

# Okowa lauds FG over pipeline contract

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**, Asaba

Delta State Governor, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa, has commended the Federal Government

over the pipeline surveillance contract awarded to former militant leader, High Chief Government Ekpemukpolo (aka Tompolo).

"The Federal Government for once has demonstrated listening, they have demonstrated admitting

good counsel," he remarked while addressing journalists at Government House Press Center, Asaba, the state capital.

Okowa also urged agitators against the contract to sheathe their

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# Crisis looms over BPE's plan to sell power plants → 2



Lagos Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu (left) greets President Muhammadu Buhari at the APC state helmsmen's meeting with the latter at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, on Tuesday. With them are Ogun State Governor, Prince Dapo Abiodun (second right) and Chief of Staff to the President, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari.

# Consumers reject planned sale of power plants

By **EDU ABADE**,  
Business Editor

**N**igeria Consumer Protection Network (NCPN) has described proposed sale of five National Integrated Power Projects (NIPPs) under the Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC) by the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) as a miscalculated action with national security risks.

President of NCPN, Kunle Kola Olubiyo, opposed the move following the commencement of special parliamentary inquiry into the planned sale of the assets this week. He expressed concern that the ongoing process of selling the plants remains an illwind that will blow nobody any good.

He argued that such a plan was self-serving and at best, constituted stripping of national assets at a time when President Muhammadu Buhari's administration was already on the verge of completing its tenure.

BPE had recently pre-qualified 16 firms for the privatisation of the five plants, as the NCPN confirmed that has sighted records of firms bidding for the Geregu, Omotosho, Olorunsogo, Calabar and Benin-Ihovbor NIPP plants, adding that some of the firms have no requisite experience in power generation business.

The plants under the NIPP of NDPHC have always been the infrastructure

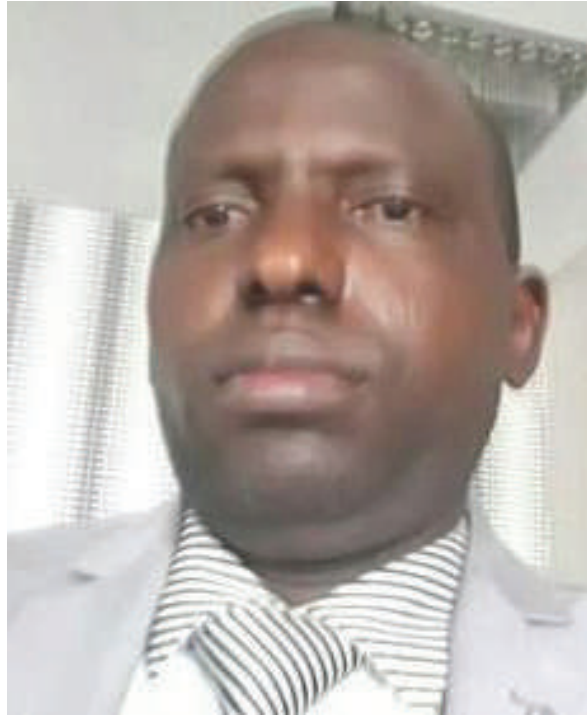
supplying electricity and providing national energy security.

During the COVID-19 pandemic when the private investors of other Generation Companies (GenCos) lower electricity generation due to low revenue returns, the NIPPs being public assets, provided the country the much-needed energy security and its attendant socio-economic stability as it had to raise power supply to avoid economic and administrative shut down of the country.

Olubiyo maintained that the private firms in the power sector so far have not fared better than the NDPHC GenCos, which have its gas obligations, gas pipeline assets and contributed to transmission and distribution networks across the country.

"Recently, the gas producers have allegedly made claims of a legacy debt of over \$1 billion. The legacy gas debts were accumulated over a long period of time and if at any point they stop supplying gas to the GenCos, Nigeria could be plunged into darkness if the NIPP GenCos are sold off and the entire power sector upstream is left at the whims and caprices of private sector investors.

"Even when some of the NIPP/NDPHC GenCos have not been put to optimal use, the country is still seeing their impact on the national grid, while serving as the nation's energy security backups.



**Olubiyo**

What BPE and any designated agency of government should be thinking of at the moment is how to optimise the NIPP/NDPHC GenCos so that Nigerians can make the best use of the power sector intervention, as that was what they were designed for," he stated.

He maintained that the NIPP interventions, which cut across the power sector value chain and implemented by NDPHC required that the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) would have evaluated them and determined their real value.

Olubiyo, however, lamented for over nine years, the NERC has been endlessly doing evaluation of these investment values without result,

adding: "Without the evaluation to determine the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) in the NIPP power sector intervention projects, NDPHC has been continually short-changed of the



**Olubiyo**

revolving funds that should be reinvested in other power interventions in line with Nigeria's energy access for 2030 targets."

Maintaining that the NCPN was opposed to any move to sell the five NIPP GenCos at the moment, he said the electricity consumers were not saying that the plants would not be sold at the right price and at the right time in the future but not at this time when the country was battling challenges of load rejection by the DisCos, low energy dispatch by the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and load dispatch managers from the various centres and the National Control Centre in Osogbo, Osun State.

"It is electioneering time and we believe that even if the five NIPP GenCos are sold, the proceeds may not be useful for the country and may just go into the pockets of politicians at all levels of

government rather than reinvesting in NIPP/NDPHC revolving funds that could help increase the investment milestones and expansion of the original ideals of NIPP project's conceptualisation.

"Selling off the five NIPP plants may not guarantee their optimal performance as the new investors will have to begin a fresh journey of having some levels of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) and Vesting Contracts with the Nigerian Bulk Electricity Trading Plc (NBET).

"However, at the moment, NDPHC has some already signed bilateral contracts for Take or Pay deal for gas supply agreement for some of the GenCos and come handy, to operate as national energy security backups, even private GenCos embark on strikes, thus serving as core energy security backup for the country, while earning revenue for

the government.

"We advise the Federal Government to collaborate with experts and professionals within and outside the power sector to initiate a comprehensive mechanism to address the decline in growth in the areas of universal access to energy security, decline in energy load dispatch by TCN, generation capacity and energy load utilisation by the DisCos."

He urged the House of Representatives Special Investigative Public Hearing to look into the basics and fundamental challenges and help in the overall public interest to avert energy crises that might result from BPE's planned sale of the five NIPP/NDPHC power plants.

He advised the Federal Government to also learn from the poor implications and delivery of the 2013 power sector privatization exercise also carried out by the BPE.



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\*\*Igini (middle), Akpata (3rd left) and others on the occasion.

# Akpata, others celebrate Mike Igini on retirement as INEC commissioner

The National President of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) NBA, Mr. Olumide Akpata among other friends lauded the quality of service rendered by the immediately past Resident Electoral Commissioner in Akwa Ibom State,

Barrister Mike Igini to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

While commending him for his integrity and selfless service to the nation, they urged him not to be weary to take up further challenging task in national development whenever the opportunity

beckons.

At a gathering to honour Igini the NBA president said "I'm here because it is in moments like these that people like Mike are re-energized and encouraged when your own call you to tell you that we know you, we see what you have done and we are proud of you. That is the fuel and

oxygen that people like Mike need to continue. Because every human has its own moments of doubt, is this worth it? because obviously, those you are fighting for are the same people that want you down."

Akpata thanked friends for organizing the gathering in honor of Mike.

He added that Mike's performance is due to him putting national interest first before personal interest and urged other public servants to emulate his virtue.

Similarly, Bar. Blessing Okpowo extolled the virtue of Mike describing him as a committed Nigerian. He said they

decided to celebrate Mike because of his outstanding performance as INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner.

"We decided as friends to put this gathering together in Honor of Mike Igini because of his outstanding performances as INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner first in Cross Rivers State and later in Akwa Ibom State. For ten years he served without blemish and scandal, resisting all powers that be in both states that he serves and today he is the shining light of credible election in Nigeria. We are also celebrating him for completing his tenure successfully."

In his response, Mike Igini appreciated friends for the time and resources put together to honor him. He noted that this honor will spur him to do more for the nation.

He however lamented that while growing up, having integrity was a virtue, but now being dishonest is what is treasured in the society.

The former REC used the opportunity to express his appreciation to all those who supported him through words and prayers.

## Okowa lauds FG over pipeline contract

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swords and work together as one. He explained that the contract was not just a win for Tompolo but for the entire Niger Delta.

Okowa, represented by his Chief Press Secretary, Olise Ifeajika, said although the protests by some groups were understandable, did not represent the position of the Niger Deltans.

He added: "The protest didn't represent the position of the Niger Deltans. It

was their own, maybe they felt that the contract ought to have been shared amongst them. You saw that there was wide applause from Niger Deltans. They felt happy about it and that is where we are. There are other areas, even in the oil

companies, there are more things to be done to five sense of belonging to the communities.

"There are many other things that could be done, giving bigger contracts, giving oil blocks to Niger Deltans that have the know how to do it. Not just giving to the IOCs, no, there are other Niger Deltans that are good engineers in petroleum, that have companies, they can look their way by way of such contracts. But like we have said, it is the beginning, we have seen a sign of being responsive but they need to strengthen it.

"If you remember, some few days ago, a federal government's delegation led by the Minister of State for Petroleum, Timipre Sylva; the Group Managing Director (GMD) of NNPC,

Mallam Mele Kyari and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Lucky Irabor was here, and their mission was to seek the support of stakeholders to curb, if not end the oil theft in the region.

"And if you recall, our governor, his input, the star of what he said was that, to check the rising oil theft cases, that the Federal Government should involve host communities, that is communities where the oil exploration is done. That they should involve them and to involve them the surveillance contract on oil facilities in the area should be reviewed, that was His Excellency's contention, that the Federal Government should review surveillance of all oil facilities in the area.

"In other words make them to own it, make them to have a partnership.

If they make them part of it, they will police it, they will guide it and they will protect it and they will see it as their own and do everything to make sure that nothing happens to those facilities including the pipelines. Because if you alienate them from it they will see it as if it is not our own even when it is in the front of their homes, in their farms they will leave it.

"But the happiness here is that, a few days after, that injunction by His Excellency, it was adopted immediately, and I am sure it was through the instrumentality of that delegation that came. Incidentally, apart from the GMD of NNPC, the

other two officers of that delegation are Niger Deltans and I am sure that they pass the message well.

"So the instruction here is that the Federal Government for once demonstrated listening, they demonstrated admitting good counsel. That the governor said this is what I think is affecting us and they didn't waste days, they hit the ground running by giving the contract to a son of the Niger Delta. So we are commending the Federal Government for taking that position because that has been the agitation of our people, make us part of this thing, this thing is gotten from our area, even if we cannot own the oil blocks, those things we can do, let us be part of the process."

## Atiku greets Kukah at 70

### •Says bishop, formidable advocate for good governance

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, Rev. Father (Dr.) Mathew Hassan Kukah has been described as a remarkable public intellectual, and a formidable advocate for good governance whose contributions to Nigeria's democracy are immeasurable and unquantifiable.

Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, extolled the virtues of the revered clergyman who turned 70 years.

In a statement in Abuja on Tuesday signed by his Media Adviser, Paul Ibe, the former Vice President said: "The man of God has never hesitated to speak out on Nigeria's ills and criticise our leaders when they derail from the responsibility of providing good governance and deepening our democracy.

"Bishop Kukah is widely misunderstood because he speaks truth to power; a task that often attracts adversaries in our kind of society."

On the allegations of

partisanship, he stated that "religious leaders are the moral compass and conscience of the people, and therefore, they have the obligation to tell leaders the truth when they are going wrong."

The Wazirin Adamawa explained that "Kukah is a great asset to Nigeria and humanity because of his tireless commitment to peace, unity and peaceful coexistence in the country and the passion he attaches to these efforts is amazing."

"Not once did I ever hear Kukah preach hate or bigotry in his sermons. All his sermons are focused on issues that can make Nigeria better. His passion for our unity and justice for all is one of his greatest virtues."

The former Vice President described Kukah as a "giant fountain of inspiration" and that it is impossible to interact with the cleric without tapping from his depth of knowledge, wisdom and incredible experience about life.

He wished him God's continued blessing in good health and many more years of service to the country and humanity.



Alhaji Atiku Abubakar

## Obaseki sacks Oboh as Director of security outfit, appoints Olukoga

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Governor Godwin Obaseki has approved the appointment of Mr. David Olukoga as Director of Operations of Edo Security Network.

A statement by Secretary to the State Government, Osarodion Ogie, said: "The Edo State Governor, His Excellency, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has approved the immediate disengagement of Emmanuel Oboh, Director of Operations of the Edo Security Network. The disengagement of Emmanuel Oboh takes immediate effect.

"The governor has, in his stead, approved the appointment of Mr. David Olukoga as the new Director of Operations, Edo Security Network. He is to take over with immediate effect.

"Oboh has been directed to handover all government property in his possession to the new Director of Operations."



Gov. Godwin Obaseki

## NGO urges rural dwellers to monitor education budgets

By **ISAAC JOB**, Uyo

A Non-Governmental Organisation (WEE) has changed politicians representing the people to always ensure that school projects captured in government annual budgets are implemented and secured for development.

Speaking during a Town Hall meeting on Tuesday organized in Onna and Ikono council areas respectively by Women United for Economic Empowerment (WEE) in partnership with USAID, the Executive Director Mrs. Iniobong Frank explained that involving communities in education budgets especially at the grassroots level will give them opportunity to state their needs in the school environment.

The Executive Director who was represented by the Grant and Compliance Manager Mrs Emem Ekong attributed the presence of abandoned school projects in rural communities in the state to non-involvement of community members in annual budget processes of the local government.

The Executive Director observed that only councilors in various wards who never consulted stakeholders in their communities singlehandedly decide on projects for the people even when they are not in need of such projects.

She noted that the problem facing communities in the area was a situation where some councilors initiate projects in their wards that are mostly not needed by citizens and in the end,

"After their exit from the council, these projects become wasted and not used by the people since it was not their priority and need.

"Councilors should seek the opinions of community members to know what they need for inclusion in the local government budget, rather than initiating projects not needed by the people, as this will help reduce the number of uncompleted, abandoned and unused projects in the area.

She frowned at situations where contractors refuse to deliver jobs awarded them even when these projects are captured in the budget and payment made accordingly adding that it leads to abandoned projects littered in the area.

She disclosed that the importance of involvement of citizens in budget processes led to the constitution of the citizens' budget committee in their organisation.

"Communities have right to ask questions if their needs captured in the budget are not met, and if implemented, are not executed according to specification.

She further explained that budget processes are participatory with the introduction of citizens budget which commenced in 2019, adding that the department of monitoring and evaluation is saddled with the responsibility of tracking budgets to assess if funds released to different sectors for projects implementation are used for such purposes.

Participants at Town Hall meet-

ing complained that they are not usually given the opportunity to participate in budget processes, and most times difficult for a common man in the area to make inputs in budget processes.

The participants who were selected from five communities of Oniong West, Okat, Nung Oku Ekanem, Nung Oku Etina and Ikot Akpan Eshiet, frowned at situations where certain projects captured in past budgets but not implemented are not reflected in the new budget but replaced with a new ones.

One of the participants Mrs Abigail Idiong noted challenges faced by teachers in both primary and secondary schools in the area such as provision of wrong textbooks and hoped that when contract for provision of books are awarded, subject teachers would be carried along to ensure the right textbooks are supplied.

In a related development, participants at the Town Hall meeting in Ikono local government area have decried lack of adequate funds for the servicing of the education sector in the area.

A participant who pleaded anonymity blamed the situation to local government joint account with the state government despite series of agitation for local government autonomy.

She said paucity of funds in the local government administration has caused the local government authority to merge education department in the area with the information, culture and sport when it should have been separated.

# 'Why IDU declared support for NNPP's guber candidate's bid'

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Isoko Development Union (IDU) has declared unflinching support for the gubernatorial candidate of New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP), Dr. Goodnews Agbi, to become the governor of Delta State next year.

This was made known during a consultation meeting at Oleh, headquarters of Isoko South Local Government Area of Delta State.

President General of the apex socio-cultural organisation of the oil-rich ethnic nationality world-wide, Prof. Chris Akpotu, said that IDU is supporting Agbi as an illustrious son of Isoko with a great pedigree and credibility.

According to him, "Dr. Agbi is not only sincere,

focused and honest but very reliable, speaks the truth as it is and dependable. His antecedents speak volumes.

"We represent the Isoko people, we represent the interests of the Isoko people. Gone are the days when the Isoko people and their interest are demeaned or where one or two Isoko sons are given appointments which serve their individual and not the interest of the Isoko people and hence they are incapable of saying the truth about shortcomings in Isoko nation. And they cannot tell their paymaster the truth."

Earlier, Agbi said he had come to intimate the Isoko nation of his interest to run the governorship race.

He added: "The Isoko people should support

me, not only because I am the only governorship candidate from Isoko extraction but that the Isoko people should trust me. I will defend their interest and will never take any decision or decisions that will be personal or inimical to the Isoko nation.

"My antecedents as guarantee that when the chips are down and implicative decisions on the guber campaign are to be taken, I will revert to the IDU. I will come here and we shall collectively take the decisions that will be beneficial to the Isoko people.

"Let me reiterate with emphasis, I will come here and we shall jointly take the decisions at this place, the Isoko Development Union, Unity House. I can assure you, now that INEC has announced me into the

Delta State governorship space, Isoko would never be taken for granted again. Mr. President, allow me to lead us to a new political dawn and Isoko people will forever be grateful to you and this your regime

"For long Isoko has been taken for granted, where, every candidate and their political party had come to harvest votes since 1999, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019 till date. Isoko North and South have collectively provided the winning votes without commensurate recognition.

