

NNPC Awards Oil Swap Contracts to 34 Firms

Ejiofor Alike with agency reports

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) yesterday issued award letters to oil firms for the highly sought-after

contracts to exchange crude oil for imported fuel.

Under the new contract that will take effect this month, a total of 15 groupings, with at least 34 companies in total, received award letters, four sources with knowledge of

the deals said.

The winning groups include: BP/Aym Shafa; Vitol/Varo; Trafigura/AA Rano; MRS; Oando/Cepsa; Bono/Akleen/Amazon/Eterna; Eyrie/Masters/Cassiva/Asean Group; Mercuria/

Barbedos/Petrogas/Rainoil; UTM/Levene/Matrix/Petra Atlantic; TOTSA; Duke Oil; Sahara; Gunvor/Maikifi; Litasco /Britannia-U; and Moco/Moco Nigeria.

NNPC's crude swap deals, which were previously

referred to as offshore crude oil processing agreements (OPAs) and crude-for-products exchange arrangements, are now known as Direct Sale-Direct Purchase Agreements (DSDP).

Under the deals, the NNPC

supplies crude oil to selected local and international oil traders and refineries in exchange for petrol and diesel.

NNPC had in May 2017, signed the deals with local

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Lower Commodity Prices Weaken Inflation to 11.22%... Page 8

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Oyo Governor Publicly Declares Assets Worth over N48bn... Page 9

Obasanjo Calls for National Confab, Says Nigeria is on the Precipice

● Writes Buhari ● PDP, Afenifere, Ohanaeze, Southern, Middle Belt leaders back former president ● Yakassai faults content of letter

By Our Correspondents

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday expressed concern over the spike in cases of killings and kidnappings in Nigeria and called on President Muhammed Buhari to pull back the country from

plunging into an abyss of insecurity.

Obasanjo, in an open letter to the president, released in Abeokuta, warned the president that Nigeria was on the edge of the precipice and urgent steps must be taken to find lasting solutions

before Nigeria witnesses the Rwandan-type genocide or turn to another Yugoslavia.

His letter, which detailed the security challenges confronting the nation and his suggestions on how to resolve them, including a national conference, elicited

varied reactions from some critical stakeholders.

The leadership of the Southern and Middle Belt Leaders Forum (SMBLF); pan-Yoruba socio-cultural organisation, Afenifere; and the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

aligned with Obasanjo's position, calling on Buhari to take the former president's warning seriously before it is too late.

But a former Liaison Officer to Second Republic President Shehu Shagari and a founding member of Arewa Consultative

Forum (ACF), Alhaji Tanko Yakassai, dismissed the content of Obasanjo's letter, describing it as not only selfish but also unpatriotic, ill-conceived and a clear invitation to national disaster.

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OBAIGBENA AT 60...
Encomiums as Toni Braxton, Tiwa Savage, Wizkid Headline Celebration

● How to make Nigeria greater, by Fashola, Obiozor, Danbaba, NPA MD
● It's all about God's grace, says celebrant

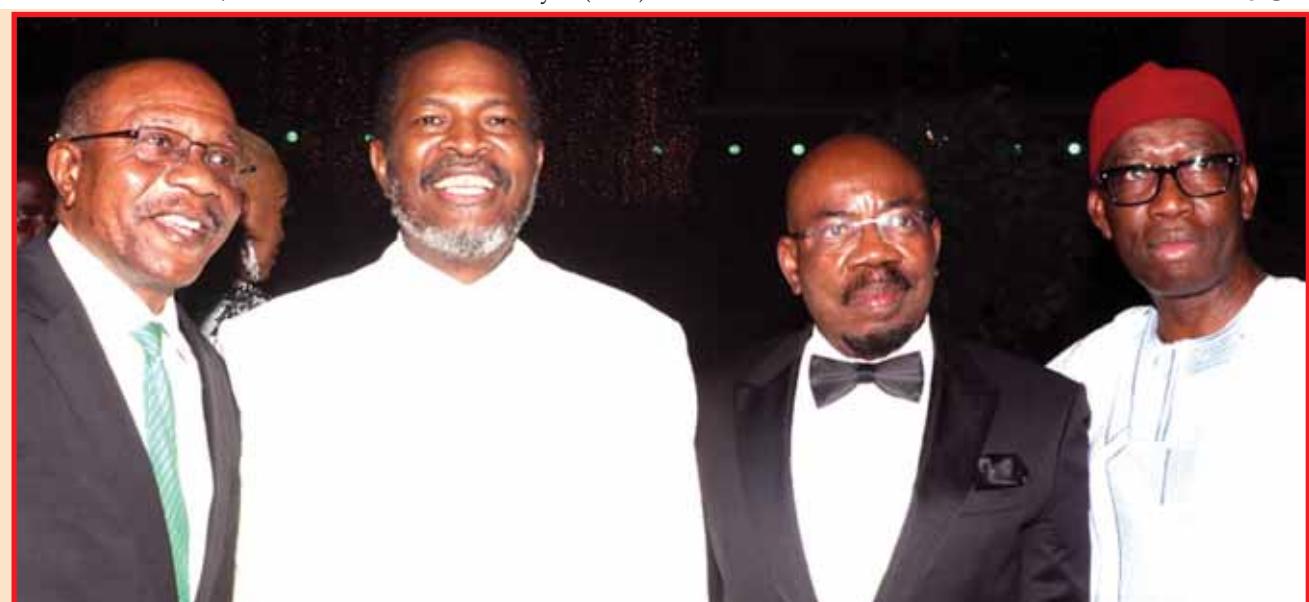
Nseobong Okon-Ekong, Chiemelie Ezeobi, Vanessa Obioha and Solomon Elusoji

It was a night of glamour. Of tributes. Of music. Of gaiety and camaraderie.

There was much to eat and to drink. The ambience was cool and the guest list impressive.

That was the atmosphere

Continued on page 8



CELEBRATING OBAIGBENA @ 60...

L-R: Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria, Mr. Godwin Emefiele; celebrant/Chairman, THISDAY Newspaper & Arise TV, Prince Nduka Obaigbena; Chairman, Zenith Bank Plc, Mr. Jim Ovia and Governor, Delta State, Senator Ifeayin Okowa, during the 60th birthday party of Obaigbena in Lagos... yesterday

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more than banking

Tribunal Admits Atiku's Video Evidence in Petition against Buhari

• Witnesses allege attacks on PDP agents, intimidation of voters in Borno, Yobe

Alex Enumah in Abuja

President Muhammadu Buhari, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) yesterday failed in their bids to stop the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and its presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, from tendering video compact discs (VCDs) as evidence to prove their petition that the president did not lawfully win the February 23, 2019 presidential election.

The Presidential Election Petition Tribunal, sitting in Abuja, dismissed their objections and admitted as exhibits 48 VCDs tendered by the petitioners.

The five-man panel, led by Justice Mohammed Garba, in admitting the documents, dismissed the objections raised by all the respondents on the grounds that the documents sought to be tendered were in line with the agreement reached by the parties and adopted by the tribunal.

Buhari, INEC and APC

counsel, in their submissions, had objected to the admissibility of the video evidence on the grounds that the documents were not front loaded, not part of the documents agreed and they were taken by surprise by the petitioners.

Atiku and his party, the PDP, are alleging that the February 23 presidential poll was marred by widespread rigging, violence and substantial non-compliance with the Electoral Act.

They have called witnesses from various states, particularly from the northern part of the country, where they alleged most of the abnormalities took place.

After calling three witnesses at the resumed hearing yesterday, Atiku sought to tender 48 video recordings of alleged irregularities during the conduct of the poll.

The former vice president and PDP also applied to the tribunal to play the video recordings in the courtroom as part of efforts to substantiate their allegations of massive

rigging during the poll.

Immediately Atiku's counsel, Chris Uche (SAN), announced his plan to tender the video discs and play some of them through one of the witnesses, Segun Showunmi, counsel to INEC, Yunus Usman (SAN), objected to the request.

Usman said INEC did not support any bid by Atiku and PDP to play the video recordings for the tribunal to see and to admit same as exhibits.

He added that the video VCDs were not front-loaded by the petitioners and that INEC, which conducted the election, has been ambushed. He told the tribunal that only documents front-loaded would be allowed to be admitted as exhibits.

Buhari and APC aligned themselves with the submission of INEC.

Responding, Uche drew the attention of the tribunal to the pre-hearing report where they all consented that objections to documents admission could only be made at the final address stage.

In a short ruling, Justice Garba dismissed the objection of the respondents, reminding them of the agreement they freely entered, adding that once an agreement is reached, it becomes binding on all.

He stressed that no party could deviate from the agreement or adopt a position that breach the terms of the agreement.

He said in line with the agreement, parties had tendered various documents and objections indicated with reasons to the objections deferred till the final address stage.

He added that no particular document was excluded from being tendered from the bar.

"Cases sighted are not material at this stage, the documents are admitted in evidence", the tribunal held.

Consequently, the panel admitted the 48 video CDs as exhibits and ordered the petitioners to lead evidence on them.

Showunmi played three of the CDs, two of which bordered on report on the

controversial central server and the third on Buhari's certificate.

In the first video, which were from a clip recorded from a television programme aired on a Lagos-based private station, Channels Television, INEC's Resident Electoral Commissioner in Akwa Ibom State, Mike Igini, was quoted as saying that results from the units and wards will be collated from the Form EC8E after which they would be transferred to the card reader and "transmitted to the central server."

However, under cross-examination, the witness admitted that Igini was not the official spokesman for INEC.

The second video exhibit also showed INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmud Yakubu, expressing optimism before the election that the commission would use the electronic system during the conduct of the 2019 general election.

The third video showed the military during a press briefing stating that although Buhari claimed to possess a

West African School Certificate (WAEC), there is no evidence of the WAEC result in his personal file with the military.

But when Buhari's lawyer, Alex Izinyon (SAN), sought to play a counter-video recording, the petitioners objected, forcing Izinyon to ask for an adjournment to enable him to bring his own equipment for the purpose of cross examining the witness.

The tribunal granted the request and adjourned further hearing in the matter till Tuesday for the continuation of the cross-examination of the petitioners' witness.

Earlier, three witnesses, Babagana Kukawa, Hon. Abana Pogu and Suleiman Mohammed Bulama from Borno and Yobe states, had testified that Buhari and APC on the election day used soldiers to attack and injure PDP agents.

The witnesses also alleged that village and district heads were also used to intimidate and threaten voters to vote for Buhari or risk being ejected from their farmlands.

OBAIGBENA AT 60: ENCOMIUMS AS TONI BRAXTON, TIWA SAVAGE, WIZKID HEADLINE CELEBRATION

join him in celebrating his 60th birthday.

Yesterday's event, tagged '60 Years of God's Grace', was the grand finale of the two-day celebration, which began on Sunday with a thanksgiving service at The Cathedral Church of Christ, Marina, Lagos.

But it was not only a night of hedonistic display, it also featured a conversation on the state of the nation and the future of Nigeria.

An entire section of the hotel was transformed into nature's own fortress with tonnes of green grasses, which signifies life.

The symbolism behind the green grasses was not lost on many of the guests who were witnesses to the behind-the-scene battles of the celebrant, who was hospitalised for three months recently.

Asides the greenery, the dangling chandeliers, alongside the revolving disco lights gave the entire ballroom a cozy ambience.

Draped in their finest, the guests were first hosted to a cocktail in another area that was decorated with plenty of foliage and a water fountain, thus adding to the aesthetic beauty.

At the dinner, drinks flowed, there were tasty dishes with scintillating dessert as the audience were regaled with a documentary on the life of the celebrant.

Toni Braxton Entertains Guests

As the guests wined and dined, popular American R&B singer and songwriter, Toni Braxton, was introduced to a visibly excited crowd.

Song by song, the songbird serenaded the guests and at a point she asked an audience member to join her on the stage.

Although the guest, who simply gave her name as Nkechi could not sing the lyrics of the song, that did not deter her from swaying

to the admiration of all.

For her almost one hour on the stage, Braxton sang, danced, walked into the crowd and engaged the audience in a sing-along section.

Ushered in by four male dancers, the sultry singer set the tone for the night with her 2009 single 'Please'. She took the audience on a memory lane when she sang 'He Wasn't Man Enough' and for 'Another Love Song'.

In the middle of her 'Breathe Again' performance, award-winning Braxton left the stage and walked to the VIP section where the celebrant was in the company with dignitaries who had graced his 60th birthday celebration.

She had earlier greeted and congratulated him on his birthday celebration. This time around, she sang to him and his friends, eliciting screams of excitement from the audience.

Thrilling the audience with her evergreen melodies, she initially took a bow with 'Unbreak My Heart' but was later called back on stage for one last performance.

Braxton's visit to Nigeria for Obaigbena's birthday celebration is another testament of his super taste and panache. Not one known to do things in half measures, he threw all in the ring for a splendid celebration.

Encomiums

As the evening progressed, Braxton finished her set at about 9.53pm, giving way to a pre-recorded testimonial of the celebrant by friends, well-wishers and family.

Kenim Obaigbena in her speech lauded her father for being a mentor that they can look up to, who keeps pushing them to be the best in their endeavours.

Afterwards, two of his daughters mounted the podium to lavish encomiums on the man they call father, but the world refers to as

The Duke.

Reading intermittently from their speech, they said: "He makes things happen. He often tells us failure is inevitable but if you fail, always stand up. He has played an incredible role in Nigeria and in all of our lives.

"Daddy, you have been our protector and provided for us. We won't be what we are today without you. We wish you many more years."

After their tribute, it was time to make a toast to many more years of grace. The toast gave way for the cutting of the cake.

Supported by the Governors Emeke Ihedioha (Imo), Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq (Kwara) and Ifeanyi Okowa (Delta State) as well as Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Mr. Godwin Emefiele, Obaigbena cut his birthday cake.

Zenith Bank Founder, Mr. Jim Ovia, anchored the cutting of the birthday cake and afterwards wished the celebrant an additional 60 years.

Another highlight of the occasion was the encomiums poured on the celebrant by family, friends and acquaintances.

Evening of Conversations

Earlier, there was a conversation on the state of the nation during which former Nigerian Ambassador to the United States, Professor George Obiozor, called for the renegotiation of the basis of Nigeria's unity and co-existence among its people must be renegotiated.

He said: "When I hear people say that Nigeria's unity cannot be negotiated, I laugh. It can be negotiated from time to time. So we should not resist the inevitable. It's a historical fallacy to say that the Nigerian unity cannot be renegotiated. That is why I believe the 2014 National Conference was a good thing

for Nigeria.

"The problem of Nigeria is the political leadership. As long as our leaders keep playing the ostrich and keep dodging to solve the real problem, every generation of Nigerians will keep facing the same problem. What Nigeria needs urgently is a political system of shared powers."

In his contribution, former Northern Region Premier, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello's grandson, Alhaji Hassan Danbaba, said the solution to Nigeria's problems was dialogue.

"In my own perspective, it is an issue that needs to bring people together to sit down and discuss. The issues are so many. The best thing is to sit down, look at what the problem is and find solutions. We need to come together. Initially I used to think that the leadership needs to do more, but the common man also needs to do more. The leadership can't do it alone," he added.

In his submission, immediate past Minister of Power, Works and Housing, Mr. Babatunde Fashola, said the country should recruit its best brains into the public service.

"What is the silver bullet for Nigeria? On deep reflection and with the benefit of public service, there is one thing I think we need to pay attention to: it is the professionals in Nigeria, the quality of those that choose to come into the public service.

"We need to bring in our very best. The very best of our human capital have left the public sector for the private sector."

Fashola also wondered how many Nigerians who attended Ivy League schools are now in the police, federal ministries or teaching in public schools.

"That is for me the singular recommendation I will make. We must decide to populate the Nigerian civil service with the very best of our human capital. We

must not underestimate the capacity and power of a well resourced, well trained, very competitively recruited civil service as the real drivers of development," he said.

On her part, Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Hadiza Bala Usman, agreed with Fashola that the public service should be peopled by the nation's best.

"Every time I see young people try to come into the public sector, I encourage them. I also believe we need to have reform minded people in the political space," she added.

According to her, the country needs to work on its consumer credit and national identity systems, adding that doing so would "help us develop our middle class. I think we should start walking the talk. It's time to start implementing this. Let's stop excuses and get Nigeria working."

Celebrant's Appreciation

Then, it was the turn of the Obaigbena to address his guests. In his speech interspersed with witty jokes and anecdotes, he said his life was as a result of God's grace.

Recalling how his proposed plans to host family and friends last December failed because of ill health, he said after being hospitalised for three months, it was obvious God still has a role for him to play.

He said: "It's a privilege to host you today. In December last year, I proposed a thank-you evening with quite a few of my friends but on the eve of that day, I fell gravely ill.

"But today, I want to thank God. I was in the hospital for three months and I was out of action but God has a role for me to play."

While mentioning some of his high-end friends in his appreciation speech, he waxed philosophical when

he charged the audience to "think about Nigeria, think about inequality and how we can make Nigeria better."

It was indeed an emotional night for the celebrant who was showered with accolades by friends, colleagues and family members. Some of the dignitaries who graced the occasion were Ogun State Governor, Prince Dapo Abiodun; his Edo State counterpart, Mr. Godwin Obaseki.

Others include key players in the nation's economy such as Chairman of Metis Capital Partners, Mr. Hakeem Bello-Osagie; former Guaranty Trust Bank Managing Director, Mr. Fola Adeola and former Managing Director of UBA, Mr. Tony Elumelu.

Bringing the night to a near-close, afro-pop superstar, Tiwa Savage, thrilled the audience with some of her hit songs before Wizkid came on stage to entertain the crowd with a medley of songs.

TSI THISDAY STOCK INDEX			
TOP GAINERS	NGN	NGN	%
CORNERSTONE	0.02	0.22	10
AIICO	0.05	0.70	7.6
LASACO	0.02	0.31	6.9
VITAFOAM	0.16	3.70	4.5
CONOIL	0.40	20.40	2.0
TOP LOSERS	NGN	NGN	%
CHIPLC	0.03	0.30	9.0
SOVETRUST	0.02	0.21	8.7
COURTVILLE	0.02	0.22	8.3
CHAMPLC	0.02	0.28	7.1
TOTAL	10.00	140.00	7.1
HPE Nestle Nig Plc N1,228.00			
Volume:	175,168 million shares		
Value:	N2.144 billion		
Deals:	3,111		
As at yesterday 15/7/19			
See details on Page 31			

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Lower Commodity Prices Weaken Inflation to 11.22%

James Emejo in Abuja

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures inflation, declined to 11.22 per cent year-on-year in June compared to 11.40 per cent in May, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Food inflation also reduced to 13.56 per cent in June compared to 13.79 per cent in the preceding month.

According to the CPI figures for June, which NBS released yesterday, core inflation, which excludes the prices of volatile agricultural produce, dropped to 8.8 per cent in June, down by 0.2 per cent compared with 9.0 per cent recorded in May.

The statistical agency further noted that prices were moderated in all the divisions that determined the headline index, leading to 0.18 per cent reduction in inflation.

Also, the urban inflation rate slowed to 11.61 per cent (year-on-year) in June, compared to 11.76 per cent recorded in May while the rural inflation rate reduced to 10.87 per cent from 11.08 per cent in the preceding

month.

According to the NBS, on a month-on-month, the urban index rose by 1.10 per cent, up by 0.05 per cent from 1.15 per cent recorded in May, while the rural index also rose by 1.05 per cent in June, up by 0.02 per cent from 1.07 per cent rate recorded in May.

It, however, said the moderation in the food index was caused by muted increases in the prices of bread and cereals, meat, oils and fats, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, vegetables and fruits.

On month-on-month basis, the food sub-index increased by 1.36 percent in June 2019, down by 0.05 per cent points from 1.41 per cent recorded in May 2019.

The average annual rate of change of the food sub-index for the twelve-month period ending June 2019 over the previous twelve-month average was 13.42 per cent, 0.05 percent points higher from the average annual rate of change recorded in May 2019 (13.37) per cent," the NBS stated.

On month-on-month, the core



Emeefie

sub-index increased by 0.85 per cent in June, up by 0.10 per cent when compared with 0.75 per cent recorded in May.

The NBS added that the highest increases in the sub-core index were recorded in the prices of medical and hospital services, cleaning, repair and hire of clothing, repair and hire of footwear, repair of household appliances, actual and imputed rentals for housing, major household appliances whether electronic or not and tobacco.

"The average 12-month annual

rate of change of the index was 9.64 per cent for the twelve-month period ending June 2019; this is 0.13 per cent points lower than 9.77 per cent recorded in May 2019," it stated.

One of the major concerns around high inflation had been its benign effect on both monetary and fiscal policy and the economy.

The drop in the headline index will excite Nigerians, who had endured increases in the prices of basic commodities in recent times, often compounding the cost of living.

Inflation had dropped in January 2019 when it declined to 11.37 per cent from 11.44 per cent in December in 2018.

The headline index further reduced to 11.31 per cent in February and 11.25 per cent in March but resorted to the upward trajectory in April when it climbed to 11.37 per cent and further to 11.40 per cent in May before falling to 11.22 per cent in June.

The deceleration in inflation will provide reprieve for the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), which had been struggling to

tame inflation in recent times.

The decline in the headline index could signal a positive start of CBN Governor, Mr. Godwin Emeefie's second term, having vowed to curtail the index.

Speaking recently while unveiling his agenda for the next five years of his second tenure as the apex bank boss, Emeefie had said he would strive to sustain positive interest rate regime to the delight of important stakeholders as well as work to bring down the prices of food items, which continued to exert inflationary pressures.

He had said monetary policy measures would be geared towards containing inflationary pressures and supporting improved productivity in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

According to him, working with other stakeholders, the CBN will reduce the cost of food items, which have considerable weight on inflation.

"Our ultimate objective is to anchor the public's inflation expectation at single-digit in the medium to long run. We believe

a low and stable inflationary environment is essential to the growth of our economy because it will help support long term planning by individuals and businesses.

"It will also help to lower interest rates charged by banks to businesses thereby facilitating improved access to credit and a corresponding growth in output and employment," he had said.

Nonetheless, the consecutive monthly drop in inflation in previous months had allowed for a rare opportunity for the CBN to tinker with the monetary policy rate (interest rate), which was reduced by 50 basis points recently to the excitement of the markets.

The adjustment in MPR finally came after holding the rate at 14 per cent for about two years, largely due to inflation as the former rate cannot go below the latter rate.

There had been increasing expectations that declining rate of inflation could further encourage the apex bank to loosen monetary policy rate, thereby reducing the cost of borrowing to boost growth.

NNPC AWARDS OIL SWAP CONTRACTS TO 34 FIRMS

and international traders to exchange about 330,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil for imported petrol and diesel, as part of measures to sustain the supply of petroleum products across the country.

However, the deals, which expired by the end of July 2018, were extended until the end of 2018.

The state-run oil firm later extended the \$6 billion oil swap deals by another six months to June 2019.

Reuters reported that while the contracts have not yet been signed, that is largely a formality as the terms have been negotiated, the sources

said, and the list of companies is unlikely to change.

NNPC spokesman, Mr. Ndu Ughamadu, when reached by Reuters for comment, said he would seek verification of the news.

The number of winners is an expansion on the previous list, which had 10 pairings with a

total of 22 companies.

Oil companies work hard to get on the list, which gives them coveted, and potentially lucrative, access to Nigeria's crude oil cargoes.

NNPC extended the previous contracts at least twice as the country focused on elections in February.

The swap deals have supplied virtually all of Nigeria's petrol for the past two years, as capped prices mean that other would-be importers cannot make money bringing the fuel into the country.

Nigeria, with a population of some 190 million, consumes close to 40 million litres per

OBASANJO CALLS FOR NATIONAL CONFAB, SAYS NIGERIA IS ON THE PRECIPICE

When THISDAY contacted one of the presidential spokesmen, Mallam Garba Shehu, via telephone yesterday, he said he was working on a statement conveying the president's reaction to the letter.

"I'm working on a statement. Thank you," he said in a text message.

However, as at press time, he had not issued it.

Obasanjo, in the letter dated July 15, 2019 and addressed to Buhari, a copy of which was made available to journalists in Abeokuta, Ogun State capital, by his media aide, Mr. Kehinde Akinyemi, said security challenges could no longer be ignored, treated with nonchalance, swept under the carpet or treated with levity.

Obasanjo told Buhari that if there was failure, the principal responsibility would be that of the president and no one else, adding that the blame game among Buhari's appointees must be avoided.

He said: "The issue is hitting at the foundation of our existence as Nigerians and fast eroding the root of our Nigerian community. I am very much worried and afraid that we are on the precipice and dangerously reaching a tipping point where it may no longer be possible to hold danger at bay."

"Without being immodest, as a Nigerian who still bears the scar of the Nigerian civil war on my body and with a son who bears the scar of fighting Boko Haram on his body, you can understand, I hope, why I am so concerned. When people are desperate and feel that they cannot have confidence in the ability of government to provide security for their lives and properties, they will take recourse to anything and everything that can guarantee their security individually and collectively."

"For over 10 years, for four of which you have been the captain of the ship, Boko Haram has menacingly

ravaged the land and in spite of the government's claim of victory over Boko Haram, the potency and the activities of Boko Haram, where they are active, remain undiminished, putting lie to government's claim.

"The recent explanation of the Chief of Army Staff for non-victory due to lack of commitment and lack of motivation on the part of troops bordering on sabotage speaks for itself. Say what you will, Boko Haram is still a daily issue of insecurity for those who are victimised, killed, maimed, kidnapped, raped, sold into slavery and forced into marriage and for children forcibly recruited into carrying bombs on them to detonate among crowds of people to cause maximum destructions and damage. And Boko Haram will not go away on the basis of sticks alone, carrots must outweigh sticks. How else do you deal with issues such as only about 50 per cent literacy in North-east with over 70 per cent unemployment?"

According to Obasanjo, herdsmen/farmers crises and menace started with government treating the issue with cuddling glove instead of hammer.

"Today, it has developed into banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery and killings all over the country. The unfortunate situation is that the criminality is being perceived as a 'Fulani' menace unleashed by Fulani elite in the different parts of the country for a number of reasons but even more unfortunately, many Nigerians and non-Nigerians who are friends of Nigeria attach vicarious responsibility to you as a Fulani elite and the current captain of the Nigeria ship. Perception may be as potent as reality at times. Whatever may be the grievances of the Fulanis, if any, they need to be put out in the open and their grievances, if legitimate, be addressed; and if other

ethnic groups have grievances, let them also be brought out in the open and addressed through debate and dialogue," the former president added.

"Niger-Delta leaders, South-Eastern leaders, Middle-Belt leaders and Northern Elders Forum have not remained quiet. Different ordinary Nigerians at home and abroad are calling for different measures to address or ameliorate the situation. All the calls and cries can only continue to be ignored at the expense of Nigerian unity, if not its continued existence," he added.

The former president

expressed worries about the inability of Buhari to tackle the challenges headlong, raising the alarm that the president might have abandoned Nigeria to be at the mercy of criminals whom he said were all suspected to be Fulanis.

"To be explicit and without equivocation, Mr. President and General, I am deeply worried about four avoidable calamities: abandoning Nigeria into the hands of criminals who are all being suspected, rightly or wrongly, as Fulanis and terrorists of Boko Haram type; spontaneous or planned reprisal against Fulanis which may inadvertently or inadvertently mushroom into pogrom or Rwanda-type genocide that we did not believe could happen and yet it happened; similar attacks against any other tribe or ethnic group anywhere in the country initiated by rumours, fears, intimidation and revenge capable of leading to pogrom; violent uprising beginning from one section of the country and spreading quickly to other areas and leading to dismemberment of the country," Obasanjo said.

In the letter, Obasanjo urged the president to rally the people towards forging consensus that could engender national unity, stability, security, cooperation, development, growth and progress.

He called on the federal government "to open up discussion, debate and dialogue as part of consultation at different levels and the outcome of such deliberations should be collated to form inputs into a national conference to come up with solutions that will effectively deal with the issues and lead to rapid development, growth and progress...."

In addition, he urged the president to work towards birthing a "nationally accepted strategic roadmap that will not change with whims and caprices of any government."

"It must be owned by the citizens, people's policy and

strategy implemented by the government no matter its colour and leaning," he said.

However, in forging the consensus and achieving a "nationally accepted strategic roadmap," Obasanjo said Buhari should mobilise the support of former heads of state, former governors, traditional rulers, past heads of service, former heads of paramilitary organisations, private sector, civil society, community leaders and religious leaders, among others.

PDP, Afenifere, SMBLF, Ohanaeze Back Obasanjo

In swift reactions to Obasanjo's letter, PDP, SMBLF and Afenifere called on the president to take the former president's warning seriously before it is too late.

In its reaction, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) said Obasanjo's vindicated the party's position.

The party, in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Mr. Kola Ologbodiran, described the letter as patriotic and a proof that Buhari has failed as the nation's chief security officer.

"The PDP urges President Buhari to read between the lines and listen to the voice of reason from well-meaning Nigerians at this moment."

"Our party is deeply worried that our nation, which grew in leaps and bounds in all sectors before the All Progressives Congress (APC) took over in 2015, is now dangerously sliding on all fronts under President Buhari, who has shown crass incompetence in managing our national affairs."

"The PDP maintains that had President Buhari heed wise counsel to rejig his parade and respect the wishes and aspirations of Nigerians in the national interest, our nation would not have been on this dangerous bend," it said.

Afenifere chieftain and notable Yoruba leader, Chief Ayo Adebanjo and spokesman of SMBLF, Mr. Yinka Odumakin, in separate telephone interviews with THISDAY, asked Buhari to act now before it is too late.

Adebanjo said the country had reached a point where the president should either act now or it would be 'to thy tent oh Israel.'

"I endorse what he (Obasanjo) wrote 100 per cent. He has always had the language. He knows all the issues that I have been talking about. He has been talking about it. The more the merrier. I agree 100 per cent. If it is only to comment on what is on now (the killing of the daughter of Afenifere leader, Pa Reuben Fasoranti, Mrs. Funke Olakunrin); people are saying 'How do you know it is Fulani?' Bola said it is not them, it is armed robber – Bola Tinubu, he is talking nonsense!

He is just saying things to be relevant with Buhari who he feels will give him presidency in 2023.

"Yoruba people no longer trust any security in the hands of non-indigenes of our area. Only for now, the personnel should be changed to indigenes of this area; the police, the army, the DSS, every security personnel should be indigenes of this place. We no longer trust any non-indigenous policemen or security men. That should be done immediately before the question of restructuring and state police," he added.

On his part, Odumakin stated that Obasanjo's letter to Buhari was "a patriotic decision," adding that "the former president has come out to speak truth to power when some voices have embraced the culture of silence or even sulking up to the terrorists who are troubling Nigeria for their immediate gains. Obasanjo has put all that aside to continue to speak truth at all times."

Continued on page 42

NEWS

Oyo Gov Publicly Declares Assets Worth over N48bn

Esther Oluku

Oyo State Governor, Mr. Seyi Makinde yesterday made public his campaign promise to publicly declare his assets, saying has nine houses while his companies are worth over N9 billion.

The governor, who visited the Oyo state office of the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) in Ibadan to receive a copy of the asset declaration form said that his decision to make the assets public was in fulfillment of a personal promise he made during the elections.

Details of the assets as contained in the CCB 1 with the name Oluseyi Abiodun Makinde, which was declared at the High Court of Oyo State, on May 28, 2019, indicated that the governor is worth over N48 billion. The assets declaration form, marked OYSE/2019/001 contained details of cash at hand, in the bank, landed properties (developed and undeveloped), household items, share and bonds owed by the Governor, his wife, Omini Makinde as well as his companies.

According to details of the asset form made public by the Chief Press Secretary to Makinde, Mr. Taiwo Adisa, the Governor of Oyo State had cash at hand and in the bank worth N234, 742,296.01, as at May 28, 2019.

In dollar terms, the governor has cash valued at \$30,056.99 as at the same date.

Properties, including the developed and undeveloped as well as household items

indicated on the asset forms, showed that the governor is worth N2, 624,800,500 as at the date of asset declaration.

In dollar terms, the governor also declared properties, developed and undeveloped as well as household items valued at \$4,400,000.

In South African Rands, the governor declared buildings and household items worth four million, four hundred and fifty-seven thousand, five hundred and fifty-four and four South African Rands.

The houses declared by the governor include nine buildings in Nigeria, two in the United States of America and one in South Africa.

One of the properties in the United States is described as "jointly owned."

The details showed the current value of Makinde's companies stand at N48, 150,736,889 with 33, 730,000 units of shares as at May 28, 2019. The governor also has existing Bonds (Eurobond) worth \$3, 793, 500 as well as shares, debentures and other securities valued at N120,500,000.

The companies listed by the governor include Makon Engineering and Technical Services Limited; Energy Traders and Technical Services Limited; Makon Oil and Gas Limited; Makon Group Limited, Makon Construction Limited and Makon Power System Limited.

The asset declaration form indicated that governor Makinde's four companies have additional assets denominated

as loan notes including Makon Engineering and Technical Services Limited (N1.7 billion); Makon Power System Limited (N148.4 million); Makon Oil and Gas Limited (N341 million);

Energy Traders and Technical Services Limited (N1.159 billion), totalling N3.389 billion.

Speaking with journalists at the CCB office in Ibadan, Makinde said: "I came here

to collect the photocopy of the form that I signed in fulfillment of the campaign promise to the people that I will declare my asset publicly and release the document to the public.

"I will encourage all the members of my cabinet to do the same thing but in as much they stay within the ambit of the law, I will encourage them to do the same."



VERY WARM RECEPTION...

L-R: Former Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Obong Victor Attah; Delta State Governor, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa; and his Akwa Ibom State counterpart, Emmanuel Udom, at the reception organised by the Chairman of Zenith Bank, Jim Ovia, in honour of the Central Bank Governor, Mr. Godwin Emefiele, in Lagos...recently

Presidency: We Haven't Given up on Leah Sharibu, Chibok Girls

Omololu Ogunmade in Abuja

her refusal to deny her Christian faith, remains strong.

He acknowledged that the book would be useful in dissecting what it described as crimes against humanity, and added that it would also assist in rallying international support for the young captive girls.

Shehu was also swift to add that whereas it was notable that the author acknowledged that the government of President Muhammadu Buhari had secured the release of 50 per cent of the kidnapped Chibok girls, the

author was yet wrong by her

submission that the government did not know who it should negotiate with in view of the split of Boko Haram into two factions.

"The Presidency wishes to seize this moment to reiterate the government's unwavering determination to secure the release, by peace or by force, the remaining 110 Chibok girls,

Ms Leah Sharibu and all other citizens held captive by terrorists.

"It is imperative to do this at this time in view of the doubts that may possibly arise following the release of a new book, 'Beneath The Tamarind Tree,' written about the kidnapping of 270 Chibok school girls, by Isha Sesay, the ex-CNN star and now a Child Rights activist.

"This book should serve the useful purpose of spotlighting the crimes against humanity by Boko Haram terrorists, etching it permanently on the public mind.

"In addition, the book should rightfully stir up interest and rally international support for the young girls on the continent who must stay in school and avoid early pregnancy and marriage, in order to actualise their God-given potential.

"In her introduction of the book, Isha claims that she wants to 'humanise' the girls, instead

of them being seen as 'mere headlines.'

"She acknowledged the release from Boko Haram captivity of more than 50 per cent of the girls under the Buhari administration but said, very rightfully, that 'we must not forget the 112 who are still missing.' On this, we share a common position.

"In stitching together her compelling portrait of this unfortunate yet paradoxical incident, Isha, this terrific journalist risks a negative judgment of history on a book that is a farrago of misrepresentation.

"It is wrong of the author to say, of the Buhari administration that "they don't know who to negotiate with" because Boko Haram had split into factions.

"This is a misrepresentation of the position of the government on split in the leadership of the terrorist group into two contending factions.

We Demanded \$30m Ransom to Free Buhari's District Head, Says Suspected Kidnapper

Kingsley Nweze in Abuja

Kumbotso Local Government Area of Kano State on July 1 by a joint security operatives.

During the parading of the suspects yesterday, the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mohammed Adamu, called for stringent penalties to discourage kidnappings, which he said was thriving because of laxity in law.

Another suspect, Sarkila Abdul, said two of the suspects received training in Libya on how to disarm armed personnel, especially security agents and conduct ambush attacks.

Parading the suspects yesterday, Adamu called for tougher legislation against kidnapping.

Adamu, represented by the Force Public Relations Officer,

Mr. Frank Mba, a Deputy Commissioner of Police, said tougher legislation against kidnapping was imperative now because of the "dispersal effect of crime", kidnappers move to places where there are weak laws to operate.

"When you don't have a uniform law, they are advised by their legal handlers to move to places with weaker laws. It is important that there is a uniformity of laws to stem kidnapping.

"I am calling for tougher legislation at the federal and state levels as a matter of urgency to review the laws and make them stronger as it relates to kidnapping," he said.

According to him, one of the suspects was arrested several

times, jailed but somehow managed to find his way out to set up another kidnap gang.

He pledged that the police would be more diligent henceforth in prosecuting the suspects.

He said 13 of the suspects were directly linked to the kidnapping of Uba, who was kidnapped and held for 60 days, and gave the age bracket of the suspects as ranging between 20 and 46 years.

He stated that five of them were from Katsina, four from Daura and the rest from Kano, adding that the arrest of the suspects was made possible through the cooperation of the communities where the kidnapping took place.

Lawan: 118 Nigerians Killed in South Africa

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

Senate President Ahmad Lawan yesterday lamented the killing of Nigerians in South Africa as he put the total death toll over the years at 118.

Lawan, while receiving in audience the South African High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr. Bobby Moroe, said 13 of those killed through various attacks, were murdered by South African policemen.

He condemned the continuous killing of Nigerians in South Africa, warning that further attack on Nigerians would no longer be condoned.

He said: "We in the parliament must speak and prevent any further killings. These killings must stop. This is the era of social media where the corpse of a victim may spark violence that may go beyond the control of government.

"The South African government must, as a matter of urgency, do whatever it takes to protect the lives and property of Nigerians living there, just as Nigerian government remains committed to the safety of South Africans residing here and their investments.

"I believe we have faced enough; we will no longer take it anymore. We want to write the names of Nigerians killed, and the South African parliament must act fast to put a stop to this menace."

Lawan recalled the contributions of Nigeria to South Africa to free it from

apartheid, adding that "we must establish events leading into these killings, including the recent one of Mrs. Elizabeth Chukwu, who was killed in her hotel room."

Nigeria, he said, would no longer condone such killings, and urged South African government to as a matter of responsibility protect Nigerians residing there.

While commending the High Commissioner for the updates on the killings, Lawan said: "the update on the cause of the late Mrs. Chukwu's death is heartwarming. It is a sign that something has been done in this regards."

Earlier, Moroe, who expressed regret over the killings of Nigerians and extended his country's condolences to the families of the victims, had said an inquest had been instituted to investigate all cases of xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

The inquest, he said, would reveal the causes of the menace and find solutions across board.

He reiterated the commitment of South Africa and its law enforcement agencies to get to the root of the matter while bringing to book perpetrators of the attacks.

"Our government will continue to be committed to the good relationship with Nigeria. Your sentiment has gone deep into our heart, and you will be happy that the same sentiment has been our concern in South Africa," he added.

One of the suspects arrested over the abduction of the District Head of Daura, Alhaji Musa Umar Uba, an in-law of President Muhammadu Buhari, yesterday spoke on how they demanded \$30 million from the family of the traditional ruler before they could release him.

The suspect, Yusuf Dahiru, who was paraded in Abuja along with 39 other suspected kidnappers, however, said they were yet to receive any ransom before their arrest in Kano.

Thirteen of those paraded were involved in the abduction of Uba from his Daura home in Katsina State on May 1.

Uba was, however, rescued at Gangan Ruwa quarters in

To my dear brother Nduka



on his 60th

My first meeting with Nduka Obaigbena was on board British Airways flight from London to Abuja sometime in 2002...how time flies. I sat next to the man known as the Duke. Today, I call him "The only Publisher in this country as the rest are newspaper printers". Our conversation in the flight was simple. We discussed all about Nigeria and politics..this still remains the bone of our conversations even 17 years later and in fact, our friendship has grown to make us one family. I was an addicted reader of THISDAY Newspapers when we met, The Verdict in particular. I also respected the backpage to the extent I felt, if I was President Obasanjo at that time, all I needed to do is to read the backpage to make Nigeria work! I never missed the Verdict, whenever I travel out of the country, of course pre-online paper era, the Thursday paper will be at home waiting for me. I have always admired the creativity of the newspaper and the passion of the man behind it remains distinguished and different amongst others. I do also respect the integrity of the brand, their level of criticism against a sitting government comes with a huge price. I never knew a time would come when I would become part and parcel of that same institution! Nduka believes in my capacity, resourcefulness, guts and dreams enough to have considered me as a board member of Leaders & Co and also advisory board member of THISDAY Style at my age!!! That said, what I appreciate and cherish most about this great man is his wise counsel. He shares his experiences and tells me what to do to avoid mistakes. In a nutshell, he calls me to order when others just watch until you slip. Nduka shows me love, care and concern, he talks to me like a blood brother, guides me like his son. In fact, Nduka has spoilt me with late night food. Even when sleeps off snoring, he still wouldn't want the conversation to end whenever I say I am leaving. To put it succinctly, he is an amazing piece of encyclopedia about Nigeria, fashion and entertainment. Even when we disagree, every single minute I've spent with him has brought value to me. I have been to every THISDAY Music Festival, Award, and most fashion shows across the globe. The energy Nduka puts in all these ventures is amazing, the brain is extra ordinary, the delivery despite always being late turns out phenomenally super. Every event is done with a touch of world class performance. I had to call off a meeting out of the country to return and honor his 60th birthday invitation and since then, most friends I engage with all say the same, "We have no option but to attend!" This tells you, you can never have a better friend if Nduka is your friend. I do get asked who my Nigerian hero is...I turn and say with utmost confidence...Nduka Obaigbena and Tony Elumelu. I get a big laughter and they further asked why? My answer is simple. I tell them, "If Michael Jackson was alive, he would have performed in Nigeria courtesy of Nduka! I will never forget the day we woke up and all the front pages of the newspapers carried "Standard Trust takes over UBA". Anyway, today is about Nduka, and it's simply about dreams, guts and belief, which he possesses in abundance. I believe I have more of it than him because he sometimes tells me, "Young man, finish one first". Publisher, as you turn 60,

May God Almighty continue to give you good health, long life and blessings.

You have done an amazing job, you have built a great brand, it is about time to institutionalize the structure, believe me, THISDAY can be 10 times bigger than what it is today!

No more snails, cutlet, lamb chops and yam at night please!

May God almighty continue to bless you and your family.

Indeed we look forward to seeing more years of your loyalty to friends, value to the creative industry and commitment to ensure we have Better Nigeria!

Faruk Saleh

The Duke of our Time



Mr. Nduka Obaigbena

Chairman, Leaders & Company Ltd & President,
Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria.

You are indeed the Trailblazer.

*And still,
harder than the Diamond itself.*

God's speed

Emeka Ihedioha CON
Governor, Imo State

Happy 60th Birthday Nduka Obaigbena

NDUKA, You have been a Friend, Adviser and Confidant for well over thirty years. I still remember our first meeting organized by Aret Adams and your hilarious but honest response to my question "Why Journalism". You have been there for us in good times and bad times. We wish you all the very very best.

Happy 60th Birthday.
GOD BLESS.

KEEM, MYMA,
ADESUWA, YASMIN,
AMEZE AND JUNAID.



