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Style



JUMOKE ODUWOLE

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COVER

Despite this being a new scene for her, Jumoke Oduwole has taken up her role in government with enviable confidence and has delivered on her duties with passion and purpose. In this interview with **KONYE CHELSEA NWABOGOR**, she lets us in on what her current position as Special Adviser to the President on Ease of Doing Business entails and also shares her thoughts on Nigeria's present economic challenges.

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In life, if you have been blessed with wealth, it is not just enough to live the life of your dreams. What is most important is the legacy you leave behind and how many people you have impacted positively. Recently, the Aliko Dangote Foundation donated \$20m to The African Center in New York. In appreciation of this gesture, the hall which houses the center was renamed Aliko Dangote Hall. Needless to say, his name has been well planted in history as one of the great philanthropists of our time especially from Africa. You might say you are not an Aliko Dangote. You do not have to be. Whatever you give, no matter how small, will put a smile on someone's face. It is such acts that make life more bearable for the less fortunate.

Many a time when we see people begging on the streets, we turn the other way in irritation especially when you do give money and all of a sudden you are bombarded with many more street urchins who suddenly spring out of nowhere! But think about it...is it not better to bless the few that were lucky recipients than to totally ignore all of them? I have always been amazed at how quick these little children are on their feet. They make very dangerous moves that it's a wonder they have never been hit by a car. What I tend to do is keep as much loose change as I can and just share amongst them before my car zooms off. There are so many other channels to give; from NGOs, to the Motherless Babies

homes, to various hospitals not to mention churches. If you cannot give in cash, you can volunteer your service in any of these charitable ventures. Gone are the days when we solely relied on the government to aid its citizens. We have fast realised that the battle of survival is in our hands and we, as private citizens, have to play our part in bettering the lives of the have-not. There is a certain type of pleasure derived from an act of kindness. If you begin to give now, in your own little way, showers of blessings will inevitably come your way. No need to hoard if you have in excess? After all, when you depart to your maker, none of these material things will be buried with you. So it is better to bless those who desperately need whenever you can...simply because you can! We pray to have many more Aliko's whose philanthropic acts will no doubt play a huge role in empowering the African narrative.

No matter how little you have to give...always remember "An inch is better than a mile in the right direction."



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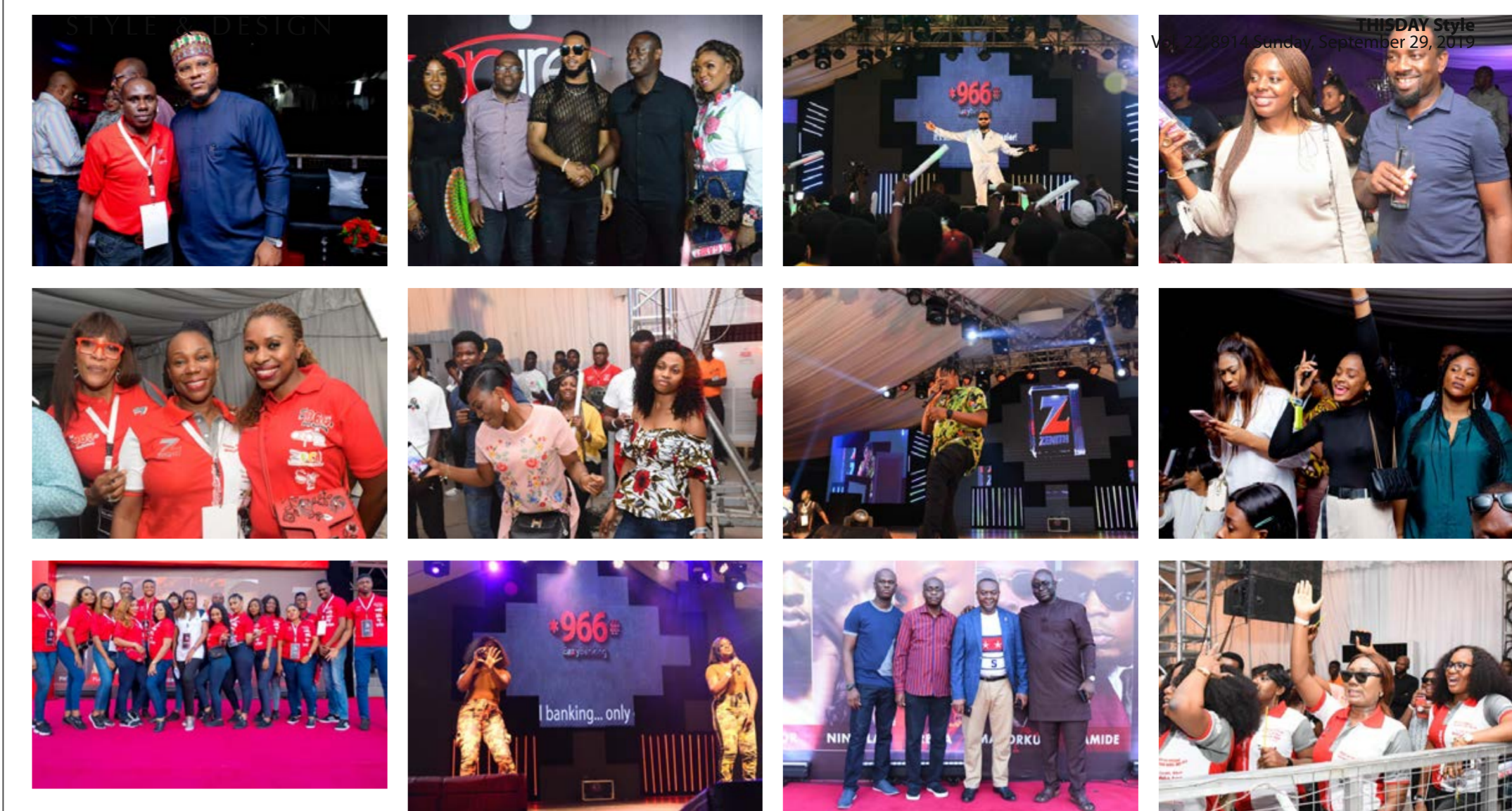