"I have come to change the narratives. We will work together and lead Isoko out of this negative political profiling. We shall look at them at the face, eyeball to eyeball and extract from the state what is rightfully and legitimately due to the Isoko people," he stated



Goodnews Agbi



Rt. Hon. Sheriff Francis Oborewori

## Delta Speaker Oborewori dedicates Appeal Court victory to God, Deltans

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Speaker of Delta State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Francis Oborewori has dedicated his victory at the Court of Appeal, Abuja, on Monday, 29th August, 2022 to God and all Deltans.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr Dennis Otu, Oborewori who is also the National Deputy Chairman of the Conference of Speakers of State Legislatures of Nigeria, said he has always had confidence in the country's judicial system.

"I have implicit confidence in our Judicial system as it remains the last hope of the common

man and I am so glad with the judgement of today. I commend the Judiciary for this judgement. To God be the glory", he said.

The Speaker who polled 590 to pick up the Delta State PDP governorship ticket at the May 25th, 2022 primaries held in Asaba also said: "The Appeal Court, Abuja has given judgement in my favour. This victory at the is dedicated to our Almighty God and to all Deltans. This is our victory and it is for all of us because we are one family. Therefore, let us put the past behind us now and join forces together towards winning the main general elections for PDP in 2023."

## Police arrest suspects over alleged ritualist den saga • Say morgue operator, building not licensed, certified

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Edo State Police Command has given an update on the discovery of an alleged ritualists' den in Benin City, with the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Investigation, Olawore Oluwole, disclosing that the morgue operator, Gabriel Chukwu Otu, was not a certified mortician.

The police chief, at a press conference

organised by the Edo Government and the command on the on the alleged ritual activities in the state, said 10 suspects have so far been arrested and interrogated.

He noted that during the investigation, the police interfaced with medical personnel, lawyers, members of the public, representatives of Benin Traditional Council (BTC), families of those who deposited corpses

and pathologists.

The DCP said the situation was a case of alleged ritual practice. His words:

"The prime suspect Gabriel Chukwu Otu is with the police and has made a statement. Investigations revealed that Otu did not acquire formal training but only worked at different mortuaries as a mortuary attendant.

"Otu had no certificate to practise as a mortician or any certification from the traditional board, as well as the ministries of health and environment. The building used is not certified by the ministry of health or environment.

"In the course of investigations, two suspects, Yusuf Lawal and Victor Obeche were discovered to be scavengers and a passerby. 23 mummified bodies and one dismembered body without a skull suggest an unlawful possession.

"A person said his mother was among the mummified bodies while another said his mother and child were reported missing in February this year, and would like to see the corpses to lay claim to them.

"In the course of our investigation, no fresh corpse was found but some shrines were found at the premises of the alleged ritual den. The shrine with the dismembered body at the site connotes a message.

"I want to appeal to Edo people to remain calm while investigation into the incident continues."

Commissioner for Health, Prof. Obehi Akoria, said: "The Edo State Ministry of Health is using this opportunity to reach out to all persons who own or operate mortuaries or embalment homes to come to the Directorate of Regulation and Monitoring at the Ministry of Health with evidence of due registration latest by 30th of September, 2022, if they are duly registered.

"However, for those who are not duly registered, we are giving them till the close of business on the 9th of September, 2022, to come to the Ministry to get from us the basic requirements for the operation of mortuaries and embalment homes in the state."



Commissioner for Health, Prof. Obehi Akoria

# Teachers not compelled to enrol their wards in public schools, says Ondo govt

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA,**  
Akure

There is no offence committed by Ondo government-paid teachers who enrol their wards in private schools.

Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary (CPS), Richard Olatunde, said there was no policy or law

that forbids anyone in the service of the government, including teachers, from enrolling their wards in any school.

Akeredolu was reacting to speculations that his government had banned public teachers from enrolling their wards in private schools.

He said: "Our attention has been drawn to a news story making the rounds, particularly

on social media with the above headline 'Akeredolu to Ondo teachers:

It's an offence to enrol your wards in private schools'. It is imperative to enlighten our people and shed light on the perspective of the Chairman of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Rt. Hon. Victor Olabimtan, who made the statement.

"Undoubtedly, the Ondo State Government under Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu (SAN), has made huge investments in the education sector in the state, especially in Primary and Secondary Schools. Tertiary institutions are not excluded.

"The rot, which pervaded public schools in the state before the Ak-

eredolu administration assumed office is fast disappearing. This has also led to an increase

in student enrollment in most of the schools."

However, Akeredolu said it would be mor-



Gov Rotimi Akeredolu

ally wrong for teachers who are proud of their work to put their wards in a private school. He said his administration had reconstructed and renovated over 800 public primary schools with perimeter fences, ICT centres and playgroup equipment.

"The students now enjoy modern desks and chairs procured by the Akeredolu administration. Besides," he said.

The governor disclosed that he had recruited over one thousand teachers in the public primary schools.

The statement added: "It is based on this background that teachers in the public schools were urged on moral grounds to enrol their wards in public schools for confidence building.

This will subsequently increase enrollment and further encourage the government to embark on more upgrades to public schools.

"There is always a place for moral burden. It is, therefore, not an offence for teachers to enrol their wards in any school of their choice. But, it will be morally wrong for teachers, who are proud of their works and teachings, to put their wards in a private school.

"Finally, Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu (SAN), will continue to prioritise education and develop it for the overall interest of the people of the state. The Governor believes that qualitative education is the key to a better tomorrow."

## Youths protest over alleged planned imposition of monarch

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA,**  
Akure

Ifira-Akoko youths in Akoko South-East Local Government Area of Ondo State have protested against an alleged plan to impose one Mr. Oluwadare Ariwajoye as the next monarch of the town, *The Trumpet* has gathered.

The youths who protested at the governor's office in Akure alleged that the candidate was not an indigene of the town and that the process was against the tradition of the community.

The protesters who were carrying placards with different inscriptions urged Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu to intervene in the matter before it turned into a crisis.

The stool of Ifira Akoko became vacant following the death of Oba Anthony Olugboja.

Some of the placards read, 'We don't want a person who doesn't understand our dialect, 'Ifira people need a

competent king' 'We say no to Ariwajoye as king of Ifira,' among others

The protesters alleged that some political appointees were using governor Akeredolu's names to manipulate the selection process of the new king, adding that the governor has never been involved in the selection of any Oba in the state since he assumed office as the Executive Governor of our dear state.

Addressing the protesters, the Permanent Secretary of the state

Ministry Of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mr Segun Ipinsanya, said the state government would ensure that due process is followed as well as look into the kingmaker's process in picking the new monarch.

He said Governor Akeredolu did not send anyone to manipulate the process of selecting the new king and urged youths to be law-abiding during their expression of grievances.

## War against fake news launched in lagos

By **SAM NWOKORO,**  
Lagos

A social pressure Group known as Comrades Society Music (COSOM) has launched a campaign against fake news posting in social media and other media of public enlightenment, saying fake news is a major factor impacting against nation-building and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

Speaking during the formal launch of the Album, Lader/Founder of COSOM, Comrade B Ashafa, also called Super Star Ambassador, said: "As we all Know (Nigerians) the Online Media platform has been terribly inflicted b fake news and that fake news is a threat to democracy stability, a threat to growing economy, a threat to military force operations, and a threat to patriotism", arguing that it is high time everybody stands up

against fake news before it destroys our national unity"

The Album launch, largely a documentary of crisis cause by fake news is being planned for launch in all states of the Federation, including the FCT Abuja via staging of live shows where copies of the Album is billed to be distributed freely to the general public.

Comrade Ashafa said that: "through musical advocacy, there will be socialization, national integration and development and this will strengthen the fight against fake news and promote good leadership and citizens' observance of their obligations and responsibility to the state, their communities, their neighborhoods, in all segments of the society.

The Founder/Leader of COSOM also introspected on the status of Nigeria's destiny as a giant of African continent

and said: "When Gog endowed Nigeria with abundant human and natural resources, God did not intend failure or suffering for African land of hope. This divine purpose is too great to be destroyed by fake news, hence, the COSOM project"

Ashafa said the objective of COSOM is to make the war against fake news a duty for every citizen, to make leaders know that citizens are willing to strengthen government through a reduction of fake news, and to promote a culture of citizens' observance of their obligations and responsibilities to the state, their communities, their neighborhoods, their organizations and families in the country.

The convener said: "corporate bodies in the country should join hands with us to invest in this project aimed at entrenching a culture of a stable democratic society. The prevailing

trend of fake news do not augur well for the country's democracy and security of lives and businesses. We therefore appeal to all socially responsible corporate organizations to partner with us to build an environment for good governance, good leadership and peoples' observance of their obligations and responsibilities in the interest of us all COSOM demanded that the fake news pushers, sponsors, promoters and agents popularly known as unscrupulous bloggers should desist from this criminal and unpatriotic act, that established media organizations, government, NUJ, NGE and relevant bodies should step up the campaigns against fake news, and that the fake news sponsors, promoters and agents in government at all levels should resign immediately to guarantee sanity in the system.

## Police rescue five-month-old baby, other kidnapped persons

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

**P**olice in Zamfara State on Tuesday rescued 12 victims, including a five months old baby girl after spending one month in the den of kidnapers.

Officers of Police Tactical Operatives attached to 42 PMF Squadron Gusau in collaboration with the vigilante near Dajin Kare kukanka forest were said to have acted on

intelligence report, leading to the unconditional rescue of the hostages including at Rungawa village in Talata Mafara LGA.

Public Relations Officer of the Command, SP Mohammed Shehu, made the disclosure in a statement forwarded to The Trumpet on Tuesday, saying the victims were rescued unhurt, checked medically, debriefed and handed over to their families.

Shehu said, "On 30th August, 2022, Police Tactical Operatives attached to 42

PMF Squadron Gusau, while on joint operations with the vigilante at near Dajin Kare kukanka forest, acted on intelligence report that led to the unconditional rescue of twelve (12) hostages including a 5-month-old baby girl from Rungawa village in Talata Mafara LGA.

"The victims who were rescued unhurt were abducted by armed bandit/terrorists and taken to Kare Kukanka forest, a bandit camp of a notorious bandit leader popularly known

as "Bello Maibille", and spent one (1) month in captivity. Victims were medically checked at 42 PMF Clinic Gusau, thereafter, debriefed by the Police and handed over to their families."

While congratulating the victims for regaining their freedom, Commissioner of Police in the State, CP Kolo Yusuf, assured the public of the command's commitment to apprehend the perpetrators of the dastardly act and bring them to justice.

"The Commissioner of Police while congratulating the victims for regaining their freedom, assures the public of the Command's commitment to apprehending the perpetrators of this dastardly act.

"The CP further commends the joint Police/vigilante operatives for a job well done, and enjoins all and sundry to be security conscious and report suspicious characters to the Police or any security Agency for prompt action," Shehu added.

## Army neutralizes bandits, recovers weapons in Kaduna

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

Troops led by General Officer Commanding (GOC) 1 Division Nigerian Army, Major General Taoreed Lagbaja, have neutralized bandits and recovered arms, motorcycles in

Kaduna communities. In a statement on Tuesday by Brig-Gen Onyema Nwachukwu, Director, Army Public Relations, the army mentioned the communities in cleared by the troops as Buruku, Udawa, Manini, Birmin Gwari, Doka, Maganda, Kuyello and

Dogon Dawa communities in Kaduna state.

According to him, the troops engaged bandits during a patrol in some of the communities, and subsequently over-powered the bandits, killing several of them.

Nwachukwu also disclosed that three bandits

were captured alive, while some of the criminal elements escaped with gunshot wounds.

He said AK 47 rifle, 27 rounds of 7.62 mm Special ammunition and 18 motorcycles, were recovered by the troops.

The statement appealed to members of the public, particularly, health facilities and paramedics to be on the watch out for the injured bandits who may be seeking medical attention for gunshot wounds and report to relevant security agencies.

## Yusuf assumes duty as Zamfara CP

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

Newly posted Commissioner of Police of the Zamfara Police Command, CP Kolo Yusuf, has vowed to protect the lives and properties of the citizens of the State.

CP Yusuf made the pledge on Monday while officially assuming duty as the 32nd Commissioner of Police in the State.

The State's Police Public Relations Officer, SP Mohammed Shehu, who disclosed this to newsmen in a statement, said CP Yusuf was enlisted into the Nigeria Police Force in 1988 and has served in various operational capacities including as Officer in Charge, Anti-Robbery Squad in Anambra, Kano, Kogi States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

According to him, the new CP is a fighter who has led several operations

that led to the arrest and killing of many Bandits/Boko Haram terrorists, rescue of kidnapped victims and recoveries of arms and ammunition.

"The New Commissioner of Police while reassuring of his unalloyed commitment to the protection of lives and property, seeks for support and collaboration from members of the public, while on the other hand, warns all criminal elements to renounce criminal activities and repent or face dare consequences," the spokesperson said.

The new Police Commissioner was born in 1968 in Majiko village of Edati Local Government Area of Niger State. He attended Katambi/Bologi Primary School from 1974 to 1979. Between 1979 to 1985, he was selected by the Niger State Government for a scholarship where he successfully completed his Secondary School Education

at the Government Technical College, Lagos State.

He holds a Bachelor of Laws Degree from University of Abuja, and is a member of the respected Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). He also holds a Masters Degree in Crime Management and Prevention from Bayero University Kano, with a Doctorate in International Relations.

CP Yusuf was also the Commander, IGP Crack Squad Zone 1 Kano, Coordinator, Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (F-SARS); and Commander Technical Intelligence Unit and Special Tactical Squad (TIU-STs) under the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB).

He has attended several courses within and outside Nigeria, such as Advanced Detective course at the Police Staff College, Jos in Plateau State and in China, Turkey and Colombia, on Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism, management and prevention



**CP Yusuf**

of violent crimes, detailing and management of crime scenes, modern threat and human intelligence development by the metropolitan school of Business and management among others.

While listing the track record of the CP, the spokesperson said, "Example of such records included, the arrest of terrorists who attacked the Nigeria Defence Academy (NDA), the terrorists who kidnapped students of Greenfield University and

Bathel secondary school, Kaduna state respectively.

"CP Kolo Yusuf also led an operation that successfully rescued Mikel Obi's father and arrested the suspects including the syndicate leader, a woman popularly known as Hauwa. He also led the rescue of 82 years old mother of chairman of Pharmaceutical giant JUHEL and chairman Tonimas petroleum group. All the kidnapers in these high-profile cases were rounded up and arrested."

## ICRC raises alarm over 25,000 missing persons in Nigeria

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

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has raised the alarm over 64,000 cases of disappeared persons reported across Africa.

According to a report on the latest figures shared on ICRC's website, over 25,000 people have been reported missing in Nigeria. The report said 14,000 or more than half of those missing are children.

There are over 35 active armed conflicts in Africa at the moment; thousands

of people, including children, cross borders, the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea, are in search of safety and better life each year, the report said.

According to ICRC, such movements often entail great risk, including the risk of disappearance while noting that documented cases of missing persons are on the rise.

It, however, warned that the actual figures are much higher.

"Sadly, the almost 14,000 children registered does not capture the full scope of this often-neglected and tragic

humanitarian issue. There is no doubt that there are more children whose fate remains unknown," said Yann Bonzon, head of delegation for the ICRC in Nigeria.

During displacement, children face risks such as exploitation, violence, mental distress and disappearance. Many also end up alone, with no news of their families' whereabouts.

ICRC has more than 5,200 documented cases of unaccompanied children in Africa.

"Having the right policies in place can save lives. It is

an essential step to protect migrants and families of missing persons. This is a question of humanity and human dignity," said Patrick Youssef, the regional director for ICRC in Africa.

He added, "Families of the disappeared face immense pain and obstacles that often transcend generations. They are stuck in limbo, unable to move forward or grieve. The search for their loved ones never ends."

Between January to June 2022, the ICRC together with the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS), assisted in the exchange of 1,250 Red

Cross Messages containing family news and reunited 31 separated children/unaccompanied minors with their families while 440 phone calls were provided to families to maintain family contact.

In addition, families of 377 persons received information about the whereabouts or fate of their loved ones and 146 families of missing persons received psychosocial, economic, legal and administrative support through the Accompaniment Programme for Families of the Missing.

## IGP condemns incessant attacks on officers

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

Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba has condemned incessant attacks on officers while on their lawful duties across the country.

IGP Baba said attacks by any member of the public on uniformed officer are illegal and an affront on the rule of law, and cautioned citizens against indulging in such practices.

Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, who made this known in a statement on Monday, said the IGP also directed all Police Commands and Formations to ensure that individuals who engage in assault on police officers are made to face the full wrath of the law via swift prosecution in courts of competent jurisdiction.

He said, "The Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, psc(+), NPM, fdc, has strongly condemned the recent trend of assault on Police Officers and men in uniform, carrying out official and lawful duties in various locations across the nation. The IGP emphasized that attacks on Police Officers, who are uniformed agents of the state, is both illegal and an affront on the rule of law.

"The IGP warned that attacks on police officers and men in the line of duty would no longer be tolerated under whatever guise, as the Force holds the lives of its personnel sacrosanct.

"Consequently, the IGP has directed all Police Commands and Formations to ensure that individuals who engage in assault on police officers, irrespective of preceding factors, are made to face the full wrath of the law via swift prosecution in courts of competent jurisdiction.

"The Inspector-General of Police while reiterating the commitment of the Force to ensuring protection of lives and property, stressed the importance of according respect to the fundamental rights of Police officers and other security operatives, in order to enable them advance their sacred mandate of serving and protecting the citizens better and maintenance of law and order."





## INEC partners CDD to address misrepresentation of its activities

● says Commission under - reported

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has expressed concern about inadequate understanding and misrepresentation of its activities by some Nigerians.

