

# APC ex-scribe Udoedehe secures NNPP's guber ticket in Akwa Ibom

By ISAAC JOB, Uyo and TUNDE JOSHUA (Abuja)

Former Interim National Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator John James Udoedehe, has defected and grabbed

the governorship ticket of New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) in Akwa Ibom State. Udoedehe, a founding member of APC, had failed in his bid to secure the APC's gubernatorial ticket which was said to have been won by Akan Udofia, who had earlier bought the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship nomination form and reportedly scored two votes. In a statement addressed to the ward chairman of the party in Uyo Local

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Osinbajo (left), Buhari, Tinubu, Adamu and the APC presidential torch bearer's wife, Senator Remi Tinubu after the veteran politician's victory at Eagles Square, Abuja.

# With 1,271 votes, Tinubu gets his turn, prize

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

In a landmark presidential primary election, All Progressives Congress (APC's) National Leader, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, emerged as its candidate for the 2023 general elections.

At the conclusion of a long-drawn contest, Tinubu garnered 1,271 votes, beating the immediate past Minister of Transport, Rotimi Amaechi, and Vice President Yemi Osinbajo.

Amaechi beat Osinbajo to the third, having scored 316 votes, against the Vice President's 235 votes.

Other contestants in the primary election were Mr Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba, Pastor Tunde Bakare, Mr Ahmed Rufai, Senator Rochas Okorocho, Mr Jack Rich, Governor Ben Ayade, Governor David Umahi, Senator Ahmed Yarima, Dr Ahmed Lawan, Osinbajo, Amaechi, Governor Yahaya Bello and Dr Ogbonnaya Onu.

As the voting time

neared, nine other contestants stepped down, with eight of them asking their supporters to vote for Tinubu, while one supported Osinbajo.

Those who supported Tinubu were Governor Abubakar Badaru of Jigawa, Robert Boroffice, Ken Nnamani, Ibikunle Amosun, Dimeji Bankole, Ekiti State Governor Kayode Fayemi and Godswill Akpabio.

They asked their supporters to vote for Tinubu, just as the only female aspirant, Mrs Uju Ken-Ohanenye,

Political pundits had said that Tinubu is the only one among the 23 candidates in APC who will be able to face 75-year-old Atiku Abubakar, who last week emerged as the flagbearer of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party.

The presidential election has been slated for February 25 next year.

**See the full list of aspirants and their votes below**

Bola Ahmed Tinubu - 1,271 votes



**Buhari**

Rotimi Amaechi -316 votes

Yemi Osinbajo -235 votes

Ahmed Lawal -152 votes

Yahaya Bello -47 votes

David Umahi -38 votes

Ben Ayade - 37 votes

Ahmed Rufai Sani -4 votes

Emeka Nwajiuba -1 vote

Christopher Ogbonnaya Onu -1 vote

Tunde Bakare - 0 votes

Rochas Okorocho - 0 votes

Ikeobasi Muokelu -0 votes

TienJack Rich - 0 votes

Apparently accepting the results of the APC

special national convention and accepting defeat, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo has congratulated Asiwaju Bola Tinubu for emerging as the party's preferred presidential candidate.

Spokesman of the Yemi Osinbajo Campaign Organisation, Richard Akinnola, in a post on his Facebook page, said: "Congratulations, Asiwaju Tinubu, the presumed winner of the primaries.

"In any contest, there must be a winner. However, I'm very proud of my choice of support in the person of Prof. Yemi Osinbajo.

"I have no iota of regret over my support for him. It was a privilege to play a pivotal role for him during the process. I would gladly do it over and over again. It's a matter of conviction.

"And for all our supporters and other volunteers who worked assiduously, day and night on the PYO project, God bless you all. I'm so proud of all of you.

"As I often say, God rules in the affairs of men and He has a purpose for what just happened.

"Understandably, many of you are dispirited and downcast but do not let your heart be troubled. There must be a reason God

allowed this. It may not be manifest to us now but later as He is all knowing."

Encouraging the numerous supporters of Osinbajo to put the defeat of the Vice President at the convention behind them, he said: "I'm unfazed, unbowed and proud of PYO. Our supporters, abeg, make una shake it off. No be say person die, Life goes on. No yawa."

Akinnola made this comment even when the final results had not been declared by the Election Committee of the National Convention headed by Kebbi State Governor Atiku Bagudu.

## Let's unite for Tinubu's win in 2023, Amaechi urges other aspirants

Former Rivers State Governor and immediate past Minister of Transportation, Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, has urged other aspirants who contested for the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential ticket

to come together and work for the victory of Asiwaju Bola Tinubu in the 2023 general election.

Speaking through his Presidential Campaign Media Committee on Wednesday, Amaechi congratulated the former Lagos State governor on his victory and his subsequent emergence as the Presidential torch bearer of the party at the just concluded presidential primaries of the APC

In a statement by the Committee's Chairman, Kingsley Wenenda Wali, the former governor of Rivers State called on all the aspirants to put the outcome of the primary election behind them and come together to work for the victory of Tinubu and APC in the 2023 presidential election. The statement reads in part, "We acknowledge that his victory follows a highly charged contest, which as expected, could only produce one winner.

"It is, therefore, our hope that following the emergence of Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu as our party's presidential candidate, all aspirants will now close ranks and work hard to ensure our party's victory at the 2023 Presidential Election.

"We thank all who in many remarkable ways supported the Presidential aspiration of Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi and urge them to see the outcome of the primaries as a victory for democracy, which signposts the maturity and evolution of the political culture of Africa's largest democracy."

## APC ex-scribe Udoedehe secures NNPP's guber ticket in Akwa Ibom

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Government Udoedehe said his defection was a tough and painful decision.

The Trumpet gathered that Udoedehe's decision to resign may have come after his faction of the party failed to be recognized by the national secretariat of the APC. Instead, it was a rival faction of the party that was given recognition following a ruling by a Federal High Court.

The letter read in part that: "Henceforth, I cease to be a member of APC in my ward or anywhere for that matter. I hereby relinquish all rights which inured to me as a member of the APC, member of the national advisory council and member of the national caucus of the APC.

"This decision to part ways with the APC is a tough one, but leadership entails adherence to the wishes of the vast majority of associates, allies and supporters who have shown fidelity over time and have now witnessed the obduracy of the APC in handling the candidate selection processes in Akwa Ibom State.

"Our greater goal of providing service to the people of our dear state remains sacrosanct," the letter stated.

It was also learnt that

Udoedehe had secured the governorship ticket of the New Nigerian People's Party (NNPP) at the party primary election held the day he defected from APC.

Meanwhile, APC in the Senate has been depleted. Senate Leader Yahaya Abdullahi and a former governor of Kebbi State, Senator Adamu Aliero, have dumped the ruling political grouping for opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Dr. Abdullahi on Wednesday left Kebbi, the state capital to his Kamba local government area, to formally declare for PDP and to indicate his interest to contest his present seat.

His special adviser on Media and Oublicity, Muhammad Jamil Gulma confirmed the defection.

His defection couldn't have been connected with the governorship primaries in Kebbi State APC and several failed truces by the national leadership of the ruling party.

He participated in the APC's Kebbi governorship primaries in which he scored zero votes, an outcome which he had since rejected and described as "shambolic" and a child's play.

According to his media aide, the former governor who is currently the Chairman, Senate

Committee on Works and Vice Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, has decamped to PDP.

He said the former FCT Minister left the ruling party because of the great provocation, ridicule and flagrant persecution, to give opportunity for peace, reconciliation and harmonious existence.

Aliero further said it was "baffling and alarming for his state governor to get away with the fraudulent act of composing the list of delegates" and that was the major reason for his leaving the APC.

The three-time senator who represents Kebbi Central Senatorial District said "it was after extensive consultations with all the important stakeholders" that he had to "come to this difficult but inevitable decision to pitch his political tent elsewhere; where he could enjoy greater sense of belonging and where the interest of the Nigerian would be best served."

"For the past three years, my people and associates have suffered alienation and have been treated as outsiders in their own party. Thus, many have become disaffected and disenchanted. At the same time, opportunities to seek redress and correct these anomalies were deliberately blocked as a government

within a government had formed an impregnable wall and left in the cold, everyone else who was not recognized as "one of us. This is why we decided to seek accommodations elsewhere," he said.

Aliero appreciated the National Chairman of the APC for his interventions and efforts at containing the "excesses" of the governor during its difficult time.

The former governor hopes that the APC will respect the choice he has made as a democratic right so that we could not become enemies of one another despite political differences."

Some bigwigs who joined the senator includes another former Governor of Kebbi State, Alh. Sa'idu Usman Nasamu Dakingari; Senate Leader and Senator Representing Kebbi North, Senator Dr. Yahayya Abdullahi; a former Deputy Comptroller of Customs, Alh. Muhammad Mera (Ciroman Kabob Argungu); National Chairman, Federal Road Safety Corps, Hon. Buhari Bello; Members, House of Representatives, representing Birnin Kebbi Kalgo and Bunza, Hon. Bello Yakubu Rilisco, as well as the others representing Aliero, Gwandu and Jega, Hon. Muhammad Umar Jega, and Hon. Abdullahi Zimbo, representing Dandi and

Arewa.

Others are a former Speaker, Kebbi State House of Assembly and Member representing Dandi local government, Rt. Hon. Samaila Abdulmumin Kamba, Deputy Speaker and Member Representing Aliero Constituency, Rt. Hon. Muhammad Buhari Aliero, that of Gwandu, Hon. Habibu Labbo Gwandu, and Hon. Samaila Bui, Member Representing Augie.

The remaining are Chairman State Emergency Management Agency, Alh. Sani Dododo, Former Commissioner of Agriculture, Alh. Abdullahi Lamba Yauri, Former Commissioner of Finance, Arch. Bala Sani Kangiwa, Federal Commissioner, National Character Commission, Hon. Atiku Bunu Jega, Former Chairmen of Jega, Dandi, Kalgo and Aliero Local Government, Barr. Shehu Marshal, Hon. Garba Salihu Dila Kamba, Hon. Umar Namashaya Diggi and Hon. Abubakar Sale Samaila Aliero.

Prof Sahabi Danladi Mahuta who is aspiring for the position of House of Representatives, Hon. Mansur Musa Jega, Hon. Umar Kalgo, Former Permanent Secretaries, Special Advisers and some councillors also joined Senator Aliero to decamp.



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# Omo-Agege, Keyamo, Dafinone laud APC, congratulate Tinubu

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**,  
Asaba

Deputy Senate President Ovie Omo-Agege; Minister of State for Labour and Productivity, Olorogun Festus Keyamo (SAN) and renowned Chartered Accountant, Chief Ede Dafinone, have lauded the peaceful and transparent conduct of the presidential primary election of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The trio in separate statements also congratulated Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, the newly-elected presidential candidate of the party.

Omo-Agege, the standard-bearer of APC in the 2023 governorship election in Delta State, in a press statement signed by Ima Niboro, Director, Communications and Media Strategy, Delta APC Gubernatorial Campaign Organization, on Wednesday, expressed optimism that Tinubu would emerge victorious in next year's presidential election.

He particularly lauded President Muhammadu Buhari and the party's leadership for giving all

aspirants a level field. He commended the 2022 APC Special Convention Committee for successfully conducting the primary, just as he showered glowing tributes on the party's Northern Governors for setting the pace by zoning the Presidency to the South.

Urging Tinubu to be magnanimous in victory, Omo-Agege stressed the need for all presidential aspirants to join hands with the APC presidential candidate and the party in ensuring victory.

"Not everyone gave APC a chance to conduct a free, fair, credible presidential primary. With the undercurrents in the buildup, some had predicted that our great party would go into extinction after this convention.

"But with the transparent process that saw the emergence of Asiwaju Tinubu as our party standard-bearer, I am confident more than ever before that this is the beginning of even greater tidings for our party. We proved our critics wrong. We have shown that with unity of purpose, the sky is our starting point," he said.

Keyamo also congratulated Tinubu and commended Northern APC governors for ensuring that the presidential ticket was zoned to the South.

Dafinone who is the APC's Delta Central Senatorial candidate, in a statement, also congratulated Tinubu, Omo-Agege and other APC candidates across the state, urging them to build a strong force to take over Delta in 2023. He said the former Lagos State Governor "has the capacity to take Nigeria to the next level."

Dafinone who is the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria Export Group chairman also congratulated other aspirants for their maturity before and during the exercise.

He added: "I must commend the party for their orderliness and respect for the Constitution. It was a family affair but what is before us now is the challenge to deliver the dividends of democracy to the people. The primary is one of No Victor, No Vanquished, and this victory is for us all."



Tinubu

## Joel-Onowakpo Thomas hails Tinubu as APC's presidential standard bearer

### ■ Describes ex-gov as political strategist

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Delta South Senatorial District candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas, has congratulated Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu on his emergence as the presidential torch bearer of the ruling party in next

year's general elections. Thomas described the former senator as a political strategist and pillar of democracy showing resilience in national and local politics.

The grassroots Niger Delta politician and technocrat, in a statement by his Personal Press Secretary, Godday Odidi,

said that Tinubu who won the keenly contested APC Presidential Primary, held at Eagle Square in Abuja, is truly the Jagaban of politics in Nigeria, noting that as one of the foundational pillars of the ruling political grouping, he has built men and women politically.

He noted that the emergence of Chief Tinubu

was as a result of hard work, stressing that the 1271 votes that gave the APC National Leader victory was an indication of overwhelming acceptance of the man he described as a great politician who had touched lives across the length and breadth of the country.

He said Tinubu's towering and intimidating political experience was enough quality that would

send jitters down the spine of the opposition, reiterating that he was confident of a resounding outing of the APC in 2023.

"Your emergence brought political relief to our party that 2023 is going to be a contest between APC, PDP and other political parties in Nigeria. On behalf of all my political supporters from the Delta South Senatorial District, I say a big congratulation

to you, sir. We have confidence in you that the 2023 victory is secured," Joel-Onowakpo stated.

He specifically commended the remarkable and unwavering leadership disposition of President Muhammadu Buhari. He stressed that his leadership prowess saw the party organising a peaceful, transparent and acceptable presidential primary, adjudged the best in the history of Nigeria's democracy.

He also congratulated all the aspirants who participated in the APC presidential primary and commended them for their display of maturity during the exercise.

He urged them to join hands with Tinubu towards repositioning the party to remain in power in 2023 and beyond.

He expressed gratitude to the delegates for making a sound decision, just as he praised the courage of the APC northern governors for speaking up and ensuring the emergence of a candidate from the south.

He admonished the APC faithful to remain united and work for the victory of the party at all levels.

## Don't be despondent or disappointed by my reaction to APC convention, Nwajiuba appeals to supporters

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

In a message of appreciation shortly after the conclusion of the special national convention of the All Progressives Congress (APC), one of the presidential aspirants, Emeka Nwajiuba has appealed to his supporters not to be disappointed by his action at the venue.

Nwajiuba who refused to step down for any of the other contenders was reported to have left the Eagles Square arena shortly after the commencement of addresses by aspirants.

The former Minister of State for Education lamented that processes which led to the convention were in contrast to his belief and

intention for joining the race. "I would urge that no one should be despondent or disappointed," he said.

According to him, his approach to the Nigerian presidency is hinged on being able to present a progressive vision of an inclusive, united and focused brand of energy to transform the country into a wholesome economic power house, whose citizens will be better secured to live more fulfilling lives.

He said he choose to take the tedious path of following the law, meeting requirements and staying disciplined, in order to sell a paradigm of same.

Nwajiuba said: "I appreciate all the sacrifices of time, resources and emotions

that have been invested by so many persons, young and old, near and afar in this tedious path.

"I and almost all other aspirants agreed to a consensus approach to the selection of our candidate, to effectively maintain the outlook of a progressive family, away from an all for money by highest bidder image, which had already been assigned to another political party.

"I and other aspirants now of the south east, wrote the leadership of our party to appreciate the commitment to move the presidential ticket to the south, and requested a further deepening to the southeast to reflect our primary reason for seeking the office, which

remains, "to build a more united and inclusive secured and prosperous nation.

"This much has been captured in the communicate south east aspirants issued on 22nd May, the speeches of Mr. President at his meetings with APC Governors, that of aspirants and of stakeholders.

"Following the failure of all these entreaties, it became clear that the convention was headed away from these lofty ideals I subscribe to and will still pursue. I therefore declined to attend.

"These ideals reflected in what some of the south east aspirants who choose to attend referred to in their pleas for Justice, or need to constitutionally require it, in the face of the absence of conscience. Even their elderly

wailing on national television could not move a vote, if I had shouted same in a more youthful voice, it may have become inciteful in face of our current security difficulties in the southeast and may thus spite our efforts. Better to stay out.

"I am committed to pursuing the ideals of a more united, inclusively secured prosperous nation for us all, lending to our dear country, its citizens and those who may be positioned to use it, the experiences acquired, lessons learnt and the various matrix that I may bring to bear."

He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage all strata of society and cadres of leadership both in the party and the country.

# Court restrains Oborewori, PDP, INEC on guber race

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has been restrained in the interim by a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja from forwarding the name of Mr. Oborewori Sheriff Francis Orhowedor to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as the 2023 governorship candidate of the political grouping.

INEC was also restrained from receiving his name and acting in any manner recognising him as the standard bearer of the PDP for the election.

The court also restrained Oborewori from parading himself as

the candidate of the PDP for the election.

The orders emerged from an Exparte Motion in suit number FHC/ABJ/CS/715/2022 filed by Moses Ogege and Timinepere Ogobiri of Patani LGA Ward 8 before His Lordship, Hon Justice Taiwo O. Taiwo of the Federal High Court, Abuja Judicial Division on May 31, with the Peoples Democratic Party, the Independent National Electoral Commission and Francis Oborewori as 1st, 2nd and 3rd defendants, respectively.

After listening to Ibrahim Idris

SAN, JD Jefia, Osita Alele and Sarafadeen Salimo for the plaintiffs, the court found that there were sufficient grounds to grant the interim injunction sought.

