

# N5,000 BENEFICIARIES: We used Jonathan's template – Presidency

➔ Says selection process not partisan    ➔ 10,700 Kwara households benefit

SEE PAGE 6



Some officers and men of the Nigerian Police, barring members of the #BringBackOurGirls from gaining access into the Presidential Villa, during a procession to mark 1000 days of Chibok school girls in captivity, in Abuja yesterday

Photo: Ayuba Raji

## NSCDC 'uncovers' Shi'ite faction in Borno

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1,000 days: We'll  
rescue remaining  
Chibok girls  
– Buhari

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Biafra: Kanu's secret trial  
begins tomorrow    ➔ PAGE 28

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Bakare to  
Buhari: Act  
now, Nigerians  
are suffering

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## APC warns El-Rufai, Kwankwanso over crisis in N/West

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## In the News

■ Gunmen have, again, attacked Angwan Umadi village of Shiroro local government area of Niger state killing one person and carting away 212 cows and seven motorcycles. 7

■ Sokoto state government at the weekend disbanded the state Hisbah Commission and pledged to reconstitute it in due course, the Commissioner for Religious Affairs, Alhaji Mani Maishiko Katami, has disclosed. 9

■ Independent Hajj Reporters, a civil society organisation, has lauded the decision of Saudi Arabia to restore the 20% cut in Hajj quota to all hajj participating countries. 13

■ Kaduna Electric has engaged the services of 310 corps members across its four franchise states for the customer enumeration exercise. 15

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Igbinovia, Abamu make Team Nigeria's final list

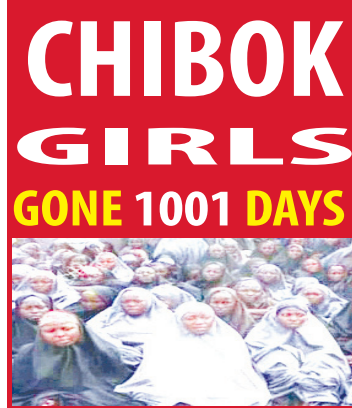
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Eagles will make amends for AFCON miss - Pinnick

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### ABDUCTION



**CHIBOK GIRLS**  
**GONE 1001 DAYS**

## Nigerians, and the love for the dramatic

By the time the fool has learned the game, the players have dispersed, and you can beat a fool half to death but you can't beat the foolishness out of him. African Proverb.

I have said it countless times that Nigerians suffer low attention span, we suffer focus delinquency, like a one-year-old baby, so easily excitable, we pick on every matter and like a toy, after a while we drop it and move to the next one. Most times what makes us cry brings us so much humor--Like last year did you remember all the noise of Mrs. Buhari and the follow-up in the other room.

We just love the dramatics-- I will remind us a few. There was a certain Aluu 4, we even had a memorial song, signed petitions, so what happened, and then last year a boy was killed by the mob in Lagos, first we debated his true age, and followed-up on whether he stole garri or a mobile phone.

Remember that drama like a tsunami over the Central Bank Chief (now) Emir Sanusi and Islamic banking--what became of all the foolish arguments especially against...or that Sanusi donated money to Kano? Today CAN, the umbrella organ of Christians says that it will kill the current Central Bank Chief who is a Christian for heading one Islamic banking body.

Who remembers Ombatse anymore and all that DSS officers that died, like an auction market--it came with all the drama, and going, going, going and finally it went, a report, a recommendation and the lives lost just was collateral damage.

Remember all the actors in the baby factories of the east, no one seems to be talking again. Pregnantors, pregnantees,



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### BURNING POT

buyers and sellers--business continues, but really it was no new news in the first place, all drama!

Nigerians naturally choose their battles based on sentiments and bias, so often that it doesn't last, as very many times they forget why they choose the stand they took. It's like picking a genre of drama; comedy and humor, tragicomedy, agony, action and thriller, sci-fi and paranormal...etc.

All part of the entertainment called Nigeria. We only grumble a bit but soon we forget.

Today the epicenter is in Southern Kaduna, before it was Plateau, Jos and environs, I recall Dogo Nawa, and more recently we have confine "Pray for Agatu" to the dirt bin of dramas that were exciting.

Follow me let me refresh our minds to the theatre production of Christians were poisoning crayfish and palm oil, sending same to the North and Muslims poisoning suya and injecting oranges and apples to kill Christians...in the words of Miriam Toews "Depression is caused by asking oneself too many unanswerable questions." Why do we love foolishness with a succinct staying power...?

I am guilty, you are, we all guilty. We are only victims of a contagion that spreads fast and as it is, for now the cure seems

far from us. So we are outdoing ourselves on the peanuts that Diezani stole...ordinary \$158million, it's all drama, we soon will forget the script, if there was any. Just like we have forgotten the collapsed church in Akwa Ibom, the Synagogue building collapse, all collapse are only part of the drama.

Each time we have one major issue, the political class gives us some drama to engage us while they loot away and we create sainthood of otherwise political miscreants.

For me our debates are dramatic as a people and largely expose our poor cerebral quality regarding nationalism and high amount of hooligan quotient in us. Nigerians learn slowly when they manage to, but sadly forget quickly.

Of all that I have read, know and what informed sources say, at best, we engage in crude fight for power, on the other hand, it is a fight with no moral, no agenda, a fight of ego and on a final count--there is no fight at all, it is all diversionary, nothing will come out of all our fights, we won't even learn from it, just some drama for the moment.

What saddens me is that Nigerians have refused to learn, I hate this psycho-make of us. Unfortunately, it is partly who we are. We are either fighting ourselves or fighting for those

that are misgoverning or looting us blind because we share faith, creed and not on any defined ideology.

I will end with this small gist; its author is unknown-- There once was a farmer who discovered that he had lost his watch in the barn. It was no ordinary watch because it had sentimental value for him.

After searching high and low among the hay for a long while; he gave up and enlisted the help of a group of children playing outside the barn.

He promised them that the person who found it would be rewarded.

Hearing this, the children hurried inside the barn, went through and around the entire stack of hay but still could not find the watch. Just when the farmer was about to give up looking for his watch, a little boy went up to him and asked to be given another chance.

The farmer looked at him and thought, "Why not? After all, this kid looks sincere enough."

So the farmer sent the little boy back in the barn. After a while the little boy came out with the watch in his hand! The farmer was both happy and surprised and so he asked the boy how he succeeded where the rest had failed.

The boy replied, "I did nothing but sit on the ground and listen. In the silence, I heard the ticking of the watch and just looked for it in that direction."

You can educate a fool, but you cannot make him think, a whole lot of us as Nigerians have refused to sit on the ground and listen, we are all talking at the same time, are we really engaging in any critical-problem solving manner, we just do not want to think, or maybe we are not--Only time will tell

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■ The government of Italy has issued interest to file criminal charges against a former Minister of Petroleum, Dan Etete, for his alleged role in the \$1.1 billion Malabu oil deal. 29

■ His clothes were rumpled and smelled of dust. The frail, scrawny man must have journeyed so far --kilometres, miles, who knows? He seems to still have some way to go but clearly lacked direction.' 30

## VISTA

# Buhari and Kanu fighting the wrong enemies

Events after events have shown that the continued detention of the Director of Radio Biafra, Nnamdi Kanu, by the Federal Government of Nigeria needs a serious rethink. The matter is not only plaguing the country socially and politically, but its toll on the national economy is not difficult to fathom. The unfortunate irony yet is that while the two principal actors, President Muhammadu Buhari and Kanu, may have good intentions, they are fighting the wrong enemies.

Please hold your thoughts till the later part of this essay on the flaming issue of secession for which Nnamdi Kanu is now better known. For it may not occur to many that before Kanu became a recurring decimal of Buhari's presidency, a major aim of Radio Biafra, in Kanu's own words, was to uproot "all looters, embezzlers, kidnappers, sponsors of terrorism, child traffickers, corrupt judges, crooked university lecturers, murderous Nigerian security forces and all thieving individuals masquerading as public officials who steal public funds thereby preventing developmental projects from impacting positively on the lives of the ordinary people."

Any read of the statement above readily shows that such aspect of Kanu's advocacy is in tandem with Buhari's standing vow for a corrupt-free Nigeria. If the rationale is inadequate, then consider that just about every group or leader who has pleaded for Kanu's release suggested that lack of development provoked his advocacy. This goes without saying that the president and Kanu have common foes in the corrupt leaders who plundered our common wealth the last 16 years of astronomical oil boom—that is, even before Buhari assumed democratic power.

Therefore, in case President Buhari and Mazi Kanu are yet to get it, which appears to be the case, their real enemies in this context ought to be the corrupt leaders from the Southeast (SE) and South-South (SS) zones



of Nigeria who combined to hinder the provision of efficient public amenities as well as job opportunities in the Biafra land that drew the ire of Kanu in the first place.

More specifically, the enemies are the very politicians and contractors that connived to embezzle the funds budgeted for projects vital to the region, some of which include but not limited to: The 2nd River Niger Bridge; East-West Highway; Enugu-Onitsha/Enugu-PH Expressways; Akanu Ibiam and PH International Airports; Calabar and PH Seaports; Dredging of River Niger; Eastern Gas Pipeline network (CAP); Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC); Legislative Constituency Projects; National Conference convened by President Jonathan that adopted, among other things, the restructuring of the country; the Constitutional Amendment, initiated under President Umaru Yar'Adua, and funded to the brim to address the concerns for equitable distribution of states and local governments.

A simple scan of these projects and their attendant ministries reveals that politicians from the South-East or South-South played one dubious role or the other in sabotaging the desired implementation or development. Needless to say, none of the states or local governments in the SE/SS zones is run by the Hausa or Fulani people—that Nnamdi Kanu has commonly blamed—but wholly by the natives themselves. Yet, there

is no commensurate development in the area for their share of federal statutory allocations.