This is as it said despite doing a lot, the Commission is being under-reported, shrouded in sensationalism or even misinterpreted by the general public.

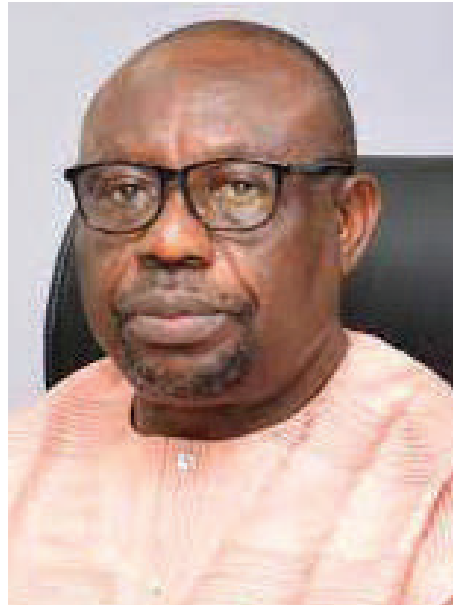
The concern was expressed by the National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Barrister Festus Okoye

Barrister Okoye said this Monday at the Transcorp Hilton, Abuja while inaugurating the Election Crisis Communication Team (ECCT) initiated by the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD).

He said "it is important to state that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has enjoyed good media coverage and Nigerians have become increasingly aware of the work of the Commission, the values attached to transparent elections and the consequences of inappropriate electoral behavior. However, the Commission has also been doing a lot that is under-reported, shrouded in sensationalism or even misinterpreted by the general public."

However, he said, "there is still room for strengthening the communications system of the Commission, as we experience increasing incidents of misrepresentation of the Commission, either out of insufficient appreciation of the constitutive legal instruments underlying the work of the Commission; inadequate understanding of the work of the Commission or other sundry issues around political positioning and contest for power."

While emphasizing that the ECCT is not just innovative and timely but a perfect complement to the capacity of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Okoye expressed hope that the it



Barrister Festus Okoye

will assist the Commission in other areas of interest which include the development of voter education materials, production of a press kit and responding to fake news and disinformation.

"As a result of the way elections are pursued by politicians, elections are almost akin to war. It is almost like a perennial crisis.

"Consequently, the Commission must be better prepared in communicating its positions. Our communication must be robust and focused on the long-term needs of the Commission. It must be diverse, proactive, coordinated and consistent, with effective feedback mechanisms.

"Our communication strategies must recognize and amplify the demographic changes in the voting population; the increasing use of technology by a sizable number of Nigerians, the increasing engagement by Nigerians with the electoral process and the affirmation of the Nigerian people in their belief that the Commission has the capacity and courage to conduct transparent and inclusive elections.

"This is the purpose of this ECCT. We hope that the Team will provide consistent, timely and targeted messaging to various stakeholders," he said.

During the coming 2023 general election, he said Nigerians would elect candidates for 1,491 constituencies, comprising 1 Presidential constituency, 28 Governorship elections, 109 Senatorial Districts, 360 Federal Constituencies and 993 State Assembly seats.

And in preparations, he said, INEC would be involved in recruiting and training staff and managing the logistics for their deployment to 176,846 polling units, spread across 8,809 electoral wards, 774 local government areas, 37 States of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

These, he said, are in addition to applying strategic approaches to ensure the printing and collection of PVCs by registered voters and replacing lost cards before the 2023 general election.

"These tasks are better appreciated when one reasons that the projected voter population for the 2023 general election is about 95 million, which is over 20 million more than the combined voter population of the other 14 countries in West Africa.

"The Commission is expected to perform these duties exceptionally despite the myriad geographical challenges that characterize the country, especially poor transportation systems. INEC staffs require water transportation systems in some States, while in other communities, polling and commission staffs can only access communities by motorbikes and human carriers.

"Therefore, ensuring the safety and security of voters, election personnel and materials, candidates, party agents, observers, the media, and transporters would be an enormous task, especially in the context of the current security dynamics in Nigeria," he added.

These challenges, notwithstanding, Okoye said the Commission is determined and

confident of conducting free, fair, transparent and inclusive election in 2023.

"To perform these tasks effectively, the Commission has since recognized the role of effective communication. That is the reason behind the Commission's Communication Policy, which it continues to update and apply.

"The Commission continues to provide timely and important information relating to the electoral process especially in the area of changes in the law, the deepening of the use of technology in the electoral process, the conduct of elections and the management of different aspects of the electoral process.

Okoye said INEC is ready to work with the Team to educate critical stakeholders and the general public on critical aspects of the forthcoming general election, including innovations the Commission has introduced to improve election service delivery, particularly leveraging digital technologies, collection of PVCs, accreditation and voting procedure and election day logistics.

"With the profound expertise and experience in this Team, both from the media and election management angles, I have no doubt that these will be achieved," he said.

While appreciating the Centre for Democracy and Development and all its partners for the wonderful initiative and members of the Election Crisis Communication Team for accepting to serve, despite busy schedules, Okoye assured that the Commission will continue to work in synergy with them to ensure a free, fair, credible and peaceful election in 2023 to protect the will of the Nigerian people.

"This has once more shown that the Centre for Democracy and Development is not just a leading Civil Society Organization (CSO) that advocates for an improved democracy in Nigeria but a think tank that approaches issues of national concern from an informed perspective based on thorough research," he said.

## Don't compare Tinubu with Obi, Obi-Datti Team tells Alake

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

A support group of the Labour Party presidential candidates known as the Obi-Datti Team has cautioned one of the spokespersons of the Asiwaju Bola Tinubu campaign, Mr Dele Alake not to compare Tinubu with the Labour Party candidate, Peter Obi.

The Obi-Datti Team termed as Obi-dient has emphasized that no Nigerians are wise enough to be deceived by fake credentials of the APC presidential candidate being presented to the public by Alake and his other image launderers.

The group was responding to a remark made by one Dele Alake, that Peter Obi cannot name legacies of his years of governing Anambra State, therefore, "cannot be compared to his APC counterpart."

In its reaction on Monday, the Obi-Datti Team said it is marketing a candidate whose content is resonating with Nigerians, asking Alake to enter the political space to sell his candidate, cautioning that "never again will anybody become Nigeria's President through fake and unsubstantiated packaging."

The statement further stated that Alake is certainly among those Lagosians who believe Nigeria begins and ends in Lagos and may



Bola Tinubu

not have crossed the Niger.

"He might not have been to Anambra and had been too biased to read up the LP candidate's records in the public domain.

"Obi's records won him numerous awards, including "Governor of the Decade" while Alake's paymaster ruled Lagos State."

"The most the media can remember about Alake's principal is his huge internal revenue harnessing which we now know has boosted one Bourdillon family's income.



Peter Obi

"Alake also claimed that Obi's business is anchored on imports that destroyed the economy and that he was not known, when his principal BAT struggled for democracy.

"Again, Alake is either mischievous or ignorant about Obi being the only chief executive of his era with the most investment of state funds that not only boosted the economy but also provided jobs. Not to talk of Obi's education policy that has taken Anambra State from number 29 to 1,

in the School Certificate performance index.

"If Alake is current, he should not have celebrated Asiwaju's role in democracy struggle because it has been diminished since it was revealed that he lobbied to be made a Minister in late Sani Abacha's government and only joined NADECO after he was rejected by the juntas."

The Obi-Datti team further stressed that; "Alake gave out one fact that the Media Office agrees with: indeed, Obi cannot be compared to Alake's candidate."

The statement said: "Yes, they are not comparable; Obi is highly verifiable, but Alake's man is not; Obi has an origin; Obi has educational credentials; his counterpart has affidavits; Obi is whole and hearty and ready to face the challenge of leading Nigeria, the other candidate acts by proxy; Alake's man says it's his turn to rule Nigeria, Obi says it's the turn of Nigerians to take back their country. Indeed, there is no room for comparison.

"We are in sympathy with those who need to keep attacking the man they claim has no structure and is just a social media wave instead of selling their structured candidate. All they seek is to mention Obi to be able to trend," the statement added.

## PDP gets reprieve in Kano as court sacks Kwankwaso backed Exco, Shekarau rejoins



Senator Ibrahim Shekarau



Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso

By **TUNDE OLOSUNLE**

With two successive incidents on Monday, the stage seems to be set for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to retract its footsteps and reposition for the 2023 elections in Kano State.

First, a Federal Court of Appeal in Abuja completely severed the hold on the party by Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, while on the other hand, a former governor of the state, Senator Ibrahim Shekarau retraced his steps back to the party.

A three man panel of the appellate court, led by Justice Peter Ige, dissolved the state executive council of the party being backed by the presidential candidate of the New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP), Rabiu Kwankwaso.

The ruling set aside the decision of a Federal High Court which recognised Shehu Sagagi as the chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, in Kano.

Mr Sagagi, who was anointed by former governor Rabiu Kwankwaso to lead the party in the state, is accused of being loyal to his former party leader, who now defected to the New Nigeria Peoples Party, NNPP.

The National Working Committee, NWC of the PDP had on March 29 dissolved the state, local and ward executive committees of the Kano State chapter of the party and appointed a 6-man caretaker committee as replacement.

On May 25, 2022 Justice Taiwo Taiwo issued a perpetual injunction restraining the PDP headquarters from removing Mr Sagagi from office until the end of his tenure in December 2024.

Justice Taiwo had held that the NWC or any other organ of the party lacked power to dissolve state executives duly elected through congress.

But the Court Appeal on Monday set aside Justice Taiwo's judgment, saying it was internal affairs of the party and that the party had powers to dissolve the Kano executives.

The panel unanimously held that the decision of the PDP NWC to dissolve the Executive Committees at all levels in Kano State chapter of PDP and appointment of Caretaker Committee members to lead and run activities of the party cannot be challenged in court, as being contrary to the PDP constitution as contended by the 1st – 4th Respondents.

The appellate court further held that the dissolution of the Executive Committees at all levels in Kano State Chapter of the Appellant, and appointment of Caretaker Committee

Members was in accordance with the provisions of Articles 31 (2) (e) of the party's constitution.

With the judgement, the PDP could be said to have been returned to owners of the party after being retrieved from the hold of Kwankwaso who was alleged of holding PDP to ransom to negotiate positions for his loyalists in coming elections.

Also on Monday, the rank of PDP has been swelled by the returning of Shekarau with thousands of his followers to PDP after a short spell at the NNPP, the party which he joined from APC on May 18, 2022.

Announcing his defection from the NNPP at a well attended event at his Kano residence in Kano, he said he has written to inform the leadership of the NNPP of his intention to leave the party.

"Myself and thousands of my followers have defected to the People Democratic Party, and are now bona fide members of the PDP," he said.

"I have formally written to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) that I am no longer a senatorial candidate under the NNPP.

Shekarau promised to work to ensure the success of the PDP presidential candidate, Atiku, not only in Kano but in all the states of the federation.

The former governor was subsequently registered as a member of the PDP by the national chairman of the party,

Dr. Iyorchia Ayu who said "it is my happiest day because Kano is strategic to the success of the party."

The chairman said the party is more interested in Shekarau because he is a selfless leader who believes in teamwork and who abandoned his senatorial ambition in NNPP to satisfy his people.

"The PDP always believed in teamwork and will never be an individualistic entity of any person," Ayu said.

Speaking further, Ayu declared, "the PDP is built by the people and that is why it is called the people's party. It was never built on an individual and can never be built on an individual.

"As the people's party, it is not waiting for anybody. We will win election everywhere and will not only win in the north, we will in the south; we will win in the South-south. The PDP will win nationwide.

"By this time next year, we shall have PDP government in place. Nobody can destabilise this party. We are not going to be distracted. Don't mind all those peddling crises.

"We shall overcome all distracting forces. We shall overcome all difficulties. Every member of PDP is important. We will do everything possible to bring all those that have left the PDP back."

The PDP presidential candidate, Atiku, who spoke in Hausa at the event, said, "Nigerians are yearning for victory in our campaign, because they know that when the PDP wins, the victory is to the people.

"I am sure you must have noticed that my team and I have kept our engagements focused on policy related issues. We know, much as you do know, too, that the upcoming election is a referendum on the ruling party. They have failed and our democracy gives us the power to punish the APC for their failed promises."

Promising to solve problems confronting the country if elected, Atiku said, "I am a candidate, who is prepared for the job and ready to hit the ground

running from day one!

"Our campaign comes with a promise of renewal, and a commitment of returning power to the people. That is what the PDP stands for. And, like I did say in Lagos during the NBA national conference, I am not a trial and error in leadership. I am tried and tested and my capacity to get the job done is proven.

"Dear friend, kindly permit me to thank you again for the great job that you continue to do by supporting the campaign. Also, kindly permit me to urge you to do more. It is when we do more that we can truly push back the APC from coming back to fail us, once more."

The party's vice presidential candidate, Ifeanyi Okowa, commended Shekarau for the huge sacrifice of dumping NNPP and its senatorial ticket and coming to PDP.

Sokoto State governor, Aminu Tambuwal, while welcoming Shekarau back to PDP, while charging the former Kano State governor to continue to help in repositioning the party and Nigeria, at large, stating that at the end, "We shall give Atiku all help to become President."

Governors at the event include Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State; Darius Ishaku of Taraba State; and the National Chairman of the PDP, Iyorchia Ayu; and members of the party's Board of Trustees led by Walid Jibril.

Party chieftains at the event are; former Vice President, Namadi Sambo; former Deputy Governor of Zamfara State, Mahdi Aliyu, and former Minister of Transport, Idris Umar; Ahmad Babba-Kaita, Senator for Katsina North District, and former lawmakers, Dino Melaye, and Shehu Sani.

Former governors, Sule Lamido, Saminu Turaki, Attahiru Bafarawa, Shehu Shema, Ahmad Makarfi, and Boni Haruna, of Jigawa, Sokoto, Katsina, Kaduna, and Adamawa states, respectively attended the event.

## ICPC probes to Buhari's aide over payroll fraud

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA



Bashir Ahmad

Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) is said to have commenced investigations into payroll fraud allegedly committed by President Muhammadu Buhari's aide on new media, Bashir Ahmad.

It was alleged that Ahmad had committed the fraud through the federal government payroll.

According to ICPC, the media aide's action was drawn to the commission through HEDA Resource Centre, a public-interest think-tank run by anti-corruption campaigner, Lanre Suraju.

The ICPC spokesperson, Azuka Ogugua said, "We received a complaint and we have commenced an investigation.

"Our investigation is preliminary at

this stage in order to establish accuracy of the information we received and then we take it from there."

Ahmad is alleged to have been earning salary after leaving office as a presidential media aide.

He had resigned from office in May in order to seek the ruling party's House of Reps ticket in his home Kano State.

However, despite confirming his resignation, the President's media aide still continued receiving salaries in May, June and July, until he was exposed by media reports.

It was said that Ahmad had received at least N3,129,530.64 in fraudulent basic earnings, with his allowances and estacodes within the same period.

Ahmad, was earlier this month reappointed by Buhari after failing to

win the primaries in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

He is also said to have refunded the illicit payments in full to the federal coffers for the months he was not in service.

He also failed to supply evidence of the reimbursement or clarify what actions he took after receiving the first, second and third salaries, as well as federal allowances and estacodes, despite being a private citizen.

### Court convicts two fraudsters

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Justice A. R. Mohammed of the Federal High Court sitting in Abuja has convicted and sentenced two internet fraudsters, Adikpo Diamond Aondover and Mathew Itodo Onyilo.

They were jailed after being arraigned in court by the Makurdi Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for charges bothering on obtaining money through false pretense.

Aondover and Onyilo were jailed on Monday, 29th August, 2022, after pleading guilty to one-count separate charge preferred against them by the anti-graft commission.

The charge against Aondover reads: "That you, Adikpo Diamond Aondover, sometime in 2021 at Makurdi, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, fraudulently impersonated one Elliott Winston Diamond from Worcester, Massachusetts, (United States of American Citizen) via your mobile No. 08084695597 and 07088598890 with intent to gain advantage to yourself and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 22 (2)(b) (i) of the Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention Etc) Act, 2015 and punishable under Section 22(2)(b) of the same Act".

The charge against Onyilo reads: "That you, Mathew Itodo Onyilo sometime in June 2022 in Otukpo Benue State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, fraudulently impersonated one Harold Marlar through his Instagram username with intent to gain advantage for yourself and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 22(2)(b)(i) of the Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention Etc) Act, 2015 and punishable under subsection (iv) of the same Act".

They both pleaded "guilty" to the charge when it was read to them.

Following their pleas, prosecution counsels, Mary Onoja and M. Yusuf, respectively reviewed the facts of the cases before the court, while praying that the convicts be sentenced accordingly.

In his judgment, Justice Muhammed sentenced Aondover to one year imprisonment, with an option of fine in the sum of N400,000.00.

Onyilo was also sentenced to one year imprisonment with an option of fine in the sum of N400,000.00.

Also, his iPhone 7 used in committing the crime was forfeited to Federal Government of Nigeria while the two bank accounts used by the convicts to access funds were closed by the court.

The two convicts started their journey to the Correctional Centre when they were arrested by operatives of the Makurdi Zonal Command of the EFCC for impersonating foreigners and defrauding their victims through false claims

## NGOs tasked to join fight against social vices

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has called on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to collaborate with statutory agencies in the fight against social vices and to promote national ethics and integrity in the country.

The Chairman of ICPC, Prof Bolaji Owasanoye, who was represented by a board member of the Commission, Dr Louis Solomon Mandama, made the call when members of a Non-Governmental Organization, the Campaign Against all Tools that Trigger Anti-Social Vices, visited the Commission.

This was disclosed in a statement by the ICPC spokesperson, Azuka Ogugua on Tuesday, stating that the chairman of the Commission said NGOs has the responsibility to collaborate with relevant agencies to tackle political hooligans, cultism, drug abuse amongst others.

