity and nation without the consent of the overwhelming majority of both constituencies.

The ING was unique. It was the only government in Nigeria's history that was not the product of a coup or election. On August 26, 1993, Babangida "stepped aside". He stood down after eight

years in power and retired with his service chiefs (Lt-General Ibrahim, Air Vice-Marshal Akin Dada, Vice-Admiral Dan Preston Omatsola and Aliyu Attah). He left the crisis-racked country to an uncertain future in

the hands of an ING headed by the chairman of the Transitional Council, Ernest Shonekan.

Shonekan was the former chief executive of the multi-national United Africa Company. His selection was strategic. Like Abiola he was an Egba Yoruba from Abeokuta. The military knew that Shonekan would be regarded as a traitor by other Yorubas for agreeing to lead the ING after the voiding of an election won by a fellow Yoruba. Even though Babangida had officially retired, Shonekan was perceived as a puppet being controlled by Babangida from behind the scenes.

In a last-ditch attempt at continuity, Babangida left his loyalists in charge of key military units. Lt-Generals Joshua Dogonyaro (Chief of Defence Staff), Aliyu Mohammed (Chief of Army Staff) and Brigadier John Shagaya (GOC, 1<sup>st</sup> Division) were left behind to watch Shonekan. The Defence Secretary and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Sani Abacha, also retained his position and was the only military member of the ING.

Babangida stood down with the military's reputation at an all time low. When he came to power he was seen as a visionary benevolent leader with foresight, a reform agenda, finesse and a

forward thinking economic blueprint. Yet he left office eight years later with his reputation mutilated and became (at that time) the most unpopular military leader in Nigeria's history

*Concluded*

# How KO Mbadiwe varsity is surmounting challenges

*Professor Ikechukwu N.S. Dozie, the Vice-Chancellor, of Imo State Government-owned Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University, Ogboko in Ideato South LGA spoke to **ATHAN AGBAKWURU** on the situation of the institution.*

*The admission program of the K.O. Mbadiwe University -How did it go? How many students have you admitted under your tenure?*

A: The 2021/22 admission process is going on very well as stipulated by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). All admissions are being processed on the JAMB Central Admissions Platform (CAPS). We have so far admitted about 120 students. We hope to admit more candidates who have shown interest in the university before the Matriculation ceremony scheduled to take place on May 27, 2022.

*The university successfully garnered accreditation for her programs from the NUC. What does it portend and imply for both the University and students.*

Successful accreditation of programmes by the National Universities Commission (NUC) implies that those programmes are being run according to the stipulations of NUC Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS). The overriding implication for the university is that those programmes satisfy the provisions of BMAS for teaching and learning aimed at producing quality graduates for self-actualization and for the task of nation building. The overriding implication for students is that the products (i.e. graduates) of those programmes will qualify on graduation to embark on the mandatory one year National Youths Service Corps (NYSC) programme.

*Do you have quality and innovative manpower and academia ready to meet up to new global standards?*

Yes. We have quality manpower who are ready to conduct teaching and learning and overall university business in line with global best practices. We have a policy of constant engagement with our staff through training and re-training programmes to keep them abreast with modern trends in curriculum design and development and overall teaching and mentorship.

*A major challenge of Nigerian Universities is the*



Prof. I.N. Dozie, Vice Chancellor of K. O. Mbadiwe University, Ogboko

*epidemic of cult groups whose activities frequently end in social mishaps and crisis that threaten academic work? How do you plan to checkmate such occurrences?*

As a preventive measure, we have a policy of engaging our students on a regular basis through orientations, workshops and seminars on the dangers of involvement in

anti-social activities and behaviors including cultism. We also have regulations contained in the Student Handbook that deal with misconducts by students and their associated sanctions/penalties/punishments. As Management, we enforce those sanctions on students who flout the rules and regulations of the university including membership

of secret cults. The sanctions are pronounced after the affected students would have been given an opportunity to defend themselves before a disciplinary committee of Senate. This implies that the students will always have the right of fair hearing before being punished.

*Tertiary institutions are bedeviled with very unethical*

*practices such as exchange of money or sex for grades. How do you plan to tackle this?*

We prevent such unethical practices through frequent engagement with staff and students. We also punish such acts of gross misconduct by invoking relevant sanctions on erring staff or student, after they have been given the right of fair hearing.



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2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03	
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
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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	
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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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# Trust deficit, hazards and Nigeria's Ponzi schemes

*Ponzi schemes are some of the ways through which certain persons use to make quick fortunes, while most Nigerians who fell for such schemes have burnt their fingers. But despite repeated warnings to Nigerians against patronising such outfits in their quest to make quick money, most Nigerians still easily fall for ponzi schemes, JOHNMARK UKOKO writes.*

Ponzi schemes are increasingly becoming the ways and means through which some financial institutions and business outfits advertise their investment opportunities to gullible and high risk takers to get quick returns on their investments.

In most cases, those who embrace such schemes actually get 'rewarded' by their promoters, as the customers who subscribe to the schemes are promptly paid as promised.

The realisation that the early patronisers, who embrace the schemes had their investments doubled or tripled in a matter of days or weeks, normally attract thousands and sometime millions of other people to such schemes with a view to benefiting from the mouthwatering promises the promoters offer, at which point most of the scheme normally crash.

It should be noted, however, that the promoters of such schemes are usually not registered with any government regulatory agencies and as such, after defrauding as many people as they could, they disappear.

In most cases, when Ponzi schemes begin to advertise their services, government regulatory agencies will quickly used the media to warned the members of the public to shun such groups who are always promising too good to be true returns on investments.

More often than not, the promoters always target youths and teenagers who are always in a hurry to get rich through the dubious schemes, because in most cases the early customers get paid, while others are defrauded.

Curiously, when such schemes debut in the country, security forces including the police and even the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) hardly arrest and prosecute promoters of fraudulent activities, which constitute financial crime in the mode of obtaining by trick (OBT).

In the late 1980s, Ponzi schemes that operated in the country were Arise and Shine and Plan Well in Benin City, Edo State, which helped a few persons to get money to buy cars and travel abroad, while majority were defrauded.

In Lagos, Forum Investment defrauded thousands of youths, while a banker, Umana Umana, promised high returns on investments in his company within a short time.

Umana's office, which was located in Allen Avenue, Ikeja, was usually a beehive of activities, as youth and unemployed Nigerians thronged the outfit with some even borrowing from their

family members and friends to invest in the scheme they thought was high-yielding investment.

Arise and Shine, Umana Umana, Plan Well and several other Ponzi schemes that invaded Nigeria since late 1980s to date successfully operated in the country, paid a few people their investments and amounts they were promised and defrauded millions of others.

A few years ago, a Ponzi firm traced to Russian promoters defrauded Nigerians and citizens of other countries when the four brothers, who established the Ponzi scheme, invaded most countries of the world.

Commenting on the menace of Ponzi schemes in Nigeria and the danger it portends for the Nigerian youths, Director-General of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Lamido Yuguda, described Ponzi scheme as a "cancer hindering effective operations of the capital market."

Yuguda, who spoke at the post-Capital Market Committee (CMC) media briefing in Abuja recently, said the SEC had been fighting a serious war against Ponzi schemes in the country.

He said: "Ponzi scheme is like a cancer bedeviling effective operations of capital market in the country. The commission had been fighting a serious war against Ponzi schemes, where people without licences extort money from unsuspecting victims."

Yuguda disclosed that the commission had been working with other agencies to reduce access of Ponzi schemes to advertising platforms, adding: "We have been saying that people should only deal with registered operators with the commission. People must confirm that operators are licensed with the commission before they patronise them."