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COMMENT

THE CASE FOR NATIONAL IDEOLOGY

Based on the current war on corruption, Buharism is a fitting ideology for Nigeria, writes **Mansur Wambai**

It is quite remarkable that Nigerians who regularly lament the lack of ideology in our practice of democracy and agonize over the seeming preference for "carry-go" democracy among politicians, have failed to recognize the elements of an ideology in the policy thrust of the Buhari Administration. It is disappointing that despite unanimity on the devastating impact of corruption and desperate demands for ethical re-orientation, the chance emergence of anti-corruption crusade as the main agenda of the government of the day has failed to inspire a determined resolve to develop it into a national ideological blueprint. The issue of lack of ideological anchor for our democratic dispensation has not received the attention it deserves so far largely because of the type of political leaders who have emerged to "deepen" democratic principles. It is beyond contention that President Buhari's adoption of anti-corruption crusade as the focus of his political mission and vision long before getting elected excited the ordinary Nigerians whose unwavering loyalty eventually brought him to power.

The status of corruption as the main cankerworm plaguing our country's potential to be great in all important aspects of nationhood is therefore of greater concern to the masses who are also its helpless victims. The demand for anti-corruption to be the theme of our national ideology and the anchor of our democratic dispensation is the clamour of the people but obviously not the priority of its leaders. President Buhari is resolutely entrenching the crusade into government policy and implanting fear of prompt detection, disgraceful prosecution and prolonged incarceration in the minds of the corrupt constituency, while the masses' who lost hope of getting "good leaders" to bring back their looted entitlements as citizens is revived.

The consistency and effective imposition of deterrent measures especially by the EFCC in the last four years is an unprecedented initiative by government to demonstrate the will and the capacity to confidently walk the talk of "eradicating corruption". Inevitably, what we may fittingly call Buharism already lends itself to becoming the national ideology, if only we can drop our clannish mentality and rally round our most appropriate and potent reformer's clarion call.

While President Buhari has effectively discharged his burden of promoting national orientation by courageously transforming the paper tiger of mere campaign chorus into a hungry lion prowling the corrupted corridors of power with a deterrent appetite, our other elected leaders would rather feast on corruption. Going by the frequent flexing of legislative muscles and orchestrated elite criticism and fault-finding against the President's agenda, the stumbling blocks to needed reforms are many and manifestly unyielding.

The free-lancing exploits of lawyers and the aloofness of judges also impede the effectiveness of the anti-corruption crusade by "technical knockout" of too many prosecution processes, while in states governors rule supreme over "loyal" legislatures' oversight functions at the pitiful expense of their states and citizens, to complete the disabling environment for the anti-corruption crusade.

There is a clear and present danger for sustenance of the highly



THE CHALLENGE OF INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ANTI-CORRUPTION CRUSADE STARES US IN THE FACE AS WE ALL KNOW THAT THE INCUMBENCY OF A SINCERE AND DEEPLY COMMITTED PRESIDENT IS ESSENTIAL TO ITS SUCCESS AND SUSTENANCE

impactful anti-corruption policy thrust of the administration beyond 2023 when the term limit will necessitate exit of President Buhari. But only the most unpatriotic and retrogressive Nigerians, particularly those who thrive on abuse of public office for self-aggrandizement, will want to see any impediment to the progressive strengthening of the anti-corruption crusade. The challenge of institutionalizing the anti-corruption crusade stares us in the face as we all know that the incumbency of a sincere and deeply committed president is essential to its success and sustenance. Any laxity or premature termination of the deterrent initiative will definitely provide the dreaded opportunity for corruption to fight back ferociously and overwhelmingly.

The ideological anchor is vital in order to infuse the ethical values of the fight against corruption into the patriotic consciousness of the generality of Nigerians, so that they can acquire the vigilance, zero-tolerance and courage, not only to insist on prioritization of the anti-corruption crusade in all political parties' manifestoes and expressed commitment of all aspirants to elected office, but also to serve as whistle-blowing sentinels at large. Once the national sentiment is aroused and mobilized against the scourge of corruption by intense mass ideological sensitization, the challenge of institutionalizing the policy will be substantially overcome. Woe betide any official or agency, or even judge or court, that compromises in dispensing justice without fear or favour in corruption cases!

The importance of a concerted effort by the political leadership in the country to be actively and sincerely committed to the anti-corruption crusade cannot be over-emphasized. The ideological push should eventually galvanize the groundswell of mass support to drive the crusade deeply into the hearts and minds of the politically-active population to adopt the anti-corruption credentials of political aspirants as a criterion for electability.

President Buhari has successfully earned the rare reputation for integrity and courageous leadership by his voluntary choice of the fight against corruption for consistent advocacy and effective entrenchment into government policy. In only four years of the Buhari administration, Nigeria has come a long way from merely paying lip service to actively fighting it tooth and nail to the extent of instilling fear in the minds of the corrupt civil servant and politician, entrenching a deterrent where impunity reigned.

This has translated into more prudent management of public resources, enhanced timely execution of public projects and gradual rekindling of public confidence in government as a vehicle of development and welfare. The remarkable thing is that it took the principled focus and committed determination of one uncommon political leader and elected president to make this a rejuvenating reality. Transforming his decades of advocacy against corruption and the unprecedented exemplary adoption of the crusade as main policy thrust of government, into the nation's first concept of ideology is a befitting tribute to make his legacy a lasting beacon for generations unborn. Long live Buharism, good riddance to corruption!

Wambai wrote from Bauchi

CONSOLIDATING THE CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS

The reforms in the civil service have boosted government's revenue, writes **Ofem Uket**

Some N10 trillion is said to have accrued to the federal government through the Treasury Single Account (TSA) in recent times through its full implementation by President Muhammadu Buhari's led administration. The ongoing civil service reforms contributed significantly to this attainment.

This revelation was made in Abuja at the monthly peer review mechanism hosted by the Accountant General of the Federation, co-ordinated by the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, to examine and rate performance index of public institutions in their statutory responsibilities as provided in the establishment acts.

This rating and benchmarking as well as capacity building have produced results of increase in revenue generation, transparency, accountability and openness in the management and control of finances in the award of government contracts and the disbursement of recurrent expenditure.

An official in the Office of the Account-General of the Federation (OAGF), Afolabi Ajayi, had made a presentation to the Head of the Nigerian Civil Service Winifred Oyo-Ita, buttressing the improvement so far made in generating revenue through major agencies of government.

Making the presentation, Ajayi stated that under TSA, the government had been able to save over N45 billion monthly in interest on ways and means that it used to pay before the full implementation of the TSA, which has significantly drawn positive economic indicators for the country, while about N50 billion is said to have been revenue mopped up from commercial

banks through the TSA implementation strategy. Ajayi also told the HOCSF that when the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIIS) kicked-off, "over N288 billion was saved as a result of the difference between the amount government releases to MDAs based on appropriation and actual amount paid through IPPIIS since payment are made directly to beneficiaries account."

The meeting disclosed that since the introduction of IPPIIS to date, 506 MDAs with total staff strength of 344,625 are on the IPPIIS platform with the gross pay of N49, 071,961,959.15k as at September, 2018. The system is a major step taken by government to eliminate ghost workers and wastages.

Since the commencement of IPPIIS, many departments and agencies have realized that personnel cost was not directly paid to them for disbursement, which necessitated agencies resolving to utilize their approved manpower/personnel budget that has generated employment for many Nigerians in the handling of the IPPIIS in various MDAs.

Through the civil service reforms, government has initiated the Asset Tracking Management Project (ATMP) to track, monitor and manage its fixed assets in a manner that leakages and wastes are blocked, making it difficult for corrupt and fraud-related conducts to thrive within government space.

Among the priority areas being addressed in the implementation strategy plan of the federal government to automate and reform the federal civil service and by extension shape governance at the state and local government levels is to develop

and ensure efficient, productive, incorruptible and citizen centered (EPIC), culture transformation of the civil service to drive needed growth.

As clearly stated in the policy document, culture as an umbrella for behavioural pattern, which could be positive or negative to either breed corrupt practices or create ascension for patriotism, transparency, accountability and integrity is a strong enabler which fosters effective collaboration between the employer and the employee.

The service wide survey introduced to crystallize strategic aspects of the civil service reforms is a baseline culture, where conducts, attitudes and behaviour in the implementation of policies of the executive branch of government is examined to articulate the thoughts of the civil servants about governing processes as contained in the regulatory framework and mandate clearly trusted on Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

The totality of corruption in Nigeria and the African continent is drawn from poor cultural backgrounds with absolute disregard for positive behavioural patterns, suspending various forms of regulations that shape government institutions and financial processes and its guidelines for openness and transparency in expenditure.

When the public sector is void of greed and aggrandizement, such a nation is bound to make desired economic development, revenue inputs from major organs are sabotaged within the civil service. This is emphatically the dominant aspect of the service the leader of the Nigerian civil service, Winifred Oyo-Ita, is currently addressing not minding whose ox is gored.

In trying to extrapolate tendentious opinions by critics, the public service reforms took a careful

study of a cross section of civil servants offering and raising concerns on what it described as task identification and job significance of a civil servant and its employer to be able to know when an officer is surreptitiously incompetent in its statutory duties, which may attract some degree of punishment arising from perceived indolence.

The kaleidoscopic nature of the reforms has given advantage to recent economic growth driven by integrity in the governing processes contained in the strategy document of implementing executive policies, though the finality of the entire package of the strategy paper is yet to be unveiled.

However, one of the major focus and mission of the reforms is to ensure efficient and effective utilization of financial resources in transparent and accountable manner in the acquisition of capital assets and to fulfill the requirements for fixed assets recognition and measurement in IPSAS accrual accounting system adopted by the federal government".

Again, the aim of setting up the Asset Tracking Management Project (ATMP) is to locate, label and register all fixed assets (property, plant and equipment) of the FGN; revalue the registered assets using approved methods of revaluation and/or depreciation; determine from records all redundant, disposed and disposable assets; recommend those assets to be disposed of, registered and relocated to other centers that need them; to internalize all processes and procedures for assets registration, tracking and management in the MDAs; and create a comprehensive real-time data base of all PPE to guide government in the efficient allocation and utilisation of financial resources for capital investment.

EDITORIAL

CURBING PIRACY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

The authorities could do more to reduce incidence of piracy

While Nigeria has for several years been a hotspot for piracy incidents, the International Chamber of Commerce International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) recent report is encouraging. It indicates that in the first quarter of 2019, Nigeria experienced a decrease in reported piracy incidents in comparison to the first quarter of 2018. These results, according to the report "confirm the Nigerian Navy's increased efforts to 'actively respond to reported incidents by dispatching patrol boats'". But the report also added: "Despite these efforts, Nigerian waters remain risky for vessels, especially the port of Lagos where four incidents have been reported."

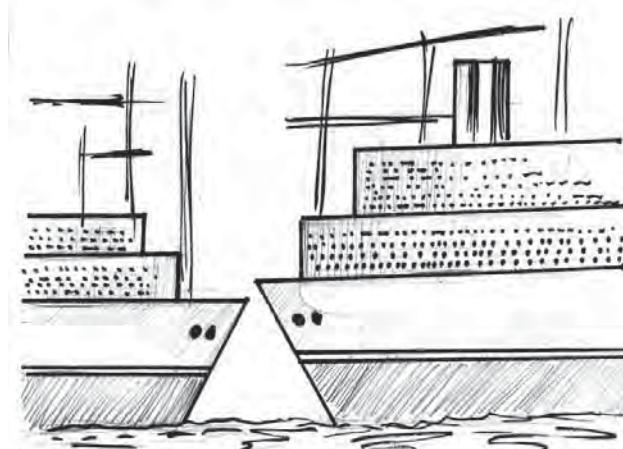
We commend the Navy for their efforts as we urge the Nigerian authorities to do more to make our waters safe and rid our country of what has become another emblem

THE ROOT CAUSES OF PIRACY IN THE REGION ARE INEFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES, WEAK RULE OF LAW, PRECARIOUS LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND INADEQUATE NAVAL, COAST GUARD, AND MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT

Incidents were reported in the coastal countries of Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo in the first quarter of 2019" said the report.

To say the least, this spate of attacks is worrisome as it has given Nigeria and other countries in the Gulf of Guinea a very negative image in the comity of maritime nations. It has also led to the high cost of freight as ship owners and crew members often demand for high

insurance premium before embarking on any voyage to Nigeria. For most of last year, according to the EOS Risk Group, there were dozens of Nigerian pirate attacks on merchant and fishing vessels in the Gulf of Guinea. "Most concerning this year has been the resurgence of 'petro-piracy', involving the hijacking of tankers for oil theft," said Jake Longworth, senior intelligence analyst at EOS Risk.



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TO SEND EMAIL: first.name.surname@thisdaylive.com

"The return of petro-piracy has been accompanied by an associated increase in the geographical reach of Nigerian pirate gangs, leading to attacks in the waters of Benin and Ghana."

The high number of lives lost to such crime aside, piracy drives fear into shipping practitioners, especially ship captains and master mariner. Apart from reducing the number of vessels calling at the nation's seaports due to the fear of an imminent attack, it has helped in no small measure to increase the cost of doing business in Nigeria as ship owners and the consignees now charge higher than they do for other countries. The huge costs are eventually passed off in the cost of freight to the final consumer.

While there is unanimity among shipping practitioners that sea piracy cannot be totally eradicated, it is also a fact that with concerted efforts by all the relevant stakeholders, the menace can be minimised in our country. In addressing the challenge, the Director General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) Dr Dakuku Peterside has consistently argued that a legal framework that prescribes stiffer sanctions, a more vigorous and vigilant military-led patrol and better intelligence gathering network would be required.

Dakuku's position has been corroborated by Ambassador Michele J. Sison, the United States' Deputy Representative to the United Nations. The root causes of piracy in the region, according to Sison, are ineffective governance structures, weak rule of law, precarious legal frameworks and inadequate naval, coast guard, and maritime law enforcement. We hope the federal government will assist Dakuku to put such measures in place so that the Nigerian territorial waters will not continue to harbour criminals.

Letters to the Editor

TO OUR READERS
Letters in response to specific publications in THISDAY should be brief (150-200 words) and straight to the point. Interested readers may send such letters along with their contact details to opinion@thisdaylive.com. We also welcome comments and opinions on topical local, national and international issues provided they are well-written and should also not be longer than (950-1000 words). They should be sent to opinion@thisdaylive.com along with the email address and phone numbers of the writer.

NDUKA OBAIGBENA AT 60: AN APPRECIATION

Happy Diamond birthday to 'The Duke of Journalism, Publisher, Founder and Chairman of THISWEEK magazine, THISDAY newspapers, Arise Magazine, Arise Fashion Week, Arise News TV, and President, Newspapers Proprietors' Association of Nigeria, Prince Nduka Obaigbena. Though my interaction with his news medium, THISDAY, started on November 18, 2003 when my article was first published in the newspaper, I didn't have the opportunity of meeting the media Octopus until I joined the services of Arise News TV as an in-house news analyst in December 2017.

I remember that fateful day in October 2017 when I got a call from the Managing Editor of the Abuja office of Arise News TV, Mr Bayo Awosemo, who informed me that "The Chairman seems to like your analysis and has asked me to negotiate with you to join our team of news analysts in Abuja". I promptly jumped at the offer as I have never been so treated by any of the over 30 print and electronic media that had been featuring me since 1990 when I started my media advocacy voyage. I eventually joined a three-man team of news analysts comprising of Mr. Tony Amadi, Mr. Emmanuel Bello and Mr. Sebastian Agbinda. We were recently joined by Dr. Sam Amadi.

During my first time on Arise News TV set in August 2017, I marvelled at the cutting edge technology being used for news production, transmis-

sion and news casting. Even the choice of Transcorp Hilton as the office for the TV station is very strategic. Though having an office space in a five-star hotel may be very expensive; however, it makes it easy to draw the 'movers and shakers' of Nigerian society to come over to the studio for interview. Chairman also has a pool of 'international subject matter experts' across the globe who analyses news for the station. These are media consultants who get paid for their services. Being a 'studio rat' of a sort who gets regularly invited across many electronic media, this is a pace setting effort which is peculiar to Arise News TV. I stand to be corrected. I also observed that 'The Duke' loves giving youths opportunity to excel. Many of our reporters, producers and newscasters are in their 20s and 30s. He is also an equal opportunity employer with a gender-balanced team. One other thing I like about the Prince from Delta State is his high standard. For instance, Arise News TV is only on DSTV and GOTV in Nigeria as well as top range channels in Europe and America. With offices in United Kingdom, Lagos and Abuja, the man has plans to open more offices in his global expansionism agenda.

Sixty hearty cheers to this workaholic, visionary and media mogul. Sir, may you live the rest of your life in good health and joy. Many thanks for the opportunity to serve in your media conglomerate.

Jide Ojo, a news analyst, author and development consultant

ILICIT TRADE IN TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Illicit trade in tobacco products remains prevalent in Nigeria. It may not be unconnected with the increased spate of terrorism, banditry and other forms of organised crime and calls for a more effective approach to curbing the threat in Nigeria as it is a major way by which perpetrators fund their operation and launder illegal funds. Of particular concern are parts of Northern Nigeria which have been devastated by terrorism and where widespread illicit tobacco trade can be readily exploited for terrorism financing.

Some factors fostering illicit trade in the country include Nigeria's history of enforcement and control, which promotes the perception that the likelihood of getting caught and punished is very low, and therefore attracts illicit traders to our markets. Nigeria's land borders provide little resistance to smugglers and this combined with the numerous illegal entry points into the country signal to the illegal operators that they can operate within the country with relative ease. This continues to make Nigeria very attractive.

In 2015, Nigeria passed the National Tobacco Control Act NTCA, to accommodate the provisions of the FCTC. The NTCA is Nigeria's comprehensive set of laws for the regulation of the tobacco industry and comprises elaborate clauses

including: regulation of smoking; prohibition of tobacco advertising promotion and sponsorship; tobacco product sales; regulation of tobacco product content and emission disclosures; tobacco product packaging and labelling; licensing of tobacco dealer; enforcement; education, communication, training and public awareness.

While the full implementation of the NTCA is still being awaited, it is important to note that Nigeria, in a bid to strengthen the fight against illicit trade, also signed the protocol for the elimination of illicit trade in tobacco products on March 8, 2019. Nigeria thus became the 51st country to ratify the treaty. With this development it is hoped that institutions will now be strengthened and relevant infrastructure made available to efficiently tackle this scourge.

Proper and effective policing of our borders is critical, if the fight must be won. The Nigeria Customs Service must step up their efforts in all our ports, increase the number of personnel so that all entry points are adequately manned and secure barricades provided at all illegal entry points. Arrangements must also be put in place for adequate training even on the provisions of the new protocol as well as other international best practices.

Nkemdiri Nwadike, Lagos



PAMO UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (PUMS) PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

Campus: No.1 Tap Road, KM 17, Aba/Port Harcourt Exp. way, Elelenwo, Port Harcourt.
E-mail: registrar@pums.edu.ng

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION FOR 2019/2020 ACADEMIC SESSION

PAMO University of Medical Sciences is a Private University licensed by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The University is committed to quality and excellence in Medical Education, Research and Health Services.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for Admission into Undergraduate Degree Programmes for the 2019/2020 Academic Session

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	MODE OF PAYMENT
<p>A. Applicants are required to have sat for the 2019/2020 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME).</p> <p>B. For Admission (via UTME) into 100 Level, applicants must possess five (5) credits passed at SSCE (or equivalent) in relevant subjects (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English Language and Mathematics), at not more than two (2) sittings and must have scored 170 or above in the 2019/2020 UTME in relevant subjects. For MBBS, the score must be 200 and above.</p> <p>C. Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i.) Candidates who chose PUMS in JAMB and (ii.) Candidates who chose other Universities. Candidates under category (ii.) are required to apply for change of Institution through JAMB Portal to qualify to participate in the Screening Exercise. <p>D. Candidates awaiting SSCE result or its equivalent are also eligible to apply for admission provided the result (s) will be uploaded on PUMS Portal two days before screening.</p> <p>E. For Admission by Direct Entry (200 Level), candidates will in addition to having five (5) O' Level credits, MUST possess at least two (2) A' Level or its equivalent, passes in relevant subjects or possess a good first degree in a related field not below Second Class Lower as the case may be. For MBBS, candidates must possess three (3) A' Level passes in relevant subjects.</p> <p>F. For Transfer Admissions, candidates should first obtain a Transfer Form from PUMS, endorsed by the current university before resubmission to PUMS for consideration. The Form should be returned to PUMS with copies of relevant current Sessional Transcripts from current university.</p>	<p>All Candidates are expected to pay a non-refundable Application fee of Two Thousand Naira (N2,000.00) through the university Portal ONLY.</p> <p>There are two modes of payment in PUMS Portal; (a.) Card Payment and (b.) Cash Payment. Log into the University portal through www.pums.edu.ng</p>
	<h4>COURSES AVAILABLE</h4> <p>FACULTY OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. B.MLS – Medical Laboratory Science 2. B.NSc – Nursing Science 3. B.Sc – Physiotherapy 4. B.Sc – Radiography <p>FACULTY OF BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. B.Sc – Anatomy 2. B.Sc – Biochemistry 3. B.Sc – Pharmacology 4. B.Sc – Physiology 5. B.Sc – Human Nutrition & Dietetics <p>FACULTY OF CLINICAL SCIENCES Bachelor of Medicine & Surgery – MBBS</p>
	<h4>COMPULSORY POST UTME SCREENING DAYS</h4> <p>The Screening Exercise will take place as follows:</p> <p>Date: 1st Screening: Mon 19th to Frid, 23rd August, 2019 2nd Screening: A date for second screening will be published later</p> <p>Time: 10:00 am daily</p> <p>Venue: University Auditorium, No 1 Tap Road, Elelenwo Off Aba Expressway, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.</p> <p>Applicants are expected to come along with downloaded completed Application Form, Originals and copies of Qualifying Certificates, the 2019 UTME/DE Results, Birth Certificate, Two (2) Passport Photographs, Evidence of Change of Institution where applicable, Evidence of Payment of Application Fees for the Screening exercise on any of the scheduled dates, Transfer Form/Transcript (for transfer candidates) and Letter of Character Attestation from a Clergy or Imam.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Signed:</i> Barr. W.U.G. Imoedemhe, Ph.D Registrar & Secretary to Council</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Tel: 09060003435. E-mail: registrar@pums.edu.ng,</p>



PAMO UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

VACANCIES

PAMO University of Medical Sciences, Port Harcourt, Rivers State invites applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill the following vacant Academic, Administrative and Technical positions in the University.

A) VACANT ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer I & II in the following Faculties/Departments in the University.

FACULTY OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

1. Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences

Specialist areas:

- i) Chemical Pathology
- ii) Histopathology
- iii) Immunology

FACULTY OF BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES

Department of Biochemistry

FACULTY OF BASIC CLINICAL SCIENCES

1. Department of Pharmacology

2. Department of Pathology

Specialist areas:

- i) Histopathology/Morbid Anatomy
- ii) Haematology/Blood Transfusion
- iii) Medical Microbiology/Parasitology/Virology

B) VACANT NON-ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL POSITIONS

1. Medical Laboratory Scientist I & II/Science Laboratory Technologist I & II

2. Medical Laboratory Technician/Laboratory Assistant

i) Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences

3. Senior Assistant Registrar

4. Department of ICT

i. Software Developer I

ii. Network Administrator I

iii. Web Developer I

iv. Maintenance Officer II

C) REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. PROFESSOR

Applicant must have been a Reader or Associate Professor for four (4) years and possess a Doctorate Degree and/or FWACP, FMC Path with at least ten (10) years University teaching and research experience in the relevant discipline. Must also have a good record of scholarly publications of at least twenty (20) Journals papers of which six (6) must be published off-shore plus four (4) referred proceedings. Must have adequate administrative experience.

2. SENIOR LECTURER

Applicant must possess Doctorate Degree and/or FWACP, FMC Path in the relevant discipline with at least six (6) years in University teaching and research in the relevant areas. The applicant must have been a Lecturer I for three (3) years, with a good record of scholarly publications of at least eight (8) Journal papers, two (2) must be published off-shore or six (6) Journal papers of which at least two (2) must be published offshore plus four (4) referred proceedings.

3. LECTURER I

Applicant must have good first degree and Doctorate Degree and/or FWACP, FMC Path in the relevant discipline with at least five (5) years of teaching and research experience in the relevant areas in a University. Applicant must have been a Lecturer II for three (3) years and possess a good record of scholarly publications of at least four (4) Journal papers or three (3) Journal papers plus two (2) referred proceedings.

4. LECTURER II

Applicant must possess good first Degree and Doctorate Degree and/or FWACP, FMC Path in the relevant discipline with at least (4) years Teaching and Research Experience in a University. Applicant must have been an Assistant Lecturer for three (3) years with scholarly publications of least three (3) Journal Papers or two (2) Journal Papers plus two (2) referred proceedings.

5. MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTIST I & II/SCIENCE LABORATORY TECHNOLOGIST I & II

a) i. Medical Laboratory Scientist I

Applicant must possess degree in Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences (BMLS) from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division plus evidence of registration with Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria as Associate Member (AMLSN), with three (3) years post qualification cognate experience. In addition, the applicant must possess current practising license.

a) ii. Medical Laboratory Scientist II

Applicant must possess degree in Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences (BMLS) from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division plus evidence of registration with Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria as Associate Member (AMLSN). In addition, the applicant must possess current practising license.

b) i. Science Laboratory Technologist I

Applicant must possess degree in Bachelor of Science Technology (B.Sc. Tech.) from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division plus six (6) years post qualification cognate experience. Applicant must be registered with National Institute of Science Laboratory Technology (NISLT).

b) ii. Science Laboratory Technologist II

Applicant must possess good HND in relevant discipline not below lower credit level, plus registration with Institute of Science Laboratory Technology, other recognized professional qualifications plus at least a minimum of three (3) years post-qualification experience.

6. MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN/LABORATORY ASSISTANT

Applicant must possess National Certificate Examination for Laboratory Assistant plus at least four (4) years working experience.

7. SENIOR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

Applicant must possess Degree not below 2nd Class Lower Division, in any of the disciplines of Management Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts or Humanities with at least six (6) years post-qualification cognate experience. A retired University Administrator at the level of Senior Assistant Registrar and above will be considered.

8. SOFTWARE DEVELOPER I

Applicants must possess good honours Degree in Computer

Science, Electrical/Electronic Engineering/Information Systems or Technology or any related field or equivalent professional qualification from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division, with at least three (3) years post qualification cognate experience. Membership of relevant professional bodies will be an advantage.

9. NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR I

Applicants must possess good honours Degree in Computer Science, Electrical/Electronic Engineering/Networking, Network Security or any other related field or equivalent professional qualification from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division, with experience in all aspects of networking and should have good technical skills in LAN and WAN and at least three (3) years post qualification cognate experience. Relevant professional membership and certification in their fields of specialty will be an advantage.

10. WEB CONTENT DEVELOPER I

Applicants must possess good honours Degree in Computer Science, Electrical/Electronic Engineering/Information Systems or Technology or any related field or equivalent professional qualification from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division, with three (3) years experience in a computerized organization with websites and networks with experience in the design of websites, and web based application systems, and a working knowledge of HTML, XHTML, XML, CSS. Membership with professional bodies and acquisition of relevant certifications will be an advantage.

11. SYSTEMS MAINTENANCE OFFICER II

Applicants must possess good honours Degree in Computer Science, Electrical/Electronic Engineering/Information Systems or Technology or any related field or equivalent professional qualification from a recognized University, not below 2nd Class Lower Division, should have some hands-on-Systems Engineering or services including designs, installations and maintenance. Membership of relevant professional body will be an advantage.

D) SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

Salaries and allowances are at enhanced levels above those presently in Public Universities in Nigeria.

E) CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

As contained in the Human Resource Policy Document of the University

F) METHOD OF APPLICATION

i) Candidates shall submit twelve (12) copies of the application and Curriculum Vitae with full documentation including passport photograph and photocopies of Certificates and Awards.

ii) Candidates must request their referees to forward references on them in sealed envelopes marked "Referee Report" with the name of the candidates underneath directly to the Registrar.

iii) All documents shall be addressed to The Registrar, PAMO University of Medical Sciences, Port Harcourt, Rivers State and shall bear the position applied for at the top left hand corner of the package

G) CLOSING DATE

All applications should reach the Registrar not later than two (2) weeks from the date of this publication.

Barr. W.U.G. Imoedemhe, Ph.D
Registrar and Secretary to Council

POLITICS

Group Politics Editor NSEOBONG OKON-EKONG
Email nseobong.okonekong@thisdaylive.com (08114495324 SMS ONLY)

TRENDING NEWS

Still in Pursuit of Justice

Alex Enumah writes that Mr. Iboro Otu, candidate of the Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party, in the 2019 Akwa Ibom State governorship election is not giving up on his quest for justice despite being shut out by the election petition tribunal



Yakubu

Iboro Otu was the candidate of the Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party (ANRP) in the March 9, governorship election in Akwa Ibom State.

He is among the contestants that are alleging rigging and substantial non-compliance with the electoral laws in the conduct of the governorship election which had returned incumbent governor, Udom Emmanuel.

However, unlike other petitioners against the victory of Emmanuel and his party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Otu is currently at the Federal High Court, Abuja instead of the Akwa Ibom State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, the designated court for election matters.

In the suit marked, FHC/ABJ/CS/652/2019 are the Independent National Electoral Commission, Udom Emmanuel, PDP, the Chairman, Akwa Ibom State Gubernatorial Elections Petition Tribunal, and the Registrar, Akwa Ibom State Gubernatorial Elections Petition Tribunal as 1st to 5th respondents respectively.

The suit filed on behalf of Otu, by his lawyer, Faruk Khamaghram, is supported by a nine paragraphs affidavit deposed to by the applicant.

According to Otu, all efforts to get the tribunal accept his petition against the outcome of the March 9 governorship election in Akwa Ibom State proved abortive, including protest letters written to the President of the Court of Appeal against the refusal of the tribunal to accept his petition.

In the suit dated June 10 but filed June 11, the plaintiff averred that the Registrar of the Akwa Ibom State Gubernatorial Elections Petition Tribunal had on March 30, 2019, refused to accept his petition against the governorship poll on the grounds that "it would take some minutes to process a Remita payment and obtain a receipt and that before accomplishing that, the time would have lapsed into the next day being March 31, 2019."

But Otu insists that the decision by the tribunal to shut him out reveals part of a wider plot to prevent him from

bringing before the election panel strong evidence that would establish claim of rigging, substantial non-compliance with the electoral laws as well as other electoral malpractices that marred the governorship poll.

"Upon declaration of results of the gubernatorial elections in Akwa Ibom State, the applicant, a candidate in the said election under the umbrella of Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party ("ANRP") was dissatisfied with the results of the said elections declared on 11th March 2019 and consequently approached the Gubernatorial Electoral Tribunal Registry in Akwa Ibom State in the midnight of 30th March 2019 after confirmation from the 5th Respondent that same will be duly received at any hour of the said date irrespective of the time.

"Upon arriving the Tribunal Registry in the midnight of 30th March, the 5th Respondent made a summersault and declared that he will not receive any petition midnight of 30th March 2019. He stated categorically the he will not receive my petition, the reason being that it would take some minutes to process a Remita payment and obtain a receipt and that before accomplishing that, the time would have lapsed into the next day being 31st March 2019.

"As a matter of fact, myself and my counsel ended up haggling with Mr. Abubakar until the wee hours of March 31st 2019. We thereafter suggested to Mr. Abubakar that he should collect the Petition and indicate that same was received on 31st March 2019 if that would assuage his concerns, but Mr. Abubakar vehemently refused. He stated that in his own opinion that declaration of the gubernatorial election results in Akwa Ibom was done on 10th March 2019 and not on the 11th March 2019 and for that reason, the period of 21days allowed for the petition to be filed had elapsed despite the fact that he is not a witness to the tribunal neither is he a party to the adjudicatory process," he said.

The ANRP candidate said he accordingly challenged the power of the 5th respondent to make pronouncements



Otu

on the competence of a gubernatorial election petition at the registry, adding that the action was tantamount to usurping the powers of the judges of the tribunal. Otu disclosed that the attention of the registrar was further drawn to the fact that the date of declaration of result is an issue of fact which can only be determined at the hearing of the Electoral Tribunal, "but he remained so adamant in a manner that would suggest that he had a specific purpose to serve to my detriment."

Not satisfied, the plaintiff said he then wrote a letter dated April 1, 2019, wherein he petitioned the President of the Court of Appeal and made a passionate plea for the latter to intervene and direct the 5th Respondent to receive his petition. Otu said his letter was completely ignored, a development which then prompted him to pay a visit to the office of the President of the Court of Appeal to follow-up on his petition and have same treated, but the President of the Court of Appeal, "blatantly told the secretary to inform me that my presence was not welcome and no reason was proffered for this embarrassing treatment. My correspondence to the 1st Respondent dated 1st April 2019 as well as my Reminder Letter dated 19th April 2019 are hereby attached as Exhibits A and B respectively".

He added, "Though I have substantial evidence to show that the gubernatorial election result in Akwa Ibom was announced on Monday March 11, 2019 and that my petition is competent, I have been completely shut-out by the actions or inaction of the respondents.

"It is therefore in the interest of justice that the applicant is granted the reliefs prayed for in this application."

The issues he has therefore brought before the Federal High Court are; "Whether the persistent refusal by the respondents to cause the applicant's Election Petition presented at its registry to be received and duly treated, constitutes a violation of his civil rights under Section 133(1) of the Electoral Act 2010(As Amended) and constitutes a grave infringement of the applicant's rights to fair hearing

guaranteed under Sections 36(6) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended).

"Whether the refusal to applicant's electoral petition, for filing so as to afford him the opportunity to challenge the validity of the electoral process is not inimical to every sense of justice, public policy, due process, equity and good conscience as well as a gross abuse of the electoral process.

If the above issues are resolved in his favour, he would be asking the court for a declaration, "that the persistent refusal by the respondents to cause the applicant's petition to be received and duly treated, constitutes a grave infringement of the Applicants rights to fair hearing guaranteed under Sections 36(6) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended.)

"A declaration that the gubernatorial elections held in Akwa Ibom State on 9th March 2019 was marred by illegality and substantial irregularities and the result thereof ought not to stand.

"An order directing the Independent National Electoral Commission to conduct fresh elections into the office of Governor of Akwa Ibom State within 30days of the date of the judgment of this Honourable Court

"And for any such further or other orders as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.

Otu said his resolve to approach the normal court instead of the election tribunal is to seek redress on the breach of his fundamental rights by the respondents.

He submitted that the Federal High Court has the jurisdiction to entertain issues relating to breach of fundamental human rights and urged the court to grant the declaratory reliefs sought on the motion on notice.

Although the matter was earlier assigned to Justice Ahmed Mohammed and was listed for mention July 3, however the court did not sit on the scheduled date.

It was however learnt that the suit would be reassigned to a vacation judge due to the time bound nature of electoral matters.

Okafor's Fate in Okigwe South Hangs in the Balance

Amby Uneze writes that the circumstance under which the Independent National Electoral Commission withdrew the Certificate of Return (CoR) earlier issued to Hon. Chike Okafor who was declared winner of the House of Representatives election for Okigwe South Federal Constituency is still clouded in controversy

To the electorate in Obowo/IhitteUboma/Ehime Mbano Federal Constituency that makes up the Okigwe South Federal Constituency of Imo State, Hon. Chike Okafor actually gave good account of himself during his 2015–2019 representative period in the Green Chamber of the National Assembly. He went to Abuja and made his Federal Constituency proud. His free medical outreach brought succor to numerous constituents who depended on the regular programme to treat various ailments.

Informed by this quality and effective representation, a good number of his constituents had no regrets working proudly for the process that would return him to the House in the 2019 election to repeat, and possibly surpass the performance in his first term. Though his victory was not pronounced in the first ballot, it took the re-run election of 9th March, 2019 to confirm that Chike Okafor actually won the election in the first instance, hence his certificate of return was delayed a while.

Okafor was one of the leading hopefuls for the Speakership position of the House of Representatives. Poised to return as the only ranking member on the political banner of the All Peoples Congress (APC) from the South-east, this dream was truncated when the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) surreptitiously withdrew his certificate of return and handed it over to the candidate of Accord Party, Hon. Emeka Nwajuba. Nwajuba had lost in the primaries to Okafor, before dumping the party and switched over to Accord.

The problem started when one Mrs. Chioma Maryann Uzoma sued the APC, Nwajuba and INEC as 1st, 2nd, & 3rd defendants respectively in suit no FCT/HC/CV/423/18. In that suit, she challenged the process of APC primaries and finally asked the court to nullify the APC primaries for Okigwe South Federal Constituency and restrain the APC from submitting the name of Nwajuba and also to restrain INEC from accepting the name of 2nd defendant (Nwajuba) from the APC.

When the matter came up during submission of candidates, INEC and APC agreed that the suit challenged the nomination of Nwajuba. In the place of Nwajuba, the APC nominated Okafor. It was resolved at the time that the suit did not in any way restrain APC from submitting the name of Okafor or INEC from rejecting his nomination. Ordinarily, that should have been the end of the matter.

But Nwajuba, having cleverly initiated the first suit through a phantom identity, went on to file a new suit against INEC in suit NO/CN/1424/2019 between himself as Hon. Chukwuemeka Nwajuba Versus INEC in a Abuja High Court not even in a Federal High Court and prayed through originating summons as follows;

"A declaration that the votes purportedly awarded to the APC by the respondent in the main election into the Okigwe South Federal Constituency on 23rd of February 2019 and at the rerun elections held on 9th March 2019 are null and void, that the said party (APC) having participated in the said election without the conduct of primaries was against section 140(2) of the Electoral Act 2010 as amended.

"An order of mandatory injunction



Okafor

directing the respondent to issue a Certificate of Return in respect of the election into the Okigwe South Federal Constituency held on 23rd February and 9th March 2019 to the claimant." It is therefore based on the judgment in suit NO/CN/1424/2019 that mandated INEC to issue Nwajuba a Certificate of Return.

Strikingly, the suit NO/CN/1424/2019 was filed on the 26th day of March, 2019. While the announcement or declaration of result of the Okigwe South Federal Constituency Election took place on the 23rd day of March, 2019.

Based on the foregoing, it is therefore clear that the suit NO/CN/1424/2019 which INEC relied on to issue new certificate of return to Nwajuba is not a pre-election matter. It is a post-election matter filed after INEC had declared the result of the 9th March 2019 Okigwe South Federal Constituency Election in which Chike Okafor won.

According to Kissinger Ikeokwu, an Owerri-based legal practitioner, "It is also clear that no court in Nigeria has powers to entertain a post-election matter after someone has been declared the winner except the relevant Election Petition Tribunal (EPT). The decision of the Abuja High Court on suit NO/CN/1424/2019 is clearly an abuse of court process.

"INEC having declared a winner on the 23rd March, 2019, the suit filed on the 26th March, 2019 makes the suit a post-election matter and not a pre-election matter as was erroneously construed or interpreted by many."

The reason cited by the FCT court to issue the certificate of return to Nwajuba, the candidate who came second in the election was that Okafor who was not even a party to the case ab initio was declared ineligible in absentia to contest the said election, and then the Electoral Act would have played a role in resolving the matter.

Referring to the submission of Prof. Nnamdi Obiaraeri on the matter, "A detailed look at the provisions of sections 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended which call for consideration

on this controversial issue of who is the rightful winner of the Okigwe South Federal Constituency, INEC lacks the powers to issue a Certificate of Return in the circumstances of this case.

Expressly, section 140(2) of the Electoral Act, 2010, as amended provides that:

"Where an Election Tribunal or court nullifies an election on ground that the person who obtained the highest votes at the election was not qualified to contest the election or that the election was marred by substantial irregularities or non-compliance with the provisions of this Act, the Election Tribunal or court shall not declare the person with the second highest votes or any other person as elected, but shall order a fresh election."

Obiaraeri maintained that it has been legally interpreted that, the word "shall" is mandatory and compulsory, adding "too many decisions of the Supreme Court of Nigeria support this view.

"Thus, where the provision of section 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended is successfully activated, the compulsory thing that must be done by the Court or Tribunal is to order a fresh election.

In view of the foregoing, assuming without conceding that Okafor was not qualified ab initio to contest the election into the Okigwe South Federal Constituency by reason of the court order(s) or judgment(s) being bandied around, by reason of the express provisions of section 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended, this action of issuing a fresh Certificate of Return by INEC is illegal and manifestly unsupportable.

"Under our extant laws, where a court forms an opinion that the person who won an election was ab initio not qualified to contest the election, the only option open to the court is to order a fresh election.

"This, with due respect, is the kernel of Nwajuba's grouse against Okafor and in the event that he succeeds, as it appears to be the case until upset on appeal, the relief open or available to him or any other person under our Electoral Laws before a court or tribunal is order of a fresh election.

"We are still at a loss over what court or tribunal would have ordered the issuance of a certificate of return instead of ordering fresh election if it was satisfied that the person who won an election was not qualified to contest the said election?

"It must have been from this order or judgment that INEC purportedly derived its power to administratively issue a certificate of return in total disregard to the applicable provisions of section 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended to this case.

"We must accentuate that the above scenario in section 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended is radically different from the inapplicable provisions of section 140(3) of the Electoral Act as amended which provides as that:

"If the Tribunal or the Court determines that a candidate who was returned as elected was not elected on the ground that he did not score the majority of the valid votes cast at the election, the election Tribunal or the Court, as the case may be, shall declare as elected the candidate who scored the highest number of valid votes cast at the election and satisfied the requirements of the Constitution and this Act."

"Uzukwu Patrick Esq has correctly explained that, "Whereas section 140(2) of the Electoral Act as amended deals with situations where the candidate with the highest votes was ineligible or not qualified to contest the election, section 140(3) of the Electoral Act as amended looks at a scenario where the candidate returned as elected though eligible and qualified to contest was not elected with the highest numbers of valid votes.

Section 140(2) of the Electoral Act says there shall be another election while 140(3) of the Electoral Act says the candidate with the highest number of valid votes shall be declared elected," he stated.

In view of the foregoing, Nigerians need to know where INEC derived its power to issue a certificate of return to Nwajuba in the peculiar circumstances of this case?

FEATURES

Group Features Editor: Chiemelie Ezeobi
Email chiemelie.ezeobi@thisdaylive.com, 08152252325

An Albatross on Sule's Neck

Igbawase Ukumba reports that the refusal of the former Governor of Nasarawa State, Umaru Tanko Al-Makura, to agree to an out-of-court settlement after he demolished Breeze FM 99.9, a privately-owned station in Lafia, has become an albatross on the neck of the incumbent, Governor Abdullahi Sule

It was in the early morning of Saturday, May 20, 2017 that the only privately owned radio station in Lafia, the Nasarawa state capital, Breeze 99.9 FM was reduced to rubbles by the Nasarawa State Government for allegedly violating land laws and posing health hazards to residents living close to it.

Paradoxically, the then governor of the state, Umaru Tanko Al-Makura, had inaugurated the broadcast outfit on March 31, 2017 before pulling it down in less than two months of its broadcasting.

But the Executive Director of the demolished Breeze FM, Dr. Nawani Aboki, dismissed the reasons fronted by the state government for destroying the infant radio station as not true. Aboki therefore insisted that government destroyed the outfit for giving the organised labour in the state a voice to air their views over a two months old workers' strike in the state.

"The state government demolished the station for not supporting the ruling party and giving the organised labour a voice to air their views over the ongoing strike by civil servants in the state," the executive director of the radio station disclosed at a press conference.

He claimed that broadcast equipment worth over N61 million were destroyed during the demolition of the Breeze 99.9 FM, Lafia, even as he added that the worth of the structure has not been quantified.