Ogugua said, "Owasanoye noted that

it was the responsibility of NGOs to collaborate with statutory agencies to ensure that social vices such as examination malpractices, political hooligans, cultism, drug abuse, targeted assassinations, abductions, terrorism and cyber-crimes were eradicated in the society.

"The ICPC boss emphasized that the state of insecurity and other social vices were critical, maintaining that only when citizens align themselves with positive attitudinal change with the view of promoting our national values that we would experience a better society.

He further highlighted the tripartite mandate of ICPC namely Enforcement, Prevention and Public mobilisation, adding that the Commission in its preventive approach had initiated the tracking of constituency and executive projects, National Ethics and Integrity Policy as well as the clamping down on Illicit Financial Flows."



ICPC Boss, Prof. Owasanoye

## Owasanoye urges NBA, lawyers to fight graft with legal system

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Chairman of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Prof Bolaji Owasanoye, has challenged the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and members of the association to play a pivotal

role in the fight against corruption in the legal system.

Spokesperson of the Commission, Azuka Ogugua, stated this on Monday while

noting that the ICPC boss decried corrupt practices by members of the

legal profession.

According to her, the former Chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Dr Sam Amadi, also hailed the impact of the anti-corruption agency in addressing corruption in the country, particularly the public sector and government finances.

"Both Owasanoye and Amadi spoke at a breakout session of the NBA Annual General Meeting and Conference on the subject matter, 'How Corruption Fuels Insecurity and Bad Governance: The Role of Lawyers in Tackling Corrupt Practices in Nigeria' held at the Eko Atlantic, Victoria Island, Lagos.

"The ICPC boss, who decried corrupt practices by members of the legal profession, advised the leadership of the NBA to act swiftly and sanction members of the profession involved in corrupt practices.

"He questioned the middlemen role played by some lawyers for suspects involved in corruption, money laundering and illicit financial flows (IFFs) cases, describing it as unethical," Ogugua stated.



Azuka Ogugua

## Two former Governors pardoned and released

It is sad, disheartening, demoralising, discouraging and unfortunate that we live in a country and have a government that is insensitive to the suffering of its citizens. The federal government demonstrated insensitivity recently when former Governors Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame of Plateau and Taraba States respectively were pardoned and released from jail on the flimsy grounds of ill health and advanced age. In fact, Joshua Dariye was so “sick” that he picked up the Senate ticket of the Labour Party barely two weeks after he was released. To release criminals whom the justice system has proven to be corrupt, unscrupulous, and have stolen humongous sums from the commonwealth indicates moral depravity by the State.

Governors Nyame and Dariye were pardoned by the National Council of States based on the President’s Prerogative of Mercy. Both governors were gaoled for fraud, money laundering, criminal breach of trust and misappropriation of public funds. They were each sentenced in 2015 to twelve years but served only four. President Buhari assured the nation that the pardon is not for political ends since others were also pardoned. While being merciful is a laudable act, we cannot run away from the fact that the pardon granted to the two governors undermines Buhari’s anti-corruption campaign. It is also demoralising to the EFCC which works very hard and against all odds to expose the activities of these criminals and bring them to justice.

During the Dariye years, Plateau State was in a state of religious crisis and security unrest. There was mass inter-religious killings and Plateau, one of the most peaceful states in Nigeria, populated by the humblest, peace-loving people, became torn apart along religious lines. Yet amidst all these, Dariye stole huge sums of money from State coffers. He diverted funds that could have been used to save lives and prevent conflict. His hands are not only corrupt, but they are

also stained with the blood of his kinsmen. In such a case, what mercy can we say he has shown to his own people that could justify the president’s pardon?

Nyame, on his part, is an ordained reverend who betrayed not only his people but his religion and his God as well. Are these really the sorts of people the president should pardon? Is it safe to release such people back into society? There are prisoners serving sentences for petty theft but have not been pardoned; some have not even been tried and have been left to languish in custody for years. We can only believe it is because they do not have the “right” connections in government. The subtext is that in Nigeria, punishment is only for “poor” people.

The question we ask here is: should pardons

be granted on health grounds given a prison system where dozens die of ill health, age and malnutrition everyday due to poor living conditions? And indeed, what are the conditions for granting pardon in Nigeria? Ideally pardons should be granted only in cases where the legal system fails to deliver a morally or politically acceptable result. Lamentably, Sections 175 and 212 of the Nigerian Constitution in which sovereign pardon is codified fail to provide guidelines on standards for exercising this power. For this reason, the President can grant pardons without the proper checks in place to curb or guide the practice. Therefore the president or the Governing Council needs to rationalise any pardons given. Secondly, the relevant sections of the Constitution should be reviewed to contain clear guidelines and standards for exercising the Power of Pardon or the Prerogative of Mercy. TSo although the Prerogative of Mercy is exercised at the discretion of the president, the operating principle is that there must be fairness; it should neither be partisan nor offensive to the national ethos.

We all remember that when Buhari was campaigning for president, his abiding election mantra was that he was going to declare war on corruption. He swore that no public official found guilty of corruption would escape the strong arm of the law. Yet here we are today with two governors being pardoned and even offered the opportunity to steal and loot from the people again. Far from punishing the duo, it is as though Buhari is saying “well done” and giving them a pat on the back. Where our leaders are concerned, there is neither shame nor remorse, only insensitivity and the arrogance to do as they please with impunity.

We can therefore conclude that Buhari simply used anti-corruption as a political or election mantra. He is himself corrupt, not for stealing or misappropriation of funds, but for condoning those who do. The justice system is unfair and the president is promoting that narrative.



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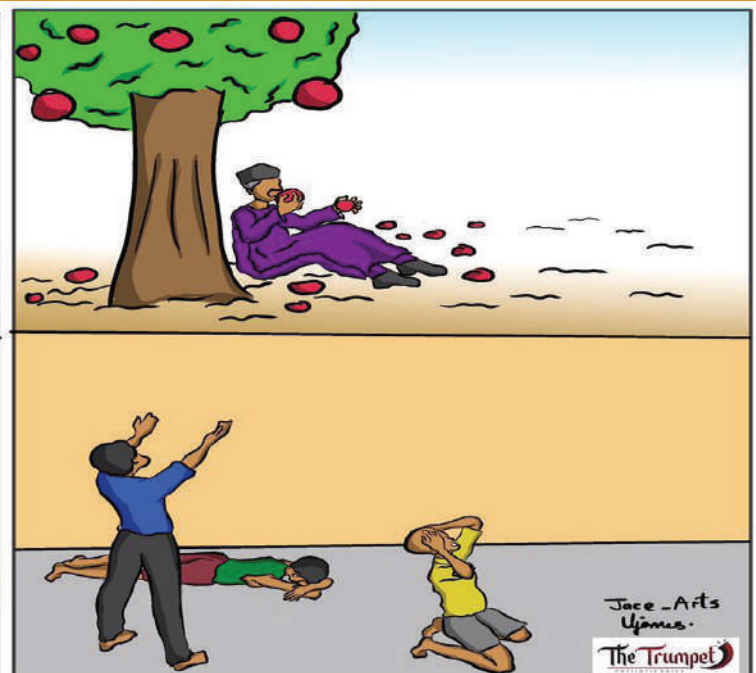
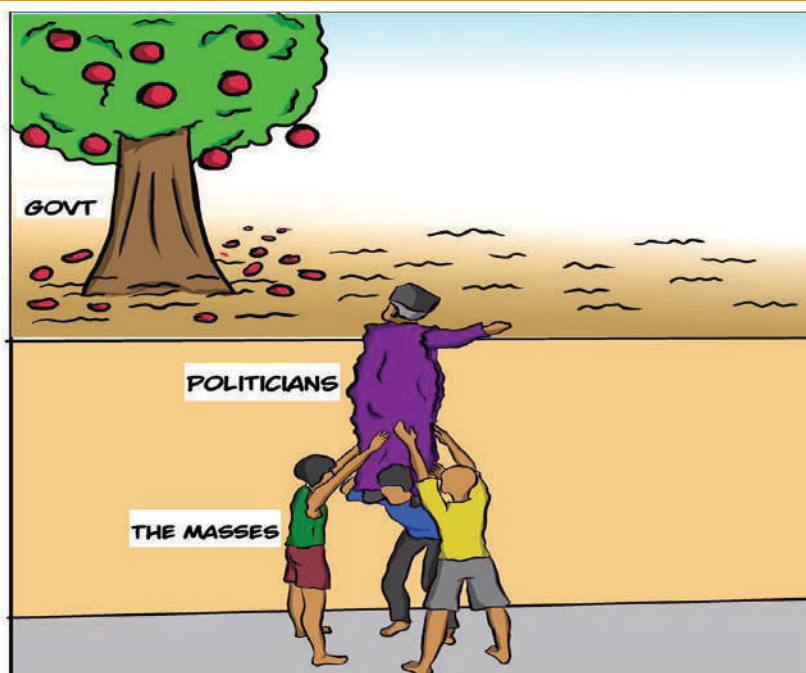
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## Despisers of the body

A few days ago in Imo State, a group of angry women stormed the streets protesting that young girls were using indecent dressing to attract the women's husbands. What this ultimately means is that the husbands are attracted to the young women's bodies, which are on display when "indecently" dressed. The focus and source of the protesting women's disgruntlement, therefore, is the female body exposed to the male gaze.

This write-up is not about that incident, but rather about our current obsession with our bodies because it brought to my mind an interesting section in Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883) entitled "On the Despisers of the Body" where the eponymous Zarathustramocks those who think that the body is less important than the mind. His argument is that it is the body, not the mind, that does things; that what we think of as the "self", that all important marker of our "true" identity, is actually nothing but one aspect of the body's "great reason". That is to say, the body is, in the words of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, "a great plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd". In this regard, our emphasis on mind over body is put to question and Nietzsche's argument on the supremacy of the body over the mind has been

justified especially in our own times.

Since Nietzsche's book, written in the 1880s, there has been a massive explosion in interest in the body as body, indeed an obsession with the body as both "reason" and "faith". This obsession with the body and how it appears to the gaze of other selves (or bodies) can be seen in present day concerns with the body such as bodily self-expression, cosmetic surgery, body art, body piercing, and the contemporary body culture along with the rise of the "hospitality" industry, consumer culture, and other notions of physical beauty, body shapes, and bodily freedom.

For most, especially for women – but it is also becoming common with men too – the natural body is something to be ashamed of, and therefore needs to be refurbished, airbrushed, painted over, and transformed into yet another body, one which is based on the person's idea of the "ideal body". This "new and improved" body masks the real, biological body, which, because of its "imperfections" is despised and therefore must not be allowed to surface.

To achieve this ideal body, women augment their natural hair with wigs, hair extensions, hair creams, hair colouring or dyeing, or by perming, curling, straightening or stretching using all manner of chemicals and

electronic gadgets. The face of the "ideal" body also has to be covered in all sorts of accoutrements, disappearing under a deluge of exotic lip creams and lip sticks, bleaching and whitening lotions, foundations, powders, paints, sprays, glitters and shadows. What cannot be painted out is modified – eyebrows are reshaped and redrawn; eyelashes are elongated with fake lashes and mascara.

Fingers and toes are not left out but disappear under paint or fake nails. Wrinkles, lines and stretch marks are "disciplined" into shape with Botox and laser treatments; sagging boobs and bums are given a new lease of life with implants. And since it has become unacceptable to have any figure but the "eight", women squeeze ourselves into modern day corsets, terrified to breathe much less – God forbid! – eat.

In this great new "religion" of the body aesthetic, beauty salons are now everywhere catering to the body and its striving towards "perfection", ever ready with the "technologies of female beauty" in the form of awe-inspiring chemicals, gadgets and devices to satisfy every "worshipper's" aesthetic desire. There's hardly now a naturally-given woman, especially among urban women. The hatred of our true body has caused us to repress our natural body making us to dress it up



Ralia  
MAIJAMA'A

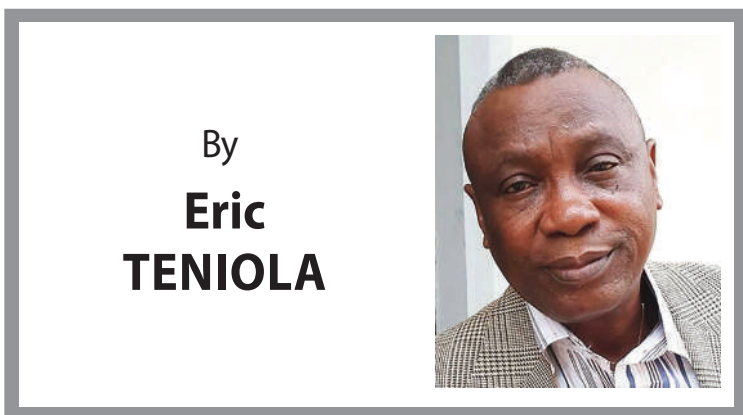
in new, non-natural, "garments".

Still not satisfied, we embark on regimes of diet, exercise, cosmetic surgery and health promotion strategies that promise a new ideal of beauty or body-satisfaction; the pressure to transform oneself into a symbol of desirability and feminine beauty pushes many women to invest in the new fad of the transformation of the body through fashion and self-decoration beyond the normative and traditional ideals of womanhood and female desirability.

But where would all this take us? Only to what psychologists would call "a lack of self-acceptance". This flight from nature, from the body-as-nature, would slowly take us to a regime of self-hatred, precisely what Nietzsche would call "the despisers of the body", or, in this case, a refusal to affirm one's own natural gifts, or those aspects of the body, from complexion and hair type, that Nature has bestowed on us.

Why must a woman have to use wigs, artificial hair, fake eye lashes, fake eye brows, fake nails, fake breasts, and fake hips and height-enhancing shoes? It is, I would argue, not just a blind acceptance of modern fashion statements but also a hidden hatred of what one is. It is a mark, no doubt, of an inferiority complex, a refusal to be as one naturally is. Self-acceptance is a great virtue and a preparation for a cultural affirmation that is noble, accepting, and prideful. Thus the new modifications of the body that we see around us is not, as has been conventionally assumed, an interpretation of the body; it is, rather, a misunderstanding of the body, the desire to hide the true body and project, in its place, an artificial, fabricated, made-up, fictitious body – for the body has a great reason, which is to affirm our natural heritage for which we should be proud not ashamed.

•Ralia Maijama'a is a member of The Trumpet Editorial Board.



By  
Eric  
TENIOLA

Continued from Monday edition

The one elected in Edo state, Mike Aiyegbemi Oghiomhe (66) later became Chief of Staff to his friend, President Goodluck Jonathan.

How many of them do we hear of these days? Look at most of them where they are now.

No vice president can survive the systematic demoralization inflicted by the office without serious injury to themselves. The vice presidency is a man eater. The office destroys individuals however competent you could be. The job is a silent killer. Most often vice presidents get to know about activities of government not through briefings, memos and files.

Between the President and vice president, trust, reliance, steadfastness, loyalty, devotion, and fidelity are the key words in their wedlock and I doubt if the two can pass the acid tests. There is always skepticism and dubiety in their marriage. Constant doubt. Their aides too

do not help matters.

In 1979, Dr Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe (1915-1990), who wanted to be vice president, described the post of Vice President as a "repeater station of a major network", while others described it as "the spare tyre on the automobile of government". No president in the nature of things, is going to yield power to a Vice President. Although they were both elected, but the Vice president is just a part of a package. A sort of an appendage to the presidency. The only reason for keeping the office of Vice President is that it provides an automatic solution to the problem of succession.

Former U.S President Roosevelt concluded that the Vice, president was "an utterly anomalous office, one which I think ought to be abolished". To me the office is incurable frustration. It is not only in this country that it applies to. No president and Vice president have fully trusted each other. Antagonism, envy, suspicion, jealousy, are inherent in their relationship. "The only

## The vice-presidency is incurable frustration (3)

business of the vice president" wrote Thomas Marshall who served for eight years under U.S President Woodrow Wilson "is to ring the WHITE HOUSE bell every morning and ask what is the state of Health of the President". Lyndon B Johnson who served as vice president under John

Kennedy before he became president eventually, said the office of the Vice President "is like a raven, hovering around the head of the President, reminding him of his mortality".

In the United States, Bobby Baker, the wheeler-dealer who fell from grace later, remembers Johnson telling him one night: "Bobby, you never had a heart attack. Every night I go to bed, and I never know if I'm going to wake up alive the next morning. I'm just not physically capable of running the Presidency." Former US Vice President Hubert Humphrey said "there is an old story about the mother who had two sons. One went to sea, and the other became Vice President, and neither was ever heard of again."

France has abolished the post of Vice President completely and yet the French democracy is one of the strongest in Europe.

On April 2, 1974 French president Georges Pompidou died in office. On May 5, the French had their election followed by a run off on May 19 and the inauguration of Valery Giscard D'estaing on May 27. In short in less than 60 days, France had a new president, freely chosen by the people and

equipped by them with a fresh mandate. The results, as told, surely favour France on essential tests of legitimacy and democracy.

Egypt, has no Vice president. Other countries, in fact too numerous to mention, have no vice presidents. In America, where we borrowed most of our constitutional provisions, the constitution of America does say that the Vice President "shall be President of the senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided."

When there was objection to this provision in America's constitutional convention, Roger Sherman observed that if the U.S Vice President did not preside over the senate "he would be without employment". The Vice President is always in a no-win situation. If he talks, he will be accused of being garrulous and loquacious. If he refuses to talk, he will be labeled dumb and laconic. If he works hard, he will be charged of being too eager to be president, if he refuses to work, he will be ridiculed for being, indolent, lazy, lacking initiative and lethargic.