"We have done a lot of sensitisation to discourage people from patronising schemes that offer return on investments that are too good to be true. We have done a lot of sensitisation to discourage people from patronising Ponzi schemes, but unfortunately, a lot of people still patronise them."

He explained why the promoters of Ponzi schemes are not usually arrested before they defraud the people and why it has been difficult for the commission to stop Nigerians from falling prey to the promoters of such schemes.

"We have several reported cases and our enforcement agencies and the police have been working on most of the cases trying to resolve issues of investments that have been lost. It is not really difficult to recognise a Ponzi scheme. When a return looks too good to be true, desist from it," Yuguda warned.



Lamido Yuguda

He further disclosed that the commission was already collaborating with the EFCC to fight Ponzi schemes and money laundering, adding that the SEC would continue to enlighten members of the public on the need to desist from patronising Ponzi schemes.

Apart from the SEC, the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) expressed serious concerns about the menace of Ponzi schemes in the country's economy and had cautioned against outfits that collect deposits from Nigerians and were not licensed by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

In statement issued recently, the corporation warned Nigerians that in the event that the illegal outfits collecting deposits from Nigerians not licensed by the CBN depositors of such firms do not stand a chance of insuring their deposits, adding: "Those who patronise unlicensed outfits, like they say in local parlance, are 'on their own.'"

The corporation lamented that despite its consistent enlightenment and sensitisation programmes against the menace, most Nigerians still patronise such firms.

Also, an economist, Felix Amechi, who spoke in an interview with *The Trumpet*, said greed and ignorance were the main reasons why despite the several warnings to Nigerians against patronising Ponzi scheme, many still do so.

Amechi argued that some of the few people who patronise Ponzi schemes were rich, hence Nigerians still take the risk with their hard-earned money, stressing that the youths do not trust the government and its institutions,

which is why they do not heed their warnings.

"There is trust deficit in the country. Many youths and even adults don't trust the government and its agencies, hence they don't listen to them when the government or its agencies caution them about Ponzi schemes," he added.

Amechi also pointed out that the country does not have opportunities for the youths, hence the youths embrace any or every opportunity available, lamenting that some youths were also embracing ritual and other forms of criminality.

"Many Ponzi schemes have reared their ugly heads in the country. No doubt, some few lucky Nigerians realised their expectations from what those outfits promised them. However, thousands youths if not millions have burnt their fingers. They have lost their hard-earned money to Ponzi schemes."

"No doubt, government agencies regularly issue warning to Nigerians not to get involved in Ponzi schemes. There is trust deficit in Nigeria. Most youths and teenagers know that the promoters of most of the Ponzi schemes do not trust our government or its agencies," he stressed.

It would be recalled that about five years ago, four brothers from Russia promoted a Ponzi scheme in some countries, including Nigeria.

When they arrived Nigeria, they targeted youths in higher institutions and as expected, most students fell for it. While the first few ones who participated in the scheme were paid for their investments, most of those, who later joined were defrauded.

Most of the youths even used their school fees to invest in the scheme, with the hope that they would get their funds doubled up to five times the amounts they invested within 30 days.

Sadly, some of the students, who came from poor homes, could no longer continue their studies, as their parents or uncles could not give them more money to pay their school fees.

Before the Russian brothers promoted Ponzi scheme crashed in December 2016, millions of Nigerians lost their investments, while the youths that invested their money, could not roll over their investment, which they hoped to sign after earning huge amounts.

Before they could realise their aspirations, the scheme crashed and the promoters and their workers disappeared.

Respondents, who spoke to *The Trumpet* on the menace, appealed to the Federal Government, its institution and regulatory agencies to initiate quick-win actions that would activate the economy to provide opportunities for the youths.

While appealing to the SEC, NDIC, CBN and the police initiate steps aimed at reducing the number of Nigerians who fall for the Ponzi schemes, they said youths who are properly engaged and have viable means of livelihood would not easily fall prey to such schemes.

They charged the police and EFCC to arrest promoters of illegal activities to prevent fraudsters from having a field day in the country.

Respondents also appealed to the youths to heed warnings of SEC, NDIC, EFCC and government against Ponzi schemes, lamenting that Nigerians have lost billions of naira to fraudsters who played on the ignorance or desperation of the youths and unemployed Nigerians.

They argued the fraudsters easily manipulate their victims because they capitalise on the harsh economic situation in the country and charged government at all levels to create enabling environment to enable the younger generation of Nigerians opportunities to create a legitimate means of earning a living instead of easily falling prey to promoters of Ponzi schemes.

Taking a cue from Yuguda, who described Ponzi schemes as 'cancer bedeviling effective operations of the capital market,' the SEC should be commended for collaborating with the EFCC and other security agencies to tackle the ravaging 'cancer.'

By and large, the future will determine if the SEC and the government will win the war against promoters of Ponzi schemes in the country.



# PEBEC applauds NEC's approval of \$750m World Bank-backed programme

Stories by JOHNMARK UKOKO

Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) has applauded the National Economic Council (NEC) for endorsing a \$750 million World Bank-backed State Action on Business Reforms (SABER) programme.

Special Adviser to the Presidential Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and Secretary of PEBEC, Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, gave the commendation in a statement issued in Abuja.

According to her, the \$750

financing amounts to 36 per cent of the N2 billion dollars government SABER programme 2022-2025 and represents the aggregate recurrent expenditure of key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) at Federal and state levels across the country.

The SABER programme is a three-year performance-based intention jointly designed by the World Bank Technical team and the PEBEC Secretariat with support from the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Home Finance Department and the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat.

It further gives expression to the EoDB mandate as articulated in the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERBGP).

The programme has subsequently retained the National Development Plan (NDP) aimed at generating 21 million jobs and lifting no fewer than 35 million people out of poverty by 2022," Oduwole said.

The PEBEC secretary further explained that the programme, which was designed to deliver concrete results across four reform areas with eight disbursement link indicators.

Oluwole said the programme covered improving land administration and land investment process, improving business enabling infrastructure, increasing sustainable large-scale investments and enabling firm operations.

All participating states and the

Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja could potentially receive a maximum of \$52.5 million within three years.

In addition to the already existing PEBEC-NEC sub-national intervention, the SABER programme seeks to provide additional incentives, such as improving the business environment and facilitating crowding in private sector investments at scale.

The eligibility criteria for the programme include developing an annual action plan with private sector collaborators to be approved by the states executive councils and published online.

Recommendations from the second sub-national EoDB report, due for release in October 2022 are expected to be considered.

She said: "The PEBEC had earlier presented the SABER programme at an expanded meeting held on August 16, 2022 and chaired by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo with the chairmen of EoDB Council from states across the country in attendance," she said.

Oduwole added that the council had been collaborating with the World Bank since November 2019 to develop the SABER programme, adding that the SABER programme comprised two main areas. \$750 million Programme-for-Results (P for R) and \$20 million technical assistance.

President Muhammadu Bihari established the programme in July 2016 to remove critical bottlenecks and bureaucratic constraints to ease of doing business in the country.

## ITF begins training for 255 youths, women

Industrial Training Fund (ITF) on Monday commenced a three months skill acquisition training for 255 youths and women in Bauchi State.

Head of Training at ITF in Bauchi, Abdulrahman Atta, said the programme was carried out under its 2022 National Industrial Skill Development Programme (NISDP) and Agriprenurship skills empowerment programme.

Atta, who said the trade areas selected under the NISDP were tilling and interlocking, solar installation as well as hairdressing, highlighted the trade areas to be covered under the programme as crop production, poultry and fish farming.

He said the trainees were selected from the 20 councils of Bauchi State, adding that 120 trainees were chosen under the NISDP, while 135 were selected under the agricultural programme.