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Scene and be Seen



AKINWUMI ADESINA, PRESIDENT OF GHANA, NANA AKUFO-ADDO & PRESIDENT OF TOGO, FAURE GNASSINGBE



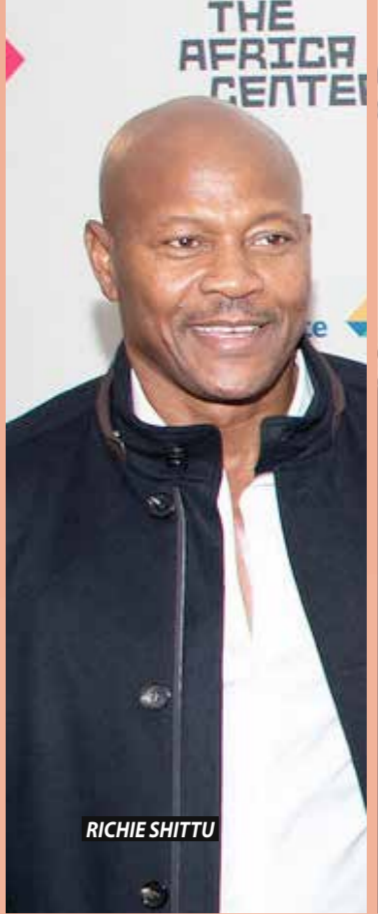
BETSY OBASEKI, FIRST LADY OF EDO STATE



IBUKUN AWOSIKA



CUPPY OTEDOLA



RICHIE SHITTU



HABEEB FASHIRO



WALE TINUBU



SEGUN FOWORA



BILL GATES



NDUKA OBAIGBENA



JIM OVIA



JOHN MOMMOH



HRH SANUSI LAMIDO SANUSI



FEMI OTEDOLA



HERBERT WIGWE & DAPO OKUBADEJO



OSCAR ONYEMA



AIGBOJE AIG-IMOUKHUEDE



SEGUN AWOLOWO



SEGUN AWOLOWO

THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICA CENTER AT ALIKO DANGOTE HALL IN NEW YORK

Recently, The African Center in New York announced the \$20 million donation made by Aliko Dangote Foundation to empower the Center's capital campaign and other ongoing operations. This donation is the first of its kind in terms of amount given by an African philanthropist to the U.S. non-profit organization. In recognition of this historic gesture, the Center renamed its venue "The Africa Center at Aliko Dangote Hall" at a ceremony during the Future Africa Forum.

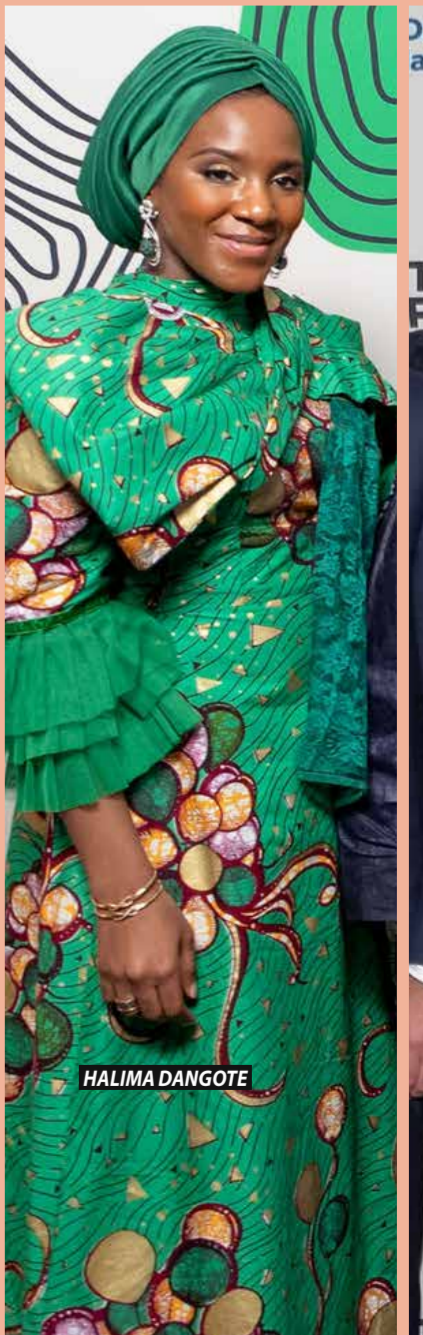
The donation is focused on promoting and building partnerships and collaborations between Africa and the United States. This will help in changing the African narrative in time to come. As one of the world's most successful business men, Aliko Dangote is a dedicated philanthropist who can list his initial endowment of \$1.25 billion to the Aliko Dangote Foundation, besides from the recent \$20 million to the African Center, as one of his many strides to help Africa in health, nutrition, education, and economic empowerment.



FMR GOV NIYI ADEBAYO, GOV GODWIN OBASEKI OF EDO STATE, GOV BABAJIDE SANWO-OLU OF LAGOS STATE, MO IBRAHIM, ALIKO DANGOTE, GOV ABDULRAHMAN ABDULRAZAQ OF KWARA STATE & GOV DAPO ABIODUN OF OGUN STATE



NGOZI OKONJO IWEALA



HALIMA DANGOTE



UZODINMA IWEALA

Scene and Seen



JAMI EKONGBA

OLU ADEGBORO & TOKUNBO AJASIN

IFEDAYO ABEGUNDE & WALE AKINTERINWA

MR & MRS AKEREDOLU

YEMI & SHADE OGUNBIYI

BOYE OYEWUNMI

KENNEDY UZOKA

GBENGA ADEKYINKA

KAYODE ODUKOYA

ADEBAYO OYEYIOLA

SOPE AKEREDOLU

BABAJIDE & ROTIMI (JNR) AKEREDOLU

YUSUF ALLI

OYEWOLE FASAWÉ

FUNSHO KUPOLOKUN

TAYO & BOYADE ALASOADURA

PIUS AKINYELURE

MR & MRS JIDE OLUPITAN

CLEMENT AGBA

OLURUNNIMBE MAMORA

IYIOLA OMISORE

ADEJOKE ORELOPE-ADEFULIRE

FEMI IBITOYE

WALE BABALAKIN

SEGUN OLUGBOYEGUN

AJAYI BOROFFICE

REPRESENTING THE GROOM'S FATHER, MR JAMES OYEYIOLA & GROOM'S MOTHER, MARY OYEYIOLA

MAMA AKEREDOLU

NKEM OKEKE, DEP GOV OF ANAMBRA STATE

AGBOOLA AJAYI, DEP GOV OF ONDO STATE

MRS OBASEKI

IBIJOKE SANWO-OLU

HAIJYA SILIFA SULE

NASIRU AJANAH

OLUTOYIN AKEREDOLU

TUNDE & TENI OYEYIOLA

TENI & TUNDE TIE THE KNOT

The ancient town of Owo in Ondo State, will not forget in a haste the cloud of dignitaries that flood the town recently when the governor of the state, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu and his wife, Betty gave their daughter, Teniola in marriage to Olatunde Oyeiyola.