This outright rebuke of the SS/SE politicians must not be misconstrued as exalting those from other regions as saints. Far from that! The emphasis on SS/SE is because of the topic of Biafra. Besides, the very zones under review produced the then president (Goodluck Jonathan), then de facto Prime Minister (Ngozi Iweala), and the then Minister of Petroleum Resources (Diezani Madueke)—the specious trio who superintended the national treasury during the period their kinfolds were looting the project funds in the area.

In a normal clime, this sort of exposé would be sufficient to unmask the culprits linked with the money-spinners cited herein. But in event that more specific details are needed, my identity has always been an open book. Moreover, this case will not require the state to dole out from its meager purse to fulfill the new policy on whistle-blowing. For quid pro quo is beneath my personal code of ethics in matters of public interest.

Change does not come easy, understood, but containing the situation in the east must not be a rocket science. Make no mistake about it; President Buhari deserves commendation for quietly undertaking some of the projects in the region that were funded but looted during previous administrations. Yet, to continue to punish the primary whistle-blower

in Nnamdi Kanu while condoning the corrupt politicians—who return a portion of their loot—is sadly an oxymoron. In view of this irony, instead of the futile detention of Kanu, the masses prefer a leader that can summon the courage to expose the real enemies who had corralled the project funds into private bank accounts.

Any call for the release of Nnamdi Kanu easily stirs emotions, and that is understandable. The style of his advocacy alone is jarringly hostile and can constitute a problem by itself. But the manner of the man's detention, including the state's refusal to obey court orders, does not serve any good purpose. The only beneficiaries are the real enemies, the corrupt vortex of the opposition, who have nothing concrete to show for their time in office, but who are today having a field day, grandstanding as the champion for the oppressed, claiming the passionate desire to liberate Kanu while stoking a view of General Buhari as an unrepentant dictator determined to abridge freedom of speech in the land. Their ultimate goal, of course, is to capitalize on the Kanu saga to con the mass support needed to derail the president's war against corruption.

Fifth columnists are sure to hide behind the urgency of Kanu's threat of secession to continue to sidetrack Buhari from the right path to justice. But fighting the right causes through the wrong courses usually creates more problems than solutions. Moreover, the president does not need to be reminded that, similar to other multi-ethnic nations, for example, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom, there has always been, and will always be, threats for secession in Nigeria, regardless of who is in power. The manner of the approach is where leadership begins and ends.

*Ogbonnia wrote from Houston, Texas, US via Email: SKCOgbonnia@firsttexasenergy.com*

## Business News

■ Kogi state Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello has commended Dangote Industries limited for promoting tourism potentials in Nigeria and especially in Kogi State by sponsoring the state's 6th Ebira Carnival. **33**

■ The National Pension Commission (PenCom) has expressed concerns about the poor attitude of many state governments to pension contribution. **34**

■ Vitafoam Nigeria Plc has declared total dividend payout of N125 million for the financial year ended September 30, 2016. **35**

■ United Bank Africa (UBA) has introduced its first merchant-focused app in Africa with the aim of creating a SMART (secure, mobile, accessible, reliable, transparent) network of 100,000 micro merchants. **36**

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### Quotes of the Day

Liberty has never come from Government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it. The history of liberty is a history of limitations of governmental power, not the increase of it.

**Woodrow Wilson**

I have a notion that if you are going to be spiritually curious, you better not get cluttered up with too many material things.

**Mary Oliver**

Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies.

**Groucho Marx**

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## VISTA

## Picture of the Day



A boy warms himself around a fire in the northern Syrian rebel-held town of al-Rai, Syria

Photo: REUTERS/Khalil Ashawi

## TODAY IN HISTORY

January 9, 1493:

## Columbus mistakes manatees for mermaids

On this day in 1493, Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, sailing near the Dominican Republic, sees three “mermaids”—in reality manatees—and describes them as “not half as beautiful as they are painted.” Six months earlier, Columbus (1451-1506) set off from Spain across the Atlantic Ocean with the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria, hoping to find a western trade route to Asia. Instead, his voyage, the first of four he would make, led him to the Americas, or “New World.”

Mermaids, mythical half-female, half-fish creatures, have existed in seafaring cultures at least since the time of the ancient Greeks. Typically depicted as having a woman’s head and torso, a fishtail instead of legs and holding a mirror and comb, mermaids live in the ocean and, according to some legends, can take on a human shape and marry mortal men. Mermaids are closely linked to sirens, another folkloric figure, part-woman, part-bird, who live on islands and sing seductive

songs to lure sailors to their deaths.

Mermaid sightings by sailors, when they weren’t made up, were most likely manatees, dugongs or Steller’s sea cows (which became extinct by the 1760s due to over-hunting). Manatees are slow-moving aquatic mammals with human-like eyes, bulbous faces and paddle-like tails. It is likely that manatees evolved from an ancestor they share with the elephant. The three species of manatee (West Indian, West African and Amazonian) and one species of dugong belong to the Sirenia order. As adults, they’re typically 10 to 12 feet long and weigh 800 to 1,200 pounds. They’re plant-eaters, have a slow metabolism and can only survive in warm water.

Manatees live an average of 50 to 60 years in the wild and have no natural predators. However, they are an endangered species. In the U.S., the majority of manatees are found in Florida, where scores of them die or are injured each year due to collisions with boats.





# News

## 'How Fulani militia killed 3 police officers'

The Adamawa Police Command yesterday confirmed the killing of three mobile police officers and the disappearance of two others in an attack by suspected herdsmen in Demsa local government area of the state.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that the policemen were among those drafted to secure Kwayine, Gidan Dadi and Karlahi communities after clashes that followed the killing of 47 cattle in the area.

The command's Public Relations Officer, Othman Abubakar, who confirmed the development to journalists in Yola, said that four rifles belonging to the police officers were also missing.

"Fulani militia attacked the three villages and we lost three of our gallant MOPOL while two are missing.

"We have constituted a high powered search team and by the special grace of God we are going to recover our men.

"On the side of the civilians, two bodies have so far been recovered," Mr. Othman said.

The spokesperson said that the police had succeeded in killing scores of the militias, who where, however, able to escape with their dead ones.

Abubakar said more police officers had been drafted to the affected areas.

The state Governor, Muhammad Bindo, had condemned the attack, which occurred less than 24-hours after a government delegation on peace building mission visited the area.

The governor in a statement signed by the Commissioner of Information and Strategy, Ahmad Sajoh, directed security agencies to deploy more personnel to the area.

He described the attack as unfortunate and sad especially coming after recent peace and confidence building efforts.

## Bakare to Buhari: Act now, Nigerians are suffering

Nineteen months into his administration, President Muhammadu Buhari's 'change' slogan has become a sad reality for Nigerians, a cleric has said.

Tunde Bakare, founder of Latter Rain Assembly and former ally of the president, said yesterday during his annual state of the nation speech in Lagos that "it is unfortunate" that the 'change' mantra "that was once the rallying cry for progressive development has now become associated with retrogression and suffering."

Bakare, a politician and former vice presidential candidate to Mr. Buhari in his failed 2011 bid,

said the hard times Nigerians are grappling with are the consequences of the policies of the Buhari administration.

Mr. Bakare said the policies, especially on exchange and interest rates, should be discarded forthwith and more pragmatic ones be implemented instead.

"To begin with, the confusing and discriminatory multiple dollar to naira exchange rates – favourable to some and not so favourable to others, and without doubt confusing for potential investors – must be discarded while a more reliable and predictable exchange rate, mutually beneficial to our

people and economy and attractive to foreign investors, should be put in place," Mr. Bakare said.

"Similarly, prohibitive and punitive interest rates must be lowered in order to liberate the creative ingenuity of our people as well as encourage those who can access mortgages at affordable rates to become homeowners, especially if our Pension Scheme is up-to-date and robust.

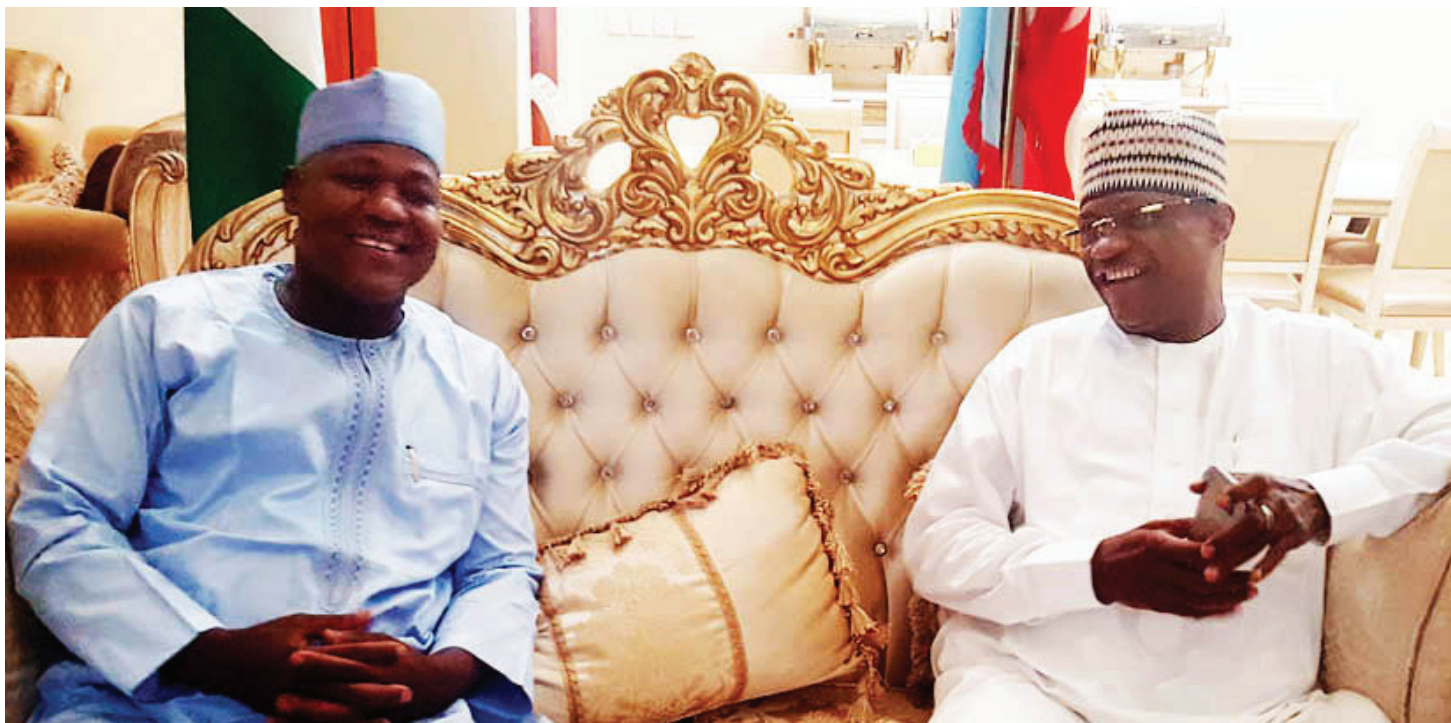
"The multiplier effect of the removal of these bottlenecks in our economy will cushion the effect of the current recession on our people," the preacher said.