He also pointed out that the Director-General of ITF, Sir Joseph Ari, was concerned about women empowerment, adding: "As the training commences today, it will end on November 11, 2022. The trainees will acquire skills that will make them self-employed and employers of labour as startup grant will be given to them in their area of skills," he said.

Maintaining that the ITF would monitor the trainees to ensure that they put the starter pack into appropriate use, he added that any beneficiary who did not attend the training session would not be given starter packs.

Also speaking, Coordinator of the Agriprenurship Training programme, Aminu Aliyu, said the programmes were designed to provide the trainees with the basic knowledge required for them to practise their skills.

He said this was important, considering the current situation in the country where people needed to have entrepreneurship skills for them to live independent and reduce over reliance on government.

One of the trainees, Esther Dakas, expressed gratitude for the training and promised to be serious and focused in acquiring the skills.

Another beneficiary of Crop Production Training, Mury Anatu Ibrahim, commended the Federal Government for initiating the intervention programme and prayed for more people to benefit from the training.

She charged the beneficiaries to make good use of the opportunity to learn, be punctual and acquire the necessary knowledge for them to become self-reliant.



Head, Human Capital, Linkage Assurance Plc, Humphrey Ozegbe (left); Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Emmanuel Otitolaiye; Director-General, Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), Mrs. Abimbola Tihamiyu; Executive Director (Technical), Linkage Assurance Plc, Okanlawon Adelagun; 51st President and Chairman of Council of CIIN, Edwin Igbiti and member of CIIN Council, Niran Aderinoye during a visit to Linkage Assurance in Lagos.

## Nigeria moves to resolve power sector tariff shortfalls, unveils NELMCO board

### •BPE concludes takeover of four DisCos

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo has declared that the inauguration of the board of the Nigeria Electricity Liability Management Company (NELMCO) will enhance efforts at resolving liabilities relating to tariff shortfalls for distribution companies (DisCos) among other challenges in the power sector.

He stated this in his remarks he delivered virtually on Friday, August 19, 2022 at the unveiling of the new board of NELMCO.

Osinbajo revealed the company has been running without a duly constituted board since the first one was inaugurated in 2013 and dissolved shortly after.

The Vice President said the inauguration marked an important milestone in the bid to resolve the liabilities relating to tariff shortfalls in the power sector, especially for DisCos and to provide a veritable mechanism for managing the dynamic nature of the liquidity challenges of the power sector.

"This ceremony formally brings on board the invaluable skills and derivable skills and experience of notable and highly respected personalities as members of the

board of NELMCO," he said.

On the expectations of the board, Osinbajo charged the members that as a board, "you are expected to make conscious and deliberate efforts to develop appropriate strategies to facilitate the successful conclusion of the outstanding pre-privatisation issues of the defunct Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) and ensure effective implementation of NELMCO's additional mandate to resolve the tariff shortfall problems in the DisCos."

He added: "In view of the challenges ahead, you are expected to draw extensively on our experience over the years, to continue to give credence to the federal government of Nigeria's economic development programmes in a transparent, sustainable, credible and acceptable manner.

"The board is required to take appropriate steps to also ensure that the interest of the various segments of society and particularly ordinary Nigerians are protected in the implementation of NELMCO's mandate."

On the board's mandate, he

charged the members to diligently carry out the responsibilities assigned to the board in accordance with the provision of the Memorandum and Article of Association (MEMART) of the company.

Some of the provisions of MEMART include to assume and administer the stranded debts of the defunct PHCN Plc pursuant to the provisions of Electric Power Sector Reform Act 2005 and to manage post-privatisation liabilities in the power sector as may be directed by the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) or any authorised agency of the Federal Government from time to time in line with the power sector reform Act 2005.

Responding, Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, assured the vice president of the board's preparedness to ensure quick resolution of tariff shortfalls and related issues in the power sector in the most efficient manner.

Other members of the board are the Minister of Power, Abubakar Aliyu; Director-General, Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Alex Okoh; Director-General, Debt Management Office (DMO), Ms. Patience Oniha; Managing Director of NELMCO, Bayo Fagbemi; Muhad

Aliyu; Jumma Olufunso; Olutola Olukoga, Chinedum Orisakwere, Modojinouwa Dekalu-Thomas and Nurain Hassan Ibrahim.

Meanwhile, Okoh said the takeover of the Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan and Port Harcourt DisCos has been successfully completed.

Okoh, who disclosed this in a presentation at virtual meeting of the NCP held recently, added that the challenge in the takeover of the Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) was being addressed.

Osinbajo was represented at the meeting by the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, who is the Vice Chairman of the council.

In his report, Okoh, who also made presentation on the concession of Zungeru Hydroelectric Power Plant, informed the NCP members to note steps taken by the BPE to facilitate the process.

Okoh also presented for approval a proposal to amend the BPE procedures manual, especially in the area of legal framework, reform activities, project advisory and delivery team, receipt of technical and financial transaction strategies, as well as opening and evaluation of technical proposals, among others.

## Linkage Assurance restates commitment to human capital development

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

Linkage Assurance Plc has restated its commitment to human capital development through support and encouragement of its employees to become the best professionals with focus on growth and development of the industry.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD/CEO) of Linkage Assurance Plc, Daniel Braie, stated this when the 51st President and Chairman, Council of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), Edwin Igbiti, visited the company's head office in Lekki, Lagos.

Braie said as a company that places emphasis on the value creation from the CIIN, Linkage Assurance Plc currently has among its members of staff one senior member of the Institute, 45 associates, which represents 44 per cent of the total workforce and 42 student members, who are adding value to the company in their various spheres of engagements.

He explained that apart from providing great support to the Institute in terms of donations and other supports,

Linkage Assurance Plc have made examination of the Institute compulsory for all technical staff; pay for all members annual subscription including building levies; reimburses examination fees for all student's members; sponsors the yearly professional forum jottier in addition to ensuring adequate participation by Chartered Insurers in the organisation.

"We also sponsor academic awards for best student in the Principles of Marine and Financial Accounting," Braie told the visiting president of CIIN and his team.

On some achievements of the company through its employees in the last one year, he said Linkage Assurance produced Nurudeen Jamiu as the latest Insurance Industry Ambassador (IIA) for 2022; winner of the maiden African Insurance Organisation (AIO) Young Insurance Professionals (YIPs) Africa Nextgen Award 2022, Oluwaseun Oyelere; while another staff, Tamarasinla Isene, graduated with distinction and as overall third best graduating student with eight prizes at the West African Insurance Institute (WAI).

Responding, Igbiti said the focus of his administration would be to consolidate on the gains of past presidents of the Institute with emphasis on the three-point agenda, including digital reinforcement of Institute's operations; insurance awareness in the grassroots, youths and members of the insuring public, as well as infrastructure development.

While seeking the cooperation of member companies of the Institute towards achieving the set goals, he said: "The above will enable us to work in line with the Institute's core values and ensure that it lives up to its vision and mission statements."



Daniel Braie

# ONICCIMA alleges govt's neglect of businesses in Onitsha

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Onitsha Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (ONICCIMA), has berated Anambra State Government for its alleged failure to support the chamber in promoting businesses in Onitsha, the commercial nerve centre of the state and other cities.

It said the government has not supported the Organised Private Sector (OPS) to realise its potential in Onitsha despite its various promises to support the chamber and private businesses.

Addressing participants at the annual event tagged: *The Perspective in Onitsha*, President of ONICCIMA, Sir Kevin Obieri, who lamented lack of encouragement on the part of the state government, expressed the hope that the current government would

create conducive environment for businesses to thrive.

Speaking at the event with the theme: *In Search Of Good Governance: The Imperatives Of Organised Private Sector The Nigerian Perspective*, he stressed that dilapidated public infrastructure like roads and poor electricity supply, among others constituted a hindrance to progress of the private sector in the state.