Accordingly, the court ordered the defendants to enter a defence within seven days of service to show cause why the reliefs sought by the plaintiffs should not be granted.

It also ordered the defendants not to do anything along the line of presenting or accepting Mr Oborewori as the Delta PDP Governorship flag bearer nor Mr Oborewori acting in such manner

until the final determination of the matter by the court.

While the court also granted the plaintiff's prayers for accelerated hearing, the next date has been fixed for June 9.

Reacting, Fred Latimore, an aide of Delta State House of Assembly's Speaker Oborewori, said there was "no cause for worries" on the restraining order.

In a statement, he said: "It is the nature and legal procedures in all Interlocutory Injunction orders for the Respondent(s) to be so restrained in the wisdom of the Court.

"That order is not the Court

judgment in the substantive suit. The Defendant(s) and/or Respondent(s) usually file Defence and the restraining order may be vacated subject to evidence adduced or other legal factors.

"All Sheriffed Deltans and supporters of our Principal and party candidate should remain calm and hopeful.

"Delta PDF Guber Candidate, Rt Hon Sheriff Francis Oborewori shall be vindicated at the end of all litigations.

"These legal actions were foreseeable and do not call for worries at all."

## 'Why APC can't rule Delta in 2023

By KELVIN OHOROR

Commissioner for Information Charles Aniagwu has said the Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege and his All Progressives Congress (APC) could not win elections in Delta State to govern.

Aniagwu told a news conference in Asaba that Omo-Agege lacked requisite knowledge to govern Delta just as the performance of APC-led

Federal Government had made it very difficult to market any candidate from the party for the 2023 general elections.

He stated that he had recently advised Omo-Agege to concentrate his energy on things that could enhance his electoral value rather than chasing shadows. According to him, "not too long ago, I had advised the Deputy President of the Senate and APC governorship candidate in the state, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege, to try as much as possible to stay with the issues that could help his electioneering campaign and not to begin to stray in directions that will not in any way advance his interest.

"I had thought that it was only those who speak for him that tend not to understand what the issues are. I read somewhere, where he was mentioning that we have received over N700 billion in the last seven years and that we couldn't account for that and I begin to wonder N700 billion received as what.

"It shows that he does not understand how governance runs

because the data that are available show that we have received more than that. I say so because he thinks that what we use to run government alone in a year is N100 billion; our wage bill alone, that is the recurrent side of the budget, is even far more than what he was mentioning," he said.

The Commissioner reminded the Orogun-born Senator that Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa was not contesting elections with him in 2023 and as such he should not make the governor the subject matter of his campaign.

"So its important that he begins to address his mind to other issues.

"As a government we have been able to show transparently through the press in the last seven years, the many projects and programmes that we have embarked upon. Programmes such as the many platforms that we have used to empower our youths and a cross section of Deltans. Policies such as the ones that affects the livelihoods of our people and indeed projects that are quite outstanding such as the New State Secretariat, upgrade and concessioning of the Asaba airport that has made our airport quite outstanding among the comity of airports in the country.

"We have performed significantly in the capital side of the budget with many outstanding accomplishments in infrastructural development. As a government we have added value to the people of Delta whether they live in the creeks or in the upland so for Omo-Agege to say that N700 billion is not accounted for, you begin to



Sen. Ovie Omo-Agege

wonder whether he understands the issues of governance. The good Lord and the people of Nigeria have seen that our Governor has discharged his responsibility very creditable well here in Delta and there are a lot facts that speaks to that in terms of projects, programmes and policies.

"We therefore urge you to shun the possibility of individuals who lack knowledge of activities in Delta and tend to paint pictures that are at variance with realities in the state. We thank you because you have remained with the truth and you have remained very professional in the discharge of your reportage and we are not going to lose any sleep because we know that you will continue to stay with the facts," he added.

## Obaseki laments incessant strikes, pledges to meet demands on AAU

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

Governor Godwin Obaseki has assured protesting students from the state-owned Ambrose Alli University (AAU), Ekpoma, that his government will take necessary actions to reopen it amid the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

The students, on a peaceful protest, stormed the Government House in Benin City, on Tuesday, issuing a one-week ultimatum to the government to ensure the reopening of the institution or face a mass action by the students.

Addressing the protesters, Obaseki, represented by his Special Adviser on Media Projects, Mr. Crusoe Osagie, said education remains a top priority for the government, which will expedite action to ensure that the students get back to classes.

He said, "All that the leader of this protest has said today is in line with what the Edo State Government wants to do for the students of the institution. We have a challenge as the hand of the government is tied to some extent due to the activities of the various unions. Most institutions, including AAU, have staff unions and easily join strike actions called at the federal level; this is not in the best interest of the students and lecturers.

"Incessant strikes have become a problem in our higher institutions. Our proposition as a government is that at some point our lecturers should put the interest of the students above their own. We believe

that the reason they sit at home during the ASUU strike is that at the end of the day, whether they teach or not, they will be paid, and this is wrong. We call on university lecturers and workers in the university to come together and make a decision in the best interest of the students because the government is willing to support the institution with the resources it needs to run," he charged.

Obaseki further noted, "Lecturers should realise that the education of the students is more important than their unionism. The government is working on other steps to help the students come out of this problem. I urge them to come together to allow the students to learn instead of being on strike.

"I assure you that the one-week ultimatum given will be adhered to by the Governor as he will take steps and actions needed to get students back to school. I want to appeal to you that when the government takes its decision, the students should rise up in support of the government so that lecturers will abide by the decision of the government."

Earlier, the Vice President of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) (Special Duties), Odiah Thomas Ikhine said they embarked on the peaceful protest to register their displeasure with the ongoing ASUU strike which has kept students at home for months. He called on the governor to emulate what is being done in Kogi State where there is no union and the academic calendar goes smoothly without strikes.

## NBM, Owo group deplore terrorist attack on church

A pan-Africanist organisation, Neo-Black Movement (NBM) of Africa, has strongly condemned the massacre of harmless worshippers at St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo State.

A statement by NBM's Public Relations Officer, Mr. Oluwatosin Dixon, flayed the attack as another reason that we need to urgently convene a national dialogue summit to discuss and proffer solutions and best way forward in keeping the country and her leaders accountable to the people.

He called on the relevant security authorities to work in conjunction with local security bodies to fish out the perpetrators to discourage such happenings.

Dixon prayed for the souls of the departed to rest in peace while urging the relevant agencies to bring the criminals to book.

Also, a group, Owo Is One Association, has condemned the attack which killed scores of people and rendered many injured.

The association, through its National Co-ordinator, Chief Akinboro Aruwajoye, said in a statement that the ugly incident came as a shock to all the indigenes of the ancient city of Owo, which has been known to be a peaceful community from time immemorial.

"We sympathise with our paramount ruler, His Imperial Majesty, Oba (Dr) Ajibade Gbadegeshin Ogunoye III, Olowo of Owo Kingdom, the families of the bereaved and the Catholic community, and pray to Almighty God to comfort each and everyone of us. We pray that the Almighty God should heal the wounded and the injured.

"We don't have any other place

we can call home but Owo, our native home.

"God Almighty, we pray to you that you come to our aid and put a divine stop to all this incessant killings in Owo.

"We pray for peace to reign in Owo, God should deliver us and protect our souls from every calamity of this world in Jesus name."

Condoling with Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State, the association's Head of Media, Mr. Olatunbosun Oladimeji,

who is also a son of Owo, urged the authorities to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

"Our government has the capability and the capacity to go after these devils. Our people should not only remain calm and be peaceful, but continue to pray for God to take control of our homeland," Oladimeji said.

## I've been vindicated by Owo massacre, says Sunday Igboho

Notable agitator, Mr. Sunday Adeyemi, has said the killing of Yoruba indigenes by terrorists in Owo, Ondo State has vindicated his agitation for emancipation of his people.

Last Sunday, about 50 worshippers were killed as terrorists attacked St. Francis Catholic Church, Owo as gunmen that invaded the church threw an improvised explosive device before they started shooting sporadically.

Adeyemi, popularly known as 'Sunday Igboho,' who reacted in a viral video from the Republic of Benin, said: "I pray to God that we don't experience such again. I pray to God to comfort the families of the victims.

"My fathers and mothers, can you see that I have been

vindicated? I was not in a battle with any Governor or Senator. But what I envisaged, you didn't see it. Now, can you all see?

"Many were saying I wanted to create crisis and foment trouble, but can you all see it now?

"Well, the situation can still be redeemed. I want Yoruba people to be united before it is too late.

"I want South West leaders to support me and other courageous Yoruba sons and daughters so that we can guard against these wicked acts. If I offend anyone, I ask for pardon, please."

A cross section of Nigerians including President Muhammadu Buhari, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as well as religious and traditional leaders have condemned the dastardly act.

## Anxiety over alleged terrorists' invasion of estate amid legal action threats

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

Fear has gripped residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) over an alleged invasion of private estate by terrorists popularly called bandits.

Some national dailies had reported that a large number of armed men, suspected to be bandits, in the early hours of Monday attacked 'Genuine' (Jenew) Estate, in the Gwarimpa area of Abuja and allegedly abducted an unspecified number of persons.

According to the report, the bandits who were armed with machetes, daggers and cutlasses, outnumbered and overpowered the security guards on duty and invaded some houses in the estate on 6th avenue behind Efab Queens.

A source was quoted as saying, "They operated in the estate for about three hours. They abducted some of the residents."

However, FCT Police Command spokesperson, DSP Josephine Adeh, said the case was a robbery case, not kidnapping.

Adeh said the police had already been mobilized to the scene to ascertain how the incident happened.

Residents of the area and FCT are currently apprehensive over the alleged invasion of the estate by the terrorists.

Reacting to the news, Anna Yusuf whose parents reside in the area said they confirmed the news to be true and cautioned people living in Gwarimpa to stay safe.

"Gwarimpa people please stay safe. My mom and dad live there and confirmed this to be true!" she tweeted.

Also, a resident of FCT who simply identified himself as Mohammed said everyone is in trouble as nowhere appears to be safe anymore in the country.

"Gwarimpa for that matter; directly or indirectly everyone is involved in this; it's even worse than it seems; until great attention is engaged to these, everyone is in trouble," he stated.

Meanwhile, Jenew Homes estate Karsana, Gwarimpa Abuja has debunked the alleged invasion of bandits on its property, saying the report was fake.

The company said there was neither kidnapping nor robbery incidence in their property.

The Real Estate company threatened to carry out legal action against the news media that public the report should they fail to describe the story as fake news on their social media handles within 24 hours.

According to a press statement by the company on Monday, Jenew Homes Karsana is one of the safest estates in Abuja, adding that security remains the watchword of the company.

"Good morning, today we woke up to the news of Kidnap at Jenew Homes estate Karsana, Gwarimpa Abuja, and calls have been coming in from residents who saw nothing happen where they live and families of the resident who wants to know about the safety and well-being of their loved ones.

# Police arrest 24 armed political thugs in Keffi

•IGP establishes 2023 electoral offenses desks

By **PAUL MICHAEL**, Abuja

Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has said about 24 armed political thugs were arrested in Keffi, Nasarawa State while warning against thuggery ahead of the 2023 elections.

The suspects are said to be loyal to a senatorial candidate in Nasarawa State.

In a statement by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, on Tuesday, the police said eight pump action guns, two locally made revolver guns, 37 rounds of live cartridges, four bulletproof vests, and 27 mobile phones were recovered from the suspects.

"In line with this mandate, operatives of the Nigeria Police Force attached to the Keffi Area Command of the Nasarawa State Command, acting on credible and actionable intelligence have arrested twenty-four suspected

political thugs at Minki Suites, along Keffi-Akwanga Road.

"The thugs suspected to be loyal to an aspirant in the Nasarawa West Senatorial primaries came into the hotel in a convoy of seven private vehicles.

"Items recovered from the arrested suspects include; eight (8) pump action guns, two (2) locally made revolver guns, thirty-seven (37) rounds of live cartridges, four (4) bulletproof vests, twenty-seven (27) mobile phones, two (2) pairs of vigilante uniforms, five (5) cutlasses, ten (10) assorted knives, criminal charms, and other incriminating objects.

"Preliminary investigations reveal that the suspects, who are thugs for hire, carry out their heinous acts under the guise of being members of the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN)," the statement said.

Meanwhile, the Inspector

•IGP establishes 2023 electoral offenses desks

General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, has ahead of the 2023 general elections, approved the establishment of Electoral Offences Desk at the Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID), Force Headquarters, Abuja.

According to Adejobi, the Commissioner of Police, FCID, is the Desk Officer.

The IGP has equally approved the establishment of the Desk at State Commands across the nation with the Assistant Commissioners of Police in charge of the Criminal Investigation Departments as State Desk Officers.

"The mandate of the Electoral Offences Desk Officers includes the collation and investigation of all electoral offences/complaints from members of the public or any quarters, with a view to determining culpability in line with the amended Electoral Act 2022, and proffering charges before Courts of competent

jurisdiction for necessary legal action.

"The IGP tasked the Desk to commence its activities immediately with some isolated cases recorded during the pre-election activities such as screening, conventions, primaries, etc," Adejobi said.

Additionally, the IGP has also ordered the immediate transfer of the case involving the arrested suspects to the Electoral Offences Desk at the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID).

Adejobi said IGP Baba has ordered the FCID to effect, "the immediate arrest of the concerned aspirant for necessary investigative actions."

The Police boss reiterated the commitment of the Force to stamping out threats to peaceful and credible elections at all levels, even as he vows to deal decisively with anyone caught engaging in political thuggery.



Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi; with a victim of the gunmen attack, when he visited survivors of the onslaught at St Louis Catholic Hospital, Owo, Ondo State.

## Fayemi visits Owo attack victims, announces N50m NGF donation

•Condoles with Akeredolu, monarch, Catholic bishop

Ekiti State Governor Kayode Fayemi has visited and commiserated with survivors of last Sunday's terrorist attack at St Louis Catholic Hospital, Owo, where some of them were receiving treatment following the bloodbath.

He is also the Chairman of Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF).

Dr. Fayemi also visited Governor Rotimi Akeredolu (SAN); Olowo of Owo kingdom, HRM Oba Ajibade Gbadegesin and the Catholic Bishop of Ondo Diocese, Most Rev Jude Arogundade, at the Bishop's Court, Akure.

Fayemi, accompanied by former Governor of Ogun State, Senator Ibkunle Amosun, urged security agencies to fish out the perpetra-

tors of the heinous crime. He also announced a donation of N50 million naira, on behalf of the NGF, to the Catholic Diocese to cushion the pains of the gruesome attack, which led to the killing of no fewer than 21 people with scores sustaining varying degree of injuries.

Fayemi said all efforts would be made to ensure that the perpetrators were apprehended and brought to book, adding that state government would redouble their efforts at ensuring safety and security of lives of the citizens.

He lamented that the situation was capable of making the people afraid to going about their daily activities including going to their

farms, pursuing their legitimate businesses and even going to places of worship. This he said calls for urgent attention to the issue of security in the country.

"All efforts towards ensuring the perpetrators are apprehended would be made, but this cannot bring the dead back to life. While we pray to God to intervene, we would also redouble our efforts and be more vigilant in our vicinity."

The governor later visited Gbadegesin at his palace where he commiserated with the monarch and the Olowo-in Council.

Thereafter, Fayemi visited St Louis Catholic Hospital, where some of the victims were receiving treatment. Some of the victims managed to narrate the ordeal to the governor and his colleagues.

Meanwhile, Fayemi has directed Ekiti State Commissioner for Health and Human services, Dr Banji Filani, to send medical and human resources to Ondo State.

"Every death or terrible situation like this diminishes us. We know how disturbed you are now. Government at state and federal levels are working together to ensure that the assailants are apprehended and also to ensure an end to these spate of attacks", he told the victims and the apparently bewildered relations who besieged the hospital.

Both Oba Gbadegesin and Bishop Arogundade called on the Federal Government to ensure the assailants were apprehended and to put measures in place to ensure safety of lives of the people.

# Best Western Plus Elomaz Hotel, Asaba.

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

Tel: +2348038193264





## Bike man donates writing materials to pupils

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**, FOREIGN AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

Writing materials worth thousands of naira have been donated by a bike man, Adegoke Adejare, to pupils of St. Paul's Anglican School 2, Yanbule in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Executive Chairman, Oyo State Universal Basic Education Board, Dr. Nureni Aderemi Adeniran, said it is grateful for Adejare's kind consideration to complement government's efforts.

Adeniran said the state government would continue to make life better for pupils through provision of basic amenities.

He called on key players in the education sector to support government efforts at moving the education sector forward, adding that philanthropic gestures from members of the public is also welcomed.

He said, "Government does not have all of the funding. Therefore, if Nigerians can come out to assist the government in this sector, I am certain the future of our

children will be more secured".

Adejare, while speaking at the donation urged the pupils to always read their books and make use of the donated materials to enhance their studies.

He described his gesture as his little efforts at making his country a better place, by encouraging those who may be in need.

Nicknamed 'One Nigeria', Adejare canvassed for Nigerians to collaborate with Government in development of the education sector.

"This is what I like to do. I never had the opportunity to attend a formal school, so I have vowed to do my best to support the government in developing the education sector, through little gestures such as this", he said.

The Headmistress of St. Paul's Anglican School 2 Mrs. Gbaroye Oluwatoyin applauded Adejare's gesture towards the pupils and assured him that the writing materials such as books, pencils, pens and erasers would be put into judicious use.



## Consulate celebrates Carrington Fellows

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

United States Consulate in Lagos has hosted a graduation ceremony to honour the accomplishments of 17 young Nigerians.

U.S. government exchange programmes bring together Nigerian youth of vision, skills, and experience to design and implement projects that have a positive impact in their local communities.

The 17 young Nigerians formed the 2021 cohort of the Carrington Youth Fellowship Initiative (CYFI).

The fellows who range in age from 21 to 35 were selected through a competitive process, implemented social service projects focused on health, education, civil liberties, environment, and economic empowerment during the 12-month long fellowship.

