

## Clark asks Ayu to resign, says Tambuwal betrayed national patriotism

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

Following the emergence of a northerner, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the national

chairman, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, also a northerner has been asked to vacate office.

The call was made by the Leader of the Pan- Niger Delta Development Forum (PANDEF), Chief Edwin Clark who blamed Atiku's victory on

insensitivity of the PDP to the principle of power rotation and zoning. He also castigated Sokoto State Governor Aminu Tambuwal as a betrayer of national patriotism for paving way for Atiku's emergence by stepping down a moment to the election.

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JUNE 1-2, 2022 VOL. 1 NO. 052 N200



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# Anxiety, tension in APC over Buhari's request on successor

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# Anxiety, tension in APC over Buhari's request on successor

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

A few days to the commencement of presidential primary poll of the All Progressives Congress (APC), President Muhammadu Buhari on Tuesday solicited the support of governors elected on the platform of the party to give him a free hand in picking who succeeds him in 2023.

The demand immediately reignited fears and tension in the ruling political grouping that the dreaded consensus formula might be used to decide who succeeds Buhari, this obviating the need for the primary election fielding many political warriors.

Buhari held a consultative meeting with members of the Progressives Governors Forum headed by Alhaji Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

The party is apparently in a dilemma of picking its standard bearer for the 2023 presidential election after the emergence of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as candidate of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP).

Last Monday and Tuesday, 23 APC presidential aspirants were screened by a committee led by a former national chairman of the party, Chief John Odigie - Oyegun.

The president who preached internal cohesion told the governor's that the party needed to effectively manage the selection process in a manner that will not cause implosion and rancour.

He pointed out to the governors that most of them select their successors without the party checkmating them, and that he should be allowed to find a dependable successor who is capable of continuing

laudable programmes and policies of the party after the completion of his tenure on May 29, 2023.

The president also told the governors that it was time for them to reciprocate his good gestures towards them on many occasions by acceding to his request.

Buhari in his speech said: "the transition processes for the 2023 General Elections have commenced in earnest and I note that the most successful Political Parties globally have always relied on their internal cohesion and a strong leadership brand to achieve bigger electoral fortunes. Our party, the APC, shall not be any different, more so as we are still implementing the blueprint for a more prosperous nation."

"As I begin the final year of my second term as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and leader of the Party, I recognize the compelling need for me to provide stronger leadership to the Party under this transition process and to ensure that it happens in an orderly manner."

"Such leadership is required so that the Party remains strong and united. It is also needed to improve our electoral fortunes by ensuring that it retains power at the center, hold the great majority in various legislative chambers and also gain additional number of states at state levels."

"In pursuit of the foregoing objectives, the Party has successfully established internal policies that promote continuity and smooth succession plans even at the state and local government levels. For example, first term Governors who have served credibly well have been encouraged to stand for re-election. Similarly, second term Governors have been



**Buhari**

accorded the privilege of promoting successors that are capable of driving their visions as well as the ideals of the party.

"In a few days, the Party will be holding its Convention during which primaries would take place to pick the Presidential Flag Bearer for the 2023 General Elections. This is a very significant process and its outcome should prove to the world, the positive quality of the APC regarding democratic principles, culture as well as leadership."

"As we approach the Convention, I appeal to all of you to allow our interests to converge, our focus to remain on the changing dynamics of our environment, the expectations of our citizens and the global community. Our objective must be the victory of our party and our choice of the candidate must be someone who would give the Nigerian masses a sense of victory and confidence even before the elections."

"In keeping with the established internal policies of the Party and as we approach the Convention in a few days, therefore, I wish to solicit the reciprocity and support of the Governors and other stakeholders in picking my

successor, who would fly the flag of our party for election into the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2023."

"I wish to assure you that the consultation process shall continue to ensure that all aspirants and stakeholders would be brought on board right through to the convention. This would also ensure that any anxiety occasioned by different factors are effectively brought under control and that our party emerges stronger."

The Trumpet learnt that Buhari's request gladdened some quarters which believe their aspirants are or may be the anointed one. The camps of Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Senate President Ahmad Lawan, former Transport minister Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, and even Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu and Ekiti State Governor Kayode Fayemi are said to be "expectant, hopeful, optimistic and confident" of clinching it, according to sources.

However, Buhari's demand has unsettled the camps of some aspirants who believe that they stand a chance of winning the primary, especially that of

former Lagos State Governor Bola Tinubu, who is not seen as a favourite for presidential anointing and coronation.

Some of Tinubu's supporters and henchmen are vociferous in the media, opposing consensus and criticising any move in that direction by the party or its officials.

In fact, crisis has eupted within the leadership of the APC as the National Chairman has been accused of taking unilateral decisions to the exclusion of other members of the party's National Working Committee (NWC).

Two NWC members, Salihu Moh. Lukman, National Vice Chairman (North) and Isaac Kekemeke National Vice Chairman (South-West) on Tuesday said there was need for urgent intervention and members to be vigilant.

The pro-Tinubu duo in a statement said they were compelled to speak out following postponement of the scheduled NWC meetings, twice within 48 hours.

They said: "we are convinced beyond doubt that this is a deliberate attempt to foist a fait accompli on the NWC on fundamental issues that affect our great party."

"Within just two months in the lifespan of the new leadership of our great party, APC, led by His Excellency, Sen. Abdullahi Adamu, the NWC, organ of the party vested with the power of managing the day-to-day affairs, including implementing decisions of the National Executive Committee (NEC), as provided in Article 13.4 of the APC Constitution, has been rendered redundant."

"The National Chairman

takes decisions unilaterally. When it suits him, he invokes the name of our leader, President Muhammadu Buhari to blackmail NWC members into accepting his decisions."

"Every effort to get the Chairman to respect the authority of the NWC as elected by the March 26, 2022 APC National Convention is proving very difficult, if not impossible. Note that NEC's donation of its powers was to NWC and not to the National Chairman or any individual."

"The two national vice chairmen said they have no option but to make this public appeal to all APC leaders to intervene please urgently to call the National Chairman, His Excellency, Abdullahi Adamu to order, immediately."

"The National Chairman must be properly reminded to recognise that the business of managing the day-to-day affairs of the party is the responsibility of the NWC as provided in provisions of the APC Constitution."

"He is free to consult any party leader(s). Such consultations will not represent decisions of the NWC or any organ of the party unless and until it is adopted by a properly constituted meeting of the NWC or organ in question according to the letters and spirit of the APC constitution."

"As a party, we have suffered enough judicial embarrassments arising from clearly avoidable leadership breach of our party's constitution and spelt out rules."

"As members of the NWC who have the mandate of our members, we hereby serve notice to His Excellency, Abdullahi Adamu, and through him to all APC leaders that henceforth, any decision taken by the National Chairman or any other party functionary, which require the approval of the NWC as enshrined in the APC constitution, will be considered as illegitimate and an infringement on the jurisdictional scope of the NWC, unless otherwise confirmed as validly approved decisions of the NWC or any other legitimate organ of the party."

"No NWC member is elected at the March 26, 2022 National Convention to warm seats or offices in the National Secretariat."

"We therefore call on all our colleagues in the NWC to rise to these challenging situations by joining hands with us to save our great party and return it to its founding mission of moving Nigeria forward based on honest, fair, just and selfless commitment to party building. God bless our party!"

## Clark asks Ayu to resign, says Tambuwal betrayed national patriotism

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Clark, in a personally signed statement in Abuja on Tuesday as well fumed at monetization of the polity by contestants at the primary. He warned that dollarization of the electoral process portends great danger for the 2023 general election.

In the furiously crafted statement, the elder statesman said: "Most disturbing is what happened at the Special National Convention of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), in Abuja, on Saturday, 28th May 2022. I followed the live broadcasts of the proceedings keenly, until about 12.30 am on Sunday, the 29th. I was alarmed by the outrageous and Machiavelli manner

in which Alhaji Aminu Tambuwal, Governor of Sokoto State, was so apparently 'arranged' to announce his withdrawal from the contest, at the last minute; his speech changed the mood of the event."

"That was done in order to foist another northerner as the party's flag bearer; having regard to the fact that Governor Aminu Tambuwal was the only aspirant from the whole of the North-west, which had about 192 delegates at the convention. What Tambuwal did was not only dishonourable but also a serious electoral abnormality and a tragic betrayal of national patriotism for hidebound interests."

"It is now widespread understanding that there

were pressures mounted on Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, and former Senate President, Senator Bukola Saraki, to also withdraw, while Tambuwal deliberately delayed his action till the last minute. By so doing, unduly swept his North-west votes to Atiku Abubakar. One can now appreciate the reasons given by Mr Peter Obi for his withdrawal from the PDP, both as a member, and as an aspirant, few days before the party's primary. And I would think that what he did was, without doubt, in respect, or obedience, to the position of the Southern and Middle Belt Leaders' Forum."

"Unfortunately, some aspirants from the south believed that, with the

resources and facilities at their disposal, their elders no longer matter, and disregarded, with impunity, the patriotic advice on the need to be steadfast on the position of the zoning of the presidency to the south. They never minded that what we have been advocating was in their interest. They proved themselves to be selfish and arrogant, and thought they could win on their own steam. They failed; I can only hope that they have, now, learned their lessons."

He further said: "Even much worse, in the extreme, was the action of the National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Senator Iyorchia Ayu, in his open visit to

Governor Tambuwal to congratulate and hail him, in his words, as 'the hero of the convention'. This clearly reveals his partiality and predilection in the processes leading to the baffling conclusion of the PDP presidential primary. Senator Ayu has failed to realize that what we are fighting for affects all minorities in Nigeria."

"Senator Iyorchia Ayu's appalling, thoughtless and unpatriotic public conduct bears grave negative consequences. He should, therefore, no longer consider himself fit and proper to retain his position as the National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and should resign now."





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# Angry with PDP, Ekweremadu meets APC chairman, Uzodinma, others

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

There are strong indications that a high level discussion has reached advanced stage for a former Deputy Senate President Ike Ekweremadu, to join the All Progressives Congress (APC). This follows his inability to actualize his 2023 gubernatorial ambition on the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Enugu State. Ekweremadu and Governor Hope Uzodinma of Imo State, on Monday, met with the National Chairman of the APC Senator Abdullahi Adamu in a closed-door meeting in Abuja. The closed-door meeting lasted three hours at the party's secretariat.

Sources close to the party secretariat

disclosed that although Ekweremadu requested for the governorship ticket of the party in Enugu State, but he was told that the party had already concluded its guber primaries where Chief Uche Nnaji, Nwakaibie, emerged candidate of the party.

The Trumpet gathered that the party told the former deputy senate president to join the party first with his supporters and other positions could be worked for him.

Although Uzodinma disclosed after the marathon meeting ended that he came to see his 'friend' for a tete-a-tete. Many believed the meeting was to probably make a case for Ekweremadu who has already been edged out of the Peoples Democratic Political (PDP) political equation in Enugu State. The embattled ex-Deputy



Ekweremadu

Senate President was reported to have told the leadership of APC that he would consult and revert back.

Ekweremadu, who had been in the governorship race of Enugu State under PDP, suddenly announced his withdrawal, 24 hours

before the gubernatorial primaries, citing irregularities in the April 30 delegates election of the party.

To make the matter worse, an Abuja Federal High Court had dismissed suits filed by Ekweremadu's acolytes seeking the nullification

of the delegates congress. The move by the senator to join APC was coming hours after Enugu State Chairman of the APC, Ugochukwu Agballah, rejected pleas by Ekweremadu to pick the governorship ticket of the party.

Agballah had described the lawmaker's demand as "repugnant" and antithetical to the Electoral Act. The APC chairman further warned that the party would not give Ekweremadu the governorship ticket because the ticket was already won by Chief Nnaji, a political grandmaster who had made many governors across Nigeria.

Sources within the state chapter of the party disclosed that the state chairman, Agballah and the national Vice Chairman, South East, Dr. Ijeomah Arodiogbu, had before the party

primaries met Senator Ekweremadu to join the APC because according to them it was clear PDP would not give him the guber ticket. They therefore told him to join APC early enough so that he could participate in the party's primaries, but that it would be late if he joins after the primaries and when the party must have elected a candidate.

Ekweremadu was reported to have told them that he would remain in PDP to see the end of the battle therein. APC members therefore believe that his bid for the guber ticket of the party is a little too late. Members of the party are upbeat about the APC flag bearer, Nnaji, as they said he is not a strange bed-fellow with politics. They said he has been a political grandmaster who had preferred to work behind the scene.

# Thousands benefit from poverty alleviation programme

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

Commissioner for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA), Mrs. Cecilia Bolaji Dada, has reiterated the Lagos State Government's resolve to lift female folks through her ministry.

She stated this while representing her principal, Gov. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, at the inauguration of a sociopolitical group, Women for SWAGA in Lagos recently.

Mrs. Dada said that though her Ministry has recorded appreciable success, there is still a large room to do more for Lagos women. 'I can tell you authoritatively that over 60,000 women in Lagos have benefited from different programs of the Sanwo-Olu administration. We have had over 10,000 women in our short term training, over 12,000 in our long term training, and over 6,000 women in our microfinance empowerment program. We have had

advocacy programs and empowerment programs as well.'

'Lagos State Government has done so much, though 60,000 women can be minimal compared

to the number of women we have in Lagos but together we can get there,' the Commissioner said.

On the presidential aspiration of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu,

Mrs. Cecilia Bolaji Dada affirmed: 'I don't see anybody in Nigeria doing the job better than Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. He is the only one who is capable of changing the

tide for this country. Come 2023, all roads will lead to Aso Rock. Together, we will gather again like this to celebrate the success.'

'I will tell all women to get empowered. It is

an empowered woman whose voice will be heard. Get involved in politics. 25 percent affirmative action should be put in place and enforced,' she concluded.

# Army tasks media practitioners on patriotism, positive reportage

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

Nigerian Army has tasked journalists, public relations and media practitioners on the need to be patriotic and positive in reporting sensitive conflict and security issues in the interest of the country.

It gave the charge in a three-day media workshop held at Headquarters 3 Division, Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, Jos, Plateau State, by the Directorate of Army Public Relations (DAPR).

As part of capacity building and professional training for its officers and soldiers, the Directorate of Army Public Relations (DAPR), Nigerian Army, is holding a three-day media workshop at the Headquarters 3 Division,

Nigerian Army, Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, Jos, Plateau State.

The workshop with the theme, "Conflict Sensitive Communication, Patriotism and Positive Media Reportage in a Joint Environment", is part of the Nigerian Army's effort to build capacity and give professional training to its officers and soldiers.

The Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Faruk Yahaya, who was the Special Guest of Honour at the occasion and represented by Major General IS Ali, General Officer Commanding 3 Division/Force Commander, Operation Safe Haven, declared the workshop open.

Major General Chris Olukolade, a former Director of

Defence Information, who was the Keynote Speaker, urged media practitioners to always put the interest of the country first while reporting on conflict and security situations. He noted that when sensitive information is published and broadcasted in a negative manner, it can escalate conflict and increase panic.

Other speakers at the event include Daniel Bitrus Majang, Plateau State's Commissioner for Information and Communication, who spoke on the topic, "Enhancing National Security Through Effective Crisis Communication in Joint Environment"; Dr Barnabas N. Gbam, Rector, Nigerian Television College, Jos, who spoke on "Media Management

in Peace and Conflict Situation: Strategies and Techniques" as well as Dr GN Danaan, Head of Mass Communication Department, University of Jos, who spoke on "Enhancing National Security in Emergency: The Need for Patriotic and Objective Media Reportage", amongst others.

Among other prominent personalities that graced the event is a former Director of Defence Information (DDI) and Senior Research Fellow at the Nigerian Army Resource Centre, Major General Rabe Abubakar; Commander, Nigerian Air Force Base Jos, Air Commodore WN Maigida; Representative of the Director Defence Information, Air Commodore Maigida; Director, Army Public

Relations, Brigadier General Onyeama Nwachukwu; Director Public Relations and Information of the Nigerian Air Force, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet and former Director Army Public Relations, Brigadier General Sani Kukasheka Usman (rtd).

Others are Navy Captain I Abdulkadir, representative of the Nigerian Navy Director of Information, Commanders of affiliate formations and Staff Officers at the Headquarters of 3 Division, the Executive Director, Armed Forces Radio, Colonel TO Antigha, and Colonel Ko Ogunsanya, various officers and soldiers of the DAPR, as well as seasoned public relations practitioners and journalists.



## By supporting Atiku, I didn't betray Saraki, says Melaye

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**

**D**ino Melaye has said he and former Senate President Dr. Bukola Saraki were still close friends despite his support for Alhaji Atiku Abubakar at the People's Democratic Party (PDP) presidential primaries won by the erstwhile Vice President.

Former Senator Melaye was the chief agent of the former Vice President. According to Melaye, who spoke as a guest at a TVC popular programme, Journalists Hangout, his relationship with his former colleague and boss at the Senate has not been soured by his action, pointing out that he only did what was logically right at the moment.

He said, "I supported Atiku because I believe he is our best option at the moment. This is a man who already has 11 million votes standing. Why should we leave someone who have 11 million votes in the waiting

to experiment with someone who has not won 1 million votes."

He claimed the emergence of Atiku Abubakar as the presidential candidate of the PDP has no ethnic undertone behind it. He said that his emergence was the best move for the PDP to win the 2023 general elections.

Asked whether the late hour stepping down of Sokoto governor, Aminu Tambuwal for Atiku was a pre-planned northern agenda, he said, "there is nothing ethnic about it. I was a Atiku's agent at that election and I know how the people voted. Kaduna and Katsina delegates voted for Wike, while Delta delegates voted for Atiku, so what is ethnic in that."

Speaking further, Senator Melaye boasted that PDP presidential candidate will defeat any candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) that will emerge. The APC is billed for a make or mar presidential primaries on 6th and 7th of June, 2022.



Dino Melaye

## Gunmen invade Anambra schools, send students home in honour of Biafra Day

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

Gunmen invaded schools in Onitsha and some parts of Idemili area of Anambra State on Tuesday, chasing students out of the classrooms.

Claiming to be enforcing "Biafra Day," they were said to have also invaded markets and public places to chase people away.

The gunmen claimed every May 30 is set aside yearly to celebrate Biafra day. However, this year's edition fell on the same day as the Monday sit-at-home order which was observed on May 30.

The gunmen insisted that Tuesday must be observed separately because the normal Monday sit-at-home day was different from Biafra day.

There were fears among the residents of the state whether to go out or not. Some of the people who stepped out had to return to their various houses due to the chaos caused by the gunmen.

Meanwhile, the Anambra State police command was yet to verify the incident or issue a statement.

## APC chief accuses Uzodinma of meddling in Abia, aide disagrees

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

A chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Nze Esiaga, has accused Governor Hope Uzodinma of Imo State of using the factional leader of the party in Abia, Ikechi Emenike, for territorial expansion. This follows an alleged move by Uzodinma to impose the candidacy of Emenike on members of the APC in Abia State in total defiance of the ruling of Justice O. A. Chijioke-led Umuahia High Court which barred the latter from participating in the concluded gubernatorial primary election of the APC and other activities of the party on the ground of his suspension in 2022 by the immediate past state executive committee over gross misconduct ranging from operating a parallel structure of APC chaired by Kingsley Ononogbu.