Dignitaries at the colourful ceremony include top politicians across party-lines, captain of Industries, academics; religious and traditional leaders as well as top government functionaries.

It was a colourful and memorable event for all who attended and witnessed the love-birds commence their journey into a blissful union. We wish them a happy married life.



TUNDE & TENI OYEYIOLA



GOV ROTIMI OF ONDO STATE, & BETTY AKEREDOLU (BRIDE PARENTS)



OBA OBATERU AKINRUNTAN



OBA OMOTUNDE ADAKO & OLORI OMOLOLA



FMR GOV BOLA TINUBU



FMR GOV BALA NGILARI



FMR GOV NIYI ADEBAYO



GOV KAYODE FAYEMI OF EKITI STATE



GOV ABUBAKAR ATIKU BAGUDU OF KEBBI STATE



OBA AJIBADE GBAEGESIN OGUNOYE & OLORI



GOV ADEGROYEGBA OYETOLA OF OSUN STATE



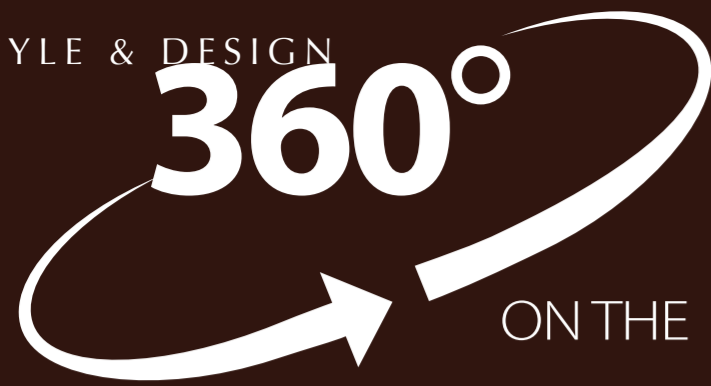
FMR GOV ABIOLA AJUMOBI



FMR GOV IBIKUNLE AMOSUN



FMR GOV OLUSEGUN MIMIKO



ON THE POSITIVE



DR IFEYINWA NWAKWESI

LIVING A PHENOMENAL, HEALTHY, HAPPY AND FULFILLED LIFE.

HYDRATION (4TH SECRET OF VIBRANT HEALTH)

As a young child, I never really drank water regularly. I drank mostly soft drinks even sometimes with my meals. I now believe that some of the health problems I had were due to lack of water in my body – Dehydration.

A few months ago, one of my business associates from south africa introduced me to a book called – Your Body Many Cries For Water by Feyendoon Batmanghlij MD. That book has simplified my practice of natural healing and I am deeply excited about the information this book provides.

In my previous teaching, I have taught health enhancement skills in this order of priority – Spiritual Well being, Mental and Emotional wellbeing, Health Assessment, Cleansing, Alkazing, Hydration, Nourishing and Exercising, but it is important to put first things first. Hydration is more important and is one of the most important steps to any health building program. Dr Batmanghlij's book – Your Body Many Cries For Water is an all time classic, designed to accomplish a paradigm shift in medicine and benefit significantly the health of millions of human beings at very minimal cost to them.

Dr Batmanghlij is a London educated Iranian medical doctor who has made revolutionary discovery about the water metabolism of the human body. Dr Batmanghlij was trained in Saint Mary Hospital Medical School of London University, one of the reputable medical institutions in the world. He was one of the last students of the eminent discoverer of penicillin , Sir Alexander Fleming. Thus steeped in classical orthodox medicine, Dr Batmanghlij was greatly amused when he found out that water was doing in a dependable way what medication has never been able to do.

In his classical medical training , like other orthodox doctors world wide, he was taught that it was a solid material in the body (The Solute) that was important; only an incidental status was assigned to the solvent aspect a human body, water. Dr Batmanghlij's breakthrough was made while he was confined to a Teheran Prison.

Dr Batmanghlij is of aristocratic lineage in his native Iran and when the shah was overthrown, he was arrested and jailed with more than 3000 other well- born victims of the Khomeini revolution. While they were awaiting execution, Dr Batmanghlij was assigned as the medical officer pending his own appearance before a firing squad. He had no medical resources other than water in an environment that was pervaded with stress and terror. Indeed the doctor found himself incarcerated in a gigantic stress laboratory. This became the environment in which fundamental discoveries were made. As per the medical and giant medical trust, vast hospital complexes and battalions of medical professionals , universities that boast about their sophisticated research facilities and the huge resources of the pharmaceutical industries, none of them was capable of penetrating the

bedrock of human health, adequate daily water intake. Without realizing it initially, Dr Batmanghlij was working with clinical controls in place.

Prison discipline enabled him to follow up his patients who had no possibility of evasion. Forced to use water medically and water alone, Dr Batmanghlij was astonished to find that water was effecting a full cures of diverse normally incurable diseases. This cures occurred in a complete fashion not seen in response to medication which "Treats" or "Controls" such recalcitrant and diverse diseases as asthma, arthritis, high blood pressure, ulcer. Orthodox medicine has only palliatives for these conditions not cures. Orthodox medicine has been ineffective in dealing with a large spectrum of diseases whose aetiology is classically listed as "Unknown" because it has this fundamental polarity of solute and solvent back to front.