Delivering remarks during the ceremony, Consulate Public Affairs Officer Stephen Ibelli highlighted the positive impact the initiative has had on local communities since its inception in 2011.

He applauded the graduating fellows for their selfless service and commitment to the values championed by the late U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Walter Carrington, for whom the initiative is named.

"You established a farmers' business

school and taught 30 rural farmers to sustainably farm. You upskilled 30 kids in Lagos juvenile homes on ICT skills and advocated policy reforms in juvenile administration. You trained school counselors on addressing mental health challenges in public schools.

"You taught rural women basic recycling skills and trained public school teachers on the use of modern teaching methods and aids. The projects implemented by the 2021 CYFI cohort are truly inspiring. These are meaningful, impactful projects. You have laid solid foundations for future work and I look forward to seeing where these initiatives go from here," Ibelli added.

Ibelli welcomed the graduating CYFI fellows to the U.S. government exchange alumni community, a prestigious and vast network of like-minded and highly regarded professionals across the country. He encouraged them to take advantage of the exchange alumni group to continue to grow and support each other.

In a goodwill message delivered at the event by the wife of late Ambassador Carrington, Dr. Arese Carrington congratulated the 2021 cohort and urged them to remain exemplars of honesty and concern for the welfare of the less privileged.

"The innovative projects you designed

and carried out during the past year have impacted lives positively. Never stop dreaming or daring to effect the needed change because you are the hope for the future," Dr. Arese Carrington added.

CYFI is built around year-long social innovation projects that are designed by fellows and supported by the U.S.

Consulate and private partners. The 2021 cohort is the first graduating class since the passing of Ambassador Carrington.

To date, CYFI has graduated 174 outstanding young Nigerians who bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to the table, and share a common vision with the goal of positively impacting the Nigerian society.



French embassy press officer, Onyinye Madu

## Embassy showcases Nigerian artist's work

Embassy of France in Nigeria is sharing an exceptional special project which will be launched at VIP TPAC Preview from 5pm to 9pm on Friday June 10th 2022

A statement by French embassy press officer Onyinye Madu, said : "This project will respond to the theme 'BLAZING CENTURY 1 by Wilfred UKPONG' and will speak to the future Africa desires. Ukpong's work employs the aesthetic concept of Afrofuturism while boldly reimagining alternative perspectives on environmental crises, social injustice, empowerment, race, gender, identity, and the body in the 21st century. "There has

never been a better moment to immerse yourself in the work of Africa's creatives. " Wilfred UKPONG is a Nigerian-born interdisciplinary artist, practice-led researcher, and filmmaker who lives and works out of Oxford (UK), Clermont Ferrand (France), and Eket (Nigeria). Working between photography, film, sculpture, installation, sound/music, performance, and incorporating a studio-based artistic practice with connective social engagement, Ukpong tackles pertinent socio-political and environmental issues with community participation and intervention. "



Consulate Public Affairs Officer Stephen Ibelli





## Lawyers puncture Adamu's 'consensus' choice of Lawan

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, POLITICS EDITOR

The race for the presidential ticket of the All Progressives Congress (APC) took a new twist barely 24 hours to the commencement of the special national convention with the announcement by the national chairman, Senator Abdullahi Adamu, that Senate President Ahmad Lawan was the party's consensus candidate.

The announcement raised dust as critical stakeholders vehemently rejected the choice of Lawan.

The Northern APC governors had insisted that power must shift to the South and that the party should consider the flag bearer among the southern aspirants. They, therefore, rejected Adamu's choice.

Also, Adamu's statement sowed discord among members of APC National Working Committee (NWC), with some disowning him. They said he expressed his own opinion and not that of the NWC or the party.

A top notcher of the APC told The Trumpet that Lawan was not adopted by the NWC, the party or President Muhammadu Buhari.

"Yes, it's true chairman announced it but it was not discussed or adopted by the NWC. He just announced it as his personal opinion, which cannot stand," he said.

Speaking with journalists after its NWC meeting on Monday, Suleiman Abubakar Argungu, National Organizing Secretary and other members of the committee including four national deputy chairmen said; "we were fully briefed about this development."

He said: "As you can see, we are all coming from the NWC meeting. We were fully briefed by our national chairman, Senator Abdullahi Adamu informed us that Senate President, Ahmed Lawan is the consensus candidate for the APC National Convention.

"That is just the information he gave us and not an issue that was discussed on the floor of the NWC.

"As you are aware, few days ago, the Northern governors had a meeting and decided that the leadership of this country should shift to the South and the southern governors also affirmed that.

"We, members of the NWC are also with the governors on what they said. Just a few minutes ago the governors of the North went to the presidency to inform the president that they are still standing on what they, northern governors, said regarding the presidency of this country.

"What the national chairman told us was just an information and all of us are entitled to our opinions because we are all Democrats. We can exercise that opinion.

"This was never deliberated by the NWC. It is an information given to us at the NWC. We don't have a divided house," he stated.

One of the strong advocates of power rotation to the south and governor of Ondo State, Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu said the APC chairman, Adamu is on a frolic of his own.

Describing Adamu's endorsement as an expensive joke, the governor



Lawan



Adamu



Falana

said "the speculation is rife that the Chairman took a flight of fancy and decided to make a pronouncement beyond his competence. He has, allegedly, made public his preferred choice as the candidate of the APC for the Office of the President in the next general elections."

According to Akeredolu, this alleged pronouncement runs contrary to the position of majority of Northern Governors in APC and their counterparts in the South.

"Our agreement is unanimous on this issue. The office of the President should be contested for by qualified persons from the Southern part of the country if the move to get a consensus candidate fails. There has been no shift from this settled issue.

"Let it be known that the Chairman or anyone who holds a contrary opinion does so at a personal level. He is at best embarking on a frolic which reasonable people will consider dangerous," he said on Monday.

But presidential media aide, Garba Shehu denied Buhari's endorsement of any candidate.

However, legal icon have picked on situations around Adamu's choice of a consensus candidate. They dissected what the law says about consensus and the context it was applied by Adamu.

Recall the the Electoral Act 2022 in "Section 84(9) (10) and (11) of the Electoral Act 2022 state as follows:

"(9) A political party that adopts a consensus candidate shall secure the written consent of all cleared aspirant for the position, indicating their voluntary withdrawal from the race and their endorsement of the consensus candidate".

Human right crusader and Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Femi Falana said there is "no consensus candidate without

consent".

In a short clarification, Falana said "a consensus candidate cannot be imposed on a political party by the President of the country or the Chairman of a political party. As far as the Electoral Act is concerned there can be no consensus candidate without the consent of all aspirants. Section 84 (9) (10) and (11) of the Act provides as follows:

"(9) A political party that adopts a consensus candidate shall secure the written consent of all cleared aspirants for the position, indicating their voluntary withdrawal from the race and their endorsement of the consensus candidate.

(10) Where a political party is unable to secure the written consent of all cleared aspirants for the purpose of a consensus candidate, it shall revert to the choice of direct or indirect primaries for the nomination of candidates for the aforesaid elective positions.

(11) A special convention or nomination congress shall be held to ratify the choice of consensus candidates at designated centres at the National, State, Senatorial, Federal and State Constituencies, as the case may be."

Another Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Babatunde Ogala said Adamu's pronouncement is legal impossibility.

He said "while the National Chairman is yet to deny or offer any clarification on the alleged declaration, it is necessary to state that such a declaration is a legal impossibility. This is because under the regime of the Electoral Act 2022, consensus, though provided for as one of the means by which a political party may produce its candidate, must specifically occur in a precise form.

"Section 84(9) (10) and (11) of the Electoral Act 2022 are the relevant provisions and they state as follows:

"(9) A political party that adopts a consensus candidate shall secure the

written consent of all cleared aspirant for the position, indicating their voluntary withdrawal from the race and their endorsement of the consensus candidate".

"(10) Where a political party is unable to secure a written consent of all cleared aspirants for the purpose of a consensus candidate, it shall revert to the choice of direct or indirect primaries for the nomination of candidates for the aforesaid elective position.

"(11) A special convention or nomination congress shall be held to ratify the choice of consensus candidates at designated centers at the National, State, Senatorial, Federal and State Constituencies, as the case may be".

He said instructively, none of the above conditions have occurred in respect of producing the presidential candidate of the APC. "Therefore, any declaration of a consensus candidate would be premature and a violation of extant provisions of the law.

"We are confident that as a law-abiding entity, the APC will not be part of such. We are further persuaded to urge our supporters to disregard this report considering that the overwhelming majority of the APC Northern Governors who, after meeting with the President, re-affirmed their preference for a president from the Southern part of Nigeria.

"This patriotic decision is widely accepted by all Nigerians as a demonstration of deep understanding of the nuanced fault lines of our nation."

Ogala, who is Director, Legal Directorate, Tinubu Campaign Organization, said in the circumstance, "a unilateral declaration by the National Chairman of a consensus presidential candidate for the party will not only violate the law, but set the party on collision course with its Governors who are critical stakeholders in the party."

# PDP will retain 13 states in 2023, Ayu boasts

● *Only God can stop Okowa as Atiku's running mate*

BY TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

National chairman of the People's Democratic Party, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, has boasted that it will retain all its 13 states and more in the governorship and other elections in 2023.

He said in an interview after the presentation of certificate of return to gubernatorial candidates of the party at the PDP secretariat on Tuesday that the governors have performed very well.

"Most of them performed very, very well. We don't have any fears that the people will vote them back to power or their successors to power in those states where we don't have governors.

"People have seen the ineptitude, the incapacity of the APC-led administration from the governorship level to the presidency and I'm sure by next year people will be voting PDP so we are also very sure that we will capture most states."

The party's presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar at the event said Nigerians are waiting for the emergence of the PDP to take over power in 2023

Atiku assured all elected candidates of the party that he will work together with them as a team and make sure you all are brought back elected as governors in their respective states.

"The question of saying that all we are going to give a quarter or so to the ruling party must not arise in this election.



Dr. Iyorchia Ayu

"The processes, which have made you to emerge are now history, what is before us is a task that we must all unite and achieve for this party and for Nigerians.", he said.

Twenty six governorship candidates

out of the 28 states were presented with certificate of return while candidates of Ebonyi and Kano were exempted because of litigation in their states.

And as the leaders of PDP anxiously search for a widely acceptable running

mate to Atiku, Delta State Governor Ifeanyi Okowa has been suggested as the right candidate.

Delta State Commissioner of Information, Mr. Charles Anuagwu, said only God could stop Okowa from becoming the running mate.

Aniagwu stated this at a press conference in Asaba while reacting to speculations that former governor of the state, Chief James Ibori, was secretly working against Okowa's chances to be Atiku's running mate. He dismissed this as rumour and handiwork of fifth columnists.

Aniagwu said, "the governor has contributed to the growth of the PDP, he doesn't boast about it because as a member of the party he has the responsibility to do that.

"You also know how many times the party brought him in to assist in conducting primaries. I am not aware if there is anybody who is bringing any roadblock, if there is anybody who is going to block Okowa, I think it should be God.

"And the last time I checked I don't think he has offended God for God to take that decision against him.

"So we are on course, I don't think there is any problem between Okowa and Ibori, these are persons who have worked together very closely. And Okowa has continued to respect our leader, Chief James Ibori. I have not heard Ibori speak evil of Okowa neither have I heard my boss speak badly of Ibori."

## 'Why I quit presidential race'

Activist Engineer Esanerovo Trinity Agbodo who was running as an independent candidate for the 2023 presidential election has withdrawn from the race.

In a statement entitled, 'WITHDRAWAL FROM THE 2023 PRESIDENTIAL RACE IN PROTEST,' he said:

"Nigeria's elections process promotes corruption. I don't want to be a corrupt President. NIGERIA BY SHAREHOLDING campaign continues.

"INEC should peg fees for nomination forms in future elections. EFCC should investigate and arrest culprits in delegates alleged bribery.

"I thank all Nigerians and friends of Nigeria that have been pouring messages of support for my presidential ambition since I declared my intention to run for the topmost political position.

But based on my assessment of the tasks ahead and the undulating complications of our electoral processes, I have decided to withdraw and want to present my observations and contributions to make electoral matters better in the future."

He added: "I wish to inform all my teaming supporters that I, Citizen ESANEROVO AGBODO, have resolved after due consultations to withdraw from the 2023 presidential race in protest against the high fees of obtaining nomination forms and the burden of election costs on aspirants and candidates.

"In as much as I could have been able to obtain the form in a political party I have pitched my tent in my capacity and with the support of well-wishers, I decided to step down my ambition to

make the point very clear that, with the current process of elections in Nigeria, corruption will continue to thrive either openly or clandestinely.

"For instance, how can we explain the rationale behind political parties making a Presidential aspirant to obtain a nomination form at a fee of 100 million naira and the aspirant will still go across the country from state to state to consult with delegates, and like what we heard with thousands of dollars offered to delegates as bribes, win the primary election ticket of the party, and move on to mobilize and even borrow funds to prosecute the general election campaign and perhaps win the election. Then when he or she becomes president, we will expect him to tell those he borrowed money from to wait patiently while he pays back with his meager salary and allowances over the next four years. This procedure cuts across almost all political parties and all political offices from House Assembly to Presidency.

"Even if I kowtow to the argument in some quarters that the high fees were to streamline the number of aspirants, political parties can adopt other methods like looking at the convictions and ideas of aspirants through a one-page document to distinguish between serious aspirants and jokers.

"President Barack Obama and other United States Presidents did not emerge by how deep their pockets were but by the ideas they promoted. We need to change the way we do things in Nigeria if we are really serious with

developing ourselves and curbing youth unemployment, militancy and other vices.

"The truth is that with the way election processes are structured today, it will be very difficult to win the war against corruption and poverty may continue to ravage our land, God forbid. Poverty is in the root of all the crises in Nigeria. Unless all hands are on the deck to combat poverty, our development as a nation will be hindered.

"Therefore, I am withdrawing from the Presidential race because I insist that the fees for nomination forms across most of the political parties are very high and are already inducing corruption in the future. Unless the federal government through INEC reviews the process and peg nomination fees for political parties to reasonable amounts for different offices in the future, corruption may continue unabated in Nigeria and all the efforts of our EFCC will be seen to be hypocritical.

"Until this moment, EFCC has not made any arrest irrespective of all we heard that money in hard currencies changed hands during the primaries elections of political parties.

"If we must build a greater nation, we must change our strategy because if we keep doing the same thing in the same old way that has fuelled corruption, then the system will continue to lament youth unemployment, lack of requisite infrastructure and the rest.

"My withdrawal from the race has only given me more time to ruminate on Nigeria's challenges to bring lasting solutions to them. I and my support-



Engineer Esanerovo Trinity Agbodo

ers are however working on other options to continue our programmes especially in promoting the NIGERIA BY SHAREHOLDING under which every Nigerian will be a registered shareholder in a National Company and monies paid to them as Nigeria earns income. We will come out with details of this programme soon and reach all political parties with the blueprint for possible endorsement from 2023.

"We will also continue to explore other opportunities either from the non-governmental approach or from collaboration with government institutions and international agencies to continue to serve our country with innovative ideas for the betterment of everyone.

"If you want to join our quest for a new Nigeria, contact us on 08075504012 (WhatsApp) or eagbodo@gmail.com to be updated on our strategies.

God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I LOVE YOU ALL."

## EFCC to deepen synergy with NYSC in Borno, Sokoto

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

Maiduguri Zonal Commander of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Shuaibu Umar, has reiterated the resolve of the Commission to deepen the existing relationship, collaboration, and synergy with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in the fight against graft.

He said this on Tuesday during a courtesy visit to the Borno State Coordinator of the NYSC, at the Federal Secretariat, Maiduguri.

Assistant Commander EFCC (li) Umar, accompanied on the visit by Jonson Ojogbane, Deputy Director, Legal and Prosecution, said his presence was aimed at strengthening the existing relationships and synergy with the NYSC.

He said: "The sensitization activities carried out by the NYSC/EFCC Anti-corruption Community Development Group in secondary schools, market places, religious institutions and Anti-corruption Road Walk Campaigns is a welcome development and there



is the need for proper re-orientation amongst the youth to check the get rich syndrome."

ACE II Umar stressed that fighting corruption is not the work of the EFCC alone, adding that all hands must be on deck in order to achieve the mandate of the Commission of ridding Nigeria of all economic and financial crimes.

State Coordinator Nura Umar promised to ensure that the EFCC achieved its mandate through continued collaboration.

In a related development, the Ag. Commander, Sokoto Zonal Command of the

EFCC, ACE Aliyu Yunusa has also called for enhanced cooperation and collaboration between the EFCC and the NYSC in fighting economic and financial crimes.

Yunusa made the call during a working visit to the NYSC State Secretariat today Tuesday, 7th June, 2022.

According to the Ag. Commander, "the NYSC has been and remains a critical partner to the EFCC in the execution of its mandate of ridding Nigeria of economic and financial crimes.

"Since the EFCC cannot fight these twin monsters alone, the NYSC whenever called upon has made available a steady supply of educated young men and women with the desire to serve this country wholeheartedly."

The Sokoto State NYSC Coordinator, Muhammad Nakamba while responding assured the EFCC of the Corp's readiness to continue to partner with the EFCC in the fight against corruption.

## Varsity dismisses two profs over sex-for-marks saga

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

University of Abuja has announced that the dismissal of two professors over alleged sexual harassment of female students.

Its vice-chancellor, Prof Abdul-Rasheed Na-Allah, who disclosed this in an interview with Journalists in New York, United States of America disclosed that it had introduced a policy on sex abuse on campus which had been published.

Na-Allah, on the two-day visit, to meet with the University of Abuja Alumni Association, USA chapter, to solicit support for the institution, stated that female students in the university need to be protected against sexual harassment, hence, the policy by the University.

He further said the institution is committed to high moral standards, stressing that it will not tolerate any act of misconduct perpetrated by its staff against students.

Prof Na-Allah said, "I have dismissed two professors since I became the vice-chancellor. It tells you how we are serious about the issue of sexual harassment.

"We are collaborating with some Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to ensure that it is not only UniAbuja that is addressing this issue, but we have a strong partnership.