NBC's Position

Nevertheless, the North central Zonal Director of the Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Franca Ayetan, who had led a team from the NBC on a verification visit to the destroyed station said demolition of the structure housing the radio station was shocking and unbelievable. She added that the development was surprising because the station followed due process in obtaining its broadcast license.

Ayetan said: "On March 31, 2017 when we came to commission the station, the state government was fully represented. If government had raised any reservation then, as a regulatory body, we would have waited a little before inaugurating the station. But none was raised."

Stakeholders React

Sympathising with the management of the Breeze FM, National President of Alago Development Association, Mathew Akwe Doma, lamented that the demolition has ridiculed the state and Nigeria in the eyes of the international observers.

"Despite concerted efforts by well meaning Nigerians to entrench democracy with fairness and justice, others are busy tarnishing the image of the country and taking the nation backward," the Alago socio-cultural association president maintained.

Similarly, the National Vice President of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Zone-D, Wilson Bako, condemned the demolition of the Breeze FM in Lafia. He said the state government has no justification for its action because the organisation was duly approved.

Also, Chairman of the Nasarawa State Council of the NUJ, Dogo Shamma, appealed to the Nasarawa State Government to settle with the management of the demolished Breeze FM.

In his reaction, the immediate past senator representing Nasarawa South Senatorial Zone, Suleiman Adokwe, described demolition of the Breeze FM by the Nasarawa State Government as suppression of enterprising skills of young men in the state, adding that it is abominable.

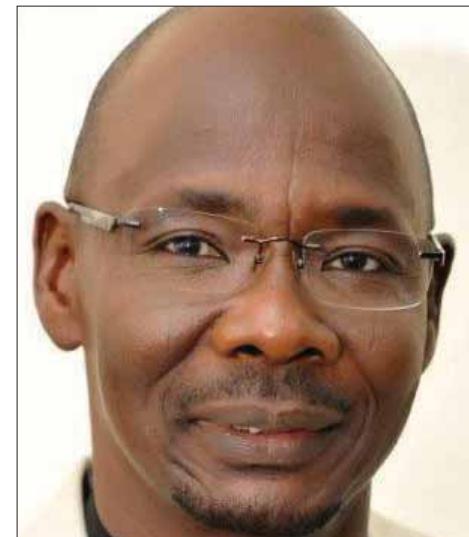
According to the erstwhile federal lawmaker, "the demolition is an act of demi-god. I expected that a government that has come to power through these kinds of injustices, one would



Demolished Breeze FM



Al-Makura



Sule

have thought that it would have been in a forefront of ensuring that government is fair to any enterprise that is trying to grow in the state.

"We condemn it in total, it is an anti-democracy and it is intolerance of divergence views and this must not continue. We call on the government to withdraw its steps to allow people to choose. Democracy is about choice, they can choose to listen to any media."

Adokwe therefore expressed disappointment that when a citizen of Nasarawa State who was trying to bring up an enterprise that would give people employment, the least that government could have done was to encourage this individual to turn the Breeze FM into a broadcast mogul and not to shortlist an effort of a young enterpriser.

No Regrets

But Ex-governor Al-Makura, while distributing relief material worth N300 million to 50 displaced communities in the state, had said that his administration did not regret the demolition of the radio station.

"I do not regret the demolition of Breeze FM station. I cautioned NBC to be wary of issuing certificates of approval to just anybody anyhow," he stated.

Redress in Court

Consequently, the proprietor of the Lafia base private radio station, Mr. Nawani Aboki, approached the Nasarawa State High Court to seek for redress by suing the then government of Al-Makura challenging the demolition of his Breeze FM.

However, during one of the hearings on the suit filed at the Nasarawa State High Court by management of the Breeze FM, Justice James Abundha, the Presiding Judge, adjourned the matter after the counsel to the state government, Shehu Usman, appealed for adjournment to enable the settlement committee get approval from Governor Umaru Al-Makura.

According to the state government's counsel, "the settlement committee had met and agreed on some terms to put to rest the lingering case, but the committee are yet to meet the governor and get his approval. I therefore

appeal for a short adjournment to enable us get the approval and report to the court."

Similarly, counsel to Breeze FM, Ocha Ulegede, did not oppose the motion for adjournment, adding that, "if at the next adjourned date they were still unable to secure the approval of the governor, we would go ahead with the matter."

Ulegede therefore urged the government to do something possible to put to rest the matter since they wanted the settlement.

Consequently, the then presiding judge, Justice James Abundha, adjourned the case to enable the settlement committee get approval from Ex-governor Al-Makura.

Win for Breeze FM

But with the refusal of Ex-governor Umaru Tanko Al-Makura to give approval to the agreement terms of out of court settlement to put to end the case of demolition of Breeze FM to rest, the proprietor of the demolished private radio station, Nawani Aboki, on June 7, 2019 floored Nasarawa State government and former governor, Umaru Tanko Al-Makura, in the Breeze FM case he instituted against the government over demolition of the radio station presided over by Justice Rose Soji.

Consequently, the Nasarawa State High Court sitting in Lafia slammed N67.3m fine on the Nasarawa State Government for demolition of the private radio station.

A breakdown shows the court slamming the sum of N50 million against the Nasarawa State Government as general and punitive damages and witchhunt. In the same vein, the court also awarded the plaintiff the sum of N17.3 million as special damage for demolition of his radio station by the state government amongst other damages.

Delivering the judgment, Justice Soji held that the demolition of the Breeze FM by the state government was a gross violation of the Nasarawa State law and that the structure housing the radio station, as claimed by the state government, was not an illegal structure.

The judge said the unlawful destruction of the radio station has caused huge financial and economic loss to the owner, adding that it has also caused the owner of the radio station public embarrassment, intimidation and serious psychological trauma hence she ordered the state government to make a public apology to the chief executive officer of the demolished private media outfit.

She held that the court was convinced by the available evidence before it that the plaintiff has substantially proved his case beyond reasonable doubt and hereby entered judgment in his favour.

Reacting to the judgment in an interview, counsel to owner of the Breeze FM, Ucha Olegede said the demolition of the radio station was unconstitutional, an act of wickedness and vindictiveness of Nasarawa State Government under Ex-governor Al-Makura.

He posited that the former Governor Al-Makura should change his attitude as he goes to the senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, just as he called on political office holders not to misuse power while in office.

Also speaking in an interview, counsel to the defendant, Ishaku Usman, who commended the judge for diligent judgement, however said they would determine whether to appeal the judgment or not when they go back to office.

On his part, Owner of the Breeze FM said: "Today marked another day where freedom and democracy has triumphed over anarchy. The judgment was for the freedom of the press in the world as press remains the pillar of democracy."

However, the onus now lies on the incumbent governor of the state, Abdullahi Sule, to either shoulder the burden of paying for an infraction he did not commit, as government is a continuous process, or refuse to play ball.

Buni's Race to Surpass Expectations

With just less two months in office, Governor Mai Mala Buni has shown that everything necessary will be done to keep Yobe State on track to make more progress and improve on the people's living conditions, **Abdullahi Bego** writes

Governor Mai Mala Buni's speech at the opening of the two-day education summit that his administration organised last week to think out-of-the-box and suggest solutions to some of the challenges in Yobe's education sector – education being always a work in progress – speaks to his leadership as an introspective person who wants to get things done by carefully weighing the options and bringing all-hands-on-deck.

Widely praised for its straight-talk, the speech pointed the experts, resource persons, traditional and community leaders and other stakeholders gathered for the summit in a clear direction – to find practical and implementable ways on how Yobe's children could have improved access to qualitative education. The speech also confirms his determination to 'walk the talk'.

A little under a month earlier, the governor, who declared a state of emergency in Yobe's education sector, had pledged to work with every person and entity – and deploy every resource available – to build on Yobe's education sector and place it on a sounder footing. The Summit was a methodical, broad-based approach to reaching that goal.

It also set the tone for what is to come under his watch in the months and years ahead. Separate and apart from what we know an approach like the summit that held could achieve, the people of Yobe State are getting increasingly assured, through his take on various issues so far, that Buni would truly be the leader they hoped for – a determined and dedicated public servant who, like his predecessor, would always prove that 'words must mean something'.

The governor has said, for example, that Yobe's next level accomplishments will be hammered into place on the anvils of continuity and consolidation. He has proceeded firmly to do that. In healthcare, water supply, agriculture, the civil service and other sectors vital to the day-to-day wellbeing of ordinary people, the governor has maintained – and is building on – the progress Yobe has made under former Governor Ibrahim Gaidam.

Governor Buni has also taken three broad initiatives that speak to the Yobe he has in mind for the next four years.

First, he has shown that to make progress on a more sustainable basis, Yobe's economic foundations must be strengthened and reinforced on the crest of its well-known comparative advantage – agriculture. By taking concrete steps to resuscitate the Yobe Flour and Feed Mills (a company that has a rice mill upgrade capacity), the Woven Sacks factory and the Yobe Fertilizer Blending company, Governor Buni has helped to enhance the agricultural value-chain in the state. With irrigation agriculture already making progress under his predecessor at the Nguru Lake and Mugura Garin-Gada, and the multiple irrigation sites he plans to support, it is only a matter of time before Yobe becomes the nation's food basket that it should be.

This will have significant impact on internal revenue flow and will positively affect Yobe's capacity to provide employment for its teeming



Buni

youths.

Second, the governor has shown that to move to the Next Level, Yobe must leverage on its partnerships and contacts with development partners both within and outside the country. In a meeting with the representatives of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in Abuja recently, for example, the governor has made clear that he will sustain all ongoing partnerships, continue to meet all counterpart funding obligations and will spare no effort to join hands with governmental and non-governmental organisations to bring about more progress to the state.

Third, Governor Buni has shown that over the next many years, Yobe would tap from the vast and relentless energy of its youths to move the state forward. In a meeting with a group of youths from across the three senatorial districts of the state recently, the governor has revealed that a Yobe Youth Development Summit is being contemplated to engage with them and each other, and develop a template that will go farther than before in addressing their needs and concerns.

One of those needs and concerns, the governor reckons, is a capacity for the youths to stand on their feet, and to be more useful to themselves, their family and community.

This is the reason that the governor, for one, is currently exploring a partnership with entities in the Kingdom of Morocco in the area of skills acquisition, among others, so that interested youths in the state could be trained in arts and crafts, fashion designing, and embroidery, including in how to make Kufa and Alkyabba that people use a lot in the North.

A meeting between Governor Buni and the Deputy Head of Mission of the Moroccan embassy in Abuja, Mr. El Houssaine Oustitane, which held recently and set the tone for the partnership, would be followed soon by visits to Yobe and Morocco at the technical level to avail officials on both sides the opportunity to make concrete inputs on how to go forward.

In Governor Buni's recent visit to and interaction with the students and teachers at the Yetim Care Foundation, an orphanage in Damaturu, the state capital, and the support that he provided to them, he has also shown that he deeply cares for what happens in the lives of orphans and the less privileged in society.

So, what does all this say about Governor Buni's desire to make a real difference in the lives of the people that he leads?

First, the idea that the governor is

nudging Yobe forward on the twin track of continuity and consolidation means that the state is likelier than most to make more progress within the shortest possible time. It means that resources and endowments that are already on the ground can be leveraged, enhanced and deployed to effect. This is clear from the directive he gave to government officials on what to focus on as the process begins to resuscitate those existing industries that he intends to breathe life into again.

Second, the governor's suave take on the issues that he's tackled so far – the idea of building on partnerships and tapping from the state's brightest minds to make progress as evidenced in the Yobe Education Summit – also clearly shows that he will justify the trust and confidence that have been reposed in him at every step of the way.

What is even more significant is that within a space of just a few weeks since taking the mantle of leadership, Governor Buni has shown that he will lead an administration in which everything necessary and possible will be done to keep Yobe on track to make more progress and improve on the people's living conditions.

-Bego is Director General for Press Affairs to Governor Buni



**PRINCE ABDULLATEEF
OLASUNKANMI
FAGBEMI,
SAN, FCIArb (UK)**

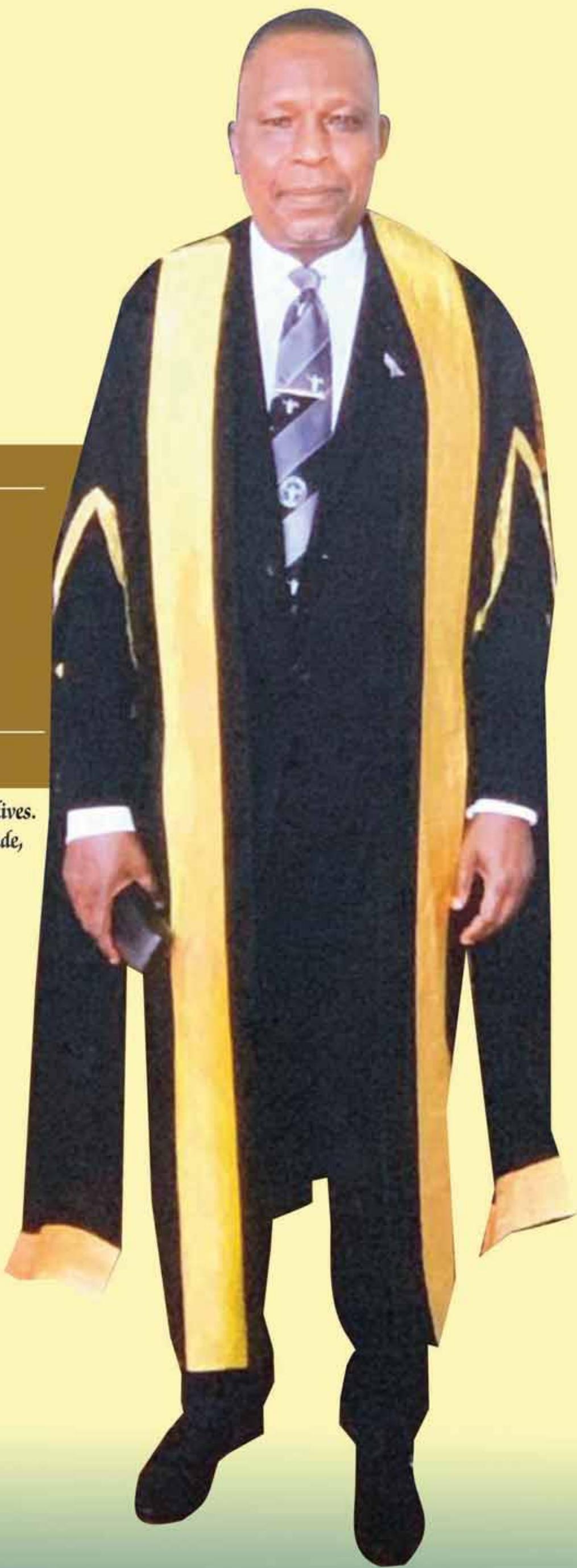
Birthdays are among the most celebrated events of our lives. It is always very special and comes with a lot of gratitude, good wishes and hopes of better days ahead.

May your birthday and every day of your life be filled with the warmth of sunshine, the happiness of smiles, the sounds of laughter, the feeling of love and the sharing of good cheers.

You are worthy of all admiration as you have earned Happy birthday to a National Treasure and Icon.

COURTESY:

1. Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN
(Executive Governor of Ondo State)
2. Chief Charles Akinlolu Olujinmi, CON, SAN
3. Yusuf Olaolu Ali, SAN
4. Adebayo O. Adelodun, SAN
5. Roland Itoyah Otaru, SAN
6. John Olushola Baiyeshe, SAN
7. Okunade Olorundare Isreal, SAN
8. Olasunkanmi Sanusi, SAN
9. Samuel Tomi Ologunorisa, SAN
10. Jibrin Samuel Okutepa, SAN
11. Abiodun Jelili Owonikoko, SAN
12. Ahmed Raji, SAN
13. Olatunde Adejuyigbe, SAN
14. Dr. Joshua Olukayode Olatoke, SAN
15. Teslim Olatunde Busari, SAN
16. Hakeem Olatunde Afolabi, SAN
17. Muiz Banire, SAN
18. Kehinde Eleja, SAN
19. Olusola Alex Oke, SAN
20. Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole, SAN
21. Johnson Oalekan Ojo, SAN



LAWYER

A THISDAY WEEKLY PULL-OUT

16.07.2019

ADELEKE V OYETOLA: SACRIFICING JUSTICE ON THE ALTAR OF TECHNICALITIES?



Ademola Adeleke



Gboyega Oyetola



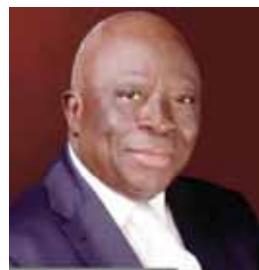
LAWYER
A THIS DAY WEEKLY PULL OUT
16.07.2019

ADELEKE VOYETOLA: SACRIFICING JUSTICE ON THE ALTAR OF TECHNICALITIES?

Ademola Adeleke Gbajega Oyetola

QUOTABLES



'You can never get anything in this country, no matter what programme you are doing, until you establish a Federal system now. You are wasting your time.... Restructure now....'

- **Chief Ayo Adebajo, Lawyer, Elder Statesman, Afenifere Chieftain**



'A group of people (the Islamic Movement Nigeria), went overboard and attacked Police Officers performing their duty...Officers have been shot....We showed restraint, in terms of not going the way the protesters went....The right to express yourself, does not mean the right to trample on other people's rights, to the extent of causing havoc and suffering to other people.'

- **Mohammed Adamu, Inspector General of Police**



The Purpose of an Interim Order of Forfeiture

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EFCC Marks 2019 AU Anti- Corruption Day with Road Walks

PAGE 5



SERAP: 'As Nigerians, we all have a right to a Corruption-Free Society'

PAGE 5



'Law Practice should be handled as a Business'

PAGE 6



Justice Karatu's Treatment: Brutal Assault on the Independence of Nigeria's Judiciary

PAGE 14

COLUMNIST



DR. MIKE OZEKHOME, SAN, OFR, FCIARB, PH.D, LL.D

Constitutional Democracy, means a system of government, in which political and governmental power, is defined, limited and shared by a grundnorm called the Constitution, which provides inbuilt checks and balances.

This column seeks to fiercely discuss constitutional, legal and political issues, with a view to strengthening, deepening and widening the plenitude and amplitude of democracy and good governance, without fear or favour.

The writer of this column, Dr. Mike Ozekhome, SAN, is a Constitutional Lawyer, Human Rights Activist, Pro-Democracy Campaigner, Notary Public and Motivational Speaker. He co-founded the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), Nigeria's pioneer human rights league, on October 15, 1987, the Universal Defenders of Democracy (UDD), in 1992, and with Chief Gani Fawehinmi and others in 1998, the Joint Action Committee of Nigeria (JACON), to push out the military. In his early days, he lectured at the University of Ife. Dr. Ozekhome is an author of many books. He is also a Special Counsel at the International Criminal Court (ICC), at The Hague.

Osun: When Justice is No Justice

Condolences

seize this opportunity to express my heartfelt condolences to the Fasoranti and Olakunri families, on the cold blooded murder of their beloved daughter, wife and mother, Mrs Funke Olakunri, last week. May her soul rest in peace with the Lord. Amen. I especially sympathise with Papa, Chief Reuben Fasoranti, who at such an advanced age of 93, has to experience this terrible kind of grief of losing a child. Only God can console him. Whether Mrs Olakunri was murdered by armed robbers or Fulani Herdsmen, Afenifere is correct - her death is one too many. It reiterates the fact that, our country is getting more insecure by the second, people are no longer safe to go about their daily business, and the Government has failed abysmally, in providing security for Nigerians, which is the primary purpose of Government (Section 14(2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) (the Constitution). **"Aa o ni ri iru e mo o. Gbogbo awon omo ti a mo ati wa won, aa o ni mo ati lo won o. Ami"** (We will not experience such a loss of a child again. All the children whom we saw coming into the world, may we never see their exit from it. Amen).

Food for thought

A few weeks ago - May 28th to be precise, I left you with some food for thought, after discussing the issue of the President of the Court of Appeal withdrawing from the Presidential Election Petition Tribunal. I concluded by saying that, though I applauded her Lordship for withdrawing, I had mixed feelings about the ruling of the Tribunal, dismissing the Petitioner/Applicant's application that Her Lordship recuse herself from the matter, even though the application was meritorious, and I wondered how justice would be meted out in the various Election Tribunals. I think I will extend my curiosity about outcomes, beyond Election Tribunals, to all courts and tribunals, generally.

Where do I start? I am not certain whether those who are of the school of thought that, Petitioners in election petitions are rarely able to win their petitions, are correct. But, I am certain that, these days, one is sometimes unable to follow the rationale behind some of the recent judicial decisions. Are cases now being decided on politics and personalities, instead of law and substantive justice? Do courts and tribunals hide under the cloak of technicalities when it suits them, instead of handing down decisions on the merits of the case? Or are the examples we have so far, too few to draw any conclusions?

In **Akpan v Bob 2010 17 N.W.L.R. Part 1223 Page 421**, the Supreme Court held inter alia that: **"Technical justice is no justice at all, and a court of law should distance itself from it. Courts of law should not be unduly tied down by technicalities, particularly where no miscarriage of justice would be occasioned.... Where the facts are glaringly clear, the courts should ignore mere technicalities, in order to do substantial justice". See also Associated**

Discount v Amalgamated Trustees 2006 5 S.C. Part 1, Okafor v Nweke 2007 10 N.W.L.R. Part 1043 Page 521.

Osun State: Adeleke v Oyetola

The most recent decision that comes to all our minds, is that of the Osun State Governorship matter, **Adeleke v Oyetola**. Many, including myself, believe that (i) Section 179(1)(a) and (b) of the Constitution, had settled the matter, in that, Senator Adeleke had fulfilled the conditions provided therein, to be declared as the winner of the election - the highest number of the votes cast, and the requisite spread in the Osun local government areas (ii) that the issue of 'inconclusive elections' is not accommodated in the Constitution, and no matter how well intentioned the concept is, it is unconstitutional, and the Constitution must be amended, if the concept is to be introduced into elections (iii) that the Constitution can only be amended via the provisions of its Section 9, and not by means of any legislation like the Electoral Act, or worse still, INEC Guidelines, and therefore, the returning officer's declaration of the Osun gubernatorial election as inconclusive, is illegal, and null and void, as was the rerun election.

Clearly, the main issues for determination in the Adeleke matter, were not addressed at the Supreme Court, that is, whether to uphold the decision of the Tribunal, which declared Senator Adeleke to be the winner of the election, declaring the rerun election null and void, and making a definite pronouncement on the constitutionality and correctness or otherwise, of the declaration of elections as inconclusive by INEC, to forestall anymore confusion about this new concept, with regard to future elections.

Even though I have not had the benefit of reading the full judgement of the Supreme Court yet, from the snippets we have seen, the Apex Court seems to have affirmed the decision of the Court of Appeal which overturned that of the Tribunal and gave victory to Oyetola, not by handing down a decision made on the merits of the case, but on a technicality - on the basis that Peter Obiora, one of the members of the Tribunal Panel, and who delivered the lead judgement, did not sign the attendance sheet on a specific day, meaning that he was absent from the proceedings on that day, which happened to be a day when it is claimed that, some major issues about the rerun election, were tabled. Peter Obiora, on the other hand, claimed he was present, but just didn't sign the attendance sheet that day. This bone of contention was not resolved in his favour by the Court of Appeal, or the Supreme Court, thereby raising the issue of jurisdiction. Can this decision, be said to have done substantial justice to the case, or was it a decision of technical justice?

By virtue of its own decision in **Akpan v Bob (Supra)** with regard to shying away from technicalities, what the Apex Court should have considered, in making its decision, was whether any miscarriage of justice was occasioned by the Tribunal's decision, with that absence of

Peter Obiora from a day of proceedings, if indeed, he was not there, or in the alternative, taken his word for it, that he was present, though he failed to sign the attendance sheet; and if there was no miscarriage of justice, the court should have gone ahead to decide the case on its merits, in order to do substantial justice to the litigants.

Code of Conduct Tribunal

When the former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Walter Onnoghen, was hounded out of office rather unceremoniously, and many of our colleagues complained that the procedure adopted to prosecute him was faulty, I recall that some others argued that, those who seemed to somehow be in support of Justice Onnoghen, were hiding behind technicalities, to disrupt or pervert the course of justice.

Similarly, when proceedings were instituted against Dr Bukola Saraki at the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT), the argument that the matter was wrongly instituted, was not sustained - that there was no Attorney-General in office at the time of the institution of proceedings, contrary to Section 24(2) of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act (CCBTA), which specifically provides for institution of such proceedings in the name of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, by the Attorney-General or those he designates from the Ministry of Justice. When my colleague, Stephen Kola-Balogun, in his column 'My Brief', raised the issue of Section 12(1) of the third schedule to the CCBTA - that the Chairman and two members of the Tribunal Panel were required to sign the book of proceedings at the end of trial everyday, nobody cared about technicalities then, that the tribunal wasn't properly constituted, as it had only two members, instead of at least three. The case went on, to its logical conclusion. There was no mention of whether the CCT lacked jurisdiction, since it was improperly constituted **Madukolu v Nkemdilim 1962 2 SCNL 341**.

Questions

Is there a trend developing, where, when a litigant is not the favourite of the Executive, technicalities are either employed against him or her, or overlooked, whichever will frustrate and harm the case of the less favoured litigant, in favour of the champion? Or are these decisions in a handful of cases, whether high profile or not, out of thousands of cases heard in all the various courts and tribunals, too few for us to draw conclusions of such a negative trend? I would like to believe that, the latter assertion is the correct position, as



ONIKEPO BRAITHWAITE

THE ADVOCATE

onikepo.braithwaite@thisdaylive.com
onikepob@yahoo.com

"ARE CASES NOW BEING DECIDED ON POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES, INSTEAD OF LAW AND SUBSTANTIVE JUSTICE? DO COURTS AND TRIBUNALS HIDE UNDER THE CLOAK OF TECHNICALITIES WHEN IT SUITS THEM, INSTEAD OF HANDING DOWN DECISIONS ON THE MERITS OF THE CASE?"

it will not only be troubling, but deplorable, for our country to be perceived as one in which injustice reigns.

Section 42(1) of the Constitution prohibits any form of discrimination against any Nigerian citizen on the basis of tribe, sex, religion, and political opinion, while Section 36(1) guarantees our right to fair hearing. Was Senator Adeleke, who is of the PDP, and not the ruling APC, discriminated upon, because of his political opinion and association? Can he be said to have been given a right to fair hearing, when his matter was aborted without proper determination, at the Apex Court? My dear colleagues, what do you think?

Dear Editor

Re: The Trials of Senathug Abbo

Dear Editor,

Excellent Article. He is a disgrace to the Senate. He's not remorseful at all.

D.O.

The political parties need to be responsible for the kind of representatives they produce, and once they are found to be unfit, they should replace them immediately, internally.

Mariam Usman

The man is clearly ill, and should be diagnosed or certified, as applicable.

A.A.

He is a ticking time bomb, and a danger to public safety, in more ways than one.

Y.S.

The story of Nigeria, as we speak. I look at the so-called hallowed chamber, and I feel like weeping. Good people will find it difficult to emerge in elections in Nigeria, because it is not in the interest of the powers that be. From what I know, it can only spiral downwards. I had thought

that this rickety democracy will get better, but it has finally dawned on me, that the foundation is too weak.

Funmi O

The Senate hearing before the Committee, was really more heartbreaking. He was neither remorseful, nor sober. It looked like he felt it was staged, just to fulfil all righteousness, as they normally do, and nothing comes out of it. When Senator Remi Tinubu mentioned suspension, he probably thought, 'might this be real?' and then, he lost it. For a second, it felt like he was going to get up, and give her a good slap too! How did we get to the point where thugs, paedophiles, thieves, and women batterers, are part of those who are in our National Assembly, in a country full of great people? May God help Nigeria.

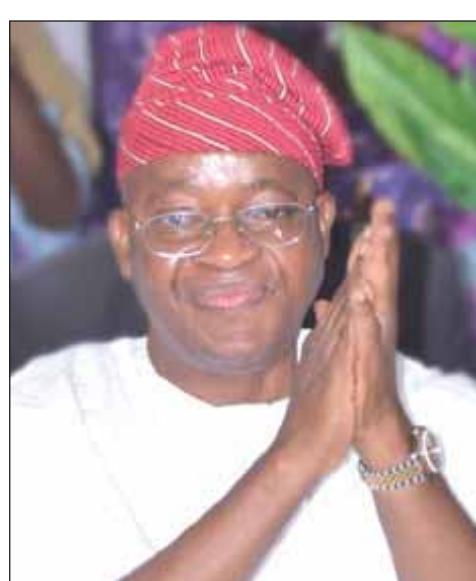
Y.W.

Excellent Article. We must all continue to call out people, who believe they can act with impunity.

S.A.



Senator Ademola Adeleke



Governor Adegbeyega Oyetola

The Purpose of an Interim Order of Forfeiture

Facts

The Respondent suspected that the sum of N2,421,953,522.78 was lodged into Account No. 2022000760 with Ecobank Nigeria Ltd, in the name of La Wari Furniture & Baths. The said amount, was suspected to be proceeds of unlawful activities. Further to this, the Respondent filed a motion *ex parte* at the Federal High Court pursuant to the provisions of Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act 2006, seeking an interim forfeiture of the said amount. The interim order was granted, as prayed. Dissatisfied, the Appellant appealed to the Court of Appeal, which dismissed its appeal. Further aggrieved, the Appellant appealed to the Supreme Court.

Issues for Determination

The following issues were raised for determination:

1. Whether Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, Cap 14 of 2006, violates or is in conflict with the provisions of Sections 33 and 44 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended).
2. Whether the proceedings commenced under Section 17 of the said Act for an order of forfeiture, is an action in *rem*, and an application for civil procedure as held by the Court of Appeal.
3. Whether having regard to the onus placed on the application under Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud Act of general civil proceedings at the Federal High Court, there were sufficient materials placed before the Federal High Court to have validated the orders made, as held by the Court of Appeal.

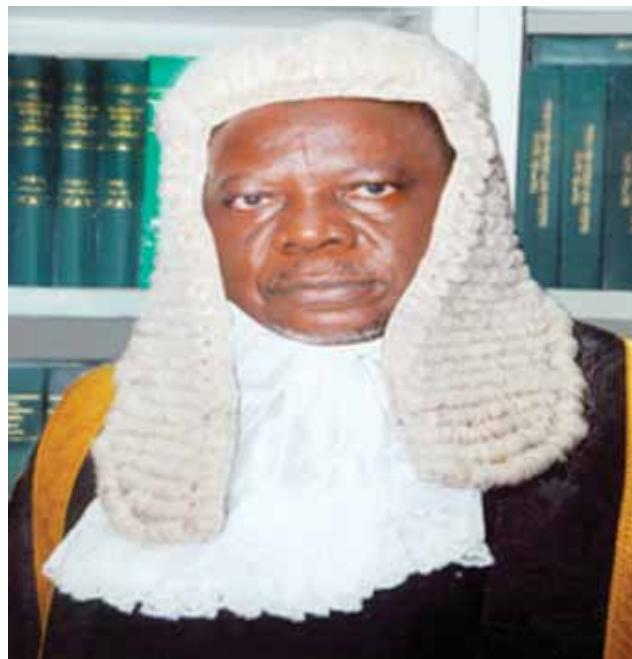
Arguments

On issue one, counsel for the Appellant submitted that, Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, Cap 14 of 2006 shows that, by its purport and intent, it is a penal legislation that purports to give the High Court unfettered power, not only to make an order of interim forfeiture against a citizen's property *ex parte*, but also to make a permanent order finally forfeiting the said properties to the Federal Government. He argued that, Section 17 of the Act is in conflict with Section 36(1) of the Constitution and the right of fair hearing, presumption of innocence, and the right to own property, and is thus null and void.

Conversely, counsel for the Respondent submitted that, the section has an inbuilt mechanism to ensure fair hearing, as it prescribed that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), should after identifying abandoned properties reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime, to first of all apply to court *ex parte* for an interim order of forfeiture, so as to preserve the properties from being dissipated. He argued that Section 17 of the Act also presupposes that there would be a final order after the interim order, and before the final order is made, the affected party is expected to come to show cause, why the interim order should not be made the final order. He submitted that, the provision sufficiently thus complied with the provision of Section 36(1) of the Constitution.

On issue two, counsel for the Appellant argued that, even if the proceedings under Section 17 of the Act are civil in nature, then the section is still invalid, to the extent that, what it prescribes is not a civil penalty, but a criminal punishment for forfeiture. He also submitted that, the opinion of the court below that the application at the trial court was an application in *Rem* is erroneous, because an application or proceeding in *Rem* has its own procedure.

On issue three, counsel for the Appellant argued that, the affidavit attached to the application was bereft of any sufficient material to warrant the order made by the Federal High Court. He argued that, the Respondent did not show that the Appellant got the money, in the circumstance which makes it to be proceeds of unlawful activities. He then submitted that,



Hon. Amiru Sanusi, JSC

In the Supreme Court of Nigeria
Holden at Abuja
On Thursday, the 15th day of March, 2019

Before Their Lordships

Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad

Mary Ukaego Peter-Odili

Kudirat Motonmori Olatokunbo Kekere-Ekun

Amiru Sanusi

Ejembi Eko

Justices, Supreme Court

SC.40/2018

Between

La Wari Furniture & Baths Ltd.....Appellant

And

Federal Republic of NigeriaRespondent

(Lead Judgement delivered by Hon. Justice Amiru Sanusi, JSC)

the failure of the Respondent to show germane particulars, should have led the court to refuse the grant of the application.

On the other hand, counsel for the Respondent argued that, both the trial court and the lower court made concurrent findings that the materials placed before the court, were sufficient enough to justify the grant of the application. He referred to the intelligence report received by EFCC with regard to the said Appellant's account, as well as the statement on oath of a staff of the bank. He submitted that, in the absence of any contrary evidence, the final order of forfeiture made by the trial court was lawful, and in order.

"...THE PURPOSE OF MAKING AN EX-PARTE ORDER, IS TO PRESERVE THE RES, PREVENT ITS DISSIPATION, PENDING WHEN ALL THE PARTIES CAN BE HEARD. THEREFORE, AS RIGHTLY HELD BY THE COURT OF APPEAL, THE INTERIM ORDER OF FORFEITURE UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE ACT, IS A NON-CONVICTION ORDER BASED FORFEITURE, AND THE PROCEEDING IS AN ACTION IN REM"

Court's Judgement and Rationale

On the first issue, the court held that, *the provisions of Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 2006, had stipulated that the Economics and Financial Crimes Commission should, after identifying an unclaimed property or properties reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime, to first apply ex-parte to the High Court for an interim order of forfeiture, so as to preserve the properties from being dissipated. The section further imposes a duty on the court granting the interim forfeiture order, to direct the applicant to publish the order, and notify anyone who might be affected by the order, so that the affected party would approach the court, to show why a final order of forfeiture should not be made. The court went further to hold that, in an application ex parte and the ensuing order if granted, the question of fair hearing does not come to play, as ex parte simply means, "in the absence of the other party", and in the case at hand, what was at stake is the preservation of the res. Relying on EASI DANGABAR v FRN (2014) 12 NWLR Part 1422, 575 at 607-608, the court held that, both the interim order and Section 17 of the Act are consistent with Section 36 of the Constitution, because they provide an opportunity to the person to make representations to the trial High Court, before it makes its final order affecting such person's rights and obligations.*

On the second issue, the court held that, an action in *rem* is one in which the subject-matter itself is sought to be affected, and in which the claimant is enabled to arrest a ship or other property, and to have it detained until the claim is adjudicated upon. The court placed reliance on RHEIN MASS UND SEE & ORS. v RIVWAY LINES LTD (1998) 4 SC 73. The court held that, *the purpose of making an ex-parte order is to preserve the res, prevent its dissipation, pending when all the parties can be heard. Therefore, as rightly held by the Court of Appeal, the interim order of forfeiture under Section 17 of the Act, is a non-conviction order based forfeiture, and the proceeding is an action in rem.*

On the third issue, the court held that, as a matter of practice, the Supreme Court is always hesitant to interfere with the concurrent findings of the two lower courts except in special circumstances, such as where the findings are perverse or there has been misapplication of facts or law. The court also held that, from the surrounding circumstances of the case, it was indisputable that the Respondent had placed before the trial court, and as rightly found by the Court of Appeal, sufficient evidence or materials, which would sway the trial court into granting the interim order of forfeiture. These evidence included evidence from the extra-judicial statement of a staff of Ecobank who was coopted to participate in the processes leading to the lodgement of the funds in the accounts opened by the Appellant, on the history of the lodgements right from the opening of the account, its operation and day to day transactions on the account, as well as how some of the funds were invested in favour of the Appellant. The court further held that, there was no evidence controverting the affidavit evidence adduced in support of the Respondent's motion *ex parte*. The Court of Appeal was also on the right track, when it unhesitatingly approved and endorsed the order of the trial court granting the said application, and the Supreme Court had no reason to interfere with the concurrent findings of facts.

Appeal Dismissed.

Representation

Chief Mike Ozekhome, SAN with Godwin Ijubor, Chinedu Maduba, Oluchi Uche, Osilama Mike Ozekhome for the Appellant.

Rotimi Oyedepo PDS, EFCC with Hadiza Afegbua PDS, EFCC for the Respondent.



BREAKFAST SEMINAR

L-R: Partner, Templars, Inam Willson, Group Head, Human Resource, Shahara Group, Ivie Imasogie-Adigun, Partner, Templars, Dayo Okusami; Senior Counsel, Labour and Employment, Binta Idonije; Human Resource, Director, Nigeria bottling Company, Olumide Sholanke and Head, Communication and Business Development, Templars, Walter Bossman at the Templars Interactive Breakfast Seminar on Outstanding and Contract Staffing in Nigeria

PHOTO: Dan Ukanma



NBA IKEJA LAW WEEK

L-R: NBA Ikeja Publicity Secretary, Mr. Charles Ajiboye, Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Roselyn Obakpolor, Chairman, Prince Dele Oloke, former NBA President, Mr. Augustin Alegbe, SAN, Alternate Chairman, NBA Ikeja Law Week Committee, Dr. Fred Odutola, Law Week Committee Secretary, Uju Peace Okeke and NBA Ikeja Secretary, Mr. Chinedu Ifezue during a courtesy visit of the Branch Exco and Law Week committee to Mr. Alegbe as part of activities marking the 2019 Law Week

EFCC Marks 2019 AU Anti-Corruption Day with Road Walks

Akinwale Akintunde

In commemoration of the 2019 African Union Anti-Corruption Day, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) last Thursday, embarked on road walks across States.

The EFCC officials in Lagos, led by the Zonal Head, Mohammed Issa Rabo and members of the civil society, took to street in their numbers, to sensitise the people on the effectiveness of the anti-corruption agency and the need for everyone to join in the fight.

Speaking during the road walk on behalf of EFCC Acting Chairman, Ibrahim Magu, the Lagos Zonal Head noted that, the African Union Convention on preventing and combating corruption was adopted in Maputo, Mozambique on July 11, 2003.

According to him, the African Union adopted July 11, as the African Anti-Corruption Day, adding that this year marks the 3rd edition of the African

Anti-Corruption Day with the theme: "Towards a Common African Position on Asset Recovery".

Rabo stressed the need to strengthen international cooperation amongst the anti-corruption agencies in Africa, for purposes of developing an African common position framework on asset recovery.

He said the government of President Muhammadu Buhari has particularly made the fight against corruption in Nigeria and the recovery of stolen assets, a key agenda for the administration.

"This has translated to significant recoveries of looted assets, that were acquired through mismanagement of public funds.

"It is against this background, that today's convergence of all relevant anti-corruption stakeholders (Domestic and International), to reflect on the challenges of asset recovery in Africa and solicit contributions and

support towards developing a framework for an African common position on asset recovery, is very important. Besides, there is need to create awareness, and engage the citizens in asset recovery efforts.

"All hands must be on deck, in response to the clarion call from across the world, to defeat corruption. We must all demand the culture of integrity and accountability, to win the fight against corruption.

"It is a settled fact that, corruption remains Nigeria's greatest problem; and, by extension, the entire African continent. The resources that should have delivered the good life to the majority of our people, have been cornered by the privileged few, leaving the entire nation underdeveloped", he stated.

Also speaking during the walk, Dr. Joe Okei-Odumakin said it was gratifying that the African Union has set aside

a day, July 11, to combat the scourge of corruption in Africa.

"It is good that this is the third edition of the African Union anti-corruption road walk, and the essence is to create awareness for Africa to unite and have a common ground on how illicit funds can be recovered.

"Africa, our great continent, is bleeding under the heavy weight of corruption. If Africa does not kill corruption, corruption will kill us.

"More than \$50bn of our resources, is being stashed away through illicit flows. The poorest people we can find in this world, are from Africa.

"Instead of us putting the feet of our youths on the pedestal of prosperity, they are being put on the pedestal of corruption. Hunger, war and terrorism, are as a result of corruption. But, we must all ensure that we keep our children alive", he added.

Appeal Court Sets Aside AMCON's Judgement, Orders Retrial

Akinwale Akintunde

Court of Appeal, Lagos Division, has set aside a judgement delivered by a Federal High Court, sitting in Lagos on May 30, 2017, in favour of the Asset Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON).

The Appellate Court nullified the lower court's judgement, on the ground that it did not comply with the principle of fair hearing.

In a unanimous decision, the three-man panel comprising Justices Mohammed Lawal Garea, Ugochukwu Anthony Ogakwu, and Gabriel Omoniyi Kolawole, ordered that the lower court should re-list and hear the case, and fined AMCON N100,000 as cost.

Delivering the lead judgement, Justice Ogakwu held that the Appellant in the suit, Suru Worldwide Ventures Nigeria

Limited's right to fair hearing was breached, when the trial court heard and determined AMCON's suit, being the alleged debtor and whose properties were the subject-matter of the suit, without hearing from the Appellant.

According to Justice Ogakwu, the trial Judge erred in law, when, without due regard to the relevant provisions of the Evidence Act, 2011, particularly Section 131(2) and Section 32 of AMCON Act, 2010 (as amended), and without any concrete evidence, particularly the Loan Purchase and Limited Services Agreement (Loan Purchase Agreement), granted AMCON's claims against the Appellants.

AMCON, in its defence, had claimed that the suit at the lower court was not seeking

for determination of any of the rights of the Appellant, and as such, the lower court had the requisite jurisdiction to entertain and determine the suit, in the absence of the Appellant, and that it was not an abuse of court process.

AMCON further argued that, its failure to attach the loan purchase agreement by which it acquired the Appellant indebtedness from the bank, did not vitiate the judgement of the lower court.

In his judgement, Justice Ogakwu traced the genesis of the case to facilities granted to the Appellant by the defunct Oceanic Bank (succeeded by Ecobank), and which outstanding debt was acquired by AMCON.

He noted that, the Appellant was not a party at the lower court, in the proceedings

which were the subject of this appeal, but that AMCON, through the judgement of court, took over its properties located at No. 86, Opebi Road, Ikeja, Lagos, No. 12, Reverend Ogunbiyi Street, G. R. A, Ikeja, and No. 22, Allen Avenue, Ikeja, Lagos.

The appellate court said the parties sued by AMCON at the lower court, were not party to the Deeds of Legal Mortgage, so they could not have assisted the lower court in the determination of whether the rights under the legal mortgage, had been crystallised.

"The parties sued at the lower court, the Inspector-General of Police, and the Commandant-General of the Civil Defence Corps, are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

SERAP Holds Public Hearing on the Use FOI Act in Education Sector

Peter Taiwo

According to a statement signed by SERAP's Deputy Director, Kolawole Oluwadare, the public hearing also aims to encourage and sensitise the citizens, on how they can deploy the FOI Act as a tool for promoting transparency and accountability in the education sector in Nigeria.