While enumerating steps so far taken by the government to ease the scope of doing business in Onitsha, the Anambra State Commissioner for Trade, Commerce and Industry, Dr. Obinna Ngonadi, maintained that the Governor Chukwuma Soludo government in has taken bold steps towards creating an enabling environment for businesses by disbanding revenue touts across the state.



Gov. Chukwuma Soludo

He pledged that the government would rehabilitate the roads when the rains subside and called on business owners and the private sector to assist the government to realise its industrialisation agenda for the state.

Speaking, President of South East Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (SECCIMA), Chief Humphrey Ngonadi, lamented the negative attitude of previous administrations towards supporting businesses to thrive through the chamber of commerce and the private sector.

He, however, appealed to the citizens and residents of Onitsha and entire state to exercise patience with the Soludo administration, as it inherited poor economy and almost empty treasury from the immediate past administration.

## Measuring due diligence of oil areas' rights, privileges

By **AHERHOKE OKIOMA**

Following the severe pollution of oil producing communities in the Niger Delta region and the recent euphoria of International Oil Companies (IOCs) divestments from the region, it has become expedient for lawyers, community leaders, oil companies and civil society organisations (CSOs) to determine due diligence in measuring the rights and privileges of impacted host communities.

It is in this regard that the Stakeholders Alliance for Corporate Accountability (SACA), a non-governmental organisation in collaboration with the Nigeria Agip Oil Company (NAOC) assembled a team of lawyers from the core oil producing states of the Niger Delta to review guideline that would be required to carry out human rights impact assessment in impacted communities.

The project, sponsored by Misesan Cara of Ireland, Saint Patrick Missionary Society (SPMS), entailed a two-day due diligence review in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State in which 21 lawyers and other stakeholders from the host communities and civil society organisations from the four major oil producing states of the Niger Delta brainstormed on national and regional frameworks that would be used as benchmark for assessment of the impacts of oil exploration and pollution of the environment.

The lawyers, according to SACA were specifically selected to review all regional and national laws as they pertain to issues of environmental degradation, land acquisition and use, social impact on indigenous people, communities, engagements and consultations, as well as mechanism for addressing violations and grievances.

In his opening remarks, Executive Secretary of SACA, Kingsley Ozegebe, noted that the Human Rights Due Diligence Committee (HDDC) in the communities was in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP).

He stated that the programme tallies with the premise of protection, respect and remedy of human rights breaches in the host communities of oil companies for harmonious relationship without necessarily

breeding conflicts.

Ozegebe explained that currently the risks associated with oil and gas activities in the Niger Delta Region were heightening, just as the investment climate was shrinking.

"Oil spillages into the environment are becoming alarming and 76.24 per cent of spillages are caused by human interference with oil facilities. This prompted stronger team work to safeguard humanity and improve the environment to attract investors to create opportunities to absorb working population that is surging daily.

"On May 26, 2022, we constituted three strategic committees to address the threat. Since then, the Environmental Management Committee (EMC) has been raising awareness in communities and the media to educate members of the public on risks associated with high exposure to crude oil and other petroleum products.

"The Agricultural Management Committee (AMC) has been supporting communities to engage in sustainable agricultural practices, while HDDC has been creating awareness on human rights and privileges to appropriate guide Community actions in seeking the protection, preservation and remedy of their breached rights," he stated.

He added that the human rights component of the project has had two major events including inauguration of the HDDC held on May 26, 2022 and the triggers of human rights on June 30, 2022. The last even gave us the opportunity to hear and integrate the views of 60 participants drawn from community leadership, NGOs and academics.

Speaking further, he said: "On August 18, 2022, we gathered to review and reinforce a draft Human Rights Due Diligence Tool with national and regional legal frameworks that will enable the HDDC to gather data on the project and appropriately advice the management of NAOC to minimise potential on human rights breaches.

"Eni/NAOC has shown commitment to the project and so, we are hopeful that they will be integrating and acting on findings of the HDDC to prevent and mitigate adverse human rights impact as enshrined in principles 19 of the UNGP"

He disclosed that the HDDC

shall be tracking effectiveness of response to verify if the risks are being addressed to properly account and share lessons on how businesses can address their impacts on human rights as indicated in principles 21 of the UNGP and Urged the lawyers to work within the ambit.

Also speaking, the Head, Legal Services and Enforcement, Bayelsa State office of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Goselle Vinings, applauded SACA and NAOC for the collaboration, describing it as "a healthy initiative."

He noted that the amount of seriousness and good intentions which the NGO and oil companies were pursuing to ensure human rights due diligence in the oil and gas sector, with particular reference to Niger Delta region and the entire country would ensure that the right things are done and work better going forward.

On his part, Project Manager of SACA, Augustine Anyio, restated the importance of human rights diligence tool in the operations of oil companies in the country.

He pointed out that HDDC tool review became imperative because the multi-national oil corporations will leave the country some day, adding that if human rights diligence tools were not adequately put in place, the indigenous oil companies, which would soon be leading in the exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in the Niger Delta region and other parts of the country would capitalise on the absence of human rights due diligence tool to undo their host communities.

Participants also commented and applauded SACA on the programme, as Legal Adviser to the Bayelsa State civil society organisation, Bar. Alagoa David, expressed shock over NAOC's sponsorship of such programme in spite of environmental degradation, pollution and community conflict in their areas of operation.

He said: "I commend the workshop being organised by SACA, a civil society group involved in corporate accountability that has put in place a review of human rights diligence tool that will be administered on oil companies to ensure compliance in the oil companies operating communities.

"The the essence is to engage the rural communities, oil companies and

regulators with respect to human rights. It is amazing that NAOC is funding the programme and I thank SACA for taking the bull by horn. It is a welcome development."

Earlier, SACA explained that it discovered that most oil pollutions were caused by indigenes of oil producing communities indigenes over grievances of neglect and lack of development

It said oil companies feed governments as internally generated revenue of Bayelsa State could not do much, but the state relies on what comes from oil companies as budgets are based on oil facilities and hence the programme aimed at advising against pollutions.

"Budgets are based on oil revenues and without oil government cannot operate, as states will be obliterated without oil and that will lead to dog eating dog, infant mortality and unprecedented poverty, except a win-win situation we will suffer and cannot go anywhere, we need oil for sustenance," it added.

Another participant and Senior Human Rights Officer with the Imo state office of NHRC, Bar. Okoroji Ihunanya Chukwu, also commended SACA for assembling the legal team to brainstorm on institutions that available and delegations that would hold oil companies accountable for human rights abuses.

This is expedient because lives are being threatened, environmental degradation caused by oil producing companies and the result of the human rights diligence committee tool will go a long way for the oil companies to know what do with their host communities, as applicable in other climes globally by domesticating best practices, existing legislations and implementation as obtainable in other countries to secure the life of people in the host communities.

"The SACA process proves that there is an Isaac Adaka Boro of our time. Many have died, while others suffered dire consequences over the fight for restoration of human rights of indigenous people and giving voice to the voiceless and what SACA has done is to avoid crisis. The instrument is a framework that seeks to protect, respect and remedy human rights breaches," he stated.

Fashion & Style

# Ways to make your lipstick last longer



**H**ave you ever had to check out your makeup after a long day out only to find out that all that's left of your lipstick looks like a line drawn across your lips?

Something about lipstick is that it has the power to brighten up whatever outfit you're in and it only sucks when you feel you've got it all working for you only to find out that half your lipstick is gone.

Although the lasting power of lipsticks largely depends on the product type but making your lipstick last all day long, irrespective of the type of product is quite easy and requires very little effort if you follow these pretty simple steps.