"We cannot allow the lives of our students to be destroyed, most of the abuses destroy the lives and destinies of their victims."

The VC noted that the university is currently investigating the activities of lecturers who are abusing female students

## ICPC, NSCDC partner to fight corruption

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Commandant, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Enugu State, Mr E V Afrika, has expressed the corps' readiness to partner with the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in the fight against graft and related offences.

He made the declaration when the newly deployed Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner (RACC) of ICPC, Enugu State Office, Mr Kennedy Ebhotemen, paid a courtesy visit to the command.

Commending the ICPC team for the visit, he emphasized the importance of

joining forces together to tackle the menace of corruption and corrupt practices in all ramifications.

The Commandant further stated that the command was always open to giving the Commission any technical assistance, particularly in the areas of training.

Earlier, in his remark, the Enugu State Office RACC thanked the Commandant for the timely response to the Commission's request to pay the courtesy call.

While speaking on the tripartite mandate of enforcement, prevention, public education, and enlightenment as contained in section 6 (a-f) of the ICPC Act 2000, Mr Ebhotemen highlighted

some of the achievements recorded by the Commission under the present Board.

He emphasized the need for both organizations to work together, especially in the areas of information gathering and intelligence sharing and the adoption of new techniques in the fight against corruption and all other forms of crimes in the state.

Ebhotemen solicited the cooperation of the Commandant and his men to support the Commission, majorly in the areas of provision of NSCDC armed men to provide security cover for personnel and facilities of the Commission, training, and other operations of ICPC in the state.

## ICAN disowns suspended Accountant-General

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria has said that it cannot sanction the suspended Accountant General of the Federation, Ahmed Idris, over his alleged involvement in an N174bn fraud, saying he is not a member of the body.

This was contained in a statement by the Institute on Monday while responding to a letter written by the Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA) asking ICAN to investigate and sanction Idris who is being probed by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

HEDA had called on ICAN to subject

Ahmed to the Institute's Disciplinary Tribunal for thorough investigation and sanction.

Responding to the letter, the Registrar/Chief Executive Officer of ICAN, Prof Ahmed Kumshe, said that the Institute cannot sanction Ahmed because he was not a member of ICAN.

"The attention of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria has been drawn to some publications in the media where a group known as Human & Environmental Development Agenda is asking ICAN to investigate and sanction the erstwhile Accountant-General of the Federation being probed

by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission for corruption.

"We wish to inform the organisation and the general public that the former Accountant-General, Alhaji Ahmed Idris, is not a member of ICAN and therefore cannot be investigated and sanctioned by ICAN.

"Our act only allows us to regulate and discipline our members when they err at our Investigating Panel or Disciplinary Tribunal as the case may be," he said.

Three days after his arrest, Idris was suspended by the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, to allow for a seamless investigation.

The Federal Government also appointed Anamekwe Nwabuoku to oversee the Office Accountant-General of the Federation in the interim.

However, the EFCC has released Idris on bail pending further investigations.

A former Governor of Zamfara State, Abdul'Aziz Yari, has also been arrested over the alleged scam.

The Accountant-General of the Federation is the administrative head of the treasury of the country and is saddled with the responsibility of managing receipts and payments on behalf of the country.

## EFCC, Law School partner to revive Economic Crimes Law Report

● NGO calls for collaboration with anti-graft agency

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Nigeria Law School have brokered a fresh partnership. It is aimed at reviving the journal, Economic Crimes Law Report.

A statement by the spokesperson of the anti-graft agency, Wilson Uwujaren, said the Executive Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa made the proposal to a delegation from Nigeria Law School led by the Director General, Professor Isah Hayatu Chiroma.

"Executive Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa hinted at this new-fangled initiative on Monday, June 6, 2022, when a delegation from the Nigeria Law School, led by its Director General, Professor Isah Hayatu Chiroma, SAN, paid him a Courtesy Visit at the EFCC's corporate headquarters in Abuja," Uwujaren said.

He further stated that the EFCC boss noted that the agency has been instrumental to the development of law in Nigeria and wants the two institutions to partner to achieve more positive strides.

Bawa was quoted to have said, "I am not aware of any institution of government that has contributed to the development of law in Nigeria in the last fifteen years (15) other than the EFCC. Last year alone, we secured two thousand, two hundred and twenty convictions (2,220), and this year, we have on record more than one thousand five hundred convictions thus far."

Earlier, Prof Chiroma expressed appreciation to the EFCC for reposing confidence in the Law School in the area of documenting economic and financial crimes cases. He commended the EFCC for its record of convictions and sought more commitments to "training and retraining of staff".



Ahmed Idris



Prof Ahmed Kumshe

# Tragic killings across the country

**N**igeria is on the edge of a dangerous precipice occasioned by a surge in tragic and wanton killings in the land. Killing of innocent persons across the country has become the norm rather than the exception. The most recent is that of a pregnant mother Hariri Jubril and her four little children in Anambra State. Two weeks before, Deborah Yakubu was set ablaze by some of her College of Education classmates in Sokoto. These incidents left the nation in shock. 'Shock' is the wrong word. We are no longer "shocked" at the news of killings. We are merely "troubled" or "disturbed" or, worse, "nonchalant". Sadly, we quickly recover from these emotions and carry on with our lives. This may seem trivial. It is not. It is a big tragedy – we are losing our basic humanity or humaneness. And the federal government appears overwhelmed!

How did we descend into such barbarity? How human are we when we shrug our shoulders at the news of a girl being burnt alive by her own classmates? How human are we when we sleep normally at night after seeing a video of a woman and her fiancé having their heads chopped off while still alive? How human are we if we can continue to enjoy our meal after seeing the corpses of a woman and her four little children slain in the street for the crime of being different? How do gloss over the deaths of scores of people in a Boko Haram attack? Is Mr. President able to sleep with so much blood being shed in the land under his watch?

The deaths of fellow Nigerians, our own brothers, and sisters, have become nothing but numbers – 30 people killed here, 12 people killed there. We have lost our humanity, and we are out of touch with what it means to be human. The English poet Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) believed that there was a beast in every one of us that needed to be tamed if society were to attain civilisation. Unfortunately, the beast

in all of us is threatening to take over the souls of Nigerians. The mark of this beast is not 666. It is lack of empathy, sympathy, fellow feeling, and goodwill. Its mark is a totally anaesthetised attitude towards horror and terror. This beast looks upon the death of a fellow human being with indifference. It makes the appropriate "noises" such as "oh no!", "how unfortunate" and, for perhaps a few days, "justice must be served!". Its "duty" done, the beast goes on as usual. This is what we have become. Beasts. This is the tragedy of Nigeria. The killers themselves are unusual – they are the greater beasts. They maim and deface or burn the corpses – an indication that the anger levels are too high.

It is not only the Nigerian citizen who

has become anaesthetised to tragedy. It is the Nigerian system in its entirety. Nigeria has become a failed state. When systems of government fail, the citizens rebel. It leads to anomie, anarchy, and general lawlessness. Our politicians carry on with their campaigns as though Nigerians are not dying daily. In fact they use these deaths to promote themselves, promising to end it all if they are elected. In the meantime they have surrounded themselves with police and armed personnel while ordinary Nigerians sleep with only one eye closed.

The government must rise to its obligations and address the dehumanization of Nigerians and the endless killings. The government should seriously consider allow the establishment of State Police. The federal security forces are overwhelmed and often are not familiar with the terrain to which they are posted. State police would be at home on their turf since they are from the same area. They will be far more efficient at identifying criminals and perpetrators of violence. They would also have the added advantage of familiarity – local people will feel freer with them and would be more forthcoming with information.

The government should call on religious and community leaders to emphasize the sanctity of human life and the importance of peace, unity, brotherhood, and good neighbourliness. The government should involve traditional and religious leaders in forming vigilante groups that would be responsible for fishing out criminals and handing them over to the authorities.

Finally, the judiciary needs to get serious. It must show that it is impartial and will not allow any crime to go unpunished. Extra-judicial killings happen as a consequence of a failed judiciary. In Nigeria justice is given only to the highest bidder. The judiciary needs to restore the faith of Nigerians in the system. The current situation where everybody is a law unto himself has got to end. Nigeria deserves better.



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## Edging towards the precipice

Nigeria is edging towards the precipice. The long history of scant regards for the rules of engagement has caught up with us. There is loss of faith in the ability of Nigeria to protect its citizens. There is despair. There is frustration. The managers of the federation take steps daily, carry out actions which threaten the existence of the country. Ensnared in the opulence of filthy power, they do not feel the pulse of the nation. If they do, they do not show it. Individuals have become more powerful than the country. Self help has become the order of the day. The brutish state of nature which we escaped from is here.

Those who are in power are helping themselves with the national cake before the house crumbles. The anti-corruption mantra of the incumbent government is a joke. The party primaries offend our sense of collective dignity. The people are angry with the politicians in Abuja and the State capitals. But there is nothing they can do. They will still vote for the clowns in 2023! Some have taken their share of the national delegates at the party primaries. They have sold their conscience!

Religion and politics have mixed to destroy the country. There is lip service to the ideals of religion. Religion has not defined life in daily encounter with reality. But it has become an ego bank. A fence. A wall. A protectorate which is conveniently deployed to stress difference. It has not stopped stealing. It has not stopped corruption. With State

funds, men can build Mosques and churches. The religions preach against stealing. Yet adherents steal funds to feed religion. It is odious. It is a contradiction. Looting the treasury is a dent on character. These characters go to the Mosque on Fridays, to the church on Sundays, visit the Holy Lands on pilgrimage. Yet, when a man as much as criticize their proclaimed religion, they are prepared to kill.

The young man who boasted on social media that he murdered Deborah Yakubu played a script, written by the powerful men in the corridors of power. Disobey the tenets of the religion. But kill the next man who utters a word against what they hold sacred. It is barbaric. It is destructive. It is atavistic. Yet, governance, if it qualifies to be so called, is all about blasphemy against the morals and ideals of the great religions. This is a paradox that the leadership class luxuriates in. Thus, we have no reports of men who reject eating the stolen pie on account of religion. That is a no-go area. Paradise is preached. Paradise is believed. But the paradise of here and now created from pilfered funds at the expense of the lives of God's own children is more attractive!

The federal government promotes a dangerous narrative. It proclaims a federation in words. But it practices oligarchy of a sort. This oligarchic disposition is woven into ethnic statis. Power belongs to us. There is a veneer of population advantage. But anyone who has lived in the north wonders where

the huge population figures come from. The British who promoted the ascendancy of the north in governance helped to create the myth of superior population. The successor government sustained the myth. But within the vaunted superior population is the existence of a minority group. This group has seized power. Ruthless in power acquisition, they are yet to learn how to deploy power to the development and growth of their own people. What is power for if it cannot change the circumstances of the people?

We are on the precipice, the edge of it. The journey to doom started long ago. Through wrong-headed economic and political policies, the rulers started the decimation of Nigeria. If the people had their way now, they would dissolve Nigeria. Perhaps what has somewhat held the nation together is the reluctance of state officials in aggrieved regions and areas to take on the federal government as Emeka Ojukwu did in 1967. Non-state actors have filled the vacuum. These non-state actors hold the elected and selected state officials in great contempt. In the north, Boko Haram, bandits, and Islamic terrorists terrify state officials. In the southeast, non-state actors control the first day of the week. The South-south once held in the jugular by militants is the only region free of control by non-state actors. Indeed, there is no guarantee that if another rebellion of the Ojukwu shade were to start today, there would be no national consensus for the rest of the federation to bring back

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the rebellious region. There is too much disenchantment with the terms of the federal union. Away to your tents is on the lips of most southerners, in and out of government. Who will bell the cat, appears to be the restraining factor?

Before the civil war of 1967, there was a dingdong between state actors and the federal government. But there was a patchwork going on. The back of the camel got broken after the coup and counter-coup. It was a turning point. The centre could not hold. The arrogance which Abuja currently displays, the attempt to seize power in the north, to jettison rotation of power between the two main regions which patently suggests a rotation between practitioners of the two rival religions, is a threat to peace. To retain power in the north in 2023 is the equivalent of a coup against the people of the south. Through bulldozing and intimidating methods, the north could hold on to power. But the seed of splitting the nation along regional lines is going deeper and deeper into the soil of time. Let us not allow the heat in the na-

tion to reach breakpoint. No one will have a tea party if there is a conflagration.

It takes no rocket science to surmise that we do not have an Army that can overrun Nigeria if there is widespread rebellion. Pushed to the wall, the people will have no choice but to go into martyrdom. It is not the way we should go. Yet, if we continue along the current path, the day of an implosion is just a matter of time. It will be inevitable.

So it was that a car that was parked by tourists in a park was swarmed by a troop of monkeys. They took control of the car and chased away the real owners. But they could not drive the car. A man who seizes power anywhere and fails to use it for the betterment of the people who are the ultimate owner of power is like the monkeys in the anecdote. Except we put the national car on reverse and stop the descent into anarchy, the conflagration of 1967 to 1970 would be a party of jollof rice and fried chicken!

•Professor Eghagha is a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board

## The reign of Peter Obi

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Recently, Mr. Peter Gregory Obi, former governor of Anambra State, emerged as the presidential flag bearer of the Labour Party. Since the news broke out, many people, especially the youths, have celebrated the development. According to them, there is hope for Nigeria after all. Before Peter Obi's emergence, it was difficult, almost impossible to behold Nigeria's political firmament and stick out a neck for any party or politician. This is because the two leading political parties APC and PDP are birds of a feather, the same party thinly separated by nomenclature. It is hard to see any member of the PDP who has not at one time or another been a member of the APC and vice versa. PDP politicians who almost erased Nigeria from the world map through avaricious embezzlement of public funds for sixteen years immediately crossed over to APC where their sins were forgiven. Under PDP's sixteen years of governance, Nigeria consistently suffered a financial and economic

haemorrhage. When APC took over, the trend continued and most actors during the PDP era immediately crossed over to the APC where they were welcomed with open arms. The law of homogenous attraction is real. Nigerians cried to God of the heavens for a saviour, one who will redefine the moral canvas of our chequered polity. Then Peter Obi and Yemi Osinbajo emerged. Nigerians agreed that the two men are the best the country could offer. However, they were irredeemably smeared by the political parties they belonged to. I have argued that even if a messiah emerges in Nigeria, as long as that messiah belongs to APC or PDP, his efforts will be tainted by the foul political culture of both parties. Peter Obi couldn't achieve anything or convince anyone about anything positive in Nigeria as a member of the PDP. Yemi Osinbajo can't claim to redeem Nigeria as a member of the APC. PDP and APC cannot save Nigeria. Both parties drink from a common trough of retrogression, corruption, and economic backward-

ness. By a stroke of divinity, Peter Obi left PDP and joined the Labour Party, a relatively unknown party to the masses.

Although the Labour Party has its internal challenges, it is poised to become an instrument of divinity. With Peter Obi, there is going to be a change of narrative in Nigeria. He is rightly positioned to deliver Nigeria from the hands of wicked men who have strangled the country for many years. These men have used the youths as thugs instead of providing jobs for them. These men have continuously plundered the exchequer, stealing humongous amounts of money. These men have enabled terrorism for their selfish ends, amassing wealth to confounding levels while the poor working masses suffered untold hardship. These wicked men have taken Nigeria away from the original owners - the workers, students, and salary earners handing the country over to thieving, economic predators. While their children school abroad, they ensure that Nigerian universities are shut down. While they visit foreign lands for medical attention, they ensure that our local hospitals are ill-equipped. While they invest millions of dollars abroad, they ensure that our naira is almost useless and having grounded the naira, they resort to spending Dollars and Pounds. For how long will this continue?

As long as Peter Obi remained in PDP, it would have been impossible to ascribe any shade of responsibility to him because the PDP is antithetical to any positive complexion of governance. So it was through divine intervention that he joined

the Labour Party. I believe Peter Obi not because of his ethnic origin, absolutely no. There are other Igbo presidential aspirants whose intentions to be president can be described as a sacrilege to the Nigerian polity. Peter Obi is in a different class. With him, it is time to rescue Nigeria from political atavism, wicked men who have deliberately submerged the country's potential over the years. Although the APC is yet to hold their party primaries, what happened during the PDP primaries will repeat itself even on a higher scale. Money will be spent, delegates will be bought and when these kinds of people emerge as leaders, the tragedy of our country will graduate to new heights. Take a good look at all the presidential aspirants in APC and you will have a good laugh. These men are jokers, those who have serially bludgeoned the common people and tired of crippling the future of Nigerian youths, they are motivated to finally bury it. It violates the sensibilities that APC is aspiring to lead Nigeria again after the horror of the last seven years. Nigerians should at this point disobey that Biblical injunction which encourages us to turn the next cheek to our adversary for another slap. No, we will never turn the next cheek for APC to slap us again because we may not survive it.

Peter Obi's emergence is a clarion call for all the millions of deprived, denied youths in the country to take back their land. All the university lecturers, common people, workers, the unemployed and the averagely employed, destiny beckons on us all to take back our country from those who only wish us dead. Let us support Peter Obi to revive our

country's ailing economy. The spirit of #endsars must be revived to rescue our country from pervasive, wicked and desperate men who have nothing to offer the new generation. To the millions of youths in Nigeria, it is time to retire insatiable gluttons who will continue to steal our money even after stealing so much as Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Governors, Ministers, and sundry public officers. Nigeria deserves a new start. This is the right time.

Some people have argued that Labour Party and Peter Obi do not have structures. Divine intervention does not respect such mundane considerations of men. The Peter Obi movement is beyond him. The young man represents a phenomenon whose time has come. Ethnic jingoists should please stay aloof. Today, the Hausa/Fulani man beheads and kills his brother. The Yoruba man kidnaps and kills his brother. The Igbo man beheads and kills his brother. Those who steal our money plunge all ethnicities into hardship. Let us rise above ethnic considerations and take back our country. When #endsars happened, even the government did not understand what was going on. Many of the politicians today aspiring to be president ran away or supported the shooting of innocent youths. The time of reckoning has come. If Nigeria misses this opportunity it will be 'to your tents Oh Nigerians'. The true change we all desire is here. Peter Obi is here to reign. Welcome to a New Nigeria and welcome to the reign of Peter Obi.