Bakare also decried alarming

levels of inflation in the country, which he said had seen the prices of everything —from staple food supplies to electronic appliances and automobiles — skyrocketed.

He said this year will be crucial in the life of the current government, warning the president to immediately reshuffle his cabinet because "we have no more time to waste."

"It is time to demonstrate leadership, wise judgment and astute public policy that guarantees stable and prosperous nationhood upon a foundation of peace; it is time to build a well-ordered nation with strong institutions dispensing justice; it is time to arise with patriotic zeal to build a great nation such that, years from now, generations yet unborn will look back at their history, not with disdain, but with gratitude to God that our generation preceded theirs.



Speaker, House of Representatives, Hon. Yakubu Dogara (left), and Yobe state Governor, Malam Ibrahim Gaidam, during the governor's visit to the speaker, in Abuja yesterday  
Photo: Ayuba Raji

## Cops' dismissal, affront on ethical responsibility – PDP

By Emeka Nze  
Abuja

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has called on the Police hierarchy to reinstate the sacked officers attached to Governor Nyesom Wike to their various position and duty posts and immediately put to trial leader of the police Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) in Rivers state, Mr. Akin Fakorede, and his men who were allegedly seen committing electoral fraud in Rivers state at the rerun elections.

A statement by the spokesman of the party, Prince Dayo Adeyeye, said: "The

offense adduced for their secret trial and subsequent dismissal was a mere concoction and a ruse.

"The hurried dismissal of these police men is another valid pointer to the pre-election rigging plans and the assassination attempt on Governor Wike by the APC led administration before the December 10, 2016 Rerun Elections in Rivers State.

"It will be recalled that the Nigeria Police Force withdrew over 70 percent of its personnel deployed to Rivers state government House and the Chief Security Officer (CSO) to the governor few days to the Elections."

Continuing, it read: "It is obvious by this latest action that the APC led administration after the failed assassination attempt on Governor Wike, decided to punish the 6 police officers who defended their oath of office and job ethics by refusing to carry out the hatchet plans.

"The accusation of professional misconduct levelled against the officers who were only performing their constitutional duties by the Police hierarchy is a slap on the rule of law, ethical responsibility of police duties and the tenets of democratic values.

"This is unfair and highly

condemnable as the accused officers were not even allowed to defend themselves before they were summarily dismissed which is against basic human rights. Change administration indeed!

"This is unacceptable and the dismissed officers should be reinstated immediately in the interest of professionalism, justice, equity, and fair play. This call for thier immediate re-instatement is equally in the interest of the Nigerian Police to save the battered image of the Force."

It added: "Otherwise, this action will be further understood to mean that the Police surely has something to hide but instead played to the gallery with this contraption as a cover up to their hidden agenda and the atrocities committed by some of its men during the Rerun elections.

"For instance, it is on record that the leader of the police Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) in Rivers state, Mr. Akin Fakorede, was seen on television with his men openly hijacking election materials and intimidating voters and INEC officials during the rerun elections.

## 85-yr-old woman hangs herself in Kano

By Aliyu Askira  
Kano

An 85-year-old woman, Malama Salamat Hassan of Jar-Kuka village in Gezawa local government area, Kano state, is reported to have committed suicide by hanging

herself on a tree. The lifeless body of the woman was found dangling on a tree few meters away from the village in the early hours of yesterday.

The deceased's grandson, Muhammad Ibrahim, told this reporter that the late Salamu had been missing for two days before her

body was found.

He said: "We have searched police stations, hospitals, houses of relatives and well wishers for late Salamat, but only to find her lifeless body hung on a tree.

Confirming the incident to Blueprint, the Police Public

Relations Officer, DSP Magaji Musa Majia, said the woman had mental disorders.

"Our men received a report from the village head of Tsamiya Babba that an aged woman was found dangling on a tree. The Divisional Police Officer led his team to the scene and took the woman to Sir Muhammadu Sanusi General Hospital, where doctors confirmed her death".

## News

# N5,000 beneficiaries: We used Jonathan's template – Presidency

➔ Says selection process not partisan ➔ 10,700 Kwara households benefit

By Abdullahi M Gulloma, Abuja  
and Umar Bayo Abdulwahab, Ilorin

The Presidency, yesterday clarified the selection process leading to how the federal government picked beneficiaries of the Social Investment Programmes (SIP) Conditional Cash Transfer, for the N5, 000 monthly stipends in the nine pilot states across the country.

Contrary to insinuations that the project was partisan, the federal government said the choice of eight out of the first nine pilot states, was done two years ago under the Goodluck Jonathan administration, using the World Bank standard.

Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity in the Office of the Vice President, Laolu Akande, made the clarifications in a statement yesterday.

He listed the states to include; Bauchi, Borno, Cross Rivers, Ekiti, Kwara, Kogi, Niger, Osun and Oyo, pointing out that reference was given to Ogun, instead of Osun, as announced in his last press statement.

In an update on the progress made on the project, Akande explained how the Community-Based Targeting (CBT) model of the World Bank was used two years ago to identify most of the beneficiaries in the pilot states, saying "the World Bank is also an active agent in the entire process".

While stressing that the data collected belongs to Nigeria, the spokesman said: "There is no way anyone can describe the selection of the beneficiaries of the CCT as

partisan as the beneficiaries from eight of the nine pilot states were picked even before this administration came into office.

"First, the officials at the federal level, working with the state officials, identified the poorest local government areas, using an existing poverty map for the state, then the LG officials identify the poorest communities in the LGAs and we send our teams there.

"The first thing our team does after selection of the LGAs is to select members of the NOA, the LGA and community officials to form the CBT team. Then we train the selected officials on how to conduct Focus Group discussions at community level. These focus groups comprise of women, men, youth, as the community determines."

Continuing, he further said, "After training them, the CBT teams now go to each of their communities to sensitise the leaders, including traditional rulers, on the CBT process and the necessity for objectivity and openness in the process. At that meeting, they firm up a date to convene a community meeting at a designated location within the community.

"On the set date, discussions are held in the local languages, using terminologies that resonate in that community. The CBT team will explain to the community the purpose of the gathering, i.e. to determine the parameters of poverty upon which persons can be described as poor and vulnerable within the context of that community.

"The CBT teams will then

engage each group (men, women and youth) in the conversation around the criteria and parameters for determining the poorest people. The groups would then be encouraged to identify those households that fall within the criteria that the community

itself determines, and told that the information is required for government's planning purposes.

"Various poverty criteria have been thrown up so far. In some cases, people have said it's the number of times they eat, it's the number of times the fumes of firewood go up from the house, the size of farmland or type of crops grown, etc. Then the groups resume in plenary and report back the criteria and parameters discussed.

"The CBT team would then compile the criteria and parameters and ask each group to return to their break-out sessions and now begin to identify the households in the community that have been identified as fitting the criteria and parameters.

"Once that is done at the groups, everybody comes together again with names compiled by each group. Now, when the same name is featured in at least two of the three groups, it is deemed qualified to be listed on the Social Register.

"At this stage, we now enumerate the members of the household and open a bank account for each of the caregivers by capturing the biometric data of households identified as among the poorest and vulnerable."

According to Akande, in

eight of the nine pilot states, this process had taken place at least two years ago under a programme supported by the World Bank under an agreement entered into directly with the state governments, on the YESSO project. The ninth state, he said, is Borno, which was added because of the IDP situation, with the list of the beneficiaries that has been verified by the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

"This is an entirely fair and transparent process and short of mischief, there is no way you can describe this process as partisan. The President is President of the entire country and the SIPs are for all Nigerians as the case may be."

"In addition to the nine pilot states, and with the release of funds for the programmes, the CBT model has now commenced in other states. The states have been updated on the requirements for the engagement by the federal team and once the lists from states are enumerated, their details are uploaded onto a server at the Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System, NIBSS, which hosts the electronic platform that validates all the payments of the FG for the SIPs.

"Banks have been informed that payments must be at community level, so those banks engaged for the pilot stage have in turn engaged several payment agents, to ensure cash-out to the beneficiaries in their places of residence which are distant to the bank locations", he added.