**1. Exfoliate your lip (Removal of dry skin)**

No long-lasting lipstick can actually withstand a dry lip. So, first off, let's take off the dry skin.

You could use an old toothbrush of yours for this. Gently brush the toothbrush against your upper and

lower lip to get rid of the dry skin.

**2. Moisturize your lip**

After taking off that dry skin you need to moisturize those lips with a lip balm to provide a base for your lipstick.

**3. Line your lip with a lip liner**

Lip liners have waxy formulas that sort of binds with your lipstick colors, making them last longer. So, line the outer corner of your lips preferably with the shade of lip liner nearest to the colour of the lips or the lipstick.

**4. Apply the lipstick properly**

It's best to use a brush when applying your lipstick (brushing from the corners of your mouth to the center) so that the lipstick is evenly applied

**5. Blot**

Blotting helps you take away the excess oil from the lipstick to keep it from smudging.

**6. Apply a translucent powder**

Gently dust any translucent powder over the lipstick. You can place a tissue over your lip before applying the powder or do it directly.

**7. Apply the lipstick again**

Finally apply the lipstick again. There you are good to go

## Tourism

# Celebrating ever vibrant Argungu Fishing Festival



**A**rgungu Fishing Festival is an annual four-day fiesta in Kebbi State, in the North-western part of Nigeria. The festival usually takes place in the capital city of Argungu Emirate Council. The region is made up of fertile river areas (matanfada, mala, gamji), with much irrigation and orchards (lambu in Hausa). The majority of fishermen are the followers of Islam and also predominantly farmers. Kanta museum is the main historical centre in Argungu for visitors across the globe. People from around the world travel to Argungu just to witness the occasion.

Call it the Fishing-Frenzy Festival. It's one of the most famous cultural festivals in Nigeria, and is celebrated to mark the beginning of the fishing season in Argungu, a river-side town in Kebbi state. Celebrated between February and March every year, AFF sees most local men and boys entering the Argungu river, armed with large fishnet scoops. They are joined by canoes filled with drummers, plus men rattling huge seed-filled gourds to drive the fish to shallow waters. Vast nets are cast and a wealth of fish is harvested. This is followed by Canoe racing, wild duck hunting, bare-handed fishing, diving competitions and swimming. There is drinking, singing and dancing into the night afterwards. A fun time indeed you would say!

### History

The festival began in the year 1934, as a mark of the end of the centuries-old hostility between the Sokoto Caliphate and the Kebbi Kingdom.

In 2005, the winning fish weighed 75 kg, and needed four men to hoist it onto the scales. In 2006 the festival banned fishing due to safety concerns relating to the low water levels. The importance of the

festival to the economy has led the government to conserve fish stock by prohibiting use of gill nets and cast nets. The Zauro polder project, an irrigation scheme in the Rima River floodplain to the south of Argungu, has been criticized because the reservoir threatens to flood the traditional site of the festival.

### Competition

On the final day of the festival, a competition is held in which

thousands of men and women line up along the river and at the sound of a gunshot, all of them jump into the river and have an hour to catch the largest fish. The winner can take home as much as 7,500 US dollars. Competitors are only allowed to use traditional fishing tools and many prefer to catch fish entirely by hand (a practice also popular elsewhere and known as "noodling" in the United States) to demonstrate their prowess.



Foodies

# Yam Pottage/ Porridge (Asaro) recipe

Asaro is also known as Yam pottage or porridge. It is a very delicious Yam recipe. Although it's eaten by most tribes in Nigeria, it is more common in the Yoruba-speaking parts of the country. It's also easy to make. If you love yam, it's a must-try recipe!

**Asaro recipe**

This yam porridge recipe tastes just like my mom's. The only difference is that it uses basil which is not typical in my mom's recipe. However, you can choose to add any herb or any leafy green of your choice like spinach, kale, or uguwu.

**How is Asaro made?**

Asaro is made from Puna Yam which is boiled till it's tender and it's cooked in a blend of Peppers, Tomatoes, onions, palm oil, and seasoning. While the dish is more common in the Yoruba-speaking region of Nigeria, it is still a meal enjoyed by the majority alike each with their own regional variation.

It is nicknamed "Asaro elepo rede rede" meaning yam porridge boldly colored with fresh palm oil and garnished to perfection.

**What is porridge made of?**

- African yam: Yam comes in different species, but the best one for this recipe is African yam.
- Red Bell Pepper, tomato, and



habanero pepper: the blend of these three will make a perfect pepper mix for the porridge.

- Fresh Palm Oil: There is no yam porridge without oil. Fresh palm oil gives it the color and makes it fluffy.
- Onion: Onions bring the flavor out of the porridge. You need onions for the pepper mix and the porridge

itself.

- Salt and Chicken bouillon powder: This will bring out the taste of the porridge. Ensure that you add in moderate quantity.
- Fish and crayfish: add this to spice up the meal. You can add mackerel, crab meat, stockfish, or dried fish.

· Vegetables/Herbs: perfect the meal with herbs like basil, parsley, scent leaves, and any other leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, or fluted pumpkin leaf (Ugwu).

**How to make Yam Porridge**

- Peel and cut and rinse the yam. Ensure that you rinse the yam more than once until the water is clear and no longer cloudy. The yam should be in medium-sized chunks about 2 inches thick.
- Blend your pepper mix. Blend the bell pepper, habanero, tomato, and half onion.
- Cook the yam and the pepper mix together. Put the first yams inside a pot, and add the pepper mix, salt, bouillon powder, and water. Cover and let it cook for 10 minutes on medium to high heat.
- Stir in the Palm oil, sliced onions, and crayfish. Cover again and let it cook extra 10 minutes.
- Mash the yams. You can use a potato masher or a wooden spoon. I love to mash some yams and keep some chunks. It gives more texture!
- Add the fish. You can smoke fish, dried, boiled, canned, or stockfish. You can also add smoked turkey or any other meat you prefer.
- Simmer for an additional 3 to 5 minutes.

## Unique Afro-Caribbean food line to open in Scotland

Gidi Grill is an exciting West African and Caribbean grilled food fusion restaurant founded in Dundee. It fuses the best spices, herbs and sauces marinated over freshly cooked prime meat cuts.

The new flagship restaurant is opening in Aberdeen September 2022. Expect big things!

[www.Instagram.com/gidi\\_grill](http://www.Instagram.com/gidi_grill)



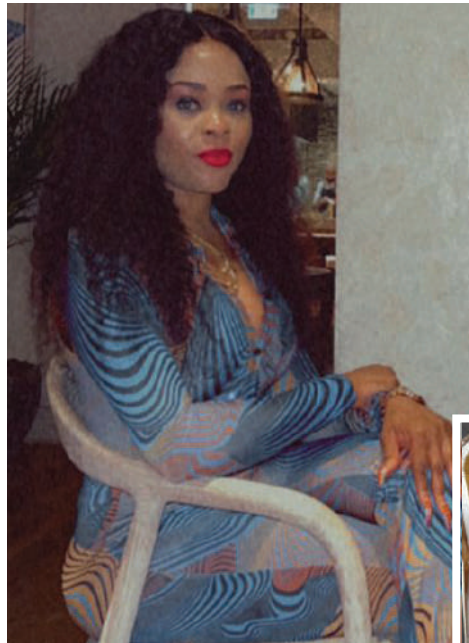
Founders of Gidi Grill, Mo and Eni Adeniyi

## FMA Kitchen Unusual dishes unique African delicacies in Dubai

F.M.A Kitchen Unusual is an all round African kitchen with an exciting West African touch in Downtown, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. At F.M A, Kitchen Unusual, a recipe is a story that ends with a good meal served with so much joy and a professional Africanism touch. F.M.A Kitchen boast of the best of local delicacies

from the popular and most talked about, Nigerian Jollof to, Seafood okra, Ofada, Vegetables amongst others.