•Dr Promise Adiele is a member of The Trumpet Editorial Board  
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## Violent crimes threat to Nigeria's survival, says CJN

### Seeks speedy trial of terrorism, banditry suspects

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

Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) Ibrahim Muhammad, has said the increase in violent crimes such as terrorism and banditry poses as a threat to the survival of the country.

He said this at the opening ceremony of a workshop for officers at the National Judicial Institute (NJI) in Abuja. The level of insecurity in the country not only exposes the polity's unpreparedness but also hobbles economic development and improvement in the country's human development.

The CJN further noted that the effect of terrorist-related activities, such as destruction of lives, public infrastructure, private and entrepreneurial investments has continued to project Nigeria as an

unsuitable destination for foreign investments.

He said, "My lords, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen, we are all living witnesses to the fact that terrorism obscures every aspect of economic, social, cultural and political life, it brings instability and disrupts peace and coexistence in the society.

"In the light of the above, we cannot ignore this threat or wish it away. Preventing domestic terrorism and reducing the factors that fuel it, demand a multifaceted response from the three arms of government."

While addressing Judges, Justice Muhammad advocated for the need to speedily determine terrorism-related cases, saying that such trial must be fair and based on specific evidence.

"You must ensure that the investigation and prosecution of terrorism-related criminal



CJN Tanko

cases, including 'of incitement to' and 'recruitment for terrorism', should be based on specific evidence, guarantee due process and fair trials.

"To this end, it is the duty of Judicial Officers to ensure these matters are dispensed within line with the rule of law," he said.

Meanwhile, in his welcome address, Administrator of the NJI, Justice Salisu Abdullahi, said the theme of the workshop, "Law and National Security: The Role of the Judiciary", sought to reinforce the need for judicial officers and law enforcement agencies to understand the dynamism

of the laws on national security.

He said, "My lords, we can all agree that terrorism and other related violent crimes is an aberration and a threat to peace, security and economic prosperity of any nation.

"No doubt, it leads to influx of refugees and a surge in terms of internally displaced persons; it creates instability, restrictions on human rights and indeed, a hindrance to social, economic and political development.

"In the light of the foregoing and without prejudice to the complexity involved in adjudicating matters of national security, I want to urge other stakeholders in the fight against terrorism to be responsive and proactive in order to accelerate and ensure swift trial of suspects within reasonable time."

Participants at the workshop were judges that were drawn from various Divisions of the Federal High Court and Court of Appeal.

## Police step up security nationwide

By **ALEX OLISE**, Defence and Crime Correspondent

There is fresh tension across the Southern part of Nigeria following last Sunday's terrorist attack carried out inside a Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo State where no fewer than fifty (50) worshippers were murdered in broad daylight.

The fear followed intelligence reports from locals and top security agencies that unknown gunmen believed to be foreign terrorists have gained entry into Nigeria through the porous borders at a time when the country is still grappling with many challenges, especially in the North-East and South-East of the Country.

Following the Owo attack, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Usman Alkali Baba directed all Assistant Inspectors General (AIGs) and the 36 States Commissioners of Police to step up their security architecture across the nooks and crannies of their various using proactive measures to forestall possible terrorist attacks.

The Trumpet gathered from top Police sources that in line with the IGP directives which was contained in a signal, all the top officers met on Monday at their various command in a tight security meeting to reveal what happened in Owo, Ondo State and plan a new strategy to forestall attacks by terrorists who are bent on unleashing terror on targeted places in the Country.

Already the Anti-bomb unit of the Force has been directed to expand its operations across the Country. The unit discovered some explosive devices in the recent attack on a Catholic Church in Owo.

The high command has also advised the management of Churches, Mosques, and other strategic places to take their security seriously by demanding such from their various commands when they suspect any unknown faces or move around their locations.

It could be recalled that the Department of State Security (DSS) had raised the alarm last month over a plot by terrorist groups to renew attacks on target places like Churches, Mosques, and critical government Infrastructures, among others.

According to a top security source who spoke with The Trumpet, "We always received intelligence reports but sometimes we look down on them that is where we as security agencies are having problems."

## IGP deploys experts for full-scale investigation of Owo terror attack

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

Inspector General of Police (IGP Usman Alkali Baba) has ordered a full-scale investigation that can lead to the arrest of criminals who attacked St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Owaluwa in Owo, Ondo State during a service on Sunday, killing scores of innocent worshippers.

Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, in a press statement said the IGP has deployed specialized operatives of the Explosive Ordnance Devices - Chemical Biological

### Police recover unexploded IEDs

Radiological and Nuclear Explosives (EOD-CBRNE), police experts, and other tactical units from the Force Headquarters commence a comprehensive investigation for immediate arrest of the perpetrators.

The statement said: "The gunmen, from preliminary investigations, invaded the church with arms and materials suspected to be explosives. Police Investigators who were part of the First Responders deployed to the scene have recovered pellets of

expended AK-47 ammunition while the Explosive Ordnance Devices-Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Explosives (EOD-CBRNE) unit confirmed the use of Explosives as fragments of the IEDs used were found and after thorough sweeping of the scene, 3 unexploded IEDs were recovered at the scene of the incident.

"Further investigations revealed that some of the gunmen disguised as congregants, while other armed men who had

positioned themselves around the church premises from different directions, fired into the church. The assailants fled the scene using a Nissan Sunny car with Reg No. AKR 895 AG which was snatched from the owner, and escaped through Owo/Ute road. The vehicle has been recovered while the owner of the vehicle is currently assisting the Police in its investigations.

"The IGP has ordered full-scale investigations into the incident in order to bring to book the perpetrators of the gruesome killing of the worshippers at the church. The IGP has further ordered

the deployment of specialized operatives of the Police EOD-CBRNE, police experts, and other tactical units from the Force Headquarters for a comprehensive investigation, and for immediate interception of the Villians."

According to the statement, the IGP condoled with the Ondo State Government, family members, relatives and friends of the victims who lost their lives.

Baba equally assured that the killers would be made to face the full wrath of the law, while the police will employ strategies to forestall similar occurrences in the future.

## AIG decorates Zone 10 PPRO, other promoted senior officers in Sokoto

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

Assistant Inspector General of Police Zone 10 Headquarters Sokoto, AIG Bello Sani Dalijan, has decorated some senior officers promoted by the Inspector-General (IGP) Usman Alkali Baba.

To enhance smooth operations, the IGP earlier approved the promotion of some officers nationwide.

Public Relations Officer of Zone 10, DSP Adamu Abbas, in a statement, said the AIG Zone 10 decorated about 15 senior officers who were promoted.

"The Assistant Inspector General of Police Zone 10 Headquarters Sokoto AIG Bello Sani DALIJAN psc (+), while decorating the newly promoted officers, congratulated them and charged them to live up to the

tasking responsibilities of their new ranks.

"The AIG Zone 10 Headquarters Bello Sani DALIJAN psc (+) was assisted by the DC Operations Decompol Maxwell Olatokunbo, Acpol DFA Zone 10 Acp Ibrahim Bawa psc, Acpol Ops Zone 10 Acp J.H Anga and all other senior officers of the Zone in decorating the newly promoted officers.

"About Fifteen (15) officers were decorated with their new ranks: 3 Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), 1 Confirmed Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP 1), 11 Inspectors promoted to Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP 11).

"Those decorated include: DSP ADAMU ABBAS the Zone 10 Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Abubakar Jimo,

Admin Officer SPU Base 10, and DSP Aliyu Wasagu," said the spokesperson.

In his vote of thanks, Zone 10 PPRO on behalf of the newly promoted officers thanked the Inspector General Police (IGP)

for approving their promotion. He equally thanked the AIG Zone 10 Headquarters and members of his management team for the wonderful decoration ceremony and advice.

He assured the Zonal Command and the Police that the newly promoted and decorated officers would live up to their requisite responsibilities with regard to their new ranks.

## Police say conspiracy of silence dead in Anambra, laud journalists

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

Anambra Police Command has said the conspiracy of silence that made it difficult for officers to get enough intelligence reports to track activities of criminals in the state has died.

The Command commended journalists for always reporting security situations in the state, saying it has made the work of personnel much easier.

Briefing journalists at Police headquarters, Amawbia,

the Command spokesman, Tochukwu Ikenga, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) said that in the past one week the Command in conjunction with other security agencies have made inroads in crime bursting.

He said, "For example, on Sunday June 5 the police received report of a kidnap at Oko and within 30 minutes another report of kidnap was received from Ekwulobia.

"Immediately, a combined operation went to work and rescued four of the victims.

"The operational vehicle of the kidnapers was also recovered.

"Based on intelligence report the police arrested the kidnapper, simply known as Emeka and rescued the kidnapped victim in Neni in Anaocha local council area after storming the location.

"On interrogation, Ikenga continued, Eneka confessed to the crime and led detectives to the gang's hide out in Oba in Idemili South Local council where detectives engaged the gangsters in a shootout."



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3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
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9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	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	
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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	
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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				
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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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## Afreximbank, Titan Trust Bank sign \$300m deal to support traders with \$3b

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

**T**itan Trust Bank (TTB) has obtained \$300 million from the African Export Import Bank (Afreximbank) to acquire Union Bank of Nigeria (UBN). It is a financial backing that will see Titan Trust Bank leveraging the acquisition to provide capital for intra-African trade.

Afreximbank provided the \$300 million, which is described as an Intra-African Investment Financing Facility to improve the support African traders would receive from financial markets for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

With the deal between Afreximbank and Titan Trust Bank, which enabled the latter to acquire 95.41 per cent stakes in UBN, a \$3 billion financing medium-term facility would be disbursed by TTB, as the acquisition would grant the

firm access to Union Bank's capital base.

A statement issued by Afreximbank's Media Liaison Executive, Amadou Sall, disclosed that: "Afreximbank's financial support will enable TTB to secure the acquisition of a well-capitalised bank with an extensive network, enabling the entity to better serve vital economic activities of the public sector, companies, and small and medium-sized enterprises."

"The development impact of the acquisition will be immense as TTB will leverage the merged entity to provide financing of about \$3 billion in the medium-term of which over \$600 million will directly support financing of intra-regional trade."

Meanwhile, President and Chairman, Board of Directors of Afreximbank, Benedict Oramah, said deals of this nature with the bank and TTB would bridge the gaps being left by foreign investors, as they exit Africa's

market.

"As international capital retreats from Africa, we must redouble our efforts to build an effective and resilient financial services sector on the continent committed to intra-Africa trade and investments, as well as development of regional financial value chains.

"Afreximbank is confident that the transaction will engender confidence in the Nigerian financial system and attract additional capital investments. It would also support the financial inclusion of small and medium scale enterprises, women-led businesses, youth enterprises and start-ups which are critical to the successful implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)," Oramah stated.



Benedict Oramah

## NAICOM may grant web aggregators operational licence

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

National Insurance Corporation (NAICOM) has disclosed that it has received applications from people seeking operational license to operate web aggregators.

Head, Corporate Communications and Market Development of NAICOM, Rasaaq Salami, disclosed this in Lagos yesterday, adding that the insurance sector regulator has received applications and that the licencing department was reviewing them.

NAICOM had pegged the minimum share capital of web aggregator at N5 million and registration fee at N3 million.

Web aggregators are insurance companies that provide information on underwriting businesses offered by different companies. They also provide a comparison of insurance products and prices of different insurance products.

Salami explained that the web aggregator concept was

developed to compare different prices of insurance products, adding that the aggregators either maintain a website or own a website to provide information on insurance products for regulating companies and as such, they need licences to operate.

He said having an insurance web aggregator licence would not only permit the companies to display insurance products, but also solicitation of policies, adding that solicitation is done through online portal where information provided to the customers.

According to NAICOM, a web aggregators are expected to have a minimum share capital of not less than N5 million as of the date of application and shall continue to maintain the same capital base throughout the licence period, even as the web aggregator shall submit daily financial position to the commission.



Sunday Thomas, CEO NAICOM

## Shareholders laud NASCON over impressive performance

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Shareholders of NASCON Allied Industries Plc, a subsidiary of Dangote Industries Limited (DIL) have commended the food seasoning company over its impressive performance in the year ended December 31, 2021 in spite of the harsh economic operating environment just as the company emerged the "Best haulage company of the year."

Speaking during NASCON's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Lagos, a representative of the shareholders, Mrs. Bisi Bakare, said the performance reflected the ability of the company's management to steer the company through difficult times, especially in the face of lack of power, fluctuating exchange rates regime and consumers' dwindling purchase power.

She expressed the belief that the overall performance of the company was a reflection of its seven sustainability pillars adopted by NASCON geared towards ensuring that the company connects with all stakeholders.

In her remarks, another shareholder, Mrs. Adetutu Siyanbola, said NASCON Transport team section should be commended as indicated in the financial report, for winning the best haulage company of the year award of the 684 companies that registered for the Road Transport Safety Standardisation Scheme of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC).

She pointed out that the company has over the years imbibed a culture known for

taking care of shareholders through consistent payment of dividend, adding that despite the harsh operating environment occasioned by the global economic downturn, the company still paid a dividend of 40 Kobo per share.

Another shareholder Sunny Nwosu, also commended the board and management of NASCON for their ability to declare and pay dividends despite the harsh operating environment, which resulted from the Apapa Warf gridlock and downturn in the nation's economy.

He said while other companies were lamenting and cutting down on production levels, the company was paying dividend, which he said, was commendable.

Responding, Acting Managing Director of NASCON, Thabo Mabe, said the company was not resting on its achievements, but was moving from strength to strength by introducing its array of products to consumers.

He said as a company in the fast-moving consumer goods sector, the management team has initiated plans and strategies to capture more shares in chosen markets and would gradually deploy them in the months ahead.

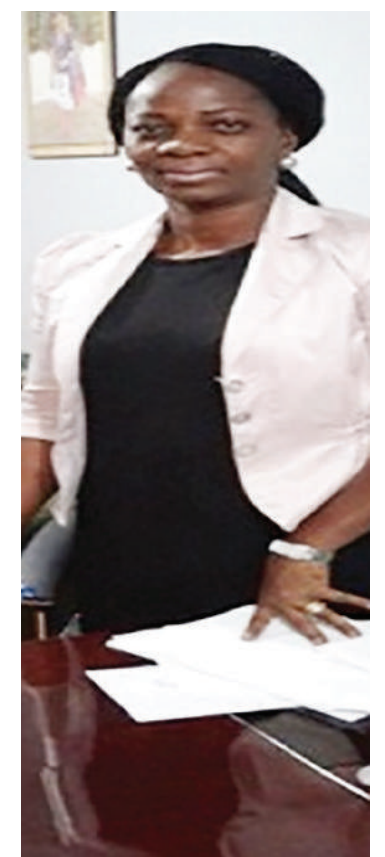
The company's annual report for 2021 indicated that profit before tax rose from N3.9 billion to N4.3 billion, while its net profit amounted to N2.97 billion.

The National Salt Company of Nigeria (NASCON,) was established as salt refinery entity at Ijoko, Ogun State in 1973 in a joint venture between the then military government

and Atlantic Salt and Chemical Incorporated, Los Angeles, California, United States of America (USA).

The company was privatised in 1991 and its shares listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange in October 1992 through which Dangote Industries acquired majority shares following the reverse takeover of NASCON by Dangote Salt Limited (DSL) in 2007 and acquired the assets, liabilities and business undertaking of DSL.

The principal activities of the company include processing raw salt into refined, edible and industrial salt, as well as production of seasonings and vegetable oil.



Mrs. Bisi Bakare



# Nigerians, businesses groan under power outages

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

**B**usiness owners in Lagos State and its environs have decried the current power outage that happened in the past two weeks.

Investigations by *The Trumpet* showed that businesses and individuals were already counting their losses as a result of the current power outage.

The owner of a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME), Okechuku Obinna, said his area, Ketu, Lagos has not experienced public power supply in the last two weeks, adding that the situation has also adversely affected water supply to the area.

Obinna said people now depend on water vendors, who go about with their trucks or wheel barrows hawking water to households.

"The past few days have been so difficult for me and people of my area. We have not been supplied power for close to two weeks, which has also affected water supply to the entire area.

"We now rely on water vendors who hawk water with their trucks or wheel barrows. Our problem is compounded with the serious heat. I can't sleep without my air-conditioner, but without public power supply, it is difficult," he lamented.

Confirming the power situation,

a statement on the website of Eko Distribution Company (EKDC) reads: "There was a significant drop in power allocation to its network from the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN). This has led to massive load shedding. Kindly bear with us, as we are currently working with our TCN partners for a quick resolution. We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience."

Also, the Ikeja Electric Distribution Company (IKDC) sent a short message to some of its customers, saying: "We apologise for the current power outage being experienced in Lagos State. We are working round the clock to rectify the issue. Please do bear with us."

However, a promoter of a Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Peter Idovah, told *The Trumpet* that the situation in the Ikeja axis has been ongoing for close to two weeks.

Idovah lamented that his raw materials, which he uses to produce chicken feeds were going bad as his generator could not work for long hours without breaking down, adding that his firm was no longer able to meet his customers' demands.

He argued that the electricity bills the IEDC will send to him for June 2022 will not reflect that there was no light for several days and that each month, the company fails

to supply electricity for days and weeks, but does not fail to give one excuse or the other, adding that such excuses no longer meant anything to him.

"Power supply to our area since about two weeks now has been virtually non-existent. The electricity company has said that the supply from TCN is low and as such, we should exercise patience while they fix the fault.

"Their excuses have become too many that they no longer make any meaning to me and to most Nigerians. Why must there be fault every month that will take days and weeks to rectify? Is that what is obtainable elsewhere? he asked.

Idovah said the excuses for the constant faults had become too many, adding that the various electricity companies were only interested in the money they get from Nigerians, while they leave them in perpetual darkness.