Meanwhile, over 10,700

house households are currently benefitting from the first phase of the scheme in Kwara State.

Under the scheme, 12 local government areas are participating in the phase while the remaining 4 local government areas are being considered to benefit in the second phase.

Head of unit, conditional cash transfer, Kwara state Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajiya Aminah Yahya-Bagudu, disclosed this in Ilorin while speaking with newsmen at the weekend.

Hajiya Yahya-Bagudu said the programme was part of the components designed by the federal government to tackle poverty in the country.

She said the beneficiaries had started receiving the payment of five thousand naira monthly from the federal government.

The head of unit explained that the selection process was based on data collected for the World Bank supported Youth Employment and Social Support Operation (YESSO), where each community identified those considered as poor.

According to her, the process was transparent and devoid of any influence, adding that the second phase of the programme would commence as soon the social register is shared with her Unit for the payment of the money.

On current hitches in the payment, Hajiya Baagidu said the selected bank had engaged the services of a consulting firm to decentralise its payment process to all beneficiaries across the state.

## NSCDC 'uncovers' Shi'ite faction in Borno

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has said that it has uncovered a factional sect of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), popularly known as Shi'ite sect in Borno state.

State Commandant of the corps, Ibrahim Abdullahi, disclosed this in an interview with NAN yesterday in Maiduguri.

The revelation is coming barely two weeks after the military swept off the remnants of Boko Haram

insurgents who had thrown the entire North-east into chaos in the last eight years.

The Shi'ites, an Islamic sect, engaged the military in a violent confrontation about a year ago in Zaria, Kaduna state, leading to the killings of hundreds of its members. Speaking on the emergence of a faction of the Shi'ites in Borno, the NSCDC state Commandant, Mr. Abdullahi explained that the group, which emerged in Kwaya Kusar Local Government Area

of the state, has a different ideology from its national leader, Ibrahim El-Zakzaky's.

He said men of the command discovered the group through intelligence gathering and surveillance.

"As part of our statutory responsibility in monitoring the activities of religious bodies in the country, we have discovered this strange group," Abdullahi said.

"When we invited the leader of the group (name withheld), he claimed to be non-violent

and that they are against the teachings of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, the IMN leader.

"But we must detest and distance ourselves from all acts of violence and illegal groups in all their manifestations under whatever guise.

"We agree that it is their fundamental right to practise their own religion, but we are still not unmindful about factors that gave rise to the calamitous catastrophe which engulfed us in the recent past."

"Let us collectively bring the calamity brought to us by some misguided miscreants to logical end by embracing lasting peace in our country. Indeed, it is gratifying that we can go to bed without any fear and go about our normal businesses.

"The NSCDC and other security agencies would work toward ensuring appropriate measures that would foster lasting peace through effective enforcement of law and order."



# News

## Gunmen rustle 212 cattle, kill 1 in Niger

By Aidelaje Ojo  
Minna

Gunmen have, again, attacked Angwan Umadi village of Shiroro local government area of Niger state killing one person and carting away 212 cows and seven motorcycles.

The attack, said to have been carried out at about 12 midnight yesterday and that the dead was a 19-year-old Senior Secondary School (SSS11) student.

He was said to have been shot at a closed range by the armed rustlers when he came out to ease himself unaware that the bandits were operating.

It was also learnt that 15 others, who escaped the invasion were either shot or cut with machete by the bandits and they are receiving treatment at the Erena Dispensary.

A witness, one of the villagers, Isaiah Baga, who narrated the incidence to our correspondent, said the rustlers, numbering about 40, arrived the village at about 12am Sunday and operated for about one hour.

He said: "We have reported the latest attack to the authority, but we are yet to hear from them. This is the 20th attack on communities in Shiroro local government area of the state with over 100 people killed and over 1,500 cattle and sheep stolen away."

The Police Public Relations Officer of the Niger, DSP Bala Elkana, confirmed the incident to our correspondent in Minna, adding that anti-riot policemen were combing the forest for the criminals.

He said that five units of mobile police from the new base in Kontagora had earlier been stationed in the vast forest in the area to curb the activities of the hoodlums.

The Commissioner for Information, Culture and Tourism, Mr. Jonathan Vatsa, in a statement said that the government was worried by the activities of people with questionable characters operating within the notorious Birni Gwari forest, Kaduna state which bordered with Niger state.

Vatsa said the criminals were those chased out from Zamafara state by the ongoing military operation and have infiltrated the state through the Birni Gwari axis to carry out the nefarious acts of kidnapping and cattle rustling.

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma  
Abuja

In furtherance of his mandate as mediator, the President Muhammadu Buhari would today host four other West African leaders to a meeting aimed at avoiding violence and preserving democracy in The Gambia.

## AU-ECOSOCC wins 2017 Africa Peace Award

By John Oba  
Abuja

African Union Economic and Social Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC) has emerged winner of the United Religions Initiative (URI) prestigious Africa Peace Award 2017.

The award is as result of the impact of ECOSOCC in promoting

the active participation of the African Civil Society including faith based organisation in the effort of building peace, security and stability in the continent.

It is also in recognition of ECOSOCC's effort to foster working partnership between civil societies, women, youth, children, the Diaspora, faith based organisations, organised labour,

the private sector and professional groups and policy makers in Africa.

URI -Africa established the Africa Peace Award to recognise the committed, effective leadership that is currently being exercised to bring sustainable peace, environmental protection, compassion, non-violence, development, good health, empowerment of women, constructive dialogue among

nations, democracy and good leadership in the continent.

The award helps to create role models of peace-builders throughout Africa. Since the establishment of the award program in 2007, URI-Africa have been giving the award every year to distinguished leaders, individuals and organisations who are doing exemplary work.



Cross section of congregation at a church service to pray for victims of the Southern Kaduna killings organised by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), at the ECWA Good News Church, in Narayi High Cost, Kaduna yesterday  
Photo: Tunde Garba

## How Yuguda misappropriated N212bn – Committee

By Najib Sani  
Bauchi

The high-powered committee set up to carry out forensic audit of all major contracts awarded by the past administration from June 2007 to May 2015 in the Bauchi State Universal Basic Education Board, Ministries of Local Government Affairs, Bauchi Specialists Hospital and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies, has asked former Bauchi state Governor Isa Yuguda, to account for over N212 billion said to have been expended by his administration within the period under review.

Presenting the committee's report to Governor Mohammed Abubakar, the chairman of the Committee, Alhaji Salihu Lukman, alleged that most of the major contracts awarded by the past administration in all

the MDAs investigated were either not competed, while payments had been made, not executed at all, over-inflated, poorly executed or due process not followed, while in others, contractors were overpaid without any acceptable reason or explanation.

The chairman lamented that the amount claimed to have been expended by the past administration in executing projects did not tally with the records that accrued to the state from June 2007 to May 2015 from the Federation Accounts as contained in documents obtained from the Office the Accountant General of the Federation.

He said from the local governments' contributions to the Office of the Accountant General in respect of Joint Projects, former Governor Isa Yuguda, former Commissioners for Local Government Affairs, former Special Advisers, former Permanent

Secretaries and former Accountants General or their representatives as signatories to the JAAC accounts were to account for N16 billion.

On several unjustified cash withdrawals allegedly made from the accounts of the Ministry for Local Government Affairs, Idris Halilu and Abubakar Ahmed Faggo, retired Permanent Secretaries, Ado Santurakin Pali and Hudu Yunusa Ari, Special Adviser in the Ministry for Local Government Affairs, former Accountants General, or their representatives being co-signatories to the JAAC accounts as well as the Director, Finance and Accounts, Aliyu Mohammed, are to account for N3.5 billion.

Within the period under review,

the Committee recommended that all former Commissioners be asked to account for N96 billion, while Special Advisers, Permanent Secretaries, Internal Auditors, Cahiers, Directors of Finance in the Ministry and visiting Auditors to the Ministry be made to account for N8 billion.

Responding, Governor Mohammed Abubakar commended the Committee for a job well done and assured that justice will be done to the report.

He warned public officers that his administration is a product of change and reiterated his commitment to zero tolerance to corruption.

He announced the constitution of a White Paper Committee under the Chairmanship of the State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Barrister Ibrahim Umar

## Gambia: Buhari hosts West African leaders today

A statement issued by the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Garba Shehu, said the meeting in Abuja is a follow up of the one held in Accra on the sidelines of the inauguration of Ghana's President which

expressed the readiness of the leaders of the sub-region to continue the pursuit of dialogue with the leaders of The Gambia

The Presidents of Liberia and Senegal, the Vice President of Sierra-Leone and ex-President

Mahama are expected at the meeting, the statement said.

President Buhari, and the immediate past President of Ghana, John Mahama as Mediator and Co-Mediator respectively, have been

mandated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to ensure the safety of the President-elect, Adama Barrow and ensure a peaceful handover of power on January 19.



# News

The scarcity of kerosene, used by millions of largely poor Nigerians for cooking, has hit major cities causing huge increase in price.

The situation has also caused some residents to turn to alternatives such as firewood and cooking gas.

Three of the most affected cities are Kaduna and Zaria in Kaduna State and Calabar in Cross River state.

In Kaduna, none of the filling stations visited by Premium Times in the state capital on Saturday had kerosene (DPK) for sale.

In one of the stations, the attendants said the scarcity began on January 2, as they got no supply from Lagos and Kaduna

## Kerosene scarcity bites harder

Refinery.

"We have no supply of DPK since the 2nd of this month. The one you see our vendors selling they bought since Christmas," the attendant said.

In Calabar, the scarcity has led to an increase in price to between N350 and N400 per litre from less than N300 per litre.

A News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) survey yesterday showed that the product was not available in any filling station in the Cross River capital and its suburbs.