The event, which will be held at Radisson Hotel, GRA Ikeja, Lagos, will bring together, citizens who are affected by the poor delivery of public services, particularly in the education sector in Nigeria;

anti-corruption agencies and other public agencies; Lawyers; human rights activists; civil society leaders; the media and other stakeholders, such as trade unions, market women, taxi drivers' associations, student associations, landlord associations, artisans, spare parts dealers, and vulcanisers.

The SFU alleged that the Prince abused his position of trust as an administrator of his late father's estate, and defrauded his 26 siblings by fraudulently converting a N500 million property, from 2000 to 2017 in Lagos.

The prosecutor, Oluwafemi Olabisi, noted that Semasa had fraudulently sold a property belonging to the late king's estate located at Plot 1440, Ilesanmi St, Itire Road, Surulere, to a private individual.

He also allegedly illegally leased another estate property located at Plot 282 Ajose Adeogun St, Victoria Island, Lagos to Ecobank Plc.

The SFU Prosecutor also shed some light on Kazeem's alleged role as an accomplice, in defrauding the late king's estate.

According to the Prosecutor, the offences contravene Sections 383(1), 383(2)(f), 390(9), 421, 434, 465 and 467 of the Criminal Code, Laws of the Federation

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

SERAP: 'As Nigerians, we all have a right to a Corruption-Free Society'

Akinwale Akintunde

The Deputy Director of Socio-Economic Rights & Accountability Project (SERAP), Mr. Kolawole Oluwadare, has reminded Nigerians of their right to a corruption-free society.

Oluwadare, who said this last week at a town hall meeting organised by the SERAP in collaboration with UKaid, called on all Nigerians to get involved in the fight against corruption,

whether grand or petty corruption, adding that doing this will amount to standing up for our fundamental human rights.

The town hall meeting titled: 'Citizens' Participation in the Fight Against Corruption in the Police, Health, Education, Judiciary and Electricity Sectors in Nigeria', and held at the Ikeja Airport Hotel, Ikeja, was attended by representatives of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), National Orientation Agency, the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and

Fiscal Commission, Nigerian Bar Association, Ikeja branch, human rights activists, civil society leaders, the media, and other stakeholders, such as market women association, taxi drivers' association, and student associations.

According to him, "The cost of not standing up for our rights is huge. Our governments and lawmakers, have little incentive to fight corruption. Therefore, corruption in Nigeria won't simply disappear, without the citizens vigorously pushing

for this to happen. We know that those who make change, have to work for months or years to create change in the world.

"But as Nigerians, we have to start doing something in our various communities about corruption, and holding our elected and appointed public officials to account. By doing this, we will not only be standing up for our own human rights, but also for the human rights of all Nigerians—both present and future generations".

"We all know corruption, when we see it! Corruption is like a huge elephant, sitting on this country. Nigeria has lost over \$400 billion of public funds to corruption, since independence in 1960. Corruption has increased the cost of achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals in the country, including on education, health, water and sanitation.

"Millions of Nigerians cannot access or obtain essential public goods and services, because of corruption. The benefits of the country's natural resources are exchanged and shared among the politicians, the rich and well connected, excluding the less privileged, the socially and economically vulnerable, in our country.

"Mismanagement, embezzlement or diversion of public funds, for example, through 'security votes', constituency projects, 'welcome package' for members of the National Assembly, further reduces the government's resources available for development and poverty reduction spending.

"Yet, if basic public services are not delivered to citizens due to corruption, the State eventually loses its credibility and legitimacy", Oluwadare said.

Also speaking at the event, a former aide to President Muhammadu Buhari on Financial Crimes in the Federal Ministry of Justice, Mr. Biodun Aikomo stated that, "the biggest problem Nigeria faces is corruption, as resources meant for everybody are in the pockets of individuals".

Aikomo, who until recently, was Senior Assistant to President Buhari, said: "We must go beyond mere rhetoric and really join hands as citizens, to fight corruption. If we wait for the anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies to fight corruption, we may not achieve much progress".

WITNESS TELLS COURT HOW LATE BADAGRY KING'S SIGNATURE WAS ALLEGEDLY FORGED CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

of Nigeria 2004.

The SFU claimed that, while investigating Semasa for the alleged fraud, they had uncovered suspicious signatures purportedly signed by the late king in documents of CAJ Industrial Enterprises, the deceased's company.

In order to prove that the late king's signature on the company's document was forged, the SFU through its prosecuting counsel, Mr. Oluwafermi Olabisi, had subpoenaed the CAC as a witness.

Etim, a compliance officer with CAC, who testified as the thirteenth prosecution witness, told the court that he had brought before the court, copies of some CAC documents namely; Form CAC 2.1 (particulars of company secretary) Form CAC 3 (change of registered address) and Form CAC 7 (particulars of directors).

While being led in evidence by SFU counsel, Olabisi the CAC compliance officer, informed the court that, the late king's signature and

the Defendant's signature were appended in CAC forms, in the years 2011 and 2012.

"In form CAC 7, James Afolabi Ogungbe (the late king) is named as the first director, the second director is named James Kola Semasa (the first Defendant).

"On the column for remarks, it states appointed, and there are no directors aside the first and second directors.

"The signature on the second page belongs to James Afolabi Ogungbe, and the signature was signed on November 28, 2011. The first director James Afolabi Ogungbe signed the resolution; I arrived at that conclusion from Form CAC 7.

"Form CAC 2.1 is particulars of person who is the company secretary of the company or any person therein, it was signed by Mr. James Kola Semasa and Mr. James Afolabi Ogungbe on March 21, 2012.

"Form CAC 3 is the notice of situation or change of registered address, Mr. James Kola Semasa signed as a director in this form, and there is a resolution attached to same signed by Mr. James Kola Semasa and Mr. James Afolabi Ogungbe on November 24, 2016", Etim said.

During cross-examination by the defence counsel, Mr. Martin Oyigbo, Etim reiterated that though he was not a signature or handwriting expert, as a legal practitioner and compliance officer, he was very conversant with the documents he presented before the court.

The witness also emphasised that, the signatures in all the CAC forms he presented before the court, were consistent and the same.

Following Etim's testimony, Olabisi informed the court that, the SFU would be closing their case against the Defendants.

Justice Taiwo has adjourned the case to October 16 and 17, 2019.

APPEAL COURT SETS ASIDE AMCON'S JUDGEMENT, ORDERS RETRIAL

definitely not in a position to proffer any information as to the state of the mortgage debt. There was a lot that could have been attained in the judicial and judicious determination of the matter, if the Appellant had been made a party, and given a hearing in the matter.

"The Appellant, was not given the op-

portunity to be heard. The Appellant only became aware of the suit, when execution of the lower court judgement, was levied.

"The Appellant is a proper and desirable party, and the entire proceeding and judgement constituted a manifest breach of the Appellant's right to a fair hearing.

"The appeal being meritorious, succeeds. The decision of the lower court is set aside, and the case is remitted to the lower court for hearing de-novo, with the Appellant as a party. The Appellant is entitled to the sum of N100,000 as cost of this appeal", Justice Ojakwu held.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

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In his words, "Every African Country needs a Barinaada."

That endorsement via his website and Facebook page, was a game changer for my business. It had a domino effect on my brand, because that glorious mention opened the doors for bigger opportunities, my client base increased with quality clients, I got a series of invitations to speak at both physical and virtual summits, and also it reinforced my authority status as a legal consultant to small business owners, among other things.

This event, for me, remains my most memorable experience yet.

Who has been most influential in your life?

I would say my husband, Alex Iheanacho, has been my mentor from day one, since I started my journey on this path. Although he is not a Lawyer, he understands that the vision is to build an unconventional law practice. He has been most supportive, and helps me a lot with the techy aspect of my business as well.

I know the question requires just one name, but, if I may add another, my father has also been a very influential person in my life. He had his doubts about my choice of practice in my early days, but, today, he is my number one fan, he believes in me a whole lot, and that too, is a source of encouragement.

Why did you become a Lawyer?

The first time I wrote my Jamb exam, I chose English language and Mass Communication and the school was University of Ilorin. Even though I had a very high score at the Post Ume, I was still not admitted that year.

Prior to taking that exam, I'd had a dream

where I was either matriculating or convoking as a law student or law graduate (that part of the dream wasn't very clear).

So, when I took the exam that first time and I wasn't admitted despite my very high score, I was so disappointed because the next year when I did the Jamb again with a different school, of course, I was given the admission to study law, and that's how my journey as Lawyer started.

What would be your advice to anyone wanting a career in law?

There is a business side to every profession, and that includes law, as well. You would have to decide early on, what you want as a Lawyer. Whatever you decide, whether you are in a law firm or on your own, or whether you are active in litigation or not, you cannot take away the element of hard work.

So, if you are like me, you would have to learn the amazing power of consistency, and showing up every day. Anyone wanting a career in law must understand that, there is nothing like overnight success, and that sometimes, overnight success can be as long 10 years of consistency in value delivery.

If you had not become a Lawyer, what other career would you have chosen?

If I had not become a Lawyer, I probably would have ended up as a businesswoman. I have always loved business.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

We aspire to become the number one SME Inclined Law firm, in Africa. Our client base will have increased exponentially, Barinaada Legal would literally be on the lips of every business owner, as the go to law firm for small business owners. In ten years' time, I would have built a strong formidable brand for Barinaada Legal that is franchise-able, and can be replicated anywhere in Africa.



Barinaada Bema Alexander

What was your worst day as a Lawyer?

My worst day as a Lawyer, was going to court one day and after sitting through the long bar list and series of cases that were set aside for judgement, it finally got to my turn, only to discover that, neither the Respondent nor the Respondent's counsel, were in court. We got an adjournment, but a very long one. That experience reminded me again, why I find litigation a bit tiring, because of the series of adjournments even for cases that are just listed for mention.

What is your most memorable experience as a Lawyer?

Precisely on the 12th day of January, 2019, the very Dr. Strive Masiyiwa 8th richest man in Africa, and the richest in Zimbabwe, recognised me for my contribution towards helping SMEs have access to legal services in Nigeria,

TALKING CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

DR. MIKE OZEKHOME, SAN

SMS only to 08098898888



Democracy and Oligarchy: The Missing Bond (Part 5)

Introduction

or the past two weeks, we have been x-raying the missing links between democracy and autocracy. So far, we have dissected this form of government (Autocracy) in a way, and have shown its limitation vis-a-vis democracy. For instance, the people are helpless against an autocrat, who dominates them with power and force. Today, we shall conclude same. Thereafter, we shall commence and conclude another form of government, Oligarchy.

Autocracy (Conclusion)

Autocratic governments are not the most efficient, or effective type of government. Nor are they the best. Autocratic leaders often don't take the best interest of their subjects into account, when passing or implementing laws. As a result, many of the events that occur, have a negative effect on the people living in that country.

Meaning of Oligarchy

Oligarchy is a form of governance, in which administrative power is vested in a few people in the society. The class of people in power is distinguished by wealth, family ties, nobility, military or religious control. The control of oligarchic states, is passed from one generation to the other, although inheritance of the family wealth is not necessary. A majority of oligarchies are known to be tyrannical, relying on the submission and obedience of the public. Oppression is used, to subdue those who rise against the state.

History of Oligarchy

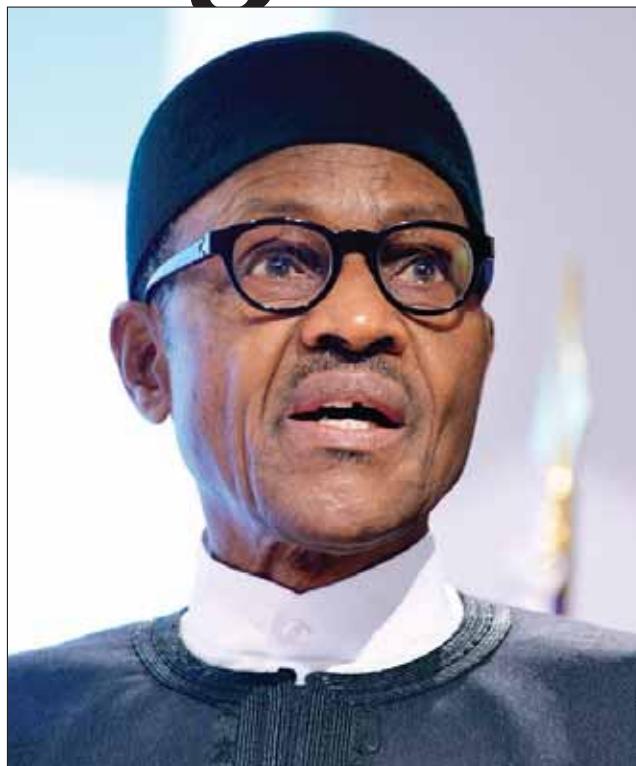
The term "Oligarchy" was pioneered by Aristotle, to refer to the rule of the rich. As far back as the 600s BCE, Greek city-states sported aristocracies in Sparta and Athens. Moreover, another antiquated example is Venice during the 14th century, where rich nobles called "Patricians", controlled all the financial and political affairs of the city-state.

But, Greece was not the only one - Russia has long been considered an oligarchy, up until 1991. Many have argued that, Russia still practices it. In fact, all communist regimes could be considered oligarchies, where the few in power make executive decisions for the rest of the country or regime - often for their personal benefit or agenda. Throughout the Soviet Union, an oligarchy was in place to manage affairs, often suited mostly for the most powerful and wealthy. And, as countless publications including The New York Times have claimed, the Russian oligarchy is alive and well.

Today, the system is better known as Plutocracy. A majority of today's de Jure democratic governments, are de facto oligarchies, since they are ruled by a small group of people from powerful and influential families, with shared interests. These groups of people spread power and elect leaders from among themselves, in disguise of being democratic. Modern-day oligarchy might be mistaken for democracy, although it is not true democracy. In the fourth century BCE, Athenians revolted against the oligarchical government, and restored democracy by selecting government officers from large groups of adult volunteers. The Athenians even drew Judges and jurors from the public, and vested them with the power to provide justice and overrule the Assembly.

How is Oligarchy Formed?

Oligarchies are formed for many reasons, but, mostly



President Muhammadu Buhari

when an elite class (either those who are very skilled or informed in certain areas, very rich, or very powerful by other means), decide to take over control of a government or corporation.

In democracies, oligarchies are formed when the general population would rather trust those who pose to be better equipped to lead, than those in charge. Oligarchies could also be formed in a democracy, when the people aren't actively involved in government or are facing a crisis. Oligarchies could come into existence by usurping power of ineffectual leaders, including kings and tyrants.

Advantages of Oligarchy

One of the main pros of oligarchy, is that it puts power in the hands of people who are often experts, and can make informed decisions for the populous or company. It therefore, is more efficient than every single person being able to make decisions, and can often free up people to focus on their own work or lives.

Disadvantages of Oligarchy

There are plenty of downsides to an oligarchical government, or management structure. While oligarchies may free up others to focus on their craft or daily lives, they can tend to skew decisions and policies, to benefit themselves.

In that manner, oligarchies tend to increase income inequality, which helps the oligarchy grow in power and wealth. Along those lines, oligarchies can often manipulate the financial markets to their advantage, even if they are not natural, or do not comply with the rules of supply and demand.

Also, an oligarchy government can perpetuate bad policies, by keeping those who are similar to them in power, which can create an unhealthy corporate or government community.

Oligarchies Practiced as at Today

Several modern-day governments, are allegedly oligarchies in nature.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Anne Applebaum, even dared to call the President of United States of America, Donald Trump an oligarch, writing in the Washington Post that "**the real problem with Trump isn't that he is sympathetic to Russian oligarchs, it's that he is a Russian oligarch, albeit one who happens to be American.**"

Applebaum was critical of Trump firing his former campaign manager Paul Manafort, when Manafort allegedly had financial connections to Russian oligarchs. In fact, the Pulitzer Prize winner reasserted her accusation, due to how she believed the President to be "a rich man who aspires to combine business with politics, and has an entirely cynical and instrumental attitude toward both".

However, President Trump isn't the only one. Other notable oligarchies include, post-Mao China, when an oligarchy assumed control of the country. Saudi Arabia seems to boast of a similar government structure, with king Salman bin Abdulaziz appointing two of his sons to high positions, controlling oil prices and other major policies.

Some have argued that, the United States is actually an oligarchy. And, according to a study published in 2014 by Princeton University Professor, Martin Gilens, and Northwestern University Professor, Benjamin Page, some researchers believe so, too.

So, some researchers have concluded that, despite the democratic processes put in place to ensure an even balance of power, it may be the wealthy and elite who are the movers and shakers, in forming policy. And while this may not be conclusive evidence that America is actually an oligarchy, it is certainly worth further consideration.

It is a recurrent idea that, all forms of government are, in the final analysis, reducible to the rule of a few. Oligarchs will secure effective control, whether the formal authority is vested in the people, a monarch, the proletariat, or a dictator. Thus, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels insisted that, throughout capitalism, the key capitalists had controlled the government; they coined the dictum, the state is the executive committee of the exploiting class. The Italian Political Scientist, Gaetano Mosca, likewise insisted that a ruling class always constituted the effective oligarchic control. Vilfredo Pareto elaborated the idea, in his doctrine of the "elite". The modern tendency to analyse social patterns in terms of an "elite", although greatly reinforced by Pareto's theory, goes further back than Marx and Engels, who employed the term "elite" to describe the class-conscious communists, the leading group within the proletariat.

Michels' Iron Law of Oligarchy

If oligarchy could survive even the socialist abolition of private ownership of the means of production, then, of course, this makes the claims for the "iron law" all the stronger.

One of the most famous modern uses of the term, occurs in "iron law of oligarchy," a concept devised by the German sociologist Robert Michels, to refer to the alleged inevitable tendency of political parties and trade unions to become bureaucratised, centralised, and conservative. His reasoning was that, no matter how egalitarian or even radical the original ideology and goals of a party or union may be, there must emerge a limited group of leaders at the centre, who can direct power efficiently, get things done through an administrative staff, and evolve some kind of rigorous order and ideology, to ensure the survival of the organisation when faced by internal division and external opposition. Subsequent writers of various persuasions, have attempted either to expand on Michels' thesis, extending it to legislatures, religious orders, and other organisations, or to restrict or criticise the thesis, charging that the iron law of oligarchy is not universal, and that some unions and parties do maintain a viable system of democratic expression and governance.

Like it or not, most countries are run by a small group of people who dominate the national policies, controlling all aspects of governance and people's well-being. Throughout history, oligarchy has played a dominant force in all types of political systems and governments. Nowadays, representative government is an artifice, a wishful thinking, and a political myth, because deep down, the masses are under the dominance of a self-selected, self-serving few, who deprive the people from their rights.

The Position in Africa

This reflects the political situation in many African countries, across the African continent; the dominance of the very few in a society via the possession, control and management of economic, political, social, and religious resources of the State, use questionable means such as, corruption, fear, terror, education and intimidation, as a major weapon of control. This is particularly noted in Sudan, Egypt, Eritrea, and Nigeria.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"We must not tolerate oppressive government or industrial oligarchy, in the form of monopolies and cartels". (Henry A. Wallace).

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D I S C O U R S E

Adeleke v Oyetola: Sacrificing Justice on the Altar of Technicalities?

The recent Supreme Court judgement, on the Osun State Gubernatorial election between Senator Ademola Adeleke and Adegboyega Oyetola, has raised a lot of questions, as to whether substantive justice was reached in the case. As legal pundits continue to ponder over and interrogate the issues in the judgement, some have asked whether the Supreme Court took the place of the Osun electorate, and whether justice has not been sacrificed on the altar of legal technicalities. **Dr. Sam Amadi** and **Steve Austin Nwabueze** delve into the major issues in the Apex Court's decision, and its implications for the larger Nigerian polity



Senator Ademola Adeleke



Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, JSC



Governor Adegboyega Oyetola

The Supreme Court as an Electorate in Osun State

Dr. Sam Amadi

be conventional assumption, is that the court, especially the Supreme Court, is far removed from politics. The unconventional truth, is that the court, particularly the Supreme Court, plays politics. We have learnt that, the judiciary is the non-political branch of government. The two other branches of government- the legislature and the executive- are legitimately political and partisan. But, the judiciary, the undertaker of what the legal philosopher, Ronald Dworkin, called 'The Empire of Law', best operates as non- political, in order to retain the credibility to police the landscape of divided and contentious power. This conception of the political neutrality of the court and its non- partisanship, reinforces the truth or the illusion of liberty and freedom that characterise the 'Constitution of Liberty' as the Nobel Laureate in Economics, Frederick Hayek, described our liberal democracy.

When we say the court is unconventionally political, it does not mean that the Judges are partisan. It does not question the assumed neutrality of the Judges as such, although there may well be arguable grounds to discount the famed political or ideological neutrality of Judges. But, the real point about underscoring the political nature of judicial determination, is to show that the judiciary equally a political branch of government in constitutional design, and therefore, entitled to a political decision just like the other branches of government.

I will argue that, in the Nigerian political landscape, the Supreme Court's decisions on election cases prove that, like citizens and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the court is a voting block that ought to be factored in, considering the outcome of a political dispute. I argue also that, there is nothing wrong about the conception of a court as an electorate (in fact, this interpretation is required by liberal democracy), provided that is complemented with the theory of responsibility, which requires all political actors to openly show their hands, as well as their reasons.

The Theory of the Supreme Court as an Electorate: The Osun Case

I will illustrate the theory of the Supreme Court as an electorate, with the Osun governorship case, and other cases decided by the Supreme Court. What does it mean, to conceive the Supreme Court as an electorate? It means that, the decision that the Supreme Court makes in contentious political cases, is analogous to the decision that the citizen makes, when he goes to the polls to elect those who will exercise political authority.

At the Court of Appeal, a 4-2 majority of the Judges reversed the tribunal, on the ground that it was not properly constituted when it heard the case. The Court of Appeal found that, on the day that the evidence on the supplementary election was given, the Judge who read the majority decision, did not participate in the proceedings. Therefore, it could not have heard the evidence that lead to the decision. This means that, the court was not properly constituted to make a valid decision on the issue.

The Supreme Court majority of 5-2, upheld the decision of the lower court. But, the Supreme Court avoided deciding on the Appellant's contention, on the power of INEC to order rerun.

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The Supreme Court decided the Osun case, on what appears to be a mere technicality. This has drawn criticism from those who believe that, by basing its decision on a mere technicality of the appearance of one of Judges, the Supreme Court has unfairly awarded an election to a candidate who did not win the election.

The Supreme Court decision in *Adeleke v Oyetola*, mirrors the decision of the US Supreme Court in *Bush v Gore*, to the extent that it raises the question of its justice and its political legitimacy.

Just like in the *Bush v Gore* case, the position of the majority seems to have captured public imagination, and satisfied lay expectation of the justice of the case. In *Bush v Gore*, Justice John Paul Stevens, speaking for the minority, deprecates the views of the majority in these unsparring words, "Although we may never know with complete certainty, the identity of the winner in this year's presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation's confidence in the Judge as an impartial guidance of the rule of law".

In *Adeleke v Oyetola*, Hon. Justice Aka'ahs of the Supreme Court disagreed strongly with the majority, and slammed the election in these stinging words, "INEC is supposed to be an umpire, not a partisan group. For INEC to have pronounced the election inconclusive, showed that it has something up its sleeves. And, it advanced that through the rerun". Justice Paul Galinje joined Justice Aka'ahs, in ruling for the PDP.

How justified is the Supreme Court's resort to technicality, in resolving such an important political election petition cases. I will briefly comment on just a few of the decisions, before delving into the pith of this article.

Supreme Court Decisions

Since emerging from the shadows of its dark military past, Nigeria's Supreme Court has had a major highlight reel of case law principles, that have gone ahead to enrich our jurisprudence. To this end, we have been regaled with a potpourri of judicial decisions, ranging from the disappointing to the enriching. Expectedly, most of these decisions, emanated from seriously contested election petition cases. I will briefly comment on just a few of the decisions, before delving into the pith of this article.

Election Petition

In arriving at its decision, the Supreme Court construed Section 153 of the Electoral Act, to mean that the Commission may, issue regulations, guidelines, or manuals for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of the Act, and for its administration thereof. In simple terms, the Supreme Court accorded

Adeleke v INEC: Discordant Judicial Tunes and Dark Clouds of Technical Justice in Nigeria's Election Jurisprudence

Steve Austin Nwabueze

The Supreme Court of Nigeria, like that of every other legal system worth its salt, is steeped in a policy-making role, aside conducting its primary role as the judex in resolving disputes. As the Apex Court, it is always looked upon to show the way, when judicial interpretations from the courts below become blurry and fuzzy. Nigeria's well-documented dalliance with military rule has, in a way, affected the policy-making role of the Supreme Court. In some notable cases, the Supreme Court has stood tall and exhibited commendable judicial intrepidity by interpreting the law, fearlessly.

Two notable cases where the Supreme Court demonstrated commendable judicial activism are the cases of *Council of University of Ibadan v Adamolekun 1967 ANLR 225 SC and EO Lakamni and Ors v Attorney-General of the West and Ors 1971 1 ULR 201*. The Supreme Court was invited in *Adamolekun's case*, to interpret the provisions of Section 6 of Decree no 1 of 1966. The Supreme Court while upholding the government's power to make Decrees and Edicts, rejected the contention, that it was an ouster clause against its jurisdiction. In *Lakamni's case*, it brought down its judicial sledge hammer, in declaring the draconian Decree No. 45 of 1968, as null and void.

Justice Niki Tobi (of blessed memory) had in the case of *Omaju v Fed. Republic of Nigeria 2008 2-3 SC (Part 1) 1 @ 13 lines 15 -30* recognised the eminent position of the Supreme Court as a policy-making court thus:

"The appellate system, is there to correct mistakes of trial Judges. Where a mistake of a trial Judge does not affect the live issues, props or fundamentals of the matter, an appellate court will not allow an appeal.. This is because, technical justice, in reality, is not justice, but a caricature of it. It is justice in inverted commas, and not justice synonymous with the principles of equity and fairplay.

Caricatures are not the best presentations or representations".

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"THE ELECTORATES OF OSUN STATE IN 2019, AND THE UNITED STATES IN 2000, WILL OBVIOUSLY AGREE THAT, THE SUPREME COURT MADE THE CHOICE OF WHO BECAME GOVERNOR AND PRESIDENT RESPECTIVELY"

the exalted status of subsidiary legislation to that section, and dismissed Mr. Faleke's contentions.

The Supreme Court thoroughly deserved every commendation it got, on this decision. The Supreme Court had also taken the view that INEC was within its rights to conduct a supplementary election, as it is empowered by its electoral guidelines and manuals.

Next came the issue of re-run election, and this is where it got interesting.

This analysis is essentially derived from excerpts from the print and electronic media, and therefore, does not represent the writer's full grasp of the judgement. The writer hereby acknowledges his limited knowledge of the arguments canvassed before the courts, and the ratios thereon.

Adeleke v INEC – how the discordant tunes started

Factual Background to the consolidated appeals:

The PDP candidate in the September 22 and 27 elections, Senator Ademola Adeleke, filed a petition at the election tribunal to challenge the victory of Mr Oyetola of the APC. The main election was held on September 22, while a supplementary election was held on September 27 in seven polling units.

INEC, declared Mr Oyetola winner of the election, after the supplementary poll.

Senator Adeleke approached the tribunal, and invited it to nullify the election of Adegboyega Oyetola, and declare him the winner of the election. The Osun Governorship election tribunal ruled in Senator Adeleke's favour, and declared him the winner of the election. In a split judgement of two to one, the tribunal ruled that INEC was wrong to have ordered a rerun election. It nullified the rerun.

The Court of Appeal decision

But, in a swift move by the Court of Appeal, the intermediate court ruled that: "the tribunal was in patent error, when it set aside the rerun".

The appellate court noted that, the Judge who issued the majority decision at the

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THE SUPREME COURT AS AN ELECTORATE IN OSUN STATE

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case? To be fair to the majority in that case, one could argue that the decision was based on more than a technicality, since incomplete composition of a court or a tribunal is jurisdictional matter, that vitiates the competence of the court to judicially determine a dispute. The competence of the court based on its complete composition, has been recognised as a jurisdictional matter. As recent as 2015, the Supreme Court held in **PPP v INEC (No.2) 2015 8 NWLR Part 1491 Page 251** that when the tribunal is not properly constituted in the essence that one of the members of the tribunal did not sit and there was no quorum, then the court is not properly constituted. The tribunal lacks jurisdiction, and its decisions are void.

From the prism of jurisdictional defects, a sympathetic view of the Supreme Court dismissal of the Adeleke's appeal, is that it is more than technicality. This is substantive matter. The decision of the tribunal, suffers from jurisdictional defect. This position could be arguable and perhaps credible, but the way the Supreme Court took its decision - the issue of whether Justice Peter Obiora was present in the court on February 6, 2019 when the issue of INEC's non-compliance with electoral guidelines was tabled, was contested by both parties before the Supreme Court. The case of APC, is that Justice Peter Obiora did not sign the attendance sheet for the day of proceedings. Justice Peter Obiora claims he participated in the proceedings that day, but failed to sign the attendance sheet. The majority did not reject this claim, or in any way found it to be untrue. It merely accepted the fact that, not signing attendance was enough to indicate the non-attendance. So, in judicial terms, the majority based the incompetence of the tribunal on the fact of non-signing of the attendance of the register, not on the improper composition of the tribunal. If it wanted its decision on improper composition, then it could have invoked its jurisdiction to resolve the conflict in evidence. What is clear is that, there is no evidence that Justice Peter Obiora did not participate in the proceedings, but rather failed to sign the attendance sheet. The minority is right to have queried the majority, for not basing the conclusion on non-attendance of Justice Peter Obiora on the record of proceedings, or on affidavit of the Respondent.

Two points arise, from the analysis. The first is that, the majority can justify its decision as not based on mere technicality. It held against the Appellant, because the tribunal that awarded it the result was not properly constituted, and therefore, lacked the jurisdiction to make the decision on INEC's non-compliance in ordering a rerun. The minority can justify its decision, that the Appellant won the election, on the ground that, there was no evidence that the Judge did not participate in the proceedings. And the onus to prove that contentious fact, lies on the Respondent who alleged it. Notwithstanding who is right about this different interpretation of the facts, this is patently a silly basis to decide a contentious electoral case.

Technicality v Substantive Justice

This raises the charge, of technicality overwhelming substantive justice. It is true that legal justice is differentiated from moral justice, by the resort to technical rules in the former. This difference separates legal positivists, from naturalists. To positivists, law is built around social facts of authority and rules. The court is bound to do justice, according to law. The law is built, around rules. Whether these rules are self-referent, or justified by appeal to natural rights and nature's reasons, is a battleground for divergent jurisprudential schools. But, howsoever these rules are derived, they are interpreted and applied to facts, as mental picture and ideological lenses constructed by Judges. Therefore, Judges' mentality and attitudes, become determinative. We can argue that, the Supreme Court Justices were not bound to dispose such an important case, on such a merest technical point. It could have decided it in at least two different ways, that could have conduced more to a substantive sense of justice.

This behaviour of the court in this case, is compounded by its refusal to determine the weighty issue of whether INEC can validly order a rerun, on the circumstances of that case. If the court made a definitive ruling on this vexed issue, it would have provided guidance to tribunals dealing with similar cases. The discretionary avoidance of the question, means that many cases will travel to the Supreme Court on the same issue; further compounding the Apex Court's case load troubles.

The majority ought to have heeded its advice, in other cases. In **Akpan v Bob 2010 17 NWLR Part 1223 @478-479** the Supreme Court counselled that: "Technical justice is no justice at all, a court



of law should distance itself from it. Courts of law should not be unduly tied down to technicalities, particularly when no miscarriage of justice would be occasioned. Justice can only be done in substance, and not be impeded it with mere technical procedural irregularities that occasion no miscarriage of justice. Thus, when the facts are glaringly clear, the court should ignore mere technicalities".

Earlier, Justice Pats Acholonu had argued, in **Associated Discount v. Amalgamated Trustee (1) 2006 5 SC Part 1 @ 37-38** that: "The courts are the products of the society. They are established to solve and give remedies to people, who complain of having been shortchanged or wronged somehow. Therefore, it should not allow undue technicalities likely to wreak havoc on the polity".

So, the decision of the majority can be challenged of failing the test of avoidance of mere technicality, to the extent that following technicality in the instance did not in any way provide remedies to the people. Contrarily, we can argue that, relying on mere technical irregularity in procedure, may have underserved the voters who are the real aggrieved persons, whose votes do not count whenever someone not validly elected, is declared the winner of a poll.

The Supreme Court: An Unusual Political Institution

But, this paper is even more concerned by the politics of the court in deciding election case, than the debate between technicality and substantive justice. The argument is that the Supreme Court in **Adeleke v Oyetola** acted typical of courts in political cases: they vote just like electorates. This perspective is based on what I call, the 'political theory' of the court. Political scholar, Robert Dahl, in his classic article, *The Supreme Court as a National Policymaker*, developed the idea of the court as a political institution. According to Dahl, "To consider the Supreme Court of the United States strictly as a legal institution, is to underestimate its significance in the American political system, an institution, that is to say, for arriving at decisions on controversial questions of national policy". Two points come out of this classical definition. First, is that, the Supreme Court is an 'unusual' political institution. The second is that, the Supreme Court is unusual 'political' institution. Read carefully, and you will see these statements are not tautological.

The Supreme Court is different from the other two political institutions- the executive and the legislature. This difference consists, amongst others, that it is not self-originating. The court has no effective advisory power, and no matter how intense the crisis ravaging society, the court cannot intervene except a citizen or one of the other political institutions, instigates its. This self-restraint, conceals the court's political effectiveness. But, the court is still a political institution, although an unusual one, because it decides political questions (Dahl tagged it 'question of national policy'), in a manner that indicates expression of choice. Another reason the court is an 'unusual' political institution is, as I argued elsewhere: "The court is an 'unusual' political institution. It is unusual because it is non-partisan, and arrives at decisions in a principled manner, without resort to violence. This is what makes the court legitimate and credible as a political institution, to intervene in terms of national crisis".

The Supreme Court's political character is most evident, when exercising its power of judicial review. The power of judicial review, was first famously articulated by the US Supreme Court in **Malbury v Madison 1 Cr. (5. U.S.) 137 (1803)**, when Chief Justice Marshal, nullified part of an Act of Congress. Since then, the view

that the court has the power to nullify actions of either branch of government that violated the Constitution, has taken roots in both legal imagination and precedents. In **Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. v Sawyer (343) U.S 579 (1952)**, the US Supreme Court opined that: "The President's power to issue the order, if any, must stem from either an Act of Congress or from the constitution". Very memorably, Justice Jackson debunked the presumptions of the office of the President, arguing that, although the President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, he is not "the Commander-in-Chief of the country, its industries and its inhabitants".

The Nigerian Supreme Court has followed the contour of Chief Justice Marshall's exposition, on judicial power of the court. In cases like as **Stitch v Attorney-General of the Federation (1986) 5 NWLR 47, Lakanni v AG Western Region (1971) IILR 201**. Famously, in **AG (Bendel) v AG (Federation) (1981) 10 S.C.**, the Supreme Court nullified Appropriation Act passed by the National Assembly, contrary to the provisions of the Constitution.

Judicial review, has divided legal scholars. Many see it as aggrandisement of power, by a branch of government that is not subjected to political accountability. The alleged lack of political accountability makes the exercise of such awesome powers dangerous, in that the Supreme Court can act as an anti-majority political institution, to reverse the choice that the people make through their elected representatives and an elected President. President Jefferson opposed the power of judicial review, and argued that, the judiciary should have no power to overrule view, "each department (branch of government) is truly independent of the others, and has an equal right to decide for itself what is the meaning of the constitution". This view does not have much support, today. Nevertheless, the suspicion that the power of judicial review is undemocratic, remains popular. But, as some institutional interests resent the overriding power of the court through judicial review, many of those whose rights have been advanced by an activist Supreme Court, especially under Justice Warren, continue to support the power of judicial review. Supporters of the power of judicial review of the court, describe the judiciary as 'the least dangerous branch', according to a book by the same title by Professor Alexander Bickel. But, as David O'Brien points out: "The Court is no longer 'the least dangerous branch', or primarily concerned with correcting the errors of the lower courts. In response to growing and changing litigation, the court more frequently overturns prior ruling, congressional legislations, and State and local law". The Supreme Court is now a full-blown political institution, making political choices in its unique manner.

"APPARENTLY, AKAHS, JSC APPEARS TO BE THE ONLY ONE, WHO ADDRESSED THE ISSUE OF THE PROPRIETY OF THE RERUN CONDUCTED BY INEC. ORDINARILY, THE COURT'S OPINION ON THE ISSUE, WOULD GUIDE THE CONDUCT OF FUTURE ELECTIONS"

Stages of Constitutional Design

My own articulation of the political theory of the court, is that as a branch of government, the judiciary is designed to play a political role. This role relates to the choice of who will exercise political power and how, in a society. Political institutions and culture have been designed such that, the power to make such decision has been structured and diffused in a manner that will secure legitimacy and effectiveness. In our constitutional design, the initial decisions are made by political parties, who prepare and present candidates for election. Citizens as voters, often participate in the party primaries, but such participation is separate from the next stage of the process. Decision at this level is essentially political, and if it is made fairly, the court defers to the internal process of the parties. This is how to understand the decisions of the Supreme Court that deferred to the choice that political parties make, in determining who are their candidates for elections. Yes, the degree of deference that the Supreme Court accords to the parties, depends on the temper of the times and the court's own intuitions and irritations.

In Amaechi's case, an irritated Supreme Court overstepped the boundaries, and 'elected' Amaechi the Governor of Rivers State. This case, has been much discredited. But, it shows the changing degree of judicial deference to parties, and shows that, the Supreme Court can be overtly political in the choice it makes. In other instances, it could be subtly so.

The next stage of this constitutional design, is the choice that voters make. This too, is eminently political and receives the highest degree of deference. If voters elect a foolish and mentally unstable, if the person was qualified to contest, no paternalism should induce the court or election management body, to change this decision. It is at the heart of democracy, that such choice should not be restrained or subverted. But, liberal democrats have argued that, entitlement of the people to make political choices needs to be constrained to the extent of protecting institutions, and procedures of democratic freedom. This is the basis of the assertion of judicial review, as a desirable counter-majoritarian democratic device.

The next stage of electoral decision-making is the regulatory stage, where the election management body makes decisions to declare the winner. This is another form of voting. This decision, takes the form of quasi-judicial and legislative functions. Just as electorates vote, the regulator exercises a vote to either affirm the choice made by electorates, or somehow reverse or constrain such choice.

The final stage, is the judicial stage. The Supreme Court is called upon to exercise its power, to determine who ultimately receives the mandate to exercise political power. It may be true as Justice Learned Hand of the US Supreme Court said: "It would be more irksome to be ruled by a bevy of Platonian Guardians, even if I know how to choose them, which I assuredly, do not". Perhaps, the Supreme Court Justices are not 'Platonian Guardians', but their votes contribute to determining who gets to exercise political power. The electorates of Osun State in 2019, and the United States in 2000, will obviously agree that, the Supreme Court made the choice of who became Governor and President respectively.

Conclusion

The truth is that, the Supreme Court is an electorate. In 2007, it voted in the case of Amaechi and Omehia. In 2019, it voted in the case of **Adeleke v Oyetola**. No one knows how it will vote in the case between **Atiku v Buhari**, if it gets there. But, it will be a determinative vote. The vote that the court exercises in these circumstances, is legitimate. It follows the constitutional design of democratic governance. It is legitimate, if it is exercised like the votes by the other political actors and institutions. That is, it is exercised in conditions of transparency and accountability. 'Transparency' requires that, the reason for the choice should always be made public. 'Accountability' requires that, such choices should proceed and be subject to active public deliberation. That is, the Supreme Court should cast its votes as part of public engagement, grounded in public reason. And because public reason is deliberative, citizens should freely examine such reason and critique it, as it would other decisions of the other branch of government. If the Supreme Court acts responsibly and lawfully as a political institution, it has a right to cast a vote. And, we ought, in the name of democracy, to abide by this vote.

Dr Sam Amadi, immediate past Chairman of National Electricity Regulation Commission (NERC)

2019 NBA-SBL Conference: The Communiqué

Communiqué Issued following the 13th Annual Business Law Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association Section on Business Law (NBA-SBL) held from the 26th to 28th of June, 2019 at Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos

INTRODUCTION

Since the 12th Annual Business Law Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association Section on Business Law (NBA-SBL) held in Abuja, Nigeria has suffered low gross domestic product (GDP) growth, sharp decline in foreign direct investments (FDIs), increased youth unemployment rate (36.5%) amidst a geometrically growing population. The country has also witnessed the inauguration of a new government, accentuating the necessity for the Nigerian government at all levels to take stock and revise strategy towards re-positioning the Nigerian economy. In the effort to support the economic reform agenda, the NBA-SBL organized its 13th Annual Business Law Conference with the theme "Growth, Investment and Employment: Beyond Rhetoric."

The Conference opening ceremony/dinner was held on 26th June. The event was graced by the Hon. Justice Bode Rhodes-Vivour, JSC, CFR, eminently representing the Chairman of the occasion, the Hon. Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, CFR, Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, Distinguished Guest Speakers: Rt. Honourable Femi Gbajabiamila, Speaker, House of Representatives and His Excellency, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, Governor of Lagos State, as well as other renowned personalities including domestic and international business leaders, legal practitioners, regulators and entrepreneurs.

Between 27th and 28th June, the Conference comprised fourteen sessions (six plenary sessions and eight breakout sessions) in which experts examined and analyzed various knotty issues vis-à-vis the Nigerian economy. The topics discussed included:- A Triage on the Nigerian economy; Health, Security and Education - Building a Foundation for Inclusive Growth; Moving from Crude Export to Value Addition; Leading the Charge - The Private Sector and the Nigerian Economy; Smarter Regulation; Making Mining Work in Nigeria; Improving Financial Services as a Catalyst for Growing Micro, Small And Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs); #MeToo - Sexual Harassment in the Workplace; and The New Era of Taxation in Nigeria.

OBSERVATIONS:

Key issues identified by panelists and other delegates include:

1. A very high rate of youth unemployment, and astronomical population growth.

2. Lack of a mandatory universal healthcare system/program, and severe underfunding in States making efforts to provide basic primary health coverage. Also, poor infrastructure, and in practical terms almost a wholesale lack of health insurance coverage (save for the top echelon of society).

3. Out-dated laws and, notably, the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990 (CAMA) and, as a corollary, the urgent need for assent by the Executive to the Companies and Allied Matters Repeal and Re-Enactment Bill 2019 (CAM Bill).

4. Insecurity and insurgencies fueled by socio-economic issues, such as



Chairman, NBA-SBL, Seni Adio, SAN

unemployment and underemployment, low educational proficiency, lack of healthcare, housing, and extreme discontent caused primarily by the foregoing factors.

5. Lack of clarity of tax laws, rules, and regulations, and inconsistent applications of same. Equally disconcerting is the disconnect between taxation and social benefits in infrastructure and public utilities, such as roads, power, healthcare, education and security.

6. In the oil and gas sector, the need to have a robust and sustained policy on value addition. The policy needs to be mutually beneficial to all stakeholders, including the Federal Government, investors and operators in the industry.

7. An inefficient dispute resolution and judicial system, which includes commercial disputes taking grossly inordinate duration at the trial courts, unmeritorious appeals, and various other inefficiencies. The foregoing are quite apart from the difficulties associated with access to justice caused by factors, such as decay in infrastructure, de-motivated administrative personnel, and lack of modern amenities including technology.