The ramified and fundamental role of water has simply not been comprehended. After two years of doing basic research in the Teheran prison, Dr Batmanghlij was released and he travelled to America, there he continued his path finding research on the water metabolism of the human body for a further decade or more. He worked with established institutions like the university of Pennsylvania, lectured widely to physicians and wrote papers for professional publications including the USA journal of Gastroenterology. The fallout from Dr Batmanghlij exertions included large numbers of completely cured persons who were chronically affected with incurable diseases. Medical doctors were among the people. Slowly but surely, numerous intelligent medical doctors and researchers who studied his work experienced the same embarrassment that had consumed Dr, Batmanghlij when he first began comprehending the cardinal role of water in human health and function. Like Dr Batmanghlij, these enlightened physicians came to realise that medicine was confronting a fundamental PARADIGM SHIFT. Some of these board certified physicians are quoted in the book- Your Body Many Cries For Water. Dr Batmanghlij's ground breaking book explains how the body has many more energy indicators of dehydration and thirst besides dry mouth.

Irrefutable clinical experience in the controlled prison environment forced the doctor to conclude that conventional medicine was hobbled and handicapped by a false paradigm. The false paradigm taught that water was not significant in human metabolism as a solute. The thrust of basic human functioning as Dr Batmanghlij research progressively confirmed, is that the solvent (Water) and not the solute plays a cardinal role in human health.

In summary, the book, Your Body Many Cries for water stipulates that lack of water – chronic dehydration is one of the root causes of many painful degenerative diseases.

Many of the bottle water we have in the market place are usually acidic water, they are not micro clustered, their anti oxidant capacity is poor and

even if you drank this quality of water it will not penetrate your cells for adequate hydration.

I recommend a product which I use that produces alkaline micro- clustered, anti oxidant rich, hydrogen infused energy water which will easily penetrate your cells, tissues and organs for vibrant health. This product is known as Alkaviva Alkaline Ionizer. You may have read a lot about the benefits of alkaline water and may even own an ionizer but please read on to understand why this system is a must have. The water is not just alkaline with PH of 9.5, but is 99.9% contaminants free and hydrogen infused for oxygenated, healthier blood cells promoting energy and overall wellbeing.

It is worthy of note that Alkaviva Alkaline water is really pure water like nature intended! Most other alkaline water systems are out of date and do not remove 99.9% of contaminants in water. Alkaviva, the most popular personal home system guaranteed to alkalyze water to PH 9.5 is independent lab tested and removes over 172 of the worst chemicals and contaminants in water. Note that some of the 172 contaminants are numbered in groups (Groups of contaminants) meaning individually Alkaviva water ionizers remove well over 172 contaminants while preserving needed minerals in water.

Again, Alkaviva ionizers like the powerful Vesta H2 infuses hydrogen into the water. Water generated infused hydrogen help promotes healthier and stronger blood cells and immune system. There are so many testimonials from Alkaviva Alkaline water consumers which proves its ability to aid poor eyesight, asthma, type2 diabetes, arthritis, gout, cancer, acid reflux, headaches and other ailments. Alcoholics even testify that this Alkaline water helps detoxify their system and reduce the side effects of alcohol and hangovers.

The awesome news is that Alkaviva ionizer system are affordable. Alkaviva Technology is newer but the machines are cheaper than the highest competing ionizer. People love this because they actually pay less for a better, more current system instead of paying more for an outdated technology.

A lot of people are going around with moderate to severe dehydration and their medical doctors may not even be aware that their health challenge is due to dehydration in the cells, tissues and organs and this is one of the reasons why medical doctors give intravenous fluids to sick patients to facilitate their recovery. My advice will be that Nigerians take their water intake more seriously, while there are other affordable systems that can also give you micro-clustered, hydrogen, energy infused water.

Thank you for your time reading this article. Until the next two weeks, remain phenomenal Your's in vibrant health
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JUMOKE ODUWOLE

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In her capacity as the then Senior Special Assistant to the President on Industry, Trade & Investment and Secretary to the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) Jumoke Oduwole is credited for leading the team who was responsible for Nigeria moving up an unprecedented 24 places in the World Bank's flagship Doing Business Report over the last three years.

Prior to her being called to serve, she had a brief stint in the Nigerian banking sector and then headed on to the lecture room where she held sway as a senior lecturer in International Trade Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Lagos and was an elected member of the University's Senate. Despite this being a new scene for her, Jumoke has taken up her role in government with enviable confidence and has delivered on her duties with passion and purpose.

In this interview with KONYE CHELSEA NWABOGOR, she lets us in on what her current position as Special Adviser to the President on Ease of Doing Business entails and also shares her thoughts on Nigeria's present economic challenges.

Congratulations on your appointment as the Special Adviser to the President on Ease of Doing Business. Did you see that coming?

In 2015, I was appointed Senior Special Assistant to the President on Industry, Trade & Investment. In that capacity, in July 2016, I was made Secretary to the newly established Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) and coordinator of the activities of its secretariat with a vision to make Nigeria a progressively easier place to do business. My team was responsible for Nigeria moving up an unprecedented 24 places in the World Bank's flagship Doing Business Report over the last three years, among other notable achievements. We collaborated widely with all levels of government – the national assembly and the judiciary, all state governments, key business-facing regulators, ministries, departments and agencies, as well as the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders. We jointly began the work of making the Nigerian economy more productive and competitive, and we have some tangible results to show for it.

What exactly does your new role entail?

Even though we have achieved some traction, there is still quite a lot of work to do in consolidating on our achievements and taking things further in this Next Level. I feel extremely honoured to have been appointed one of only seven Special Advisers to Mr President, and entrusted with more responsibility to deliver impact in one of the priority focus areas through the transformation of Nigeria's business environment.

My role as a Special Adviser to Mr President on Ease of Doing Business demonstrates the Administration's determination to improve the regulatory, bureaucratic and legislative environment for businesses operating in Nigeria, particularly SMEs to thrive.

A recent analysis by Forbes has rated Nigeria as the 110th best country for business in the world in 2019. The list also states that Nigeria is rated 14th in Africa while South Africa occupies the number one spot. What can be done to improve on this?