However, the product was available only in surface tanks in

parts of the city, where dealers sold it at N350 per litre.

The survey revealed also that the itinerant retailers sold the commodity between N380 and N400 per litre, depending on the area.

Grace Nja, who resides in Ikot Efanga area of the city, said she bought the product at N280 at a filling station early last week.

Ms. Nja alleged that petrol product marketers in the state sold their consignments wholly to some middlemen from neighbouring states, instead of the consumers within the state.

"I went to buy kerosene and I saw some women from outside the state carrying big cans and buying the product in large quantity.

"So, they are the ones that buy up the entire supply in the state," she said.

Another resident, Elizabeth Sunday, decried the situation and described it as greed on the part of the product marketers.

"This is bad for us the poor people of this country. I am a widow and I don't have money to buy gas cooker.

"My appeal is that government should do something to change the situation in the interest of the masses," she said.

## New Ghana President Akuf-Addo in plagiarism scandal

New Ghanaian president, Nana Akufo-Addo, has begun his administration on a rather embarrassing note after being caught plagiarising former American presidents during his inaugural speech on Saturday.

Mr. Akufo-Addo, 72, was sworn in alongside his Vice-President, Mahamudu Bawumia, at the Independence Square in Accra, the Ghanaian capital, promising not to "let the people of Ghana down."

Vigilant citizens quickly spotted stark similarities in excerpts of his speech and those delivered by two ex-presidents of the United States decades ago.

The two American presidents, Bill Clinton and George Bush, delivered their inaugural speeches in 1993 and 2001, respectively.

Akufo-Addo first lifted a portion of Bush's January 20, 2001 speech where he said: "I ask you to be citizens: citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens building communities of service and a nation of character."

The new Ghanaian president said: "I ask you to be citizens: citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens building communities of service and a nation of character," without attribution.

Similarly, he also used quotes from Clinton's speech delivered on January, 20, 1993.

"Though our challenges are fearsome, so are our strengths. Americans have ever been a restless, questing, hopeful people. And we must bring to our task today the vision and will of those who came before us," Mr. Clinton said at the time.

Akufo-Addo carefully tweaked the speech to read: "Though our challenges are fearsome, so are our strengths. Ghanaians have ever been a restless, questing, hopeful people. And we must bring to our task today the vision and will of those who came before us."

A composite video showing how Messrs. Bush and Clinton read their respective speeches and how Akufo-Addo plagiarised it had since gone viral on the Internet, marking the latest embarrassment for West African leaders.

Akufo-Addo's communications director, Eugene Arhin, had since apologised for the speech, describing it as "complete oversight and never deliberate."

"I unreservedly apologise for the non-acknowledgement of this quote to the original author."

# We've increased rice production to enhance food security – Ganduje

By Bashir Mohammed  
Kano

Following Kano state government's renewed interest in agriculture, as part of efforts to diversify the local economy, the rice produced by farmers in the state rose from 692, 481 tonnes in 2015 to 1, 551, 720 tonnes last year, reflecting an increase of about 95.2 per cent.

Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, who announced this,

said "wheat production in the state increased from 9, 495, 024 tonnes in 2015 to 17, 717, 000 tonnes in 2016, showing a swell of 84 per cent."

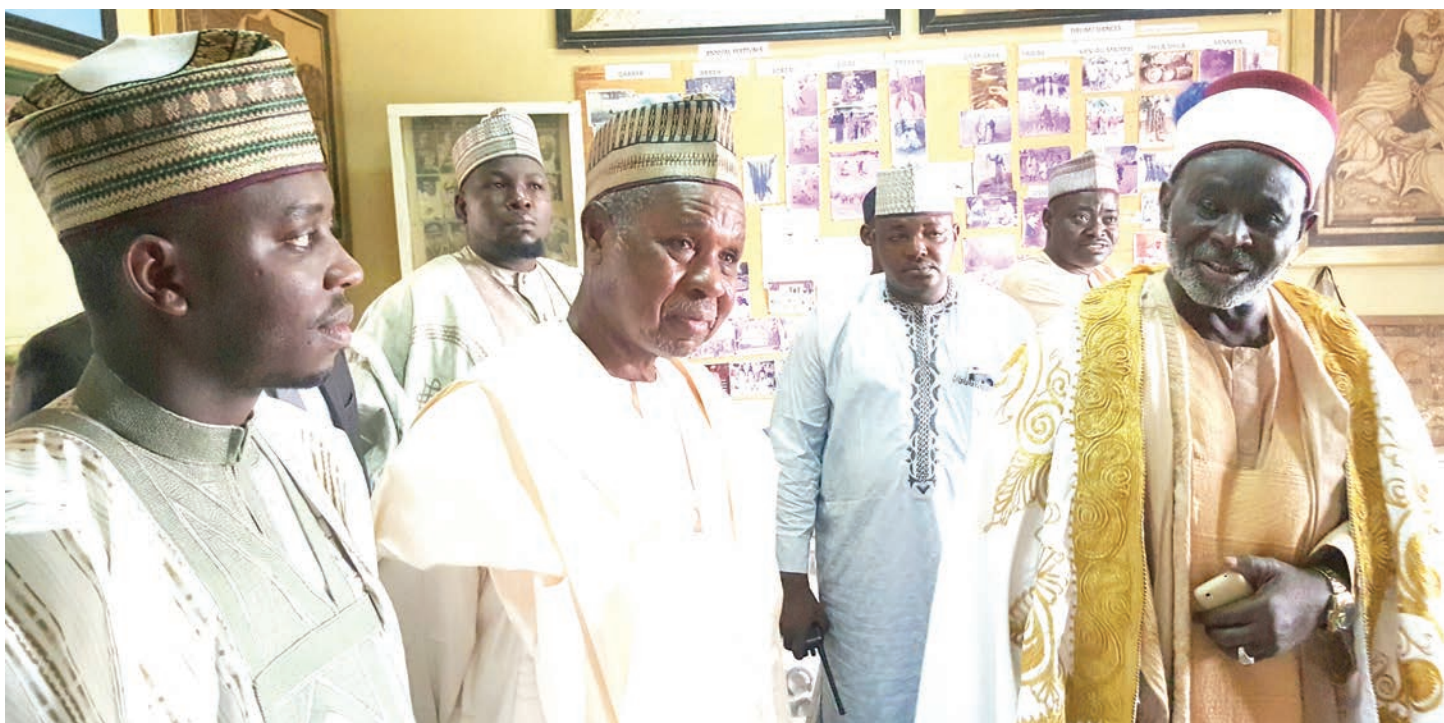
The governor stated this during an Interactive Session on loan recovery with farmers, on the Central Bank of Nigeria/ Bank of Agriculture/Kano state Rice Anchor - Borrowers Programme, at Kano Seed Processing Centre, Kadawa, Garun Malam local government

area yesterday.

On the impediments to the farmers' productivity, the governor said: "I have noticed that there are two major issues in Anchor-Borrower Programme. Farmers are complaining that they are not getting the assistance at the time they need it, and that constituted a major problem. Secondly, those who are involved in the scheme (CBN and BOA) are complaining that farmers are

not paying back what has been given to them."

Earlier, the representative of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), AbdulKadir Ahmad, said the guarantee given by the state government was behind the success of the programme, highlighting that N960 million was allocated to Kano farmers and each got N367, 000 worth of loan, in terms of seedlings, pesticides, allied agricultural inputs and cash.



Katsina state Governor, Hon. Aminu Bello Masari (middle), the Speaker, Katsina state House of Assembly, Hon. Aliyu Sabi'u Ibrahim Muduru (left) and the Mai Potiskum, Alhaji Umaru Bubaran Ibn Wuriwa Bauya 1, during a visit to the monarch in his palace, Potiskum in at the weekend where the monarch announced the conferment of the title of Shettima Alama on Governor Masari

Photo: Govt. House Katsina

## Pastor Adeboye is an inspirational leader – Atiku

By Bode Olagoke  
Abuja

Former Vice President and chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Atiku Abubakar, has described Pastor Enoch Adeboye as a unique example of inspirational leadership whose influence cuts

across tribe, class, and even religion.

In a statement released by Atiku Media Office yesterday in Abuja at the announcement of Pastor Adeboye's stepping aside as the General Overseer (G.O.) of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Nigeria, Atiku praised the

religious leader's influence on multitudes of Nigerians over the past four decades in his former position.

"Some of the most prominent personalities Nigeria has been blessed with have been those who learnt from the pulpit of Pastor Adeboye. A most recent example is our current Vice

President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo," the statement read in part.

He also hailed the several efforts of Pastor Adeboye, which clearly went beyond the normal expectations for a preacher, such as his active participation in the war against HIV/AIDS in Nigeria which saw the G. O. feature in an anti-AIDS

advert that was aired on national television.

In addition, Atiku hailed the role that the G.O. has played as a converging figure for other religious leaders in Nigeria, many who openly attended his services or consulted with him despite being of different congregations.

"Pastor Adeboye is the kind of religious leader I pray that we see more of in Nigeria. He is a man beloved, and who loved one and all without discrimination."



News

By Bashir Mohammed  
Kano

Governor Abdullahi Ganduje has said that the \$1.85 billion development loan obtained by the state government from China was of concessional nature on favourable terms and not meant to mortgage the future of the state, as insinuated by political detractors.

“The interest on the loan will not be more than three percent while the loan has a repayment period of 15 years. The Chinese Bank will give 85 percent of the contract sum while

Kano’s \$1.85bn devt loan not mortgage design – Ganduje

we (Kano state government) will provide the remaining 15 percent,” he said.

He made the clarification on Thursday while inaugurating a 13-member committee to ensure effective implementation of the Kano Metropolitan Light Rail

project, to be executed by a joint venture of China Railway 18th Bureau Group Ltd and China Railway Construction Electrification Bureau Group.