8. Grossly insufficient investment in the agriculture value chain, to transform yield in livestock and dairy products, food crops, and funding value addition including storage, transportation, packaging and export of agriculture and allied products.

9. Whereas, the Federal Government has developed some innovative funding mechanisms for MSMEs, there continues to be a dearth of funding for them resulting in a stifling of the sector that employs approximately 80% of the labour force, and accounts for approximately 50% of GDP.

10. The Nigerian Government's delay in signing the Africa Continental

Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), which would be to the country's disadvantage, long term. The AfCFTA was the flagship plenary topic at the 12th NBA-SBL International Business Conference in June 2018, and the in-depth and incisive discourse provided a unique platform for further stakeholder consultations on the subject. However, since raising the issue at the 13th Conference and, just before issuing this Communiqué, the Federal Government signed the Agreement, thus evincing that even the 12th Conference was beyond rhetoric.

11. Neglect, illegal activities, and lack of transparency in the mining sector.

12. #MeToo - Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. The need to create an environment conducive to protecting victims and, importantly, providing swift recourse to enforcing rights and disciplining offenders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Extensive deliberations and discussions from participants resulted in the following resolutions/recommendations:

Government

1. Diversifying from oil - investments should be made in the five critical stages of the agricultural value chain, that is, production, transportation, storage, processing and export.

2. Government should remove VAT from locally produced LPG and, instead, impose tariffs on imported LPG in order to encourage local production, availability and domestic utilization of gas.

3. The oil sector should be liberalized - government should allow more flexibility in terms of pricing to encourage investments in the sector.

4. Government should move away

from commercial infrastructures which are financeable by the private sector and, instead, work on improving transparency and encourage market determination of pricing.

5. Government should build investor confidence by providing a transparent, fair, and inclusive tax regime to all the stakeholders thus enhancing the ease of doing business.

6. There is an urgent need for rapid human capital development and investments across health, education, agriculture, security and other sectors to tackle unemployment while keeping population growth in check through family planning and controlled immigration.

7. Healthcare should be policy-driven - to ensure broad health insurance coverage, the federal laws governing health insurance should move from 'may' to 'shall' - insurance should not be optional for employers.

8. Government should demonstrate the political will to tackle insecurity, professionalize the Nigerian security apparatus, and secure Nigeria's borders.

9. Financial inclusion for the youth should be prioritized to enable them access loans and other entrepreneurship benefits.

10. Policy formulation in Nigeria should be more consultative and inclusive.

11. The Federal Government should ensure that the licensing regime in the mining sector is coherent and made transparent in order to attract and retain investments in the sector. Also, the government needs to immediately address issues of insecurity and illegal mining activities, as well as jurisdiction between the Federal Government and State Governments.

Lawyers and the Private Sector

12. We should develop a high sense of patriotism, optimism, and sell the Nigerian brand.

13. Businesses should establish clear policies prohibiting sexual harassment in their respective organizations, including severe sanctions for those who violate the policy.

14. Lawyers should enhance capacity in the area of international trade and investment law, particularly with the advent of AfCFTA.

15. Lawyers are encouraged to develop capacity in accounting in order to enhance their practice as tax lawyers.

16. Lawyers should refrain from filing frivolous actions and impeding the swift administration of justice.

Commitments of the NBA-SBL The NBA-SBL will:

1. Develop a policy against sexual harassment for consideration and adoption by law firms;

2. Push for Smarter Regulation and, in doing so, engage all levels of governments, as well as other relevant stakeholders; and

3. Work with the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) to reform and adapt the rules of professional conduct in line with modern realities, as well as fostering transparency and discipline.

Communiqué signed by: Seni Adio, SAN, Chairman NBA-SBL and Dr. Adeoye Adefulu, Chairman, NBA-SBL 13th Annual Business Law Conference Planning Committee



Former Chairman of the NBA-SBL and Access Bank, Gbenga Oyebode, MFR making a presentation to Kingsley Moghalu and other panelists at the 13th Annual Business Law Conference



L-R: Hon. Justice Bode Rhodes-Vivour, JSC, Seni Adio, SAN, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila and Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu



L-R: Yomi Audifferen, Sina Sofola, SAN and Olumide Akpata



L-R: Otunba Yinka Lawal-Solarin, Seni Adio, SAN and Chief (Mrs) Bjorg Lawal-Solarin



L-R: Jumoke Lambo, Danladi, Verheijen, Ijeoma Agboti-Obatoyinbo and Frank Aigbogun



L-R: Ifeyinwa Ugochukwu, Akintunde Oyebode and Adeleke Alex-Adedipe



Former Council Member, Moyosore Onigbanjo, SAN, (R) with Panelist, Funke Adeyemi



L-R: Soji Awogbade, Mira Mehta, Onyekachi Ekezie, Sola Oyawale and Falaq Tidjani



L-R: Alex Muoka, Foluke Dada, Emeka Anosike, Dapo Abiodun and Victor Omubo Frank Briggs



L-R: Oyinkan Badejo-Okusanya, a delegate, Segun Osuntokun, Partner, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, and Atinuke Dosunmu



L-R: Hon. Justice Kazeem Alogba, Ag. Chief Judge of Lagos State, Jonathan Taidi, NBA General Secretary, Ayuli Jemide, NBA-SBL Vice Chair, Paul Usoro, SAN, NBA President, Ozofu Ogiemudia, Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Seni Adio, SAN, Chinyere Okorocha, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbababiamila, Speaker, House of Representatives; Hon. Justice Bode Rhodes-Vivour, JSC & Dr Adeoye Adefulu, 2019 Conference Chair



L-R: Babasola Alokolaro, Priscilla Ogwemoh, Seni Adio, SAN, Hon. Justice Mohammed Baba Idris, JCA, Babajimi Ayorinde, Abidemi Ademola, Prof. Andrew Chukwumerie, SAN and Olasupo Shasore, SAN



L-R: Hon. Abubakar Bichi, Hon. Babajimi Benson, Hakeem Muri Okunola, Head of Service, Lagos State and Chinyere Okorocha



L-R: Oseinnoma Okpeku, Duwa Idehen-Nathaniel, Olubunmi Aboderin-Talabi, Ayodeji Ajibola, Esther Akinnukawe, Hon. Justice Obaseki-Osagie, Okey Egbuchi, Ifeoma Utah and Anthony Nwaochei



L-R: Dotun Adio, Toyosi Fatoki, Morayo Wale-Balogun



L-R: Conference Planning Committee members, Theodora Kio-Lawson, Efeomo Olotu and Damilare Ojo



L-R: Kehinde Daodu, Blessing Choko, Joseph Ifebunadu, Emeka Offor, Olawale Akoni, SAN, Olabimpe Alabi and Fola Akande



L-R: Folu Storms, Kelechi Amadi-Obi & Nnamdo Patrick-Onuh



Kingsley Moghalu with some Young Lawyers at the closing party of the 13th Annual Business Law Conference



Guest Artist, Mayorkun performing at the Conference closing party

Justice Karatu's Treatment: Brutal Assault on the Independence of Nigeria's Judiciary

This article by **Joseph Otteh**, condemns the recent action of an officer of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, who prevented Justice Elizabeth Karatu, the former acting Chief Judge of Kebbi State, from entering her court, possibly on the instructions of higher authority. He warns that, the Judiciary must take strong action against this impunity, and make the perpetrators of such a contemptuous act, accountable, so as to avert any such reoccurrence in the future

Background

In 14th June, 2019, the Governor of Kebbi State, Atiku Abubakar Bagudu, removed Justice Elizabeth Asabe Karatu, from office as Acting Chief Judge of the State, and appointed Justice Sulaiman Ambursa to act in that capacity. The substitution came on the heels of a petition written to the National Judicial Council (NJC) by Justice Karatu, requesting the Council's intervention over the protracted refusal of the Governor to swear her into office. Justice Karatu's petition also requested the NJC, to ascertain the nature of Justice Ambursa's involvement in the refusal of the Governor and State House of Assembly, to confirm her appointment as the Chief Judge of the State. According to Justice Karatu, Justice Ambursa, who is the next most senior Judge and the person in line to succeed her as Chief Judge, had "colluded" with the Governor and Speaker of the State House of Assembly, to prevent her appointment as substantive Chief Judge.

In May 2019, the NJC constituted and delegated a reconciliation committee, to intervene in the judicial impasse in the State. Following the NJC's representations, Justice Karatu's name was forwarded to the State legislature again for confirmation, but the legislature declined to confirm her, as the substantive Chief Judge.

On July 5, 2019, which was Justice Karatu's last day in judicial office, she was approaching her courtroom where she was scheduled to deliver the last of her judgements, but was prevented from accessing the court by an officer of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, who asserted that his actions were in compliance with a directive to prevent Justice Karatu from entering the courtroom.

Live footage of the scene showing Justice Karatu being prevented from entering her court, has circulated widely on social and news media. The Government of Kebbi State has not disputed, as much as we know, the current narrative of this event.

Preventing Court Proceedings from taking place: A Brutal Assault on the Rule of Law and Judicial Independence

This is not the first time, that Judges have been prevented from accessing their courts. In 2014, the police shut the roads leading to Ekiti State courts, on the pretext that bombs had been



Kebbi State Governor, Atiku Bagudu



Justice Elizabeth Karatu

planted within the court premises, although it was simply a subterfuge to prevent courts in the State from hearing or delivering any judgements/orders that could prevent then Governor-elect, Ayodele Foyose, from being sworn into office.

Preventing a judicial officer from gaining access to his or her court, is a major assault, not only to the rule of law and the administration of justice in Nigeria, but to the adjudicational authority and dignity of the Judiciary. It is one of the most sinister ways of preventing courts from playing their roles, not just as arbiters of disputes, but as guardians of the constitutional rights of the people. If the Judiciary allows any form of this impunity to stand, it shoots itself in the foot, tramples on its own authority, while opening the gates for repeat occurrences of similar acts in the future.

Legally speaking, what the official of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps did, was a classic act of judicial contempt – contempt of court, in all of its complexion. Whoever authorised the said officer to prevent Justice Karatu from accessing her court, is also a principal contemnor, and all of them should be made accountable for their actions. It is also an interference with the administration of justice, which is a criminal offence in quite a number of jurisdictions, including, possibly, Kebbi State.

The incident has profound other implications: the day of the incident was the last official work-

ing day for Justice Karatu, as a judicial officer. She was in court, to deliver final verdicts. The Constitution requires that, court proceedings must be held in open court. Preventing Justice Karatu from accessing her office, would then mean that she couldn't deliver her judgements in a legitimate way, and no longer could do so validly after that day.

This would mean that the entire trial conducted on the case(s) due for judgement, would return a blank, and the efforts and expenses of everyone involved in them, wasted. This would be a huge travesty, and a major set-back for the access to justice rights of those concerned, given that the right to a fair and reasonably-timed trial, is a constitutional right, besides representing a major waste of public resources expended, in conducting the trial. Those responsible for interfering with the judicial process in this malevolently obstructive way and occasioning these futilities, must be held responsible for their actions.

A Strong Response Needed: What the Judiciary Must Do

The Judiciary's response to this incident, will likely frame the choices that people make when important decisions implicating judicial independence and access to court are at stake, both currently, and in the future. The Judiciary must, therefore, not treat this matter with apathy, or with levity either. If the Judiciary comes up

light - or short - on this, it will send an ambivalent or weak message about its own strength or ability to defend itself, when its core values are attacked, as well as its integrity as an institution of government. A weak response will not offer any deterrent value, or prevent these kinds of incidents from reoccurring perfunctorily in the future, and will further reduce the image of the Judiciary, in the eyes of both members of the Judiciary, and the wider public.

The leadership of the Judiciary in both Kebbi State and nationally, must first clarify what happened in an impartial, transparent manner. Since the acting Chief Judge of Kebbi State has been alleged by Justice Karatu to be amongst those who sabotaged her confirmation for the office of Chief Judge, the role of the NJC in conducting an objective inquiry into this incident, is heightened.

Related to this, it will also be particularly important to interrogate the response of the (acting) Chief Judge of Kebbi State, Justice Sulaiman Ambursa, to the incident and clarify whether he knew of it at the time it was taking place, and responded to it in a manner expected of a person at the helm of the State's Judiciary. Should his response be found wanting, this should be grounds for concluding that, he cannot discharge the functions of a Chief Judge competently. The inquiry should also determine whether criminal offences applicable in the State have been committed, in blocking the access of Justice Karatu to her court.

Conclusion

The Judiciary walks a fine line, in the way it responds to the incident in Kebbi State. Should it under-calibrate the strength of the resolve it brings to bear in addressing this issue, it will stand the risk of losing more and more of its respect and authority, and more demeaning breaches could take place some time to come. In fact, we are gradually living in the shadows of this discomfiture, if we place what is happening in Kogi State now, in the broader picture. But, if the Judiciary steps up to the plate, and offers a principled and bold intervention, ensuring that those responsible for the denigrating actions are all brought to book, it could be a significant way for the Judiciary's new leadership, to announce that change is underway. This is the kind of hope Nigerians desperately seek to see in the horizon, however distant it seems, particularly in these troubling times.

Joseph Otteh, Convener, Access to Justice

ADELEKE V INEC: DISCORDANT JUDICIAL TUNES AND DARK CLOUDS OF TECHNICAL JUSTICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

tribunal, Peter Obiora, was absent on February 6, 2019, when a major discussion on the issue of non-compliance was tabled before the tribunal; and could therefore, not have viewed the issue squarely.

Apparently dissatisfied, Senator Adeleke went to the Supreme Court and filed four consolidated appeals

A seven-man panel of the Supreme Court, presided over by the Acting CJN to determine Adeleke's four appeals, namely; **SC/553/2019; SC/554/2019; SC/55/2019 and SC/556/2019**, delivered judgement on the appeals filed by Ademola Adeleke against the majority decision of the Court of Appeal, on July 5, 2019.

The Supreme Court in a split decision of 5-2 affirmed the decision of the Court of Appeal, and upheld the election of the APC candidate, Adegboyega Oyetola. It also set aside the majority judgement of the Election Tribunal, which had allowed Adeleke's petition and declared him winner of the election.

Personal Reflections on the Judgement

It is quite revealing that, the majority judgement at the tribunal did not include the Chairman's views, who, as stated above, dissented. Justice Peter Obiora and a fellow member gave majority decision in the Tribunal, returning Senator Adeleke as winner. The Chairman, Justice Sirajo gave a minority decision, which more or less, upheld the decision of INEC to conduct a rerun, relying on its guidelines. The other two members of the panel, handed down serious judicial excoriation to INEC for being in breach of its own guidelines. Again, the writer would refrain from making extensive comments on the decision of the tribunal, until he receives the full judgements. In any event, excerpts of the judgement, show demonstrable errors by all the panels involved in the determination of this dispute.

At the Court of Appeal, George Ita Mbamba JCA, demurred from the majority view that allowed the appeal. Paul Galinje and Aka'ahs JJSC, dissented from the majority decision at the

Supreme Court. Thus, from the Tribunal through to the Apex Court, there was no unanimous decision. The writer has no recollection of any election petition case in recent times, where such an incident occurred.

Curiously, the majority decision of the Supreme Court, failed to address the propriety of the rerun conducted by INEC. Certainly, the Supreme Court cannot just affirm the decision of the Court of Appeal, without more. There should be policy considerations on the conduct of our elections going forward, with particular reference to where elections have been deemed inconclusive by the electoral umpire. After all, this was the major plank of the appeal, in the first place. Apparently, Aka'ahs, JSC appears to be the only one, who addressed the issue of the propriety of the rerun conducted by INEC. Ordinarily, the court's opinion on the issue, would guide the conduct of future elections. On the contrary, INEC may have just been issued the needed judicial imprimatur, on rerun elections. How soon this issue will be

revisited, is unclear at the moment. Otherwise, this case would portend a dangerous precedent, which would take us down the oft dreaded and perilous journey into technical justice. It whets my appetite, to find out how this issue would be eventually resolved, going forward.

I will conclude with the immortal words of Oputa JSC in **Bello v Oyo State 1986 5 NWLR Part 45 826 at 886**, when he pilloried the penchant for technical justice, worthy of reproduction as follows:

"The picture of law and its technical rules triumphant, and justice prostrate, may no doubt have its admirers. But, the spirit of justice does not reside in forms, formalities nor in technicalities, nor is the triumph of the administration of justice to be found in successfully picking one's way between pitfalls of technicality. Law and its technical rules, ought to be a handmaid to justice..."

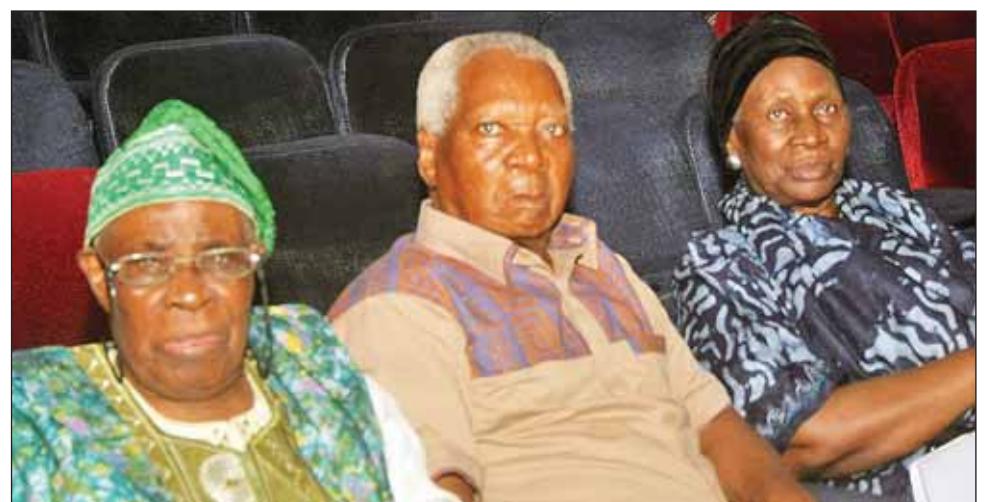
Steve Austin Nwabueze

The 9th Edition of the Prof. A.B. Kasunmu, SAN Annual Lecture titled 'An Enquiry into the Appropriateness of a Generic Approach to the Concepts of Democracy, Federalism and National Unity' was held at the Ade Ajayi Auditorium, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos last Thursday, 11th July, 2019. Here are some of the guests that attended the event

PHOTOS: KOLAWOLE ALLI



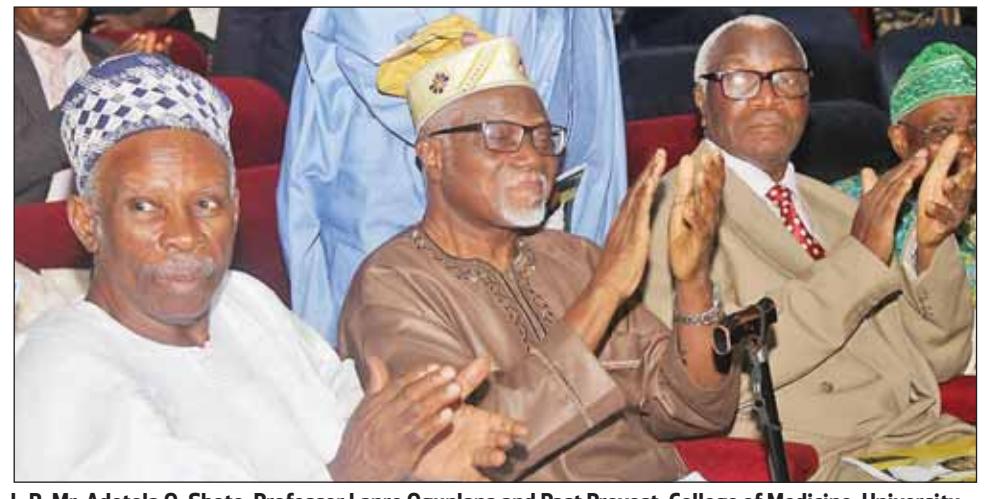
Guest of Honour, Professor Alfred Bandele Kasunmu, SAN and his wife, Mrs. Alfred B. Kasunmu



L-R: Engr. M.O. Omotosho, Professor J.P. Clark and his wife, Professor (Mrs.) Ebun Clark



L-R: Nwudego Chinwuba, Professor Abiola Sanni, Faculty of Law, Unilag and Professor Chioma Kanu Agomo



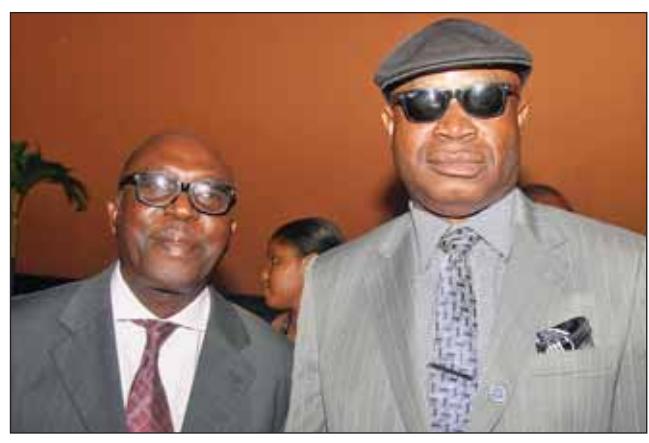
L-R: Mr. Adetola O. Shote, Professor Lanre Ogunlana and Past Provost, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Professor Kunle Akinosi



Former Attorney-General, Ondo State, Chief Dele Ogedengbe and Mrs. Modupe Ajibola Ojo.

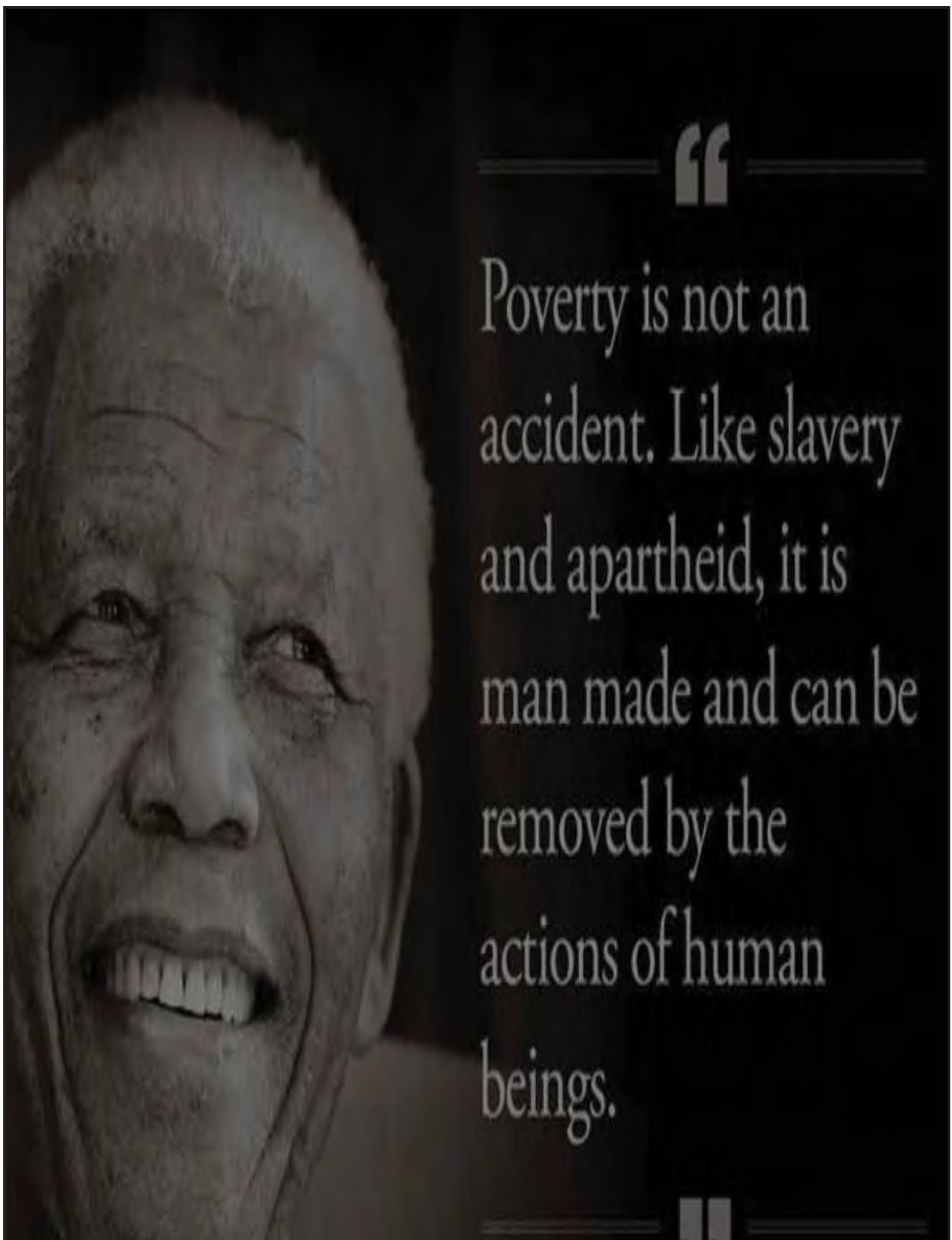


Engr. Folarin Salako and his wife, Mrs. Folake Salako



Secretary, Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria, Chief Seyi Sowemimo, SAN (left) and Chairman, Council of Legal Education, Chief Emeka Ngige, SAN

WORDS OF WISDOM



“Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man made and can be removed by the actions of human beings.”

BUSINESSWORLD

RATES AS AT JULY 12, 2019

MONEY MARKET		REPO	S & P INDEX		S & P INDEX		EXCHANGE RATE
OVERNIGHT	2.93%	CALL	1.50%	INDEX LEVEL	406.07%	1/4 TO DATE	1.45%
OBG	32.21%	1-MONTH	5.50%	1-DAY	0.53%	YEAR TO DATE	13.75%
		3-MONTH	6.38%	MONTH-TO-DATE	1.45%		



BUSINESS EXPANSION

L-R: Group Head, Corporate Banking, FCMB, Mrs Chinyere Muda-Sanusi; Chief Operating Officer, Ikeja Electric Plc, Mrs Folake Soetan and General Manager, PEP Stores Nigeria Proprietary Ltd, Mrs Kofo Awonuga, during the launch of Ikeja Electric retail outlet in partnership with PEP and FCMB, held in Lagos...recently

ABIODUN AJALA

FG Selects 205 Bidders for Next Phase of Gas Flare Out Scheme

Chineme Okafor in Abuja

The federal government has approved 205 applicants for allotment in its ambitious market-based gas flare out programme – the Nigerian Gas Flare Commercialisation Programme (NGFCP), to move to the next round of the programme.

The Programme Manager of the NGFCP, Mr. Justice Derefa, disclosed in a statement sent to THISDAY, that the Statements of Qualification (SOQs) evaluation report for the NGFCP was recently submitted by its inter-ministerial committee, and the Permanent Secretary in Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Dr. Folasade Yemi-Esan conveyed the ministry's approval of it.

ENERGY

Derefa, explained that Yemi-Esan, could disclose the approval in her supervisory capacity over the affairs of the ministry following the successful completion of the evaluation exercise which was done in June by the NGFCP Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC).

He noted that over 850 interested parties registered their interest in the NGFCP but 238 applicants submitted SOQs in response to the Request for Qualification (RfQ) published by the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR).

According to him, a total of 238 SOQ documents were subsequently evaluated in accordance with the provisions of applicable

regulations, guidelines, and standard DPR practices for bid evaluation, adding that they were then adjudged to have either 'passed' or 'failed'.

Following a rigorous exercise conducted in line with established protocol and using the Electronic Evaluation Tool (EET), 205 applicants emerged successful – attaining a 'pass status' while the remaining 33 applicants did not meet the minimum requirements and thus attained 'fail status', said Derefa.

He equally stated that: "The PEC in the next stage, which is the Request for Proposals (RfP), will evaluate proposals submitted by the Qualified Applicants (QAs) to determine those Bidders that achieve Pre-

ferred Bidder (PB) and Reserved Bidder (RB) status in line with the criteria of the Request for Proposal (RfP) package.

Ahead of the Request for Proposal stage, an NGFCP qualified applicants' workshop is scheduled to hold in Abuja.

Derefa, also indicated that successful applicants from the next stage would be invited to submit their proposal for flare gas utilisation through the RfP phase, while those not successful would be advised further, considering that they could still participate in the NGFCP if they opt to join a consortium that has been successful in the RfQ process.

Continued on page 24

Currency-in-Circulation Rises Marginally to N2159trn

ECONOMY

At N2.159 trillion, currency-in-circulation, on month-on-month basis, rose by 0.3 per cent at the end of April 2019, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) revealed in its economic report for May 2019.

This was in contrast to the respective decline of 3.9 per cent and four per cent at the end of the preceding month and the end of the corresponding period of 2018.

The development relative to the preceding month, according to the central bank, reflected the increase in demand deposit component.

The report showed that deposits of the federal government,

banks and the private sector with the CBN, on month-on-month basis, rose, relative to the level at the end of the preceding month.

Overall, aggregate deposit at the CBN increased by 12.8 per cent to N15.746 trillion at the end of April 2019, the report showed.

"Of the total deposits at the CBN, the shares of the federal government, banks and the private sector were 42.4 per cent, 36.8 per cent and 20.8 per cent, it added.

Also, under the CBN's

Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme, as at May 20, 2019, 21 projects repaid the sum of N2.63 billion in respect of one project as full repayment and 20 projects as steady repayments.

The repayment of N2.63 billion took the cumulative repayment under CACS from inception in 2009 to N347.69 billion.

Analysis of number of projects financed under CACS by value chain indicated that out of the 588 CACS-sponsored projects; production accounted for 61.1 per cent and dominated the activities funded, while processing accounted for 28.1 per cent.

"These were followed by storage, input supplies and marketing which accounted for 4.8 per cent, 3.4 per cent and 2.7 per cent, respectively.

"The Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS) guaranteed a total of N259.1 million to 1,397 farmers in May 2019. The amount represented a decrease of 24.4 per cent and 2.7 per cent below the levels in the preceding month and the corresponding period of 2018, respectively.

"Sub-sectoral analysis showed that food crops got the largest share, amounting to N136.0

Continued on page 24

Group Business Editor Obinna Chima
Email obinna.chima@thisdaylive.com
08152447875

Quick Takes

NB Extends Award Deadline

Nigerian Breweries Plc has announced the extension of deadline for the submission of entries for the 2019 Maltina Teacher of the Year by two additional weeks. The submission of entries, which was initially meant to close on July 12, 2019, has now been extended until July 26, 2019, to allow more teachers to participate. The Maltina Teacher of the Year, the brainchild of Nigerian Breweries Plc - Felix Ohiwerei Education Trust Fund was designed to identify, showcase and reward outstanding teachers in Nigeria.

Speaking on the decision to extend the deadline, the Corporate Affairs Director, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Mrs. Sade Morgan, noted that the extension of the cut-off date for the submission of entries was done in response to calls by teachers and other stakeholders to allow for additional time for more teachers to turn in their entries.

Morgan, explained that teachers should take advantage of the new window by filling directly or downloading the application forms from the Maltina website. She also added that they can also submit directly through the award website or pick up a form at their States Ministry of Education, Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Nigeria Union of Teachers or Nigerian Breweries offices nationwide.

"We have received so many enquiries and pressure from participating teachers and other well-meaning individuals for the possibility to extend the entry deadline for this year's edition of the Maltina Teacher of the Year initiative. This has further revealed to us that the initiative is highly regarded by our key stakeholders," she said.

Afreximbank Targets \$40bn Deals

The organisers of the Second Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF2020) expect it to surpass the achievements of the inaugural trade fair held in Cairo in 2018 by attracting 10,000 participants and generating intra-African trade and investment deals worth more than \$40 billion, Prof. Benedict Oramah, President of the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), has said.

Oramah was speaking recently, at the formal launch of IATF2020, during the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Business Forum 2019 held on the sidelines of the 12th Extraordinary Summit of African Union (AU) Heads of State in Niamey. He told guests that the trade fair, scheduled for Kigali, from 1 to 7 September 2020, would attract more than 1,100 exhibitors from over 55 countries.

"Working with our esteemed partners, we will exceed the achievements of 2018," he said, describing IATF2018 as a resounding success, not in the colourful displays exhibited, but in the showcasing of diversity of tradable goods by about 1,100 exhibitors from 45 countries and in the execution of deals worth about \$32 billion.

That trade fair resulted in a Nigerian technology company winning a \$100-million contract to provide technology-based solutions to the South Sudanese government; an Egyptian company winning contracts in many African countries to supply and install energy generation and distribution equipment worth close to \$1 billion; Egyptian and Tunisian companies signing a \$50-million partnership deal to create a joint venture for assembling home appliances.

Zimbabwe Joins Africa50

During its General Shareholders Meeting (GSM) in Kigali recently, Africa50, the pan-African investment platform, announced that the Republic of Zimbabwe has joined as its 31st shareholder.

Speaking during the event, Africa50 CEO, Alain Ebobissé, thanked the government of Zimbabwe for its commitment to the institution, which marks a welcome expansion in southern Africa.

"We are grateful for this strong vote of confidence and look forward to working closely with the government and the private sector to identify priority projects and deploy our project development and financing expertise," he added. George Tongesayi Guvamatanga, Zimbabwe's Permanent Secretary for Finance and Economic Development, signed the Share Subscription Agreement on behalf of the Government, committing Zimbabwe to acquiring shares in Africa50.

The President of the African Development Bank and Chairman of the Board of Africa50, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, said: "In recognition of the importance of the project development work of Africa50, the African Development Bank has decided to increase its shareholding.

The Quote

"Airtel Africa's listing on the NSE will not only showcase the company as an established player in the African telecommunication industry, but will enable the firm to actualise its strategic vision"



CEO, NSE,
Mr. Oscar Onyema

FG SELECTS 205 BIDDERS FOR NEXT PHASE OF GAS FLARE OUT SCHEME

He said, overall, the NGFCP has the potential of generating approximately \$3.5 billion of inward investment into Nigeria, as well as the potential to impact the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by an estimated \$ 1 billion per annum.

"It could potential unlock 2 to 3 LNG trains, around 3000MW electricity generation as well as generate circa 600,000MT of LPG per year giving 6 million households access to clean energy through LPG.

The programme could also bring inflow of new infrastructure players to enable gas uptake and usage in previously unreachable regions and business development from gas companies to unlock new domestic markets for gas," Derefaka, added.

CURRENCY-IN-CIRCULATION RISES MARGINALLY TO N2.159TRN

million (52.5%) guaranteed to 860 beneficiaries, followed by livestock, N44.9 million (17.3%) guaranteed to 171 beneficiaries.

"The sum of N41.8 million (16.1%) was guaranteed to cash crops sub-sector, in favour of 226 beneficiaries. Fisheries, 'others' and Mixed crops received N22.8 million (8.8%), N10.9 million (4.2%) and N2.8 million (1.1%), guaranteed to 77, 45 and 18 beneficiaries, respectively," the report showed. Analysis by State showed that 22 states and the Federal Capital Territory benefited from the scheme in May 2019, with the highest and lowest sums of N34.6 million (13.4%) and N0.1 million (0.04%) guaranteed to Ogun and Delta states, respectively.

The report indicated that the Bank continued to intervene in the foreign exchange market to further sustain the improved liquidity and relative stability in the market. Thus, a cumulative sum of US\$2.04 billion was sold by the Bank to authorised dealers in May 2019, compared with US\$2.43 billion supplied in April 2019. This indicated a decline of 16.1 per cent and 42.4 per cent below the levels in the preceding month and the corresponding period of 2018, respectively.

CBN Takes Sensitisation Programme to Ilorin

Hammed Shittu in Ilorin

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has extended its sensitisation programme on its various policies and initiatives to assist small and medium scale businesses in the country.

Speaking at the 2-day sensitisation outreach programmes tagged, "CBN Fair," for small and business owners in Ilorin, Kwara State, recently, the Director, Corporate Communications Department of CBN, Mr. Isaac Okorafor said, "many Nigerians are unable to access loans from commercial banks because they cannot/distinguish between working and fixed capital."

The theme of the fair was, "promoting sustainable economic development in the country."

He also said many Nigerians cannot access its many financial initiatives as they don't have bank accounts.

Okorafor, revealed that many bank customers did not know their rights, adding that, "some of the commercial banks allegedly make illegal deductions from their accounts."

Represented by the Assistant Director in the Department and National Coordinator of the fair, Mr. Samuel Okegbue, Okorafor added that the CBN had returned billions of naira to customers from illegal deductions by commercial banks.

He attributed the proliferation

of dirty and mutilated naira notes in circulation to poor and improper handling of the currency, which he described as "the nation's pride."

He said, "the fair is to sensitise our people on how to take records of what they have, as this will enable them know how to organise their businesses well."

"The CBN is poised to make policies that are people-focused. CBN is monitoring to make sure that bank's customers do not get unwarranted charges from their banks."

"We want to have detailed discussion about development finance initiatives of CBN. Many Nigerians do not know how to access initiatives as they don't

have bank accounts."

He added that before the introduction of the Anchor Borrower's Scheme to Nigerian farmers, the country was importing over \$1 billion worth of rice annually.

"By importing rice into the country we were sending our hard-earned/money outside the country to improve the

economies of others. By that time the exchange rate of the naira also crashed.

"Today, the exchange rate has remained relatively stable in the last three years. When the exchange rate is stable, businesses can thrive. That stability makes businesses to have confidence. These are the things CBN has been doing."



MEDIA BRIEFING

L-R: Software Engineer, CWG Plc, Mr Bamidele Ojekunle; Product Manager, Mr Olaolu Hassan, Regional Business Head, Abuja, Sterling Bank Plc, Mrs Aisha Ashafa, Lighting Africa Program, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group, Mrs Oluwakemi Makanju; and Business Director, Emergent, CWG Plc, Mr Charles Ibonye, at a conference on the use of technology in cooperative societies held in Abuja... recently

AKINYELE ABAYOMI

Firm to Leverage Opportunities in Nigeria's Pipeline Projects

Chineme Okafor in Abuja

Indigenous oil and gas service firm, Global Process and Pipeline Services Limited (GPPSL), has disclosed plan to leverage opportunities in the multiple big-ticket petroleum pipeline projects Nigeria has signed up to build in the coming years.

GPPSL, which claimed to be the only Nigerian company focused solely on process and pipeline services, stated recently in Abuja that it has acquired three massive flooding pumps with the capacity of 3,150 US gallon per minute (USG) and close to 600 pound-force per square inch (PSI) each.

It added that together, with

three massive lifting pumps of 6,000USG per minute each and other connections that go with the equipment spread, they would be ready to take advantage of business openings in the 48-inch pipeline Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano (AKK) project as well as the planned pipeline project between Nigeria and North Africa. Both projects are linked to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

"They are high pressure, high volume and no other company can boast of such flooding pumps in West Africa," said the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of GPPSL, Mr. Obi Uzu, in a statement.

Uzu, further explained: "Those are massive projects that will need our kind of equipment. Besides there is also requirement for big pipeline services in-country."

The statement equally noted that GPPSL acquired about six air loaders which included pneumatic suction pumps for cleaning of floating production and offloading (FPSO) tanks.

It added that with regards to health and safety regulations of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), FPSOs operating in Nigeria will require cleaning. "We have gone ahead to make these massive investments to keep the game alive – those

clients we have been working for are happy but we want to make sure that they are happier with the services they are getting today and in future compared to what they got yesterday," Uzu stated.

He noted that the company had also invested in solid organisational process and sustainable human resources. According to him: "We are pursuing new operational certification ahead of ISO-9001-2015 which we have gotten already. We are getting into integrated management system (IMS) certification that will look at our Environmental, HSE and Quality compliance all together to make sure we

improve on all our processes."

On the human resources, he said the company developed, "what we call the 'career tree' plan for our personnel, thus when you join from the root of the company, as you are growing, you can see the branch available for you to go and concentrate on that or branch out along the way depending on your interest and performance.

The company gives every staff an overview of plan and opportunities available to enable them to build their carrier at their own pace and interest in the field operations, sales, engineering and administration."

Chevron Takes Mass Deworming Exercise to Bayelsa

Emmanuel Addeh in Yenagoa

At least 42,000 school children in Bayelsa State are to benefit from the mass de-worming programme organised by Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL).

The programme designed for children between the ages of six and 12, was organised in partnership with the Women Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) attracted beneficiaries from several schools in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital.

Speaking during the commencement of the exercise at the Community Primary School, Biogbolo, the General Manager, Policy, Government and Public Affairs (PGPA),

Mr. Esimaje Brikinn, said the target was to deworm over 42,000 children.

Brikinn, who was represented by the Communications Coordinator, Mr. Kayode Adeboye, said the company embarked on the exercise because it had been established that worm infestation was a leading cause of ill health and mortality in children of school age, mostly in the tropics.

"The effects of worm infestation, especially on children of school age, have assumed such alarming dimensions that it requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders to fight the ailments.

Available statistics from the World Health Organisa-

tion (WHO) estimates that more than 1.5 billion people, or 24 per cent of the world's population, is infected with soil-transmitted helminth (parasitic worms) infections worldwide. Infections are widely distributed in tropical and subtropical areas.

"Unfortunately, young children are particularly prone to these infections since over 270 million preschool-age children and over 600 million school-age children live in areas where these parasites are intensively transmitted, and are in need of treatment and preventive interventions. "These parasitic infections can prevent children from achieving their full potential."

He added that Chevron was committed to support-

ing improvement in health delivery in Nigeria through investments in preventive health programmes, health and social infrastructure, sponsorship on manpower development in the health sector and provision of other health facilities.

"This exercise is one of the initiatives through which the NNPC/Chevron Joint Venture seeks to uplift the health and development of Nigerians; especially the children. It is part of several health intervention programmes undertaken by the Joint venture as part of its contribution to the ongoing efforts at building a healthy nation. 42,000 doses have been procured for the campaign.

"We are proud of the tre-

mendous successes recorded through our partnership with the Bayelsa State Government in past health programmes which, no doubt, were because of our collective commitment to improving healthcare delivery and by extension the quality of life of the people of Bayelsa State and the Niger Delta," he said.

Brikinn recalled that between 2012 and 2018, Chevron, in collaboration with PACT and the Bayelsa State Government, sponsored a US\$5.3 million Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PROMOT) programme. This, according to him, has helped reduce the HIV prevalence rate in the state where over 57,000 pregnant women had been tested.

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How Mele Kyari Plans to Run NNPC

Chineme Okafor takes a look at the promises of the new Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, Mallam Mele Kyari, who recently assumed the position

Mele Kyari's selection to head the NNPC was roundly cheered – his colleagues in both the state-run corporation and global oil industry, as well as other stakeholders connected with the industry, had reasons to celebrate his choice as the new helmsman, and now, he is faced with the job of moving a behemoth forward.

While felicitating with him, these stakeholders also as expected laid out their thoughts and what they think he should do to get the NNPC become an efficient national oil company.

As a national corporation holding in trust for Nigerians the country's hydrocarbon resources, the corporation is always the cynosure of all eyes because of its significance to the country's wealth.

For example, the NNPC with regards to national energy security, is a significant entity, one which mostly determines how secured Nigeria's energy supply is or not, either in terms of petroleum products availability or electricity supplies. Its operations are frequently top priorities in discussions around Nigeria's national life.

Divulging his intentions

Shortly after taking over from the immediate past Dr. Maikanti Baru, who retired from the service of the corporation, Mele Kyari, open up to Nigerians his plans for the NNPC, and with which his contract of service would mostly be appraised.

Perhaps appreciating the need for the corporation to change its operational methods which industry experts had condemned as been inefficient and unproductive, Mele Kyari had said: "Going forward, we will seek to continuously entrench transparency, accountability, and performance excellence across all NNPC operations, and we will put the necessary structures in place to ensure compliance with these principles."