In the book- THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Tom Marshall was quoted as saying "the vice President is like a man in cataleptic state: he cannot speak, he cannot move; he suffers no pain and yet he is perfectly conscious of everything on about him". Also in the book Hubert Humphrey who was Vice President to Lyndon Johnson described the Vice Presidency in bad terms,

"it's like being naked in the middle of a blizzard with no one to even offer you a match to keep you warm. You are trapped, vulnerable, alone and it does not matter who happens to be President". To non-politicians, the Presidential election in 2023 is too far but to politicians, it is tomorrow. The scheming for that election is on already. So what do we make of our own Vice President?

The first thing to do is to reform the way Vice-Presidents are chosen. Since 1999, Vice Presidents in Nigeria have been imposed on politics or by hasty compromise of exhausted factional leaders. The selection process must be more open. The party structure must be more involved so that the Vice President nominee could be more screened by the party leaders. Vice Presidents must be given scheduled responsibilities by the constitution same as deputy governors.

The way we choose our Vice Presidents has become so absurd.

In the absence of a constitutional amendment, the best hope for improvement of the Vice President's job seems to rest in improving the selection process. The presence of top-flight persons as Vice President would at least put some additional pressure on the President to involve the Vice President in important governmental decision making and thus upgrade the existing role of the office.

There is still hope, for the Vice President. *Concluded*

# ASUU strikes are to save public universities

By **EMMANUEL OSODEKE**

1. The National Executive Council (NEC) of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) held an emergency meeting at the Comrade Festus Iyayi National Secretariat, University of Abuja, Abuja on Sunday, 28th August, 2022. The meeting was called mainly to review developments since its last resolution that rolled over the nationwide strike action for another four weeks starting from 1st August, 2022.

2. NEC observed with regret that the Union had experienced a lot of deceit of the highest level in the last five and half years as the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) engaged ASUU in fruitless and unending negotiation without a display of utmost fidelity. In 2017, the Federal Government constituted a committee to renegotiate the 2009 FGN-ASUU Agreement under the chairmanship of Dr. Wale Babalakin. After three years of fruitless negotiation, Dr. Babalakin was replaced in December 2020 with Professor Emeritus Munzali Jibril. The Renegotiation Committee produced and submitted a draft agreement to the Federal Government in May, 2021. It is sad that, until 14th February, 2022 when the ongoing strike commenced, the Federal Government made no significant efforts to either sign the agreement or commence implementation. It was only after the commencement of this strike that the Federal Government reconstituted the committee with Professor Emeritus Nimi Briggs appointed Chairman to lead the Government Team.

3. NEC recalled that, before meeting with our Union, the Nimi Briggs Committee confirmed to ASUU in writing that it was consulting with all relevant stakeholders in order to aggregate Government's position/offer. After intensive bargaining, ASUU came to a compromise with the Professor Briggs-led Team leading to the submission of the second Draft Agreement to the Federal Government in June, 2022 for consideration and approval for signing by the two parties within one week. This was done in line with the principle of collective bargaining. Shortly after and against all expectations, however, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Dr. Chris Ngige, and later his Minister of State, Festus Kayamo, alleged that the Union chased away representatives of government agencies and thereafter fixed unreasonable and unimplementable salary package for its members. They claimed that the government would need to borrow 1.6 trillion Naira to implement the Draft Agreement;- a claim that is not only malicious but contrived to blackmail the Union. Subsequently, some miserable,

unilateral, and insulting take-it-or-leave-it offers of between N30,000 and N60,000 monthly salary were thrown at the Union. This was obviously an attempt to abrogate the principle of collective bargaining which has guided ASUU engagements with Federal Government since 1981.

4. NEC noted that ASUU and other well-meaning Nigerians have expressed serious disappointment by and consternation on the attitude of the Government conveyed by the Minister of Education, Mallam Adamu Adamu, who had deliberately misinformed the public and reduced the current struggle of ASUU to the payment of withheld salaries, claiming that all other contentious issues had been resolved. For the avoidance of doubt, however, none of the issues that forced our Union to resume the suspended strike as listed in the December 2020 FGN-ASUU Memorandum of Action (MoA) has been satisfactorily addressed by the Government to date. The draft renegotiated FGN-ASUU Agreement (second draft) remains unsigned; the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) has not been adopted and deployed to replace the discredited Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS); and the White Papers on Visitation Panels to Federal Universities, if ready as claimed by Government more than six months ago, are nowhere to be found.

Similarly, Government has not delivered on the promised balance of one tranche of the Revitalization Fund more than one year after, the outstanding two tranches of the Earned Academic Allowances (EAA) have not been released; and nothing has since happened on the upport for amendment to the Law of the National Universities Commission (NUC) to stem the tide of proliferation of universities especially by the State Governments.

5. NEC was utterly disappointed in agents of Government, especially the Minister of Education, for the deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation of facts aimed at scoring cheap political gains. It is disheartening to imagine that a Minister whose responsibility it is to resolve the crisis can overnight turn round to lead in this ignoble enterprise of distorting facts and misleading Nigerians. The disdain with

which the Minister of Education handled questions about the ongoing ASUU strike at his distasteful Press Conference on Thursday, 18th August, 2022 lends credence to the widespread suspicion that the current Government never believed in saving public universities from the misfortunes that have befallen Nigeria's public primary and secondary schools.



Adamu Adamu

6. NEC noted with delight that, in defence of the integrity of the process leading to the agreement reached with government, the Briggs Committee has, in a well-publicized newspaper advertorial, confirmed that all the proposals and recommendations it made to ASUU were properly discussed and cleared with their Principal. The Committee also confirmed that throughout the renegotiation process, all the relevant government agencies, including National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission, Budget and Finance and Federal Character Commission (FCC), were in attendance. In addition, the paid advert by the Briggs-led Government Team equally showed that the figure of N1.1 Trillion quoted by the Minister of Labour and Employment, Dr Chris Ngige, and his Minister of State, Festus Keyamo, and some other government officials as amount needed to implement the salary increase, came from some imaginative blues and was no way close to reality. We commend members of Nimi Briggs-led Team for their unprecedented act of courage. By this singular act, the Team has put the lie to official propaganda against ASUU and the entire renegotiation process. May this race of Nigerians multiply!

7. NEC observed with

displeasure that some mischievous Vice-Chancellors and Chairpersons of Governing Councils of State Universities have evolved disingenuous underhand tactics to undermine the current ASUU struggle in their various Universities. ASUU struggles are to save Nigerian public universities irrespective of ownership - Federal or State. The Union views with all seriousness the fact that the sanctimonious behaviour of these university administrators and managers does not stop them from accessing yearly grants of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) which ASUU struggles of the 1980s and 1990s brought to life. Neither did their holier-than-thou attitude keep these invidious individuals from jumping into the next flight to come for project defence each time ASUU struggles had translated into some handsome funds for the revitalization of their universities (hostels, laboratories, workshops, lecture theatres, etc.). ASUU shall use all legitimate means at its disposal to protect and defend the interests of our members in public universities who may be victimised on the account of the ongoing struggles.

8. ASUU NEC noted with pains, its concerns for Nigerian students who are also our wards and foster children and

condemned Government's seeming indifference to their plights. The Union empathizes with the students, their parents, as well as other stakeholders (including our colleagues who are undertaking their higher degrees) in the universities. ASUU reaffirms its belief in the sanctity of a stable academic system. Were it within our control, our universities would never have been shut for one day! However, ASUU was forced into taking this painful decision to prevent members of the Nigerian ruling class and their foreign collaborators from further destroying whatever is left of our public universities. We are all victims. We need the understanding, solidarity and sacrifices of all to ensure that every qualified Nigerian youth who

cannot afford the cost of private university education or foreign studies has unhindered access to quality university education. ASUU strikes are aimed at saving public education, and ensuring that Governments (Federal and State) use our common patrimony to support quality public university education. This is our collective obligation.

9. NEC acknowledged with appreciation past and current efforts by eminent Nigerians and groups to mediate in the lingering crisis. Our Union remains open to reasonable engagements we have always done. However, ASUU remains focused on the full implementation of the 23rd December, 2020 Memorandum of Action for quick restoration of industrial harmony in Nigeria's public universities.

10. In view of the foregoing, and following extensive deliberations on Government's response to the resolution of 14th February, 2022 so far, NEC concluded that the demands of the Union had not been satisfactorily addressed. Consequently, NEC resolved to transmute the roll-over strike to a comprehensive, total and indefinite strike action beginning from 12.01a.m. on Monday, 29th August, 2022.

Thank you.

Emmanuel Osodeke  
President of ASUU.  
29th August, 2022

## Alumni body holds Emore Grammar School, Oleh golden jubilee celebration

Emore Grammar School, Oleh Old Students Association (OSA) holds the institution's Golden Jubilee Celebration September 7-11, 2023 on its premises at the headquarters of Isoko South Local Government Area, Delta State.

Governor Ifeanyi Okowa is the special guest of honour while Prof. Patrick Muo-

boghare is chairman of the event.

According to OSA President Emmanuel Egbure, the Odilogbo of Oleh Kingdom, His Royal Majesty Anthony William O. Ovrawah (JP) Omogha 1, is the Father of the Day; Prof. Oghenekaro Ogbinaka is the Keynote Speaker and High Chief Henry Ojogho is

the the special guest.

Founders Day is among highlights of events which include visits to the council chairman, Oleh Kingdom monarch and an orphanage as well as establishment of an endowment fund, presentation of a hall, lecture, election of executives, awards, novelty match, gala night and thanksgiving service.



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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	
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02	
9 x 2	112,183.69	120,597.47	7 x 4	158,608.73	170,504.38	7 x 4	145,965.10	156,912.48	14.5 x 2	124,915.92	134,284.61	
9 x 3	168,358.90	180,985.39	7 x 5	198,260.25	213,129.77	7 x 5	182,500.19	196,187.71	5 x 3	56,804.77	61,065.13	
10 x 3	187,065.45	201,095.35	8 x 2	90,633.42	97,430.92	8 x 2	73,399.58	78,904.54	6 x 3	68,170.86	73,283.67	
14.5 x 2	260,395.00	279,924.62	8 x 3	135,950.22	146,146.48	8 x 3	125,871.78	134,674.05	7 x 3	79,526.68	85,491.18	
8 x 4	199,536.48	214,501.71	8 x 4	181,266.93	194,841.95	8 x 4	167,043.40	179,022.80	8 x 3	103,375.58	111,130.80	
9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	26,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97	9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86	9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11	7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93	
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86	10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21	10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02	8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40	
11 x 5	493,852.78	530,891.74	10 x 4	226,258.00	243,176.28	10 x 4	208,808.58	224,469.23	9 x 6	278,649.91	299,548.66	
9 x 6	484,873.39	521,239.16	10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16	10 x 5	325,815.11	349,966.25	11 x 5	295,636.20	317,808.91	
10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53	10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42	10 x 6	390,978.13	420,320.48	11 x 6	340,573.10	340,466.08	
11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89	
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5	11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24	11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19	FP14.5 X 6	379,943.00	408,438.72	
FP 14.5 x 6	560,500.00	602,537.50	14.5 X 2	197,128.09	211,912.70	14.5 x 2	151,178.45	162,516.84				
			14.5 X 4	394,256.19	423,825.40	14.5 x 4	362,827.71	390,039.79				
			14.5 X 5	472,286.06	507,707.52	HP7.25 X 6	246,131.63	264,591.50				
			HP7.25 X 6	269,191.05	289,380.38	14.5 X 5	431,525.39	463,889.79				
			FP 14.5 X 6	460,275.00	594,225.62	FP14.5 X 5	423,373.39	455,126.39				
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Earpiece Front Page 3x2	593,750.00	638,281.25	Wrap around 1 Front Strip 1 Back Strip 4 Full Page Pull Out	25,650,000.00	27,573,750.00
Earpiece Back Page 2x2	409,687.50	440,414.06	4x6 Front Page	5,187,000.00	5,576,025.00
Earpiece Back Page 3x2	628,187.50	675,301.56	6x6 Front Page	6,982,500.00	7,506,187.50
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Centre Spread (HP)	1,017,063.80	1,093,343.59	Back Page 10x6	5,320,000.00	5,782,750.00
Double Spread (HP)	741,000.00	796,575.00	ROP 2x12	771,400.00	829,255.00
Page 2 (Full Page)	1,420,250.00	1,526,768.75	ROP (Strip) 2x6 Colour	266,000.00	285,950.00
Page 3 (Full Page)	1,311,000.00	1,409,325.00	ROP (Strip) 2.6 (B/W)	717,000.00	768,825.00
Page 4 (Full Page)	1,187,500.00	1,276,562.50	3x6 Front Page	1,140,000.00	1,225,500.00
Page 5 (Full Page)	1,064,000.00	1,143,800.00	2x6 Under Mast Head	3,990,000.00	4,289,250.00
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# NLNG restates commitment to local content

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

The Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Limited has restated its commitment to ensuring that Nigerians benefit maximally from its operations by going beyond mere compliance with Nigerian Content targets as specified in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act (NOGICD) 2010.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NLNG, Philip Mshelbila, stated this when he led a delegation on a visit to the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Simbi Wabote in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital.

The NLNG's delegation included Deputy Managing Director, Olalekan

Ogunleye; General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development, Andy Odeh; General Manager, Human Resources, Terhemba

Makeri; Manager, Contracts and Procurement Management, Abdul Umar;

Manager, Nigerian Content Development, Dagogo Buowari and Manager, Community Development, Charles Epelle, among others.

Mshelbila said the NLNG considers Nigerian Content a core part of its strategy in line with its corporate vision of being 'a globally competitive LNG company helping to build a better Nigeria.'

He commended the NCDMB for its cordial relationship with the company, which focuses on joint value creation, citing the unique Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the NLNG and NCDMB as a classic example of the board enabling business.

He also commended the Board for the collaboration leading to the smooth take-off of the Train 7 project, which recently recorded seven million safe man-hours without any incident of lost-time injury.

The NLNG boss reiterates



Philip Mshelbila

the commitment of NLNG to 100 per cent in-country supply of its Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) volumes, stressing that within the context of the global energy transition, support of regulators like the NCDMB would be critical in

ensuring access, availability and affordability of energy for domestic consumption.

He proposed the formation of an NLNG-NCDMB Technical Working Group, which would meet periodically to discuss and resolve such

strategic and other operational issues.

Responding, Wabote congratulated NLNG on the smooth and successful leadership transition, while maintaining national pride of being led by 100 per cent senior management team of Nigerians.

He assured that the regulator would continue to work with NLNG to deliver on its Nigerian Content commitments in its Train 7 Project to positively impact local manufacturing capacity and employment levels in the country. He encouraged the company to begin preparations for Train 8 and also endorsed the idea of an exchange programme of employees of both organisations to deepen the knowledge of their inner workings for better partnership and business efficiency.

He said the Board would continue to adhere to its Business-to-Business Service Level Agreement (SLA), as it remained the first in the industry and had set a standard for shortening the contracting cycle, improving compliance with the NOGICD Act and urged the NLNG to key into NCDMB's ongoing efforts to expand LPG distribution and storage across the country.

## Pantami assures of 95% digital literacy by 2030

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Prof. Isa Ali Pantami, at the weekend, in Gombe State said Nigeria's March towards attaining 95 per cent digital literacy in 2030, as contained in the National Digital Economy Policy, Strategy (NDESP) 2020-2030 has become more promising than ever

Pantami, who administered the graduation of participants at a two-week digital job creation training for the North East zone in Gombe State, which was facilitated by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), said: "We train citizens on digital skills because they are no longer considered a luxury, but necessity required in any business. In this age and time, if anyone desires to be successful he must acquire digital skills."

He stressed that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was not just an independent sector, but the key enabler of all sectors of the economy, as almost every activity now depends on it, adding: "It enables opportunities in education in health, agriculture, security, defence, manufacturing, trade, investments and industry."

He, therefore, urged the participants to adopt innovation-driven enterprises and use the opportunity offered by the training they have received to improve their socio-economic status and make the country a better place to live in.

"We have to utilise ICT to make our country a better place.

We must use ICT even for our personal economic benefits, among other gains.

Therefore, we encourage you not to waste your time online, but rather use the knowledge acquired to make Nigeria a better place and derive other economic benefits from it."

Pantami also pointed out that a report of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on the performance of each sector of the economy for which ICT contributed 18.44 per cent, as heartwarming, adding that it speaks to the prospects of the industry meeting expectations of its policies.

"So, by implication, we set records last year and we surpassed that record in the second quarter of 2022 without involving the digital services. Only the ICT sector contributed 18.44 per cent, which can be attributed to the policies we have introduced in the sector," he stated.

He noted that the training, which had taken place in nine other states, including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, will be conducted in other geopolitical zones of the country.

The digital job creation training is a two-week programme targeted at youths, who desire to develop and enhance their ICT skills to promote and engender growth in the yet untapped and commercially viable sector globally.

Each participant at the training received starter packs comprising laptops with accessories, Wifi Internet modems with three month-data subscription and some cash.

## Figures of crude oil theft inflated, says naval chief

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, has declared that there has been a significant misinformation in the determination of how much Nigeria is losing to crude oil theft, because losses due to other factors are often lumped together as oil theft. Gambo, who spoke on a Channels Television programme monitored in Lagos, noted that the losses are then blamed on security agencies, maintaining that Nigerians needed to understand and properly situate the difference between oil theft and oil losses.

"While oil theft is siphoning oil from vandalised pipes into barges, oil losses occur when there are visible production issues, especially during shutting down of production and force majeure," as the

Federal Government does not earn the desired revenue.

"Losses also occur from metering errors on operating platforms as read, but the volume of crude oil shot-ins from non-production is often

added to them as oil losses, which should not be," he explained.