On Thursday, 26th May, 2022, a parallel structure of the Abia APC, backed by Emenike, held an indirect primary election, where he emerged as the governorship candidate of the party, in defiance of a directive by the party's national leadership for direct primaries in choosing Abia gubernatorial candidate for the forthcoming 2023 elections.

However, while alerting APC members of the alleged move by the ex-federal lawmaker, Esiaga, in a press statement made available to newsmen in



Gov. Hope Uzodinma

Umuahia, on Tuesday, called on the people of Abia to rise in condemnation of Governor Uzodinma's clandestine efforts to annex the state to Imo.

According to the party stalwart, "he is using Chief Ikechi Emenike as a willing tool to actualize his devilish ambition. Lest we forget that when late Senator Arthur Nzeribe attempted to grab Abia State in 1991 when the state was newly created, Abia Progressives ably led by Late Eze Elechi Ikoro, resisted him at a very high cost.

"Yours sincerely was in the forefront of the battle on 'Abia belongs to Abians'. To God be the glory that we chased Arthur Nzeribe away from Abia State and confined him to his Orlu Senatorial zone in Imo State. Let all hands be on deck to

salvage Abia once more from another Orlu son else history and posterity will judge us."

Continuing, Esiaga added, "Chief Emma Enukwu, the Deputy National Chairman (South) of the All Progressives Congress was sponsored to the office by Governor Hope Uzodinma against Senator Ken Nnamani of Enugu State. Enukwu is now merely acting the script written by Uzodinma against Abia State and I stand to be corrected.

"Governor Uzodinma and his co-travellers must be told in the language they understand that those whose kernels were cracked for them by the benevolent spirits of Supreme Court judges against the wishes of Imo people should not fail to be humble. Any further encroachment into Abia State henceforth will earn them the wrath and anger of our ancestors. I am neither a prophet nor the Son of One but anything short of direct primary election in the Abia State chapter of APC will spell doom."

Meanwhile, Obilor Ogbonna, a close aide to the Abia APC chieftain, Ikechi Emenike, while reacting to the allegations, described the suspension slammed on the latter, by the immediate past State Executive Committee led by Donatus Nwankpa and affirmed by members of the state party caucus, as vituperation of drowning men as the pendulum has just swung

against them.

Ogbonna who recalled that the party's national leadership had invalidated and put paid to the rumoured suspension of Chief Emenike, urged party members and teeming supporters to disregard such rantings.

## Kano renames state varsity after Dangote

Kano State University of Science and Technology (KUST), Wudil has been renamed after business mogul Aliko Dangote.

The State Executive Council approved this at its last sitting presided over by Governor Abdullahi Ganduje.

Malam Muhammad Garba, the state Commissioner for Information disclosed this in a statement, saying the development followed a recommendation by the university's Visitation Panel.

Garba said the institution is now to be called Aliko Dangote

University of Science and Technology (ADUST), Wudil.

The commissioner further explained that the approval has been transmitted to the state House of Assembly to study the relevant laws establishing the university for amendment and to effect the name change.

Former Governor Ibrahim Shekarau had renamed the university after Aminu Dantata at the end of his tenure, but Rabi'u Kwankwaso reversed the directive when he was re-elected as governor of the state in 2011.



Aliko Dangote.



# Lagos records 2,334 domestic violence cases – Official

By **ADELEKE ADESERI**,  
News Editor

Lagos State Government has disclosed that it has within the last six months recorded 2,334 cases of domestic violence, and four deaths. It described domestic violence as a worrisome development in the state and environs.

The Supervisor Virtual Response and Referral Service, VRRS, Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency, Henry Okafor made this known in a presentation at the fifth anniversary programme of TQ Behavioral Health Limited, held in, Lagos.

The theme of the anniversary which was held

at Oriental Hotel, Lekki in Lagos State is 'Domestic Violence in Nigeria through the Ages: Causes, Mental Health Consequences and Intervention.'

Okafor explained that following incessant menace of the domestic violence, the state government has commenced proactive measure to curb the cases, with advocacy engagement, which is also extended to schools.

The Supervisor while noting that domestic violence is a circle, also disclosed that within last year the state recorded 19 deaths, as well as 999 physical assaults at matrimonial homes, and 127 recorded cases of rape and defilement.

He said the government in same vein, to address

the issue, introduced family therapy, introduced social media engagement, and empowered over 200 women who were victims of the violence.

The speaker in his presentation emphasized the need and importance to work on mental health, as part of solution to the menace, stressing relevance of intensive advocacy engagement across board among stakeholders.

The Executive Director, Operations TQ Behavioral Health, Olakunle Adeogun earlier in his welcome address said Behavioral Health is the Premier Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facility in Nigeria with a mission to play a key role in total transformation of behavioral health care in

Nigeria and beyond.

The Director added that, the establishment work closely with both clients and their loved ones to provide world class effective and supportive treatment in a safe and very comfortable environment that promotes recovery.

'Our multi-disciplinary team of care providers include Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Nurses, Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and other experts in various fields. Our staff comprise of professionals, operational and support staff who have been carefully selected because of their dedication, passion, compassion and commitment to care', he said.

The Group Chairman and Chief Executive Of-

ficer of the organization, Dr Henry Odunlami, in his remarks, gave background of the establishment, and disclosed plans to expand operations to other West African countries in due course.

The establishment boss assured that more facilities are in offing to be put in place across the country, adding that one of it which is state-of-art, is already ongoing in Lagos, and shall be ready for commissioning in October

'Our plan is to expand, we are going and expanding. We are planning to have more facilities. We are having state of the art facility in Lekki, to be opened in October. We are also expanding to other West African countries' Odunlami said.

## APC guber primary poll in Lagos free, fair, peaceful, says appeal committee

•Mustapha Withdraws Petition

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

All Progressives Congress (APC), Appeal Committee for the governorship primary election in Lagos State on Tuesday declared that the process was free, fair, peaceful and transparent, just as the sole petitioner, Mr. Ahmed Olorunfemi Mustapha withdrew his petition and promised to support the party and its gubernatorial candidate.

Its Chairman, Hon. Ibrahim Akaje, who stated this while briefing newsmen in Lagos, said the three-man Gubernatorial Primary Election Appeal Committee inaugurated by the National Working Committee, NWC, of the APC, led by Senator Abdulahi Adamu, has amicably resolved the issues raised by the aggrieved in order to foster unity and make progress in the party.

Akaje, flanked by the Secretary of the Committee, Barrister Abubakar Hassan, and Hon. Ginika Tor, noted that Lagos was among the APC states that recorded relative peace in the primary elections.

"We are indeed not surprised because it could not have been otherwise owing to the security alertness the state ensured. It is an acknowledged fact that Lagos State is not only the cradle of Nigerian politics, but it has also continued to be a determining factor in political scheming of the country.

"Today, our great party is the country's ruling party basically on account of the influential role played by the political juggernauts in Lagos State, who in alliance with other political heavyweights across the federation aligned to midwife the APC and subsequently steered it into National electoral victory. We are very optimistic that this victory will be repeated come 2023 general election not only in Lagos State, but across the federation."

The chairman of the committee pointed out that, "The committee received a single petition submitted

by Ahmed Olorunfemi Mustapha alleging that he was denied access and participation in the Gubernatorial Primary election. In view of that and to ensure justice and fairness, the complainant was invited and accorded fair hearing in a peaceful meeting under a conducive atmosphere.

"It is instructive to inform the press and the party faithful that the committee has received the report of the election committee held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, 2022 at Mobolaji Johnson Arena, Lagos State. The report of the Gubernatorial Primary Election Committee confirmed that the election was a free, fair, peaceful and transparent exercise.

"The Appeal committee received the petitioner who presented his matter extensively. After thorough analysis and deliberations on the matter, the committee subtly informed the petitioner that he was not cleared by the gubernatorial Screening Committee, a verdict of which was upheld by the Screening Appeal Committee. Both parties therefore agreed to embrace peace and maintain unity for the good of the party and the state."

Fielding questions from newsmen, the petitioner Mr. Ahmed Olorunfemi Mustapha said, "I will abide by the party's decisions, irrespective of what has happened, we have been a beneficiary of the party, we cannot break a house that we have built. We have resolved to work together with the party in exploring the internal mechanism of the party.

"I will ensure that Lagos State remains in the kitty of the APC to deliver dividends of democracy, working in conjunction with the party. I and my supporters will support absolutely the party, nominee of the party, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu to make sure that our party wins not just in the state but at the federal level so that our leader Asiwaju Bola Tinubu will become the president of Federal Republic of Nigeria.

## Suspected hoodlums destroy FG housing scheme, injure workers

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**,  
Akure

Suspected hoodlums have invaded the Federal Government Housing Scheme and destroyed buildings and property worth millions of naira in Akure, the Ondo State capital.

It is located at Alagbaka Government Reservation Area (GRA).

They injured the employees on the site while some escaped with injuries.

The Trumpet gathered that the armed thugs who overran the ongoing Federal Government Housing Scheme around 9.00 am, fired several gunshots and demolished the construction works that were ongoing.

Also, it was gathered that the thugs destroyed plumbing pipes while over five Storex tanks were broken.

Speaking to journalists, the Managing Director of the company handling the project, Medaville Building & Construction Co. Ltd, Otunba Ademola Akin-Benson, accused a monarch (name withheld) as the sponsor of the attack.

Akin-Benson claimed that the monarch has been making unlawful moves to snatch the land from the company and stop the project by allegedly sending thugs.

He complained that over N50 million had been lost to the regular attacks by the thugs who periodically dropped charms and other



Otunba Ademola Akin-Benson

fetish objects on the site to scare him and the labourers.

Akin-Benson asserted that where the monarch claimed as a community land was far away and not the area where work was going on in line with existing court judgment.

He alleged that the monarch even sent his thugs to kidnap some workers recently which was reported to the police and appropriate authorities.

He said: "They came here on the 18th of this month with two bikes, beat, harassed the workers;

destroyed many building materials."

The Managing Director explained that the land is owned by the Federal Government but handed over to Medaville Building & Construction Co. Ltd to develop.

He noted that the matter was already in court, saying: "He has been served but trying to dodge it; it is always like this. We will not take any law into our hands. We will continue to pursue the case to the highest level."

Akin-Benson, revealed that two different trials have been established

to check the monarch's excesses.

Describing the thugs actions as disturbance of the peace of the community, he said the project is to ease housing problems in Ondo State, stressing that the Federal Government is aware of the harassment and destruction.

Contacted, the monarch through his Chief Press Secretary, debunked the claim.

He alleged that Akin Benson hired thugs and refused to pay them their fee, sparking the crisis and demolition witnessed at the site. He said the former was only trying to point fingers rather than blame himself for the miseries he caused himself.

"There was a disputed five hectares of land belonging to Akure and the court had asked him (Otunba Benson) not to work on the disputed area but only on the approved 15 hectares. We expect him to abide by the decision of the Court over the matter.

"The palace had no hand in the in-fight that occurred between the thugs he engaged on the land," he said.

The king said Akure would not do anything that would disrupt its peace, but what would bring development and expansion.

The monarch urged the managing director to desist from blackmailing him and see Akure as a peaceful and accommodative land.



## Foundation, others give free menstrual hygiene products to girls

By ADAMU WALTER

Loveled Foundation in partnership with Nigerian Girl Guides Association and others have urged governments to give tax reduction on importation of menstrual products. They also urged free distribution of sanitary pads to girls in rural communities just as condoms are given free.

They made the call during the distribution of free reusable sanitary pads to teenage girls in Ifako-Tomaro Community, Apapa, Lagos State to prevent health implications arising from poor practice.

It was part of efforts to mark World Menstrual Hygiene Day,

According to statistics from the World Bank, at least 500 million women and girls globally lack access to menstrual products and adequate facilities for menstrual hygiene management (MHM), with Nigeria accounting for 25 per cent of the number.

At the event tagged Sanitary Pads Drive 1.0, which held at the weekend, the teenage girls were also lectured on proper menstrual hygiene living and thought how to make reusable pads

The Founder, Loveled foundation, Chika Ewuziem, said lack of proper menstrual hygiene has been a major issue affecting teenage girls in the rural areas, especially Islands where government and corporate entities seem to have neglected.

He said poor menstrual hygiene, however, can pose serious health risks, like reproductive and urinary tract infections which can cause future infertility and birth complications.

He also noted that inadequate sanitary facilities, lack of access to affordable and



Teenage girls at Ifako-Tomaro community receive free reusable sanitary pads from Loveled Foundation

quality menstrual hygiene products, and the stigma and social norms associated with menstruation contributes poor menstrual hygiene.

Ewuziem, said driven by the need to address the situation, especially with the price of sanitary pads up to 500 per cent, the foundation with its partners distributed free menstrual hygiene kits to teenage girls in the community and also equip them with information and knowledge on how to make reusable sanitary pads for themselves.

The Youth Coordinator, Nigerian Girls Guide Association, Lagos State Chapter, Adebayo Taiwo Ayomide, said menstrual hygiene practice in the country is poor, which calls for more sustainable solutions to teenage girls through production of reusable pads.

She said with economic hardship on the rise and teenage girls exposed to unhealthy materials, the government should reduce

taxes placed on menstrual hygiene products so that the prices would reduce.

Ayomide also added that, just like condoms are given out freely, sanitary pads should be given out free to bring about sustainable solutions to challenges of menstrual hygiene among teenage girls.

Also, the Founder, Iyanu Reusable Pad Empowerment Project, Shonde Iyanuoluwa, said they are empowering girls on how to eradicate menstrual period poverty by distributing free reusable sanitary pads to the teenage girls in rural communities, which will last them for about two years.

She expressed worry on harmful materials used by teenage girls during their menstrual period, such as animal dunks, tissue papers and pieces of dirty clothes, which could cause great harm to the girls.

She said poverty has limited many teenage girls from assessing healthy menstrual

products, which is why the reusable sanitary pads are being taken to the community.

A mother in the community, Mariam Agunbiade, expressed appreciation to the foundation for the initiative, saying it will go a long way in helping families that can't afford buying sanitary pads for their teenage girls.

She said most of the families in the community are very poor, hence, their teenage girls use pieces of clothe or tissue paper during their menstrual period.

Agunbiade also thanked the foundation for teaching the girls how to make reusable sanitary pads, noting that it is a form of empowerment.

She said there are no primary health care facilities in the community except one privately owned health facility with a nurse and a medicine store where the pads are being sold, but expensive.

## Tackling sudden heart attack

By ORIDO VINCENT AKPOMEFURE

The increasing reports of heart failure and sudden death in African society is causing a great alarm. This has been traced back to inadequate knowledge and precautionary steps to avert it. In view of the above, we want to examine the roles of health workers in their involvement in the community's well-being and sharing of knowledge. The primary duty of the health worker is to teach—to teach children, parents, farmers, school teachers, other health workers—everyone he can! The art of teaching is the most important skill a person can learn. To teach is to help others to grow, and to grow with them. A good teacher is not someone who puts idea into other people's heads, he or she is someone who helps others build on their own ideas, to make new discoveries for themselves. Therefore, teaching and learning should not be limited to the school house or health post. They should take place in the home and in the fields and on the road. As a health worker one of your best chances to teach will probably be when you treat the sick. But you should look for every opportunity to exchange ideas, to share, to show, and to help your people think and work together.

**THE ROLES OF HEALTH WORKERS IN ILLNESSES OF OLD AGE: THE HEART**—The heart simple defined as a muscular organ that pumps blood through the body, traditionally thought to be the seat of emotion. The heart trouble or disease is more frequent in older people, especially in those who are fat, who smoke, or who have high blood pressure or indulged in fatty diets. **HEART PROBLEMS** are caused by prolonged heavy drinking and this normally results in heart failure (reducing pumping efficiency of the heart), hypertension (high blood pressure), cerebral

haemorrhage, and cardiomyopathy. One type of stroke is linked with high consumption of alcohol. The circulation of blood—the arteries harden, causing poor blood circulation and higher blood pressure—are the results of lack of regular exercise; smoking and poor diets. The health workers should note the following signs of heart problems—(1.) Anxiety and difficulty in breathing after exercise; asthma-like attacks that get worse when the person lies down (cardiac asthma). (2.) A rapid, weak, or irregular pulse. (3.) Swelling of the feet—worse in the afternoon. (4.) Sudden, painful attacks in the chest, left shoulder, or arms that occur when exercising and go away after resting for a few minutes (angina pectoris) (5) A sharp pain like a great weight crushing the chest; does not go away with rest (heart attack). **TREATMENT AND GUIDANCE BY PROFESSIONAL HEALTH WORKER**—(1.) It should be noted that different heart diseases may require different specific medicines, which must be used with great care. If you think a person has heart trouble, seek medical help. It is important that he have the right

medicine when he needs it. (2.) The health worker should educate persons with heart problems not to eat oily food and should lose weight, if they are overweight. (3.) If an older person begins having attacks of difficult breathing or swelling of the feet, he should not use salt or eat food that contains salt. For the rest of his life he should eat little or no salt. (4.) If a person has angina pectoris or heart attack, he should rest very quietly in a cool place until the pain goes away. If the chest pain is very strong and does not go away with rest, or if the person shows signs of shock, the heart has probably been severely damaged. In this case, the person should stay in bed for at least a week or as long as he is in pain or shock. Then he can begin to sit up or move slowly, but should stay very quiet for a month or more. \*Consider getting medical help as soon as possible! Another way of diagnosing heart trouble is to examine the pulse (heart beats). The pulse gets much faster with exercise and when a person is nervous, frightened, or has fever. As a general rule, the pulse increase 20 beats

per minute for each degree (°C) rise in fever. Health worker should take the pulse often and write it down along with temperature and rate of breathing when a person is very ill. The health worker should notice changes in the pulse rate in order to determine the nature illness. For example (1) A weak, rapid pulse can mean a state of shock. Shock is a life-threatening condition that develops when the body's blood pressure drops dangerously low. This can be result from great pain, a large burn, losing of lot blood, severe illnesses, dehydration or severe allergic reaction. Signs of shock are (a). weak, rapid pulse (more than 100 per minute). (b) cold sweat, pale, cold, damp skin. (c). Mental confusion, weakness, or loss of consciousness. (2.) A very rapid, very slow, or irregular pulse could mean heart trouble. (3.) A relatively slow pulse in a person with a high fever may be a sign of typhoid. The health worker should always pay special attention to the way the sick person breathes—the depth (deep or shallow), rate (how often breaths are taken), and difficulty. Notice if both sides of the chest move equally when he breathes. He should pay attention to the strength, the rate, and the regularity of the pulse. In this situation, if you have a watch or timer, count the pulse per minute. Normal pulse for people at rest—Adult.... from 60 to 80 per minute. Children.... from 80 to 100 per minute. Babies.... from 100 to 140 per minute. Finally, in order to increase the life span of the aged, the government should create awareness campaign to sentize rural communities, the public and various health workers with adequate knowledge and periodic information.

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## 'Environmentally impacted communities deserve justice'

Executive Director of Environmental Rights Action, Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/FoEN), Barrister Chima Williams, who just won the Goldman Prize award for environmental justice, in this interview with **Business Editor, EDU ABADE**, advised communities oppressed by multinational oil companies to seek redress in the courts, rather than resort to self-help tendencies. He said no matter how long it takes, there is hope that the polluted Niger communities and others around the world deserve to get justice.