He explained that, "in the next couple of weeks, the COOs (chief operating officers) will join me to unveil the NNPC roadmap towards global excellence," adding that the proposed roadmap, "will guide our aspirations to achieve sustained outstanding performance to meet the short and long term growth objectives of the corporation as we transit to a national energy champion."

Mele Kyari, even disclosed that the corporation would deeply entrench technology and innovation in its operations to, "refine our business processes in line with best industry practice, improve efficiency, block leakages and create desirable outcomes that will strengthen the NNPC brand."

He called for the workers of the corporation to work on this path with him, explaining that: "To build this brand, there is need to improve the synergy of teams and commitment to business objectives towards a unified enterprise view."

Key priorities

Having indicated the need to cut down on its wastages by blocking leakages and improving efficiency, Mele Kyari, revealed his displeasure over Nigeria's continued reliance on imported petrol to operate its economy.

He said that: "It is painful that nearly all our petroleum products requirements are imported despite the existence of our three refineries and the numerous attempts by successive governments to encourage the establishment of private refineries. This has to stop."

This from experts' point of views suggest that he would have to find ways to keep the corporation expenditure on petrol subsidy, pipeline repairs and all other sources of leakages minimal.

According to a January 2019 operations and financial report of the NNPC, it spent monies worth N956,765,767,585 on various costs it incurred between October 2017 and October 2018, a length of 13 months.

In addition, there was also a N771,391,262,249 that was spent to keep pump price of petrol in Nigeria at N145 per litre, in line with the desires of the federal government. The NNPC also reportedly imported 21,100,118,126.30 (21 billion) litres of petrol through its Direct Sales-Direct Purchase (DSDP) crude for product swap scheme between January 2018 and January 2019.

It even spent N155,177,555,159 (N155 billion) to repair and maintain its petroleum pipeline across the country, and had a total of 2,278



breakages on its pipeline between January 2018 and January 2019, with the highest of 264 breaks recorded in December 2018, while the lowest of 82 was recorded in May 2018.

More on losses, the NNPC equally recorded a financial deficit of N2,478,250,203 (N2.4 billion) and N27,718,697,974 (N28 billion) on crude oil and products loses respectively. These according to the corporation's books accounted for most of its deficits, and which Mele Kyari, indicated he would fix. With regards to Nigeria's reliance on imported petrol and how he would get it fixed, he said: "We will see to the successful completion of the ongoing rehabilitation of our refineries within record time. We will further encourage the establishment of private refineries either as independents or in some form of public private collaboration. We will also provide every necessary support to the Dangote Refinery in order achieve timely start-ups."

"This we believe will help in making our nation a net exporter of petroleum products within the life of this administration," he added.

But to accomplish this, Mele Kyari, would have to consider as suggested by the Nigerian Natural Resource Charter (NNRC) in its recent report on the workings of the NNPC that, "the problems with the refineries are multi-faceted and well documented – chronic funding, Turn-Around-Maintenance, poor management and political influence."

Downstream sector

Recently, the immediate past president of the Nigerian Association of Energy Economists (NAEE), Prof. Wumi Iledare, disclosed that Nigeria may save more than \$5 billion annually if it

reformed her downstream sector by deregulating its operations to enable for cost-efficiency, however, Mele Kyari, disclosed to Nigerians that he would spend his time at the NNPC finding solution to the challenges of the sector but not clearly stating if a deregulation would happen in sub-sector which holds the largest amount of jobs in the global petrol industry.

According to him: "Alongside, we will continue with the revamping and rehabilitation of all our downstream infrastructure particularly our pipeline network which has been subject of persistent attacks by vandals.

"As a matter of responsibility, the NNPC will continue to ensure availability of petroleum products to our citizens despite the huge challenges associated with this task."

Oil search in the north

Despite analysts' reported censuring of NNPC's search for oil in the north, as well as its recent challenges with same in the Chad Basin, the new man in charge hinted that the oil search would remain a part of the upstream strategy to upgrade Nigeria's reserve base.

This, was, however with his commitment to stabilising the fiscal regime in the industry and supporting processes to pass the Petroleum Industry Bills (PIBs) to revamp the industry.

He explained thus: "In the upstream sector we will continue to work towards resolutions of issues around stability of the Fiscal regimes, passage of the outstanding petroleum laws and engage partners to sustain the current self-funding model and improve production."

"In line with the aspiration to grow our nation's hydrocarbon reserve base to 40 billion barrels by the year 2020. We will sustain the tempo of the ongoing exploration campaign in the frontier basins, especially the Gongola Basin where His Excellency Mr. President flagged off the spudding of the Kolmani River II early this year," Mele Kyari, added, while noting that the corporation's upstream subsidiary, the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) would be supported to grow.

More gas for electricity generation

On its natural gas business, the NNPC recently disclosed that between January 2018 and January 2019, a total of 300.35 billion cubic feet (bcf) of gas was flared in Nigeria, while 468.23bcf was monetised and sent to the domestic economy with the power sector getting 291.04bcf and domestic industries – 177.19bcf.

It also stated that 1342.99bcf of gas was monetised for the export market where the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) got

1199.79bcf of the supply for the period, leaving the balance of 79.94bcf, 38.96bcf and 27.30bcf for the Escravos Gas to Liquid (EGTL); Natural Gas Liquids/Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG); and West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) respectively. In his plan for gas, Mele Kyari, hinted that the power sector would get more volumes to produce more electricity for the country.

According to the new NNPC boss, "On the gas sector, our strategic aspiration is to open the domestic market further to support improved power generation and the growth of gas-based industries. NNPC will be ready to partner and support stakeholders along the power value chain to guarantee improved power generation and transmission and boost industrial growth."

Openness taking a front seat

Although he had hinted on this when he was first announced, and with the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) amongst others urging him to make this a priority going by the corporation's history with business opacity, Mele Kyari, said he would expand the space for operational accountability in the NNPC.

He noted that for the NNPC to maintain positive image, it needed to show more transparency in its operations and render shared values of integrity and professionalism at all levels of its works.

He even promised that, "the COOs and I will take full responsibility to ensure that the necessary enablers are in place to guarantee the excellent performance of businesses under their respective portfolios," adding that they will provide the needed leadership with inspiration and integrity.

"We will broaden our involvement in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) commitment of the federation in order to further elevate citizens' participation in the business of our national oil company.

"Under my leadership, NNPC will strive to be more credible, competent and accountable institution that manages the oil resources on behalf of the citizens of Nigeria in accordance with its mandate and the core persuasions of President Muhammadu Buhari," said Mele Kyari, who also noted that he has a strong foundation to build on, and willing partners to work with.

"Building on our experience in EITI reporting and close collaboration with NEITI, NNPC is now committed to joining the EITI's targeted effort on State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) transparency as a means of sharing best practices and improving disclosure of information on the management of the nation's oil and gas revenues," he explained.

It is painful that nearly all our petroleum products requirements are imported despite the existence of our three refineries and the numerous attempts by successive governments to encourage the establishment of private refineries. This has to stop



RICE FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

Congratulations

We heartily congratulate Mallam Abba Kyari on his reappointment as Chief of Staff to the President.

You reappointment is a testimony to the quality of your character as well as your commitment and loyalty to the President and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

We are witnesses to these qualities during our interactions with you in the area of rice sufficiency and food security.

On behalf of Nigeria's 12 Million rice farmers we are, indeed, grateful to Mr. President for rewarding an efficient, trustworthy and silent achiever.

RIFAN looks forward to working with you further to deliver on Mr. President's food security agenda.

Mallam Abba Kyari
Chief of Staff to the
President of Nigeria

Signed

Aminu M. Goronyo
National President

Chief Livinus Nwangwagwa
National Secretary

PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

Higher, Further Education Institutions from Six Continents Declare Climate Emergency

Bennett Oghifo

Networks representing more than 7,000 higher and further education institutions from six continents have announced that they are declaring a Climate Emergency, and agreed to undertake a three-point plan to address the crisis through their work with students.

This is contained in a statement by UN Environment, which also said the three-point plan includes: Committing to going carbon neutral by 2030 or 2050 at the very latest; Mobilising more resources for action-oriented climate change research and skills creation; and Increasing

the delivery of environmental and sustainability education across curricula, campus and community outreach programmes.

The statement said the letter, organised by The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education, known as EAUC, the US-based higher education climate action organisation, Second Nature, and UN Environment's Youth and Education Alliance, marks the first time further and higher education establishments have come together to make a collective commitment to address the climate emergency.

Signed by universities including Strathmore University (Kenya), Tongji University (China), KEDGE Business School (France), University

of Glasgow (UK), California State University (USA), Zayed University (UAE) and the University of Guadalajara (Mexico), the call is also backed by major global education networks such as the Global Alliance and the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative, which have made commitments to meeting the suggested carbon neutrality targets.

"What we teach shapes the future. We welcome this commitment from Universities to go climate neutral by 2030 and to scale-up their efforts on campus," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UN Environment. "Young people are increasingly at the forefront of calls for more action on climate and environmental challenges. Initiatives which

directly involve the youth in this critical work are a valuable contribution to achieving environmental sustainability."

Examples of best practices for sustainability on campus include Kenya's Strathmore University, which runs on clean energy and has set up its own 600 kilowatt photovoltaic grid tie system, as well as Tongji University in China, which has significantly invested in delivering a sustainability education curriculum and is encouraging other education institutions to do the same. In the United States, the University of California has committed to the system-wide goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2025, while others, such as the American University and Colgate University, have

already achieved carbon neutrality.

Speaking in support of the action, Charlotte Bonner, a Director for Students Organising for Sustainability said: "Young people around the world feel that schools, colleges and universities have been too slow to react to the crisis that is now bearing down on us. We welcome the news that they are declaring a climate emergency, we have no time to lose. We will be calling on those who haven't yet supported this initiative, to come on board. Of course, the most important element is the action that follows."

The expectation is that over 10,000 institutions of higher and further education will come on board before the end of the

2019, with governments invited to support their leadership with incentives to take action.

EAUC is the alliance for sustainability leadership in education. EAUC represents over 200 institutions with a combined total of 2 million students and nearly 400,000 staff with a spending budget of over £25 billion. We help leaders, academics and professionals to drive sustainability to the heart of their post-16 education institutions. Sustainable universities and colleges are more successful institutions in the longer-term. They report better financial and operational resilience, achieve better outcomes for students, provide greater societal impact and deliver world-leading research and innovation.

Builders, Civil Engineers Advised to Use Made-in-Nigeria Premium Steel Products

Fadekemi Ajakaiye

Premium Steel and Mines Limited (PSML) has urged local builders and civil engineers to use the company's world-class steel products that are produced in conformity with the United Kingdom BS 4449:2005 grade for their building and construction projects.

PSML Chief Executive Officer Prasanta Mishra made this plea at the presentation of some finished products of the one million tons per annum rolling mill to a group of businesspersons who visited the Ovwian-Aladja Delta State-based factory, recently.

He urged builders and civil engineers in the country to embrace and use locally manufactured Premium steel bars for their construction works, remarking that the products compare with similar imports from Europe and China.

PSML currently ranks amongst Nigeria's foremost

suppliers of certified steel products to ongoing national projects including railway, refineries, bridges, flyovers, malls, and high-rise buildings, the company's helmsman affirmed.

He said "Only buildings and structures that constructed with certified quality steel and casting products can withstand the devastating impacts of shocks and quakes."

Also adding that the demand for quality steel is undoubtedly increasing in Nigeria in the wake of recent building collapses, Mr. Mishra said PSML is ready to meet customers demand for quality steel.

Other SON (Standards Organization of Nigeria) certified products such as reinforcement Premium re-bars that are produced at the factory were also showcased during the excursion.

Mr. Mishra said that the steel products are manufactured at

the company's newly groomed 18-stand rolling mill and tailored to meet the evolving needs of Nigeria's building and construction industry.

Commissioned a year ago, the PSML state-of-the-art equipment plant was re-built by the Austro-German Consortium to produce competitive market products for the construction industry.

"We are continuously transforming to be a future ready organisation that could meet the growing challenges of modernisation, re-invention and restructuring," Mr. Mishra added.

Adding that PSML is conscious of the evolving needs of the construction industry, the company's director said: "We will continue to invest in new technologies, state-of-the-art equipment as well as R&D (research and development) to meet growing demand of the construction industry for quality steel and casting

products."

PSML Head of Sales and Marketing Ujjwal Sinha had in his remarks said: "Our

products are accessible in all markets across the country and are competitively priced to cater to all categories of

customers, just as we offer the best applications to forestall building collapse and undue threats."



PSML Chief Executive Officer Prasanta Mishra showing businesspersons finished products of the one million tons per annum rolling mill at Ovwian-Aladja, Delta State, during a tour of the factory... recently

Spotlight Africa Set to Honour 150 LAWMA Women Sweepers

Fadekemi Ajakaiye

Spotlight African Network, a non-profit organisation is set to honour 150 LAWMA female sweepers by the month.

This was stated at a press conference and unveiling of brand ambassadors, held in Lagos recently.

The Convener, Spotlight African Network, Barr. Nonye Mike-Nnaji stated that the organisation is set up to foster, advocate, inspire, empower and invest in the human capital of diverse groups and communities in Africa.

"Our sole aim is to birth the continent where every individual can live out to their fullest potential through a power network of varied human investment," she said.

"We started our work in Jos in 2007 where we ran various leadership programs for public and private high schools. We continue to scale up our reach

and have recorded impactful results over the years to over 30,000 people," she stated.

She stated that the theme for 2019 edition is "Women Making a Difference Community Service Leadership Awards." Spotlight Africa in partnership with LAWMA is recognising 150 diligent and devoted Lagos Females Street Sweepers including the street sweepers who have lost their lives on duty. These women in their everyday work have exceeded all expectations and are worthy of our applause.

The objective of this event is to celebrate the women who are making a difference by keeping our highways and communities clean and to carefully put in place long lasting sustainability plans that continues to guarantee their safety, growth and impact in society, she said.

She stated that this is considered an inspirational award event; a joint initiative that

awards, rewards, motivates and inspires women who through their mundane work have shown incredible dedication and excellent leadership. Most of all, every morning on the streets of Lagos; they preach one message - DIGNITY IN LABOUR

The event which is scheduled to hold later this month, will bring together over 150 select women who have stood out in their day to day lives as 'sweepers' to be inspired, trained and rewarded.

The MD LAWMA, Mr. Ola Oresanya, expressed his appreciation to the kind gesture of the organisation, stating that the sweeping programme itself is a poverty eradication initiative of Lagos state.

He stated that these sweepers are the unsung heroes who respond to accidents, suicides, eye witness reports, etc and their presence keeps a lot of people off the street and off crime.

Govts, Organisations, Businesses, Individuals Should Reflect Climate Change in Decision, Says UN Report

Bennett Oghifo

UN Climate Change Annual Report has stipulated that climate change be reflected in almost every decision that governments, organisations, businesses, investors and individuals make for years to come.

The report, launched recently, also looks ahead at the work to come, in particular the need to put the final touches to the Paris Agreement Work Programme in 2019, for nations to revise upwards their Nationally Determined Contributions.

According to a statement by UN Climate Change, the Annual Report highlights the progress made on tackling climate change in 2018 and the ways in which the international community can raise ambition and achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

"Stepping up action has never been more urgent. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special

report on the impacts of global warming at 1.5 °C, requested at COP21, made this crystal clear," said UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa. "We are running out of time to stay under this limit," she added.

"I have hope. Alongside new scientific evidence and the increasingly observable signs of climate change - from melting glaciers to massive storms - 2018 showed that the world is now ready and determined to act. As this annual report illustrates, the UNFCCC secretariat continued to support tirelessly the global climate platform that supports and encourages this progress."

The report covers the key achievements of the UNFCCC intergovernmental process and the activities of the secretariat, particularly the impacts of those activities in support of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

The statement said, "For example, at COP24 in December 2018 the world agreed the

majority of the guidelines to put the Paris Agreement into action through the Katowice climate package.

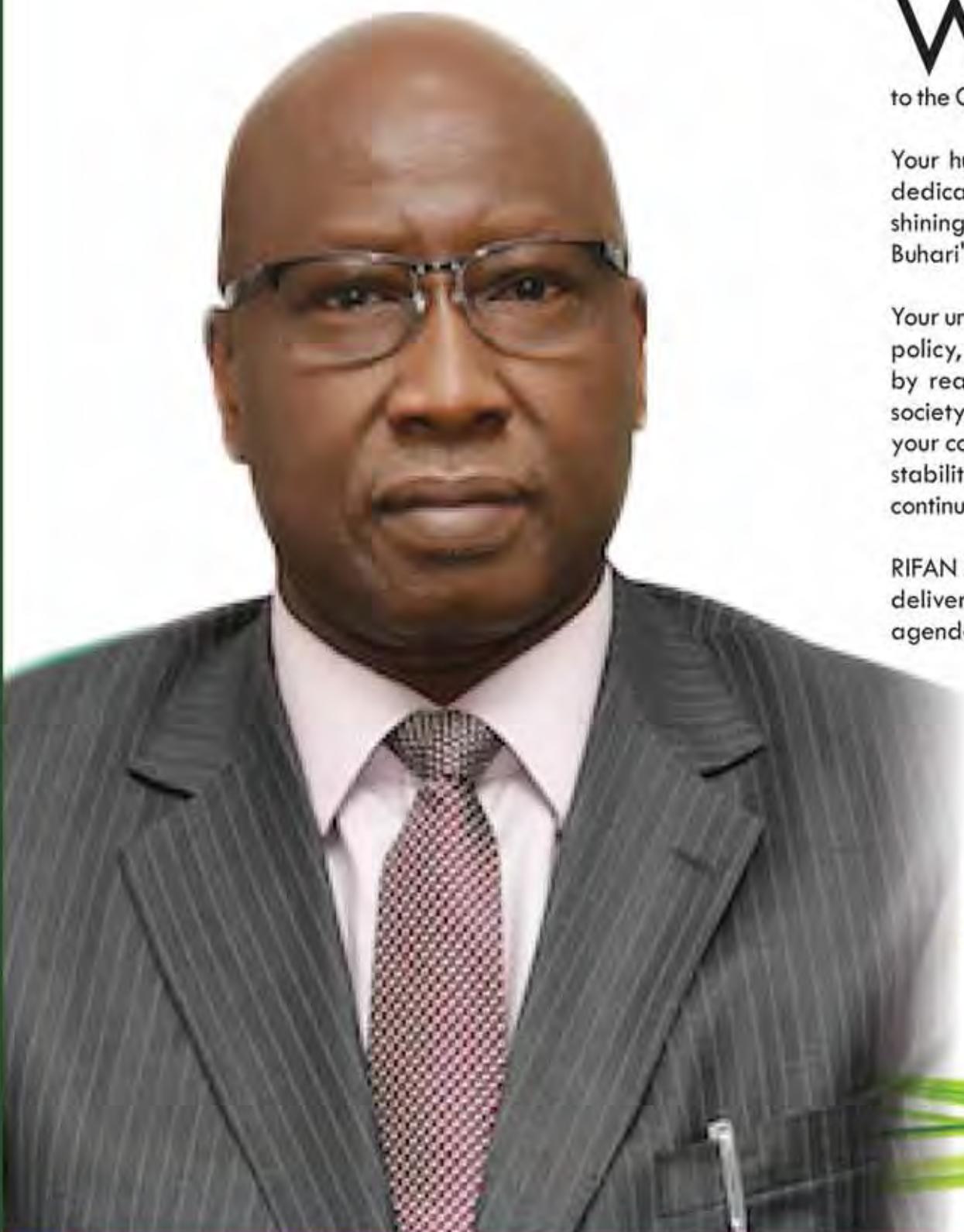
"The package provides the operational framework for climate action and guidance on tracking and evaluating efforts at the national and international levels. It outlines how countries will report on their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs - national climate action plans under the Paris Agreement), the specific actions they will take and how they can communicate their progress. This includes efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the inevitable impacts of climate change, as well as financial support for climate action in developing countries."

While current pledges under the NDCs fall far short of where the international community needs to go to achieve its climate goals, by finalising the Katowice climate package nations showed they are committed to increasing their ambition.



RICE FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

Congratulations



We heartily congratulate Mr. Boss Gidahyelda Mustapha on his reappointment as Secretary to the Government of the Federation.

Your humility, selflessness, team spirit and dedication to duty stands you out as a shining light of President Muhammadu Buhari's Administration.

Your uncommon grasp of politics and public policy, your capacity for building bridges by reaching out to all facets of Nigerian society, particularly in times of crises, and your commitment to our nation's peace and stability makes you the right person to continue in the position.

RIFAN looks forward to working with you to deliver on the President's food security agenda.

**MR. BOSS
GIDAHYELDA MUSTAPHA**
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION

Signed

Aminu M. Goronyo National President	Chief Livinus Nwangwagwa National Secretary
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PETAN Tasks Mele Kyari on Increased Investment in Oil Exploration

Peter Uzoho

As the new Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mr. Mele Kolo Kyari settles down to steer the ship of the state-owned oil company, the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), has tasked him to among other things, push for increased investment in oil exploration activities.

This, according to the association would catalyse Nigeria's economic diversification dream.

The Chairman of PETAN, Mr. Bank-Anthony Okoroafor, gave the advice in an article, while pledging the association's support for Mele Kyari.

According to Okoroafor, to achieve a 45 billion reserve, "we must carry out exploration and drill more wells. Nigeria has the lowest well services activity in the world. Most of the International Oil Companies (IOCs) are not

exploring and drilling activity is minimal."

He added: "Your good office with the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) and critical stakeholders must look into this to ensure the operating companies explore and drill more wells.

"NNPC also needs to intensify exploration in all the inland basins".

According to him, "the shallow water and onshore contribute about 60 per cent of Nigeria production."

He added that the Deepwater had contributed more than \$100 billion to the government in the past 10 years, noting that potential exists for future investment above \$70 billion if we can put the right things in place."

He cautioned that Nigeria should "not use Deepwater to kill shallow water," saying to address low exploration in Deepwater, Mele Kyari should use stick and carrot approach on

companies that do not invest in exploration.

He added: "We are carrying a reserve value of about 37 billion barrels and 174 tcf gas. I believe our reserve is about 200 billion barrels and 400 tcf gas.

"We must as a country invest in exploration now that oil is fast going out of fashion to derive the full value from our natural resources and use it quickly to diversify our economy and improve on our infrastructure."

"Government needs to create incentives towards exploration for reserve replacement, urge development of allocated but un-developed blocks and increase in production enhanced; with a total of two billion barrels produced from Nigeria's Deepwater space since inception, the contribution to national production by Deepwater operations has consistently been on the rise since the NOGICD Act."



L-R: Group Executive Director, Corporate Services, Nosak Group, Osagie Ogunbor; Group Chief Operating Officer, Thomas Oloriegebe; Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Toni Ogunbor; Managing Director, Lekki Free Trade Zone Development Company (LFTZDC), Xigong Huang Deputy Managing Director, Popson Popoola Jaiyesimi, and Group Executive Director, Operations and Production, Nosak Group, Osaheri Ogunbor, during the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Nosak Group and LFTZDC in Lagos... recently

Fidelity Organises Campus Activation, Targets Increased Customer Base

Ugo Aliogo

As part of efforts to promote financial literacy, Fidelity Bank Plc has organised a campus activation programme at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Yaba Lagos with a focus to bring on-board 3,000 new account holders.

Speaking at the event yesterday in Lagos, the Divisional Head Retail Banking, Fidelity Bank Plc, Richard Madiebo, said the programme was a platform through which the bank engages students during major academic events such as matriculation, student week, convocation and others.

He also stated that part of the objectives of the campus activation was to lecture the students on the

importance of financial literacy, adding that the bank was also focused on creating accounts for those that are not in the banking system.

"We are trying to bring these students to the formal sector because most of them don't have bank accounts; part of the objectives of these campus activation is also to lecture them on the importance of financial literacy.

"So those that doesn't have account, we open account for them and those that have accounts, we lecture them on why they should bank with fidelity because we are here to provide solutions to their financial needs.

"This is the first time of coming to the School to organise this

campus activation. Before now our team usually visits because we have students who maintain accounts with Fidelity Bank," he stated.

Madiebo, who was represented at the event by the Flex Product Manager, Fidelity Bank, Johnson Akaolisa, explained that most of the accounts created were done digitally.

According to Madiebo, "Today, we are focusing on 3,000 students, which we have started. Presently, we have close to 500 students who have on-boarded. Our target is not only the students, but the lecturers; we also want to meet the needs of the lecturers because some of them want consumer loans, and also provide them with solutions for their retail needs."

ARM Life Named among 'Companies to Inspire Africa'

Nume Ekeghe

The London Stock Exchange (LSE) has recognised ARM Life Plc, following the company's contribution to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

This honour came after the company was featured in the 'Companies to Inspire Africa 2019 report', which was published by PwC Africa in conjunction with the LSE. The NSE, recently partnered with the LSE and PwC Africa to host participating companies, market operators and international participants in Lagos.

The British Deputy High Commissioner would also host a networking reception, and select fast-growing companies in Africa, to celebrate the launch of the report in Lagos. According to the LSEG, the criteria for giving the awards to ARM Life were its high standards of corporate governance, year-on-year growth trajectory, ethical business practices: challenging the status quo and being the benchmark for competition in this regard.

The Managing Director, ARM Life, Mr Stephen Alangbo, while speaking on the recognition said,

"This in turn makes us a delight to our customers and partners thereby gaining their loyalty."

He explained that the company's year-on-year growth achieved in gross premium written, profitability and policy count were attributable to the unique strategy and values of the organisation.

The 2018 financial report of the company showed that ARM Life paid N604.15 million claims to its customer in the year under review, while its gross premium earned rose from N3.58 billion in 2017, to N5.699 billion in 2018.

Access Bank Partners She Leads Africa

Access Bank Plc in partnership with She Leads Africa, recently concluded the first phase of #SheMeansBusiness, a Facebook programme aimed at empowering female SMEs on how to leverage digital platforms to drive growth in their businesses. The training, aimed at scaling up the skills of small business owners to take advantage of the captive market on social media platforms in Nigeria and beyond, kicked off in June and has held in Abuja, Lagos, Enugu and Ibadan, with over 500 female business owners in attendance.

A statement from the bank quoted the Executive Director, Retail banking, Access Bank Plc, Victor Etukwu, while speaking in Abuja, to have said: "As one of the fastest growing retail banks in the country, Access Bank is always at the forefront of leveraging technology to drive emerging businesses. The idea behind this partnership and empowerment programme is to give our SME customers an opportunity to expand their access to market and increase their visibility to potential customers.

"There are over two billion

people on Facebook globally and over 65 billion WhatsApp messages exchanged globally on a daily basis. With the right knowledge, our customers can showcase their products to large audiences as well as get leads that will take their businesses forward."

Etukwu further said, "We intend to actualise our promise as the largest retail bank in Africa to provide not just financial services but also non-financial services which we provide knowing that when our customers succeed it will trickle down to us."

MARKET INDICATORS

MONEY AND CREDIT STATISTICS (MILLION NAIRA)

NOVEMBER 2018

Money Supply (M3)	31,794,803.44
-- CBN Bills Held by Money Holding Sectors	6,333,064.28
Money Supply (M2)	25,461,739.17
-- Quasi Money	14,773,076.98
-- Narrow Money (M1)	10,688,662.18
--- Currency Outside Banks	1,711,763.59
--- Demand Deposits	8,976,898.59
Net Foreign Assets (NFA)	18,990,400.78
Net Domestic Assets (NDA)	12,804,402.66
-- Net Domestic Credit (NDC)	26,062,986.22
--- Credit to Government (Net)	2,980,229.66
--- Memo: Credit to Govt. (Net) less FMA	7,093,619.43
--- Memo: Fed. and Mirror Accounts (FMA)	-4,144,571.43
--- Credit to Private Sector (CPS)	23,082,756.56
-Other Assets Net	13,258,583.57
Reserve Money (Base Money)	6,811,192.37
-Currency in Circulation	2,100,129.91
-Banks Reserves	4,366,259.05

• Source - CBN

Money Market Indicators (in Percentage)

Month	March 2018
Inter-Bank Call Rate	15.16
Minimum Rediscount Rate (MRR)	
Monetary Policy Rate (MPR)	14.00
Treasury Bill Rate	11.84
Savings Deposit Rate	4.07
1 Month Deposit Rate	8.82
3 Months Deposit Rate	9.72
6 Months Deposit Rate	10.93
12 Months Deposit Rate	10.21
Prime Lending rate	17.35
Maximum Lending Rate	31.55

• Monetary Policy Rate - 13%

OPEC DAILY BASKET PRICE AS AT FRIDAY, 12 JULY 2019

The price of OPEC basket of fourteen crudes stood at \$67.36 a barrel on Friday, compared with \$67.57 the previous day, according to OPEC Secretariat calculations. The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Djeno (Congo), Oriente (Ecuador), Zafiro (Equatorial Guinea), Rabi Light (Gabon), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela)

SOURCE: OPEC headquarters, Vienna

MARKET NEWS

FMN Shareholders to Receive 120 kobo Dividend as Firm Records N10b Profit

Goddy Egene

Shareholders of integrated food business and agro-allied group, Flour Mills of Nigeria (FMN) Plc are to receive a dividend of 120 kobo per share for the year ended March 3, 2019, showing an increase of 20 per cent compared with 100 kobo paid the previous year.

The audited results of the company, FMN ended the year with a revenue of N527.4 billion compared with N542.7 billion

in 2018. Given the challenging operating environment in Apapa, which the company is located, selling and distribution expenses rose 32 per cent from N6.180 billion to N8.166 billion, while administrative expenses remained at N19.424 billion, compared with N19.423 billion in 2018.

However, the company reduced its financing cost by 30 per cent from N32.7 billion to N22.9 billion, thereby strengthened balance sheet and leading to an increase of 20 per cent in

dividend. FMN posted profit before tax of N10.2 billion as against N16.5 billion in 2018.

Commenting on the result, Group Managing Director, FMN Plc, Paul Gbededo, said: "We have made substantial progress this year, even in the face of an adverse and challenging business environment. Our growth and efficiency initiatives across our various functions and businesses have started to show anticipated gains as we continue to focus on organic sales growth and posi-

tion the business for continuous profitability."

According to him, FMN has undergone several functional and structural changes within the last year, with innovation and focus on its consumers, at the heart of our strategic direction.

"We are positive that we will see even greater achievements in our financials in the following quarters as we continue to focus on value creation for our shareholders. To that end, we will be proposing the declaration of

a dividend to our shareholders with a significant increase over last year," he added.

Also speaking, Chief Finance Officer, Anders Kristiansson, said: "Our strategy to restructure the balance sheet base and optimize the financing costs have started to yield the desired results, as the business showed increasing levels of efficiency. Despite ongoing pressures on consumer disposable income in many of our target categories, we continued delivered a stronger quarter 4

than last year."

Looking ahead, the company said continuous growth is envisaged in key segments such as Food and Agro-Allied, as targeted strategies deliver improved margins and operational efficiencies.

"Continuous implementation of turnaround initiatives in the Agro-allied business, accelerated expansion in the B2C segment, optimal operation of our supply chain and further balance sheet management is expected to result in higher profitability," it added.

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF 13/07/2019

MAIN BOARD		DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)
PRICES FOR PREMIUM BOARD SECURITIES					
NANCIAL SERVICES					
S/N	BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES
1	ACCESS BANK PLC	163,443.04	5.65	6.60 □	222
2	UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	251,365.75	7.35	1.38 □	248
3	ZENITH BANK PLC	686,013.39	21.85	1.16 □	261
ANKING					
4	FBN HOLDINGS PLC	265,625.17	7.40	4.25 □	163
5	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES
6	FBN HOLDINGS PLC	265,625.17	7.40	4.25 □	163
7	SKYE BANK PLC	18,895,421			
8	AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC	4,117.00	0.20		0
9	REGENCY INSURANCE PLC	4,435.33	0.64	3.23 □	13
10	WEMA BANK PLC	23,144.68	0.60	3.45 □	22
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99	WEMA BANK PLC	23,144.68	0.60	3.45 □	22



Tuesday, July 16, 2019

Thisday Afrinvest 40 Index shed 1.1%

Yesterday, the Thisday Afrinvest 40 Index shed 113bps to settle at 1,243.19 as a result of losses in **GUARANTY** (-3.0%) **ZENITH BANK** (-1.1%), and **DANGCEM** (-1.7%). These stocks cumulatively account for 40.8% of the index.

Bearish Run Continues in the Domestic Bourse... ASI down 79bps

Sustained sell pressures in the local bourse dragged the benchmark index southwards as the ASI declined 79bps to settle at 28,341.03 points while YTD loss worsened to -9.8%. Losses in **DANGCEM** (-1.7%), **GUARANTY** (-3.0%) and **MTNN** (-0.5%) were the major drags to market performance. Consequently, investors lost N110.0bn as market capitalisation fell to N13.8tn. Activity level strengthened as volume and value traded advanced 74.5% and 46.9% to 175.2m units and N2.1bn in that order. The top traded stocks by volume were **WAPIC** (42.0m units), **UBA** (24.2m units) and **GUARANTY** (16.0m units) while top traded stocks by value were **NESTLE** (N681.7m), **GUARANTY** (N478.8m) and **DANGCEM** (N191.2m).

Bearish Sector Performance

The performance across sectors was bearish as 5 of 6 indices ended the trading day in red. The Banking index led losers, shedding 1.7% stemming from losses in **GUARANTY** (-3.0%), **ZENITH** (-1.1%) and **FBNH** (-2.5%) while sell-offs in **DANGCEM** (-1.7%) and **WAPCO** (-1.1%) led to decline in the Industrial Goods index (-1.0%). In the same vein, the Oil & Gas (-0.7%), Insurance (-0.3%) and AFRI-ICT (-0.3%) indices lost as investors exited positions in **TOTAL** (-7.1%), **NEM** (-3.1%), **CHIPLC** (-9.1%) and **MTNN** (-0.5%). On the flip side, the Consumer Goods index (+0.2%) was yesterday's lone gainer, following bargain hunting in **NIGERIAN BREWERIES** (+0.9%), **NESTLE** (+0.2%) and **DANGFLOUR** (+0.6%) which lifted the index.

Investor Sentiment Weakens

Investor sentiment as measured by market breadth (advance/decline ratio) declined to 0.5x from 0.6x recorded on Friday as 10 stocks gained against 21 stocks that lost. The top gainers yesterday were **CORNERST** (+10.0%), **AIICO** (+7.7%) and **LASACO** (+6.9%) while the top losers were **CHIPLC** (-9.1%), **SOVRENINS** (-8.7%) and **COURTVILLE** (-8.3%). For the rest of the week, we still expect the bearish run to continue. Nevertheless, we expect the release of half year corporate results and bargain hunting opportunities to drive activities in the market.

THISDAY AFRINVEST 40 INDEX

Fundamental Performance Metrics for THISDAY AFRINVEST 40 Index												
Ticker	Current Price	Previous Price Change	Current Weighting	Price Change YTD	Price Change Index to Date	ROE	ROA	P/E	P/BV	Dividend Yield	Earnings Yield	
THISDAY AFRINVEST 40	1,243.19	-1.13%		-15.3%	24.3%	17.2%	5.7%	4.8x	0.7x	6.7%	16.5%	
1 Guaranty Trust Bank PLC	29.00	-3.0%	19.2%	-15.8%	-15.9%	33.1%	5.3%	4.3x	1.4x	9.2%	23.1%	
2 Zenith Bank PLC	18.80	-1.1%	12.0%	-18.4%	-18.4%	24.7%	3.2%	3.2x	0.8x	14.9%	31.7%	
3 Dangote Cement PLC	170.00	-1.7%	9.6%	-10.4%	-8.6%	40.1%	21.8%	7.7x	2.8x	9.4%	13.0%	
4 Nestle Nigeria PLC	1,228.00	0.2%	8.0%	-17.3%	-16.7%	81.2%	27.4%	20.6x	15.5x	4.8%	4.9%	
5 Nigerian Breweries PLC	58.50	0.9%	4.9%	-31.6%	-25.3%	9.5%	4.4%	26.8x	2.7x	4.1%	3.7%	
6 FBN Holdings Plc	5.85	-2.5%	4.6%	-26.4%	-26.9%	10.0%	1.1%	3.5x	0.4x	4.4%	28.5%	
7 Cement Co Northern Nigeria PLC	14.50	0.0%	4.0%	-25.3%	-25.3%	4.7%	4.3%	4.2x	0.6x	2.8%	23.8%	
8 United Bank for Africa PLC	5.85	-0.8%	3.9%	-24.0%	-25.0%	15.5%	1.7%	2.5x	0.4x	14.4%	40.2%	
9 International Breweries PLC	17.00	0.0%	2.3%	-44.3%	-46.0%	-15.7%	-1.9%			4.7x	-6.3%	
10 SEPLAT Petroleum Development C	530.00	0.0%	3.5%	-17.2%	-17.2%	10.1%	6.3%	5.1x	0.5x	3.6%	19.5%	
11 Access Bank PLC	6.60	-1.5%	3.9%	-2.9%	1.5%	22.2%	2.1%	1.7x	0.4x	7.6%	59.5%	
12 Ecobank Transnational Inc	9.95	0.0%	2.4%	-28.9%	-30.4%	16.3%	1.1%	2.8x	0.5x		36.0%	
13 Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC	40.00	0.0%	2.6%	-16.6%	-16.6%	30.3%	4.6%	6.0x	1.6x	3.8%	16.7%	
14 Unilever Nigeria PLC	33.00	0.0%	2.6%	-10.8%	-10.8%	12.7%	7.7%	18.4x	2.2x	4.5%	5.4%	
15 Lafarge Africa PLC	13.50	-1.1%	2.2%	8.4%	12.5%	-2.1%	-0.7%			0.9x	-4.4%	
16 Guinness Nigeria PLC	47.50	0.0%	1.0%	-34.0%	-34.0%	6.8%	3.7%	15.9x	1.2x	3.9%	6.3%	
17 Okomo Oil Palm PLC	61.95	-0.1%	1.3%	-18.7%	-18.7%	21.0%	16.0%	9.8x	2.0x	4.8%	10.2%	
18 Total Nigeria PLC	130.00	-7.1%	1.0%	-36.0%	-36.0%	19.3%	4.5%	7.6x	1.5x	13.1%	13.2%	
19 11 PLC	158.00	0.0%	1.3%	-14.8%	-14.8%	26.1%	11.3%	6.6x	1.6x	5.2%	15.1%	
20 Flour Mills of Nigeria PLC	16.20	0.0%	1.0%	-29.9%	-27.0%	2.8%	1.0%	16.1x	0.5x	6.5%	6.2%	
21 Oando PLC	4.00	0.0%	1.1%	-20.0%	-16.7%	14.3%	2.5%	1.8x	0.2x		55.1%	
22 Fidelity Bank PLC	1.62	0.0%	1.0%	-20.2%	-20.2%	12.7%	1.4%	1.9x	0.2x	6.8%	51.7%	
23 Transnational Corp of Nigeria	1.03	1.0%	0.9%	-22.0%	-20.2%	16.4%	3.6%	3.9x	0.6x	2.9%	26.0%	
24 Dangote Sugar Refinery PLC	10.35	-2.4%	0.7%	-32.1%	-30.1%	22.3%	12.6%	5.2x	1.2x	10.7%	19.2%	
25 Diamond Bank PLC										0.6x	2.4%	
26 FCMB Group Plc	1.58	0.6%	0.6%	-16.4%	-12.2%	8.8%	1.2%	2.0x	0.2x	8.9%	50.6%	
27 UAC of Nigeria PLC	5.90	-1.7%	0.4%	-39.5%	-38.2%	-7.9%	-3.6%			0.3x	10.8%	-33.2%
28 Sterling Bank PLC	2.20	-0.5%	0.7%	15.8%	15.8%	9.3%	0.9%	6.8x	0.6x		14.7%	
29 Presco PLC	44.80	0.0%	0.3%	-30.0%	-30.0%	7.3%	4.6%	11.7x	1.7x	4.6%	8.5%	
30 NASCON Allied Industries PLC	15.50	0.0%	0.3%	-13.9%	-13.9%	32.2%	12.9%	10.1x	3.3x	6.7%	9.9%	
31 Forte Oil PLC	20.70	0.0%	0.3%	-24.7%	-26.1%	48.9%	7.4%			1.6x	-10.1%	
32 Union Bank of Nigeria PLC	7.50	0.0%	0.5%	33.9%	33.9%	6.6%	1.2%	13.1x	1.0x		7.6%	
33 Julius Berger Nigeria PLC	19.95	0.0%	0.3%	-0.7%	-9.7%	19.9%	2.3%	4.0x	0.7x	10.2%	24.7%	
34 PZ Cussons Nigeria PLC	6.20	0.0%	0.2%	-48.8%	-49.6%					0.6x	2.4%	
35 Chemical and Allied Products P	27.50	0.0%	0.2%	-21.1%	-21.1%	68.7%	31.5%	9.3x	5.8x	11.3%	10.7%	
36 Wema Bank PLC	0.61	0.0%	0.2%	-3.2%	-3.2%	7.3%	0.7%	6.3x	0.5x	4.9%	15.7%	
37 Beta Glass PLC	66.35	0.0%	0.2%	-2.9%	-2.9%	18.0%	12.0%	6.4x	1.1x	2.2%	15.5%	
38 Dangote Flour Mills Plc	17.50	0.6%	0.5%	155.5%	165.2%	-15.8%	-5.1%			2.7x	-6.4%	
39 Transcorp Hotels Plc	5.40	0.0%	0.1%	-11.5%	-11.5%	6.0%	3.2%	12.0x	0.7x	2.8%	8.3%	
40 AXA Mansard Insurance PLC	1.80	0.0%	0.1%	-1.6%	-1.6%	11.0%	3.1%	7.9x	0.9x		12.7%	

Top 10 Gainers			Top 10 Trades by Volume		
Ticker	Price	Price Chg %	Ticker	Volume	Price Chg %
CORNERST	0.22	10.0%	WAPIC	42.0	0.0%
AIICO	0.70	7.7%	UBA	24.2	-0.8%
LASACO	0.31	6.9%	GUARANTY	16.0	-3.0%
VITAFoam	3.70	4.5%	LASACO	15.1	6.9%
CONOIL	20.40	2.0%	TRANSCORP	14.6	1.0%
TRANSCORP	1.03	1.0%	FBNH	13.4	-2.5%
NB	58.50	0.9%	ZENITHBANK	7.8	-1.1%
FCMB	1.58	0.6%	ACCESS	4.9	-1.5%
DANGFLOUR	17.50	0.6%	COURTVILLE	2.8	-8.3%
NESTLE	1,228.00	0.2%	STERLNBANK	2.0	-0.5%

Top 10 Losers			Top 10 Trades by Value		
Ticker	Price</th				

Avuru: Seplat's \$700m Gas Investment will address Nigeria's Power Deficit

Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc's planned \$700m Assa North /Ohaji South (ANOH) gas and condensate field project, at completion, is expected to contribute significantly in addressing Nigeria's deficit in thermal power delivery, generate significant earnings and deliver returns to shareholders of the

company.

The Chief Executive Officer, Seplat, Mr. Austin Avuru, disclosed this when he led other two presenters from the company to make a presentation titled: 'Stability, Performance, Growth' to capital market operators at the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) in Lagos.

The ANOH gas processing project is managed by Anoh Gas Processing Company (AGPC), an incorporated joint venture between Seplat and the Nigerian Gas Company. AGPC is expected to develop a 300 Mscfd midstream plant on OML 53 to process future wet gas production from the upstream unit.