“The rail projects in Britain Germany, France and the US were constructed with bank loans. Also,

the light rail projects in Lagos, Port Harcourt and Kaduna were constructed with loans obtained from banks. Even the Lagos – Abuja – Kaduna – Kano rail project, being constructed by the Federal government is financed with a loan. Ours is not an exception, so anybody

who thinks we can do it alone is economically naive.”

Responding, on behalf of the committee members, the chairman, Alhaji Isyaku Umar Tofa, who is also the chairman of the state Investment Promotion Agency, thanked Ganduje for the appointment, and assured that the committee would justify the mandate.

Ganduje, who returned recently from a trip to China, explained that he met with officials of the Bank of China, Bank of Development and China EXIM Bank to discuss modalities for funding the project.

NGO calls for peace in Nasarawa council

By Moses John  
Abuja

A non-governmental organisation (NGO), Bassa Unity Forum (BUF), Bassa in Kokona local government area of Nasarawa state, has appealed for peace among the ethnic groups in the community.

The group made the passionate appeal during its maiden meeting at the Government Secondary School, Bassa, recently.

Convener of the group, Comrade Moses J. Akwashiki, said the need for the meeting became imperative to enable the community to dialogue considering the ethno-religious crisis that engulfed the area in recent time.

He urged people of the area to embrace peace and to live together in peace and harmony as one indivisible entity “so as to guarantee development and progress in the community.”

He said: “We, the members of Bassa Unity Forum (BUF), a non-political, non-ethnic and religious group, are calling on every indigene of the community to embrace peace and harmonious coexistence with one another.

“It is time for every

individual to know that without peace, there won’t be a meaningful development. Look at our roads, Primary Health Cares, schools and other social amenities are dilapidated. There is the need for us to work together to attract government attention to our community, and we can’t achieve that if we are not leaving in peace, love and unity with one another.”

The Forum also cautioned politicians against inciting speeches that could lead to violence in the community during electioneering, adding that youths must resist the temptation of fighting each other irrespective of political affiliation.

It further urged politicians to stop making inciting comments while campaigning, also challenged religious and community leaders to preach the gospel of togetherness always.

It would be recalled that since the crisis that engulfed the community in January 2013, there had been no presence of a Police Post in the area, which stakeholders said had discouraged residents who had fled the community to return back after peace had since return to the community.

Garun-Malam LG chair hails M4D’s awareness initiative

By Bashir Mohammed  
Kano

Chairman, Garun-Malam local government council in Kano state, Alhaji Saadu Abashe, has commended Mobilising for Development (M4D), a DFID-funded project, for creating awareness and sensitising indigenes on comprehending the task that lies at the onus of political office holders.

Speaking to newsmen shortly after attending a one-day sensitisation workshop organized by M4D held at Tahir Guest Palace in Kano, Abashe said without awareness the rural folk would be kept in perpetual darkness at the time they were expected to contribute their widow’s mite in supporting the nascent democratic dispensation in the country.

He pointed out that M4D had made considerable inroad in creating adequate

awareness in local government areas designed and selected for its pilot scheme, adding that the issue of entrenching credible leadership and good governance was the major cardinal thrust of the DFID-funded project.

He said it had been his cornerstone to ensure that his people were exposed to the goodies of a sound and genuine democratic system in the country where the local government being the third tier of governance was accorded the much needed leverage to forge ahead.

Commenting on the role of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) on enhancing the quest for Community development, he said, courtesy of the M4D, the CBOs were exposed to the nitty-gritty of collaborating with political office holders to in charting the course for good governance in a democratic age.

Sokoto disbands Hisbah commission

By Sidi A. Umar  
Sokoto

Sokoto state government at the weekend disbanded the state Hisbah Commission and pledged to reconstitute it in due course, the Commissioner for Religious Affairs, Alhaji Mani Maishiko Katami, has disclosed.

Katami, who disclosed this to newsmen, said the decision was taken on Saturday during a meeting with the leadership of three factions in the commission and the officials of ministries of Religious Affairs and Justice.

He said: “This action was taken as the three groups had failed to harmonise themselves into one group, for efficient and united operations.

“The state government had given them a grace of over one year to do so, but the groups had failed to harmonise; this is contrary to the Act establishing the commission.

“This has allowed unnecessary bickering, unilateral operations, while myriad of complaints were received from members of the public about alleged over zealotness and high handedness of its operatives.”

The commissioner directed the Chairman of the commission, Dr Adamu Kasarawa, to “immediately hand over all documents and property of the commission” to his office.

He said the state government would soon constitute a proper and harmonised leadership of the commission.

In his reaction, Kasarawa denied the allegations of wrong doing by the over 9, 000 operatives of the commission.

“This action by the state government is very unfortunate, but I will hand over all items and documents with me as directed, because I am a law-abiding citizen.

“It is not also true that we have been operating unilaterally, but some officials were not happy with some of our most recent operations,” he said.

The government action came barely seven days after the commission seized musical instruments used during the governor daughter’s wedding ceremony for allegedly violating Shari’a law being implemented in the state since 2000.

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**US warns citizens  
against visiting  
Gambia - News**

*SAJID GUNWOK*



## Letters

Letters should be concise and sent to: [chamsim2007@yahoo.com](mailto:chamsim2007@yahoo.com)

# Still on the Kano light rail project

In addition to the increasing number of overhead bridges and underpasses within Kano, the state government has again conceived and is about to begin the construction of the 75 Kilometre Kano Light Rail at the huge sum of \$1.85B. Indeed, besides facilitating the easy flow of traffic, they also give us the pride of having yet another of the trappings of a world class modern city.

However, viewed against the background of our current

economic realities and more urgent priorities, the wisdom in embarking on such an expensive project at this material time, needs to be questioned. Moreover, except for a curious obsession with grandiose projects, much of the welfare issues in public transportation, patronised by the vast majority of our peoples have been overlooked. This project therefore, for all we can judge, is not so much to foster the people's welfare as to serve some yet unknown interests of the powers

that be.

Obviously, sanitation counts first, then of course sanity or precisely decency as far as the densely populated Central Business District, (CBD), of Kano Metropolis is concerned. The CBD comprises an area of less than three kilometre radius with the Ado Bayero Junction on Ibrahim Taiwo Road as the centre. It is indeed a far cry from the basic standards of a healthy environment for decent business activities. Aggravated

by overcrowding, it constitutes the dirtiest part of Kano. There is a rapid accumulation of wastes from trading and other human activities which usually takes a long time to evacuate. The air too, is heavily polluted with dust and from exhaust smoke of numerous vehicles as well as widely used electric generating sets. And to make matters worse, pedestrians, hawkers and sedentary traders contend with vehicles; parked and moving for the ever shrinking streets and

pavements making the area a chaotic frenzy and adding to the risk exposures in safety, health and fire hazards.

Currently, the stark reality is that, with federal allocations reduced by more than 60%, the state is now financially poorer. And because it is planned to link areas already served by existing network of roads, the Light Rail is by that fact, at least for now, an unnecessary duplication.

Indeed much as I tried, I cannot figure out exactly the urgent problems which the project will solve for us now, making it ever more disagreeable. Besides, making the already overcrowded Bata Junction its point of convergence will further worsen the very congestion difficulties it is supposed to solve.

Particular mention can be made of our justice delivery system. It will certainly foster the welfare of more citizens to make justice delivery not only easier, faster and more efficient, but also more cheaply accessible to the poorest citizens than what obtains now.

Owing to the population increase, Kano should be made to expand outwards in its size. The markets within the CBD need to be broken down into smaller ones and together with a needed, but unavailable, Warehousing Estate be located in the suburbs to restrict articulated vehicles from driving directly into the CBD.

In conclusion, governments should not set up businesses for profits. In this our clime at least, they have a consistent record of failure from inefficient and fraudulent management. This tendency has not changed significantly enough to justify borrowing such a huge amount for the Light Rail project. For now, they should rather focus on efficient delivery of realistic welfare services in accord with our most urgent needs and the diligent enforcement of its regulations.

# BOI YES programme, waste of time

By Amira Abdullahi Ahmad

Publish Date: Dec 22 2016 2:00AM Six months after the commencement of the Youth Enterprise Support programme by the Bank of Industry, not even a single person has benefited from the time invested to this initially promising scheme even after getting to the final stage (Plan Approval). NOT ONE!

The YES programme has successfully wasted the precious times of young entrepreneurs who initially thought it would be their stepping stone to a greater future.

BOI led the entrepreneurs, to sign up for the programme, hid key terms of the loan and allowed these helpless youths to commit their time, resources energy, intellect for 60 solid days in online training from AMI (A good exposure I must say) and a week in class training for which some participants had to travel long distances, feed themselves and pay for hotel accommodation. Imagine the stress nursing mothers and their babies had to go through for

6 days and probably more for some.

My major problem with BOI is this: why must you lie and lure thousands of youth to sign for the YES programme when you know that there are other terms and conditions you never disclosed initially to these youths until they have reached the final stage before telling them? Why? Is it because you knew if you told them early enough, many would not join the scheme because you also know only 1-2% of these entrepreneurs can meet such stringent conditions. BOI an organization I hold in high esteem has turned itself into a petty corporate liar.

To our great youth, whether you have started or not, there is one condition (a major condition) BOI never told you during the training but will inform you only when your plan is approved and I doubt many will meet such condition in time, if at all.

YOU MUST PRODUCE 2 GUARANTORS WORTH 5M (subject to loan amount requested) EACH AND THEY MUST BE READY TO SWEAR

A NOTARISED AFFIDAVIT OF NET WORTH AND DROP THE RECEIPT(S) OF THEIR ASSET.