*How do you feel about the Goldman Prize award and how do you plan to deploy the funds?*

The award is a recognition of what we have been doing with communities across the Niger Delta and across the world in trying to bring hope to the people and steer them away from self-help tendencies and make them to understand the benefits of using the law, the law courts and application of the rule of law in their quest for seeking redress against any injustice that may have been done to them.

On the price of the award, it will help us to further expand the scope of our work and continue to sustain the work that we are doing in the sense that it will equally promote the hope aspect, because the work we are doing is basically centered on hope to the people that at the end of the day, there is hope at the end of the tunnel. So, the fact that this award has recognised what we are doing is a parameter for the people to understand that the world is taking note of whatever little thing you doing in the cause of seeking justice for oppressed people and communities. More importantly, we were not doing what we are doing with the expectation to win any awards, but this award shows that the world is watching the little things we are doing that are positive. So, it is an encouragement for us.

*There are defining moments in every man's life. At what point did you decide to engage in the struggle against environmentally deprived communities?*

Well, it is something that goes way back, but the decision to focus attention on environmentally oppressed communities and issues came with my contact with the likes of Nnimmo Bassey, the late Orono Douglas, the late Ken Saro-Wiwa, the late Prof. Festus Iyayi and others. But we started first from civil rights activism, which dates back to my secondary school days. So, I didn't just stumble on it. My interaction with these persons now refocused my attention to create something that is a little bit off the track. Because in the 1990s, talking of environmental justice movement and campaign, not just in Nigeria, but globally was not the major thing. It was the civil rights aspect that was the major focus and that was how in 1993 precisely through my interaction with these persons that I became a volunteer for the Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/FoEN) on its foundation from the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO). So, we continued to hone ourselves until 1998 when through the guidance of the late Orono Douglas (may God bless his soul), who was my senior as a lawyer and an activist, that I founded the first-ever students focused environmental justice movement in West Africa named Students Environmental Assembly Nigeria. From there, the tendency to now support community people within the limits of our abilities was formed.

*In other words, you fashioned your struggle after those role models you mentioned, is that correct?*

Absolutely! That is very correct.

Court of Appeal ruling in The Hague on the case between Shell and the Nigerian farmers may have come as a surprise after 13 years of back and forth. Did you anticipate that verdict?

For the outside world, it may have come as a surprise, but for me and my team of lawyers, it did not come as a surprise. In the first place, it was our disbelief of the case against Shell, which it won at the lower court that made us to appeal the ruling, because we thought that the judgment was not correct. When we did our analysis of the verdict, we were highly optimistic that it will be overturned at the Court of Appeal. So, it didn't come to us as a surprise by any standard. Perhaps, what may have come to us as surprise was the depth of analyses and the judgment itself, which covered all fields. We expected a positive judgment at the Court of Appeal and that was why we filed the appeal in the first place.

*Since the judgment, you must have contacted the communities in the light of the victory and may want to share your experience?*

Of course we have been in regular touch with the communities. We have visited and talked with their leaders and everyone who cares. We discovered that the judgment has given hope that our effort in steering the communities into positive actions,



Barrister Chima Williams

as well as renewing their thoughts and plans not to resort to any kind of self-help has yielded good result. Beyond that, our happiness is that the entire Niger Delta people have seen the judgment as theirs. And so, their reactions have been positive and since the judgment of January 29, 2021, there have been about 10 other positive judgments that would ordinarily have been impossible, either in Nigerian courts or those outside the country or even in the home countries of the oil multinationals. So, we see that the judgment has rekindled hope in our judicial system and the judicial systems of other climes.

*Do you see a similar trend in the pending Ikot Ada Udo community litigation against Shell?*

For us, the Ikot Ada Udo case was the first case we won at the lower court and by whatever parameters, we expect a positive judgment if it continues in court, but if doesn't continue in court, the outcome will be positive on all sides.

*You have also been exposing how multinational oil companies are divesting from the Niger Delta after decades of polluting the region. What, in your opinion, is the best way to hold the IOCs accountable, going forward?*

We have always maintained that owners of assets have the right to sell when they wish, but in the circumstance of divestment by International Oil Companies (IOCs) and because there are legacy problems of pollution which affects people not involved in the business of buying and selling crude oil and fuel related products, our position is simple. First, they should clean up the mess they created and restore the environment to the way it was before they started their operations. They should improve the livelihoods of the communities and not destroy the environment further. Following up on that, we sent a caveat-buyer beware, which is to say that whoever buys assets buys the liabilities. So, if they do their due diligence checks, they should know that the challenges of acquiring such assets will come after them. It should be a total package for the Nigerian government and the investors to join forces with the communities, civil society and all stakeholders to ensure that the right things are done. First is that if the IOCs must divest, they should restore the environment to the way it was. Two, if they won't restore the environment, they should put in place an environmental

remediation bond, which will be assessed by a collective interaction of all stakeholders to arrive at an amount that can take care of the problems already created. Thirdly, most of the domestic oil companies (DOCs) buying those assets don't have the technical knowhow and financial capacity to take care of the situation on ground, let alone what will happen in future. So, the investors should also put in place their environmental remediation bond so that everybody will know that they have the capacity and if they fail to do the needful, the necessary authorities can then use the money to do the cleanup. Those are some of the steps that can be taken and of course, the communities can litigate against the divesting and investing companies to stop the process until they are sure that their environment and sources of livelihood have been restored. That can be done at national and home country levels so that in organising, states that are heavily impacted can work with communities, citizens and civil society organisations to mobilise for national action. It is not a novel thing. After all, ERA/FoEN had done it before in Lagos by mobilising victims and civil society groups for mass action against the state.

*Is there an estimated amount of the remediation bond you are recommending on the part of the divesting companies?*

We cannot put a price tag on it because ERA/FoEN has been advocating for years that there should be a \$100 billion fund set aside for the cleanup of the Niger Delta. So, if we take from there, the regulatory authorities and the relevant stakeholders can come up with a figure that can adequately take care of the cleanup of impacted sites in the Niger Delta.

*Now that you have mentioned the issue of cleanup, what is your assessment of the Ogoni cleanup since nothing significant seem to be happening there?*

We must put the narrative straight and very clear. It is not correct to say that nothing significant is happening in Ogoni, but it will be correct to say that things are not moving at the pace they should with the investments already made there. The fact is that the more we wait to cleanup Ogoni land, the more problems and the more polluted the area gets. So, there are skeletal works going on, but more can actually be done. It is the collective responsibility of community people, the media, civil society and all stakeholders to put more pressure on the government to do the needful, pursue the money and release funds to those saddled with the responsibility of the cleanup and monitor what is being done. Because it is not just to ensure that money is released, but to what purpose the money is being deployed. This should be our clarion call, because this government is winding up and as such, if the pressure is not sustained, it might be left for the incoming government to decide whether or not to continue the cleanup exercise. But if the pressure is sustained, the goal will be achieved. It can also be made a campaign issue in the 2023 general elections, not targeted at any political party, but all political parties.

*In the light of your award and recognition, what is your message for Nigerians?*

My message is that of hope; for our Niger Delta communities being destroyed by oil exploration activities, there is hope. Let us get more organised, focused and mobilised. No single individual can achieve anything in this kind of struggle. It is by collectively speaking with one voice that we can change the status of communities in the Niger Delta. And for Nigerians, let's believe and support ourselves. That is because some of the issues we have are caused by fellow Nigerians and until we see ourselves as one people with a common destiny that is connected, it will be difficult to solve our internal problems. Let us take this as a pointer that when we do something positive, there will be recognition for it, however and whenever it comes. The struggle will definitely not be easy, as we have seen that this lasted for close to 15 years beginning from when we started the work before the judgment came. So, persistence and consistence is key to driving positive change. For the rest of us, this is not an individual struggle, but a collective one. If we must struggle against any multinational, we must be multinational in our approach, tactics and dimension of work. No single individual can solve the problems of the people.





# Lawan is APC's ace to win 2023 presidential election

By **DR. EZREL TABIOWO**

**A**head of the 2023 general elections, the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) must come to terms with the fact that it is bound by obligation as the party in power to present a presidential candidate with acceptance ratings that cuts across the six geo-political zones of the country to ensure unity and stability in all facets of our national existence.

The party must go the extra mile to re-assure Nigerians by demonstrating that it places premium on performance and the delivery of good governance by rallying support for its best aspirant with the requisite competence, intellectual depth and mental alertness to confront the complex challenges faced by the nation.

At a time when the Northern and Southern parts of the country are recording an all-time high in loss of lives due to the spate of insecurity and criminal activities, it would appear insensitive and disingenuous for the APC to bend the rules for whatever reason to accommodate regional or any other consideration to advance a zoning arrangement in favour of any aspirant in particular.

It is common knowledge that the attendant threats constituted by the activities of terrorists, bandits and kidnappers have made our roads and rail system both unsafe means of transportation. Like an analyst said, "it is only a matter of time before the airports become a target as well."

In the five states of the South East Zone, a region once considered as the bastion of trade, economic activities are grinding almost to a halt as a result of the deadly siege by some rebellious murderers identified as the "unknown gunmen". The region has become volatile, uninhabitable and a shadow of what it was in the past.

In the North, the brazen operations of terrorists and kidnappers - considered a major security challenge - has led to the shut-down of schools in several northern states. It has also compelled farmers and residents of affected communities to flee for safety and seek refuge in camps for Internally Displaced Persons in Niger and Benue States, respectively, including the Federal Capital Territory.

The worrisome situation signals a looming humanitarian crises likely to snowball into unimaginable proportions if not squarely contained and, of course, this is not to mention the threat to food security which it poses.

In the South-South region, the one-time security problem of kidnapping and militancy has evolved into the criminal enterprise of crude oil theft perpetrated by hardened criminals and economic saboteurs for monetary gains to the detriment of the Nigerian economy.

At a meeting between the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, Oil Producers Trade Section, and the Independent Petroleum Producers Group sometime in March, this year, it was revealed that Nigeria lost about \$3.2 billion (USD) to crude oil theft between January and February, 2022.

The staggering amount, when converted at an exchange rate of N416.25 to the dollar, comes to a whopping N1.36 trillion as loss to the nation for just a two-month period alone.

Such an amount as accruing revenue could go into funding the country's N6.25 trillion budget deficit for the year 2022, without Federal Government's recourse to financing with new borrowings, privatisation proceeds and drawdown on loans secured for specific projects.

The enormity of the issues above, present a rather complex set of challenges that demand a hands-on approach to leadership and governance in the quest to have them addressed.

## The Lawan Factor In Shaping A New Nigeria

Senator Ahmad Lawan, a University Lecturer was born on the 12th of January, 1959. He was first elected in 1999 to represent Bade/Jakusko Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives on the platform of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), a position he held until 2007, when he contested the Senatorial election to represent Yobe North District in the Senate.

As a Lawmaker of the upper chamber, he was a member of the National Assembly's Committee on Constitution Review in 2008; and later appointed as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee in 2009. He served in that capacity in the 6th and 7th Assembly - between 2009 and 2015.

While Chairing the Public Accounts Committee at the time, Lawan ensured strict probity and accountability in the country's financial system by ensuring that government spendings by relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies were properly accounted for, and duly in accordance with the provisions of the law.

The number of times I covered the meetings which he presided over, left me wondering how he managed to stay ahead of the agencies when it came to working the books. Even more surprising is the fact that his memory is as sharp as ever to retain even the smallest details. His vast experience in Public Accounts can be said to have subsequently informed his views on why it has become expedient for the Federal Government to identify areas of waste to cut down on annual expenditures in the national budget.

## Lawan's Role In Tackling Banditry, Insurgency

Apparently not new to dealing with the issue of insecurity, Lawan as Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee On Review of Security Infrastructure in Nigeria, visited some states affected by the activities of bandits and kidnappers in 2017. The committee was tasked with investigating and unraveling the actual cause of the escalating incidents of insecurity in the north.

On two occasions, I accompanied him on the fact-finding visits around the worst hit areas, and the stories of victims were quite shocking as they were revealing. It was a time when banditry was gaining grounds in Zamfara and some neighboring states.

Lawan met with the traditional leaders and victims who narrated their ordeals to members of the Ad-hoc Committee. They narrated how wives and daughters were snatched from the abode of their husbands and parents and taken into the forest to be raped by the terrorists. We were informed that those who struggled to resist them were brutally killed in broad day light and in the presence of relatives. Informants of security agencies were tracked by the bandits to their homes and gruesomely murdered to instill fear in residents.

They further narrated how the military and security agencies were grossly over-powered as a result of insufficient personnel on the ground to repel the bandits, and, therefore, refused to respond to distress calls from the various communities when under attack.

In some cases, the marathon meetings between the Ad-hoc Committee and the various communities and representatives of the state governments lasted till about



Sen. Ahmad Lawan

5 a.m in the morning.

We also visited some parts of Benue State where IDP camps were situated to accommodate those who fled their homes as a result of the farmers-herders clashes at the time. What my eyes saw on those fact-finding trips exposed me to the Ahmad Lawan most people do not know. He is a fearless leader who would go any length to finding solutions to the problems of Nigerians. He is also the type of leader who would give his all by working round the clock tirelessly towards ensuring that results are achieved.

In coming up with a report, the Ad-hoc Committee under Lawan's leadership at the time made recommendations, some of which, interestingly, he subsequently pushed for after becoming the President of the Ninth Senate.

Top on the recommendations was a request to the federal government for the provision of proper funding of the nation's security assets, and the enforcement of accountability on the part of the military, police and other agencies.

Consequently, in 2021, over N800 billion naira was approved by the National Assembly for defense and security; and N996 billion in 2022 - figures which represent the highest monies ever budgeted to Defense for the purpose of increasing the size of the Nigeria Police, Military and other Para-military agencies given the growing population in the country.

It is on record, too, that the Senate President has in the past held several meetings behind closed doors with the country's Service Chiefs and Heads of Security Agencies at various times when the spate of insecurity was seen to have heightened.

Nigerians believe strongly that he is the only aspirant who is best positioned to do more beyond legislative interventions to address the nation's security challenges by fully implementing the recommendations of the reports of the adhoc committees on security constituted in the Eighth and Ninth Senate, respectively, if elected President.

## Lawan's Practical And Dogged Approach To Governance

While contesting the Senate Presidency for a second time in 2019 after an unsuccessful attempt in 2015, Lawan knew he had to come up with a realistic and implementable

Agenda that would target critical areas in need of prompt legislative attention for the benefit of Nigerians.

His legislative blueprint focused on the following key areas: Security, Economy, Criminal Legislation Reform, Public Finance Management Legislations, Youth Unemployment and Substance Abuse, Standard of Education, Healthcare Services, Social Safety Net, and Constitutional Amendments. Other aspects include: Independence of the Legislature, Electoral Reforms, and Reviving the Real Sector and Infrastructure.

In less than three years, the Senate President, through resolute commitment, was able to lead the Ninth National Assembly in driving legislations that ensured the realisation of his agenda.

Most importantly, he was able to restore the nation's deformed budget cycle to the January to December timeline which was unachievable under past assemblies since 1999.

His knack to always take on difficult pieces of legislation that hitherto defied passage and have them passed, apparently, makes him one of Nigeria's most outstanding Senate Presidents with sterling accomplishments to his credit.

Under his watch, he was able to get the Deep Offshore and Inland Basin Production Sharing Contract Act amended and passed by the Ninth Assembly. The piece of legislation sees Nigeria earning about \$2 billion USD annually from royalties on oil exploration.

Also, revenues generated by the Nigeria Customs Service was shored under Lawan's leadership. The service had in previous years generated less than N500 billion yearly, an amount which in contrast is abysmally low when compared to the sum of N2.2 trillion generated by the NCS in 2021.

Lawan, while underscoring the need for increased revenues, had severally mandated the Senate Committee on Customs, Excise and Tariffs and relevant Committees to have quarterly engagements with Revenue Generating Agencies in the country to ensure that revenue targets are met and possibly surpassed.

It therefore does not come as a surprise that the National Assembly set a N3 trillion target for the Service in the year 2022.

According to Lawan, implementing the Finance Act 2021, passed by the National Assembly, would guarantee improved internally generated revenue to boost Nigeria's earnings and assist revenue agencies in meeting up with targets.

As it stands, the outcome of the Peoples Democratic Party's primary has suddenly evoked a longing and clamour amongst Nigerians for Lawan's emergence as the candidate of the All Progressives Congress against PDP's Atiku Abubakar.

Unlike other aspirants, Lawan is considered the darling of the South-East, South-South, South-West, North-East, North-West and North-Central Geo-political Zones of the country.

Without a doubt, I dare say he is the only aspirant that can campaign across the length and breadth of the country without suffering any rejection. This stems from the belief that he possesses the true Nigerian spirit needed to foster unity and stability, restore peace, and bring about economic prosperity for all.

Indeed, he is the Ace of the All Progressives Congress in the 2023 presidential contest, and the unifier that Nigeria desperately needs at this time.

*•Dr. Tabiowo is the Special Assistant (Press) to the Senate President and writes from Abuja.*



## Nasarawa APC delegates pledge support for ex-N'Delta minister

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

"Because you saved the life of one of our sons 16 years ago, when he came out as the only survivor in a military plane crash, by taking care of his medical bills, we owe you a duty to support your presidential ambition by casting all our votes for you at the All Progressives Congress (APC) Special Convention".

Those were the words of Dr James Angbazo, during the consultative meeting of APC presidential aspirant, Senator Godswill Akpabio, with Nasarawa State delegates and stakeholders on Monday.

Similarly, former National President of the National Council for Women Society (NCWS), Hajia Zainab Ahmed, said she was endeared to the Presidential hopeful, after listening to his programs for the women and youths, if given the opportunity to become the next President of Nigeria in 2023.

According to Angbazo, "I have listened to your programs for Nigeria, but what you did 16 years ago, is the reason why you have my votes at the convention next week. My brother was one of the military officers who were involved in a plane crash which took the life of all the officers, but my brother was the only survivor.

"You sent substantial amount of money for his medical treatment abroad and today, he has just retired as a General in the Nigerian Army. That is why my vote is for you. When you become the President of this country, please continue with your good works. Don't change when you get there, because we will hold you to all what you have said today," he stated.

In the words of Hajia Ahmed, "your programs for women and the youth has endeared me to you and for having that in mind about the youths and our women, you have my vote. We want a president who will take very seriously, the welfare of women and our youths. I am also very impressed that your wife, as the First Lady of your state, built over 40 houses for the widows. This is unprecedented. We will hold you to your words and we pray that at end of it all, your heart desires would be granted in 2023".

Earlier in his welcome speech, the Nasarawa State Secretary of the party, Alhaji Aliyu Bello, had described Akpabio as a detribalised Nigerian, who thinks and dreams of the welfare and well being of Nigerians at every given time, saying, "our presidential hopeful is one Nigerian that is truly a Nigerian in deeds and actions. He is detribalised and totally committed to the unity and peace of our country. He is also an indigene of Nasarawa State and that is why we are here, to declare out support for his ambition to become our next president in 2023".

# Akwa Ibom APC crisis deepens

•Group urges Adamu to expel Akpabio, Udoedehe for peace •Guber aspirant accepts defeat, backs candidate

By **ISAAC JOB**, Uyo

A governorship aspirant on the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC) in Akwa Ibom, Prof. Chris Ekong, said he has swallowed the defeat from the party gubernatorial primaries and will work for the success of Obong Akan Udofia in 2023 general election.