Visiting Dubai for the first time and needs that African touch food , follow the official instagram handle [www.Instagram.com/fma\\_kitchenunusual](http://www.Instagram.com/fma_kitchenunusual) , [www.snapchat.com/kitchenunusual](http://www.snapchat.com/kitchenunusual) contact +971556281565



FMA Kitchen CEO, Funsho Ajileye





## Fan to take legal actions against Kyrgios over comments

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

**W**orld number 26 Nick Kyrgios is expected to face litigation following his utterances against a fan, Anna Palus, who he alleged was a drunk.

Kyrgios, during the 2022 Wimbledon contest, called Palus a drunk who he said has taken about 700 drinks.

According to a British report, Kyrgios complained to the umpire about Palus' presumed excesses.

The Australian, who got to his first Grand Slam final where he lost to Serbian Novak Djokovic, said, "She is distracting me when I am serving in a Wimbledon final. She is drunk out of her mind in the first row speaking to me in the middle of the game, so kick her out."

"I know which one she is, its the one who looks like she has had about 700 drinks. She is talking



to me in the middle of the point every time I get the ball," Kyrgios added.

However in response, Palus said she is not litigious but what Kyrgios did caused the family considerable damage.

Palus added the tennis star was unprofessional in his conduct with unfathomable allegations.

In the SW19 grand finale, where Kyrgios lost 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(7-3) to

Djokovic who was denied entry into Australia over his refusal to take the covid-19 jab, Palus attended with her mother.

"I am not litigious, but after much consideration I have concluded that I have no alternative but to instruct my solicitors to bring defamation proceedings against Mr Kyrgios in order to clear my name," she continued.

"The need to obtain

vindication and to prevent repetition of the allegation are the only reasons for taking legal action. Any damages recovered will be donated to charity.

"I hope that Mr Kyrgios will reflect on the harm he has caused me and my family and offer a prompt resolution to this matter. However, if he is unwilling to do this, I am committed to obtaining vindication in the High Court," Palus added.

According to Brett Wilson, Palus solicitors, Kyrgios' actions were televised to millions of persons around the world which further compounded her trauma.

"Not only did this cause considerable harm on the day, resulting in my temporary removal from the arena but Mr Kyrgios' false allegation was broadcast to and read by millions around the world, causing me and my family very substantial damage and distress," Wilson said.

Kyrgios contested in the Cincinnati Masters men's doubles alongside Thanasi Kokkinakis where they lost 6-7(3-7), 6-2, 10-8 to the pair of Rajeev Ram and Joe Salisbury in the third round.

## Qualifiers: Super Eagles B team are formidable, says Onazi

Defensive midfielder Eddy Ogenyi Onazi has commended the coaches of the Super Eagles team B for doing a wonderful job in assembling a formidable team that will pip the Black Galaxies of Ghana to the ticket to the 7th African Nations Championship in 2023.

He said the players are fit and prepared to make Nigerians proud.

"I think the coaches have put together a very strong team that is capable of nicking the ticket at the expense of Ghana," Onazi said.

"I have seen the players are very fit and good enough to make Nigeria proud," the former Trabzonspor player added.

The 29-year-old, who plays in the Saudi Professional League for Al-Adalah FC and made his debut for the senior team under coach Steven Keshi in 2012, enjoyed quality time with the 2018 CHAN runners-up in Abuja and says he is comfortable with the quality of players and their fitness, as well as the quality of the coaching crew.

Speaking about the head coach of the Super Eagles B team, Salisu Yusuf, Onazi stated that the gaffer has a grounded knowledge of the national league which aided his squad selections.

He added, "know Coach Salisu Yusuf is well-informed in the domestic league and has assembled the best players in the league, and I can also see that the other members of the technical crew are positioned to help the Head Coach."

The former Lazio player featured in the team's first friendly match against Mahanaim FC which the Eagles came from two goals down to win 3-2.

"It was a very good test for the Eagles. They are preparing for a very big game and I liked the level of the game. We had to fight back to win," he said about the game.

Onazi is warming up in Abuja for another club outside the country.

"I am actually here to collect my passport to travel and then I heard the team was training here. I like the opportunity to train at this high level and so I grabbed it. It is the best way to stay fit."

The Eagles B have continued their build-up for the matches against the Galaxies of Ghana billed for Sunday, 28th August in Cape Coast and Saturday, 3rd September in Abuja. The winner on aggregate will qualify for Algeria 2023. However, Onazi is fully backing the Super Eagles B to overwhelm the Black Galaxies of Ghana.



## Joshua, Falconets, others to bounce back better, Dare insists

The weekend has not been that favourable to Nigeria sports men and women in boxing, football, volleyball and UFC 278 where Anthony Joshua, Falconets, U21 volleyball men's team and Kamaru Usman lost at different stages in various competitions.

To Joshua, he was unable to reclaim the heavyweight title belts, WBO, WBA and IBF, he lost in September last year to the undefeated heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk in Jeddah, King Abdullah Sports City Arena in Saudi Arabia on Saturday.

The British-born Nigerian, who got infuriated that he was unable to reclaim the belts, applauded the Ukrainian and called him the heavyweight champion of the world.

While in football, the high flying Falconets who neither lost a game in the group stage nor drew any, lost 2-0 to Netherlands in the quarter-final to see their blistering campaign in the 2022 U20 Women's World Cup in Costa Rica hampered on Sunday.

Also on Sunday, the U21 men's volleyball team fell to Egypt at the semi-final of 2022 U21 Men's African Nations Volleyball Championship. Although the team



projected to clinch a World Cup qualifying ticket and was backed by the technical crew, who did proper assessment reports on other contending

teams with the needed support from Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), the U21 men's team were defeated 3-0 by Cameroon.

Also a regrettable experience that happened on Sunday was our own UFC 278 welterweight champion Kamaru Usman, who was ahead in the final round with a few seconds to go, received a stunning head kick from Leon Edwards that knocked him out of the contest.

However, the Honourable Minister of Youths and Sports Development, Sunday Dare on Monday has charged the sportsmen and women to bounce back better.

Dare urged the Nigerian sports men and women to

shrug off the defeat and get back on their feet.

In a statement by the Sports Minister on Monday, the sportsmen and women should keep their heads up high because they gave the best of themselves.

"Nigeria is still proud of them and they remain national heroes and heroines, believing they will bounce back again, stronger and better," Dare said.

The Minister also advised Nigerians to rally round these sportsmen and women to hasten the process of recovery.

He underlined that these crop of national heroes and heroines at a time made Nigerians proud and must invigorate them back to stardom.

## Klopp laments Liverpool's injury woes

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp is going to have a rough ride this season following the number of players that have been affected by injury.

Curtis Jones, Ibrahima Konate, Joel Matip, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Diogo Jota, Thiago Alcantara, Calvin Ramsay and Caoimhin Kelleher are all casualties who are on the sidelines.

Recent to join the clique of casualties is Guinea international Naby Keita, who got injured in

training on Sunday and was left out of the squad that lost 2-1 in Old Trafford.

Keita is yet to kick the ball for the Reds this season, having fallen ill in the opening match against Fulham and was an unused substitute for Klopp against Crystal Palace.

In a statement by Reds' boss, Keita will have to undergo a medical examination to ascertain the extent of the injury.

He added that the club is passing through a tough time due

to these predicaments.

"Naby was injured [on Sunday]. We need further assessment but it doesn't look like he is in training [on Tuesday]," he said.

"Maybe I will know more [on Tuesday] but I don't know.