In addition to working on hard infrastructure issues such as power, roads and rail, airports and seaports, and broadband penetration, over the last three years we have created a systemic intervention



My role as a Special Adviser to Mr President on Ease of Doing Business demonstrates the Administration's determination to improve the regulatory, bureaucratic and legislative environment for businesses operating in Nigeria, particularly SMEs to thrive.



focused on reducing the cost of doing business and the time it takes to do business, particularly relating to interaction with government agencies, with a particular emphasis on transparency and leveraging automation to reduce rent seeking opportunities. I can readily point to the significant improvement in the process of starting a business in Nigeria through automation reforms undertaken by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), which is the first port of call for harnessing ideas and unlocking innovation in any economy. Again, our 24 hour electronic visa process application process has enabled foreign investors and business travellers to receive visas on arrival as they forge partnerships with Nigerians. The very first executive order of this administration, the Executive Order 001 of 2017 on efficiency and transparency in public service mandates MDAs to adhere to service level agreements with each other, and as advertised to the public pertaining to their processes. Importantly, EO1 performance is tracked on a monthly basis for select PEBEC agencies, and the public have the opportunity to lodge complaints or give feedback through the reportgov.ng app and portal, which has a mandate for a 72 hour response time backed by the Federal Executive Council.

Going forward, we will be consolidating on the deepening of these reforms to promoting a sustainable reform culture by all stakeholders, as well as taking on the implementation of feedback pertaining to some of our regulators to ensure that we have a regulatory environment that adhere to

global best practices in order to support the growth of key sectors of the economy. You can also expect some big ticket, game-changing reforms such as the National Trading Platform which will deliver a single window project and scanners to Nigeria's ports, starting with Apapa Port, making them more efficient and competitive. Catalytic legislation, such as the Companies and Allied Matters Bill, is also poised to be passed and signed into law before the end of this year.

Some people would say these numbers look good on paper but it doesn't necessarily represent the reality on ground. What's your take on this?

The validations from the private sector regarding the impact of the over 140 reforms implemented by the PEBEC initiative so far are what has led to these modest increases in our rankings. There is really no way to "game" these reports. The World Bank Doing Business report, for example, is hinged on what private sector says they are experiencing, not what governments say. On our own, we track the empirical impact of our reforms from a cost and time perspective and are now moving to tracking actual financial benefit to companies in targeted sectors. Our website www.businessmadeeasy.gov.ng, lists out the reforms and we have received numerous testimonials from businesses on actual impact to their bottom line based on these reforms. For example, Flying Doctors Nigeria Limited, a medical emergency service operating across Central and West Africa has significantly increased the number of patients it has brought into Nigeria in the last 18 months simply because of the availability of the emergency visas on arrival introduced by the Nigerian Immigration Service specifically to address this need. As you can imagine, medical tourism, already impactful on its own in terms of revenue generation for Nigerian hospitals, has an additional knock on effect of demand for hotel rooms for accompanying family members, and the likes. This is how just one reform can be a game changer for a sector.

What are your thoughts on Nigeria's present economic challenges and how do you advise start-ups work around them?

Our current economic challenges are not peculiar to Nigeria alone. All across the world governments are battling with similar issues. The priorities of this





Administration – tackling security, corruption and growing the economy – have been well articulated in the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017–2020), from stabilizing the macroeconomic environment to investing in our people and building a competitive economy, a lot of work has been in progress and is beginning to bear fruit. The journey is not necessarily an easy one but it can definitely be done with collective effort. With government spending at less than 10% of GDP, we definitely need a vibrant and proactive private sector. I'd encourage them to think global – to do the work, do the research on how to be globally competitive, set high standards from the beginning. Be out there! It takes courage but playing to win is something Nigerians are actually great at. Connect with ecosystems and networks in your sector so you learn the lessons that others have already been through – don't allow excuses or blame the system because every problem is an opportunity.

Tough as it may be and there's a wealth of knowledge and experience out there – others are pressing in, paying the price and making it work.

Tough as it may be and there's a wealth of knowledge and experience out there – others are pressing in, paying the price and making it work. Determination, resilience and good old favour will take us all towards where we want to be in life because "fortune favours the brave".

Determination, resilience and good old favour will take us all towards where we want to be in life because "fortune favours the brave".

What are your thoughts on the growth of the Nigerian fashion industry? Any favourites?

Phenomenal! I'm a die-hard fan of Nigerian fashion. At least 90% of my wardrobe is proudly made in Nigeria. Simply Beautiful clothes! Many people know I wear a lot of my bestie, Folake Coker's designs. I'm a real Tiffany Amber girl. The major milestones in my life over the last 20 years can all be chronicled with TA pieces and influences. Of course, all the clothes in this shoot, except one outfit, are TA or TAN (their diffusion line) Lol! I also support a lot of younger designers as well. The gorgeous and fun mustard jumpsuit is a Lady Biba piece and I'm quite the #LadyBoss wearer at work. I wear a lot of TIFE and GREY, Moofa, Exclamations! and more for work and for life. I've been eyeing OlarSlim since one of my mentees rocked an interesting shorts jumpsuit at an event we were at a few weeks ago but I don't own any of her pieces yet. I constantly meet designers at exhibitions, fairs and shows and I also have my tailors, from the high end ones to my faithful and reliable Louis or Biliki at Sura Market. I really enjoy supporting them and wearing all these clothes. I feel especially exotic when I'm abroad and people ask about my clothes or bags or hair or lipstick and I smugly tell them that they are Nigerian brands, but I really can't wait to see some of these businesses come to full scale mainstream on the global fashion scene. Why can't TAN overtake Zara or Mango in a few years? Zashadu up stage Prada? Tara dethrone MAC?? Why not? There's definitely the selfish angle to all this. Nigeria can earn much-needed foreign exchange from exports of our clothing, apparel, leather and other accessories, cosmetics and more not to talk of the number of jobs that can be created from local light manufacturing for consumption and for exports. I'm personally committed to solving their business environment challenges so they can produce locally and dominate the African market and beyond. It's really in all of our interest to consciously buy Nigerian and wear Nigerian to help grow our own economy, while looking and feeling absolutely fabulous!

What are some of the successes recorded when you served as SSA to Mr President on Industry, Trade and Investment, and now as SA of the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC)?