Addressing a press conference in Uyo on Tuesday, Ekong observed that APC had suffered several defeats in the past because leaders holding on to their ego refused to acknowledge party supremacy causing them to lose to PDP at different times in the state. He said the decision to support the winner of the gubernatorial primaries in the state was for the interest of the party.

He maintained that the conduct of the party primaries was free, fair and credible for every aspirant to accept adding that parallel attitude of party chieftains in the past was the cause of losing the state to PDP for many years. He listed unforgiving spirit, greed, self centredness and vendetta as characteristics of party chieftains that worked against their success adding it will never happen in 2023.

He observed that some chieftains frustrated the party in the past and run to Abuja to negotiate appointments only to return after four years in another election season leaving supporters in the lurch.

"They are deliberately setting it on course, to however, grapple with the destiny of the party; and themselves, remaining some serial political entrepreneurs whose traditional stock-in-trade is to trade the fortunes of the party for their personal and vaulted gains."

Ekong, a renowned professor of Economics, noted that APC had suffered defeats from 2011 in the days of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) to 2019 as those defeats were caused by inflexibility of political gladiators who contested with bitterness that gingered them not to accept the choice of party men except such decision were taken in their favour. He said uncompromising clash of the beneficiary stakeholders had over the years robbed the party of success at the polls in the state and had totally weakened the party's ability to help maintain her teeming members, supporters and admirers who always bear the brunt of these stakeholders covetous attitude.



National Chairman of APC, Abdullahi Adamu

"After killing the aspirations and yearnings of serious party members to win elections in the State, these covetous stakeholders run to Abuja to buy themselves and cronies into various national appointments.

"Once they land the Abuja appointments with the 20percent votes they milked from the impoverished and famished party members, they will only return after 4 years to contest another election with intention to repeat the same cycle."

He said his participation in the governorship race was with a clear vision committed to return Akwa Ibom to her greatness through APC and nothing can stop it. He therefore enjoined all delegates and supporters to join him in the move to support the winning candidate and prepare for 2023 general election in the state.

But a group under the aegis of Movement for Better Nigeria (MBN) has urged the National Chairman of All Progressives Congress (APC), Abdullahi Adamu, to expel Senator Godswill Akpabio and Senator John James Akpan Udoedehe from the party in Akwa Ibom State.

Addressing a press conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State capital, on Tuesday, spokesman of the group, Dr. Paul Dowell, said the duo of Akpabio and Udoedehe have been identified as the two

factions that drove the party backward in the past.

The group insisted that the two gladiators have caused downfall of APC in Akwa Ibom State from 2011 to 2019 adding that the party will not fold her arms to see these personalities fighting for party to lost out in the battle for the soul of Akwa Ibom State in 2023. He observed that out of 329 wards in Akwa Ibom State, APC never had even councillor, in ten federal constituencies, the party had no representative as well no seat for the three Senatorial Districts in the state. The group spokesman said Udoedehe and Akpabio have grounded APC in the state because of their personal and selfish interest and cannot accept such disposition in 2023.

"What we have been suffering in this state, since 2011 is ownership and entitlement mentality of a member who feels that without him there is No APC in Akwa Ibom. That is why we have remained down politically in the state. In 2015 that same person came again claiming to be the owner of APC when the likes of Comrade David Ekanem, late Idongesit Udoekpo, late Steve Ibanga and others who went to his house and lobbied him to leave PDP and join APC did not claim ownership. That same fight began and APC lost

the election.

"We will no longer fold our arms and watch these people take us back to the dark days. It is said that when two elephants fight, the grass suffers. In this case, APC in Akwa Ibom suffers the fight between the two persons in the party which has led to the polarisation of the party."

The group explained that Akpabio was admitted into APC in 2019 but he came with a lot of troubles while Udoedehe claims ownership and entitlement mentality in the party. He said these two factions are not helping APC to succeed in Akwa Ibom and urged the National Chairman of APC, Abdullahi Adamu, to exit them from the party in the state if it must succeed in 2023.

"In 2019, we brought Akpabio to the party, he came again with a lot of trouble, the duo were championing their selfish interest embellished with sabotage which made APC to lose again.

"Though Akpabio was compensated with the office of the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, taking the glory of other people who worked tirelessly for the party while Udoedehe became the National Secretary."

He argued that the above compensation never settled them as they went about destroying chances of the party during election times in the state. He said all the aspirants and the generality of Akwa Ibom people are confused on who to follow adding that "enough is enough" to internal wranglings in Akwa Ibom APC.

"Now again! 2022, that same person and his likes are here, we say never again! APC has gone a long way and should allow internal democracy to thrive and not to allow one person who sees the party as his birth right to have his way. We expect the party to sit down and strategize on how to win the state and not to allow internal fighting," he said.

The group spokesman recalled that ambushing of APC governorship primaries materials from Airport to where there shootings along Oron Road in Uyo City was a manifestation of the two factions working for themselves instead of the party in the state.

"The ambush of national officers from the Obong Victor Attah's International airport, the sporadic shooting and the fracas between the two groups were indicators that peace is still far from the two groups in the party," he said.

## Abioye promises quality representation for constituency

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

A former member of Kwara State House of Assembly, Hon. Tajudeen Olabisi Abioye has won the primary election of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for Ifelodun/Offa/ Oyun Federal Constituency to the House of Representatives.

He defeated the incumbent

member representing the Constituency, Hon. Tijani Ismail.

Abioye polled 179 votes to defeat others while Ismail polled just 3 votes.

The winner of the primary election told The Trumpet on telephone interview on Monday that he dedicated his victory at the party primary to his teeming supporters.

He said the victory is for every member of APC in the constituency and Kwara State at large while calling on those that contested the election with him to rally round him to ensure victory for the party at the actual election in 2023.

Abioye promised qualitative representation to his constituent if he win in 2023.

He as well called on the people of Kwara to reelect the state governor, Abdulrahman Abdulrazak for a second term in office.

Other winners of federal constituencies in the election are; Yinka Ahmed for Ilorin South/ East, Segun Adebayo for Ekiti/ Isin/ Irepodun, Oke- Ero and Mohammed Umar Bio for Baruten/ Kaima.



## Court grants Okorocha bail

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

A Federal High Court in Abuja has granted a former governor of Imo State and presidential aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Chief Rochas Okorocha, bail in the sum of N500 million and one surety in like sum.

Okorocha, who currently represents the Imo West senatorial district at the red chamber, is being tried by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on a 17-count N2.9 billion fraud charge.

He was accused of conspiring with others, including a member of the APC and five companies to steal from public coffers, although he has since denied any wrongdoing.

Okorocha was brought to the Federal High Court in Abuja by operatives of the EFCC on Monday, 30 May 2022.

At the proceeding, the former governor took a stand in the dock after which the charges were read to him.

In his response, he pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The second defendant in the suit, Anyim Chinenye, as well as the five companies also pleaded not guilty to the charges.

After taking their plea, Okorocha's lawyer, Mr Okey Amaechi, prayed the court to release his client on bail, pending the determination of the case against him.

Amaechi also drew the attention of the court to the fact that his client was roughly arrested before the screening of the presidential aspirants of the APC.



Okorocha

However, the EFCC, through its lawyer, Mr Gbolahan Latona, told the court that Okorocha raised some issues in his bail application that would require its response.

Justice Ekwo adjourned the matter until the following day, Tuesday to hear the bail applications of the defendants and ordered that they should remain in EFCC custody, pending the determination of their bail applications.

At the resumption of proceedings on Tuesday, the court granted the former governor bail in the sum of N500 million and one surety in like sum.

According to the court, the surety should be a citizen of Nigeria, who owns a landed property in Abuja, and the original property document should

be deposited with the court registry.

It further directed the registrar of the court to verify the said property and ordered the defendant not to travel outside the jurisdiction of the court, without the court's permission.

The EFCC is to deposit the defendant's passport with the court registry.

The registrar of the court is to inform the Nigerian Immigration service, that the passport of the defendant is with the court.

Mr Okorocha is billed to attend APC Presidential screening today at the Transcorp Hotels, Abuja.

The Trumpet recalled that Okorocha was arrested in a commando-style by the EFCC that stormed his Maitama residence of Abuja in the Federal Capital Territory last week Tuesday.

The EFCC's officials, who insisted that Okorocha must submit himself for arrest for failing to honour a long-standing invitation by the agency, later barricaded the residence of the presidential aspirant.

Following a series of drama at the scene, gunshots were heard as the anti-graft agency's team broke into Okorocha's house and left with the presidential aspirant to their office.

The lawmaker had on Friday last week, lost his request to the court to be admitted on bail, pending the determination of a suit he had instituted against the Federal Government and the anti-graft agency. Okorocha had predicated his bail request on the ground that he was a presidential aspirant of the APC, adding that his political ambition would be jeopardised unless he was granted bail to proceed for screening.

## EFCC declares ex-Rep Nzeribe wanted for alleged fraud

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has declared a former member of the House of Representatives, Chief Chuma Nzeribe, wanted for alleged fraud Justice Yusuf Y. Halilu of the Federal Capital Territory High Court, Maitama, Abuja had on May 23, 2022, convicted Nzeribe for fraud in absentia.

Declaring the former lawmaker wanted, Wilson Uwujaren, EFCC's Spokesperson in a statement on Monday, said Nzeribe, who is 62 years old, jumped the court bail granted to him by the FCT High Court, Maitama, and has since not been seen.

Uwujaren called on the general public to assist in apprehending Nzeribe.

"His last known address is at Block M7, Flat 8, NNPC Housing Estate, Area 11, Garki, Abuja.

"Anyone with useful information as to his whereabouts should please contact the Commission in its offices or report to the nearest Police

Station and other security agencies," the spokesperson said in a public notice.

Nzeribe was first arraigned by the EFCC on October 16, 2020, on a four-count charge bordering on possession of a fraudulent document, forgery, using as genuine and cheating by impersonation, punishable under section 6, 8 (b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same Act.

## Efficient, accountable service delivery, solution to corruption, ICPC affirms

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Imo State office of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has identified efficient and accountable service delivery as the panacea to graft ravaging the public sector.

This assertion was made by an Assistant Commissioner in Imo state office, Mrs Chinwe Egbeocha, at a sensitization programme recently organised by the Commission for staff of Imo State Internal

Revenue Services (IIRS).

Egbeocha stated that lack of accountability in the public sector could degenerate into corruption with negative consequences, pointing out that public servants, instead of discharging their functions as development centres, have acquired a reputation for corruption, fiscal indiscipline, and overall irresponsibility.

She noted the role of IIRS as an important government agency that helps make governance possible, by ensuring

that government revenues are collected to fund essential programmes and services. She further stated that many governments all over the world have through taxation ensured that resources are mobilised and channeled towards funding public services, infrastructure, and other development and poverty reduction goals.

She, however, observed that corruption is a challenge in tax administration and management in Nigeria, and due to the

lack of knowledge of taxpayers regarding tax laws, tax officers take advantage of this inadequacy to use their power and threats to extort illicit payments from tax-payers.

The Assistant Commissioner lamented that corruption is a disease, which eats into the political, cultural, and economic growth of any country and destroys the functioning of various organs of the government, pointing out that ICPC was established to eradicate the scourge.

## INTERPOL nabs Nigerians for alleged online scam

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

An INTERPOL-led operation targeting malware cyber fraud across Southeast Asia has led to the arrest of three Nigerians, who are suspected global scammers.

Operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in a sting operation conducted simultaneously in a Lagos suburb called Ajegunle and in Benin City, 300 km to the East of the commercial capital, arrested the suspects.

The Nigerian sting operation came as part of a global operation codenamed "Killer Bee" involving INTERPOL, National Central Bureaus (NCBs), and law enforcement in 11 countries across Southeast Asia.

The arrests followed the publication of an INTERPOL Cyber Report linking a suspected syndicate of Nigerian

fraudsters operating from the West Coast of Africa to the use of a malicious Remote Access Trojan (RAT) known as Agent Tesla.

The men are thought to have used the RAT to reroute financial transactions, stealing confidential online connection details from corporate organizations, including oil and gas companies in South East Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

One of the scammers, Hendrix Omorume was charged with three counts of serious financial fraud and has been convicted and sentenced to one year imprisonment. The trial of the others is still ongoing.

"Through its global police network and constant monitoring of cyberspace, INTERPOL had the globally sourced intelligence needed to alert Nigeria to a serious security threat where millions

could have been lost without swift police action," said INTERPOL's Director of Cybercrime, Craig Jones.

He added, "Further arrests and prosecutions are foreseen across the world as intelligence continues to come in and investigations unfold." INTERPOL assisted in examining the laptops and mobile phones seized by EFCC during the arrests, helping to confirm the systematic use of "Agent Tesla" malware to access business computers and divert monetary transactions to their own accounts.

"Cybercrime is spreading at a fast pace, with new trends constantly emerging. Through operations like Killer Bee, INTERPOL partners EFCC to keep pace with new technologies and understand the possibilities they create for criminals and how they can be used as tools for fighting cybercrime,"

said EFCC's Director of Operations, Abdulkarim Chukkol.

"The enforcement actions led by Nigeria and coordinated by INTERPOL send a clear message that cybercrime will have serious repercussions for those involved in business email compromise fraud, particularly in Nigeria," Chukkol added.

The three men, aged between 31 and 38, were each arrested in possession of fake documents, including fraudulent invoices and forged official letters.

Operation Killer Bee is led by the ASEAN Cybercrime Operations Desk, which is funded by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) 2.0 and supported by the Singapore Government.

Operational partners included Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.



# ASUU Elongated strike action

**R**ecently, the Academic Staff of Unions (ASUU) announced a further extension of its national strike. The current strike was called on February 14, 2022. That it has lasted three months and still counting shows that the stakeholders in the sector are incapable of finding lasting solutions to the problems of education.

The worrisome thing about ASUU strikes is that the reasons for them have been largely the same. Failure on the part of the FGN to implement agreements, MOUs and MOAs reached with the union. The union on her part has always greeted this with strikes. ASUU always 'suspends' and does not 'call off' her strike. The public have always acted the same way each time ASUU embarks on strike actions. Curiously, all expect different results.

The education sector suffers. Perhaps government and Nigerians are comfortable with the fact that other countries can provide educational services for Nigeria. This is wishful thinking, and one borne out of a people who hope to live in a fools' paradise. No society's development – economic, technological, scientific, cultural, etc. – can outmatch the quality of education she offers. The university is the light house and beacon of societies that aspire for true progress and development.

The almost near silence of the once vibrant and articulate Minister of Education, Alhaji Adamu Adamu is suspect. He had a brush with the leadership of NANs and went under the bunkers since then! The Minister of State for Education has left the scene apologetically. He wants to be the next president of Nigeria after purchasing a form of N100,000,000 to express his interest for the office under the platform of the APC. The Minister of Labour and Productivity is not one to be held down in statements and actions.

The time has come for all stakeholders in the education sector to put on their thinking caps and find lasting solutions to the problems besetting the sector. Efforts must be put in place to make this current strike the last of this national embarrassment that started since

1988.

There are many ways we all are victims of ASUU strike actions. However, the most hit are the poor and middle-income earners who cannot send their children and wards to foreign universities. It is a thing of surprise that the NLC and other labour unions do not feel that it is their children that are most affected. It is therefore commendable that the TUC is waking up to this challenge.

Students have started protesting the strikes on our streets. The fear this portends for us as a people is better imagined than experienced. If reports received are taken seriously, we may begin to have highly 'militarised' student bodies across the country. The high-handedness of our security personnel does not help matters. It is therefore imperative for both government and ASUU to nip this in the bud. The country

is already charged enough to tipping point! When will this, and future strike actions end?

The federal government seems to be recruiting more academics for ASUU. Staff of most of the newly established publicly owned universities are now members of ASUU. Universities like the University of Ilorin that pulled out of ASUU in the past have returned to her fold.

The salaries of academics should be reviewed upward. It is shameful that many Nigerians do not aspire to become researchers and academics. Salaries have remained the same since 2009. Some academics have left the system for others lucrative sectors or foreign countries. It is not enough for the FGN to reject the UTAS payment platform created by ASUU. The fact that persons who have retired and died are on the payroll of IPPIS, the fact that academics who were not physically captured are being paid under the platform demonstrate that the office of the Accountant General was parsimonious with the truth. If only for its local content, if it has 75% credibility pass and if it is capable of being upgraded and improved upon from time to time, then the FGN should accept UTAS for trial.

No doubt, we are in a society where public officials do not resign honourably when they have failed or are found in doubtful positions. Nevertheless, we call on the Minister of Education, Alhaji Adamu Adamu to put an end to this unrest in our university system. Alternatively, he should resign. ASUU and other stakeholders in the education sector should give the nation a workable and implementable roadmap on how to bring our universities to where they belong among their peers in the world. It takes two to tangle As a union of academics, ASUU most look inward and see where she can make some accommodation for the system to run smoothly; after all, there are many aspects of the 2009 agreement that various universities' managements have not even addressed.

This is one strike too many for our university education. That polytechnics and colleges of education unions have threatened to join is a tragedy!



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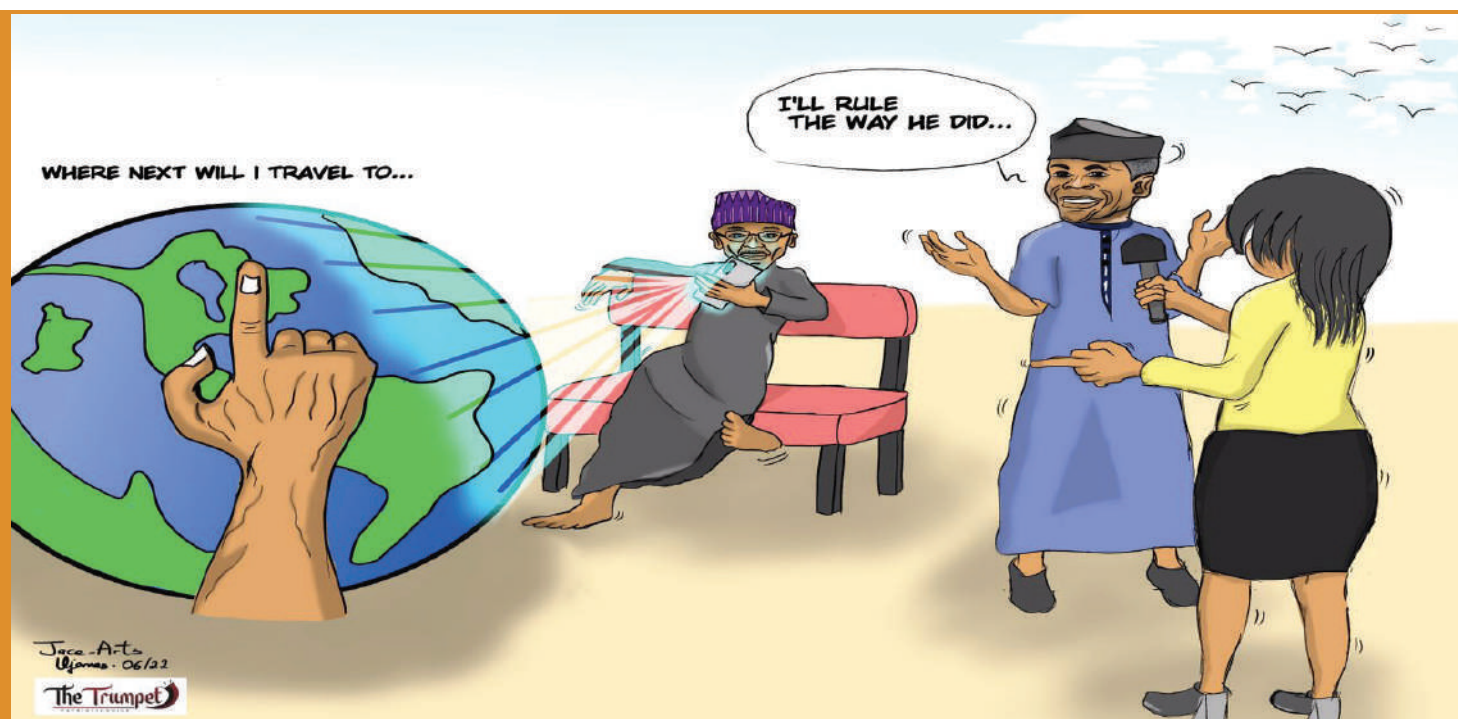
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## Why regular milk consumption is important

"A glass of MILK a day keeps black thoughts away . . ." – Nischita Nibedita

For those able to tolerate milk, however, consuming high-quality milk and dairy products has been proven to provide a number of health benefits. These include: -

1. **GOOD FOR BONES:** Milk is the topmost food source of Calcium and Vitamin D for children and adults. Calcium is an essential nutrient for strong bones, muscle movement and nerve signals. Vitamin D increases the body's ability to absorb Calcium. Sunlight is an excellent source of Vitamin D.