Citing earlier reports that between 200,000 barrels of crude oil were being stolen daily in Nigeria, Gambo said: "About 100,000 barrels of crude oil is the equivalent of 15.3 million litres of crude oil that require a five-ton barge and 3,166 trips to convey such volume to a mother vessel within a day. Most of the claims are definitely outrageous and unrealistic."

He insisted even if there were enough barges to do so, it is very unlikely given the increased presence of security forces in the creeks and estuaries, as well as the substring operations specifically targeted at the type of criminal activity.

The Trumpet recalled that the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited recently announced that Nigeria was losing \$1.9 billion to oil theft monthly, while International Oil Company (IOCs) operating in Nigeria have continuously expressed their frustration over the escalating oil losses in the Niger Delta

region due to the activities of oil thieves.

While the Federal Government, through the Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, announced that the government would soon unveil the identity of those behind the oil theft in Nigeria that had not happened as of the time of going to press.



Awwal Gambo



# GDP of 10 Nigerian states bigger than some African countries, says Osinbajo

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo has revealed that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of some 10 Nigerian states was bigger than that of some

African countries and as such, Nigeria should not be compared with smaller African countries in terms of economic prosperity.

In a statement issued by

## Nigeria spends \$3.49 billion on importation of fish, eggs, other items

Data released from the International Trade Centre (ITC) indicated that Nigeria imported eggs, fish, milk, dairy and fish products with \$3.49 billion in the last two years.

A statement issued by the ITC disclosed that fish products worth \$2.14 billion were imported into the country, while dairy valued at \$1.35 billion were brought into the country within the period under review.

It revealed that the items included frozen fish, meat, fresh chilled or frozen or dried, salted or smoked fish, flour meals, pellets of fish, crustacean, fresh, chilled, frozen, dried, salted or even smoked flour meals and pellets or molasses, were imported.

"Dairy products, including milk and cream, butter milk and other fermented or acidified milk and cream, products comprising natural milk constituents whether or not containing added sugar or other sweetening items, fats and oils derived from milk and dairy spreads," were also imported.

"Others are cheese and cured birds, eggs in shells whether fresh, preserved or cooked, bird eggs without shell and egg yoke, fresh, dried, cooked by steaming or boiling in water molded frozen or otherwise preserved, natural honey, turtle eggs, bird nests and other edible products of animal origin," the statement added.

This is in spite of stakeholders' acknowledgement that the continued importation of fish and dairy products was depleting the nation's foreign reserves and ability of local farmers to sell their products within the country.

Laolu Akande, media aide to the Vice President, and made available to journalists on Monday, indicated that Osinbajo spoke when a group from Harvard Business School visited him at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

"First there is the need to appreciate the size of the country, which is crucial to understanding the issues. For instance, Borno State is about the size of the United Kingdom (UK), plus Sweden or Denmark.

"And so, when they talk about the economy, we are often compared with smaller African countries, but there are 10 states in Nigeria that have bigger GDPs than those countries, which makes the country a huge target market," he said.

He added that integrity,

transparency and social justice were important to him, adding that he came into government with those values, adding: "Merely looking at the values, there is a great deal of unanimity about the right thing to do. The question is whether or not you will do those things, or whether you are motivated enough to do them or whether you are completed to do them or not.

"Spirituality helps in the sense that it enables you to decide what to do and what not to do, especially where institutions are not strong enough to restrain people from behaving in a particular fixated way.

"I came into government with values about what I think is important, especially around transparency, social justice and justice, among others. You are

almost always a product of the values you believe in.

Fortunately, a lot of the values cut across the different faiths. They are not necessarily restricted to a religion or one faith," he stressed.

He added that in societies that are more developed institutionally, one does not need to be told that he should not do certain things because people who flout the laws end up in jail.

"If one commits an offence, there is the likelihood that he could be detected and the process will go through and the culprit will end up being punished. I talk about corruption and all that, but where institutions remain weak, some people have the tendency of not doing the right things," Osinbajo said.



Vice President Yemi Osinbajo

# NIS cautions against patronising touts

## • Urges direct dealings with immigration officers

Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has cautioned Nigerians against patronising touts and urged those wishing to process their passports and other travel documents to deal with only certified immigration officers to avoid being swindled.

Comptroller of the Seme Command of NIS, Mike Chukwemeka Dike, gave the charge while speaking with journalists. He commended the Acting Comptroller General, Isa Jere Idris for the approval, posting and redeployment of no fewer than 69 senior officers to various zones and commands across the country.

He urged the deployed officers to continue to avail the service of their rich experience in their new commands and formations to improve service delivery and enhance national security.

Dike, who also benefited from the recent posting from the Border Patrol Command Lagos to the Seme Command, said members of the society should stop patronising touts and relate directly with immigration officers to ensure efficient service delivery.

According to Dike the Comptroller General of immigration has assured international

travelers using the area of hitch-free movement across the border post, maintaining that the mandate was in line with the Comptroller General's three-point agenda, part of which is to ensure hitch-free movement of travelers in and out of Nigeria.

He, however, warned that while the command was determined to make things easy for travelers in the course of their businesses, it would not compromise on perfect documentation, insisting that travelers should always transact their businesses with officers of the command rather than dealing with touts, who usually lurk around the NIS offices.

"I assure travelers using the Seme Border of free movement in and out of the country. This is why they should be dealing with our officers rather than patronising touts," he said, stressing that in terms of movement of people across the border, the NIS remained the lead agency, whose personnel were well trained to handle people on transit.

"That was why the system ensured that immigration officers should first receive visitors on arrival and be the last to see them off on departure. It was this aspect of the service's job that could encourage or jeopardise the inflow of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) into the country. "For an investor, who is bringing in his money into the country and who experiences poor

treatment would never come again. When such happens, the country loses massively. That is why our role is critical not only for security, but also for the economic development of the country," he stated.

Dike disclosed that the Comptroller General was making efforts to ensure that e-passports come into existence in a bid to achieve seamless operations, adding that border security remained a priority with the intention of eliminating smuggling of small arms into the country.

He, therefore, charged the media to join hands with the service to achieve the objectives for which it was set and solicited the cooperation of the media and journalists' understanding, while urging them to avail the command of valuable information that would facilitate its job.

He stressed that the role of journalists in national development could not be over-emphasised, adding that they were immigration officers by default because of their job, which was similar to that of the service.

On his part, Comptroller Shittu Olajire Fatai, responsible for Border Patrol Command Lagos, expressed the desire for continued cordial relationship with the media and urged journalists to verify their facts and figures before publication and that the NIS remained the gatekeeper of the country's entry points.



Acting Comptroller General, Isa Jere Idris

## CitiTrust registers N50b CP in FMDQ Exchange market

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

FMDQ has announced the registration of CitiTrust Holdings Plc's N50 billion Commercial Paper (CP) programme in its platform.

It explained that the successful registration of the CP programme on the exchange in August 2022, following approval of the Board Listings and Markets Committee, affirmed the highly efficient time-to-market and uniquely tailored securities admission service offered by the FMDQ Exchange.

"This significant milestone for CitiTrust Holdings PLC (CitiTrust Holdings or the Company), a leading Pan-African financial and investment conglomerate in Nigeria, has seen it join other corporate institutions in various sectors of the economy, enjoying the benefits of visibility, transparency and liquidity for issuers and issues that come with the FMDQ Exchange Quotations Service.

"Registration of the CP programme, which is sponsored by Boston Advisory Limited-a Registration Member (Quotations) of the Exchange-strategically positions CitiTrust Holdings to raise short-term finance easily and quickly from the Nigerian debt markets," FMDQ stated.

"By the registration of its CP programme and quotation of subsequent CPs from the programme on the FMDQ Exchange, the company will leverage exceptional benefits, including, but are not limited to unrivalled and efficient platform for access to capital, enhanced investor confidence, continuous disclosure of information to protect investors' interest, effective price formation and increased global visibility," it added.

# Anchor Insurance grows gross premium

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

Anchor Insurance Company Limited has recorded a gross written premium of N10.4 billion as against the N6.8 billion achieved in 2020, representing a 54.43 per cent performance in 2021 over its 2020 financial results.

Chairman of the company, Dr. Elijah Akpan, who disclosed this at the company's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Lagos, stated that 2021 was generally acknowledged as a year of recovery for businesses from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Akpan said: "Despite the challenges businesses faced while trying to regain their full feet, we came out of the year with a gross written premium of N10.4 billion as against the N6.8 billion achieved in 2020, indicating a 54.43 per cent performance over the 2020 results. Our Profit Before Tax (PBT) stood at N1.02b from N336.55m recorded in 2020, representing a 203.13 per cent increase.

"Our Profit After Tax (PAT) rose to N867.55 million compared to N436.49 million in 2020, show-

ing a 98.75 per cent growth, while assets grew from N13.54 billion in 2020 to N15.49 billion in 2021, indicating a 14.33 per cent rise. Similarly, the shareholders' funds increased by 13.76 per cent from N5.67 billion in 2020 to N6.45 billion in 2021."

Also speaking, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the company, Ebose Augustine, said regular claims payment has always set the company apart from others, adding: "We held on to our regular claims payment policy, which has continued to set us apart from the competition. We paid N997.42 million as claims to genuine affected policyholders as against the N1.29 billion response in 2020.

"This shows a 22.62 per cent drop in claims paid. This positive claims management was a direct result of improvement the Claims Team continued to make. Its thorough investigations and assessments have saved the company severally from incurring fraudulent claims.

"We would have surpassed the income generated if premiums for most businesses, mainly in the



Ebose Augustine

public and financial sectors we had concluded were paid."

On dividend payment, Augustine noted that in keeping with the company's policy to always

delight the shareholders, it paid 4.5k dividend per share to the owners of the business for the 2021 financial year as against the 40k it paid in 2020, adding: "The Board assured the shareholders it would keep the trend increasing proposed figure for dividend as the profit margin continues to gain such yearly momentum."

On future outlook, Augustine stated: Although the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has suspended its planned recapitalisation, we will pursue the recapitalisation of our company to its conclusion, knowing the advantages for the company when achieved.

"We will look at creating more people-oriented retail products as further multiple premium generation channels. We value our employees for their dedication and ownership spirit in the discharge of their duties.

"They are responsible for the good report the company achieves each year. The Board will work closely with the management to ensure that appropriate welfare rewards are extended to all deserving employees of the company."

## STI reiterates commitment to stakeholders' satisfaction

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

Management of Sovereign Trust Insurance Plc has restated its commitment to enhance service delivery to its customers while creating exceptional value for shareholders.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the company, Olaotan Soyinka, disclosed this while speaking with journalists in Lagos recently, noting that Sovereign Trust remains committed to innovative products and services that will improve the life of customers even as it

has created an enhanced third party motor insurance policy for the insuring public.

Soyinka, who spoke through the Deputy General Manager, Sales and Corporate Communications, Segun Bankole, said: "Our mission is to enhance the everyday life of our customers through innovative insurance and financial services while creating exceptional value for our shareholders.

"As an organisation, we have been driven by our vision and mission and that attests to the fact that we are the underwriters of some of the profitable oil and

gas businesses in the country.

"In terms of innovation, we have Enhanced Third Party Motor Insurance. We thought of the usual third party whereby when a claim occurs; it is only the third party that gets the benefit of having his or her vehicle repaired.

"But with our enhanced third party, with a premium of N7,500 per annum, the third party is insured in case of any damage amounting to N1million and the insured has a limit of liability up to N500,000."

According to Soyinka, the reason for the enhanced third

party motor cover is to protect customers, adding that the policy makes economic sense in the face of the country's harsh business environment.

"We lost clients who would rather not continue with their insurance due to the prevailing economic situation in the country. So, we deemed it fit that instead of losing clients, we should be able to keep them.

So, customers will still feel that they have insurance. Although it is not a comprehensive policy, but at least, the customer is still covered."

## Universal Insurance grosses N4.1b premium income in H1 2022

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

Universal Insurance Plc has recorded a total premium income of N 4.1 billion in the first half of 2022 ended June 30, 2022, which it said is above what it achieved in 2021.

The company's premium income at the end of 2021 stood at N3.4 billion; while N459 million was paid as claims, just as its financial report for second half of 2022 showed a Profit After Tax (PAT) of N796 million and payment of N348 million claims.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Universal Insurance Plc, Dr. Benedict Ujoatuonu, made the disclosure, while speaking at the inauguration of the new executive of the National Association of Insurance and Pensions Correspondents (NAIPCO) in Lagos.

Ujoatuonu, who was represented by the Company Secretary and Head of Corporate Communications Department, Chinedu Onyilimba, said the performance was achieved due to aggressive moves in driving its business development, especially

by providing special tailor-made products in retail operations.

"Our aggressive deployment of technology, especially in driving our retail operations as well as



Benedict Ujoatuonu

our business expansion which led to opening of new branches, enlargement of our marketing units, which also led to the engagement of new staff made this possible," he stated.

He said the company was further poised to drive, achieve and surpass its N6.5 billion target for 2022 in spite of the harsh economic environment.

Ujoatuonu said the company, will as part of its strategy, continue business expansion to meet its target of making its products and services available to its prospective customers across the country, noting that the firm was expanding its investments and leveraging technology to drive its retail operations.

"We are also expanding our investments in and deploying technology, especially in our retail operations, this will help us make our numerous tailor-made products accessible to members of the insuring public," he said.

Ujoatuonu pledged the company's commitment to continue to collaborate with NAIPCO to advance a robust insurance and pension industry in the country.

## At 19, Globacom underlines commitment to excellent service delivery

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

Telecommunications giant, Globacom has pledged enhanced services as it marks its 19th year of operations.

In a statement issued by its Deputy Chief Operating Officer (DCOO), Bisi Koleosho, in commemoration of its anniversary, the company commended its subscribers and Nigerians in general for their unflinching support since it rolled out on August 29, 2003.

It also expressed commitment to the provision of world-class communications and digital services, which it said, was in line with its promise at the launch to build a robust communications and technology infrastructure that would consistently deliver value to its esteemed customers.

"As we celebrate our achievements these past 19 years, we wish to thank our subscribers for keeping faith with us. We assure them that Globacom will remain a catalyst for socio-economic empowerment, not only in Nigeria, but also in Africa," Koleosho said, adding that the company is constantly investing massively in new technologies to exceed customer expectations.

Koleosho revealed that Globacom has been carrying out an aggressive roll-out of network equipment and upgrade of its sites to 4G-LTE across the country in order to continue to

offer high speed and quality data experience to its over 56 million subscribers.

He said: "The process covers the entire scope of telecoms infrastructure upgrade from the core network to access network, transmission and IP network, fiber network, metro access and backbone infrastructure.

"It also involves rollout of new sites to increase network coverage in areas that need improvement and ease off already congested areas.

This ultimately improves customers' network experience and satisfaction in terms of service delivery, network quality and coverage."

Globacom has equally impacted heavily on international telecoms operations with Glo Gateway, the International Wholesale Voice and Data Exchange and Trading Business Unit of Globacom. It is the first operator in Africa to launch gateway switches outside the continent to carry international voice and data traffic. Glo 1, the first privately owned submarine cable, has also addressed the bandwidth requirements of the West African sub-region and led to crashing of data tariffs.

The company's massive investments in digital technology, its value-added services, far-reaching and unique marketing initiatives have given it a pride of place, as the network of choice for millions of telephone users since inception.

E-Features

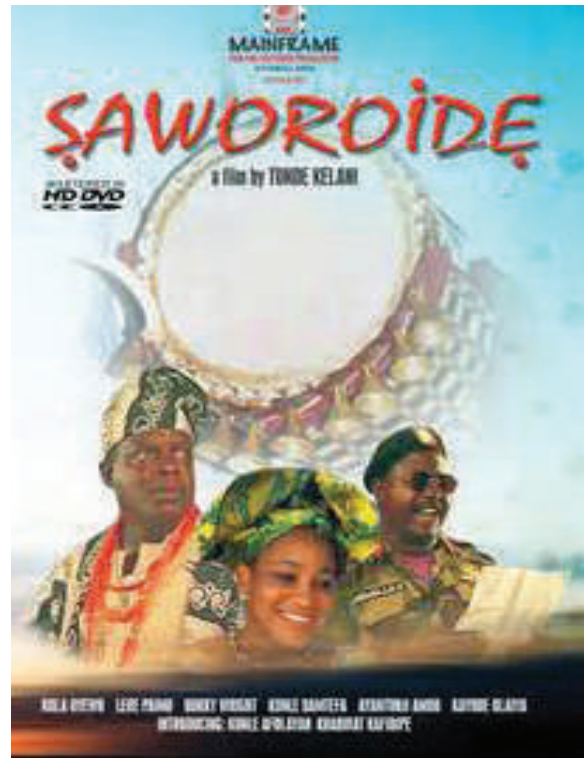
# Panning through time: Yoruba folkloric films

This week, we will go back in time. To the beginning of Yoruba films. Nollywood is doing tremendously well, gaining international recognition and meeting first world standards in movie production. You can't talk of Yoruba folklore, wrongly called "folkloric", without talking about the father of contemporary Yoruba theatre". Oloye Hubert Adedeji Ogunde.

Ogunde was a Nigerian actor, playwright, theatre manager, and musician who founded the Ogunde Theatre Party, the first contemporary professional theatrical company in Nigeria. He has been described as the father of Nigerian theatre. In his career on stage, he wrote more than 50 plays, most of which incorporate dramatic action, dance and music with a story reflecting the political and social realities of the period. His first production was a church-financed play called The Garden of Eden that premiered at Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos, in 1944. Its success encouraged Ogunde to produce more plays and he soon left his job with the police force for a career in theatre. In the 1940s, he released some plays with political commentaries: The Tiger's Empire, Strike and Hunger and Bread and Bullet in 1950. During the 1950s, he toured various Nigerian cities with his travelling troupe. In 1964, he released Yoruba Ronu, a play that generated controversy and earned him the wrath of Akintola, premier of the Western Region. In the late 1970s, Ogunde was spurred by the success of Ija Ominira and Ajani Ogun, two pioneer Yoruba feature-length films, to co-produce his first celluloid film, Aiyé, in 1980. He released three more feature-length films influenced by Yoruba mysticism.