"It is sad that Nigerians have to constantly rely on generators for energy supply. We all know how much diesel is sold today. Most businesses have to reduce their operational hours to optimise production costs. I appeal to the media to help us plead with the government and the electricity companies to fix the country's power supply system," he stated.

Another businessman, Balogun Tunde, in a telephone interview

with *The Trumpet*, lamented that his small office that runs services for some clients was being billed between N70,000 and N80,000 monthly, while power supply remains about 10 to 12 hours before the total blackout.

Tunde, who declined to reveal the name of his firm for fear of backlash from the EKDC, added that his office at Ajah axis of Lagos had been in perpetual darkness and that despite the constant power outages, the bills keep rising.

"Ajah and its environs, is always in darkness now and then over one excuse or the other. But the bills keep increasing every month. We are helpless as the price of diesel has increased beyond the reach of the average company," he lamented.

Another respondent and employee of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), who spoke on condition of anonymity, said his office has been permanently run on generator since the last power outages.

He said although the company used to provide power once in a while, it only lasts for a few minutes or an hour at the most, adding: "Power supply has been very poor in Victoria Island and Ikoyi despite the high tariff we are being billed. The last two weeks have been particularly difficult for businesses in terms of power supply in Lagos based on feelers from our members across the state."

Also, a Chartered Accountant, who runs an auditing firm in Surulere told *The Trumpet* that his office was currently been run on generators, saying: "I can tell you categorically that power supply has dropped in the recent days. We now run between 10:00a.m. and 3:00p.m. instead of 9:00a.m to 4:30p.m and this has been bad for most businesses in the country.

"Even in our homes, we don't have light. To sleep is difficult, because the heat is much, although we should have been in the rainy season," he added.

A barber at Adamo area of Ikorodu in Lagos State, Tony Odeh, said the past few weeks had been tough for his barbing saloon, adding that the union of barbers had to increase the amount they charge their customers.

"Since we are running our saloons with our small generators, we now charge N500 to cut the hair of adults instead of the initial N400, while we take N300 from children instead of N200, once we use generator to cut hair.

"We are all suffering the power outages that have become so worrisome since the beginning of the year. Our union leaders added N100 to the cost we formerly charge, if there is no light and we are bound by it.

"It was a decision taken at our general meeting, so we are all in agreement with it. Any barber that flouts the resolution is punished if caught," he stated.

## Fidelity Bank gets best SMEs award

Fidelity Bank Plc, one of the country's foremost financial institutions, has been recognised as the Best SMEs Bank" in Nigeria by the Global Finance Banking and Finance review.

The bank was given the award after an assessment of its interventions and provision of long-term financing support for small businesses across the country and was, therefore, recognised as the Best SMEs bank in Nigeria by the Global finance banking and finance award 2022.

Managing Director of the bank, Mrs. Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe, who dedicated the award to its customers and staff members of the bank, said: "Our long running support for the growth and development of small businesses stems from our recognition of SMEs as critical agents of economic transformation in Nigeria."

"That is why we constantly innovate new ways of helping them to meet their objectives. I thank our customers for keeping faith with us and our employees for going the extra-mile in delighting our customers.

Onyeali-Ikpe, said Fidelity Bank had developed a strong multifaceted SMEs banking franchise over the years driven by tailored products and services.

She also noted that the bank



Ahmed Kunshe

has attractive service offering backed by the requisite one-on-one and cluster-focused advisory services and support for SMEs customers.

It would be recalled that the Global Finance Banking awards is

recognised globally and regarded as industry standard for premier banking and financial services excellence with key sources of data and intelligence on the global banking and finance industry.

## Nigeria's equity capitalisation gains N96b, as naira weakens to N426.25

Nigeria's Equity Market closed on a positive note on Monday with the index increasing by 0.34 per cent while the capitalisation gained N96 billion.

The upward trend in the market was driven by Fidelity Bank Plc, Julius Berger and Union Bank Plc, which was recently taken over by its new owners, Titan Trust Bank (TTB).

The All Share Index (ASI) increased by 0.34 per cent to close at 53,086.46 basic points compared with 52,908.24 points the previous day.

It also increased by 0.34 per cent to close at 53,908.24 points the previous trading day. The market capitalisation of equities listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NGX) increased to N28.619 trillion from N28.523 trillion, as of the close of trading the previous day.

The total volume traded closed with an exchange of 755.624 million units valued at N8.90 billion traded in 4,217 deals, while the market breadth was positive with 19 gainers as against 13 losers.

Also, the NGX 30 index increased by 0.39 per cent to close at 2,929.99 points as against 1,922.43 points the previous day.

Besides, market turnover

closed with a traded volume of 669.50 million units, just as Fidelity Bank and Julius Berger were the key gainers, while Unilever and Ecobank Nigeria Limited are key losers.

Specifically, the shares of Fidelity Bank gained 3.64 per cent, Union Bank gained 2.67 per cent, Julius Berger gained, while Union Bank gained 2.40 per cent.

First Bank of Nigeria (FBN) Holding shares rose by 2.27 per cent, MTN Nigeria shares rose to 1.56 per cent. Conversely, while the shares of Unilever declined by 4.01 per cent and Ecobank fell by 1.27 per cent.

On the money market, inter-bank lending rate rose with the overnight (O/N) rate increasing by 0.08 per cent compared with the 7.08 per cent and the 7.00 per cent it closed with the previous day.

Also, the Open Repo (OPR) decreased by 0.33 per cent to close at 6.33 per cent compared with the previous day, which closed at 6.63 per cent.

At the Import and Export (I&E) window, the naira depreciated by 0.12 per cent as the dollar was quoted at N420.25 as against the previous day, when it closed at N419.75.

## Oando partners Lagos on electric mass transit, targets 22m commuters

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

Oando Clean Energy Limited (OCEL) has partnered the Lagos State Government to roll out electric mass transit buses in its efforts to support charging infrastructure and service centers (EV Infrastructure Ecosystem).

Oando had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA), the agency tasked with planning, implementing, regulating and engaging franchises for sustainable integrated public transportation system on April 28 2022 to revolutionise public mass transit in the state.

The partnership will form part of several interventions, such as the Lagos Blue and Red Rail, expected to set the tone for the gradual decarbonisation of the state's road transportation sector.

Commenting on the MoU, Managing Director of LAMATA, Abimbola Akinajo, said: "Oando Clean Energy approached us with a comprehensive solution that went beyond electric mass transit buses to include supporting infrastructure and this was key for us, as the full remit of an EV support ecosystem is the only way to achieve success.

"This initiative will not only accelerate the state government's transportation agenda, but also positively impact the health of Lagos residents and the entire environment.

"The Oando brand comes with know-how and experience and we are relying on this to successfully move from the signing of the MoU to actual implementation that will in the medium to long-term benefit over 22 million Lagos commuters. We look forward to a robust and fruitful partnership."

He said the initiative reinforces the importance of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in enabling the continent to actualise its industrialisation goals, adding that across Africa, PPP models have become increasingly critical as both funding and operational mechanism for socio-economic infrastructure.

"This is not the first time Oando has partnered with the state government, neither is it the first time it has created a blueprint for others to adopt in the realm of cleaner energy solutions.

"In the past, through its erstwhile mid-stream vehicle, Oando Gas and Power (OGP), now rebranded as Axxela, any pioneered private sector gas pipeline development in 2007 and championed the development of Independent Power Plants (IPPs) including the Akute and Alausa IPPs powering the Lagos Water Cooperation and the Lagos State Secretariat," he stated.

Commenting on the launch, Chairman of Oando Clean Energy, Adewale Tinubu, said the company was born out of a need to create the best energy mix to propel Nigeria and Africa to realise their full potential.

Tinubu said the company had always championed PPPs as fundamental to Nigeria's industrialisation, adding that through the signing of the MoU, the company would revolutionise the landscape of mobility by pioneering e-mobility in Lagos State.

He said the investments in more sustainable transport infrastructure solutions were capable of delivering environmental and socio-economic benefits beyond reduction in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.

He noted that in the medium to long-term, it would unlock job opportunities, promote knowledge transfer and kick start Lagos State



Abimbola Akinajo

and hopefully other states of the country to leapfrog in mass transit infrastructure.

Also, the state Commissioner for Transport, Dr. Fred Oladeyinde, said with the understanding that transportation was a key emitter of greenhouse gases in Nigeria, the state developed a strategy to cut greenhouse gases by 50 per cent.

"A key component of this strategy was identifying and developing a more robust mass transit system for Lagos that would include rail and waterways among others. Using electricity to power mass transit is a step in the right direction and from there we will gradually transit to private cars.

"This is just the beginning, there is still a lot more to come on stream. I commend LAMATA and Oando on the signing of the MoU and both parties can be rest assured that they have my full backing to ensure the success of the initiative," he added.

## Conflict among concessionaires may cripple \$3.2b e-Customs project

With over two years of the Federal Executive Council's (FEC) approval for the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) e-Customs project, indications have emerged that conflict among the concessionaires may cripple the \$3.2 billion contract already signed by the Federal Government.

This is coming as the initial lead concessionaire, Bionica Technology, said it had not exited the contract, contrary to the reports of the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed that the company earlier pulled out of the scheme following disagreement in the sharing formula of the project.

Findings also revealed that Bionica is considering litigation that could see the project delayed indefinitely, even as the company is concluding plans for

a media briefing to unveil some un-procedural approaches by the Finance Ministry in the contract.

The Trumpet recalled that the Finance Minister, had last week, said the implementation of the e-Customs project would now commence since the party that was uncomfortable with the agreement had opted out, despite efforts by the government, through the office of the Attorney General of the Federation, AGF, to mediate.

An official of Bionica, Umaru Tanko, challenged the Minister of Finance to provide documents indicating that the company pulled out of the concession arrangement.

While confirming that the company had disagreed with other partners in the concession, he argued that the Ministry of Finance facilitated the concession

in violation of known regulations and procedures.

His words: "I really don't want to comment on this now, because we are still weighing the best approach on the matter. Shortly, we will reach out to the press and provide documents and evidence of what happened with the e-Customs project.

"The procedure was affected and there are obvious irregularities that the Federal Government has to correct, hence, this project will certainly suffer some setbacks."

When asked if the disagreement in the concession was linked to the pulling out of one of the concessionaires (Bionica), he said, "Where is the proof that any of the concessionaires pulled out? The Finance Minister didn't provide any document to show that any of the concessionaires pulled out.

"There is no evidence that any concessionaire pulled out and the concessionaire we are talking about is the lead sponsor and promoter of the project. Bionica developed the project and without Bionica the government is handing over the business to mere facilitators."

Meanwhile, industry stakeholders have continued to oppose the e-Customs project, describing it as a confirmation that the NCS had been relegated to only a revenue collection agency with concessionaires projecting \$176 billion government revenue in 20 years at the expense of trade facilitation and national security.

Some freight forwarders had also raised concerns on the secrecy surrounding the contract, even as they lamented the absence of stakeholders' engagement in the exercise.

Industry observers have also faulted the Federal Government's recent investments in scanners amid plans to concession that aspect of the service the FEC

approved in 2021.

The contract sum of \$18.12 million and N3.255 million for the acquisition of three Rapiscan Cargo Mobile Scanners awarded to Messrs Airwave Limited and another contract of N280 million, including Value Added Tax (VAT) for five units of fast Ballistic Reverie Assault Boats/ five units of Patrol Boats with assorted accessories awarded to Messrs C.Y. West Africa Limited.

With these scanners already deployed to the Tin Can Island, Apapa and Onne ports, industry stakeholders have described the move as a waste of resources.

Also in a bid to dissipate the backlash, which has trailed the Customs concession, the NCS Spokesman, Timi Bomodi, encouraged stakeholders to support the initiative, as it would enhance Customs operations for imports and exports.

"As efficient as NICIS II is, it still has limitations. We complain about alerts and serial interventions on transactions because we have a less than efficient audit mechanism.

"With this system examinations and release of import and exports will be subjected to live feeds in multiple platforms. This will check arbitrary decision making at all levels and will guide interventions.

"Several aspects of the Customs job are still not automated. An example is the escort operations for goods in transit. Today, because of shortfall in manpower, requests for escort takes quite a while before approval. This causes delays in the delivery of transit containers, but with automated e-tracking system, the delays will be a thing of the past," he said.

Bomodi also assured that border management and control, as well as interface with other government agencies will be enhanced as customs moves into an era of high efficiency, which will be tech-driven.



Mrs. Zainab Ahmed

## Commercial buses take over okada operations at Apapa port corridor

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

Commercial buses have resurfaced along the newly constructed Apapa Oshodi Expressway, with passengers plying the Mile 2-Liverpool axis along Tin Can Island Port corridor.

*The Trumpet*, which monitored

the development since the Lagos State Government's ban of motorcycles on Wednesday, June 1, 2022, reports that a section of the road has been occupied by yellow buses (Danfo), mini buses and LT buses, which usually carries higher number of passengers.

The outward Apapa lane of

the road under construction is currently occupied by tankers and container-laden trucks and although Okada riders were relatively visible along the corridor, commercial buses far outnumbered them.

Viable routes along the corridor by the transporters include the Mile 2-Second Gate Tin Can

Island Port, Mile 2-Coconut, Mile 2-Liverpool and Mile 2-First Gate.

A cross section of commuters who spoke with *The Trumpet* expressed sigh of relief over the development, even as they commended efforts of the transporters' initiative at assisting passengers.

They noted that the transporters' initiative was timely, sequel to the recent ban of Okada in some part of Lagos State.

A customs broker, who simply identified himself as Sunday Nwachukwu, noted that the replacement of commercial buses with Okada along the corridor was a welcome development, adding that it is safer, cheaper and less risky.

Nwachukwu said the transporters have provided assistance for most of the freight forwarders and other ancillary service providers in the shipping industry, pointing out that the ban of motorbike operators from major highways should be properly

enforced and implemented.

On her part, Comrade Bolanle Adewole of the Nigeria Merchant Navy Officer and Water Transport Senior Association, applauded the Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu for the ban on okada, adding that the transport hiccups in Apapa have been addressed with the intervention of commercial buses.

Adewole stated that issues of transportation within the corridors would reduce the risk of accidents.

Another stakeholder in the maritime industry, Jerry Obadiah, called on road transport unions to ensure that motorbike operators should not be allowed to venture into commercial bus business for now.

Obadiah maintained that the era of going round within the Apapa-Ajegunle axis will become a thing of the past if relevant agencies properly carry out enforcement of the ban.

## Nigeria Air gets license for proposed national carrier amid pending aircraft

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO and ADAKU WALTER**

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has issued an Air Transport License (ATL) to Nigeria Air Limited the operating company for the new national carrier Nigeria Air.

Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, said the licencing was the beginning of operations of the airline, maintaining that the commencement date for the domestic operation of the airline would be announced in due course.

Nigeria Air Limited received an Air Transport License (ATL) from the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) signaling the end of the beginning of operations of the airline and the commencement date of domestic operations will be announced in due course," Sirika wrote on his verified Twitter handle.

*The Trumpet* learnt from an employee of NCAA that the Federal Government has begun the process of buying and leasing some aircraft.

The source added that the airline hope to commence operations before the year runs out with about eight to 10 aircrafts depending on the outcome of the commitments of its private partners.

The source who spoke on condition of anonymity said the airline would have begun operations a long time ago, but for the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He added that the President Muhammadu Buhari administration wants to see that the airline project become a reality before the end of its tenure, which is less than a year.

*The Trumpet* recalled that Air Nigeria takes off has been dogged with several challenges, setbacks and controversies in the last four and five years.

The ATL marked: NCAA/ATR1/ATL214, which was presented to the airline, was signed by the Director-General of NCAA, Captain Musa Nuhu, and would run for five years from June 3, 2022 to June 2, 2027. The new national airline is expected to provide scheduled and non-scheduled services.

It would be recalled that Nigeria Air Limited had in March, 2022 applied to the NCAA for a license to operate scheduled and non-scheduled passenger and cargo service.

Meanwhile, the interim management of the national carrier has explained why the new airline was yet to take delivery of any aircraft required for its operations.

Speaking in Lagos after receiving an ATL for Nigeria Air, the Chief Executive of the airline, Captain Dapo Olumide, who stressed that it was difficult to get the aircraft, attributed this to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global aviation sector and other factors.

Olumide, who received the licence on behalf of the proposed new airline, assured that efforts were ongoing to get all the aircraft, as this was a basic requirement of the NCAA before the issuance of another vital certificate.

"The aircrafts are available but there are all sorts of issues because this is summer peak period. And as you know, post-COVID, all the aircraft were parked in the desert. The airlines are bringing them out slowly. It takes time to



Hadi Sirika

bring an aircraft out of storage. There is a further complication with lots of flights in Europe are being cancelled or delayed because most people were laid off during the COVID and they don't have enough staff in the airports to turn around flights.

"It is difficult to get the aircraft but, we there are ongoing discussions with the original equipment manufacturers and we are waiting for the right terms of the agreement. We already have the aircraft identified, because that is one of the requirements of NCAA, but we are just trying to perfect titles and so on," he said.

Olumide also noted that the airline was still sourcing aircraft, stressing that the national carrier was in a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) process with the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) based on approval of the Federal Executive Council (FEC).

## Nine years after ratification, stakeholders decry NIMASA's poor regulation of MLC

Industry stakeholders have expressed worries over the lack of proper enforcement, implementation and regulations of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006 by the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) nine years after ratification of the convention in 2013.

They lamented that manning agents and ship owners are uncontrollable in term of employment and working condition of seafarers aboard ships, while calling on government to review and revise the convention.

A Director of the Centre for Multi-Modal Transport Studies, University of Lagos (UNILAG), Iyiola Oni, decried failure of enforcement and regulations of the MLC in Nigeria since its ratification almost a decade ago.

In a presentation, the university teacher also lamented that the workers right convention had failed to adequately address most of the pressing issues in the nation's maritime space.

Oni maintained that the MLC 2006 was yet to bring about the anticipated changes due to difficulty in implementation by different ratifying flag states.

According to him, regulatory agencies of the Convention in Nigeria failed to effectively regulate manning agents and recruitment of seafarers aboard ships in the maritime domain.