2. **HELPS IN BUILDING STRONG TEETH:** Milk strengthens our teeth because it contains a high amount of Calcium. Lactose also helps prevent cavities and tooth decay.

3. **PROMOTES MUSCLE HEALTH:** Drinking milk is associated with a lower risk of age-related muscle loss. Also, several studies have demonstrated that drinking milk after a workout can decrease muscle damage, promote muscle repair, increase strength and decrease muscle soreness.

4. **RICH IN PROTEIN:** Your body requires proteins that can help in cell repair and boosting a person's immunity.

5. **PROMOTES HEART HEALTH:** The Potassium in milk may help with heart health. Getting more Potassium while also reducing Sodium (salt) intake can lower blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

6. **REDUCES DEPRESSION:** A quote by one Nischita Nibedita

says: "A glass of MILK a day keeps black thoughts away." Yes, adequate levels of Vitamin D in milk supports the production of Serotonin, a hormone people associate with mood, appetite and sleep. Manufacturers often fortify cow's milk and plant milk with Vitamin D. So, this can help to reduce depression.

7. **BOOSTS METABOLISM:** Milk boosts your metabolism and keeps you satisfied for a longer period.

8. **REDUCES RISKS OF OBESITY:** Whole milk can be added to your diet. With its high protein content, it can curb your cravings for junk food for a long time, which will aid you in your fitness strategy to burn fat.

9. **FIGHTS MULTIPLE DISEASES:** Researchers have found that milk helps in preventing many diseases, even including some types of cancer.

10. **STRESS BUSTER:** Milk soothes your muscles and nerves and has a calming effect on you.

11. **PREVENTS HEARTBURNS:** There are many foods that are acidic in nature and can cause heartburns. Milk gives you a calming effect that coats the stomach lining and oesophagus from causing heartburn.

12. **GOOD FOR YOUR SKIN:** Milk makes your skin look young, soft and glowing. This is because it contains retinol, a known anti-aging and skin-restoring antioxidant.

Plus milk's Vitamin D is also an anti-aging vitamin, thanks to its anti-inflammatory effects and protection from ultraviolet rays.

How much milk should we consume daily? There is no hard and fast rule, but too much of something is not advisable. For adults, two full glasses of milk a day - once in the morning and once before bed - will provide an adequate amount of nutrients. For children below 12 years of age, two 250ml glasses of milk a day should be sufficient. And, of course, babies require regular milk intake, as it is their sole source of nutrients. It is good for us to also note that milk has healthy types that can benefit us. It is advised that we choose low-fat or non-fat milk, whole milk or skim milk.

The price of milk has increased as a result of inflation in Nigeria. So, to conclude, I appeal to the various producers of dairy products to consider reducing the price of milk, so that many more people can afford to enjoy more regularly this rich, nutritious and delicious super-beverage. "And there will be enough . . ." -Proverbs 27:27.

So, everyone, drink milk regularly, enjoying its rich nutritional benefits from A to Z!

•Ighakpe, a writer, lives in FESTAC Town, Lagos. He can be reached via [danny.ighakpe@gmail.com](mailto:danny.ighakpe@gmail.com) and 0817 479 5742.

**W**ORLD MILK DAY is observed every year on June 1. It was introduced in 2001 by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) to recognize the importance of milk as a global food, and to celebrate the dairy sector.

MILK is the first food we consume when we are born. Breast milk provides the ideal nutrition for infants during their first months of life. Children are encouraged to drink up their milk so that they can "grow up big and strong." Do we, however, tend to stop drinking this nutritious beverage as we grow older? Even as adults, should we still drink milk?

For decades, scientific research has continued to emphasize the importance of maintaining bone health as we age. Gradually throughout our lives, our bones are constantly changing. Hence, when our intake of Calcium-rich foods is low, our body 'steals' the Calcium it needs from our bones - which can cause them to become porous and weak. In Nigeria, bone diseases are quite common. Just as an example: according to data, more than 1.5 million cases of Osteoporosis

are diagnosed in Nigeria every year! Osteoporosis refers to a condition in which bones become weak and brittle, and bone loss occurs without symptoms. Consequently, most people are unaware of their deteriorating bone health.

However, the good news is that drinking milk regularly can help prevent Osteoporosis and bone fractures and even help you maintain a healthy weight. This delicious beverage - Milk, has always been a healthy drink because it is an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, and many other nutrients which are usually under-consumed by many people.

However, although milk is a good choice for many, some people cannot tolerate it because they are unable to digest lactose, a sugar found in milk and dairy products (dairy products are products containing or made from milk). It is suggested that such people stick to unsweetened varieties of milk, to limit the amount of added sugar in their diet. Some examples of non-dairy milk alternatives include: soymilk, oat milk, almond milk, and more.

## Kingsley DIKE



## Sokoto, Zamfara and WAEC

the imams who are supposed to care for them . It is only in Nigeria that you see a sea of young people just roaming the streets and begging for money. Soon they graduate from street begging to street urchins, then to armed robbers , kidnappers, bandits and terrorists. They are the Boko Haram fighters with few hardened global Islamic jihadist from the war in Libya and chad. The wars in the Sahel coupled with Nigeria's no-border policy (porous borders) have meant that as Libya fractured, thousands of escaping moslem terrorists and jihadist found home in Nigeria's sambiza forests with Boko Haram terrorists. The war in chad have also long brought this cross-border migration of criminals and social miscreants fueling the security challenge. Many Nigerian villages, towns and cities would wake up to see strange looking foreigners setting up tents with AK-47 machine guns. Not long

they would start witnessing all kinds of heinous crimes ranging from rape of innocent women and children in the farms, killing of farmers, kidnapping on our roads for ransome, hitherto very strange occurrence in Nigeria's culture and value system.

The Almajiris are the Hausa-Fulani herdsman killing and maiming herdsman across the country. Tackling terrorism, bandits and Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria requires more than the now yearly huge financial and budgetary allocations to Security ( so-called security votes) to dedicated pursuit of education for the huge swathe of disenfranchised young people called Almajiris in Northern Nigeria. Unfortunately Northern states like Sokoto and Zamfara and others are not making the effort. Imagine states of the federation who receive monthly federal allocation do not have students graduating from elementary and secondary school

to qualify them to take WAEC examination. Almajiri system is producing young people who have nothing to loose in society. Thus they also have nothing to gain nor to contribute to the country but to torment their fellow countrymen as they grow up with no life skills to earn a legitimate living. They become the foot Soldiers of Boko Haram, and the Fulani headsmen killing people and causing mayhem across Nigeria. It would take more than the normal politics or our usual unproductive rhetorics to pull Nigeria from the brinks of this security quagmire. It would require new thinking, great courage and determination to shake up the status quo. Who will save Nigeria?

•Kingsley Dike, a former Foreign Affairs Reporter with The Guardian in Lagos and retired United States Army Intelligence Analyst, wrote from Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

**T**his story should concern every Nigerian all over the world. The Almajiri system in Northern Nigeria is and has been producing a generation of disenfranchised young men who have nothing to lose. One of my unclassified work as an Intelligence Analyst in the United States Army was to answer the question who are the Boko Haram fighters and what was fueling the insurgency in Nigeria? I painted a profile of the Boko Haram fighters and

other actors responsible for the breakdown of Nigeria's security architecture like the Hausa-fulani herdsmen.

A common denominator in Nigeria security challenge are the Almajiri. The Almajiris are orphan and other abandoned children usually left in the care and tutelage of moslem clerics and imams. But in practice the children are left to take of themselves through the solicitation of alms and street begging and in most cases even



# Army, Police deny Cameroon separatists attack on C'River

## ■ Over 500 fleeing Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria – SEMA

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

**N**igeria Army has refuted claims that Cameroonian separatists launched an attack on a Nigerian community, Bashu, in Boki Local Government in Cross River State on 29 May 2022. It said the alleged attack was on two Cameroonian communities, Obonyi 2 and Njasha.

A report has stated that militants of a Cameroonian separatist group, Ambazonia, attacked Boki Local Government Area on Sunday, killing 20 people in Bashu community.

Responding to the report in a statement on Monday, the Director of Army Public Relations, Brigadier-General Onyema Nwachukwu, said the report was false and misinformation, adding that no Nigerian community was attacked by Cameroonian separatists.

While urging the public to disregard the information, Nwachukwu said citizens should not panic but go about their legitimate activities.

He said, "The Nigerian Army has been notified of a statement insinuating that Nigerian villages were attacked by Cameroonian (Ambazonian) separatists on 29 May 2022.

"Contrary to the misinformation, our own troops deployed at Danare received information on Sunday morning about the said attack. The troops immediately mobilised to Bashu community, which was allegedly under attack.

"On their arrival, it was revealed that Bashu was not under attack and no external incursion was recorded; rather the separatists attacked Obonyi 2 and Njasha, both of which are communities located in the Republic of Cameroon. Four victims of the attack, who crossed over to Nigerian territory were later rescued by our troops and operatives of Nigerian Immigration Services. The attack was therefore not within Nigerian territory as claimed.

"Members of the public are enjoined to disregard the unsubstantiated information and not panic."

Similarly, the Commissioner of Police in Cross River



Lt Gen. Yahaya

State, Aminu Alhassan, told newsmen on Monday that there was no single attack on Bashu community let alone the killing of 20 persons in Boki Local Government Area of the state on Sunday.

Alhassan noted that the report was not only fake but a "figment of the writer's imagination". While asking the public to disregard the report, he urged journalists to always crosscheck facts before publication.

He said, "There was no militancy attack in Boki Local Government Area, not to even

talk of killing 20 people as alleged by the report.

"There was an attack and deaths, but it was in neighbouring Cameroon and not on Nigerian territory.

"For the sake of emphasis, there was no attack in Boki Local Government Area or in any part of Cross River."

Meanwhile, the Cross River State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) has said that no fewer than 500 fleeing Cameroonian refugees have crossed the border into Bashu community in the state.

Princewill Ayim, the Director-

## IGP decorates new DIGs, tasks officers on quality service

Two newly promoted Deputy Inspectors-General of Police (DIGs), Bala Zama Senchi and John Ogbonaya Amadi, have been decorated with their new ranks.

Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Usman Alkali Baba performed the ceremony in his office at Louis Edet House, Force Headquarters, Abuja.

A statement signed by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said the decoration came on the heels of recently released promotions by the Police Service Commission (PSC), in which the two officers' recommendations by the IGP were approved by the body.

"DIG Bala Zama Senchi, psc(+), was until his recent promotion, the acting DIG Department of Operations, Force Headquarters, Abuja. A consummate police officer, he holds a BA in History. The Kebbi State-born cop has held many Command positions including the Commissioner of Police, Police Staff College, Jos, Jigawa Police Command, and Assistant Inspector-General of Police in-charge of Community Policing, Force Headquarters, Abuja.

"DIG John Ogbonaya Amadi, who hails from Ebonyi State, is a versatile police officer, with a Bachelor's degree in Education (Biology) and a Master's Degree in Education both from the prestigious University of Lagos. He has attended several professional courses both in Nigeria, and abroad.

"He is a member of the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), has held many Command positions including as Commissioner of Police at the Railway Police Command, Western Ports Authority, Lagos, and Airport Command, Lagos; Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Maritime, Lagos.

"He is currently the DIG in charge of Research and Planning, as well as the coordinating DIG for the South East Geo-Political Zone," CSP Adejobi stated.

He also added that the IGP tasked the senior police officers and other men of the Nigeria Police Force who were recently promoted to give quality policing service to citizens in accordance with modern police reform.

"The Inspector-General of Police has charged the senior officers and others who have just been promoted, on quality delivery of policing services to members of the public while ensuring full compliance with the police reform agenda of the President.

"He further charged the DIG Operations with improving ICT-based operational activities while the DIG Research and Planning was tasked to focus on engendering professional planning for improved policing in Nigeria," he said.

# Police arrest suspect with human part, charms in Zamfara

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

Zamfara State Police Command has arrested one Jabiru Ibrahim, a member of an outlawed group known as YANSAKAI from Dauran district in Zurmi LGA for allegedly possessing a human hand.

A statement signed by the Command's Spokesperson, SP

Mohammed Shehu, said that the suspect was arrested by the Joint Police and Military Operatives on Anti-Banditry Operation along Dauran – Zurmi axis and brought to the Police Command Headquarters, Gusau for discreet investigation.

Shehu said a discreet investigation on the culpable homicide of one Abdullah, a Fulani and possession of a

human body part is currently being carried out by the police on the suspect and his gang members, who are currently at large.

He added that the outlawed YANSAKAI group has been terrorizing Dauran community through jungle justice, which has provoked reprisal attacks by terrorists on the innocent dwellers of the community.

He said, "Preliminary

investigation revealed that the suspect was among the members of the outlawed group (YANSAKAI) who have been terrorising members of Dauran Community through Jungle Justice, leading to reprisal attacks by bandits and terrorists against the innocent members of the public.

"In the course of interrogation, the suspect has confessed that, himself and

three (3) other members of his gang now at large carried out the gruesome killing of one Abdullah, a Fulani by tribe and later the suspect removed the right hand of the deceased.

"Investigation is in progress with a view to arresting his partners in crime and to unravel the circumstances of their action before being charged to court for Prosecution."

# NSCDC bursts illegal oil storage site, arrests 19 suspects

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

Lagos State Command of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has busted an illegal oil storage site in Oregon, Ikeja, where Automotive Gas Oil (AGO) also known as diesel, is being refined and arrested 19 suspected oil vandals, trucks, peddlers, buses, cash and cars, and other machines used for perpetrating the heinous economic sabotage.

Assistant Superintendent of Corps (ASCI), Abolurin Oluwaseun Oluwaseun, disclosed this in a statement on Tuesday, adding that the head of the Command, Commandant Eweka Okoro, avowed his unflinching commitment to the vision of the Commandant General, Ahmed Abubakar Audi, in

eradicating illegal dealings in petroleum products and all forms of economic sabotage in Lagos state.

Recall that recently in a meeting with the Honourable Minister of Mines and Steel, Uche Ogar, the NSCDC boss reiterated his vow to stamp out oil pipeline vandalism, illegal oil bunkering, illegal dealings in petroleum products, illegal mining of solid and natural minerals and other disheartening forms of economic sabotage, being perpetrated by criminal elements in the country.

According to Oluwaseun, "The Commandant General's Special Intelligence Squad, inaugurated towards the tale of the year 2021, at the NSCDC, National Headquarters, in Abuja, is also one of the multidimensional approaches being deployed by the CG to squash the desecrating activities of oil pipeline vandals and the asymmetric war, the

nation is being faced with today."

He added, "The CG Special Intelligence Squad, in the realisation of their responsibilities, stormed Etal Avenue, off Kudirat, Abiola Way, Oregon, Ikeja, Lagos State, at about 12:18hrs, Monday, 30th May 2022, where it burst an illegal oil storage site, where Automotive Gas Oil (AGO), also known as diesel, is being refined, arrested a syndicate of suspected oil vandals, trucks, peddlers, buses, cash and cars, with machines and other implements used for perpetrating the heinous economic sabotage.

"The CG Special Intelligence Squad, relied basically on credible intelligence, coupled with the reinvigorated vigour of the Squad, in line with the CG's charge to stamp out the oil thieves in the Oregon area of the nation.

"The CG Special Intelligence Squad, upon bursting the illegal oil site, where it was discovered that petroleum products were being illegally stored and refined, as well discovered and arrested the following persons and items: (i) Nineteen (19) suspects; Eighteen (18) male and one (1) female, (ii) Eighty-one (81) trucks, (iii) Nine (9) bus, (iv) Twelve (12) pumping machines, (v) Twenty-five (25) surface tanks, (vi) One hundred and forty (140) drums containing illegally refined (AGO), (vii) Fifteen (15) generators and (viii) four million (4,000,000) Naira in cash found in a car suspected to belong to the syndicate.

"The Squad was immediately re-enforced by the Anti-vandal team of the Lagos State Command, on the swift orders of the Commandant, NSCDC, Lagos State Command, Commandant Eweka Edenabu Douglas Okoro, msc, acma, cna,

who clinically directed that the arrested suspects be brought for adequate interrogation and investigation, in the Intelligence and Investigation (INT) Department, at the State Command Headquarters in Alausa, Ikeja, before further legal action will be taken on the matter.

"The Anti-vandal unit of the Command has also been directed by the Commandant to take full charge of the illegal oil site immediately, so as to forestall any further untoward activity by these economic saboteurs of our collective commonwealth.

"Finally, Commandant Eweka Okoro avows his unflinching commitment to the vision and mission of the Commandant General, CG Ahmed Abubakar Audi, PhD, mni, in relation to the eradication of illegal dealings in petroleum products and all forms of economic sabotage in the State and Nation."





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2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	1 x 2	11,294.45	12,141.54	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	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	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	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	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	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	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	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 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	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 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	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	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02
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10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,111.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	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 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	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 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	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 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88
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10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53	10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16	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	10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19	FP14.5 X 6	379,943.00	408,438.72
FP 14.5 x 6	560,500.00	602,537.50	11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24	14.5 x 2	151,178.45	162,516.84			
			14.5 X 2	197,128.09	211,912.70	14.5 x 4	362,827.71	390,039.79			
			14.5 X 4	394,256.19	423,825.40	HP7.25 X 6	246,131.63	264,591.50			
			14.5 X 5	472,286.06	507,707.52	14.5 X 5	431,525.39	463,889.79			
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Page 4 (Full Page)	1,187,500.00	1,276,562.50	2x6 Under Mast Head	3,990,000.00	4,289,250.00
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# CBN charges banks to support firms with foreign exchange inflow

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

As Nigeria continues to grapple with scarcity of dollars, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has urged Nigerian banks to support indigenous companies to increase foreign exchange inflows and boost economic growth.