Unfortunately for me, I can't meet such stringent conditions of N5m net worth of each guarantor. I was ready to drop my certificate but this I cannot do, after much investment into this programme. I know many are like me, BOI deceived us into this programme but what can we do? How many young entrepreneurs can meet these conditions?

I strongly want to call on the Federal Government and all parties involved to ask BOI to revert to the original conditions with which this programme was advertised.

We are sincere and excellent entrepreneurs to have made it this far and we are ready to contribute their quota in developing our economy that currently lies in a cesspool, but we need support, not one with impossible conditions as BOI YES programme is asking for.

To BOI, I thank you for time wasted, I strongly advise henceforth that you come out

plain with the true conditions from day one and not cajole Nigerian youths into your failed YES programme filled with half-truths. Have you asked yourself why not one person across the nation has benefited from this YES after 6 months? I will advise you maintain the certificate as security because it will be easily met by sincere youths than the 5m each (subject to loan sum requested), 2 guarantors, if truly the goal of your YES programme is to assist young entrepreneurs, contribute to the economy and take people out of poverty. Right now, you are not different from commercial banks, why do I need to waste my time with you if I have such guarantors in the first place.

To our youths, I must commend your courage, we have really endured this country despite the frustration. My encouragement to you all is to keep up fighting and look out for better deals and grants.

Amira Abdullahi Ahmad,  
Katsina.

Mustapha Aminu Yusuf,  
Kano



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## MISSION STATEMENT

**Blueprint** is committed to the tenets of democracy and the task of restoring hope to our lives as a nation. We will eagerly take our pens and fight those that threaten Nigeria's wellbeing, unity and progress through corruption, misplacement of priorities, as well as nepotism and prejudice. At the same time, we will celebrate Nigerian achievers at home and overseas, tasking others to emulate them. We endeavour to ensure that this news publication is well-produced, while adhering to high ethical and professional standards of the journalism profession.  
*So help us God.*

EDITORIAL

Eliminate ghost tenders!

While interacting with journalists at the State House, Abuja, last Tuesday, Malam Garba Shehu, the Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to the President, announced gleefully that the Federal Government saved a huge sum of N200bn from 50, 000 ghost workers between February and December last year, averaging N18bn monthly. He further revealed: “Through a notable initiative, the Efficiency Unit of the Federal Ministry of Finance, the government has embarked on the continuous auditing of the salaries and wages of government departments.

“When the committee was constituted in February 2016, the federal government’s monthly salary bill was N151bn, excluding pensions. “Now the monthly salary warrant is N138bn, excluding pensions, which means that the government is making a monthly saving of about N13bn. That is from February 2016 to date.”

Shehu also disclosed that 11 persons oiling the syndicate of ghost workers had been handed over to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for further interrogation and possible prosecution. The latest disclosure by Garba Shehu has further heightened the concern of economic watchers about the havoc which phantom employees are wreaking on the nation’s purse. At various times, different statistics of ghost workers have been reeled out by various authorities in recent years and there seems to be no end to the long list. Figures ranging between 45, 000 and 65, 000 have been announced at various times since the introduction of Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in 2006.

In 2014, Adeosun’s immediate predecessor, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, revealed that following the staff audit of the MDAs on the implantation of the IPPIS, a total of 60,000 ghost workers were discovered in that year alone. Pray, how many ghost workers are the MDAs harbouring?

The introduction of the IPPIS by the federal government was intended to eliminate fraudulent and corrupt practices rooted in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). But about 10 years down the road, the criminal elements that facilitate the coming of ghosts from the graves to collect salaries and pensions monthly appear to be more ingenious than the monitoring mechanisms put in place by many establishments. This is evidenced by the report released by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) in 2015 which put the percentage of ghost workers in the MDAs at 25.

However, the existence of ghost workers is not a new phenomenon or peculiar to the federal government alone. It is a national malaise. A few examples recorded in different states in recent years will

suffice here: In 2009 or thereabouts, a whopping sum of N600m was lost to ghost workers on the payroll of the Kwara state Universal Basic Education Board. It was also discovered that the fraud had been thriving for over 12 years before it was busted. The revelation came to light following the introduction of e-payment in the state.

Within the same period, the Niger state Government discovered that some staff members on a salary as low as N15, 000 per month were paid as much as N100, 000. A committee set up by the government to carry out verification revealed that a colossal sum of N2.7bn was lost to ghost workers in 27 months. Earlier in Plateau state, a panel set up by the government discovered over 8,000 ghost workers on the payroll of the 17 local government councils. In Bayelsa state, biometric exercise detected over 2,000 ghost employees that had existed for 10 years.

All the frauds listed above came to light about three years after the IPPIS was introduced across the land. Within the period under review, a total of 1,800 ghost pensioners who had been drawing benefits from the federal government were fished out. In Kogi state, 19 accountants in some ministries, departments and agencies were suspended for fraternising with ghost workers.

The use of ghost workers to pillage the nation’s treasury has assumed an alarming dimension in recent years. It is a reflection of systemic corruption which has overwhelmed every sphere of our national life. There is hardly any state that does not have its own fair share of restive workers who come from the tombs on monthly basis to collect salaries and other entitlements. And because they are “ghosts”, they escape exposure by technology. No thanks to ghost tenders, who make the frauds impossible to detect in most cases.

The implication of this is that the perpetrators of these fraudulent practices, executed in most cases with the active connivance of their bosses, are denying fellow Nigerians job opportunities. Small wonder, government at all levels groans under the weight of heavy wage bills, which cause them to place embargo on employment and in some cases sack workers.

The e-payment system remains the surest way to ensure that the ghost workers rest undisturbed in their graves. The system, if vigorously pursued with all honesty by all the tiers of government, will go a long way in saving billions of naira being lost to ghost workers. The Buhari administration should not only block all wastages in government but also go all out after the ghost tenders that oil the wheel of corruption. Ghost workers are the shadows; ghost tenders are the substances.



# Comments

For brevity, all contributions to this page should not exceed 650 words.

Send to: [chamsim2007@yahoo.com](mailto:chamsim2007@yahoo.com)

## Of Nigerian Army and campaign for democracy

By Israel Abiodun

Again, as it is customary with Nigerians, some online media platforms were recently awash with the disgusting news that Nigerian Army's special yuletide security vigilance in the Southeast region, code named Operation Python Dance (OPD) has sniffed life out of over 2000 Igbo youths in just one month of its operation.

The press statement purportedly issued in Onitsha, Anambra state, January 4, 2017, credited to Campaign for Democracy's (CD) national publicity secretary, Dede Uzor claimed the massacre of over 2,000 Igbo youths by Nigerian soldiers. Never has a serious news item been as vague as the statement said to have been issued by the CD.

The media platforms globally accord news items of tragic nature or mass deaths prominence, by furnishing readers with convincing details of the publicized tragedies. But CD's claims or the online media reportage of the purported deaths of thousands of Igbo youths was barren of any clue as to how it happened and what caused it.

It has once been expressed publicly that the multiplicity of online media platforms in Nigeria would soon become a problem in information dissemination. And the hour is just in the backyard. The news item which negatively projected Nigerian soldiers as murderers and human rights abusers of Nigerians they stake their lives to protect is extremely malicious and slanderous. It failed every test of authenticity or factuality, yet, the online media platforms found it potent enough to make the list of the news pages on their websites. What a shameful raping of the nobility of journalism?

The media blight of the Nigerian Army is spurred by nothing else rather than the desire of some crooks in the Southeast to farther the interests of secessionist groups like IPOB and MASSOB, armed robbers and kidnappers whose planned criminal activities during the Yuletide period were truncated by the troops Training Exercise codenamed Exercise Python Dance. It is well known fact that these groups have over the time constitute a nuisance to law abiding Nigerians in the region. It is indisputable that while these groups camouflage under the banner of self-determination, their members also commit heinous crimes against their own people.

And no part of Nigeria suffers heightened insecurity at festive periods like Easter, Christmas or New Year festivities as the Southeast has proven over the years. Travellers have recounted gory tales of encounters with robbers, kidnappers, abductees and arsonists in the past. No responsible government would allow it fester.

And acting in consonance with his oath of office, President Muhammedu Buhari (PMB) approved the deployment of troops to the Southeast region to enable inhabitants and travellers traversing the region to have a blissful yuletide season. And through the wisdom of Nigeria's security czar, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Lt. Gen. Tukur Yusufu Buratai, the Nigerian Army launched a month of field training exercises in the region tagged "Operation Python Dance."

Those opposed to the military operation in the area more were "bedroom" human rights organisations and the outlawed secessionist groups, who sensed a deprivation of their dubious activities at the prime time of yuletide. So, they kicked and protested, with the feeling that falsely labelling Nigerian soldiers as murderous would attract the attention of the international community.

But Campaign for Democracy, a respected NGO founded by venerated Nigerians like, Dr. Beko Ransom Kuti and others as well as the fusion of disparate organizations of the human rights community in Nigeria blindly and cheaply played into the hands of dubious secessionist interests in the



Buratai

Southeast.

Issuing a statement without any factual or pretended semblance of truth defeats the essence of the formation of the CD, which was driven by the desire of Nigerians to pursue the cause of entrenching democratic values in Nigeria.

Therefore, apart from loudly, but fruitlessly opposing the operation of OPD in the Southeast, the criminal elements opted for the media as last weapon of vengeance against the Nigerian Army for frustrating their dubious intentions in the festive seasons. But citizens enjoyed respite from insecurity offered by the soldiers.

But these dubious and devilish elements can only deceive themselves, as Nigerians are too wise to fall for their cheap tricks. General Buratai is a hundred times wiser than their crooked senses. By code naming the exercise as "Operation Python Dance" alone heralds the peaceful and noble intentions of the Army in the region.