He also added that ship owners and their agents do not properly provide rest hours, feeding and quality of recreation facilities.

He further stressed the need for the government to review and revise the MLC 2006, pointing out that Article IV of the Convention provides right to secure and safe working environment, fair terms of employment, decent working

and living conditions on board ships.

Oni restated that health protection, medical care, welfare measures and other social protection measures were major components that were itemised in MLC 2006.

The lecturer asked NIMASA to collaborate with other relevant authorities to effectively enforce and regulate manning activities in the country, maintaining that adequate welfare of seafarers would move global trade without barrier.

"Seafarers are the drivers of the transformation to a low carbon maritime industry. To attain a low carbon maritime industry, it is vital that working condition, health and safety of seafarers are guaranteed.

"Stronger standards are required for safe operational crew and component crew resilience which reduced risk to crew, vessels and the environment.

"The transition maritime task force set up in 2022 made up of the UN's shipping body, IMO and International Labour Organisation (ILO) targets ensuring that the shipping industry pursues a fair and equitable green transition in shipping," he added.

Seafarers' unions have also called on the apex regulatory agency to up the ante in furtherance to better the lots of seafarers.

MLC 2006 came into force in August 2013 with the aim of ensuring better working and living condition of seafarers. Currently, no fewer than 96 countries of the world have ratified the provisions of the conference covering 90 per cent of global shipping fleet.

Nigeria is the 37th ILO member state and fifth state in the Africa region to have ratified the provisions of the conference in 2013.

## MWUN tasks NPA on renewal of concession agreement with indigenous terminal operators

Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) has urged the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) to encourage indigenous terminal operators in the country's ports by renewing their concession agreements.

President General of MWUN, Adewale Adeganju, who gave the charge while addressing journalists in Lagos, asked the Managing Director of NPA, Muhammed Bello-Koko to expedite action on the renewal of the concession agreements.

Adeganju argued that unlike the foreign terminal operators, whose activities and investments translate into capital flight, indigenous terminals had encouraged Nigerian workers better.

It would be recalled that the Managing Director of NPA, at a parley with the maritime journalists recently disclosed that the concession of no fewer

than five terminal operators had expired and that the agency was on the verge of renewing them without new conditions.

While making a case for the indigenous terminals, Adeganju also urged the NPA to give them more favourable terms of agreement than their foreign counterparts, who care less about Nigerians and the country's economy.

"Our indigenous terminal operators need to be supported, because they have done well. We all know what transpired in 2016, when they were coming onboard, we thought that they will not perform, but now, we have seen the dividends of privatising the ports one of which is that it has generated employment.

"What happened there was that for the NPA, which happens to be the master stevedore then, privatising the ports affected all 14,000 employees of the NPA,

which was reduced to 3,000 workers.

"But as things went on, we have been able to manage the terminal operators. We need to encourage them to improve on their terminals. I agree that some of them are not good, but to me, they have come to stay, anyone found wanting among them should have their contract of concession reviewed," he said.

Adeganju also pointed out that indigenous terminal operators should be applauded, as most of the foreign terminal operators at the port and other multinational companies invest in Nigeria and make huge profits, which they repatriate to their countries for development.

He said this calls for encouragement of indigenous terminals by the government to ensure money made from Nigeria is reinvested for the development of the country.

# 'I'm not retiring anytime soon'

## No comparison in industry, says Saidi Balogun

*Veteran Nollywood actor, Saidi Balogun is one of the most versatile ones who combines acting, producing and directing. His delivery prowess is second to none and as such he is one of the very few who created new initiatives in the industry that include being the first to produce a one cast movie. Having been faced with several challenges; Walata as he is sometimes called, is still waxing stronger. In this chat with OMONIYI ALLI, he bares it all.*

**You are a big name in the movie industry. You have appeared in English movies as well. But people still believe that the Yoruba movie industry has a long way to go if it would meet up with its foreign counterparts?**

I don't think those who are saying that are correct. The Yoruba movie industry is big and growing every day. I don't like to comment on this unnecessary comparison that has been dividing us over a long time. We are all practitioners and we are doing very well. There is nothing there to catch up, we just have to keep getting better and put our house in order. No association is perfect but we can get better by putting the right structure on ground so that people would not have to keep looking at A as being better than B. I have appeared in countless English and Yoruba movies and I can tell you that there is no difference. The only difference is the expression. I am not ruling out the fact that we have a lot of work to do, but I would not deride the actors and actresses who toil every day to make sure that they keep their fans entertained. There is no comparison so to say; we are all under one umbrella tagged 'Nollywood'.

**Your new movie *Online* is currently doing well. What is the inspiration behind the movie?**

Like I always say, I am in the era of rebranding myself and on that note was when I shot the movie 'Online'. With the movie I try as much as possible to make a lot of youths especially know that they can't always get away with anything they post online because nobody seems to be censoring their contents. The movie

is also to generally erase the notion that only criminal stuffs are done online.

**You double as the Director of Media for Adron Homes; does that mean you are turning back on acting?**

Turning my back on acting? That is never going to happen. Let me state it here clearly that my deal with Adron will not affect my job as an actor and movie producer. Back then when the company contacted me, I took my time to study the brand and discovered that they worthy companies and also I discovered that the only common thing that gives many Nigerians problem is the issue of housing. So, if a company is giving Nigerians the opportunity to become land and house owners in the most simplest and affordable way, I think it should be commended.

**How have you been handling this knowing your busy schedules on set?**

I understand what my job entails as the director of media, and I am ready giving my best.

**But you have been an actor all your life. How will you cope with this new assignment?**

As an actor of many years in the game, I have worked with media executives at different times over the years. I have executed a number of projects involving the media in the last six years or more. So, this is a familiar terrain. Some of my friends in the media would come in handy this time. I have a team of experts that I would be working with. The job is not going to be as difficult. I am up to the task. I am grateful to the Group Managing Director of Adron Homes and Properties,



Oba Adetola Emmanuel King, for the big role he wants me to play.

**For Saidi Balogun, how did the journey into the movie world start?**

I was born in Enugu, grew up in the north and I am a Yoruba boy. I lived with a man who did a lot of French. I can speak the 3 languages and it has been helping me. From the word go my mum knew I would become a good actor. My father was a soldier and a comedian although he didn't commercialize his own but I am doing it now. I also have guardians in the industry, Madam Saje, Yinka Quadri, Lola Idije etc they helped me grow. I finished my secondary school in 1978 Madam Saje drove me back 8 years after. Lola Idije was always providing money for me any time I had issues at School. They have been calling me Jide Kosoko's boy and I remain his boy.

**You are at the 5th floor now. Ehat do think you about life at the moment?**

I have had the most beautiful moments. A lot of people know my story but, they may not know it all, because even me, I can't tell my whole story without missing out one or two touching experiences. For me, I am still here today because Almighty Allah granted me the grace to be here and I want to live every moment of my life thanking Him for His mercy over my life. As long as life continues, we can't run away from challenges. What I usually tell people is that my life is an example of a man with plenty of grace. At this point in my life, I want to take things easy and be happy as much as I

can. I don't want to keep anybody in my resentment. It is a new dawn.

**What are the things you engaged in before now that you can no longer do because of your age?**

I have really experimented and introduced new innovations before, my records speak for me. However, I want to promote the culture of this country now, more so I want to focus on improving the production aspect of it.

**There are quite a number of events that have occurred in your life in the last few years. Which would you describe as the most challenging?**

The truth is that if you know me quite well, you would know that I am a forward-looking person. As long as I live, occurrences will not cease to happen. Maybe, a bigger one is yet to happen, I don't know. So, if I pick one as the most challenging now, I am assuming that I am nearing my end. I think the most important thing to do every day of one's life is to keep thanking God while one works on the things to make life more meaningful for others. All the events that have happened, the good and the bad, have shaped my thinking. Of course, I have had my flaws. I have had the worst moments. I had a terrible auto accident some years back, one that almost claimed my life. In fact, a lot of people had concluded that Saheed Balogun could not survive it, but here I am today. So, you can't really tell how beautiful your story would end, but you can write a beautiful story with your life while you can.

Relationship

# Managing your emotional reactions



By OMONIYI ALLI

Emotions are the most present, pressing and sometimes painful force in our lives. We are driven day by day by our emotions. We take chances because we're excited for new prospects. We cry because we've been hurt and we make sacrifices because we love. Without a doubt, our emotions dictate our thoughts, intentions and actions with superior authority to our rational minds. But when we act on our emotions too quickly, or we

act on the wrong kinds of emotions, we often make decisions that we later lament. Our feelings can alter between dangerous extremes. Veer too far to the left and you're bordering on rage. Steer too much to the right and you're in a state of euphoria. As with many other aspects of life, emotions are best met with a sense of moderation and logical perspective. This is not to say that we should stop ourselves from falling in love or jumping for joy after great news. These truly are the finer things in life. It is negative emotions that must be handled with extreme care.

Negative emotions, like rage, envy or bitterness, tend to spiral out of control, especially immediately after they've been triggered. In time, these sorts of emotions can grow like weeds, slowly conditioning the mind to function on detrimental feelings and dominating daily life. Ever met a person who's consistently angry or hostile? They weren't born that way. But they allowed certain emotions to stir within them for so long that they became inbred feelings arising all too frequently.

Follow these steps to control your emotions and regain rationality in any challenging situation:

Don't react right away: Reacting immediately to emotional triggers can be an immense mistake. It is guaranteed that you'll say or do something you'll later regret. Before refuting the trigger with your emotional argument,

take a deep breath and stabilize the overwhelming impulse. Continue to breathe deeply for five minutes, feeling as your muscles intense and your heart rate returns to normal. As you become calmer, affirm to yourself that this is only temporary.

Ask for divine guidance: Faith is our saving grace in our darkest moments. No matter your creed, developing a healthy relationship with the divine world will help you surmount your obstacles more easily. This is because when you believe in a higher force, you also believe in the power of divine intervention to show you what you must do, teach you why something is happening or even save you from a certain unwanted situation. When burdened with emotion, close your eyes, envision a positive solution to your problem, and ask the universe to illuminate the best path forward.

Find a healthy outlet: Now that you've managed your emotion, you'll need to release it in a healthy way. Emotions should never be bottled up. Call or go see someone you trust and recount to them what happened. Hearing an opinion other than your own broadens your awareness. Keep a journal and transfer your emotions from your inner self onto the paper. Many people find it helpful to engage in aggressive exercises, such as kickboxing or martial arts, to discharge their feelings. Others meditate and chant to return to a tranquil state of being. Perform whatever activity is best-suited to you in order to liberate your being from pent-up sentiments.

See the bigger picture: Every happening of our lives, whether good or bad, serves a higher purpose. Wisdom means being able to see past the moment and discern the greater meaning of any given situation. You may not understand it in the beginning, but as time goes by, you'll begin to see the bigger picture falling into perfect order. Even in the midst of an emotionally upsetting moment, trust that there

exists an ultimate purpose which you will come to comprehend soon.

Replace your thoughts: Negative emotions bind us to recurring negative thoughts, creating cycles of downright negative patterns. Whenever you are confronted with an emotion which is making you feel or think something bad, force it out of your mind and replace it with a different thought. Imagine the ideal resolution to your problem playing out, think about someone who makes you happy or remember an event that makes you smile.

Forgive your emotional triggers: Your emotional triggers may be your best friend, your family members, yourself or all of the above. You may feel a sudden wave of anger when your friend "does that thing she does," or a stab of self-loathing when you remember something you could have done differently. But when you forgive, you detach. You detach from the resentment, the jealousy or the fury lingering within you. You allow people to be who they are without the need for escalating emotions. As you forgive, you will find yourself

disassociating from the harsh feelings attached to your being.

Accept responsibility for your reaction: Accept yourself as powerful instead of as victim to remove the veil of self-deception. When you seek to identify what is triggering how you feel in the moment, you give yourself the chance to feel differently if you want to. You will also have more clarity on what you need to do or what you need to ask for to change your circumstances.

Choose what you want to feel: With practice, the reaction to your emotional triggers could subside, but they may never go away. The best you can do is to quickly identify when an emotion is triggered and then choose what to say or do next. Ask yourself: Are you really losing this need or not? Is the person actively denying your need or are you taking the situation too personally? If it's true that someone is ignoring your need or blocking you from achieving it, can you either ask for what you need or, if it doesn't really matter, can you let the need go for now?.





## Nigeria, Sierra Leone AFCON qualifier behind closed door - NFF

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

The Nigeria Football Federation has reiterated that Thursday's 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifying encounter between the Super Eagles and the Leone Stars of Sierra Leone at the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja will be played without fans in the stands.

NFF General Secretary, Dr Mohammed Sanusi said in Abuja on Tuesday that the situation is a consequence of the one-match ban placed on the country by world football governing body, FIFA, over the fracas that followed the end of 2022 FIFA World Cup playoff round against the Black Stars of Ghana in March.

"We want to appeal to our very passionate football fans to



take heart for this one game. It is only a one-match ban, after which they can again start trooping out to support the Super Eagles," Sanusi said.

"The match against Sierra Leone will be without fans as a consequence of what happened after the match against the Ghanaians.

"Nonetheless, we want to urge all our football fans,

and indeed all Nigerians, to support the team whichever way they can and pray for success against the Sierra Leoneans on Thursday," he appealed.

The Super Eagles take on the Leone Stars at the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja in a Day 1 game of the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations starting from 5pm on Thursday, 9th June.

Four days later, they tackle 'The Falcons and True Parrots' of São Tomé and Príncipe at the 45,000-capacity Grand Stade de Agadir in southern Morocco.

While CAF has appointed Ivorian officials to take charge of the encounter in Abuja, Liberian officials led by referee Hassen Corneh will oversee the match in Agadir on Monday.

## AYG2022: Nigeria, Benin qualify for beach volleyball

Nigeria volleyball youth team and their counterpart, Benin Republic, have qualified to represent their countries in beach volleyball at the 2022 African Youth Games.

The giant of Africa's team, during qualification, beat Niger Republic in two sets, 21-13, 22-20 to record a 2-0 victory in the male category to complement their unbeaten run at the just concluded 2022 Zone III African Youth Games (AYG) Qualification Beach Volleyball held at Mobebe Palace, Badagry, Lagos state.

In another scenario, Nigeria in the female category, walloped Benin Republic on two occasions being the only female team in be 2022 ZIII AYG qualifiers, 2-0 (21-14, 21-11) and 2-0 (21-8, 21-8) to garner 8 points to qualify for African Youth Games championship.

It is noteworthy to state that Nigeria's male team finished

top with 12 points followed by Benin Republic in second place with 9 points. Niger Republic placed third with 6 points while Ivory Coast occupied the fourth position with 3 points.

According to the report by the Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), the Secretary-General of Confederation of African Volleyball (CAVB) Zone III, Engineer Musa Nimrod commended the participating teams for making qualification a success.

He hailed the Mobebe of Badagry for providing the beach volleyball facilities and crowd support base during the qualifiers.

Nimrod, who is the President of Nigeria Volleyball Federation said, "The 2022 Zone III African Youth Games Qualification Beach Volleyball was successful and I want to thank the Mobebe of Badagry



for providing the facilities and the people of Badagry are great; CAVB Zone III executives want to thank the countries that participated.

"It is not a surprise that Nigeria qualified for the African Youth Games and we will put in a lot of effort because the real games are not easy.

"The coaches have seen the weaknesses of the players; the Federation will begin the Beach Tour in July and it

will strengthen the players," Nimrod revealed.

He added that the participants are good representatives of beach volleyball sport and specifically thank Cote d'Ivoire for making up to the qualifying stage.

He continued: "Benin, Nigeria and Niger Republic are good in Beach Volleyball as far as I am concerned; I want to thank Ivory Coast for making it to the qualifiers.

## Cannavaro wants English, Spanish clubs' offers

Azzurri legend Fabio Cannavaro longs to return to coaching after parting ways with Chinese topflight club Tianjin in 2021.

The 2006 World Cup-winning star voted the '2006 FIFA Footballer of the Year', disclosed that he has spoken to several clubs in England and Spain to get back to coaching.

However, Cannavaro, commenting on Ivan Perisic's move to Tottenham from Inter Milan, noted that it poses a threat to the Italian league which lags behind the English Premier League and Spanish

La Liga.

Furthermore, the former Tianjin boss pointed out that Paul Pogba's prospective move back to Juventus is a welcome development but hopes that the France World Cup-winning star can replicate his old form which attracted Manchester United to resign him at a club-record fee.

According to a report by La Gazzetta dello Sport, Cannavaro said, "I want to return to the pitch, but I am in no rush.

"I've spoken to several

clubs in England and Spain, but I must be convinced about the decision. It's not a matter of money, but I must feel the ambition to reach specific targets.

"It's complicated for Serie A sides to fill the gap with La Liga and Premier League clubs.

"Perisic's move to the Premier League isn't a good sign," he opined.

Speaking about Pogba, he continued: "I hope we'll see the real Pogba again, one of his first spells at Juventus.

"He needs to find the right

motivations because the midfielder we've seen in the last few seasons isn't useful to Juventus or France," added the Italian legend.

Cannavaro, nevertheless, defended coach Gennaro Gattuso who was accused by some Valencia fans of racism.

In his defence, he exemplified Gattuso who he acknowledged as a good coach that has impressive records.

He added that he is aware that the directors at Valencia are having some issues among themselves, the kind once experienced by Tottenham

## Nadal to play in Wimbledon if...

French Open champion Rafael Nadal said he will feature in this year's Wimbledon if his chronic football injury subsides.

The 22 Grand Slam single titles holder has been suffering from a chronic foot injury that forced him out of several major contests in 2021.

Though the 36-year-old expected to have retired because of the incident that needs urgent medical surgery, the Spaniard has played through 2022 using anaesthetic injections to suppress the pains and has won two majors.

Nadal's accolades presently have surpassed world number 1 Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer's Grand Slam singles titles record by two after he won the 2022 Australian Open and French Open at Court Philippe Chatrier.