A CBN team on inspection of projects funded through Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) in Lagos gave the advice recently.

It noted that the apex bank was counting on these companies to expand export earnings and achieve the goal of 200 billion dollars in foreign exchange repatriation in three to four years.

The CBN team visited Pinnacle Oil and Gas FZE Candel Company Limited, Lagos Free Zone and Sana Building Systems all in Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos State.

Head, Legal Services Department of CBN, Kofo Salam-Alada during a visit to Candel Company Limited, urged commercial banks to support Nigerian companies to boost production in the country.

"With what the company is doing, I believe that bankers should actually start coming for them, it is not just the Central Bank's intervention funds. Nigerian banks should actually seek them to see how they can partner with them to achieve their goals.

"The key thing that Nigerians must also know is that we need to support our own, not just in terms of employment generation, CBN that is interested in increasing foreign exchange in

this country, it is something that needs to be supported," he said.

Speaking, Director, Banking Supervision Department, Haruna Mustapha, said what the company was doing was quite complementary to the apex bank's "RT200" designed to boost the non-oil sector.

"Cancel stands at two critical junctures: It is a manufacturing outfit. CBN recently introduced the RT200 designed to boost the non-oil sector and what Candel is doing here is quite complementary to that policy.

"Again, it is providing the needed support to the agricultural sector which will feed into the policy of the government to diversify the productive base of the Nigerian economy. Ultimately we expect to see a solid impact especially when you consider the various chains this business touches.

"So, we need more support for companies like Candel and if we can have them in sufficient critical mass, the future looks great for Nigeria," Mustapha said.

Also speaking, Director of Development Finance at CBN, Yila Yusuf, noted that the bank under its commercial Agro Credit Scheme disbursed N2 billion to Candel, adding that the apex bank was impressed with how the company deployed the funds.

"We have given Candel N2 billion under our Commercial Agro Credit scheme, fully paid through First Bank. We came here to see essentially, the manufacturing line they have



Haruna Mustapha,

and their new products. We are impressed with what we have seen.

"The CBN will continue to support and work with performing companies. Quite a number of new jobs both direct and indirect that we have seen on the floor line," he said.

Responding, Chairman of Candel Company Limited, Charles Anudu, who noted that manufacturing companies in Nigeria are suffering a lot of difficulties doing business in Nigeria, urged banks to be development-oriented like the CBN.

"We suffer a lot of disadvantage manufacturing in Nigeria. Our cost of production is very high. We have to generate our own power and do everything which is very expensive. Yet, we still compete against countries doing exports to Nigeria," he stressed.

## AfDB will continue to implement life transforming projects, says Adesina

President of the Africa Development Bank (AfDB), Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina, has said that the bank will continue to make Africa proud by supporting implementation of impactful and life-transforming projects across the continent.

Adesina said this on Sunday in a tweet through his verified Tweeter handle @akin-adesina, saying: This day in 2015, I was first elected president of AfDB and seven years later, the bank was named the best multilateral financial and the fourth most transparent institution in the world. We will keep making Africa proud."

He expressed delight at the recognition of AfDB by Global Finance as the best multilateral finance institution in the world in 2021, adding: "I am proud that for the first time since its establishment in 1964, the bank has risen to become a foremost globally respected financial institution.

Describing the award as "one that was fully earned," he, however, attributed the bank's continued success to a new culture of results, strong client orientation, leadership creativity and continued innovation by a team of excellent employees across all its jurisdictions.

According to him, we are constantly innovating financial investment and knowledge products to meet the rapidly changing needs of African countries and the private sector.

In 2021, Global Finance, the United States magazine that specialises in financial markets and investment banking, named AfDB the best multilateral financial institution in the world for 2021.

"The award is a global recognition for the path breaking efforts of the bank as it's transforming itself into a solutions bank for Africa. The bank achieves this through a combination of its operations, knowledge services and investment positioning which continue to help accelerate.

Also speaking, Publisher and Editorial Director of Global Finance, Joseph Giarraputo, said investment banks would play a leading role in reshaping global economy after the COVID-19 pandemic.

With widespread expectation of consolidation in multiple

sectors and all around the world, investment banks will continue to play a leading role in reshaping the world economy post-COVID-19 pandemic.

"Companies need more than ever to understand the specialties and skills that investment banks bring to the table and Global Finance awards are a valuable guide in that regard," he said.

The award is an affirmation of the success of the operational strategy being pursued by the AfDB under the leadership of Adesina, who was unanimously re-elected for a second term of five years as president of the bank.



Akinwunmi Adesina

## Banks spend N60b on marketing, advertising costs

A new research has revealed that commercial banks spend N60 billion on marketing and advertisements, with First Bank Holding topping the list of banks with the highest marketing and advertising budget.

The Trumpet learnt that 12 Nigerian banks listed on the stock market spent N60 billion on marketing and advertisement in 2021, a marginal increase compared to N59.85 billion recorded in the previous year.

This was disclosed in an analysis carried out by Nairalytics-the research arm of Nairametrics based on the financial statements released by the banks on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NGX), just as the compilation showed that FBN Holding topped the list of banks with N9.49 billion.

Advertisement is one of the major means through which companies gain market presence and expand their customer base. It also serves as a medium to communicate with customers and maintain a positive public image. Therefore, companies across all

sectors prioritise advertisement and promotions in their marketing strategies.

These advertisements could be done through the print media, television, radio jingles, billboards and various online platforms. In recent times, the use of social media and other platforms as mediums of advertisement has risen significantly as more Nigerians become increasingly digital savvy.

Promotion as one of the Ps of marketing has been dubbed as a major indicator of revenue growth.

In the year under review, the 12 listed banks in Nigeria rake in N2.84 trillion, as inference income, growing by 5.8 per cent when compared with the previous year, while Nigerian banks have spent about N294.55 billion on advertisements in the last five years.

The data also showed that other banks, apart from Access Bank, Fidelity Bank and Zenith Bank, recorded an increase in their advertisement expenses.



# GTCO's GTBank maintains dominance at Brand Africa 100

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

**G**uaranty Trust Bank Limited (GTBank), the banking subsidiary of Guaranty Trust Holding Company Plc (GTCO), emerged winner in four major categories at the 12th yearly Brand Africa 100: Africa Best Brand 2022 ranking of the top 100 most admired brands in Africa.

A statement issued by the bank and made available to The Trumpet, said the award is an initiative of Brand Africa aimed at driving Africa's competitiveness and creating a positive image through strong brands with Geopoll, a leading global mobile surveying platform and Kantar, an influential consumer insights and data analytics company as technical partners.

During the presentation ceremony in Lagos, GTBank retained the number one position as the most admired financial services brand in Nigeria for

the second year.

GTBank also ranked as the most admired financial services bank in Africa and the most admired financial brand in West Africa, as well as the most admired Nigerian financial services brand in recognition of its excellent positioning strength and reach beyond Africa.

At the inaugural ceremony, Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of GTCO Plc, Segun Agbaje, was conferred with the Africa brand leadership excellence award for his role in inspiring brand-led excellence that drives the growth of made-in-Africa brands and businesses and his long-standing contribution to the financial services industry.

Agbaje led GTBank through a decade of unparalleled growth and now oversees the Holding Company.

The Group recently concluded the acquisition of key businesses in fund management and pension

operation as Guaranty Trust Fund Managers Limited and Guaranty Trust Pension Managers Limited.

Commenting on the awards, Agbaje said: "As a leading African financial services company, we are always looking for new ways to meet our customers' needs and to do more to help them and communities thrive by creating faster, cheaper, safer and newer products for our people and businesses through every stage of life.

"The awards are testament to our boundless innovative capacity and the power of the Guaranty Trust to touch and enrich lives as proudly African and truly international institution. As we grow and expand as a group, we remain committed in our founding values, which have endeared our brand to millions of people across Africa and beyond and which continue to drive our financial success.

"We will leverage the synergies within our holding company

to drive Africa's growth and achieve our vision of making end - to - end financial services easily accessible to every African.

GTCO Plc is a diversified financial services company with N5 trillion assets providing a wide range of banking as well as non-banking financial services in Nigeria, West Africa, East Africa and the United Kingdom.

The Group's consistent year on year growth in customer base

and delivery of Superior value to all stakeholders is underpinned by its strong service culture, world-class corporate governance standards, efficient management and bias for innovation.

The group is currently rated 'B' and 'B-B' by Fitch and S&P Global, a reflection of its long-term stability and reputation of being a well-established financial institution with strong assets quality.



Segun Agbaje

## Expert highlights importance of credit bureau reporting in economy

A credit rating expert has urged the relevant authorities to develop a viable credit bureau system for economic development as no country can run only on cash, maintaining that Nigerians must work hard to develop its credit bureau to enable financial institutions to avail individuals and organisations credit facilities.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD/CEO) of Credit Bureau Reporting (CBR), Dr. Tunde Poopola, stated this yesterday, while speaking with online and business correspondents in Lagos.

He said the country had remained underdeveloped because it failed to develop viable credit system, adding that no person or organisation has all the required funds at all times.

He said deposit money banks (DMOs) were reluctant to give credit facilities to most Nigerians,

because the banks do not have adequate information on them, adding that in the past, banks do not share information leading to bad loans, but with a robust credit bureau reporting in the country, issues of bad debts have reduced.

"In a society with good credit bureau, you don't need to know anyone in a bank to get a credit facility. With the improvement in our national identify cards, Nigeria has improved its means of identification.

"As of March 2022, only 77.3 million Nigerians had been registered with the National Identity Management (NIM), meaning that only about 33 per cent of Nigerians have been captured and are known by the system," he said.

He also identified low process of the country's judicial system as a major impediment to an effective credit system, adding it takes a long time for the courts to adjudicate legal issues.

Poopola also identified the country's low financial inclusion, insisting that only about 40 per cent of Nigerians have bank accounts and that only such persons could access credit facilities.

The CRC boss lamented that the agriculture sector's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was only about 21 per cent, which was why the sector could only get about only three per cent credit facilities.

He disclosed that records showed that Nigeria has about 41 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), noting that less than five per cent had accessed credit facilities.

Poopola equally pointed out that the country's oil and gas sector's contribution to the GDP was less than 10 per cent, yet the sector has access to about

23 per cent of all available loans.

He also argued that the growth in credit bureau would lead to improvement in the country's economy and that the country was in dire need of facilities and policies to grow the credit bureau system.

Poopola said the Federal Government, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Consumer Protection Council (CPC) were doing a good job in their efforts to improve the country's credit system, but that they needed to do more.

He enjoined the government to tackle fraudulent individuals that give loans at high interest rates and keep on harassing the debtors and innocent Nigerians on their telephone lines.

"There are some faceless individuals or firms that go about granting credit facilities, whose interest rates make very difficult to repay. Some of those guys keep on sending SMS messages to all the people on the telephone contacts of the borrower to threaten them.

"These people are disasters and so, the government should go after them or they will destroy all government efforts to move the country forward," he added.

He urged Nigerians to get their credit rating if they wish to get credit facilities and pay their outstanding credit facilities as agreed without any excuses if they hope to continue getting loans in future.

He said those who have not accessed credit facility from any financial institutions before could be accessed through their social media presence and other records by the financial institution so that they could apply for credit facility for the first time.

Poopola also disclosed that the country currently has three firms in credit bureau reporting.

## Manufacturers spend N77.22b on alternative energy sources

Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) has disclosed that the cumulative spending on alternative energy sources in the manufacturing sector amounted to N77.22 billion as against N81.91 billion in 2020.

It attributed the decline in expenditure on alternative energy sources for last year to the marginal improvement in the national electricity supply during the period.

MAN stated this in its second half economic review 2021 from July to December, which was made available to The Trumpet at the weekend just as president of the association, Mansur Ahmed, explained that the improvement was due to marginal improvement in power supply from the national grid.

He said this compelled members of MAN to invest heavily in alternative energy sources to sustain uninterrupted production activity.

"While some of the manufacturers have invested in diesel generating plants, some others

are utilising gas plants. The costs associated with these plants are further increased by expenditures on spare parts and other energy management apparatus, such as stabiliser, UPSs, inverters and other items," Ahmed said.

He, however, lamented that unfortunately, the cumulative expenditure on alternative energy sources and the high tariff associated with supplies from the national grid, majorly accounted for consistent improvement in terms of average daily supply.

Consequently, he said in the second half of 2021, daily electricity supply to the manufacturing sector averaged 11 to 14 hours in the corresponding year to between 14 and 16 hours.

He said daily power outage for the second half of 2021 averaged three times as against four times in the second half of 2020, maintaining that the costs of the plants further increased by expenditure of other electricity equipment.



Tunde Poopola



## 'Collaboration will improve Nigeria's logistics performance index rating'

Registrar of the Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria (CRFFN), Sam Nwakohu, has canvassed greater collaboration among industry stakeholders to improve the country's rating in logistics, saying that Nigeria ranks 110 of 160 listed on the global logistics performance index (LPI).

Speaking in Lagos after being inducted as a fellow of the African Centre for Supply Chain (ACSC), Nwakohu charged logistics practitioners and other stakeholders to expand their interactions on finding a solution to the country's low rating.

According to the World Bank Group, the LPI is based on a global survey of operators on the ground including freight forwarders and express carriers, providing feedback on the logistics 'friendliness' of countries with which they operate and trade.

Describing Nigeria as a critical participant in African and global trade, Nwakohu said there was the need for the country to raise its integrity bar in the area of trade, which remains vital for economic development.

He said the present LPI of the country is worrisome and that government and private sector collaboration is required to achieve an improved rating as a way of promoting trade and foreign investment.

The registrar appreciated the African Centre for Supply Chain for the honour bestowed on him and advised it to mobilise all stakeholders to deliberate on the issues.

Director-General of Nigeria Institute of Transport Technology (NITT), Salih Farah, who was also conferred with the fellowship, assured of more support for human capital development initiatives in the logistics sector.



Salih Farah

## Lekki Port set to take delivery of STS cranes, RTG

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

As completion of the Lekki Deep Sea Port draws nearer, management of the Lekki Port LFTZ Enterprise Limited is set to take delivery of three new ships to shore (STS) cranes and 10 rubber-tyred gantries (RTG) from Shanghai, China, ahead of commencement of port operations.

The STS cranes can service the largest container vessels, which are capable of carrying more than 18,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

The specifications of the STS cranes include a fixed rail line at the quayside to access vessels and reduce delays moving across bays, with a lifting capacity of 65 tons in twin-lift mode, 50 tons in single lift mode and 85 tons under

the hook beam.

The cranes can reach out from the quayside up to 61 metres with an air draft of 52 metres and a span of 30.5 metres beneath the crane.

Managing Director of the Lekki Port, Du Ruogang, said the equipment, which left Shanghai on May 17, 2022, will be the most sophisticated port equipment to be used in Nigeria and will completely change the port landscape, putting Nigeria at the forefront of container operations in West Africa.

Ruogang asserted that Lekki Port would become a catalyst and an economic enabler for Nigeria with this development, adding that the equipment will make Lekki Port operations fast, efficient and seamless.

Chief Operating Officer of Lekki Port, Laurence Smith, stated that an STS crane generates 300 lux



Du Ruogang

of light, making the surrounding environment appear like daylight so that the stevedores can work safely at night.

He explained further that a personnel elevator is installed for operators' comfort and safety.

He further revealed that the cabin is fitted with an ergonomic seat so that the operators can find the most optimal comfortable position for themselves, adding that cameras are strategically placed around the cranes to support operations from different angles.

"From a customer and stakeholder perspective, the STS can more than double the performance of any port crane in Nigeria today, thereby positioning the Lekki Port as the future preferred gateway into Nigeria and beyond. Lekki Port is indeed a game-changer," he said.

## Stakeholders demand release of Customs vessels to maritime academies

Stakeholders of maritime academies have urged the Federal Government to release the Nigeria Customs Service's (NCS) sea-going vessels to the institutions as part of efforts to boost capacity of seafarers and cadets.

The two ocean-going ships have been wasting away in Lagos waters since their deployment to Nigeria from Europe in 2014. The vessels-MV Group of Nine and MV Customs Pride—are sophisticated watercraft built with Roll Royce engines to comb territorial waters.

Speaking against the backdrop of the lackluster attitude of the management of the NCS, the stakeholders maintained that the vessels should be handed over to reputable maritime academies for optimal utilisation.

They argued that due to

their disuse, the vessels might have become outdated, even as they restated that students of the academies would benefit immensely in proffering solutions to sea time experience.

Registrar of the National Association of Government Approved Freight Forwarders (NAGAFF), Francis Omotosho, said since the vessels are under-utilised by the marine team of NCS, there was a need to hand them over to some reputable maritime schools.

Omotosho noted that the vessels have the capacity to train Nigerians youths and will further save the cost of sending students overseas for sea time experience.

"If the vessels are bought with government money for the NCS and they refuse to use it, then it will be advisable that they give it out for training of students who

are studying nautical sciences related courses for adequate sea time simulation and practical training," he said.

Registrar, Ports and Terminals Management Academy of Nigeria (POTEMAN), Dr. Samuel Babatunde, stressed the need for government to direct the Customs to give the vessels to some of the maritime training institutes.

Babatunde said a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) should also serve the purpose of training cadets, adding that the idleness of the ships is a colossal loss to the nation's economy, insisting that the sea-going vessels could bridge sea-time gap experience and that students would benefit from the ships if taken over by the maritime institutions for training purposes.

He added that effort should

be made to see if the abandoned vessels are still relevant to the modern shipping practice.

"In as much as the Nigerian government, through the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) could not acquire training vessels for sea time, alternatively, the industry watchers call on the government to donate abandoned vessels by customs to maritime academies to bridge the gap of sea time experience.

"At least, our cadets can have more fair experience than none. Most importantly, the ships do not constitute a hazard to the trainers and the trainees respectively.

"Lastly, efforts should be put in place to ascertain their legal status before engagement to avoid trespassing on another person's property," he added.

## Adalikwu applauds Sierra Leone's plans to develop maritime potential

Secretary General of the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), Dr. Paul Adalikwu, has commended the government of Sierra Leone for its many plans to develop the country's maritime potential.

Adalikwu said this in Free Town during his maiden visit to the country where he met with the Minister of Transport and Aviation, Kabineh Moinama Kallon; Minister of State, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mamadi Gobeh Kamara and heads of maritime agencies.

He expressed support for the country's move to attract funding from African Development Bank (AfDB) to develop its port facilities.

He also pledged technical cooperation to assist the maritime administration build

up a capacity to maximise the potentials of her Blue Economy and promote a sustainable marine environment through cleaning up of the coastline.

The MOWCA scribe also identified that a properly harnessed Sierra Leone marine environment will support the country's job creation agenda for women and youth among other things.

Adalikwu, who applauded the country's efforts to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in its territorial waters with a declaration of a ban period for commercial fishing, said valuable marine resources in West and Central Africa deserve state protection.

He pointed out that the temporary stoppage of the fishing activities would, aside from protecting the environ-



Paul Adalikwu

ment from pollution and other illegalities, help in naturally replenishing stocks of marine resources.