Ogunde distinguished his group by using promotion methods such as advertisements and posters and changing the round stage used by alarinjo performers to one with a proscenium. In addition, he introduced dramatic action and realism into his plays depending on the audience for commercial support. By these acts Ogunde began the rise of modern professional theatre in Nigeria, a movement in which he remains the father figure. After leaving his job as a police constable, Ogunde moved away from his earlier focus on religious themes and started writing plays that were nationalistic or anti-colonial in outlook, a trend in Lagos during the furious forties. During this period, many of his early movies were co-directed by G. B. Kuyinu.

In early 1945, he produced Worse than Crime, a political play infused with Yoruba dance and ancient folk songs and like most of his early plays, it was premiered at Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos. Later in that year, he wrote The Black Forest and Journey to Heaven, two Yoruba operas that also improved on his use of traditional Yoruba folklore but with the latter having a strong Christian influence. In November 1945, he wrote a pro-labour play, Strike and Hunger motivated by the events of a general strike by labour unions led by Michael Imoudu. In 1946 he wrote and produced Tiger's Empire. Premiered on 4 March 1946, Tiger's Empire was produced by The African Music Research Party and featured Ogunde, Beatrice Oyede and Abike Taiwo. The advertisement for the play was the result of Ogunde's call for "paid actresses". It marked the first time in Yoruba theatre that women were billed



to appear in a play as professional artists in Light in their own right. Tiger's Empire was an attack on colonial rule. He followed Tiger's Empire with Darkness and Light, a play he vaguely remembers.

Later in 1946, he produced Devil's Money, an African story about a man who entered a contract with an evil spirit so as to get rich. The folk opera was successful with a set of twenty-four actors donning costumes. After the death of Herbert Macaulay, he wrote the opera Herbert Macaulay, to commemorate the life of the nationalist who died in 1946. He then released another political themed play, Towards Liberty in 1947. Before 1948, Ogunde plays were staged in Lagos and occasionally in Abeokuta, both his growing popularity in other Western Nigeria provinces made him think about traveling to other cities with his theatre troupe. In 1948, he went on a tour major Western Nigerian cities with his group, including stops at Abeokuta, Ibadan, Oyo, Ede and Ogbomosho. When he took his tour to the north, he had two major encounters with the police due to the political context of Worse than Crime and Tiger's Empire. His first tour outside Nigeria was not well received by the Ghanaian audience largely because they did not understand the Yoruba language and Ogunde was ignorant about the tastes of the audience.

Ogunde wrote his first satire, Human Parasites, about the craze for Aso ebi, a social culture which encourages both men and women to buy the most expensive materials for social gatherings. "The custom has lent itself to much abuse in that the occasions for celebrating marriages of funerals occur so often that one may be asked by friends to buy 'Aso Ebi' more than ten times a year". Human Parasites lampooned Lagos socialites but many of them were Ogunde's patrons.[13] Around the time, he wrote Human Parasites, he changed the name of his troupe to Ogunde Theatre Party from the previous name of African Music Research Party. Ogunde's earliest dramas were folk operas whereby the actors on stage sang their lines with limited dialogue.

In 1947, Ogunde and Adesuwa, his wife and

co-star traveled to London to make contacts with the promotion of his shows in England. The talks were not fruitful but in London, they had the opportunity to take waltz and tap dance classes. In his later operas, he syncretized the waltz with the traditional Batakoto dance and tap dance with traditional Yoruba Epa dance.

At the inauguration of the complete musical works of the late theatre impresario, which held at the June 12 Cultural Centre, Abeokuta, the personalities submitted that the messages of the late Ogunde still held much meaning to the society, especially the Yoruba race 20 years after his death.

In attendance was renowned Yoruba scholar, Late Chief Adebayo Faleti who die who on July 23, 2017. The Yoruba race and Nigeria at large lost one of its finest minds, one of its brightest sons and perhaps the best of its philosophers. Other notable personalities to remember in the industry is Tunde Kelani who was responsible for the circulation of Zimbabwean movies in Nigeria while John Ribber, his associate distributed "Thunderbolt" and "Saworoide".

Ola Balogun is one to remember. He is a Nigerian filmmaker and scriptwriter. He also ventured into the Nigerian music industry in 2001. Balogun, who has been making films for more than three decades, is part of the first generation of Nigerian filmmakers

Ajani Ogun, Balogun's first indigenous Yoruba-language film is a musical released in celluloid form in 1975. The film had Ade Love in the lead role, while the majority of the crew came from Duro Ladipo's travelling theatre troupe. Balogun reached a wider audience with Ajani Ogun and the success of the film led to an increase in the adoption of stage plays performed by Yoruba traveling theatres into feature-length movies. After the success of Ajani Ogun, his next project was Musik Man, a movie produced in pidgin and English so as to reach a wider audience. However, the film was not financially successful.

Balogun bounced back with Ija Ominira, an adaptation of Adebayo Faleti's novel, Omo Olokun Esin, which was being performed

on stage by a theatre troupe. The movie was produced in collaboration with Ade Love, his lead actor in Ajani Ogun; Ade Love was also the lead actor in Ija Ominira. There were filming difficulties between Balogun and Ade Love on the set of Ija Ominira, both men had minor disagreements about the direction of the movie. Balogun followed Ade Love's Ija Ominira with A Deusa Negra also known as Black Goddess, which he both wrote and directed; the project was a Nigerian-Brazilian collaboration distributed by Embrafilme of Brazil. A Brazilian producer had seen some of Balogun's previous works and asked him to shoot a new movie in Brazil. Despite some tensions and financial challenges, he completed the film in 1978.

Yoruba Films have managed to remain relevant, improving on production and content. New acts and talented technical gurus also developed interest in the industry due to the success of the past. Now we know Kunle Afolayan, a renowned cinematographer who has taken filming to another level. He recently produced "Banuso". A creative work available online for download. Online media became and remained has remained a relevant tool in the marketing and distribution aspect of the industry's output. Popular Actress, Funke Akindele, most popular for her lead role in "Jenifa", is one brilliant innovator who used mobile standards for her movie series "Jennifer's Diary" when she discovered it was mostly downloaded on portable devices. She also produces with Quality cameras that online platforms conform with.

The Yoruba movie industry, wrongly called Yoruba-Nollywood has survived different generations of actors and still managed to remain relevant in the country's entertainment sector. This achievement cannot be unconnected to the activities of the practitioners, who have kept up with the pace despite the many challenges. We are familiar with actors like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Dayo Ade, Femi Adebayo, Odunlade Adekola, Muiyiwa Ademola, Funsho Adeolu, Kareem Adepoju, Sikiru Adesina, Adeyemi Afolayan, Gabriel Afolayan, Legendary Kunle Afolayan to mention a few.

## Fashion & Style

# Six sweaters styles to rock in rainy season



By OMONIYI ALLI

I remember growing up how much I used to hate wearing any type of sweater that my mom used to lay out for me. I felt it made me look like a tiny bug about to explode. But my moms bless her, always sang to me that 'better safe than sorry', so dress up kid, and sweat your heart out. So you get why for quite some time, I disliked sweaters of any kind. Up until I grew up (well, that's debatable), and found myself embracing their look and utility. Also I think sweaters have become a major look for the past years. Now I have officially signed onto the Sweater club.

Below are 6 amazing sweater types that you can wear this rainy season:

### Oversized sweaters.

The bigger the better you know. Who ever said size does not matter, clearly never wore or seen a sophisticated boho-chic oversized sweater paired with anything, especially skinny pants, jeans, OR miniskirts.

### Metallic sweaters

Are quite the deal this season, which is perfect because they can go from office hours to late night dinners or even cocktails? They look so fabulous, yet have a certain effortlessness to them, sort of like saying 'I just threw this on and here I am.' Silver & gold styles are the best

### Turtleneck sweaters

The 70s pals! Or just a great solution to hide from the cold. From loose to skin tight, to roll or messy turtlenecks they're all in, whether on oversized or tight sweaters, they do the style trick. To get that gorgeous look everyone is buzzing about these days, tuck your hair in

### Chunky sweaters

Chunky Sweaters are the best fashion invention ever. For freezing temperatures. For fat days. And being in right now makes them okay not just for weekends or mountain trips, but for everyday no matter the occasion. A little half tuck always gives a bit of chicness to the look and waist definition.

### Pastels or powdered sweaters

Crazy prints and funky patterns step aside, it's time for monochromatic style, for muted colours, for pastels and dainty hues to rule this autumn. Whites, blues, pinks, and tons of greys are invading the streets and the shops. I call it the Sanguine kind of sweater. Besides, they carry a bit more class and sophistication to them.

### One colour sweaters

Okay, so patterns and prints may not be so hot this fall that does not mean we can't wear them though. If you are looking for simplicity but beautiful one colour sweater is your pick.

Tourism

# Agemo Festival and Ijebu people

**A**gemo Festival is a masked or masquerade festival traditionally held in many Yoruba cities but more popularly linked with the Ijebu people of Ogun State. The festival and accompanying rituals are celebrated to honor the spirit deity Agemo, who is believed to be a protector of children and who safeguards Ijebus future through its blessing. The festival is linked with the traditional African religion, in particular, the practices of the Agemo cult and as such, issues like restriction of movement during certain periods of the festival do occur.

The festival is mostly celebrated during between the months of June and August, and historically coincided with the harvesting of maize by Ijebu farmers. The period of the festival takes seven days and the beginning period is fixed after a consultative meeting between the Awujale of Ijebu and the heads of the sixteen recognized or titled agemos also called Olofas. The festival was historically preceded by seven days of chants by the Oro cult and the beating of drums to 'Gbedu' music. Thereafter, sixteen agemo masquerades from different villages proceed to their shrine at



Imosan, via Ijebu-Ode on an annual pilgrimage. Each agemo carries items such as feathers and ram's horns on the head and are followed by some agemo followers. It is considered a taboo for a woman to see the agemo masquerade during their procession to Imosan. On their pilgrimage, the agemo masquerade stops to receive gifts and offer prayers to residents.

At Imosan, the masquerades receive additional gifts sent by the Awujale; they spend three days at the Agemo

shrine performing traditional religious rites and appeasement of the agemo deity. On their last day at Imosan, a traditional agemo ritual dance is performed this time; it can be witnessed by both men and women. The masquerades will then move to Ijebu-Ode to perform the final rites of the festival. The festival ends with the dance by the leader of the agemo, 'Tami Onire' before the Awujale and further public dances by the other agemos.

The agemo festival is an old ritual performance among the Ijebus, historically, the agemo priests were part of the intellectual life of Ijebu and over the years, conflicting ideas about how many titled agemos are recognized or how the rituals should be performed emerged. Though, many recognize 16 agemo titles, there exist more, while the Awujale's in modern times are either Muslims or Christians and doesn't stop them from fulfilling many historical roles.

## Go local with Banga soup

Nigerian Banga soup is a quick and delicious Niger-Delta style palm nut soup. It is very easy to make and packed full of flavor from the herbs and spices used in making it. You can have this soup from your kitchen to the table in 30 minutes, it is very similar to Ofe Akwu recipe (Ibo style) but they use different spices. Banga soup is popularly eaten with starch but I love mine with pounded yam or Eba.

**Ingredients**

- Palm fruit/banga extract
- Catfish or any preferred fresh fish
- Assorted meats of your choice
- Chopped pieces of stockfish (panla, okporoko)
- ½ cup fresh or smoked shrimps (optional)
- 1 tbsp ground dried crayfish or prawns ( crayfish preferably)
- 12 tbsp banga spice (you can buy a ready mix or simply make your own by blending ataiko and irugeje in a dry mill)
- 12 tbsp crushed obeletientien leaves or dried bitter leaves.
- 1 oburunbebe stick (optional)
- 2 scotch bonnet ( atarodo)
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 2 tbsp dried pepper (atagungun) this is optional if you're using rodo but i l prefer mine really hot.
- ½ cup periwinkles
- Spice cubes (preferably knorr)
- Salt to taste

**Method**

Clean all the proteins you plan to use and boil. If you're using stock-fish make sure you soak in hot water and salt and boil before further cooking.

If you have access to the palm fruit (banga) get the extract by; wash the banga thoroughly, boil for 30mins to soften, mash the banga, then wash with hot water to get the extract, finally, put the banga extract on the cooker. You can use the canned palm fruit (banga) if that's what you have access to

Place a large pan on medium heat, add banga and dilute with warm water double of the amount of palm fruit used. You can add any tough beef at this point, this will help soften it more and the flavor infuses as well

Stir well and bring to boil for about 20 minutes, until you see the palm

fruit extract bubbling and starting to thicken, and the oil floating on top of the soup. (Don't cover the pan with a lid at this point as it would boil over. Put a wooden spoon across the pot to stop this from happening)

Add blended scotch bonnet, assorted beef, periwinkle and cook for another 10-15 minutes

Add banga spice, oburunbebe stick, ground crayfish and cook for another 10 minutes. Add salt and seasoning. (You can dilute the soup with reserved stock if it is too thick).

Add fresh fish and shrimps to the soup, add the beletete leaves or bitter leaf and leave to cook on low heat for another 10-12 minutes.

Your soup is ready to be serve with starch, pounded yam, semolina, garri or fufu (preferably starch).





## Sports Minister unsatisfied with NFF, LMC, in football development

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

**M**inister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, is dissatisfied with the level of work done by the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) and League Management Company (LMC) to develop the nation's football architecture.

Dare said though they both organs tried putting in effort in certain areas, there persist several pressing issues bedeviling the football system of the nation.

The Sports Minister, who made the statement when he received a delegation of the Club Owners Association led by the chairman, Barr Isaac Danladi, in the Moshood Abiola National Stadium in Abuja, stressed that the Sports Ministry is mandated to provide direction in terms of policy and initiatives for sports development.



"We are aware of the efforts made by the NFF and the League Management Company (LMC) to address some of these challenges, but we are not satisfied with the efforts that have been made," Dare said.

"The problems, and the challenges, have been out there in the open, but we have not seen a commensurate effort and commitment to bring about a league that is virile, profitable, and that fits our reputation as a football-loving nation.

"As the Ministry that has the mandate to superintend

sports development and set a general direction, in terms of policy and initiatives for sports development of which football is major, we have passed our concerns to the necessary administrators, we have had time to sit with them, we've had an exchange of correspondence and we believe that concerted efforts can bring about the change," the Minister added.

Commending the Sports Minister for his accomplishment, despite being barely three years in office, Danladi pointed out the outstanding feat

recorded by Nigerian athletes in Oregon and Birmingham.

Recall that Tobi Amusan broke the 100m hurdles record in the World Athletics Championships in Oregon and went ahead along with other athletes to win the gold medals in the 4x400m and also 100mh events at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

However, Danladi was quick to exemplify the input of the Sports Minister, who during his stead at the helm of sports affairs in the country, Nigeria broke uncommon grounds.

## 3SC still on test run, says Ogunbote

Head coach Gbenga Ogunbote said the Value Jet Cup was a test run process to prepare the players of Shooting Stars Sports Club (3SC) of Ibadan ahead of the new Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) season.

Losing three games and one draw to crash out of the Cup in the group stage, the former Rangers International boss is undeterred by the results, adding that the featured players, comprising new and old stock, have not blended properly.

"I see this tournament as a test run. We were able to test both the players retained and the new ones invited and I can tell you that we have been able to achieve our aim to some extent," Ogunbote told the 3SC media.

"I am not worried by what we got here considering the fact that we featured players who had not played together and whose fitness is at the zero level. We only had just two days of training before the

tournament started.

"Now that we are done with this tourney, I can tell you that we are going to start the real business in terms of training and in a few weeks time, I can assure you that this team will be different and it will be the team to beat," he added.

On the issue of recruiting fresh legs into the squad, the football gaffer said he will be actively involved in the process for an intensive search to bolster the ranks of his team.

Nevertheless, the 3SC boss dubbed 'the Oracle', commended the physically fit players for being resilient against Remo Stars despite crashing 3-1 in Ikenne to the prospective CAF Confederation Cup entrants.

Ogunbote left Remo Stars for Oluyole Warriors after his contract expired last season. Before his time with the Ikenne-based club, he also had spells with Sunshine Stars, Rangers International and Enyimba FC.

## NCF name Miracle, Rakayat, 12 others, for U19 World Cup qualifier



The Nigeria Cricket Federation (NCF) have announced the names of fourteen of Nigeria best U-19 female cricketers for the Women's U-19 World Cup Africa Qualifier scheduled from September 1-13, 2022, in Botswana.

In an official report by the NCF Public Relations Officer, Musa Ehizoje Bodie, the players mostly from the offshoot of the U17 National Championship, include others with senior national team experience.

Mr Musa added that before these crop of players were selected, they underwent a rigorous preparatory process that spanned a one-month timeframe in various camps across the country.

He underlined that the squad which includes Miracle Imimole, one of the duo that attended the

1 month Under-16 High-Performance Academy India, in 2019, will captain the team while Rukayat Abdulrasak, who made her senior debut at the Kwibuka Women Tournament in June this year, serves as her assistant.

Other familiar names include Lucky Piety, Oseyande Omonkhobhio and Lillian Ude to mention a few.

The team departed the shores of the country on the 30th of August for Gaborone, the Capital of Botswana, where they will compete with other countries such as Namibia, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Tanzania and host Botswana.

- NIGERIA WOMEN'S U-19 SQUAD**
1. MIRACLE IMIMOLE (CAPTAIN)
  2. RUKAYAT ABDULRASAK (V.