Avuru said Nigeria holds 37 per cent of total proved gas reserves on the continent, adding that the majority is concentrated in the Niger Delta.

According to him, Domestic Supply Obligation (DSO) price has increased to commercial levels and non-DSO prices are determined on a willing buyer/willing seller basis opening up

new vista of growth for the Seplat's gas business.

"Projected to grow to a population of 450 million people by 2050 (highest population growth in Africa) and become the third most populated country globally (behind only China and India). This will spur a high demand from power industries and

other commercial enterprises. "Current capacity deficit in thermal power generation provides immediate headroom to place additional gas volumes (significant installed but non-operating generation capacity seven per cent royalty on gas revenues as opposed to 20 per cent on oil production," he said.

A Mutual fund (Unit Trust) is an investment vehicle managed by a SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) registered Fund Manager. Investors with similar objectives buy units of the Fund so that the Fund Manager can buy securities that will generate their desired return.

An ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) is a type of fund which owns the assets (shares of stock, bonds, oil futures, gold bars, foreign currency, etc.) and divides ownership of those assets into shares. Investors can buy these 'shares' on the

floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

A REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) is an investment vehicle that allows both small and large investors to part-own real estate ventures (eg. Offices, Houses, Hospitals) in proportion to their investments. The assets are divided into shares that are traded on the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

GUIDE TO DATA:

Date: All fund prices are quoted in Naira as at 12-Jul-2019, unless otherwise stated.

DAILY PRICE LIST FOR MUTUAL FUNDS, REITS and ETFS

MUTUAL FUNDS / UNIT TRUSTS

AFRINVEST ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD

Web: www.afrinvest.com; Tel: +234 818 885 6757

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Afrinvest Equity Fund 143.96 144.11 -9.06%

Afrinvest Plutus Fund 100.00 100.00 8.11%

Nigeria International Debt Fund 273.54 273.54 0.12%

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL PARTNERS LTD

Web: www.acapng.com, Tel: +234 1 291 2406, +234 1 291 2868

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

ACAP Canary Growth Fund 0.88 0.88 4.18%

ACAP Income Funds 0.76 0.76 33.02%

AICO CAPITAL LTD

Web: www.aiicocapital.com, Tel: +234-1-2792974

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

AICO Money Market Fund 100.00 100.00 13.02%

AICO Balanced Fund 2.33 2.36 5.03%

ARM INVESTMENT MANAGERS LTD

Web: www.arm.com.ng; Tel: 0700 CALLARM (0700 225 5276)

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

ARM Aggressive Growth Fund 14.83 15.27 -10.64%

ARM Discovery Fund 335.81 345.94 -5.84%

ARM Ethical Fund 28.32 29.17 0.28%

ARM Money Market Fund 1.00 1.00 12.82%

AXA MANSARD INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Web: www.axamansard.com; Tel: +2341-4488482

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

AXA Mansard Equity Income Fund N/A N/A N/A

AXA Mansard Money Market Fund N/A N/A N/A

CAPITAL EXPRESS ASSET AND TRUST LIMITED

Web: www.capitalexpressassetandtrust.com; Tel: +234 803 307 5048

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

CEAT Fixed Income Fund 1.85 1.85 14.19%

CHAPELHILL DENHAM MANAGEMENT LTD

Web: www.chapelhilldenham.com, Tel: +234 461 0691

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Chapelhill Denham Money Market Fund 100.00 100.00 13.63%

Paramount Equity Fund 12.00 12.11 1.64%

Women's Investment Fund 106.66 107.27 2.97%

CORDROS ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Web: www.cordros.com, Tel: 019036947

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Cordros Money Market Fund 100.00 100.00 12.36%

Cordros Milestone Fund 2023 95.40 96.01

Cordros Milestone Fund 2028 97.72 98.43

CORONATION ASSET MANAGEMENT

Web: www.coronationam.com, Tel: 012366215

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Coronation Money Market Fund 1.00 1.00 13.37%

Coronation Balanced Fund 0.83 0.84 -2.84%

Coronation Fixed Income Fund 1.21 1.21 7.89%

EDC FUNDS MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Web: www.ecobank.com Tel: 012265281

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class A 100.00 100.00 12.34%

EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class B 1,000,000.00 1,000,000.00 12.25%

FBNQUEST ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD

Web: www.fbnquest.com; Tel: +234-81 0082 0082

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

FBN Fixed Income Fund 1,218.79 1,219.54 9.02%

FBN BALANCED FUND N/A N/A N/A

FBN Money Market Fund N/A N/A N/A

FBN Nigeria Eurobond (USD) Fund - Institutional N/A N/A N/A

FBN Nigeria Eurobond (USD) Fund - Retail N/A N/A N/A

FBN Nigeria Smart Beta Equity Fund N/A N/A N/A

FIRST CITY ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD

Web: www.fcamltd.com; Tel: +234 1 462 2596

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Legacy Money Market Fund 1.00 1.00 10.91%

Legacy Debt Fund 3.46 3.46 6.53%

Legacy Equity Fund 1.09 1.11 -10.74%

Legacy USD Bond Fund 1.06 1.06 2.55%

FSDH ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD

Web: www.fsdhaml.com; Tel: 01-270 4884-5; 01-280 9740-1

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Coral Growth Fund 3,023.17 3,051.35 1.26%

Coral Income Fund 2,942.42 2,942.42 7.39%

FSDH Treasury Bills Fund 100.00 100.00 12.85%

GREENWICH ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Web: www.gtlgroup.com; Tel: +234 1 4619261-2

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Greenwich Plus Money Market Fund 100.00 100.00 12.99%

Nigeria Entertainment Fund 108.76 109.40 1.02%

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Web: www.gdl.com.ng; Tel: +234 9055691122

Fund Name

Bid Price **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

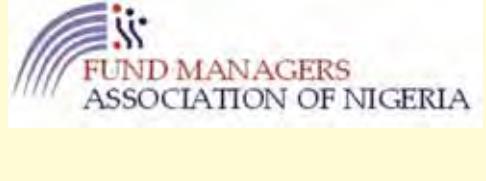
GDL Money Market Fund 10.00 10.00 12.56%

Offer price: The price at which units of a trust or ETF are bought by investors.

Bid Price: The price at which Investors redeem (sell) units of a trust or ETF.

Yield/Total Return: Denotes the total return an investor would have earned on his investment. Money Market Funds report Yield while others report Year-to-date Total Return.

NAV: Is value per share of the real estate assets held by a REIT on a specific date.



INVESTMENT ONE FUNDS MANAGEMENT LTD

enquiries@investment-one.com

Web: www.investment-one.com; Tel: +234 812 992 1045, +234 1 448 8888

Fund Name **Bid Price** **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

Abacus Money Market Fund 100.00 100.00 12.02%

Vantage Balanced Fund 2.13 2.15 -1.35%

Vantage Guaranteed Income Fund 1.00 1.00 15.35%

Kedari Investment Fund (KIF) 132.66 132.75 6.15%

LOTUS CAPITAL LTD fincon@lotuscapitallimited.com

Web: www.lotuscapitallimited.com; Tel: +234 1-291 4626 / +234 1-291 4624

Fund Name **Bid Price** **Offer Price** **Yield / T-Rtn**

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO A QUINTESSENTIAL
PROFESSIONAL AND
CHANGE AGENT**



**MELE KOLO
KYARI**

19TH GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR (GMD), NNPC

YOUR APPOINTMENT BY PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES, MUHAMMADU BUHARI HAS BEEN DESERVEDLY APPLAUDED BY THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STAKEHOLDERS, SIGNPOSTING A GOOD OMEN FOR THE FUTURE OF NIGERIAN OIL INDUSTRY.

IT IS A TESTIMONY TO YOUR PROFESSIONALISM, EXCEPTIONALISM, AND PATRIOTISM WHICH YOU EVINCED IN THE COURSE OF YOUR EXEMPLARY CAREER

AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE REALIZATION OF YOUR VISION TO REPOSITION THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION (NNPC) IN LINE WITH THE NEXT LEVEL AGENDA OF PRESIDENT BUHARI, I WISH YOU A SUCCESSFUL AND EVENTFUL TENURE AS GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE NNPC.



SIGNED:

AMINU BALELE KURFI (DAN-AREWA)
+23480 3301 4135



RICE FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

Congratulations

We heartily congratulate Mr. Godwin Emefiele on his reappointment as the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria.

Your reappointment by Mr. President is, in part, in recognition of your commitment to the delivery of the Federal Government's economic diversification agenda and your tireless effort in support of the nation's agriculture.

As rice farmers, we are particularly grateful for the introduction and efficient management of the Anchor Borrower Program of the Central Bank of Nigeria under your able leadership as Governor. Through you, Mr. President has given Nigeria's rice farmers a new lease of life and repositioned agriculture to become a bigger contributor to the nation's GDP within a period of four years.

As an important stakeholder in Nigeria's agriculture, RIFAN looks forward to further working with you in the coming years to make full food sufficiency a fact of life in Nigeria.



Mr. Godwin Emefiele

Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)

Signed

Aminu M. Goronyo National President	Chief Livinus Nwangwagwa National Secretary
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Worldwide Technical Services Ltd

A WTS Energy Company

JOB VACANCY FOR EXCEPTIONAL CANDIDATES

Due to steady growth and expansion, our Client seeks to employ competent career minded individuals to join a well-established team.

1. Offshore Installation Managers (AD-07-001): Completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters on ships of 3000 gross tonnage or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 and 4 years offshore experience

2. Safety Officer/Assistant Mooring Masters (AD-07-002): Possess approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW code for chief mate on ship of 3000 gross tonnage or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 alongside a related engineering degree. **Experience:** At least 36 months approved seagoing service as specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW code for officer in charge of navigational watch prior to chief mate certification and 24 months further offshore experience in this position in addition to excellent leadership skills.

3. Maintenance Supervisors (AD-07-003): Must have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in Section A-III/2 of the STCW code for Chief engineers on ship of 3000 gross tonnage or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with a degree in Operation and Maintenance of Marine power plants.

Experience: 24 months offshore experience in this position with good leadership skills.

4. Senior Maintenance Technicians Engine (AD-07-004): Possession of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW code for second engineers on ship of 3000 kw propulsion power or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with an engineering degree in Operation and Maintenance of Marine power plants.

Experience: At least 12 months approved seagoing service as specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW code for officer in charge of engineering watch prior to Second engineer certification and 24 months further offshore experience in this position in addition to good communication skills.

5. Senior Maintenance Technicians Deck (AD-07-005): Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for second engineers on ships of 3000 KW propulsion power or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with a degree in marine engineering in addition to related licences and certification.

Experience: At least 12 months approved seagoing service as specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW code for officer in charge of engineering watch prior to second engineer certification and 24 months further offshore experience in this position in addition to good communication skills.

6. Senior Maintenance Technician Process (AD-07-006): Having completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW code for second engineers on ship of 3000 kw propulsion power or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with an engineering degree in Operation and Maintenance of Marine power plants and certificates of training in Gas and water production & separation.

Experience: At least 12 months approved seagoing

service as specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW code for officer in charge of engineering watch prior to Second engineer certification and 24 months further offshore experience in this position in addition to good communication skills.

7. Electro Technical Officer - Instrument Technicians (AD-07-007): Having completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/6 of the STCW code for Electro-Technical Officer in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 accompanied with an approved oil & gas technical training amongst other STCW basic certificates.

Experience: At least 36 months of combined workshop skills training and approved seagoing service of which not less than 30 months shall be seagoing service in the engine department. In addition to the above must have 24 months experience in this position.

8. Cargo Supervisors (AD-07-008): Must have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in Section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters on ship of 3000 gross tonnage or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with a degree in Marine Engineering.

Experience: 24 months offshore experience in Cargo Supervisor position. Must possess Good leadership skills

9. Pump Man (AD-07-009): A/B Certificate II/5 in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with proven Familiarity with Tank operation procedures in particular: Tank Entry Operations, Crude Oil Washing, Water Washing of cargo and SLOP tanks, Purgung and gas freeing Operations, Stability Planning, Good knowledge of hydraulics systems including valves, actuators and solenoid valves, High experience with cargo, ballast and inert systems.

Experience: At least 36 months experience offshore experience / 24 months in this position minimum.

10. Production Supervisors (AD-03-010): Must have completed education in Mechanical engineering and machine design or STCW A-III/2 in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with trainings in advance process operation & oil field operation. Should also have endorsement attesting the recognition of tanker training requirements under the provision of international convention on standards of training certification and watchkeeping for seafarer in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10.

Experience: At least 48 months as a Senior Production operator on an FPSO or equivalent onshore experience and 24 months further experience in this position with proven good leadership skills.

11. Electro Technical Officer – Electricians (AD-07-011): Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/6 of the STCW Code in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10.

Experience: At least 36 months of combined workshop skills training and approved seagoing service of which not less than 30 months shall be seagoing service in the engine department. In addition to the above must have 24 months experience in this position.

12. Mooring Masters (AD-07-012): Must have completed education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in Section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters on ship of 3000 gross tonnage or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10.

Experience: should have at least 36 months approved sea going service in that capacity alongside 24 months offshore experience. Preferably with Mooring Master Approval and logbook including in-depth background in senior position from tanker operation.

13. Deck Foremen (AD-07-013): Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/5 of the STCW code in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10. Mechanical apprenticeship or equivalent training scheme in addition to professional welding qualification.

Experience: Should have 60 months experience as General-Purpose Rating with 24 months offshore experience.

14. Life Extension Work Coordinators (AD-07-014): Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW Code for Chief Engineers on ships of 3000 KW propulsion power or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with a degree in marine engineering in addition to related licences and certification. Candidate should also have good vessel refit experience, particularly Tanker and/or FPSO refit either in the shipyard or offshore in addition to good communication skills.

Experience: 72 months offshore experience as Engine Officer with at least 36 months in this position

15. Life Extension Work SAFOs: (AD-07-015) Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for Chief Mate on ships of 3000 GRT or more in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10. Candidate should also have good vessel refit experience, particularly Tanker and/or FPSO refit either in the shipyard or offshore in addition to good communication skills.

Experience: 72 months offshore experience as Deck Officer with at least 36 months in this position.

16. Pump Operations Supervisors: (AD-07-016) Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence Certification II/5 or III/5 in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10 with proven familiarity with Tank operation procedures in particular: Tank Entry Operations, Crude Oil Washing, Water Washing of cargo and SLOP tanks, Purgung and gas freeing Operations, Stability Planning, Good knowledge of hydraulics systems including valves, actuators and solenoid valves, High experience with cargo, ballast and inert systems. Vast experienced in Routine required maintenance and repairs of cargo pumps.

Experience: 84 months offshore experience with at least 48 months in this position.

17. Deck Operations Technicians: (AD-07-017) Have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/5 of the STCW code in compliance with STCW regulation 1/10. Mechanical apprenticeship or equivalent training scheme in addition to professional Valid welding qualifications, & Electrical apprenticeship or equivalent training. Vast experience in welding, cutting, Lathe and drill machine operation.

Experience: Should have 84 months general offshore experience with at least 36 months in this position.

Interested candidates should send their applications and comprehensive curriculum vitae Containing functional email addresses and mobile telephone numbers quoting the respective job position to recruitnigeria@wtsenergy.com Application closes two weeks after this publication

Please note! This position is open to Nigerian nationals only.
Only qualified candidates will be contacted



Nigerian Bottling Company Ltd. RC 902
(A member of Coca-Cola Bottling Company)

PRESS STATEMENT

EVA TABLE WATER IS SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION - NAFDAC



The National Agency for Food and Drugs, Administration and Control (NAFDAC), has declared that Eva Premium Table Water produced and bottled by Nigerian Bottling Company Limited (NBC) is safe for consumption, assuring consumers and the general public of their safety.

This is contained in a Press Release issued by the agency, titled 'Update on The Two Lots of Eva Water' and signed by its Director General, Professor, Mojisola Adeyeye on Tuesday, July 9, 2019.

Adeyeye noted that the assurance became necessary in the wake of recent alert for the precautionary recall of two batches of Eva Water (75cl) produced in one of NBC's ultra-modern factories, Asejire Plant, Ibadan.

"Following discovery of a default in two lots of Eva bottled water (75cl pack size) produced between 22nd and 23rd May 2019 at the NBC ultra-modern factory at Asejire in Ibadan, the company immediately initiated a recall of the affected lots and voluntarily notified NAFDAC as expected of every responsible quality-driven organization with high priority for Food Safety and safety of its consumers", she stated.

Adeyeye further affirmed that there was no reason for the general public and consumers to panic as laboratory reports obtained from the analysis conducted on all products including Eva Table Water manufactured in the plant does not indicate any health threat.

"It is important to highlight that there is no cause for alarm, as the laboratory reports did not indicate any health threat; the recall was purely precautionary and it is standard food safety practice all over the world", she added.

NAFDAC commended the company for demonstrating high sense of responsibility by voluntarily reporting the issue and initiating a recall process. The DG urges all companies and stakeholders to think of the customers' safety first just like NBC has done in this case. "This is exemplary and should be emulated by all manufacturers" said Adeyeye.

NAFDAC also expressed satisfaction with the corrective and preventive actions that have been put in place by the company to guarantee the quality and safety of Eva Water and all Coca-Cola Products registered by the agency.

Signed
Management
Nigerian Bottling Company Ltd

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
IN THE ABUJA JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDING AT ABUJA
ON FRIDAY THE 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 2019
BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP, HON. JUSTICE B. F. M. NYAKO

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
IN THE ABUJA JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDING AT ABUJA
ON FRIDAY THE 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 2019
BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP, HON. JUSTICE B. F. M. NYAKO
JUDGE
FHC/ABJ/CS/373/2017

BETWEEN:
JAHCN INTERNATIONAL LIMITED.....PLAINTIFF
AND

DEFENDANTS
1. NIGERIA NATIONAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION.....
2. DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES.....
3. DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES.....
4. NIGERIAN PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY.....
5. MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES.....
6. ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION.....



ORDER

UPON THE MOTION ON NOTICE dated 8th November 2018 and filed on the 19th November, 2019 praying the Honourable Court for the following:

1. AN ORDER of interlocutory injunction restraining the 4th defendant, acting by itself, or through any other person or persons whether in the capacity of an agent or contractor or through its officers, privies, or otherwise however from interfering with and or carrying out/undertaking any works including seismic survey/study on the oil block the subject matter of this suit commonly known and described as OPL 2001(but now re-styled/re-designated as OML 13 by the 2nd and 3rd Defendants

HON. JUSTICE B.F.M. NYAKO

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A. B. J. A. & Son
1
F. O. N. Joseph Sato

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A. B. J. A. & Son
2
F. O. N. Joseph Sato

3

including carrying out any activity thereon intending to alter the character/status quo of the said OPL 2001(OML 13) pending the hearing and determination of this suit.

2. AN ORDER directing the parties hereto to preserve and maintain status quo of the said OPL 2001 (OML 13) pending the hearing and determination of the suit.

3. AND FOR such further or other orders as this Honourable Court may deem fit to grant in the circumstances of this case.

UPON READING the Affidavit in support of the Application sworn to by Alex Ukwuese, male, Christian, citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Legal Practitioner of Ikwueto Law Firm of No. 6B Sennanga Street, off Accra Street, Wuse zone 5, Abuja and filed at this Court Registry.

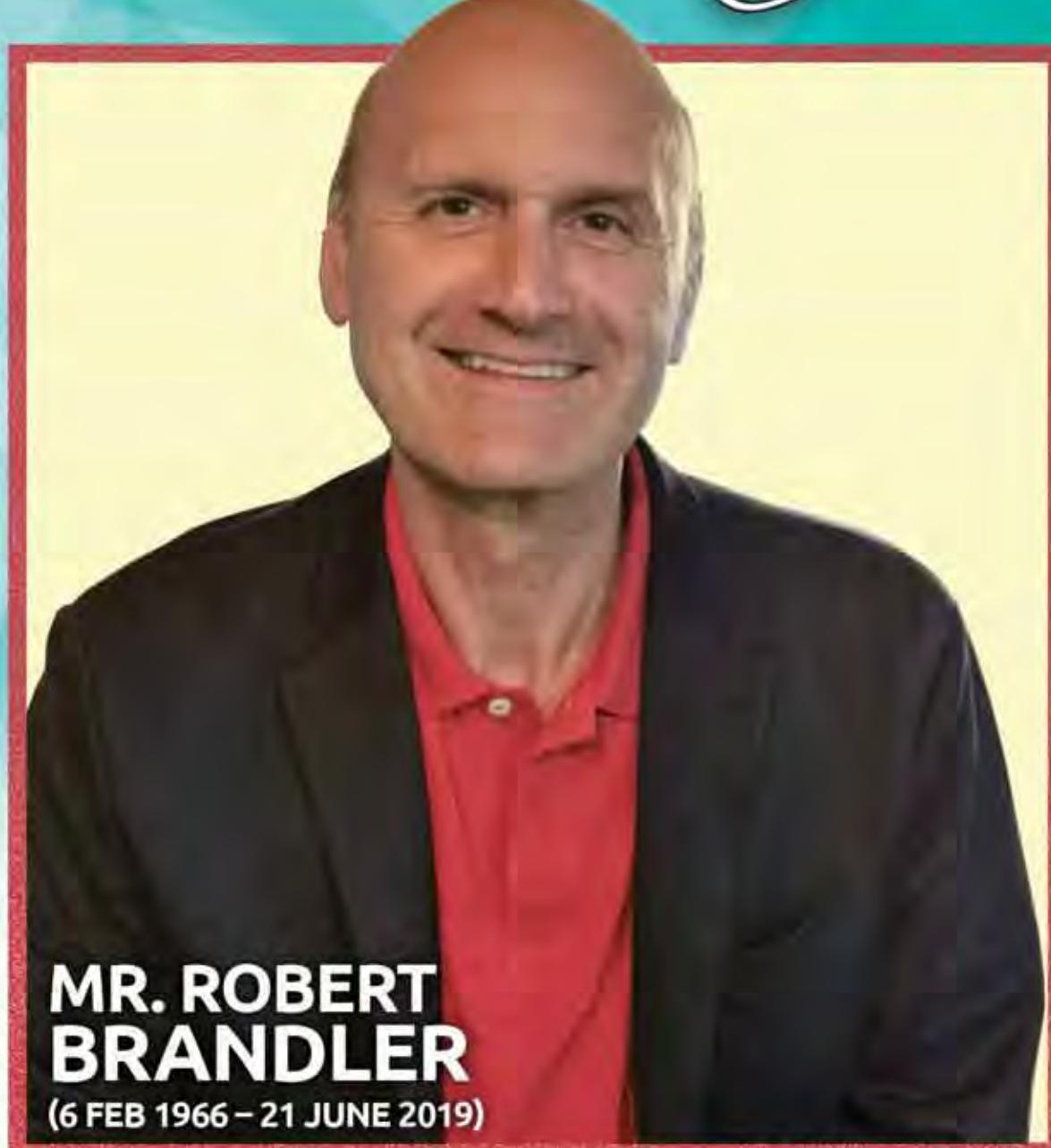
UPON HEARING P.I.N. Ikwueto, SAN with C.K. Alabi, Esq., C.C. Emekewere, Esq. Alex Ukwuese, Esq. and C.F. Jideofe, Esq. of Counsel for the Plaintiff/Applicant move the application together with the further Affidavit and adopt the Written Address in support. He urge the Court to grant the application as prayed or order maintenance of status quo.

Barakah Ali, Esq. with A.A. Ibrahim, Esq of Counsel for the 1st and 4th Defendants; Isiaka Adekunle, Esq. with Raskal Ukah, Esq. of Counsel for the 2nd and 3rd Defendants respectfully oppose the application with their Counter Affidavits while urging the Court to dismiss the motion for injunction. A.A. Kaltungo, Esq. of Counsel for the 5th

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Obituary



MR. ROBERT BRANDLER

(6 FEB 1966 – 21 JUNE 2019)

Mr. Robert Brandler (6 Feb 1966 – 21 June 2019) has died in Kano after a brief illness. The youngest son of Consul Joe Brandler, whose life in Nigeria spanned over 50 years, he studied at Oundle School, in Peterborough, U.K. and the London School of Economics. After five years in corporate London he joined the Brandler family timber, rubber and leather trading business in Lagos. He soon branched out to establish Tilbrook Products Ltd, now a highly respected spice trading company in Kano and Kaduna States, holding international quality certification and recognition.

He was a great and compassionate friend of the ordinary Nigerian and was loved by his staff and farmers (as well as his overseas customers) on account of his heartfelt concern for their welfare and progress. In this he perfectly reflected the values of his late father, a legend in the Nigerian logging and timber business from 1950 – 1975. Robert leaves behind three young children in England. His burial is on 20th July 2019 and he will lie next to his parents in the village churchyard in Tilbrook, Cambridgeshire, UK. May his soul rest in peace.

CHILDREN:

NINA BRANDLER
LUCIAN BRANDLER
ELSA BRANDLER

ANNOUNCER:

DAVID BRANDLER

NEWSEXTRA

Supreme Court Strikes out Suit against Wike's Eligibility

Davidson Iriekpen

The Supreme Court has struck out the suit challenging the eligibility of Governor Nyesom Wike to contest the last governorship election in Rivers State.

In two unanimous judgments delivered yesterday, a five-man panel of the Supreme Court upheld two appeals by Wike, with which he challenged the leave granted to Elvis Chinda by the Court of Appeal.

Chinda had sued at the Federal High Court in Abuja, querying, among others, the authenticity of birth certificate

allegedly submitted by Wike to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and prayed the court to disqualify him from contesting the last governorship election.

In a judgment, earlier this year, the Federal High Court dismissed the suit, a decision Chinda appealed at the Court of Appeal in Abuja.

Chinda later discovered that his notice of appeal was wrongly addressed to the Federal High Court as against the Court of Appeal, and applied for leave to amend.

Wike objected to the amendment sought by Chinda,

on the grounds that he applied to amend outside the time allowed by law for him to appeal the judgment of the Federal High Court.

The Court of Appeal disregarded Wike's objection and granted the amendment

sought by Chinda, a decision Wike appealed to the Supreme Court in two appeals marked: SC/606/2019 and SC/607/2019.

In its lead judgment, authored by Justice Olukayode Ariwoola, but read by Justice Paul Galumje, the Supreme Court

set aside the leave granted Chinda by the Court of Appeal to amend his notice of appeal.

The court held that the amendment, granted outside the time allowed for the appellant to file his appeal, violated Paragraph 14(4) of the First

Schedule to the Electoral Act.

The Supreme Court proceeded to allow both appeals filed by Wike and struck out the notice of appeal filed by Chinda before the Court of Appeal, which it said was defective.



WAR AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS...

L-R: Executive Director, Stop TB Partnership, Geneva, Dr. Lucica Diti; representative of wife of the President, Dr. Florence Ajimobi; First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu; and Board Chair, Stop TB Partnership Nigeria, Prof. Lovett Lawson, during a dinner forum with corporate sector on mobilising domestic resources to end TB in Lagos...recently

Olakunrin's Murder: Presidency Warns against Politicising Killings

The Presidency has asked the political class to stop playing politics with the death of Mrs Funke Olakunrin, daughter of the Afenifere leader, Reuben Fasoranti.

A statement issued yesterday by the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Malam Garba Shehu, asked leaders across the country to be mindful of their language and its potential consequences.

The statement described Mrs Olakunrin's murder as tragedy, describing insecurity as an issue that the people of the country must unite to tackle.

It added that tragedies like this should not spring up politics, stressing the need for those who stand in positions of influence to recognise and understand that.

"The Presidency has noted public concerns on the

unfortunate attack leading to the death of daughter of the Afenifere leader, Pa Reuben Fasoranti. The President has already issued a statement expressing his heartfelt condolences to the family of Mrs Funke Olakunrin and followed up with a telephone call.

"The Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo has, in addition, paid a visit to the grieving family in Akure, Ondo State. Her death is a tragedy. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

"It is incumbent on all leaders across the country to consider their language and its potential consequences. Insecurity is an issue that Nigeria must face together as one nation – united. Times of tragedy like these are not the time for politics. It reveals only disrespect for the departed and her family.

Three Dead, Scores Injured as Three-storey Building Collapses in Jos

Seriiki Adinoyi in Jos

The city of Jos, the Plateau State capital, was yesterday evening thrown into pandemonium following a collapse of a three-storey building at Butcher lane of Jos North Local Government Area, killing three people and leaving scores of others wounded.

An eyewitness, Mallam Adamu, said the recent frequent rainfalls in the city may have been responsible as the old structure has become weak.

Three corpses were evacuated and three others injured from the collapsed building, which trapped many residents and labourers, according to residents.

Jos businessman that deals on pharmaceutical products.

THISDAY gathered that officials of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) only arrived the scene of the incident at about 6.30 p.m., after which two escalators were brought to assist in rolling away the rubble.

NCC Remits N51.3bn to FG's Consolidated Revenue Account

Emma Okonji

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the telecoms industry regulator, has said it remitted N51.3 billion to the federal government Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) in the first quarter of 2019.

Represented by his deputy, Kadaraf, the governor said his administration accords high respect and commitment to the traditional institution, describing it as a "symbol and pride of every society".

He said: "I felicitate with the Emir and people of Gwoza over the official relocation and return of our Emir back to his palace after years in Maiduguri. This administration will not afford to toy with the people of Gwoza and the traditional institution.

According to the FRA 2007, such payments were to be made every year after preparation of audited accounts.

Specifically, Section 22 Sub-section 1 of the Act states that: "Notwithstanding the provisions of any written law governing the corporation, each corporation shall establish a general reserve fund and shall allocate thereto at the end of each financial year one fifth of its operating surplus for the year."

Section 22, Sub-section 2 of the Act states further that: "The balance of the operating surplus shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) of the federal government not later than one month following the statutory deadline for publishing each corporation's

oversight by the commission, the telecommunications sector has witnessed phenomenal growth since 2001, making it an enabler of economic growth and development.

According to him, "The telecoms industry has positively impacted all the sectors of the economy including banking, healthcare, commerce, transportation, agriculture, education among others, with increased quarter-on-quarter contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)."

For instance, he said the latest data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed that the telecoms industry contributed 10.11 per cent to Nigeria's GDP in the first quarter of 2019.

Borno Monarch Returns Home Five Years after Displacement by Boko Haram

Michael Olugbode in Maiduguri

The Emir of Gwoza in Borno State, Alhaji Mohammed Shehu-Timta, has returned home following relative peace and security five years after displacement from the kingdom by Boko Haram insurgents.

Mammoth crowd gathered at Pulka and major streets in Gwoza metropolis yesterday to give the first class traditional ruler a rousing welcome.

Shehu-Timta who was accompanied by the Deputy Governor of the state, Mr. Usman Kadaraf; Senator Ali Ndume (APC-Borno South), members of the state House of Assembly and village heads, among others, was received in a colourful celebration showcased

NEWSEXTRA

UNIBEN Final Year Student Commits Suicide

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin-city

A final year student of the University of Benin has reported to have committed suicide by jumping down from the second floor of a hostel building in the school.

The incident, it was learnt, occurred last Sunday evening at the Faculty of Arts.

The deceased was said to be a student of the Department of Actuarial Science in the Faculty of Management Sciences.

As at the time of filing

this report, it was not clear if the deceased left a suicide note.

It was however gathered that the victim who was supposed to have graduated

before now, had a carry over.

Effort to get confirmation from the Public Relations Officer of the university, Mr. Michael Osasuyi, failed as calls made to his mobile

phone failed to connect.

Four weeks ago, a 21-year-old student of the university, Christabel Buoro, also committed suicide over alleged failed love affair.

CIPPON Gets New President, Council Members

Solomon Elusoji

The Chartered Institute of Professional Printers of Nigeria (CIPPON), established by the Act of Parliament 24 of 2007, has elected 15 individuals as Members-in-Council to steer the affairs of the institute for the next two years.

A communiqué issued and signed by the Secretary of the Interim Caretaker Committee, Ike Okorafor shortly after the election listed the elected council members as: Mr. Malomo Olugbemi; Mr. Akin Oduwole; Mr. Rabiu Garba; Sir John Okeke Onuegbulem; Babajide S. Salako; Mr. Ajayi Abayomi Sunday; Dr. Daniel Itanyi Egbunu; Mr. Akinlabi Olawumi; Mr. Eloho Gideon; Mr. Clement Koko; Mr. Adesoye Omoniyi; Mr. Omopariola Samuel Odimayo; Mr. Babafemi Olanrewaju Oluwalana; Mr. Oluwole Ademuyiwa and Mr. Hakeem Adeleke.

According to a statement issued yesterday by the Secretary of the Council, Akin Oduwole, the Members-in-Council thereafter elected Mr. Olugbemi Malomo as the President/Chairman of the Council. Other elected principal officers of the council are Mr. Rabiu Garba, who was elected as 1st Vice President; Sir John

Okeke Onuegbulem- 2nd Vice President; Comrade Babajide S. Salako-3rd Vice President; and Mr. Akin Oduwole as Secretary to the Council.

Malomo and other Members-in-Council of the institute were elected on July 10 by members of the institute during a general election held at Sam Ethan's Officers Mess at the Nigeria Air Force Base, Ikeja, Lagos State.

The communiqué noted that the election of the president and other council members marks the beginning of a new dawn in the history of the Nigeria's printing industry.

According to the communiqué, apart from those elected, the federal government is expected to nominate five people to join the council.

The Nigerian printing industry, which currently employs millions of Nigerians and valued at over N1tn in its entire value chain, received its "Charter" status" when the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua signed into law Act 24, which is the Chartered Institute of Professional Printers of Nigeria Act 2007.

The communiqué added with the emergence of the new council, members of the institute and every stakeholder in the Nigeria printing industry can expect a turnaround in the industry.



SEPLAT'S DAY AT THE MARKET...

L-R: Chief Financial Officer, Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc, Roger Brown; Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Stock Exchange, Oscar Onyema; Chief Executive Officer, Seplat, Mr. Austin Avuru; Operations Director, Seplat, Effiong Okon; General Manager External Affairs and Communications, Seplat, Mrs. Chioma Nwachukwu; and Managing Director, ANOH Gas Processing Company (AGPC), Yetunde Taiwo, at Seplat's Capital Markets Day event at the Nigerian Stock Exchange in Lagos yesterday

ETOPUKUTT

Rape Allegation: CAN Declares Support for COZA, Fatooyinbo

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has declared support for the Common Wealth of Zion Assembly (COZA) and its pastor, Biodun Fatooyinbo, amid allegations of rape and sexual assault against him.

The Christian body announced its position on Sunday when its delegation

visited the church.

CAN Chairman in the FCT, Samson Jonah, assured the church that CAN was with it and the beleaguered pastor and would continue to stand by them.

The visit of the CAN delegation came less than a month after CAN condemned any case of rape and stressed

that justice must prevail in all rape cases.

The Christian body said it had no details on the allegations against Fatooyinbo other than what was on social media, which it described as "not reliable and credible evidence".

Also speaking, the CAN Chairman North Central, Israel

Akanji, said the association would not ignore what is going on in the church now.

"How can I, and then the FCT Chairman, hear that one church that God has a plan and purpose for is going through this Jerusalem-Jericho road and then we will walk and walk away? We will not do such a thing," he said.

Afenifere, PANDEF Fault FG's Plan to Deploy Military in Highways

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

The Yoruba socio-cultural group, Afenifere, and its Niger Delta counterpart, Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), have faulted the planned deployment of military to major highways to stem the high level of insecurity in the country, saying the proposal which they described as outdated won't solve the problem.

The two groups yesterday expressed deep concern with the rising wave of insecurity in the country and the glaring inability of the federal government to tackle the problem.

Spokesman of Afenifere, Yinka Odumakin, told THISDAY that the government proposal won't solve the insecurity problem.

According to him, the military is already overstretched "with the Chief of Army Staff openly complaining that the soldiers are not doing enough against the insurgents in the Northeast."

Odumakin wondered "where do you want to get the number of soldiers to deploy in the highways?" Besides, you are sending coded message to the military about who should govern when you hand over police duties to them all over the country."

He therefore said what Afenifere believes would solve the problem is the creation of state police to compliment the activities of the Nigeria Police Force in addressing the overwhelming insecurity challenge.

"What we need now is a state

police system because we cannot continue to run a multi-ethnic country with a single police," he stated.

On its part, PANDEF urged the federal government to wake up to its responsibility of curbing the alarming insecurity situation in the country which he said has already risen to an unspeakable dimension.

Its National Secretary, Dr. Alfred Mulade, stated that the group was right to conclude "that we are in a state of an orchestrated and systematic war wrecked on the South and middle belt by dissident elements effectively demonstrated by Fulani herdsmen militias surreptitiously supported and encouraged by the federal government headed by President

Muhammadu Buhari, through obnoxious policies."

He said the planned use of military to solve security problem is out of place, saying: "On the surface, it might appear as if they are doing so much, but clearly, it is grossly inadequate and out of pattern, as the government cannot be saying one thing while it's doing another thing altogether."

The PANDEF statement which was signed by its Scribe stated that "the government has by its action encouraged criminality, insecurity, banditry and kidnappings in the country, particularly in the South area and Middle Belt, when it cannot arrest or refuse to arrest and prosecute any of the perpetrators of these heinous crimes."

60 Ecobank Workers Protest over Sack

About 60 of Ecobank staff in Kaduna yesterday took to the street to protest what they termed "unjust sack" and called for government intervention.

The Northern Coordinator for the retrenched staff, Muhammad Yashe, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the protest was held in Kaduna in order to show their grievances.

Yashe said that about 60 staff members in Kaduna and about 920 staff nationwide were retrenched by Eco Bank.

He said that the staff retrenchment was uncalled for at this critical time of economic hardship, appealing to the government and labour unions

to assist in compelling the bank to pay them their dues in full.

The disengagement of staff last week by Ecobank is uncalled for. Some of us have spent over 20 years working with the bank. At the end they sack us without even paying us our entitlements in full.

"Some of us were given meager amount after retrenchment, that amount can't even sustain or enable us establish a business which we can continue to build our lives on."

"We are calling on the government and labour union to intervene. We will continue to push for our right, I have

served the bank for 12 years but no penny was ever given to me for leave allowance while I was in service."

"Other entitlements were also never paid to us, but we never complained, at the end they sack us without paying us our entitlements. I am appealing to the government and labour unions to help us fight for our right."

Also speaking, Mr. Yusuf Ataguba, who is also an affected staff, said that Ecobank has robbed him.

"I have worked for over 20 years with this bank, I dedicated my youthful age working with them only for them to retrench

us without pre-information, this is robbery."

"I am appealing to the bank to pay us our full severance without delay, that is why we came out to protest and tell the world to come to our aid."

"We want the world to know and we want the National Assembly to come to our aid."

"The National Assembly should review the labour laws where needed in order to safeguard its citizens against unlawful acts by employers."

"We are appealing to the government to help compel Ecobank to pay us our full dues or we shall continue to seek other redress where necessary."

Fasoranti: We Have Made Arrests, Say Police

The Ondo State Police Command yesterday revealed that it had made some arrests on the killing of Mrs. Funke Olakunrin, the daughter of the leader of the pan-Yoruba socio-political organisation, Afenifere, Chief Reuben Fasoranti.

The police reiterated that their mThe Police Public Relations

Officer in the state, Mr. Femi Joseph, said the command would not relent until the perpetrators were apprehended and brought to book.

He said, "We have made a lot of arrests on this matter, but we are doing the screening of those arrested to know who among them are the culprits."



**Jos Electricity
Distribution Plc.**

JOS ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION (JED) PLC

ROLLOUT OF METER ASSET PROVIDER (MAP) SCHEME

In line with the Meter Asset Regulation by the Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), the Management of JED PLC is pleased to inform esteemed customers the selection of Meter Asset Provider (MAP), TRIPPLE Seventh Nigeria Limited & MOJEC International Limited as a joint venture preferred bidder following the conclusion of the Meter Asset Providers (MAP) procurement process.

JED Plc in collaboration with TRIPPLE Seventh Nigeria Limited & MOJEC International Limited is scheduled to commence the meter roll out to JED Plc customers commencing August, 2019 across the franchise areas. The Unit cost of Single-Phase Credit Meter, Single-Phase Pre-Paid Meter and Three-Phase Pre-Paid Meter are ₦31,090, ₦36,992 and ₦67,055 respectively.

JED PLC MAP METER ROLLOUT PLAN					
Location	Timeline	Quantity	Single-Phase Credit (Quantity)	Single-Phase Pre-Paid Meters (Quantity)	Three-Phase Pre-Paid Meter (Quantity)
JED PLC 8 Regions	Year 1	100,000	20,000	70,000	10,000
	Year 2	180,000	35,000	126,700	17,400
	Year 3	220,000	45,000	153,300	22,600
Total		500,000	100,000	350,000	50,000

The MAP partners of JED PLC have teamed up with some selected banks to access financing scheme as per terms and conditions therein. Meters will be installed 10 days upon confirmation of payment.

Signed:
Management

Court Gets Fresh Instructions to Continue Kalu's Trial July 22

Davidson Iriekpen

The 13-year-old N7.65billion fraud trial of a former Governor of Abia State and senator representing Abia North senatorial district, Chief Orji Uzor Kalu, will resume at the Federal High Court in Lagos on July 22, 2019 before Justice Mohammed Idris.

The new date was fixed following a fresh fiat issued by the President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Zainab Adamu Bulkachuwa to Justice Idris to conclude the case.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is prosecuting Kalu together with his former Commissioner for Finance, Ude Udeogo, and his company, Slok Nigeria Limited, on an amended 39-count charge of money laundering to the tune of N7.6 billion.

The former governor who is a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) was alleged to have committed the offence between August 2001 and October 2005.

On October 31, 2016, the EFCC preferred a 34-count charge, bordering on N3.2 billion fraud against the accused.

The charges were, however, amended and increased to 39 counts.

Kalu and the others had each pleaded not guilty to the charges and were granted bail.

Justice Idris, who has been sitting as a trial judge in the criminal charge, was elevated to the Court of Appeal.

He had, however, been conducting the trial following a fiat, authorising him to continue with the case.

At the last adjourned date on November 12, 2018, Kalu was absent from trial, after being absent on a previous adjourned date of November 5, 2018.

Although the defence counsel had informed the court that he was away for medical treatment in Germany, the court had revoked his bail and ordered that at the point of his entry into the country, he must submit himself and all

relevant travelling documents to the EFCC, failing which he would be arrested.

The court had then adjourned the case until January 23, for the continuation of trial.

When the case came up in late January, the prosecutor, Mr. Rotimi Jacobs (SAN), appearing for the prosecution, informed the court that in spite of its order, the accused had refused to submit himself or his travelling documents to the EFCC.

He argued that such attitude constituted a clear disregard for the court, adding that in the circumstance, he would urge the court to give effect to the provisions of Section 352(4) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) and continue with the trial of the accused even in his absence.

According to Jacobs, the court should order the defence to call its witnesses, failing which the court is allowed by the provisions of the law, to close their case.

NERC Proposes Order to Accelerate Deployment of Meters to Consumers

Adedayo Akinwale in Abuja

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has disclosed that the 'proposing order' that it plans to introduce is expected to be a catalyst for the distribution companies (Discos) to fast-track deployment of meters to unmetered customers.

NERC's Commissioner in charge of Consumer Affairs, Dr. Moses Arigu, gave the hint yesterday in Abuja at the "Public Consultation on Capping of Estimated Billing, Distribution Franchising and Competitive Transition Charge".

He said that the various proposing options were aimed at improving on the services being rendered to the people.

"We must bear in mind that while customers are being metered through Meter Assets Provider (MAP), no all unmetered customers will be metered at the same time and those who are yet to be metered should not be arbitrarily billed.