He described the country's ratification of the Maritime

Labour Convention 2006 as a landmark state decision in promoting fair labour practices, decent work and living conditions for seafarers in the maritime industry.



## NAGAFF's allegation of fraud in vehicle clearance raises concerns

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

Chairman 100 per cent Compliance Team of the National Association of Government Approved Freight Forwarders (NAGAFF), Tanko Ibrahim, has alleged that officers of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) were conniving with freight forwarders and vehicle importers to shortchange the Federal Government through manipulation of the Pre-Arrival Assessment Report (PAAR).

Tanko, who spoke to journalists, alleged that due to the constant increase of the PAAR at the Customs Headquarters in Abuja, most freight forwarders have started cutting corners by conniving with valuation and releasing officers to get ex-factory price as value payable on used vehicles.

He further claimed that with the connivance of Customs officials, freight forwarders would describe imported batteries or

wine as used vehicles because they want to evade payment of duties.

In a letter aints earlier addressed to the Customs Area Controller of Apapa and dated March 30, 2022, Tanko lamented that due to the sharp practices, compliant freight forwarders were now losing businesses, while government was losing millions of Naira in revenue.

"We know you as a man of reputable standards, integrity and clean records in terms of revenue collection. We plead with you to therefore, use your good offices to intervene in this crucial matter. You can request re-examination of all cargoes, whose value were based on ex-factory price," he stated.

Speaking further, Tanko restated that the problem freight forwarders are having today is caused by the Comptroller in charge of PAAR at Customs Headquarters in Abuja.

"We are having issues with

PAAR, a container carrying bottled water could be given N10 million, while another is given N3 million. With this, Customs officers are forcing people to falsify and manipulate the contents of their containers.

"Some agents declare high duty vehicles as used vehicles or even contraband and they just go to the valuation department and obtain the ex-factory price.

"Those of us going through the normal channel of obtaining PAAR are the ones suffering. If you say the maximum cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value of imported goods is N3 million, let it be so. Not some people are given N5 million, another N8 million and others N2 million. Immediately it is issued, there is nothing anybody can do.

"This is why agents are running away from the PAAR and collecting ex-factory prices, but we cannot run away from the PAAR, because nothing can make us to cut corners," he stated.



Tanko Ibrahim

## Exporters deny using other countries' labels to prevent rejection

Nigerian exporters have denied allegations that they forge 'country of origin' and use labels of neighbouring West African countries on their goods to avoid rejection of their exports by European countries.

This followed the allegation that Nigerian exporters sometimes tamper with the label of Nigerian products just for their exported items to be accepted in European countries.

The Trumpet recalled that last week, the Director-General of the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye, confirmed that some Nigerian exporters bypass the agency to re-label their products.

She lamented that exporters were boycotting regulatory procedures and that all the food products rejected abroad never went through the scrutiny of either NAFDAC or the Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Services (NAQS).

She raised the alarm that about 76 per cent of the country's products were rejected by the EU and that NAFDAC was being informed through the rapid alert systems that the products have been rejected.

Also confirming the rejection and stereotyping of Nigerian exports, Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello-Koko, recently urged the British government to address the issue.

Bello-Koko told the UK Minister for Export, Mike Freer, who visited Nigeria on trade facilitation that the wrong profiling of Nigerian exports was borne out of the country's preconceived hostile perception and that it was not based on the quality of exports from Nigeria.

On her part, the Port Manager, Lagos Port Complex, Olufunmilayo Olotu, advocated that exports from Nigeria should not be treated with any reputational bias to enable the country to earn recognition and value for its trade initiatives

in the UK.

During a visit to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Export Park in Lagos, some exporters frowned on the allegations of the adoption of foreign labels.

Assistant Manager of the export park, Ambali Ajiboye, said Nigerian exporters do not use foreign labels, adding that only products imported into the country have their labels changed to "Made-in-Nigeria labels."

Ajiboye pointed out that exporters at the ECOWAS Park only export Nigerian industrial packaged products such as beverages, Nigerian-made diapers, processed foods like Semovita, noodles and others to over 13 African countries under ECOWAS.

According to him, it will be very difficult to change the labels of these products because they are known brands with some having peculiar Nigerian packaging.

The Assistant Park manager hinted that exporters don't have issues at the border, adding that they currently use only the Seme border to export goods due to the initial closure of the Idi-Iroko border in Ogun State, but upon reopening, he promised to resume export activities soon at Idi-Iroko.

Also speaking, Vice President of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), John Aluya, stated that export goods could only be rejected when they do not conform with required specifications.

While noting that some Nigerian products were the best in the world, he urged relevant government agencies to do more without compromising standards to avoid rejection of the products.

Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, who confirmed that Nigerian products were often rejected, inaugurated a committee last week to examine and end the rejection of Nigeria agro produce in the international market, which had led to huge financial losses with its attendant negative impact on the supply value chain and jobs creation.

## NIWA raises alarm over lack of competent marine engineers

National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) has lamented lack of enough experienced hands in marine engineering to fix the numerous boats plying the Nigerian inland waterways.

Managing Director of NIWA,



George Moghalu,

Dr. George Moghalu, who spoke at a ceremony in Lagos, said there was dearth of engineers in the agency, adding that any experienced professional that applies for a job would automatically be employed.

Moghalu, who was represented by the NIWA's Officer 1 Marine, K. G. Abbah, said during the agency's sensitisation of boat drivers, that there was lack of engineers, who could teach the drivers how to fix their engines whenever they develop faults on the waterways.

Abbah, who spoke on *The Development of Inland Waterways Transportation as Tool for Job Creation for Nigerian Youths Through Maritime Sector*, said: "We have numerous boats here in Lagos, especially when you are at Mariner Lagos and going to Port Novo, which is a nearby country, we have boat transportation that takes people there. There are so many, they have outboard engines and inboard engines.

"For those who are into

marine engineering, we are having challenges whereby we have a few technicians, who can fix the problems. So, the opportunities are there and there are jobs already for those going into marine engineering.

"If you apply to NIWA today, I am sure you will be absolved, because, apart from the sensitisation programme, we have few engineers in NIWA, whereby we have several challenges of trying to fix the engines or trying to advise the owners on what to do."

He also revealed that NIWA was currently employing a private company that would specialise in the removal of water hyacinth from the inland waterways, adding that the agency had acquired a ship with a debris interceptor to facilitate the job.

"It is NIWA's function to remove pollution from our inland waterways including water hyacinth, which obstructs the waterways. This also affects the movement of boats and vessels," he said.

## Customs earns N2b from defaulting private aircraft owners

Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) has declared that it has so far generated about N2 billion from the revalidation of documents of private aircraft owners in the country.

It had in June 2021 threatened to detain private aircraft whose owners were yet to validate their documentation in line with Federal Government's revalidation policy and gave private aircraft owners 30 days to comply with the directive, failing which their aircraft would be grounded.

Two weeks into the deadline, it informed that no fewer than 91 of 147 identified owners and operators of private jets in the

country failed the verification test the service conducted on them.

The NCS also disclosed that 62 allegedly refused to show up for the mandatory verification exercise, while 29 others defaulted in payment of customs duty.

It, thereafter, issued a 14-day ultimatum for payment of duties and submission of verification papers, or risk sanctions that may include forfeiture of assets.

Public Relations Officer of the NCS, Timi Bomodi, a Deputy Comptroller of Customs, said the service realised about N2 billion from the exercise add-

ing that the service deemed it necessary to cancel the deadline due the willingness of private aircraft owners to comply with the directive.

"The exercise was not meant to be punitive, but to ensure that the revenue due to government is paid. The exercise is still ongoing and hopefully, those affected will pay up the amount owed," he said.

However, he could not provide details of the level of compliance, adding: "I don't have the records right now, but all I can say is that the level of compliance is encouraging and it is still ongoing."



## Spotlight

# Without 'sound engineers' input, artistes will sound wacky- Indomix

Iloyi Oluwole Adebayo popularly known as Indomix is chiefly a producer and music engineer who is responsible for the first class mixing and mastering of many songs in Nigeria. Indomix put together the vocals, ad-libs, sequence, progression, after-effects, finishing, and gloss of many songs. Without his job, you definitely would have a headache, listening to anything fresh from artistes. Indomix has worked with major A-list in the entertainment industry which include Adewale Ayuba, Reminisce, Faze, D'banj and a host of others. Cornered recently, the cool-headed engineer led us into his work, passion for the industry and why sound engineers must be recognized and other issues.

### Your growing up?

My names are Oluwole Iloyi a.k.a Indomix. I grew up in Ogun State, Sagamu. I started as an artiste in a group. We had a lot of challenges which made the other members deserted and at that point, I ventured into production and finally chose to stick to sound engineering.

### What were the challenges encountered in the process?

One of the challenges I encountered when I started, was moving into Lagos, because at that time, my studio was in Sagamu, Ogun state. Then, most of the artistes were coming to me in Sagamu, ogun state. I started quite small in equipment, but I thank God for my brand so far.

### How then did you come about the name Indomix?

First when people here about it, they be like if this guy really love taking Indomie noodles which is not far from the truth, I was known as Indomie before now when friends will attribute me as somebody who is skinny as Indomie pastas but as time went on, I begin to get use to the name. Luckily for me when I met Faze, the first thing he told me was since I mix songs also, why don't I add the word mix to my Indomie stage name and that was how I came about the name Indomix.

### How long did it take you to get acquainted with the magic of mix and maxing?

It was a gradual process; I started with a small radio and computer while I was working in a computer business center, few client will come around there, I do their job and I get paid for it because then the money was just coming in bit so I could not afford a big studio then. But I can tell you that from that small business center I made several hit songs for some of the made entertainers now.

### With your vast knowledge in sound engineering, did you actually study it professionally?

Funny enough I did not study anything related to sound engineering but the fact it I picked interest in music at a very tender age because at five, I was a chorister in church and I take the lead most of the time during church service.

### What does having a good mixed song entail?

A good mixed song must have clear vocals and instrumentals. It also must not distort and must be smooth to the ears.

### How many of the notable artistes have you worked with?

I have lost count because I have worked with a lot of artistes. To mention just a few- 9ice, D'banj, Olu maintain, 2face and many more.

### What would you have been if not a Sound Engineer?

I would have been a footballer or soldier. This is as a result of the fact that I loved football while growing up.

### You are not the only one in the mixing industry. What would you say singled you out?

I would say hard work, determination, and honesty. These spectacular attributes have brought me thus far and I think that will continue to keep me till I get to where I am going to.

### What is your assessment of the entertainment industry in Nigeria? Do you think we are moving forward in terms of content?

It is not contentious that the industry is growing everyday. I would say yes we are moving forward even though at a slow pace. Looking back to the industry 10 years ago, you would definitely agree with me that we are doing well. Back in the 90's, we only listen to foreign music but now its Naija music everywhere even in Europe, America, and in fact worldwide. Yes, we are moving forward and we will

continue to soar high. Upcoming artistes are doing all they could do to get to the top and I am sure with persistence and continuous rebranding, the sky will be their starting point.

### You once talked about appreciation not coming for sound engineers. What do you think can be done to rectify this?

Seriously, I don't know what is wrong with organizers of awards ceremony, they give credence to the artiste alone leaving out those us who are the brain behind their success, when they have nice beat and they voice on it, people enjoy and want to keep listening to the tracks but when it comes to recognitions, we are majorly left out. On like

other countries, the sound engineer award category is usually uttermost in their ceremony as they value them so much. I am not lobbying for an award but the fact remains that we need to be recognized and appreciated too, I am sure organizers of awards listening carefully to music and at the tail end they hear the name of the sound engineer too for instance, Indomix, Sheyman and a host of others. They have several categories of awards and no matter the good quality of the song, it must pass through a sound engineer, so therefore we are making a clarion call to organizers of awards to create platforms for us too.





## Relationship

# Tips on how to create a lasting relationship

*Have you ever heard the old saying that "Relationships take work?" How does it make you feel when you hear that? Tired? A little frustrated? Do your eyeballs roll back in your head when you think of "working" on your relationship after a long day at the office?*

By OMONIYI ALLI

Relationships can be a lot of work. Sometimes, they can just be plain hard. Many of us have been through relationships, or are in struggling ones. But even if we have given up once, we absolutely need to give ourselves a second chance at love. Here are a few things that could help you stay happy in your relationship and make it work.

(1) Never Assume, Always Ask: I do not care if you have been together for over 20 years and believe you know what the other person's response is going to be to everything. More feelings are hurt and more communications misunderstood because of a simple assumption. Cut it out. Do not assume that you know what your significant other wants or doesn't want, what they need or how they are going to react to a situation. Respect them enough to be upfront and ask them. You may be surprised at their response.

(2) Make sure to keep yourself happy: We often forget that keeping ourselves happy and healthy is imperative – if we even want a shot at making anyone else happy. Whether its grabbing coffee with your friends, or going to the gym post a long day at work – if there is something you'd rather do than what your partner suggests, do it!

(3) Practice Active Listening: Yes, this goes together with never assume, always ask. If you are going to ask, you must really listen to your partner's response. When someone else is talking, let them finish talking completely. Do not interrupt them to insert your own response – when you are already thinking about what you are going to say next, before they have even finished talking,

you cannot be present and fully aware of what they are saying. Think about how it feels to you when your partner actually hears what you are trying to communicate and give them the gift of listening actively.

(4) Be willing to adjust: Sure, if your partner really wants to do something with you, or has somewhere important to go to and asks you to come along, you should. But remember that there is no point doing what they want and resenting them for "making" you do it. Do it because you love them and want them to be happy too.

(5) Leave the Skeletons in the Closet: You know exactly what I'm talking about. Those controversial moments in time you had long forgotten and thought you would never hear about again until that one disagreement or argument when any past hurt or misdeed rises up from the depths of the past as ammunition for the current moment. Stop holding on to past hurt, or do what you must to heal if you are using the past as an excuse for present situations. Keep current disagreements about current events. You will have more credibility and get more respect from your significant other.

(6) Confront compassionately: If you attack someone, their natural instinct will be to immediately jump to their defense. This gets you nowhere except to a point where two people are having a rather loud conversation about who's right and who's wrong. The situation however, is rarely black and white. You both have valid points in all probability, but are being too stubborn to meet on a middle ground.

(7) Celebrate Each Other: Male or female, we all want similar things in

our relationships. To be appreciated, acknowledged, nurtured, supported, respected and loved. So, do one small thing each day to celebrate each other. Tell him he looks handsome in that new blue shirt, that she is beautiful and you're the luckiest man in the world. Thank him for taking the trash out or putting the kids to bed. Tell her you appreciate everything she does for you. Leave love notes or send your significant other a card in the mail. It really is the little things that make such a big difference. Make the time to celebrate each other so you build a solid foundation of connection that will last the test of time.

(8) Give them the benefit of doubt: It's easy to believe that people may do things intentionally or doubt their honesty – to believe that your boyfriend was trying to hurt you by not inviting you out with his friends or that he double

booked a date with you and a night with the guys. If you're with someone who loves you, they want you to be happy. So whether it was calling you back or the movie plans you had, if they say it just slipped their mind, try and believe them.

(9) Tell them you trust them, and mean it: As easy as it is to get upset in certain situations, if you trust your partner there is very little room for negativity. Trust your gut, but if you're trying to do a relationship right, trusting the person you're with is everything. Don't jump to conclusions. Very often, we react before we think. Whether it is based on our past experiences of our partner's behavior or the fact that we have never seen them behave a certain way before, understand the situation before you come up with your own theory.







# S'Eagles arrive in USA for Ecuador friendly

## ■ Set sights on Sierra Leone, Mauritius 2023 AFCON qualifiers

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

Following their arrival in New Jersey from Dallas on Sunday, three-time African champions Nigeria have stepped up preparations for their friendly play with Ecuador on Thursday evening, as well as next month's AFCON 2023 qualifying matches against Sierra Leone and Mauritius.

A rampant Mexican side were lucky to win a game of two halves at the AT&T Stadium in Dallas on Saturday, with the Eagles showing great spirit and creating several chances in the second half after settling down to the prestige friendly, following long-haul flights into the United States from across the world.

"We were unhappy to have lost to Mexico because everyone worked very hard. The issues of long travel and little time to adapt to the new zone affected us all in the first half, but we created a raft of chances in the second half and were unlucky to have lost," captain William Ekong told NFF Media in New Jersey on Monday evening.

"Nevertheless, we have taken on board a lot of lessons from the game and they will be quite useful in subsequent



matches," he added.

Ekong heaped plaudits on the four home-based professionals who were given opportunities in the second half, saying they were tireless and showed composure and confidence against the El Tri.

He continued: "Everyone has been great here with a good attitude and response at training.

"However, I must specially commend the teammates from the Nigeria Professional Football League who have shown poise, pace and power and also commitment; they have no doubt raised the NPFL's profile with their attitude and performance," Ekong said.

Defender Sani Faisal,

midfielder Chiamaka Madu and forwards Victor Mbaoma and Ishaq Rafiu came into the fray in the second period.

Having divested themselves of the procession and environmental issues (long-haul travels and time zone body reaction), the Eagles filed out for a full training session at the Montclair State University pitch on Monday, with most of the players showing the usual enthusiasm, energy and sharpness.

Monday's session was accented on close control, space management and clinical finishing, as Coach José Peseiro supervised proceedings alongside his assistants.

Only defender Olaoluwa Aina, who suffered a knock

during the team's first training session in Dallas, and midfielder Innocent Bonke, who copped a knock in Saturday's game against the Mexicans, stayed out of the gruelling session to do light recovery training of their own.

The Eagles will file out against Ecuador at the Red Bull Arena in Harrison on Thursday evening, from 8pm ET (1am on 3rd June in Nigeria).

However, Peseiro says his crew is not losing focus on the AFCON 2023 qualifying games, with the Eagles due to take on the Leone Stars at the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja on Thursday, 9th June before flying to Saint Pierre to take on Mauritius on Monday, 13th June.

# Ivan Perisic joins Tottenham

Tottenham has signed Inter Milan midfielder Ivan Perisic, who had his medical in the North London club on Monday, 30 May, 2022.

Perisic worked with Tottenham boss Antonio Conte and won the Scudetto with the latter when he was in charge at Inter Milan for two seasons (2019-2021) after leaving Chelsea.

The Croatian, who featured 49 times in all competitions for Nerazzurri scoring 10 goals, won the 2022 Coppa Italia in a final against Juventus where Giorgio Chiellini announced his retirement.

If 33-year-old Perisic passes the medical, he will become the second player to join the Lilywhites after Southampton goalkeeper Fraser Forster's switch.

Although Inter Milan had hoped to retain the winger by offering to extend his contract, he turned down the offer to

reunite with Conte by agreeing to a two-year deal worth £100,000 weekly, football365 reported.

However, Tottenham are still in pursuit of a 'top target' and Inter Milan centre-defender, Alessandro Bastoni, but the player is adamant to honour a move to England.

According to Daily Mail, it would cost Tottenham about £50m to sign Bastoni should he accept to move to England, a fee Spurs will scrap a part from the sale of £20m-valued Harry Winks who is not part of Conte's plans



# USA Consulate, academy launch basketball camp in Port Harcourt

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**, Foreign Affairs Correspondent

United States government sports diplomacy programmes continue to promote social inclusion and empower youth in underserved communities by providing them with team building, leadership, and conflict-resolution skills.