But the Spaniard, who is eager to feature in the Wimbledon, has rejected any means of undergoing a process of playing through the support of anaesthetic injections.

"Wimbledon is a priority, always has been a priority. If I'm able to play with anti-inflammatories yes," Nadal said told Sky Sports

"To play with anaesthetic injections, I do not want to put myself in that position again. It can happen once but no, it's not the philosophy of life I want to follow.

"Let's see. I am always a positive guy and always expect things are going the right way. Let's be confident, let's be positive and let's see what's going on," he added.

Nadal disclose his next line of action that could enable him pilot his career to its prime.

He continued: "It's going to be a radio frequency injection on the nerve and trying to burn a little bit the nerve and create the impact that I have now on the nerve for a long period of time.

"That's what we are going to try. If that works, I'm going to keep going. If that does not work, then it's going to be another story. And then I am going to ask myself if I am ready to do a major thing without being sure that things are going the proper way, for example.

"A major surgery that doesn't guarantee me to be able to be competitive again and take a long time to be back [is a risk]. So let's do it step by step, as I did all my tennis career," he added.

Nadal missed almost the entire 2021 season, including the Wimbledon, Olympics and US Open due to a chronic foot injury but reignited his career in 2022 with a triumph at the Australian Open and victory over Norwegian Casper Ruud on Sunday to win his fourteenth French Open major.



## Milner signs one-year contract extension

Liverpool midfielder James Milner has signed a one-year contract extension that will see him remain in Anfield for an additional year.

The former Manchester City player, who joined Liverpool in 2015 on a free transfer, was a key figure for Aston Villa for two seasons where he made 71 Premier League appearances while netting 11 goals until 2010.

According to reports, the midfielder had to take a pay cut to ensure he is made part of Jurgen Klopp's plans for next season.

The 36-year-old, attaining 289 appearances for the club with 26 goals while fabricating 44 clinical assists for Liverpool, won 6 trophies with the Reds including a UEFA Champions League and FIFA World Cup trophies.

Confirming the report, Liverpool on their official social media handle said, "The vice-captain, who joined the club in 2015, is set to remain with the Reds for a further season having agreed to fresh terms beyond the expiry of his previous deal this summer.

"Since arriving on a free transfer seven years ago, the No.7 has helped Jürgen Klopp's team win the Premier League, Champions League, FIFA Club World Cup, UEFA Super Cup and, last season, the Emirates FA Cup and Carabao Cup.

"Milner has played 289 games, the most of any side he has represented in his career, and scored 26 goals during his time at Anfield so far," Liverpool added.

Milner, overwhelmed with the contract extension, has been a stabilising force on Liverpool's bench, giving Klopp an option in games that prove physically tenses.

"Couldn't be happier to extend my stay with this incredible club for another year. Playing football is a privilege and even more so here. Thanks for the support, will do my best to repay it," Milner said after completing the deal.

The former Three Lions midfielder capped 61 times with a goal to his name, got his first call to represent England in 2009.



# Make Super Eagles a superb blend, Dare charges Peseiro

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

The Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, on Wednesday, charged the new Head Coach of Super Eagles, José Santos Peseiro, to make the squad a blend of the very best of professional players based at home and abroad.

Dare said the Ministry will assist in the rebuilding process by providing a conducive environment for the Portuguese to use their best efforts and endeavour to restore the confidence of football-loving Nigerians and the Government in the Super Eagles.

At a brief but colourful ceremony in Abuja, where the NFF formally presented Peseiro to the Government of Nigeria through the Sports Ministry, Dare told the gaffer in no uncertain terms that Nigerians want their national teams to win every game, even though this is an impossibility in sport.

"Whenever the team does not win, it must be clearly seen to have demonstrated high-level commitment, fervour, consistency and discipline on and off the pitch," Dare told Peseiro.

"In order to be able to appreciate the deep love of our people for the game and why they want their team to win all



the time, you have to live in our country, enjoy our food, our weather, our hospitality.

"I want to let you know that the process that produced you was governed by diligence, commitment and spirit of teamwork, and indeed very thorough.

"I believe that you will use this opportunity to make a mark by leading the Super Eagles to new heights," the Minister added.

The Minister then told Peseiro to ensure a solid win for the Super Eagles against the Leone Stars of Sierra Leone in Abuja on Thursday, in a Day 1 encounter of the qualification series for next year's Africa Cup of Nations finals.

Earlier, NFF 2nd Vice President Shehu Dikko, who stood in for President of the NFF, Amaju Melvin Pinnick, thanked the Minister and the Sports Ministry for the support

and guidance during the process that produced Coach Peseiro.

He reiterated that the Portuguese ticked all the boxes for the federation having coached in four continents worked with big clubs and big players and demonstrated a keen desire to work with the Super Eagles.

While the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Alhaji Ismaila Abubakar challenged Peseiro to work assiduously with the passion to achieve his mandate, NFF General Secretary, Dr Mohammed Sanusi said he has been impressed with the Portuguese tactician's training methods and work ethics, before the friendlies with Mexico and Ecuador in the United States of America.

Peseiro, on his part, thanked the Government and people of Nigeria for the opportunity to

tinker with the Super Eagles and said he is fully committed to the objective of winning the Africa Cup of Nations in Cote d'Ivoire next year summer.

"I have always loved the Nigeria team, ever since I watched them play at the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the United States. It is a team with a solid pedigree. Presently, we have both quality and quantity of players and it is always a good situation for any team," the Super Eagles coach said.

Also at the occasion were the Chief of Staff to the Minister, Alhaji Abba Abdullahi Yola; NFF's Director of Communications, Ademola Olajire; Special Assistant to the Minister, Mary Onyali; Super Eagles Team Administrator, Dayo Enebi Achor; SA (Multimedia) to the Minister, Toyin Ibitoye and; Media Assistant to the Minister, Kola Daniel.

## Sadio Mane: Liverpool reject second Bayern's bid

Liverpool have rejected a second bid worth £30m, with a £23.5 upfront payment for Senegalese Sadio Mane from Bundesliga giants Bayern Munich.

The deal, including an additional £6.5m in add-ons, would only be paid if Bayern won three Champions Leagues and Mane lifted Ballon d'Or three times.

According to Liverpool, considering the terms unrealistic, value the striker above the Bayern Munich worth for the player.

Liverpool value Mane, who is 30 years old and about to enter the last phase of his contract with the Merseyside club, at around £43million.

The Reds had earlier rejected an offer from Bayern,

for an initial £21m with another £4m in add-ons.

According to reports by British media last week, Mane said he would do "what the Senegalese people want" when asked about his future, and has more recently joked that he could sign for Ligue 1 side Marseille.

The report noted that Mane and forward partner Mo

Salah are both out of contract at Anfield next summer, and Bayern have been preparing a three-year deal for the African Cup of Nations winner.

He told Sky Sports News before the Champions League final that he would decide his future after the defeat to Real Madrid but teased fans ahead of last week's AFCON qualifier against Benin.

## Chelsea to honour Lukaku's move to Inter but...

Chelsea have inarguably accepted to allow Romeo Lukaku process next season's campaign in the Inter Milan's jersey but only on two conditions.

According to emerging reports from Italian media, the West London club is open to doing business to send Lukaku to the Nerazzurri on a paid loan deal or by including one of the Inter's top players in a swap deal.

The Blues coach, Thomas Tuchel, in yesterday's meeting

with Todd Boehly consortium to discuss the club's transfer plans, would not stop a move by the Belgian to return to Italy according to reports by Gazzetta dello Sport.

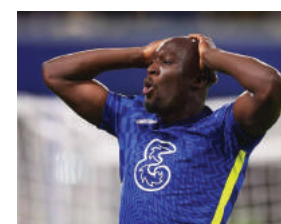
Italian media, however, noted that given the performance of Lukaku, who scored a paltry number of 15 goals in 44 appearances in the entire season, Tuchel's decision to allow the player to leave for Italy does not look surprising.

The former Manchester United forward whom Chelsea

spent a whopping sum of €113m to bring to Stamford Bridge from Inter Milan in last year's summer transfer window, could return to Italy on a loan deal.

According to La Il Corriere dello Sport, Inter would need to pay at least €25m for the striker's season loan, but given Inter's finances, it's hard to imagine the Nerazzurri invest as much to get the player for just one season.

The other path could see the Nerazzurri offer one of



their stars to re-sign Lukaku permanently. Lautaro Martinez, Alessandro Bastoni and Milan Skriniar are among the options for the Blues, but it remains to be seen if the Nerazzurri would sacrifice one of their stars to welcome Lukaku back.

## Zevrev undergo surgery: 'It's the best choice'

World number three Alexander Zevrev has undergone surgery to fix his torn ligament which occurred in the French Open final with Australian Open champion Rafael Nadal at Court Philippe Chatrier.

The German, who lost by a walkover after processing two sets against Nadal, a Spaniard aiming to clinch his 22nd Grand Slam title, hopes to come back better and stronger after the surgery.

According to world number 3 on his social media, he announced that the surgery was successful, adding that this was the best choice to quicken his return to action earlier than expected.

"Surgery was the best choice" for him to return to action as soon as possible, reported BBC Sports.

The world number 3 was trailing 7-6 (10-8) 6-6 against Nadal - who went on to win the men's singles tournament and claim a record-extending 22nd Grand Slam title - when he badly rolled his ankle and screamed out in agony.

He said all three of the lateral ligaments in his right ankle were damaged.

"We all have our own journey in life. This is part of mine. Next week I'll reach a career-high ranking of number 2 in the world, but

this morning I had to undergo surgery," Zevrev posted on Instagram.

"After further examination in Germany, we received confirmation that all three of the lateral ligaments in my right ankle were torn.

"To return to competition as quickly as possible, to ensure all the ligaments heal properly, and to reclaim full stability in my ankle, surgery was the best choice.

"My rehab starts now and I'll do everything to come back stronger than ever!

"I am continuing to receive so many messages and would like to thank everyone once again for supporting me during such a difficult time," he added.

If he had reached the final at Roland Garros and succeeded in lifting his first major in Paris, Zevrev would have taken over as world number one.



## Modric renews Madrid's contract

Real Madrid ace playmaker, Luka Modric, has extended his contract with the Spanish giants that will enable him remain in the Spanish capital until June 30, 2023.

The Croatian, on Wednesday, renewed his contract after enduring a superb spell at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

Modric, who joined Madrid from Tottenham in 2012 in a deal worth £30m, has won five Champions League and three LA Liga trophies in his ten-year spell at the club.

The midfield maestro has also made 436 appearances for Madrid in all competitions, scoring 31 goals while creating 73 assists. Definitely, he is happy to commit to the club for an additional year.

He said, "I am very happy and I'm proud to continue at least for one more year with Real Madrid.

"I feel happy and proud, I

want to give everything for the club and I'm proud to continue wearing this shirt.

"Thank you very much for your support and your love, Hala Madrid," he added.

Confirming Modric's new deal, Real Madrid are continuing to build their squad for the 2022/23 season, in which they'll seek to defend their status as Spanish and European champions.

This development which comes after the club confirmed the signing of Antonio Rudiger and Aurelien Tchouameni, shows Real Madrid have taken another step towards finalising the squad that will work under Carlo Ancelotti next season.

According to reports by Spanish media, Madrid have always sought to extend the Croatian's contract who has been instrumental to the dynamism experienced in Los Blancos midfielder.

## Nigeria Army reconstruct volleyball court

The Nigerian Army (NA) have reconstructed and commissioned the Largema Abogo cantonment volleyball court in Borno state.

It was commissioned by the Acting Commanding Officer of the Admin Battalion, Nigerian Army University of Biu, Major Julius Usman.

Usman, who is also the Patron of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Spikers, revealed on Tuesday that junior and senior teams have been formed basically from the barracks.

According to Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), the Army Commanding Officer

stated that the renovation became expedient to groom the potential embedded in the grassroots within the barracks.

He said, "The barracks is our community and that is where we have the bulk of our soldiers' children. We are making effort to harness the potential there and provide a platform that will give them a future in volleyball.

"The volleyball court in Largema Abogo cantonment, Biu and we commissioned it today sir. We also inaugurated our volleyball senior team and the barracks kids academy to commence training," he added.

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

— Leo Tolstoy



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# Olu of Warri presented with key to city in Canada

History has been made in Toronto, Canada, as revered Olu of Warri Kingdom, Ogiame Atuwatse III, was presented the key of Brampton City for his profound impact and outstanding community contribution and support.

His father Ogiame Atuwatse II, during his reign was also presented with the key of a city in the United States.

The Mayor of Brampton, Patrick Brown, who made the presentation at a colourful ceremony, expressed satisfaction with the Olu, for his show of love and desire to support community efforts in Brampton.

Patrick, who told the visiting King that “despite the fact that His Majesty resides in Nigeria, he never loses sight of where the Nigerian

community goes.”

In his words, “This may not be known, but His Majesty, as part of his visit, is showing a lot of love to the community. I was asked by his Majesty’s team if there is any local course that he can support in our city. For me, what became most important was the abundant recommendation for a hospital, which comes with an enormous price tag of over a billion dollars.

“In a city like Brampton, we need to have the best possible health care. We know there are challenges in the health sector and as part of his visit His Majesty has made a substantial contribution to our local hospital.

“So in honour of that friendship for the hospital in our city, I have a token of our city friendship and appreciation. His Majesty’s father was awarded a key to a

city in the United States for his generosity and so keeping to that history in the family, it is my pleasure today to present the city key of Brampton to honour your contributions. It is one thing to visit a city from abroad and another thing to come and say how can I help and show love.”

Excited Olu of Warri, thanked the Mayor and the people of Brampton for the recognition, adding that the symbolic gesture would foster better relationship between the Itsekiri and Nigerians alike.

“First of all, I want to thank you for the honour. Thank you for the city of Brampton for this warm reception and recognition. I was chatting with the Mayor and he was really proud of the positive contributions of the Nigeria community in Brampton and for me, that is what gives me joy.

“I have always likened myself as a diplomat of sort and we always represent home and I’m confident that Nigerians will be celebrated much more by the city of Brampton. I’m really overwhelmed by this. I believe that this symbolic gesture will open more doors to every single one of us. On behalf of myself, the Itsekiri Nation and the Nigeria people I say thank you.”

Ogiame also reciprocated the gesture by presenting a replica of his mode of transportation - two Red Canoes to the Mayor of Brampton, Patrick Brown and the city of Brampton respectively.

The city key presentation is also a direct symbol of the city wish that a guest is free to come and go at will and a great honour to the recipient alike.



Ogiame Atuwatse III

# UBA redeems USD500m five-year Eurobond

United Bank for Africa (UBA) has redeemed its debut \$500 million five-year Eurobond notes with the maturity date of June 8, 2022.

Issued in 2017, the five-year bond was offered at a coupon rate of 7.75%, and raised to support the Bank’s business in key sectors of the economy.

As part of UBA’s liability management strategies, In November 2021, the bank repurchased \$310.9 million of the notes through a cash tender offer. Upon maturity of the Eurobond, the outstanding portion of \$189.1 million and the coupon of \$7.3 million were redeemed by the bank.

“The development is a testament to UBA’s robust and prudent liquidity management strategies, coupled with a very strong and diversified asset and liability management process. This, in spite

of macroeconomic headwinds underpinned by FX illiquidity, double-digit inflation and currency devaluation,” said Kennedy Uzoka, GMD/CEO of UBA.

“Our huge customer base, diversified geographical spread and uncommon multiple decades of proven track record, continue to spotlight UBA as the

preferred destination for investors, individuals and businesses alike,” Uzoka continued.

With presence in 20 African countries, including Nigeria,

as well established operations in France, the United Kingdom (UK) and the only sub-Saharan African bank with a deposit-taking licence in the United

States of America (USA), UBA is a renowned financial institution providing banking and financial services to over 33 million customers across the globe.

# S’West govs get ultimatum to avert further massacres, acts of terrorism

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**, Akure

Following the terror attack at St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Owo Local Government on Sunday, leaders of thought in Yorubaland have declared and made seven points demands for South-West governors to avert further attacks. The leaders in a statement, asked South-West Governors to immediately embark on an “operation sweep terrorism out of Yorubaland” to be led by their Chairman and Ondo State Governor, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, being the latest victim of terrorism attack.

In the statement signed by Otonba Deji Osibogun and Engr. Yomi Bolarinwa, the leaders expressed worry over the inability of security agencies to nip all the insecurity

occurrences in the country and why many of the herders who are Fulani terrorists (whether real or disguised), have not been apprehended or prosecuted. The statement added that operation sweep terrorism out of Yorubaland must not stop at their arrests, but must also proceed towards the diligent prosecution of their cases which ordinarily attracts death penalty for their murderous activities. The statement read in part: “No culprit once apprehended must be transferred to Abuja where often times they are never tried but released to embark again on their aborted missions. All cases must be tried and prosecuted in Yorubaland where the crimes are committed.”

Furthermore, the leaders advised the governors to temporarily ban motorcycles (Okada) for the

next 10 months, in order for the state governments to establish appropriate regulations for its operations or pass laws for its total ban. Also, the statement added that each State Security Councils in conjunction with all local governments council areas should commence an immediate residency registration programme of all security personnel in each state. The leaders asked each state government to establish a law or an edict for compulsory registration of neighbourhood associations, and collaborate with the Police Community Relations associations in each Divisional Police Headquarters.

“Similarly, security outfits operating across all the 137+19 LGs in SW including Kogi(12), Kwara(5) and Edo(2) must be registered. In this regard, the Governors of Kogi and Kwara

must be co-opted to avoid a breach of security or loopholes from their areas.

“The proposed OPERATION SWEEP TERRORISM OUT OF YORUBALAND must be coordinated in conjunction with Amotekun, OPC, Agbekoya, Yoruba Hunters Association and our farmers union. A thirty day(30) period of evaluation and implementation of these 7 point demands is hereby proposed to the governors so they can be implemented on behalf of innocent Yoruba sons and daughters who now live in daily fear and those in diaspora who are too scared to return home.”

The leaders said any further massacre in Yorubaland as a result of non-implementation of the seven demands must be squarely blamed on the governors.