Thus, the proposing order is expected to be a catalyst or the discos to accelerate or fast-track deployment of metres to unmetered customers.

"The commission will closely monitor the accelerated deployment of metres through MAP initiative; it is also worthy to note that the scheme is designed to tackle issues relating but not limited to adherence to timeline for replacement of faulty metres, timely metering of new

connections and elimination of bulk billing/arbitrary billing," he added.

On distribution franchising, he explained that, "a regulatory process to be applied by discos to authorise a third party to provide electric distribution utility services in a particular area within the disco's coverage area of supply."

Arigu noted that on competitive transition charge that a regulatory process to address among other things, the loss of allowed revenue.

On his part, the President, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Ayuba Wabba, said that with the poverty level in the country, Nigerians cannot afford to pay exploitative bill.

NIGERIA ON THE PRECIPICE, OBASANJO WRITES BUHARI — CONT'D FROM PG 8

According to him, the letter showed the woes afflicting Nigeria presently and the failure of leadership.

"If the government is serious, Obasanjo should not be telling him now that there is a need for a national dialogue with what is going on. The Nigerian government today has put us in a place where it can only talk to the Fulani herdsmen and all the rest of Nigeria, and not to put the people together. That is serious to the polity," Odumakin said.

President General of the apex Igbo socio-cultural organisation, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Chief John Nnia Nwodo, also aligned with the views expressed by Obasanjo.

Nwodo who spoke to THISDAY, saluted the courage and patriotism of the former president, saying that the situation in the country has become worrisome and called on all people of goodwill to

rise up and speak out.

"Obasanjo simply supported the stand I held yesterday and expanded the reasons for a conference. I welcome him to this school of thought and salute his courage and patriotism," Nwodo said.

However, the ACF declined comment on Obasanjo's letter until it studies the content.

Spokesman of the group, Mr. Anthony Sani, told THISDAY that the organisation would react soon.

Letter Unpatriotic, Says Yakassai

Yakassai who also reacted to the letter, described it as not only selfish but unpatriotic, ill-conceived and a clear invitation to national disaster.

Yakassai told a group of journalists in Kano yesterday that he did not see any hint of patriotism in Obasanjo's letters.

"In fact, all the letters

written by General Obasanjo to all military heads of state and presidents of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are not guided by patriotic considerations.

"My experience with the Nigerian political situation is that the top echelons of the military are always fighting one another, either when in the service or when on retirement.

"It is from this angle that I always view most of the writings of General Olusegun Obasanjo to any military officer who is a Head of State or president in Nigeria as unpatriotic. Even the ones he wrote to former Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and the late Umar Musa Yar'Adua were not patriotic. They were guided by selfish interest," he said.

He added that there was nothing new in the latest letter the former president wrote to the president.

NEWSEXTRA

Bauchi Assembly Holds Session under Tight Security

Segun Awofadeji in Bauchi

The one-month leadership crisis that engulfed the Bauchi State House of Assembly (BSHA) took a new turn yesterday as Abubakar Y. Suleiman-led faction held its first sitting

yesterday at the Assembly's complex under tight security and approved the list of new appointments sent to it by Bauchi State Governor, Senator Bala Mohammed Abdulkadir.

The sitting, which lasted for about one hour, was attended

by all the 13 members that elected Suleiman as Speaker on June, 20.

Suleiman and Kawa Shehu Damina were the two factional speakers of the BSHA that emerged last month.

The sitting of the Suleiman's

faction of the state assembly occurred as the Adhoc Committee set up by the Speaker House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabiamila, arrived Bauchi State to address the leadership crisis plaguing the state's legislature.

The Suleiman's faction that sat yesterday attended to a correspondence from Governor Abdulkadir that requested for approval state assembly to appoint 10 Special Advisers that will assist the governor in running the affairs of governance of the state.

The governor's

correspondence was read by the Speaker, Abubakar Y Suleiman, after it was handed over to him by the Clerk of the Assembly who acknowledged receipt of the correspondence from the executive arm of the state's government.

After the deliberation on the correspondence, the assembly approved the request and gave the governor the go ahead to make the appointments and revert back to it.

Meanwhile, the House of Reps' Committee will hold a public hearing today (Tuesday) on the crisis rocking BSHA.

The 12 member committee, which is headed by Hon Musa Sarkin Adar, is tasked with the responsibility of finding out the circumstances that led to the emergence of two speakers at the BSHA.

Other members of the committee are Abubakar Fulata, Olododo Abdulganiyu Saka, Tunji Ojo Olubunmi, Benjamin Kala, Jaha Ahmadu Usman and Julius Ihonybere. Other members of the committee are Bamidele Yusuf, Darlington Nwokocha, John Dyegh, Unyime Josiah Idem and Abubakar Yarima Iris.

Be Ruthless, Decisive against Bandits, Buratai Charges Troops

The Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Tukur Buratai, has charged troops of Operation Harbin Kunama 3 to be ruthless, aggressive and decisive against bandits in the North-west.

Buratai gave the charge when he visited the troops stationed at 1 Division Super Camp in Kuyello, Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State yesterday.

He urged them to remain

focused in the operations and to act within the confines of the law and rule of engagement.

Buratai said that the Army would not tolerate any form of criminality and threat to peace and security in any part of the country, adding that the corporate existence of Nigeria must not be jeopardised.

"You must remain focused; you must be aggressive; you must be decisive and you must be ruthless just the way the

criminals have been ruthless on the innocent lives. We will not spare them as well.

"The law must take its course more so if they are seen in the act, and indeed, carrying arms which is within the law and within the rule of engagement.

"We don't have time to waste, we must develop, we must move ahead and we must keep our country secured.

Non-academic Workers' Protest Halt Activities in UI

Kemi Olaitan in Ibadan

Members of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) and the Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU), University of Ibadan chapter, yesterday began a three-day protest to demand N30 billion allowance as well as against the federal government refusal to obey court judgment on staff school salaries.

The peaceful protest,

which drew scores of affected workers to the main gate of the institution, affected smooth vehicular movements in and out of the school premises.

The protesting workers carried placards with inscriptions such as: 'We demand N30 billion to pay part of our earned allowance now'; 'FG stop provoking inter union crises in Nigerian universities'; 'FG, please obey court judgment on staff school', among others.

The Chairman of UI SSANU, Wale Akinremi, flanked by other union leaders, while speaking with journalists, said any country that treats teachers the way "we treat ours in Nigeria will never be destined for greatness."

He said the three-day protest would be followed by a branch protest and the 'mother of all protests' at the national level which he said would shake the corridors of power to its foundation.

Okonkwo Institutes Entrepreneurial Research on Onitsha Markets

Udora Orizu in Abuja

Business Mogul and Founder of The Dome Entertainment Center, Dr. Obiora Okonkwo has instituted an entrepreneurial research chair into the Onitsha main market as a central hub of Igbo enterprise development.

The research, according to him, will document the beginning, the growth and development of entrepreneurship at the Onitsha main market, which at a time, was the largest market in West Africa.

Announcing this yesterday at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK), Awka, Anambra State, after he was conferred with an award as Business Philanthropist of the Year by the UNIZIK Business School,

at the ongoing 2nd Edition of its International Conference in Awka, Okonkwo said that the coming generation of Nigerians have a lot to learn from the entrepreneurial spirit of the Igbo man which, he said were developed from the Main Market at Onitsha.

He stated that before the emergence of large markets in Lagos, the main market held sway as the hub of Igbo enterprise, adding that "at that time, every Igbo billionaire took off from the main market in Onitsha".

Relating that to his humble beginnings in business, Okonkwo recalled that "I had my first lessons in trading at the Onitsha main market, rising from there to become who I

am today".

He noted that most Igbo businessmen and women of the time, had their offices at Onitsha and only traveled to Lagos on holidays.

He said that though the trend has changed, a proper study of the market and the growth of the apprenticeship system in Igbo land, will add value to new business innovations that will sustain growth and ensure enterprise survival.

Noting that the upcoming generation of Igbo businesses must learn from mistakes of their forebears, Okonkwo regretted that the exploits of Sir Louis Odumegwu-Ojukwu, who at a time was the biggest name in business in Nigeria, ended with his passage.

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Edo APC Chieftain Cautions against Pushing Obaseki out of Ruling Party

• *State assembly clears six commissioner-nominees*

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin

A chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Edo State, Mr. Charles Idahosa, has warned against attempts to push Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, out of the APC, a plot he said will spell doom for the party in the state.

This is coming as the Edo State House of Assembly (EDHA) has cleared six commissioner-nominees whose

names were recently sent to the House by Obaseki in a major cabinet reshuffle.

Idahosa, a former Political Adviser to Adams Oshiomhole, gave the warning while addressing journalists in Benin City, the Edo State capital, yesterday.

He reiterated his earlier stance that Oshiomhole was responsible for the ongoing crisis rocking the party in the state.

"If by error of commission

or omission, Governor Obaseki is pushed out of the APC, the party is dead in the state and I will go with the governor to anywhere he goes," he said.

The APC leader described Oshiomhole as ungrateful to Obaseki who he said played a vital role for Oshiomhole to become Governor of Edo State, adding that, "Chief Oseni Elama was the man that facilitated Adams Oshiomhole's meeting with Godwin Obaseki before he (Oshiomhole) became Governor of Edo State".

"After that meeting, Oshiomhole had no money on him, but Obaseki brought in people to launch the seed money which amounted to billions of

naira which Oshiomhole used to run his governorship campaign."

He urged the APC national chairman to allow Obaseki concentrate on developing Edo State as any attempt to deny Obaseki the APC 2020 governorship ticket will be resisted by Edo people.

"Oshiomhole should please leave the governor alone to run the state to the best of his ability because nobody interfered with his own administration when he was governor of the state."

"We don't know why Oshiomhole has insisted on producing the Speaker for the State House of Assembly. During his tenure, nobody made the choice for him," Idahosa stressed.

Idahosa further noted that Oshiomhole should not blame Obaseki; his deputy, Philip Shaibu; and the SSG, Osarodion Ogie and others for fighting against godfatherism he once fought against adding that they are only replicating what he taught them.

According to him, Oshiomhole taught Obaseki how to fight godfatherism and that what he is doing now.

Meanwhile, the Edo State House of Assembly (EDHA) has cleared six commissioner-nominees whose names were recently sent to the House by Obaseki in a major cabinet reshuffle.

During its plenary session at

the Anthony Enahoro Assembly Complex, in Benin City, yesterday, July 15, the Speaker, Hon. Frank Okiye, introduced the commissioner-nominees to the House after Chairman of the Screening Committee, Hon. Roland Asoro, reported that the assembly has screened the candidates.

The commissioner-nominees are Damilani Lawani; Joe Ikpea; Felix Akhabue; Moses Agbakor; Momoh Oise Omorogbe and Marie Edeko.

Okiye tasked them to see their new assignment as a call to service and join the Obaseki-led administration in moving Edo State to enviable heights.

Dickson: Education Panacea for Curbing Criminality

Shola Oyeyipo in Abuja

The Bayelsa State Governor, Mr. Seriakie Dickson, has described sufficient investment in education as a veritable tool for curbing militancy and other forms of violent crimes in Nigeria.

Dickson, who made the assertion at the weekend when addressing the class of 20 parents' graduation dinner and the fund raising of the Loyola Jesuit College Endowment Fund held at the Transcorp Hilton, Abuja, said he succeeded in curbing militancy in his state by paying adequate attention to the educational sector.

"If we must have a new Nigeria, we can only have it by investing in education and creating the new Nigerians that will give us a new Nigeria and

the new Nigeria has already started in the various schools where I have children; all of us; they interact, make friends and they prepare for this new Nigeria.

"While I was campaigning for governor in 2011, I was very clear about the need to build a sustainable society on the foundation of education," he explained.

Also speaking at the event, the Chairman of Editorial Board of THISDAY Newspapers and former presidential spokesman, Mr. Segun Adeniyi, who is also a parent in the school, said it is a source of pride being a Loyola parent.

"I am Loyola parent because Loyola is very good, not only in terms of excellence but also in terms of value," he added.

Ezekwesili, Others Task Nigerians on Family Values

Sunday Okobi

As Nigeria searches endlessly for purposeful and effective leadership presently, prominent Nigerians have expressed the belief that grooming children to be compassionate and strong future leaders is the starting point of nation building.

The Chief Human Resources Officer of MTN Nigeria, Esther Akinnukawe, while speaking on the 'Fundamentals for Successfully Raising Tomorrow's Leaders Today' at the 2019 edition of the 'Power Summit' of the Queen of the Rosary College Onitsha Alumni Association, Lagos State chapter, pointed out the growing rot in today's society and the crisis of leadership are plaguing the country, and therefore needed a way out.

She stressed that teaching children empathy and compassion would be the key to building the nation for the future and making them great leaders.

According to her, "It is imperative for us to begin grooming tomorrow's leaders from today. There is a need to groom future leaders that are compassionate and empathetic; who will address the rot and chaos that surround them; future leaders who are moved by our groaning; who will venture into public service knowing well that it is not for their personal benefit; leaders who will become executives well equipped to create a difference, and determined to reform the

justice system."

In her keynote address at the conference on the theme: 'Building a Strong Family Base Towards National Development', former Minister of Education, Dr. Oby Ezekwesili, emphasised on the integral position of the family and the values it brings to the general society.

At the Summit organised by Foster networking opportunities and support for a balanced life among women, the former head of the Africa Division of the World Bank and the co-founder of the anti-corruption watchdog, Transparency International, noted that "each family here, being the producers of the basic values are expressed in the way we do our things at each family level, can be the ones that at that unit to develop a nation. You don't need an appointment into public office for you to be a contributor to the process of national development, because at the basis of family, you are shaping the values that are called ultimate institutions."

Other speakers at the event who also spoke on family values and nation building included Executive Director, Rain Oil Limited, Mrs. Godfrey Ogbemie; co-founder, Falcon Corporation Limited, Mrs. Audrey Joe-Ezigbo; CEO, Brand Zone Consulting LLC, Mrs. Chizor Malize; Principal Consultant, Centre for Sex Education and Family Life, Mr. Praise Fowowe, and Medical Director and Psychiatrist in Chief, Pinnacle Medical Service, Dr. Maymunah Kadiri.

A BOOST TO PERSONAL HYGIENE.....

L-R: Headmistress, Express Way Primary School, Mrs. Deborah Ajumobi; Dettol Brand Ambassador, Funke Akindele-Bello; Brand Manager, Purposeful Marketing Reckitt Benckiser, Cassandra Uzo-Ogbugh; and Headmaster, Express Way Primary School, Mr. Ayo Ajiboye, during the Dettol Clean Naija's School Hygiene Programme, in Ikosi, Lagos...yesterday

Ortom Appoints Ayabam BIRS Chairman

George Okoh in Makurdi

Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom has announced the appointment of Mr. Andrew Ayabam as the acting Chairman of the state Internal Revenue

Service (BIRS). Ayabam, according to a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to governor, Terver Akase, will take over from Terzungwe Atser, who was appointed by Ortom in 2018.

Until his appointment, Ayabam was a Zonal Director of Taxes with the Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS) covering Benue, Niger and Kaduna States.

He was first appointed as

As a businessman, Obaigbena has also had his travails. He had cause to run away from the country when the General Sani Abacha government marked him out as an enemy of the state. Under Abacha, any one who published anything critical of the state or expressed a progressive idea or was seen to be supporting the progressive cause was a target for humiliation, assassination or economic destruction. Obaigbena's employees have taken him to court or called him out for non-payment of their salaries. Company properties have been fifa-ed or a lien placed on company accounts. Terrorists, particularly the Boko Haram, have bombed the Abuja office of THISDAY, destroying the property. The Muslim Ummah once placed a fatwa on the head of a THISDAY reporter. Ms. Isioma Daniel was

accused of writing something sacrilegious. The lady had to leave Nigeria. There have been cases as well of THISDAY staff dying under mysterious circumstances.

If Obaigbena looks back, he will definitely see a lot and recall a lot. But through thick and thin, whatever may be the depth of the difficulty, he has demonstrated an uncommon strength of character. I like the fact that he stands by his team. Even when a staff abuses him and walks away, when the same staff returns to him for help or seek to return to the company, he takes them back, he supports them. He doesn't throw people away. At Arise News, the TV Channel where I am an anchor, when he threatens to sack anybody, the people just laugh. They will say behind his back: "don't mind him, he will not do it and if he sacks you,

after a few days he will start worrying about how you will survive without a job, the worst he will do is to surcharge you."

The same staff know of course that he does not take nonsense and he cannot be held to ransom. He does not consider anybody indispensable. He believes he can turn any talented person into a star and he is very proud of the fact that many of the superstars in Nigerian journalism and politics today once worked with him. What he has achieved in the print media, he wants to replicate in the broadcast industry. Arise News under his watch, is beginning to rise. Many of the young talents who joined the team and could not even ad-lib or read the teleprompter a few months ago, are now beginning to sound like experts, young producers are beginning to offer opinion about best production

practices...

I cannot predict what Obaigbena plans to do next. It must be something in his head. But he is that kind of person who stumbles on a dream and insists on translating it into reality in 24 hours if possible and he expects the people around him to fall in line and make it happen. He is very aggressive with his ideas and dreams. But he is also above all, a very pleasant, kind-hearted fellow. We admire him for all that he has done and achieved and the inspiration that flows from his anointed example. But now that he has turned 60, please, he must begin to leave some special legacies for younger men like us, especially those beautiful, pepper dem, ladies who flock around him like bees around nectar... Hen hen. Congratulations, Chairman.



NDUKA OBAIGBENA AT 60



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Funeral arrangements are as announced by the family.

TUESDAY SPORTS

Siasia's Mother Kidnapped Again by Gunmen in Bayelsa

● Police begin manhunt for abductors

Duro Ikhazuagbe and Emmanuel Adeh in Yenagoa

Former Super Eagles Head Coach, Samson Siasia is very disappointed that he is being put through the agony of his mother in the captivity of kidnappers for the second.

Gunmen in the early hours of Monday abducted the mother of the former Nigerian footballer and coach, Mrs Beauty Ogere Siasia, 80, from her home in Sagbama in Bayelsa State.

She had earlier been kidnapped in 2015 and held for 13 days before a ransom was exchanged for her safe passage back home. Siasia was in The Gambia preparing Nigeria's Under-23 team for the African Under-23 Championship in Senegal.

He returned to Nigeria with the only bronze medal Nigeria won at the Olympiad in Brazil.

Speaking with THISDAY yesterday, Siasia said he wonders why the focus is on his mother.

"I am not a government official and do not even earn salary right now. I feel very sad being put through this trauma right now.

"Please those who have kidnapped my mother now should spare her and allow her return home safe and sound," observed the former Super Eagles head coach who is now pre-occupied with grooming his Sia-One Academy to represent Nigeria at the Dana Cup in Denmark later this month.

Siasia's mother was kidnapped from her home in south of Bayelsa State by two armed gunmen at 2:15am on Monday.

Meanwhile, the police in Bayelsa, Monday confirmed

the kidnap of Siasia's mother and vowed to ensure her prompt release.

Giving an insight into how she was forcibly taken away, the police said the gunmen accessed the old woman's residence through the popular River Nun which flows through Sagbama Local Government Council.

Asinim Butswat, Spokesman of the Bayelsa Police Command assured family members that the force has deployed its special tactical team to find Madam Ogere Siasia.

"On the 15th July, 2019 at about 0200hours, unknown gunmen who were heavily armed came through the waterways of the River Nun and invaded the residence of one Mrs Beauty Ogere Siasia, 80 years in the riverine village of Odoni, Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State and whisked her away through the waterways to an unknown destination.

"The Commissioner of Police Bayelsa State Command and the command's Tactical Team have visited the scene of the crime.

"The command in collaboration with other security stakeholders have launched a manhunt to apprehend the perpetrators and rescue the victim. Investigation is ongoing," he said in a statement.

In 2015, Madam Siasia spent about two weeks in the kidnappers' den before she was released after paying an undisclosed ransom. The abductors had demanded an initial N150 million, making the former coach cry out that he wasn't a rich man to be so exploited.

Some other Nigerian footballers who had been at

the receiving end of kidnappers at different times include Super Eagles Captain, John Mikel Obi whose father was abducted last

year in Enugu State before a ransom was paid for his release.

Also, ex international Christian Obodo's mother was

abducted in Warri, Delta State in June 2012.

Earlier this year, the mother of Nigeria winger Samuel Kalu

, was kidnapped in Abia State and was only released after a double ransom was paid by her family.



Senate President Lawan with NFF President and President of AFCON Amaju Pinnick in the Super Eagles' dressing room at the Cairo International Stadium on Sunday night. With them is Captain of the team, John Obi Mikel

Senate President, Pinnick, Others Encourage Eagles to Go for the Bronze

Head of the Federal Government delegation to the 32nd Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt, Senator Ahmed Ibrahim Lawan who also doubles as the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic has given the Super Eagles a pat on the back for their outing against Algeria on Sunday, while charging them to go all out against Tunisia on Wednesday to win the bronze medals.

The Senate President was at the Eagles' dressing room at the Cairo International Stadium after the 2-1 defeat by the Desert Foxes of Algeria, which sent the North Africans into Friday's final and Nigeria into Wednesday's third place game.

"The Government of Nigeria is proud of you and how far you have been able to go in this competition. You worked very hard and showed the desire to win, but this is football and these things happen.

"The third place match is there and you have to forget the result of this match and prepare very well to win the bronze medals."

The Senate President's delegation also included the President of Nigeria Olympic Committee and Nigeria's Member of the International Olympic Committee, Habu Ahmed Gumel; a former Minister of Youth and Sports, Solomon Dalung; Senators Sani Musa, Bello Mandiya and Gabriel Suswam; Umar Saidu Gajo and; Ocheme Okopi.

Similarly, President of the Nigeria Football Federation, Mr. Amaju Melvin Pinnick, alongside

his 2nd Vice President, Shehu Dikko and General Secretary, Dr. Mohammed Sanusi were on Monday at the Le Meridien Cairo Airport hotel camp of the Super Eagles to ginger the players ahead of Wednesday's third place match against Tunisia.

A last-gasp goal by Riyad Mahrez took Algeria to their first AFCON Final in 29 years and meant the Eagles will have to battle for the bronze medals with Tunisia, who lost to Senegal also on Sunday.

"I must start by acknowledging that you gave your best out there against Algeria as you have done since the beginning of the competition. It is important that you put the loss behind you as the third place match is just two days away. The message from the NFF is simple: Let us not leave this championship empty-handed. This is the biggest and toughest AFCON ever and we must win on Wednesday to make Nigerians happy again.



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Zenith Bank Commends Eagles, Urges Team to Finish High

One of the major sponsors of the Nigeria Football Federation, Zenith Bank, has hailed the performance of the Super Eagles at the on going Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt, despite the failure of the country to qualify for the final of the competition after losing their semi final clash against Algeria.

Despite coming from a goal down in the game against Algeria, the Eagles succumbed to a last minute free kick by Riyad Mahrez to lose 2-1 to the Desert Foxes.

Zenith Bank had urged the team to go for the win before the game but said the players showed a lot of resilience in the game by coming from a goal down to get the equaliser and almost

Speaking yesterday in Lagos, the Group Managing Director of the bank, Ebenezer Onyeagwu, commended the fighting spirit of the Eagles adding that they have displayed the quality of champions, despite the defeat.

"Although we wanted them to

come back with the trophy, but getting to the last four is a good achievement for the team," he said.

"With host country, Egypt, defending champions, Cameroon and some other top teams failing to get to the last four, I will say they have made Nigeria proud.

"It was not an easy task against a team like Algeria, who have been playing exceptionally well since the start of the competition, but taking the battle to them, especially in the second half, show that we have a bright future in

the team."

Onyeagwu however tasked them not to return to the country empty handed and they should go all out for a win against Tunisia in the third place match.

He said the boys should put behind them the semi final loss against Algeria and make Tunisia pay for the defeat.

The Super Eagles will be taking on Tunisia on Wednesday for the bronze medal while it will be a battle between Algeria and Senegal in the final on Friday.

I Wish There Can be a Replay of Algerian Free Kick, Says Akpeyi

Super Eagles goalkeeper, Daniel Akpeyi, has said that he wished for a replay of the free kick by Algerian Riyad Mahrez which halted Nigeria's dream of a fourth Africa Cup of Nations title in Egypt on Sunday.

Speaking with Nigerian journalists covering the tournament in Egypt shortly after the 1-2 loss to Algeria, the Kaizer Chiefs' goalkeeper said now he knows what to do in similar situations in the future.

"I wish there can be a replay but it's over now and we have to look up to the third-place game," he noted without any regret.

Akpeyi defended his teammates from criticism.

The Super Eagles looked to be in with a great chance of beating Djamel Belmadi's men to reach the competition's final after dismissing South Africa in the quarter-final.

However, a Mahrez last-minute free-kick sent Gernot

Algeria Neutralised Our Wing Play, Says Rohr

Super Eagles Head Coach Gernot Rohr admitted that the tactics employed by Algeria Head Coach Djamel Belmadi proved to be enough to neutralise his pacy wingers Ahmed Musa and Samuel Chukwueze.

Speaking at the post match shortly after the Desert Foxes had snatched the ticket to the final to confront Senegal on Friday, Rohr revealed that the intensity of pressing by the Algerian players restricted the Eagles from getting into

their rhythm. Both Baghdad Bounedjah and Riyad Mahrez gave Kenneth Omeruo, Wilfred Ndidi and William Troost-Ekong a tough time.

"Algeria had a better pressing than us especially in the first half and in the midfield they had some very good situations and we had problems in the back of our defensive midfielders. They could have some opportunities," Rohr stressed.

"The centre forward from Algeria (Bounedjah) gave a lot of problems to our centre

backs and we could not find our wingers like we did the other day against South Africa.

"Today (Sunday) they could not give crosses and come on the side, I think they were well organised against us and we could not find a solution because the pressing was very strong," recalled the Eagles Franco-German gaffer.

Rohr reiterated that the Super Eagles played better in the second half but the young midfielders still have room for improvement. "It was better in the second half, we had some shots on target, we were unlucky to concede an own goal (by Troost-Ekong).

"I congratulate my players for this big fight against a very good

team, we knew the tournament is becoming more and more difficult and today in the last minute they (Algeria) won it, and they deserve it.

Rohr however admitted that Eagles have a lot of work to do if they must raise their game to be counted amongst the best in the continent. "We have to work much more, we are

young. Our midfield is the youngest one with Ndidi, Etebo and Iwobi. They have to learn tactically, they have to make better communication better," observed Rohr.

In their last 2019 Africa Cup of Nations fixture, the Super Eagles will face Tunisia in the third place play-off on Wednesday, July 17.

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DEMOLA OJO'S NILE NOTES

Algerians Outnumber Nigerians

Even with the support of Egyptian fans, Nigerian supporters were greatly outnumbered by their Algerian counterparts at the Cairo International Stadium on Sunday night. They bellowed and screamed from the popular stand to the VIP. However from the period preceding the penalty to the end of regulation time, they were subdued as the tide turned in favour of the Super Eagles.

Alas, the stadium erupted in a deafening uproar the moment Riyad Mahrez volleyed the superbly struck free kick resulting from Wilfred Ndidi's unnecessary infringement with seconds to the end of added time.

Sharing Responsibilities

When Henry Onyekuru came on for Samuel Chukwueze in the second half, he became the 21st member of the 23-member squad to play for the Eagles at this Nations Cup. It was slightly unexpected though as coach Gernot Rohr had said the semis was no stage for experimenting. He had hinted at a previous press conference that there was a clamour in some quarters for Onyekuru and Victor Osimhen to play a part. Expect Osimhen and the only other member of the 23, Francis Uzoho, to play in the third place match.

Unenviable Record?

Nigeria holds the record for the most bronze medals (for third place teams) at the AFCON. The Eagles have been third seven times and would be looking to make it right against Tunisia on Wednesday.

GOtv Boxing Night 19: Boxers in War Mood

Boxers billed to fight at GOtv Boxing Night 19 on Sunday have worked themselves into a war mood, as they conclude their training for the event, which holds at the Indoor Sports Hall of the National Stadium.

The nine-bout show will have in action some of the biggest names on the domestic boxing scene and two all-female bouts. Among boxers scheduled to fight are Rilwan "Baby Face" Babatunde, West African Boxing Union (WABU) lightweight champion; African Boxing Union (ABU) lightweight champion, Oto "Joe Boy" Joseph; former ABU featherweight champion, Waidi "Skoro" Usman; and Taiwo "Esepo" Agbaje, a rising featherweight star.

In separate interviews, the boxers boasted that they will see off their respective opponents with ease.

Babatunde, who takes part in the event's headline bout, said he will crush his opponent, Eden Biki of Ghana, in their international welterweight challenge bout.

"I'm sure of victory and ready to make Nigeria proud. No Ghanaian will defeat me whether or not I'm fighting at home. Nigeria has always been

bigger than Ghana and it will remain so," he said.

Joe Boy, who is due to fight Tope "Berinja" in a national lightweight challenge bout, vowed to make light work of his opponent, whom he described as "baby boxer".

"Berinja is a baby in this sport. I am not losing any sleep over our fight. He will regret agreeing to get into the ring with me. He will not last beyond the third round," bragged Joe Boy.

Hammed "Ese Hammed" Ganiyu, who is billed to face West African Boxing Union (WABU) lightweight champion, Rilwan "Real One" Oladosu, is convinced that his opponent will taste defeat for the first time in his career. Both face each other in national lightweight challenge bout.

"My fans have nothing to fear because I'm ready to explode and put Rilwan in his rightful place on the canvas and turn him into the 'Fake One,'" said Ganiyu.

Skoro, the former ABU featherweight champion, who faces a daunting task against the all-action Agbaje, said he is unimpressed, let alone daunted, by the profile of his opponent, winner of the best boxer award at GOtv Boxing Night 16.

One of the leading football academies in the country, ABEC Football Academy is ready to commence operations any moment from now.

According to a statement from the academy, a comprehensive programme is to be unveiled July 18, and operations will commence in September 2019 with all ABEC Schools hosting at least one aspect of the project in different capacities.

Tennis legend, Boris Becker, has warned tennis fans to "wake up to the greatness" of Novak Djokovic after he won his 16th Grand Slam at Wimbledon at the weekend.

Serbia's Djokovic, 32, won his fifth Wimbledon title by beating Centre Court favourite Roger Federer in a classic.

Victory in the longest ever Wimbledon singles final moved him closer to Federer's men's record of 20 major triumphs. Rafael Nadal, with 18, separates the pair.

The academy is designed to provide children desirous of a career in football with quality education alongside an elite player development football programme.

The school's goal reads, "Our overall goal is to encourage the child to develop personal / moral self discipline, cooperate and show respect for self and others; these are keys to becoming self-reliant and actualized in all he does."

Djokovic struggled to win over a pro-Federer crowd, who clapped some of his misses and jeered him at one point during a tense final set.

"It triggered him to fight in the fifth set," observed Becker, who coached Djokovic between 2013 and 2016.

"He got a bit riled and gave some stares to people in the crowd but that's how he works, that's how he ticks."

"There comes a point when you get frustrated, but I thought he handled himself

but the momentum watered down in the second as they could only get three points as the Guineans fought back to take the second quarter 13-3 to end the first half tied 23-23 points.

The third quarter ended in favour of the Guineans 14-11 but a spirited comeback in the final quarter of the game from the Nigerians saw them take the game 20-16 to win the game by one point 54-53.

Speaking after the game Head Coach of the team Fubara Onyanabo said he is excited about the outcome of the game and seeing the boys take the third position remains a consolation which they can build on in the future.

"I am really excited, it was a very tensed game and I could not take my eyes off the board in the final quarter of the game because the Guineans kept coming at us but the boys held their nerves for the win. "I am disappointed we didn't get the World Cup ticket, we tried our best and I am sure we will do better next time. It goes to show that with proper preparation, Nigeria can do better at these competitions. We have abundance of talents in this country I must say that for certain."

Nigeria matched her best performance at the tournament. The country finished third at the maiden edition of the competition in 2009.

ABEC Football Academy: Where Footballers Play, Learn

An official of the academy said, "The curriculum is designed to adequately prepare a good number of these players for successful football careers in Europe and secure sports scholarships into colleges in the United States".

The programme will run with three age-specific options, namely, recreational football, for athletes under the age of 10.

These would further be grouped into 2 training groups:

U-8 and U-10 and their training exercises will be conducted at the Primary School playgrounds of the ABEC Schools Group.

There is also Collegiate Football for athletes under the age of 13.

Their training exercises will be conducted at the ABEC Boarding School field, Woji.

They will be exposed to 5 hours of on-the-field training, and 3 hours of competitive play each week.

WIMBLEDON FALLOUT

Tennis Fans Must Wake up to the Greatness of Djokovic, Says Boris Becker

Tennis legend, Boris Becker, has warned tennis fans to "wake up to the greatness" of Novak Djokovic after he won his 16th Grand Slam at Wimbledon at the weekend.

Serbia's Djokovic, 32, won his fifth Wimbledon title by beating Centre Court favourite Roger Federer in a classic.

Victory in the longest ever Wimbledon singles final moved him closer to Federer's men's record of 20 major triumphs. Rafael Nadal, with 18, separates the pair.

well and was mentally well prepared."

Swiss second seed Federer, 37, was aiming for a record-extending ninth men's singles title at the All England Club, which would have matched Martina Navratilova's all-time leading tally.

Federer is the darling of the Centre Court crowd and was backed by the majority of the 15,000 fans in what became an increasingly partisan atmosphere.

That was most apparent

when Djokovic was booed when he went over to chair umpire Damian Steiner to discuss what he felt was a late Hawk-Eye challenge from Federer.

"Federer is the greatest of all-time here and has the right to get that love, but on the other side you have to respect a four-time champion a little bit more," said Becker, a three-time winner at SW19.

"I hope next year, if they played again, it would be more even".



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MISSILE

Soyinka to Buhari

"The problems of this nation are beyond the solution that can be offered by this government, that's the first admission; they have to stop thinking in partisan government"

- Nobel laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, taking a swipe at President Muhammadu Buhari that the problems confronting Nigeria are beyond him.



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TUESDAY WITH REUBEN ABATI

abati1990@gmail.com

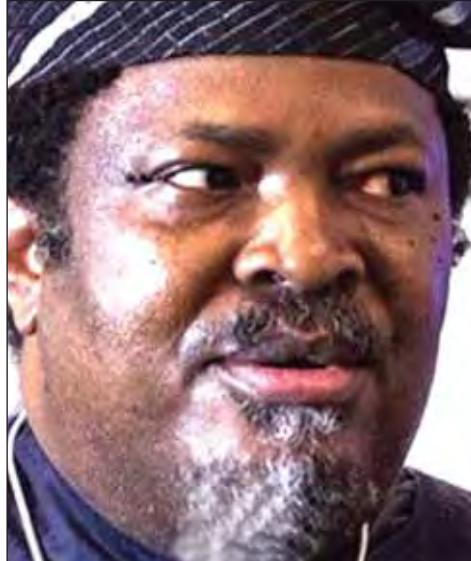


Nduka Obaigbena at 60

On Sunday, July 14, Nduka Obaigbena, the publisher of THISDAY newspaper, and founder/chairman of the Arise News Media group turned 60. Friends, family, associates and the top rank of the Nigerian elite including the Vice President, state governors and captains of industry turned up en masse to mark the occasion at a Thanksgiving Service held at the Cathedral Church of Christ in Marina, Lagos. The celebration continued with a luncheon at the Sky Lounge of the Eko Hotels and Suites. A grand celebration was held at the same Hotel on Monday evening. Nduka Obaigbena deserves all the accolades that have been showered on him. When he turned 50, 10 years ago, I thought that was the most impressive celebration I had ever seen, but 10 years later, the entire city practically stood still to celebrate a man of great impact and consequence. From the President to the supplier of newsprint and the vendor on the street, we have concrete evidence of the essence of the man we call "The Duke", "Publisher" or simply "Chairman." Whenever the story of Nigeria's media industry in the 20th and 21st centuries is written there is no doubt that Obaigbena will occupy a place of respect, praise and admiration in the narrative. He wields in the Nigerian media industry and even beyond, such influence and impact, not because he has been a two-time President of the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) but because of his contributions to the development of the industry, his commitment, his entrepreneurship and his innovativeness.

His life is an interesting epic about determination, hard work, creativity, and the ability to think out of the box. He is certainly not a theoretician; no, he is rather a man of direct action, impulsive and intuitive may be but merciless, exact and determined in the pursuit of defined goals, which oftentimes may be overshadowed by his own restlessness. He is essentially an artist, creatively imaginative with a pragmatic turn of mind. We are talking about a man whose unorthodox methods have produced admirable results and whose style is a catalyst for industry-wide innovation. He started quite early. He was in his twenties, barely 25, when he decided to venture into the business of publishing a news magazine. He called it *ThisWeek*. Every one had their doubts. The industry was dominated by the big names of the profession. The only thing Obaigbena had done at the time, was may be earning a small notoriety as a witty newspaper cartoonist. He was not one of the big boys. He did not have a recognizable family name, not even a fat bank account in his name. Nobody gave him a chance.

But he would soon end up as a major discovery in the media industry. He put to work his major assets: his ability to identify talents and provide a liberal, friendly environment for the flowering of talent. He put together a team comprising some of the best and brightest in the media, and what happened? Every week, *ThisWeek* churned out some really wacky reports and stories



Obaigbena

in well-tuned prose. The market noticed. Other players in the market also noticed that a new kid on the block was beginning to shake the table. Obaigbena likes to shake tables through innovation and ideas. But the business model behind *ThisWeek* fell off the table. Ill-advised tampering with the exchange rate by the military authorities and poor management decisions combined to frustrate the project. *ThisWeek* was printed every week in London and couriered back to Nigeria. It was not sustainable.

But that was not the end for Obaigbena who had now carved a niche for himself. His next major move, after a brief period away from the turbulence, was the announcement of the publication of THISDAY newspaper. This was received with a mixture of doubt, skepticism and outright contempt. I recall that many in the industry predicted the early demise of THISDAY. "That young man has not learnt his lesson with the failure of *ThisWeek*?" "What does he think this business is all about?" For 10 years, the pessimists kept prophesying the early end of THISDAY newspaper. Their prophecies failed. THISDAY was introduced at a time when there was a gap in the media industry – the National Concord, The Guardian, *The Punch* were under siege on account of military repression. THISDAY filled the gap, focusing mainly on politics, business and lifestyle, breaking fresh stories and commentaries authored by skilled and ambitious journalists. Obaigbena had cleverly recruited seasoned journalists who had become jobless because of the proscription of those three newspapers. This is why till today, THISDAY offers a mixture of *The Punch*, *National Concord* and *The Guardian*. By the time these newspapers were de-proscribed, THISDAY had become well established in the market.

But there was a lot more at the level of innovation. At a time, computers were considered best suited for fraudsters involved in internet scam, and the notorious 419, Obaigbena "forced" his reporters and technicians to start using the computer. Once upon a time in this country, media managers resisted the introduction of the

computer, and the production team boasted about their ability to set typefaces using the old Goss machine. Obaigbena was one of the first, if not the first publisher, to move quickly to the 21st century. He digitalized his newsroom and gave laptops to his reporters. He insisted that his reporters must move to the next level or ship out. It looked like tyranny then, but today, there is no journalist anywhere in Nigeria who would consider the computer an instrument of punishment. *The Guardian* is the first newspaper to introduce colour in its masthead: the blue colour- but Obaigbena moved beyond the mast head and started full colour printing at a time that was considered impossible in Nigeria. There were complaints about cost and the recklessness of a young publisher whose target market was the young and the stylish who do not necessarily read. But the innovation soon became standard practice in the Nigerian press.

Obaigbena is also the first publisher to introduce simultaneous printing. The circulation department of newspapers in Nigeria used to be a source of nightmare for everyone. The circulation department set the deadlines more or less. They used to dictate when the newspaper must go to bed. If the newspaper was not ready at a particular time, it would not be able to reach the market. They exercised a kind of authority that was irritating to those who had to look for the stories, process them and put the paper together. When Obaigbena's THISDAY introduced simultaneous printing, other publishers followed his lead. Before then, Chief MKO Abiola, publisher of the then *National Concord* had set up Concord Bulk which was meant to be a central circulation system for all newspaper houses. It was modelled after a similar infrastructure in the United States but ego, rivalry, competition, politics and mischief stood in the way and the Abiola initiative failed. THISDAY set up printing presses in Lagos, Abuja and Agbor. The game changed.

The back page of the Nigerian newspaper used to be the traditional space for sports news and reports. Obaigbena moved sports to inside back page and introduced back page commentary. It was as if he had committed an abomination. There was a loud scream across newsrooms. But the back page came to stay. Today, many newspapers in Nigeria are doing exactly the same thing. The back page of THISDAY where I now write this column every Tuesday has endured over the years. The pioneers are Obaigbena himself, Olusegun Adeniyi, Amanze Obi, Victor Ifejeh, Eniola Bello, Louis Odion and Ijeoma Nwogwugwu. Obaigbena has been able to create new brands on this page – and also use the platform of the newspaper to create an emergent generation of ace reporters and analysts. The biggest achievement of a newspaper is to create its own team and ambassadors. For many years, the *Daily Times*, *The Guardian*, *Vanguard*, *Punch* were the leaders in this regard. THISDAY soon became an award-winning newspaper in its own right and can also now boast of an alumni association working in other newsrooms and in other professions.

At 60, Nduka Obaigbena can look back and beat his chest, and then look around him with satisfaction that he has been able to make a mark and turn something that he enjoys doing into a legacy and a source of life-long fulfilment. He is like a fireplace from which others have tapped light and he has been most generous in allowing access to his space and resources. The point must be made that his influence goes beyond Nigeria. He has endeavoured with varying degrees of success to set up media operations in South Africa, New York, and the United Kingdom. He learnt some bitter lessons in South Africa but whatever challenges he may have faced as an entrepreneur form part of the totality of his essence: in this regard, his capacity to fail and rise again and move on to greater accomplishments. I referred earlier to his restlessness. After THISDAY, he established the Arise Magazine, he set up the Arise Fashion Week, he dabbled into events management, setting up an events centre in Lagos and Abuja, he organized concerts – the THISDAY Music Festival – bringing some of the topmost musicians in the world to Nigeria, from Jay Z to Chris Brown, Kelly Rowlands and Beyoncé. He would also bring world leaders to Nigeria to speak: Presidents Bill Clinton, George Bush, Vicente Fox, Prime Minister Tony Blair and Condi Rice. He has on his Rolodex some of the most powerful people in Nigeria and the world across industries. In the fashion world, he is a friend of the inimitable Naomi Campbell. In journalism, he has partnered with some of the most influential media houses in the world. In leadership, he has had cause to engage some of the world's great leaders. The 25-year-old who came to Lagos after university in Benin is now one of the big boys of Nigeria!

The Obaigbena that I know is not like the photographs that you see of him. He is a resilient spirit, a dogged fighter. This is perhaps the source of his staying power in the turbulent arena of Nigerian business and politics. He actually once ventured into politics on the platform of the National Republican Convention (NRC) but he fled and has since not looked back. He thinks Nigerian politics is dirty even if he has many friends in politics, and his media outfit's focus on politics as a primary subject. He didn't enjoy being a politician at all. He thinks politicians and the electorate are just interested in money and when you give them money, they are likely to ask for more money. When I told him I wanted to run as Deputy Governor in Ogun State during the 2019 general election, his key advice was that I must not borrow money from anybody, and that I must not sell anything that belongs to me. He insisted - his friend, Chike Ogeah was there - that politics is a casino. You can put in everything you have and you may not win. I won't say he is right or wrong, I guess in Nigerian politics when you win, you lose; when you lose you win. But that is another topic entirely.

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