The U.S. Consulate General Lagos, in collaboration with the Organized Basketball Network (OBN) Academy, launched a sports diplomacy program, "Uplift African Youth Through Basketball", for 100 boys and girls aged 6-18 from underserved communities in Rivers State.

The basketball camp provided the participants with an opportunity to learn from mentors, including alumni of U.S. government exchange programs, about the sport, gender-based violence, entrepreneurship, and inclusion of marginalized communities.

Speaking at the launch of the basketball camp in Port Harcourt, U.S. Consulate Deputy Public Affairs Officer, Jennifer Foltz, highlighted the U.S. government's commitment to empowering youth in underserved communities with valuable life skills through participation in sports.

She explained that the U.S. Mission has organized many sports initiatives through the Sports Envoy program, which recruits passionate, articulate, community-oriented professional athletes from the United States to connect with communities in every corner of the world, using sports as the platform, to build connections and to bridge cultural divides.

"Our sports programs are not just about sports, they are a way to engage people, especially youth, on important topics. For our program today, the youth participants will learn about basketball, but also about gender-based violence and

the inclusion of marginalized communities. In addition, they will build their communication, leadership and teamwork skills," Foltz added.

Declaring the basketball camp open, Rivers State Deputy Governor, Ipalibo Banigo, congratulated the participants on their enthusiasm and involvement in the program and encouraged them to keep dreaming big.

She expressed her satisfaction with the hard work demonstrated by the participants and conveyed her appreciation to the U.S. Consulate and OBN Academy, a local basketball institution founded by former NBA player, Obinna Ekezie, for providing mentorship to the participants.

In his remarks, Ekezie said the basketball camp will provide the girls and boys with skills that will enable them to impact their communities positively. He added that the participants will benefit from follow-on activities throughout the summer.

"Through this basketball camp, we have been able to teach important life and sports values, such as respect, discipline, overcoming adversity, combatting gender-based violence and basic entrepreneurship skills. We made a lasting impact in Port Harcourt and we are grateful to the U.S. government for the partnership," Ekezie said.

The next edition of the "Uplift African Youth Through Basketball" will take place in Lagos in the coming weeks. The basketball diplomacy project highlights the importance of sports and education for young people and promotes dialogue, tolerance, and respect for diversity.

The U.S. Mission in Nigeria utilizes sports diplomacy as a way to build bridges and enhance people-to-people ties, as the universal passion for sports transcends socio-cultural, and linguistic barriers and unites people.

# Handball: Pillars, Defender Babes, others, record wins

Kano Pillars continue their dominance in Phase 1 of the Prudent Energy Handball Premier League table with a 29-25 win over Tojmarine Academy at the Indoor Sports Hall, Package B, MKO Abiola National Stadium.

The defending champions of the male category, who recorded a workover against Kada Stars in yesterday's matchday8 fixture, processed the duel with Tojmarine Academy, who lost 29-23 to Niger United, with utmost caution.

In another matchday9 result, Benue Buffaloes

conceded to a narrow 24-26 defeat by D:Defenders following an unfortuitous 16-17 loss to Police Marines on matchday8.

Results from the female category revealed that Benue Queens were battered by Defender Babes to a devastating 19-40 defeat, while Rima Queens got a workover (10-0) against Kada Queens.

Meanwhile, Seaside Babes shove off yesterday's 27-36 loss to Defender Babes to defeat Adorable Angels 37-34, while Safety Babes mauled Bendel Dynamos 32-22.



# 'Osimhen more suited for Arsenal than M'United'

Italian sports expert, Conor Clancy, claims Napoli striker Victor Osimhen will be a perfect fit for Arsenal than he would at Manchester United.

Clancy believes Osimhen faces a lesser challenge with Lacazette than he would with Ronaldo.

The Napoli striker, who is at the centre of a contract foray among European top clubs seeking to sign the Super Eagle in the summer, has seen Arsenal at the forefront of the chase.

Clancy advised that if Osimhen chooses to join the Red Devils in the summer,

he would be outshined by Cristiano Ronaldo.

"I think Arsenal will be more suited to him than United, to be honest, because if he goes to United while Cristiano Ronaldo is there, he's probably going to be held back," he told Givemesport.

"If he goes to Arsenal, he's going to be the main man. There's no comparison between Osimhen and Lacazette," Clancy claimed.

Recently, Calciomercato.it reported that Napoli rejected Arsenal's £77m bid for the former Lille forward with GOAL blowing open last

week's meeting between technical director Edu with the player's agent.

Manchester United are eyeing a move to snap the player off the radar of Arsenal who Napoli are reportedly expecting nothing less than a £94m to honour a deal.

The Trumpet reports that Osimhen, 23, who won the U17 FIFA World Cup and the Golden Boot in 2017, became the most expensive African player after he joined Napoli in 2020 from Lille at a club-record fee of €70 million, potentially rising to €80 million with add-ons.





## He can't punch, Hunter mocks Fury

**M**ichael Hunter has mocked Hughie Fury ahead of their July 2 final eliminator bout at the AO Arena in Manchester.

The winner of the fight will challenge who wins between defending champion Trevor Bryan and Daniel Dubois, the British number one-ranked contender for the WBA regular belt.

Hunter said the best thing Fury can bring to the fore is his lineage from a fighting family.

The boxer, who parades a 20(14)-1-2 record after his lacklustre performance in a bout with Jerry Forrest in December 2021, admitted that his opponent is a decent boxer while possessing some good skills.

"He just can't punch. He's good, I think he's a decent boxer, he's got some decent skills, he's tall, he's long, he comes from the Fury family," Hunter told Sky Sports.

"The best thing we can



say is he comes from a Fury family, a fighting family. That's the best thing I can see.

"I don't think he's a great puncher, when you say technical boxer that's what I see, it means he's just not a puncher," he added.

He continued: "I'm excited to be over in England and display my skills," Hunter added.

"We're going to knock them [the Furys] down one by one, Hughie first.

"He's in the way, I'm going for the belts and anyone in my way I've got to run them over," Hunter boasted.

Meanwhile, Fury is happy to be back in the ring to get a shot to challenge for a second Heavyweight title belt after losing 3 years ago to Alexander Povetkin.

The 27-year-old British professional boxer parades a record of 15 knockouts from 26 wins and 3 losses in 29 professional fights.

Hughie Fury, a cousin to the undefeated Tyson Fury, 'Gypsy King', extended his undefeated record to 20 after he claimed the WBO Inter-Continental title by outpointing Fred Kassi in 2016, since turning pro in 2013.

The Trumpet reports that Fury's first loss was on September 23, 2017, against Joseph Parker in a bout for the WBO heavyweight title at the Manchester Arena, England.

## How Wydad AC won CAF CL



Wydad AC of Morocco won the CAF Champions League final after defeating defending champions and Egypt's

top-flight club, Al Ahly SC, 2-0 at Mohammed V Complex, Casablanca, Morocco.

The one-leg final

in which Zouheir El-Moutaraji opened the scoresheet in the first half for Wydad AC, heralded the clinching of their third CAF Champions League trophy in a remarkable campaign.

Wydad AC having probably enjoyed the support of their home fans in the stadium, after Morocco won the right to host the CAF topmost event for African clubs, doubled the lead from the same player, 3 minutes after the start of the second half.

Ahly struggled to put one back to reignite a campaign for an eleventh CAF Champions League title but met stiff resistance from a familiar foe who had stopped them previously in 2017 to win a

2nd CAF CL title.

Although Nadi El Watanniyah dominated the field of play with a stat of 67% against Wydad AS's 33%, the latter still took the day with El-Moutaraji's brace to hand coach Walid Regragui his first-ever CAF Champions League trophy.

Both North African clubs have had a running battle, with Wydad AS being displaced by Ahly SC in the 2020's final as payback for 2017's painful loss. The 2020 win was Ahly's 9th CAF Champions League title.

The Trumpet reports that Wydad AS victory saw the club win the 58th edition of the CAF Champions League final on their home soil on May 30, 2022.

## NNL22: City FC maintains pressure on El Kanemi

City Football Club of Abuja defeated Yobe Desert Stars FC of Damaturu in the 2021-22 season of the Nigeria National League (NNL) at the Area 10 Sports Complex football pitch.

The Abuja-base club on Sunday, got a vital 1-0 win in their matchday12 fixture of the season, recording 24 points on the NNL table of Group A1 Northern Conference.

City FC, who is second-placed on the table, one point behind El Kanemi with a goal in hand, had their matchday11 fixture against Sokoto United suspended.

According to a report by NAN, the home team was rusty against the visitors, with forwards Mujeeb Odufeso and Oscar Ezejirofor failing to

score from close range after 14 minutes into the first half.

Odufeso also missed scoring from a freekick for City FC. However, he later prodded a goal in added time of the first half from close range.

Meanwhile, the coach of Yobe Desert Stars, Ernest Jupiter, has attributed his side's loss to ill luck.

Jupiter noted that the team was very prepared and trained effectively for the cracker but the outcome was unfortunate.

"We thought our training hard and skills could help us to overwhelm City FC but luck ran out on us," Jupiter told NAN post-match.

While noting that his team was not in a good position in



the league, Jupiter assured that they were going to make sure they maintained their position in the NNL.

Jupiter said he returned to the Yobe Desert Stars FC this season, remarking that they were already playing well as the season went by.

He said, "I told the management clearly that I

didn't come to the team to give them a promotion. I came to groom the team for next season's league.

"We will maintain our position in the NNL and we will not get relegated. I wish those going to the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) in the group best of luck," Jupiter added.

## NPFL22: It's not over, Rivers Utd boss insists

Rivers United head coach, Stanley Eguma, says the club and Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) table leaders will not celebrate winning the top-flight competition until the last fixture.

Eguma, who guided the club to a stunning comeback win in their matchday30 fixture at Godswill Akpabio International Stadium against Dakkada FC, maintained their seven-point lead over a contending side, Plateau United.

Despite pulling such an amazing win, the coach is adamant to acknowledge victory stressing that it is not over yet.

In a statement by the club on Sunday, 29 May, 2022, Eguma insists Rivers United have not yet achieved their quest for the Nigeria Professional Football League title and 'will fight to the end' to get their hands on the coveted trophy.

Since being tipped as favourites for the crown after an away victory over Katsina United on matchday 22, Eguma's side have seen their form drop for the first time this season, losing three matches consecutively in a role.

However, following Saturday's win against Dakkada FC in a thrilling encounter, the Pride of Rivers are now seven points clear on top of the NPFL with eight games remaining.

According to Rivers United, the experienced Eguma believes they are still been challenged by Plateau United for the title and feels his side's comeback win in Uyo shows they have enough quality in their squad to clinch

the title.

Nevertheless, the Pride of Rivers host their closest rival Plateau United in a cracking matchday 31 fixture on Wednesday, 1 June, in what could be the league's title decider but Coach Eguma has refused to pin all of his title aspirations on that particular game.

"We can see the green light at the end of the tunnel and we also believe that it is possible we can do it but for now, it is not yet over," Eguma insisted.

"We still have some games to play and you can never predict the scoreline of those games. Plateau United also won heavily so it's a sign that it's not yet over, the title race is still on.

"We cannot start celebrating now because I believe that a lot of things will happen between now and the end of the season so we cannot relent. It is still not yet over but I think we are the best side who have the chance to grab the title," Eguma added.

The Trumpet reports that despite Rivers United players, Ishaq Rafiu and Chiamaka Madu,

going on international duty to represent the country in friendly matches with Mexico and Ecuador in the United States, the Pride of Rivers were still able to pull a stunning win against Dakkada FC to prove the depth of the squad.



## French Open: Medvedev, Tsitsipas crash out in 3rd round

World number 2 and US Open champion Daniil Medvedev has been booted out of the French Open by Croatian Marin Cilic in straight three sets' win.

Cilic, 20th-seed in the competition, put up a spectacular performance to hamper Medvedev, who recently returned to action after undergoing a hernia operation.

The contest proved to be unevenly matched as the Croatian mauled the Russian 6-2, 6-3, 6-2, at Philippe-Chatrier to reach the quarter-finals for the third time in Roland Garros.

Cilic, who won 85 points, 18 games and 53 service points to Medvedev's 60, 7, and 43 respectively, was extremely satisfied with his performance from start to finish.

The veteran, however, acknowledged the perfect condition of the atmosphere, adding that he processed one of his best performances in his career yesterday.

"It was an absolutely fantastic match from the first point to the last," Cilic said post-match.

"I enjoyed the atmosphere, enjoyed the night session here.

"I played incredible tennis - one of the best matches of my career from start to finish," the Croatian added.

Meanwhile, Danish teenager, Holger Rune, has shown world number 4, Stefanos Tsitsipas, the way out of the French Open after recording a wracking 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory at Philippe-Chatrier.

The French Open debutant ranked 40 in the world, joins

his aegamate and Madrid Open champion, Carlos Alcaraz, in the quarter-finals.

After the contest, the youngster, who was overwhelmed with obvious smiles, revealed he was nervous at the start of the match but stuck to his strategy.

Rune said, "I have an unbelievable feeling. I was so nervous in the end.

"I was very nervous. I told myself to keep at it and play my plan. I mean it is so great to still be here.

"Part of the tactic was to play as aggressive as possible, when he gets shorter balls he attacks them. I really liked playing the drop shots and it worked out pretty good so I am happy," the youngster added.

Reacting to the defeat, Tsitsipas said he wants payback, adding that rising tennis prodigies [Alcaraz and Rune] wants to humiliate him.

He posited that though they play similar patterns chasing the ball, he is ranked higher above them.

"These kids are going to want to beat me badly because obviously they are chasing. I'm chasing too, but I'm at a different kind of position than they are," Tsitsipas said post-match.

"I'm hungry to beat them too. Now that they have beaten me I want payback," he added.

In the quarter-final, Holger Rune plays Casper Ruud, who won Hubert Hurkacz 6-2, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, at Court Suzanne Lenglen, while Marin Cilic takes on Audrey Rublev, who won Jannik Sinner 1-6, 6-4, 2-0.



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

— Leo Tolstoy



# Israel, UAE sign free trade deal

## ■ It's Jewish state's first in Arab World

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**,  
with agency report

A free trade agreement has been initiated by Israel and United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is the Hebrew nation's first big trade accord with an Arab state and a move aimed at boosting trade between the two countries.

The pact was signed in Dubai by Israel's Minister of Economy and Industry Orna Barbivai and her counterpart, UAE Minister of Economy Abdulla bin Touq al-

Marri, on Tuesday after months of negotiations.

This is Israel's first free trade agreement of this kind with an Arab state and comes two years after UAE and Israel signed a normalization agreement in 2020.

"Israel & the UAE just signed a historic Free Trade Agreement - the first of this scope to be signed between Israel & an Arab state," Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett tweeted. "This was the fastest FTA to be signed in Israel's history."

Mohamed Al Khaja,

the UAE ambassador to Israel, called it "an unprecedented achievement."

"Businesses in both countries will benefit from faster access to markets and lower tariffs as our nations work together to increase trade, create jobs, promote new skills and deepen cooperation," he tweeted.

President of UAE-Israel Business Council Dorian Barak, predicted that trade would soon multiply between the regional powerhouse economies.

"UAE-Israel trade will exceed \$2 billion in 2022, rising to

around \$5 billion in five years, bolstered by collaboration in renewables, consumer goods, tourism and the life sciences sectors," he said in a statement.

"Dubai is fast becoming a hub for Israeli companies that look to South Asia, the Middle East and the Far East as markets for their goods and services."

Nearly 1,000 Israeli companies will be working in and through the UAE by the end of the year, Barak added.

The UAE was the first Gulf country to normalise ties with Israel and the third Arab nation to do so after Egypt and Jordan.



L-R: Israel's Minister of Economy and Industry Orna Barbivai and her counterpart, UAE Minister of Economy Abdulla bin Touq al-Marri, after signing the agreement on Tuesday

## CP vows to enforce ban on commercial motorcycles

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

Lagos Police Command has urged residents not to panic over the alleged plan by commercial motorbike riders to disrupt activities in the state on June 1 over the ban on their operations.

A press statement e-signed by the Command's Spokesperson, Benjamin Hundeyin, a Superintendent

of Police (SP), stated that, "The attention of the Lagos State Police Command has been drawn to a panic-laced message making the rounds on social media purporting that motorcycle riders in the state have concluded plans to disrupt social and commercial activities in Lagos State from June 1, 2022, in protest of the ban on the use of motorcycles within six LGAs in Lagos State.

"The Commissioner of

Police, Lagos State Command (CP) Abiodun Alabi, uses this medium to assure all Lagosians that all necessary human, material and operational resources have been deployed across the state to forestall any breakdown of law and order.

"A carefully drafted security architecture, resulting from a detailed crime-mapping of the state has been emplaced across the length and breadth of the state. In addition, all

Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers and Tactical Commanders have been placed on red alert towards any eventuality.

"CP Alabi, therefore, enjoins all residents of Lagos State to go about their lawful businesses without fear of harassment or intimidation before, during and after the touted date for the purported civil disturbance, as officers and men of the Command are fully on top of the situation."

## Two arraigned for posting sex video of married woman on social media

By **ALEX OLISE**

Two women have been arrested and arraigneded by the police in Lagos for allegedly uploading their friend's sex videos on social media.

A police source, who spoke with The Trumpet, said the reason the suspects gave during interrogation was that they were not happy that their friend got married before them.

The two ladies, identified as Faith Osemeiame and Solace Okonta, both aged 26, were arraigned before Ogba

Magistrate Court in Lagos.

It was gathered that the victim and the two ladies in question were close friends before she got married and distanced herself from them to face marital responsibilities. To the two suspects, this was reason enough to dig into her past life with a view to disgrace and destroy the victim's marriage.

They were said to have obtained the sex tape, which all of them recorded while they were spinsters and uploaded it on social media.

When the victim saw the video trending on social media, she confronted them because she knew they were the only ones who knew about it. While she tried to question them, they beat her up seriously and injured her in the process.

The case was reported through a petition to the Lagos State Commissioner of Police (CP) Abiodun Alabi, who ordered full investigation into the allegations. Human Rights Resource Center, Police Command Headquarters,

Ikeja, trailed and successfully arrested the culprits and later detained them for interrogation.

After a thorough probe, the police found them culpable and subsequently charged them before the Ogba Magistrate Court for assault and conduct likely to cause breach of public peace.

They, however, pleaded not guilty upon arraignment. The case has been adjourned till June 20, 2022, while the accused have been remanded at the Female Correctional Facility in Kirikiri, Lagos.

## NECO extends 2022 SSCE registration

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

Registration period of the 2022 Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) for school-based candidates has been extended by three weeks.

National Examinations Council's (NECO's) Head of Information and Public Relations Division, Azeez Sani, announced this in a statement, saying: "The National Examinations Council (NECO) has extended the registration period of the 2022 Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) for school-based candidates to midnight on Monday 20th June 2022.

"The registration period which was initially scheduled to close on Monday 30th May 2022. State Ministries of Education, Principals,

Commandants, and all stakeholders are enjoined to note that there would be no further extension after that.

"The 2022 NECO Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) will commence on 27th June 2022, and end on Friday 12th August 2022. Candidates are to be examined in 76 subjects during the examination."



NECO Registrar, Obioma