The first thing I would mention is that we were able to noticeably diminish the very significant trust deficit that existed between the private sector and government prior to 2016. We did this by engaging a lot with private sector and mediating between private sector and public and civil servants to foster dialogue and mutual understanding of their roles. Another area I am proud of is the building of a systemic intervention from scratch without any pre-existing structure, and ensuring the sustainability of the project to this point. Fostering a sustainable reform culture within some MDAs and getting some of the reforms the PEBEC has birthed beyond the possibility of unravelling if we take our foot of the pedal. For example, in 2017 we partnered with the National Assembly to pass two critical laws in the area of access to finance, which is a major issue for SMEs in Nigeria by underpinning our credit bureaus and the Central Bank of Nigeria's National Collateral Registry with legislative frameworks. That feat is about to be repeated with some key legislations that we have loading.

Prior to your being called to serve, you were a senior lecturer in International Trade Law at the Faculty of Law at the University of Lagos what was that experience like?

I left a career in investment and corporate banking to pursue academia and I have never regretted



If I am convinced that running for office is what I want to do, then I will face it wholeheartedly, the same way I face every new and challenging opportunity – with rigorous preparation, determination and courage.

that decision even for a single day. Academia gives you the liberty and space to develop your mind and is actually excellent preparation for public service. Those were the years that I really came into my own. I think I can refer to teaching as my first love. I simply love my students!! The opportunity to impact and help shape young minds was such a privilege, and now it is always so gratifying to see them thriving in various works of life ranging from following in my footsteps in public service or academia to tech, fashion and creative industry, business, and of course, becoming stellar lawyers in practice.

Do you see yourself ever returning to the lecture hall?

I have never stopped teaching, and I don't think I ever will. Almost every time I have the opportunity to speak to an audience or to my team I end up defaulting to teaching mode. It's basically part of who I am.

Do you see yourself ever going into active politics. Any plans?

Why not? If the timing and the role is right I'm 110% committed to active public service. It's often been said that politics is a dirty game particularly for women. What's your take on that? I do not believe that "politics" should be looked at with such a limiting lens. We really must demystify these stereotypes. Every situation would be different so we need to do the research and hard work.

If I am convinced that running for office is what I want to do, then I will face it wholeheartedly, the same way I face every new and challenging opportunity – with rigorous preparation, determination and courage.

Any observation about the challenges that women face that are specific to the public service space?

In my opinion, people, not only women, face the same challenges in public service as they would in any other professional space. Competing or

collaborating to excel and reach the top of any professional ladder has its demands. Again, I would not shroud wanting to excel in public service in any more mystery than I would have given wanting to reach the pinnacle of my earlier banking or academic careers.

We need to change the rhetoric from public service being some unknown space that many people are afraid to explore because it is critical that a certain minimum percentage of the best minds in every country willingly serve in nation building. In Nigeria's case, it has become existential for us that this should be the case.

In any area, I find myself, exhibiting character, competence, capability and courage are my mantra, and these are pretty much transferable through all works of life.

What are some of the most rewarding experiences you have had as a public servant?

The first deeply rewarding experience I'd share was when I informed the Vice President that Nigeria had moved an unprecedented 24 places up on the World Bank Doing Business rankings in 2017. With the effort and political capital that he had expended in actualizing Mr President's directive to the PEBEC to move up 20 places that year, and was one of the top 10 most reformed economies that year, it was so gratifying to share that the systematic and well coordinated approach taken by the Council had bore globally acclaimed fruit, and that we were progressing in the right direction.

Of course, working with federal and state MDAs to deliver consistent upward movement in our indicator areas year on year since the inception of our initiative is really meaningful. It is exciting to see some officers in agencies that were originally almost hostile and resistant to change become self-motivated champions of reforms, "efficiency conscious" and seeking the leverage of automation on processes themselves. Indeed, some once defensive public officials now have a deeper understanding of their role in contributing to Nigeria's economy and have become evangelists for reforms in their various MDAs. The journey ahead

is still a long one but on two occasions now we have paused to recognize the hard work of such colleagues and our partners through the Annual PEBEC Awards events.

As a wife, mother and public servant, how do you find balance and unwind despite your busy schedule?

As a wife, mother, daughter, sibling, mentor and friend, as well as a busy professional, like everyone else, I do what I must to make it all work!! No, seriously, first of all I have an extremely supportive and encouraging husband, and a strong support network of family and friends as well. I also now actively take steps to ensure that I do not stay under too much sustained pressure for too long, and that I don't over exert and overcommit myself. With the increase of lifestyle and stress-related illnesses it has become really important that we all do this. I commute between two cities on a weekly basis so I try to as much as possible ring-fence my weekends primarily for family time and rest, but in general, for private time. I do try to keep these boundaries. With public service in particular, if you allow it, your whole life will be consumed by work and/or work-related events and conversations even at the weekend because well meaning people see you and remember their issues, ideas and suggestions, or want to have an exciting debate on topical events – leaving you with no time for a mental break – so I have had to learn to "say no" and to try to practice lessons learnt a few years ago from the book "essentialism" – the disciplined pursuit of less!

What drives you in life to keep pushing boundaries?

To put it simply I'll have to say it's "God at work". I truly consider it a privilege to serve Nigeria. For me, it's really more about being impactful and making a difference on this God-given assignment than about pushing boundaries per se. I really didn't start off planning to do many of the things that I've done, it's been a whirlwind adventure with God and I know this for sure because looking back at my life, I could never have designed it the way it's turned out so far.

3-INCH HEELS

It's no secret that high heels can make you feel like a boss, but if your feet aren't fans of sky-high heels then you can try 3-inch heels. Research shows that 3-inch heels are the perfect height for both confidence and comfort.

COLOUR

A good mood goes a long way where confidence is concerned, and colour can make the world of difference. Cue yellow. It's a hue that looks gorgeous on all skin tones – rich complexions look stunning for citrus shades, while softer sorbet shades flatter paler dispositions – while it's proven to make you feel happier whenever you wear it.

JEANS

We spend so much time in our trusty denims, but they're notoriously difficult to shop for. Mom jeans will nip you in at the waist and keep you comfy all day, while Paige jeans come with a built-in bum sculpting cut and a wash specifically created to contour and elongate your legs. Skinny styles are neither skinny nor oversized, helping to balance out proportions and highlight all your best bits.