"During the week it is not easy because we have 15 senior outfield players, I think, in training. That's obviously not cool," Klopp added.

Liverpool resorted to a three-man central midfield

because they a short of attackers with newbie Darwin Nunez suspended for headbutting Crystal Palace defender, Joachim Andersen.

According to soccer pundits, Liverpool seem to be weak at the central midfield which Manchester United capitalised to record their first win of the season having started on a very poor footing.

Despite the injuries bedevilling the club, Klopp has brushed off any intention to sign players

before the summer comes to an end.

He said, "We have at the moment five senior midfielders and we have to start with three.

"We could start with two if we would have more attackers, but we have only three attackers, so it means we start with three and then we change during the game.

"We have to think before the game and that's the only reason for it, but this is not the story of the game. It's just the decision for this game," Klopp insisted.

# Ronaldo snubs Carragher

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

**M**anchester United talisman Cristiano Ronaldo is one hell of a footballer that does not condone critics. The forward was recently lambasted by former Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher after the fall of Manchester United at Gtech Community Stadium to Brentford where he said: "no other club wants him."

Ronaldo has been in the spotlight lately following his intentions to leave Manchester United to embrace a new challenge that will provide the enabling UEFA Champions League football.

However, the Portugal international took note of



the swipe by Carragher, who is also a Sky Sports football commentator, and waited for the instance to retaliate appropriately.

Carragher has been very critical of Ronaldo but the latter got his pound of flesh at Old Trafford for the match between Manchester United and Liverpool.

The 37-year-old, in the run-up to the match, where Manchester United

clinched their first Premier League win for the season against Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool, showed a total disregard for Carragher who then was in the company of other soccer pundits including Roy Keane, Michael Owen and Gary Neville.

Ronaldo made a mess of Carragher during the pre-match broadcast, where he bluntly snubbed him after

exchanging pleasantries with Keane and Neville.

The Manchester United forward was very affectionate with Keane and especially with Gary Neville, with whom he spent several seconds. Carragher thought that he would greet him next and held out his hand with the microphone, but Cristiano snubbed him, a gesture that speaks volumes of itself.

Recall Carragher, after Brentford thumped Manchester United 4-0, said, "His career has lengthened because he is a great professional, but now he is 37 years old, he will be 38 this season, and he is not the same player. He is still a great goalscorer, but he is not the same footballer as before.

"I may be wrong, but I think that no other club in Europe wants him."

# Barcelona responsible for wages as Umtiti makes move to Lecce

French defender Samuel Umtiti has been given the nod by Barcelona to discuss with Serie A side Lecce to process a transfer for the season, a report claims.

The 28-year-old, who receives circa €20m per season, joined Barcelona in 2016 from Olympique Lyon and has scored 2 goals in 133 appearances for the Catalans.

Reports have it that despite the Catalans itching towards cutting down their wage bill to have the leverage to register players for La Liga, Umtiti's move will have no effect as the Spanish club will be responsible for upsetting his wages even while at Lecce.

The report added that the Serie A club's only commitment in the deal would be performance-related bonuses in the existing contract.

Giallorossi have already started the negotiations with the player's representative on personal terms while Umtiti will fly to Italy for further discussions.

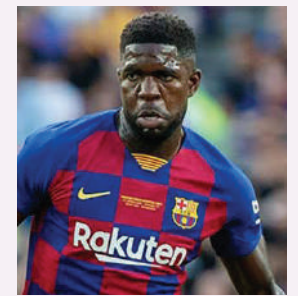
Meanwhile, Lecce President Saverio Sticchi Damiani, on Sunday, disclosed that the club have been courting

Umtiti for quite a long time before triggering a formal negotiation with Barcelona.

Although Damiani added the deal is far from being concluded, Diario Sports on Monday opined that Umtiti could be in Lecce on Tuesday to finalise the deal.

"We have been evaluating the signing of Umtiti for a long time. There is a negotiation with Barcelona, but there are lots to speak about still. The operation is a long way from being formalised," said Lecce President.

Lecce look to include the defender to its squad after sustaining two defeats in the Serie A season from Inter Milan and Sassuolo to wallow in 19th place in the Italian top division log.



# Shooting Stars unveil Ogunbote

## Agoye joins Sunshine Stars

Shooting Stars of Ibadan have unveiled coach Gbenga Ogunbote as the new coach of the club after coach Edith Agoye resigned to further a coaching course in the United Kingdom.

Gbenga Ogunbote on Monday, was unveiled by the management of Oluwale Warriors to reaffirm the club's vision for 2022-2023 season.

Recall that last season, Shooting Stars narrowly escaped being relegated to the Nigeria National League (NNL) after finishing 16th on the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) table. Although the club tallied with Katsina United on 58 points, they leveraged on goal differences.

However, the club are determined to redefine their focus with a target to finish in the qualifying spot for a continental tourney next season and believe that Ogunbote, the former Remo Stars gaffer who qualified Sky Blue Stars for the CAF Confederations Cup after finishing on third place, can do the magic.

Meanwhile, Sunshine Stars have secured the services of Edith Agoye after he parted ways with Shooting Stars at the close of the NPFL season.

Although upon his resignation last week, the Oluyole Warriors said he was slated to attend a coaching course abroad.



However, with the news making the rounds that the coach who piloted Shooting Stars out of relegation zone in the concluded NPFL season has signed for Owena Waves, shows he is ready to dish out his coaching expertise in the 2022-23 season.

Sunshine Stars finished 11th on the NPFL log last

season after narrowly escaping relegation in the 2019-2020 season.

Recall that last season, Sunshine Stars were left midway by coach Deji Ayeni to join Akwa United and the management of the club named Cameroonian Emmanuel Deutsch who took over until the end of the season.

# Napoli to give all for season, Osimhen pledges

Napoli striker Victor Osimhen has assured that the squad do every possible to have a fruitful season.

Osimhen, who scored in the 4-0 thumping of Monza over the weekend to complement Napoli's grip on top of Serie A table, stressed that every player, both those on the pitch of play and substitutes in the bench.

"Everyone, from those on the field to those on the bench, will try to give our all for this season. There are many challenges to understand where this Napoli can go," Osimhen told DAZN.

In the match against Monza, Osimhen was substituted in the 84th minute to pave way for Algerian Adam Ounas

but the 23-year-old's reaction proved he was not happy to be withdrawn from action.

However, the player has clarified that he actions after being substituted was to invigorate Partenopei against the visitors.

He said, "It's nothing to do with the change, but I wanted to motivate the team even more."

Napoli are on top of the Serie A table courtesy of Sunday's brace by Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, Osimhen's second of the season and Kim Min-jae's finisher.

Osimhen noted that the team performance from the start to finish was amazing having operated seamlessly.

"It was a great performance,

I'm proud of how all this team interpreted from the first to the last minute," he added.

Kvaratskhelia replaced Lorenzo Insigne in the starting lineup for Napoli and the Super Eagles striker has praised the player for adding depth to the attacking force.

The Georgian attacker partnered the Nigerian upfront which the latter added that they will continue to build the understanding more.

He said, "We will continue to work to build the understanding even more.

"He is a player who can give a lot and help us win the game," Osimhen added.

Osimhen has netted on two consecutive occasions since the season began and would

seek to sustain the constituency when Partenopei travel to Artemio Franchi, Firenze, to take on Fiorentina on Sunday, August 28, 2022.



# Happy at Manchester City, Bernardo Silva scoffs at Barcelona's links

Manchester City forward Bernardo Silva has shelved a move to join former Chelsea defender Andreas Christensen in Camp Nou after several reports linked the Portuguese with an imminent move to Catalunya.