3. LUCKY PIETY
4. QUEEN JOSEPH
5. OSEYANDE OMOKHOBHIO
6. REBECCA AWAJ
7. AISHA SHITTU
8. VICTORY IGBINEDION
9. HENRIETTA MBAM
10. REJOICE ASSAN
11. PECULIAR A GBOYA
12. UDE LILIAN
13. DIVINE URANTA
14. JUDITH ANTHONY



## India 2022: Olowookere invites 35 to camp

Head Coach Bankole Olowookere has invited 35 players to camp as the U17 Girls National Team, Flamingos commence preparations for the 7th FIFA U17 Women's World Cup taking place in India in October.

Team captain Alvine Dah-Zossu, first-choice goalkeeper Faith Omilana, regular defenders Miracle Usani, Blessing Sunday, Comfort Folorunsho and Tumininu Adeshina, midfielders Blessing Emmanuel and Taiwo Afolabi, and forwards Opeyemi Ajakaye and Aminat Bello are among those told to report at the Serob Legacy Hotel, Wuye, Abuja on Tuesday 30th August 2022 with their training kits, medical certificate of fitness and international passport.

The Flamingos conquered the challenges of the Democratic Republic of

Congo, Egypt and Ethiopia to qualify for this year's FIFA U17 Women's World Cup, winning five of their six matches in the process.

The 7th FIFA U17 Women's World Cup finals will be staged in India from 11th - 30th October 2022.

### ALL THE INVITED PLAYERS:

Goalkeepers: Faith Omilana (Naija Ratels); Linda Jiwuaku (Confluence Queens); Jessica Chikamso (Rivers Angels); Uchechi Onyechere (Heartland Queens); Comfort Erhabor (UK-based)

Defenders: Miracle Usani (Abia Angels); Tumininu Adeshina (Naija Ratels); Iniobong Umanah (Nasarawa Amazons); Olamide Oyinlola (Naija Ratels); Confidence Nwora (Nasarawa Amazons); Comfort Folorunsho (Delta Queens); Mamuzo Edefe

(Rivers Angels); Immaculate Effiong (Abia Angels); Ekezie Onyedikachi (Heartland Queens); Blessing Sunday (Edo Queens); Marylin Essin (Rivers Angels)

Midfielders: Alima Alasse (IFK Goteborg, Sweden); Bisola Mosaku (Kazeem Eletu Queens); Blessing Emmanuel (Naija Ratels); Taiwo Afolabi (Delta Queens); Mary Aderemi (Bayelsa Queens); Chidera Okenwa (Abia Angels)

Forwards: Daniella Alali (LA Galaxy, USA); Tolulope

Adubairo (Arsenal Women, England); Amarachi Ndudim (Abia Angels); Mary Lucky (Heartland Queens); Edidiong Etimi (Bayelsa Queens); Ijeoma Onweagba (Ibom Angels); Odinaka Odoh (Honey Badgers); Opeyemi Ajakaye (FC Robo Queens); Aminat Bello (Naija Ratels); Alvine Dah-Zossu (Osun Babes); Kafayat Bashiru (Bayelsa Queens); Yetunde Ayantoshos (Osun Babes); Udeme Ukoh (Ibom Angels)



## On way to retirement, Williams beats Kovinic in US Open

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

**2** 3-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams has started the journey to her 24th Grand Slam title on a remarkable note by dislodging Montenegrin Danka Kovinic in the first round of the US Open.

Williams, who turns 41 soon, saw off Kovinic 6-3, 6-3 in the 25,000 capacity Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Recall that the former world number one is close to taking a bow from the profession and would love to equal the all-time record of Margaret Court.

With the stadium almost filled to capacity, William with six US Open titles to her name was cheered and



hailed by her fans as she dished out powerful strokes to send the Montenegrin out of the competition.

After the action, Williams revealed that it would be hard to leave a sport that gives her much satisfaction though there comes a time when one embraces new

challenges.

According to her, the feeling that comes with the game is appealing knowing fully well it creates an environment where one invariably fits in perfectly.

"It's extremely difficult still because I absolutely love being out there," Williams

said.

"The more tournaments I play, I feel like the more I can belong out there.

"That's a tough feeling to have, and to leave knowing the more you do it, the more you can shine.

"But it's time for me, you know, to evolve to the next thing. I think it's important because there are so many other things that I want to do," the former world number one added.

Williams, after her victory, will play Estonian Anett Kontaveit in the second round at the Arthur Ashe Stadium on Wednesday.

Moreover, the player, also in the doubles event, paired with her sister Venus Williams against Czechs, Linda Nosková and Lucie Hradecká in the first round.

## Kross, Bellingham, late minute target for Liverpool

Liverpool, plagued by a series of injuries, are not relenting in the transfer market to add the needed players to bolster the squad for the season's campaign.

Early last week, Reds coach Jurgen Klopp had rebuffed insinuations that the club needed new additions but after he lost to Manchester United at Old Trafford, and Naby Keita joined the queue of injured players, the German gaffer is eager to snap up a late signing before the transfer market closes.

Liverpool have not had it easy after winning the Community Shield against title rivals Manchester City, with two draws and a loss to unstable Red Devils, their outing can be rated poor.

Surprisingly, on Saturday, the Reds reverberated a performance, thumping Bournemouth 9-0 in Anfield and this has further put pressure on the management to initiate certain late interests.

According to reports from the German Bundesliga, Liverpool are on the trail of Borussia Dortmund Jude Bellingham, who the Reds have pencilled in as a potential target.

The 19-year-old, who joined Dortmund from Birmingham in 2020 for €25m, has appreciated to a market value of €80m.

However, Dortmund are not ready to part ways with one of their prized assets this summer and have played down any intention from Liverpool towards the English midfielder.

In a statement by the sporting director Sebastian Kehl, he reiterated that the

club will not entertain any offer for Bellingham though no club has signified interest.

Kehl, to assert his position, added that he maintains closed tiles with the player, who, categorically, is also not considering leaving Dortmund.

The sporting director, though believes the player will remain with the club during the summer, he cannot guarantee Bellingham's future after that.

"There is no request for him," Kehl told the media after Dortmund's victory on Saturday against Hertha Berlin.

"And honestly - I know this from the player and his family - the boy has no interest at all in going anywhere this summer.

"He will stay with us this season, I can guarantee that," he added.

Meanwhile, a report from Spain has linked Liverpool with a move to sign Real Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos.

According to Fichajes, the player who has virtually won all titles with the European champions with a year left in his contract, is on the radar of three top club's including Liverpool.

Klopp is not happy and is mounting intense pressure on Liverpool to sign some midfielders to salvage the injury-ravaged squad.

Although it won't be easy for the former Bayern Munich man to leave Santiago Bernabeu after Manchester United signed Casemiro recently, the Reds may resort to offering a tempting bid that may force Los Blancos to reconsider the offer.

## Injured Lukaku to miss Milan Derby, Bayern clash

Chelsea striker on loan in Inter Milan, Romelu Lukaku, will not be available to feature in the derby clash with AC Milan, on Saturday, at the San Siro Stadium.

According to the Nerazzurri, this setback is a result of a thigh injury that the player incurred recently.

Reportedly, the player whose leg-thigh flexor was first assessed in Rozzano's Humanitas clinic to confirm the degree, will undergo a further examination next week.

In an official statement, the

club asserted that the player will further undergo an assessment to ascertain the level of damage.

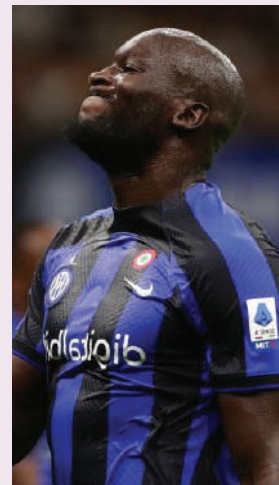
Resultantly, the 28-year-old Belgian will likely miss Inter Milan's matches from now till September and is envisaged to return in the first week of October.

Certainly, Lukaku will miss Tuesday's match against Cremonese at home before taking on Milan on Saturday, which already has been confirmed by the club about his nonavailability.

Edin Dzeko would be the

likely replacement for the big man, who by proposition would miss the UEFA Champions League matches against Bayern Munich and Viktoria Plzen in September, including a trip to Friuli Stadium to face Udinese in a Serie A clash.

Lukaku won the hearts of Nerazzurri after he left England for Italy to spearhead Diego Simone's attacking lineup, winning the Italian league in the 2020-2021 season in the process with 24 goals in 36 appearances.



## After Lewandowski, Aubameyang latest victim of robbery attack

Barcelona striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was attacked in his home alongside his family by unsuspected armed robbers in Castelldefels.

According to reports that cited police sources, four masked men tracked the former Arsenal striker to his garden, threatened him with a gun and beat him mercilessly with iron bars.

Following the inhuman treatment, Aubameyang led the robbers to his safe where they carted away several valuables, including pieces of jewellery. However, before the police could arrive, they fled in

a white Audi A3.

Reports explained that the robbers during the operation that lasted for like an hour, converse in the Italian language in which one of them hit the Gabonese with the iron bar on his chin.

Aside from Aubameyang, the wife, who was also a victim of the robbery attack, was hit on the head with the iron bar.

Resultantly, the incident was traumatic and this instigated Barcelona to send the club's psychologist to help allay the tension posed to the family by the assailants.

This is not the first



Barcelona player that has encountered or become a victim of a robbery attack as former Bayern Munich striker Robert Lewandowski,

who moved to Camp Nou in the summer, had also been attacked.

Reportedly, Lewandowski, though he recovered the watch that was stolen from him with the thief caught, encountered the said incident at Esportiva in Sant Joan Despí.

Aubameyang moved to Barcelona eight months ago after falling out of favour with Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta over disciplinary issues but with Chelsea on the negotiation table for his signature with the Catalans, there is every tendency that the 32-year-old would fast-track the process.

## 'Real Madrid take advantage of broken games'

Carlo Ancelotti said the Real Madrid squad consist of formidable players that can take advantage of a stiff contest to provide victory for the club.

He noted that the squad have good dynamics that work perfectly for them.

In an interview after Real Madrid defeated Espanyol on Sunday, the Italian added that the players took advantage of the spaces to leave it late at Cornellà-El Prat.

Los Blancos had gotten an early lead from Vinicius Junior through an assist by Tchoaméni but was cancelled 31 minutes later by Joselu.

However, the resilient home

side were hellbent to frustrate the European and Spanish champions from having the day whilst the award-winning coach resorted to making four substitutions which he acknowledged made the difference.

Dani Carvajal, Eduardo Camavinga, Dani Ceballos, and Rodrygo, came in for the second half to make a difference with Rodrygo providing the assist for Karim Benzema to reclaim the lead before sealing the 3-1 victory at an additional time.

"We have a very good squad and the five changes help us a lot," Ancelotti said.

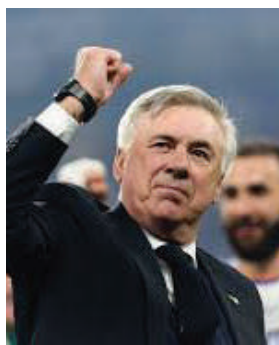
"When the game breaks we have an advantage because we have powerful players with energy to take advantage of the spaces.

"We won because we had more energy than the rival.

"We have started well, scoring early, but we have lowered the intensity. The second half was difficult for us, but we increased the pace with energy and it has paid off.

"Tchoaméni has arrived and we have to take advantage of it, but the other midfielders have to balance their movements," he added.

Real Madrid presently sit at the top of the Spanish La



Liga table with a 100 per cent record from 3 games. In their next fixture, Los Blancos will welcome Real Betis to Santiago Bernabeu on September 3.

## Pogba unworthy of global recognition as brother set to blackmail star

World Cup-winning star Paul Pogba has been in the nest of the purported blackmail by a clique of his childhood friends including Mathias Pogba, his elder brother.

The former Manchester United midfielder was a victim to these blackmailers that accosted and threatened him with arms-wielding masked men, who dragged him into an apartment during his visit to where he grew up to demand €13m.

Mathias, who has also been a footballer playing in lower leagues across Europe, posted a video on social media where he announced he will be revealing some confidential information about Pogba.

According to Pogba's elder brother's "big revelation", issues surrounding the relationship between the Juventus midfielder and Rafaela Pimenta, a lady who is his business associate, will be divulged to the public.

He stated that after he finishes revealing the kind of stuff the brother has under his sleeves, it will be left for the fans to decide if the France international deserves the accolade and recognition he is being accorded.

Mathias said, "I'm announcing that I'll soon be making big revelations about my brother, Paul Pogba, his lawyer, his friend and his confidante Rafaela Pimenta, who Paul calls his 'second mother' as if one wasn't enough.

"For those who don't know me, I'm a professional footballer and the big brother of world champion Paul, who has joined Juventus after a disappointing spell at Manchester United.

"I'm making this video today because I think that the French, Spanish, English, and Italian people, as well as fans of my brother, Juventus, the French national team, his teammates and his sponsors, deserve to know certain things so they can decide in full knowledge of the facts whether he really deserves the respect, admiration, and love of the public.

"If he deserves his place in the French squad, if he deserves to play in the World Cup, if he deserves to start for Juventus, if he is a person worthy of our confidence and whether he is worthy of being a role model for the youth," Mathias added.

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

— Leo Tolstoy

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## Delta varsities' teachers earn more than federal counterparts, says Okowa

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**,  
Asaba

**D**elta State Governor, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa, has chastised the Federal Government over its inability to end the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

According to him, the Federal Government should deploy a delegation to Delta to learn how it was able to manage four state-owned universities without any form of crisis or strike.

He disclosed that professors in the state universities earn N150,000 more than their federal counterparts.

ASUU on Monday extended its six months old strike indefinitely over failure by the Federal Government

to reach a compromise with the union.

The governor, via his Chief Press Secretary, Olise Ifeajika, while reacting to the development, called on the Federal Government to draw down from the strength with which it yielded to his (Okowa) call for a review of the pipeline surveillance contract recently awarded to High

Chief Government Ekpemuokpolo aka Tompolo.

He said: “The University lecturers have extended their strike indefinitely, not just by one or two months but indefinite and that is terrible for the system. The children have been at home for six months, meaning that they don't even know how long more they will be at home.

“The sad thing is that, if you have a child that is in the University



Okowa

of Benin, University of Lagos, University of Port Harcourt, and another one that is maybe younger, that is in Delta State University, Abraka or University of Science and Technology, Ozoro here and they entered same time, the one in

the Federal university is at home, the one in the state university is in school and activities are on, he is writing his exams, he will graduate first.

“Our governor has said that even with four universities here in Delta, all the schools are

open, the students are on campus, whatever the requirements are, the state government is meeting. So we are asking federal government to listen to him, the same way they listened to him on the oil theft solution, they should come and adapt, come and understudy us on how we are managing four universities to put the lecturers out of strike, make them remain in school and they are teaching our students.

“No matter how late it may seem, they should come. Everything that teachers need, parents need, students need in terms of infrastructure they are in our universities. There is industrial harmony. Rather than put parents through this torture, students through this trauma of just getting education at their home, they should

come and understudy us in Delta and do the things that are right.

“They should send a delegation team to meet us to show them how we have been able to keep our university teachers on campus. It's on record, that apart from every other things like infrastructure, a professor in the Federal Universities that is at the bar, that is, the end, where he cannot be promoted again and his contemporary in Delta State University, our own here earns salary that is N150,000 more than the Federal Professor.

“In other words, the state government pays more. Federal Government has more money and we think Federal Government can do better. If it is the modus that may be the issue, they should come and learn from us.”

## Delta APC welcomes Oborewori as 'weakest link' to governorship race

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**,  
Asaba

Delta APC Gubernatorial Campaign Organisation has said the embattled Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate for the 2023 elections, Sheriff Oborewori, is the weakest link in the contest, and welcomed his Monday afternoon “victory” at the Court of Appeal.

The court had set aside the judgment of the Federal High Court which on July 7, 2022,

nullified his nomination on grounds of certificate forgery and perjury preferred against him by his main opponent in PDP, David Edegbie.

Welcoming Oborewori's victory, the Director, Communications and Media Strategy of the Campaign Organisation, Ima Niboro, described it as good news for All Progressives Congress (APC). The former Presidential Spokesman described Oborewori as a weak and compromised candidate who will find it

impossible to explain why Deltans should give him and his fellow travellers another opportunity to mortgage the future of the state with more humongous loans with nothing to show.

He called on Deltans to resist Oborewori, PDP and Governor Ifeanyi Okowa with their ballots, insisting that the PDP governorship candidate who could not run a House of Assembly, definitely cannot govern a complex state like Delta.

His words: “Oborewori's victory at the Appeal Court in the certificate fraud case against him by David Edegbie is good news. Oborewori is the obvious weak link in the 2023 guber race.

“What more can you ask for when you have a Sheriff whose only claim to fame is a specious “street credibility,” in a state gripped by a selfsame street anomie, a soaring crime wave, unemployment, greed and wickedness.

“What more can you ask for when Delta

youths, already seething with anger, have been presented Okowa's, the loan master's main acolyte; his partner in mindless borrowing; his cheerleader in general misplacement of priorities, ineptitude, cluelessness and brinkmanship?

“Deltans do not want the continuation of a government that has pauperized and inflicted untold hardship on them; neither do they want a Sheriff coming to town just to ride roughshod over them; a Sheriff

who foreshadows a coming lawlessness, dictatorship and lack of accountability.”

Niboro enjoined the people to join hands with Delta APC to rescue the

state from the stranglehold of PDP,, adding: “APC's Senator Ovie Omo-Agege is leading the charge to chase out the locusts and cankerworm in human form feasting on our commonwealth at the expense of millions of our dehumanized and dispossessed people.”