BLAZERS

The formal blazer has become synonymous with strong females. More women admit to be more confident when they slip one on a blazer, especially in an office environment. Wear with contrasting trousers and loafers for your 9-5, then pair with bright colours and lashings of denim off-duty.

UNDERWEAR

We're all for the belief that confidence is just as much about what lies underneath, as it is what's on the outside. The key is to feeling both comfortable and sexy at once, and ESTAREnailed IT!

Dear
Watcher
 OF
TIMES...



TONYE COLE

WHY FEAR FEAR?

It was 4am and I was about to embark on a journey I had been on time without number. The program at the Redemption Camp in neighboring Ogun State had gone better than expected and my duty of ensuring worshippers exited the various parking lots around the Arena was completed without incident. The area was quiet as those staying behind had gone to sleep while the occasional strollers went about their prayer walks or whatever task needed completing at this hour. For me, it was time to head home and my destination this day was back to Ikoyi, Lagos where I lived.

Ordinarily this was a journey I did without much thought but times had changed subtly and that which used to be taken for granted was no longer so easy to overlook. Travel by road to anywhere and at anytime it seemed, was now fraught with unimaginable perils. Stories flood the airwaves of masked men indiscriminately opening fire with automatic weapons on vehicles in a bid to stop them and thereafter carting any number of captives that survived the hail of gunfire into the jungle, kidnapped victims held for ransom. To think that these bandits are willing to kill a few just to kidnap a few is mind boggling but therein lies the abysmal value paid to human lives today.

The God of All Creation had long foreseen the depravity that man was capable of unleashing upon each other and therefore set out certain laws well at the beginning of time meant to keep man in check. "Thou shalt not kill" He declared, the penalty for which was the loss of ones life, the finality of the penalty reflecting the seriousness of the crime. And so it was that He equally declared kidnappers must pay the ultimate penalty for the crime of stealing another human being for by not stamping down on kidnapping as soon as it rears it's ugly head, societies abrogate their peace of mind to a life of constant fear and torment. If we must fear at all, let us fear the fear that comes when the law breaks down completely.

May today bring us righteous law enforcers

For your comments, contributions, connect with me here: @TonyeCole1 on Twitter.



IDIA AISIEN



MINAA MONROE



PA LENA



OZINNA ANUMUDU



ESTARE

Tips TO BOOST YOUR CONFIDENCE

Whether you're bossing it in the office or brunching with your girls, the outfits you choose should do wonders for your confidence. From the colour you wear, here's all the fashion buys you need to feel confident round-the-clock.

BY FUNKE BABS-KUFEJI

Handbags add character

Handbags are another great way to add some character to a look. Never buy a boring one. If you go for a classic shape, why not buy it in red, blue, green or even exotic skin.

Have fun

Never take your clothes too seriously. A little touch of humor - or extravagance - can make an otherwise uninteresting look seem instantly smashing.

Keep your hair neat

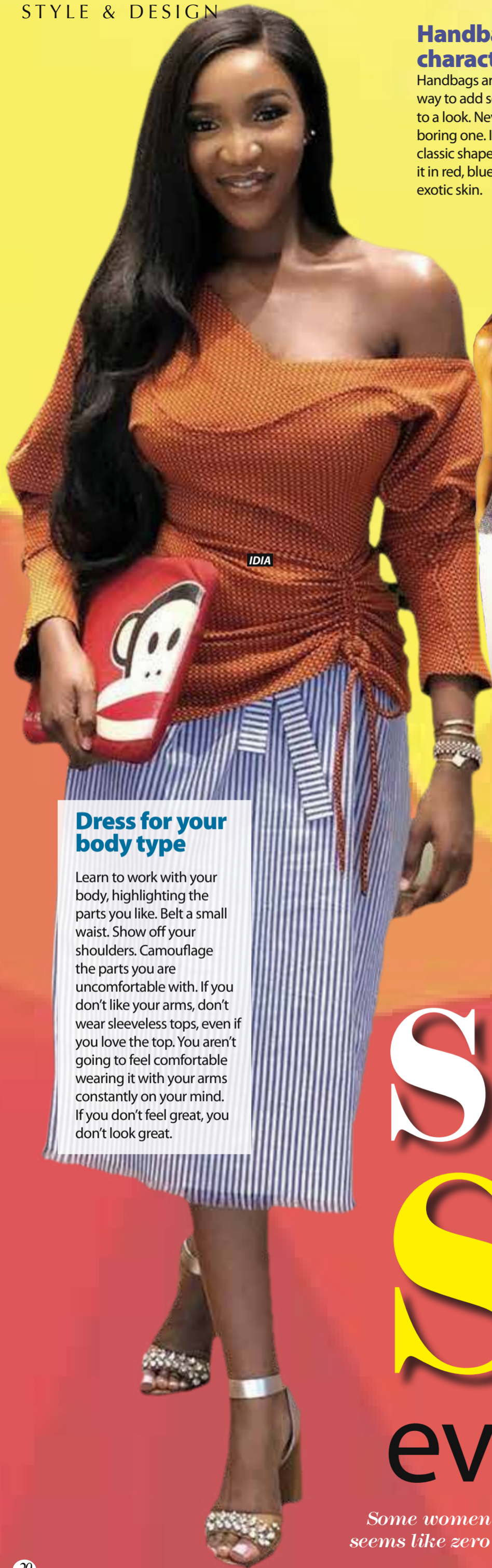
Hair is a tough one. We'd say get a blowout every other day, but that's not realistic. Instead, keep a travel-sized brush in your handbag or car and run it through your hair when no one's looking and you'll look like you just walked out of a salon.

The black pump

It seems obvious, but there is nothing more useful than a black, closed toe pump. Elegant and timeless, this shoe adds quiet elegance to any look. A slight point to the toe is more modern and helps to elongate the legs.

Take care of your skin

Figure out what works for you and stick to it. The worst thing you can do is to constantly change your beauty routine. You'll aggravate your skin.



IDIA



EZINNE AKUDO



KAHLANA



KIKA OSUNDE



YUKI AKINOSHO



STELLA UZO



DAMI

Dress for your body type

Learn to work with your body, highlighting the parts you like. Belt a small waist. Show off your shoulders. Camouflage the parts you are uncomfortable with. If you don't like your arms, don't wear sleeveless tops, even if you love the top. You aren't going to feel comfortable wearing it with your arms constantly on your mind. If you don't feel great, you don't look great.