Bernardo joined City five years ago from Monaco and has featured in 254 games under coach Pep Guardiola with 49 goals to his name.

Despite the player having quite a wonderful spell in England where he has won four Premier League titles, four Carabao Cups, two Community Shields and an FA Cup since his move to Etihad Stadium, coach Xavi Hernandez has been on his trail to bolster his attacking option despite Barcelona's financial escapade.

Several reports alleged the player was close to switching allegiance to have more playing time in Camp Nou but in a twist of events, after

Manchester City's game against Newcastle on Sunday, Silver said he is happy at Etihad.

In the encounter against Newcastle, the Magpies were close to sealing three points at St James' Park before Bernardo Silva rescued a point with a 64-minute leveller.

However, the player after the match where he provided the assist for Ilkay Gundogan's opener, and was named the 'Man of the Match', reaffirmed his commitment to the club.

"I'm happy here. I'm doing everything possible to help the club. I'm very focused," said Bernardo Silva.

A Spanish report said Bernardo Silva was interested in the move to play in La Liga but the body language of the club was enough to send a signal that such plans will not come to fruition this season. Nevertheless, it may be possible in the future without him forcing his move away from England.

# Injury blow for Mourinho as Wijnaldum fractures tibia

Injury has hit Jose Mourinho's squad as Georgina Wijnaldum sustained a fractured tibia that would see him sit out of the game for weeks.

The Dutch central midfielder, who joined Roma on a season-long loan this summer from Paris Saint-Germain, broke his tibia in a training session ahead of the Monday cracker against Cremonese at Stadio Olimpico.

In the report by Giallorossi, Wijnaldum has undertaken a medical examination to determine the existence of the fracture in his tibia.

"Following an injury sustained during training on Sunday afternoon, Georginio Wijnaldum subsequently

underwent medical tests which confirmed the presence of a fracture in the tibia of his right leg," Roma said in a statement.

The 31-year-old made his debut for the Giallorossi against Salernitana in the Serie A opener where he came in as a second-half substitute for Nicolò Zaniolo in the 78-minute.

Roma added that Wijnaldum will undergo more tests to have a concrete understanding of the extent of the injury.

However, the club have not stated the number of weeks the player will be out from action which depends on the degree of fracture but will definitely be aware after he has undergone further scans.

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

— Leo Tolstoy

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## Ban Miyetti Allah like IPOB, Soyinka urges Buhari

By PAUL MICHAEL

**N**obel Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka, has asked the Federal Government to proscribe a Fulani pastoralists group, Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN).

Soyinka spoke in an interview on Channels Television, decrying how the Federal Government handled the farmers-herders crisis in the country.

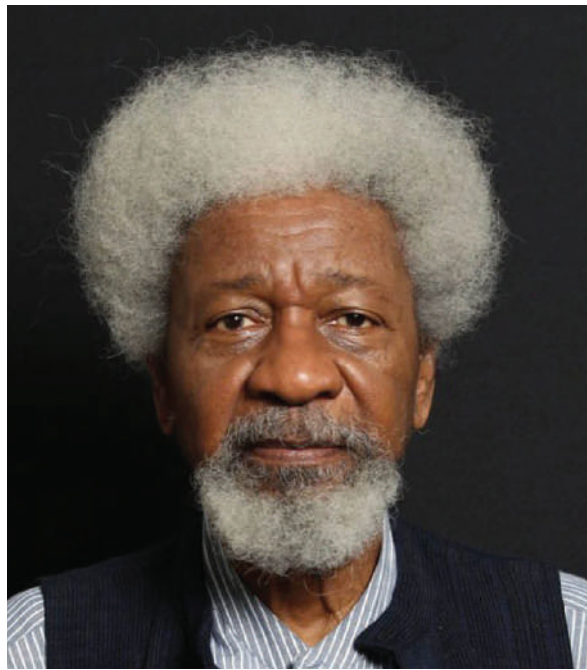
He argued the Federal Government to also ban Miyetti Allah the same way it proscribed the Indigenous People

of Biafra (IPOB) for making secession moves to cede South-East from Nigeria.

Soyinka insisted Nigeria must always put the country's history in perspective so as to understand security challenges.

According to him, the Miyetti Allah has been making inciting statements capable of dividing and causing a crisis in the country.

“And then I will make up my mind whether I want to leave. So, each outrage, unfortunately, has the opposite effect. Whether the outrage is taking place in Benue, Kaduna, or is taking place in Owo.



Soyinka

“Or whether it is taking place right here on the (Ogun state) border – we have also been subjected to this lunacy, of the subjugation mentality which some minority

people hold. And I find it very difficult to accept being chased out of my own entitled portion of the earth.

“Many people just either do not know the history or do not understand the purpose of history. And then there's a different group also who are very selective about history; they know how to distort or misuse history,” he said.

“Take, for instance, when the incursion of the Fulani herdsmen began, and the Miyetti Allah. Their spokesman said, I think it was in Borno, ‘We once ruled this place, and we can take

back our land anytime we want’. I remember that statement; I have never forgotten it. In the midst of the trauma of these people, somebody comes gloating and then citing selective portions of history.

“I said this person should be arrested and locked up, who says he wants to repeat his history of conquest – he is admitting either knowledge, before or after, or support, anyway. Is not there anything like hate speech anymore? Why are you proscribing IPOB without proscribing Miyetti Allah?,” the Nobel Laureate added.

## Nigeria, USA sign agreement for return of fresh \$23.4m Abacha loot

An agreement has been signed by Nigeria and the United States of America (USA) for repatriation of additional \$23,439,724 allegedly looted by the late military Head of State, General Sani Abacha.

While the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami [1], represented the Federal Government in the signing of the asset return agreement at the Headquarters of the Ministry of Justice in Abuja, the United States

was represented by its ambassador to Nigeria, Mary Beth Leonard.

Various sums of money allegedly stolen from the national treasury when Abacha was head of state, commonly referred to as ‘Abacha Loot’ had been repatriated from most countries in Europe and the United States of America since the former maximum leader died in 1998 and return of democratic governance in 1999.

Malami said the decision to return the Abacha loot, which

he tagged Abacha-5, was a product of series of negotiations and meetings between Nigeria, the U.S. Department of Justice and the United Kingdom National Crime Agency (UK-NCA).

“It is worthy to note that in line with the terms of the agreement, President Muhammadu Buhari had already approved the funds to be used for the ongoing Presidential Development Infrastructure Funds (PIDF) projects namely: Abuja-Kano Road, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and the

Second Niger Bridge linking Asaba, Delta State with Onitsha Anambra State and the South East under the supervision of Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA).

“The President's mandate to my office is to ensure that all recoveries of the nation's stolen resources from foreign countries are invested in a transparent and accountable manner and monitored by civil society organisations (CSOs) to complete the projects within the agreed timeline,” Malami said.

## Obi meets with Southern leaders

By TUNDE JOSHUA

Presidential candidate of Labour Party, Peter Obi, on Tuesday continued his consultations by visiting leaders of the South and Middle Belt.

He was at the residence of the leader of pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group, Afenifere, Pa Ayo Adebajo, in Lagos where he paid homage to the aged elder statesman and some chieftains of the South and Middle Belt Leadership Forum.

Obi made this known on his twitter handle where he posted pictures of his visit along with his associates.

According to Obi, he was at the location with leaders of LP.

Details of the meeting were sketchy at the

time of filling this story, but the visit may not be unconnected with Obi's vast consultations with stakeholders across the country on his presidential ambition ahead of the 2023 polls.

“Presently visiting PA Ayo Adebajo and members of the South and Middle Belt Leadership Forum. The National leaders of the Labour Party and other stakeholders are here too. -PO”, Obi tweeted.



Obi