Everyone should own a pair of nude shoes

Whether it's flat sandals, a simple pump or high-heeled sandals in the perfect shade of nude, you can't go wrong: they go with everything

STYLE SECRETS every woman should know

Some women are just born with an eye for style. Sure, it makes us a little jealous that they manage to pull off just about any trend with what seems like zero effort, but if there's one thing we know about fashionable women, it's that they've got their own tips and tricks to staying stylish.



Alero Adollo
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CAPSULES

Let's go there and tell one another the truth.... Parties are a get together for celebrating one thing or the other and as a people we take pride in splurging.

Oftentimes in "lasgiddy" you wonder when you attend these parties why people say times are hard, as people are gorgeously dressed, even if they have had to borrow shoes from friend A, wrapper from friend B and necklace from friend C, the end game is to pepper them so that others go gree sey sauce still dey pot. Who is fooling who you sometimes wonder, the whole process can be riveting.

What riles and rankles is when you're invited to a party and you're expected to sit on the floor, beg for food and water whilst dripping with sweat, what's up with that people?

When someone honours you with their presence, yes you read me right, honours you with their presence, it is rude and discourteous not to see to their comfort, truth be told, I doubt that there are people who actually depend on these parties for their daily meal, so why treat them like "babianlah" people. It is ludicrous I tell you.

You send out invitations for 1000 people, provide chairs for 800, then provide refreshments for 500, seriously, this is out of order and we need to stop doing this. Have a small party if that is how far your pocket can stretch but do not take people out of their homes and ignore them like yesterday's horrid meal.

When people come out to celebrate with you, don't treat them like you're all that, show them that "they" are all that, that's how we'll know you are enlightened.

The process of preparing for an outing is migraine inducing thus the least anyone can do is be a good host.

You need to make each invited guest feel like a VIP, that is how it is supposed to be done people.

Another really silly thing that happens at Lasgiddy parties is that the chairs and tables can sabi try you enh....you get there on time and they boastfully flash reserved, for guest that are yet to arrive while you wander around like an Israelite in the wilderness pleading with the floor to manufacture a seat for you to rest your form.

You look at the empty chairs longingly whilst they stare back unapologetic for snobbing you, attempt to sit down and the quick retort of "sorry you can't sit here" slaps you in the face like the cold December wind.

I think it is critical that we include etiquette in our curriculum as many people do not know what is polite or impolite or maybe they just don't care.

Whilst inanity may spell well, pronounce well like a nursery rhyme, those in that box ought to realise that it puts the brain in debit. Rude ain't cool and arrogating some class of sorts to yourself by treating others badly is actually crass I tell you.

Maya Angelou once said "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel"..... interestingly, it is what you say and do that oftentimes provoke the feeling which stores you in memory.

Colours of Life



with Koko Kalango

ONCE I HAD NO SHOES

Is God really real? Does He answer prayers? How can I be sure? If you have ever pondered any of these questions then maybe my testimony will help answer. Here it goes...

In the late 80s, fresh out of university, I was posted to the bustling city of Lagos for my National Youth Service. Far away from the relatively quiet city of Port Harcourt where I grew up and where my parents lived, I stayed with my sister and her husband.

When I completed the compulsory Youth Corps programme, I joined the job market. One day, to my joy, I received an offer letter from an airline and I was to begin work the following week. It would be my first real job and I was excited. I was particularly looking forward to this job because it came with lots of travel opportunity. But there was one problem - I did not have appropriate shoes for work!

During my service year I had taught at a government secondary school and we were not required to dress that formally so I did not have much formal wear and I certainly did not have shoes to wear to work. I desired low-heeled, comfortable, leather, court shoes, preferable black. At that time I could not afford to buy the sort of shoes I needed because I had not earned a real income and even if I had, I would have needed to save over several months to get the shoes. I did what I do when I am in a fix: I prayed. "Lord," I said, "I need a pair of court shoes to wear to work on Monday".

At the time I was part of a home Bible study group that met every Thursday at 27 Ekololu Street, Surulere. The Thursday before the Monday that I was to report at the new job, I went for Bible study as usual. After the meeting, a lady named Korede, who was also part of this home fellowship, came up to me with a shop bag in her hands and said "Koko, the Lord asked me to give you this pair of shoes!" I was shocked. I did expect God to answer my prayers but not in this way. I had thought perhaps I would receive the surprise pocket money that my parents sent me from time to time and with that I would get myself the shoes. I also felt that my caring big sister (with whom I lived) would figure out my need and hand me down a pair of her shoes. I thought of several

possibilities but it never crossed my mind that God would respond in such a dramatic way.

With a mixture of joy and awe, I received the bag from Korede. I was to be even more dazed when I saw its content. Inside it was a black pair of court shoes made by the luxury Suisse footwear brand - Bally. What made that incident even more amazing was the fact that I had always loved Bally shoes but at the time I could not afford them. Whenever I went to London's West End, I would pass by the Bally shops and gaze longingly at their lovely leather shoes. Sometimes I would even venture

into the shop, pick up their footwear and raise them to my nose to take in the aroma of the rich leather. Then I would try them on. But that was as far as it went. Now here was the Lord not just answering my prayers for a pair of shoes, but giving me the brand I loved but could not afford.

I would find out much later that Korede and I wore the same size of shoes. She had bought these particular pair for herself but somehow never worn them. According to her, as she prepared to attend Bible study that Thursday she sensed the Lord telling her to give the shoes to me and she obeyed. The answer to my prayers was in Korede's closet!

Someone once said such testimonies are just coincidence. I will not

argue with them. All I would say is that from my experience, these 'coincidences' occur when I pray so I would gladly respond to the Lord's invitation to prayer in the book of Matthew chapter 7 verse 7 to "Ask".

p.s.

I have put together a book of amazing stories of God at work in people's lives today which I would recommend. It contains testimonies of healings, deliverances, provision and much more. You may get copies from Laterna Book Shop or from the Rainbow Book shop on Jumia.

Koko Kalango is author, Colours of Life devotional. She may be reached at contact@coloursoflife.org or on Instagram @koko.kalango

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