For those who do not know, Late Professor Chinua Achebe, a south-easterner, world acclaimed literalist and pen artiste of uncommon talents intimated the world about the snake called python and its significance in Igbo mythology. It is simply an animal of peace, which co-habitates with human beings even in living rooms. And no one dares to attack or kill it, much as humanity has inherent phobia for snakes.

So, Buratai's choice of the word python for the operation is carefully thought-out and a reflection of the essence of Igbo culture. Soldiers under this banner could not have in any rage or under any influence mass-murdered 2,000 Igbo youths as claimed by Dede Uzor, who probably used the platform of CD to promote the dubious intents of some elements in his region. That is what happens in a country where dignity is thrown into the high sea as food for sharks and ordinarily, men who should proudly defend their self-worth in words and actions tend to misuse it.

Nigerians have seen Nigerian Army conduct the Operation Shirin Harbi for insurgency, cattle rustling and other sundry crimes in the Northeast region; there was Exercise Harbin Kunama in the Northwest region also for banditry, insurgency and cattle rustling, among other menaces and soldiers also engaged in Exercise Crocodile Smile in the Niger Delta region targeted at the rampant incidences of illegal oil bunkering, oil theft, sea piracy and other peculiar crimes.

Yet, in these other regions the military conducted its field training exercises before the one in the Southeast, they were not maligned with incidents of mass murders or is the CD saying, it lost its sight and voice at the commission of such crimes in other sections of the country?

The artificial fuss created by pro-Biafran elements would not deter the determination of PMB and the Nigerian Army under Buratai from securing the lives of law-abiding Nigerians in any part of the country. Late Odumegwu Ojukwu had nobler aims for a Biafran state, but he failed to succeed.

So, the present crops of crooks masking as Biafran agitators would never be allowed to destabilize Nigeria and blackmailing government to high heavens would not change this disposition. But Campaign for democracy should be mindful of itself, before greedy, power-drunk and dubious elements in the Southeast rubbishes its years of hard-earned reputation and good image.

Abiodun PhD writes from University of Ibadan, Oyo

## Time we had a Heroes' Day

By Abdulrazaq Magaji

January 15 is here! Mark the date! January 15 is one date on the nation's calendar that never fails to intrigue. Mark the frenzy that characterizes the build up to that date and you begin to get the impression that there is huge money in rituals! Anyway, Nigeria will continue to mark important dates on its calendar; what will not continue is how millions of Naira is appropriated to celebrate national rituals.

Let's thank God for the Buhari/Osinbajo administration that has effectively taken care of that! Lest you begin to wonder, January 15 is the date set aside to salute Nigeria's fallen heroes. Those fallen heroes are soldiers who died in the two world wars of 1914 to 1918 and 1939 to 1945 and those who died during the 30 month long Nigerian civil war. Emphasis here is on soldiers, not the millions of non-combatant casualties, especially civilians who died during needless Nigerian civil war. The civilian victims will have to wait for an imaginative government in the future to carve out a date to remember them. This misnomer takes a lot of shine off the annual ritual on which, until the Buhari/Osinbajo administration appeared on the stage, we spent millions of Naira to celebrate every January 15.

Celebrating an Armed Forces Remembrance Day on a date the Nigerian civil war ended does little to heal the wounds of that avoidable, better-forgotten war. More vexing is that, on that date in 1966, some over pampered members of the Armed Forces, under the cover of darkness, invaded the homes of prominent leaders of the First Republic and murdered some of the finest leaders of the country.

In Kaduna, Major Patrick Chukwuma Nzeogwu took advantage of his closeness to Sir Ahmadu Bello, the premier of the old northern Region, invaded the premier's lodge when honest men are expected to be in bed and killed the main tenant and his wife in cold blood. Reports had it that Nzeogwu did not have problems entering the home of Sardauna Sokoto even at that unholy hour because he was well known in the Premier's official quarters. He was not restrained because no member of the Premier's security detail thought the young army officer that Sir Ahmadu Bello fondly referred to as my son was capable of taking the life of his mentor! In Lagos, some soldiers invaded the official residence of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the nation's first and only prime minister, disrupted his mid night prayers and took him away, at gunpoint, to be killed. His killers, some of the soldiers the nation ironically salutes every January

“

**What makes the death of the political leaders of the First Republic even more painful is that the men were innocent of the cooked-up charges of treasury-looting levelled against them. None of the men had stolen public funds, had stashed away millions of foreign currency in local or foreign banks or lived above their earnings.**

15, dumped the corpse of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in a shallow grave in a bush near Otta, in Ogun state.

Also executed, Gestapo-like, were Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola, premier of the defunct Western Region and Festus Okotie-Eboh, the nation's finance minister. Aside killing these political leaders, the soldiers effectively ended the nation's burgeoning democracy and set the stage for a long military interregnum. The immediate effect of the actions of the Nzeogwu led bloody coup was the suspicion it introduced into the Armed Forces which eventually led to the needless and avoidable 30 month civil war. Nzeogwu and most of his fellow conspirators are dead, but continue to be presented to Nigerians, alongside deserving members of the Armed Forces, as the best thing to happen to Nigeria! This is for the simple reason that they were members of the Armed Forces whose fallen members are remembered every January 15.

What makes the death of the political leaders of the First Republic even more painful is that the men were innocent of the cooked-up charges of treasury-looting levelled against them. None of the men had stolen public funds, had stashed away millions of foreign currency in local or foreign banks or lived above their earnings. All of them, with the possible exception of the flamboyant Chief Okotie-Eboh actually maintained spartan life styles. Even in the case of Okotie-Eboh, his killers never substantiated claims that he amassed public funds to drive his flamboyant lifestyle. For Sir Ahmadu Bello, his only worldly possessions were two mud houses, one in Sokoto and the other in Wurno, all in present day Sokoto state. At the time he was killed, the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was still indebted to his bank for an overdraft he drew for the upkeep of his family! So, were these men killed because they were corrupt as alleged by their killers?

But, we should not continue to pretend that heroes are only produced through the barrel of the gun. Truth is, there are no non-military Nigerian heroes too; Nigerians who struggled for independence and those who advanced and championed the course of democracy are heroes who deserve to be celebrated. This is why there is an urgent need to set aside a day to celebrate and salute outstanding Nigerian heroes and heroines. And, for all intent and purposes, January 15 fits the bill. A caveat, though! If, for whatever reasons January 15 is too appealing to be retained as Armed Forces Remembrance Day, then it is not out of place to set another date aside as Heroes Day. Like January 15, a Heroes Day does not have to be a work-free day.

Magaji wrote from Abuja.



# News

By Moses John  
Abuja

Senior Pastor of Family Worship Centre (FWC), Pastor Sarah Omakwu, has said that it was better to have a corrupt Nigeria, than to have people killed without President Muhammadu Buhari intervening.

Sarah, who was reacting to the Southern Kaduna crisis that

## I prefer a corrupt Nigeria to insecure nation – Cleric

led to over 1, 000 people were killed, lamented that President Buhari had been silent when the crisis started.

The cleric, while speaking during the Sunday service at the Church auditorium in Wuye, Abuja, yesterday, wondered why “it took so long for the

President to order military action in the area, when the two major religions voted for him during the 2015 general elections that brought him to power.”

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) declared Sunday 8th January 2017, as a National

Day of Mourning by Christians, including those in the Diaspora, to pray fervently (fast) for the Southern Kaduna Brothers and Sisters who were victims of these wanton killings.

“Tell the president we are not happy, tell the president that it looks like he is not for

everybody, but yet we voted for him. Because I and so many of others voted for Buhari, we have the right to talk to him; I will rather have corruption back in the country, than have people wipe away. I want you to tell President Muhammadu Buhari that he is a President for all,” she said.

## Lagos lawmaker promises better representation in 2017

By Tope Musowo  
Lagos

Minority Leader of the Lagos state House of Assembly, Hon. Akeem Bello, has promised his constituents better representation and more developmental projects in 2017.

Bello, who represents Amuwo-Odofin constituency 11, made this promise in a statement signed by his Media Aide, Mr. Musowo Temitope, in Lagos.

He said: “We have been able to attract good roads to our area, out of the 114 roads built by the state government in 2016, we had our own share; the governor has promised more of such this year, so we are already looking at those roads in our constituency that need urgent attention.

“My main focus this year is going to be taking the youths off the street while I also empower the senior citizens as well; I just need my people to continue to give me all the necessary support as they have been doing.”

Hon. Bello in his goodwill message to his constituents explained that he has lined up various empowerment programmes for both youths and senior citizens his constituency, he urged them to continue to obey the law of the land.

Speaking further on his programmes to make his constituents happy in 2017, he said: “I am working on direct employment for the youth, so also skill acquisition programmes to get the youth busy so that they won't be susceptible to criminal activities, I have just graduated a set in the skill acquisition programme, another set is coming on.

## Army urges Igbo to probe ‘Biafra killings’

The Nigerian Army has urged relevant authorities in the south-eastern part of the country to set up an inquiry to investigate allegations of killing of Igbo youth by soldiers.

In a statement on Saturday, the army top hierarchy denied claims that its officers were responsible for the deaths of over 2,000 youth in the south-east.

The army described the allegation as “unjustified, invidious, and over flogged.”

“For emphasis and clarity, the Nigerian Army as an accountable, morally and professionally sound organisation had variously through its Human Rights Desk at the Army Headquarters, painstakingly investigated allegations of rights violations and the results indicated

specifically that this claim is false, malicious and should therefore be ignored for the sake of Nigeria,” the Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, Sagir Musa, said.

The Campaign for Democracy, a civil society group, on January 4, issued a statement accusing the Nigerian Army of human rights abuses of un-armed pro-Biafra activists.

“It is on record that two years of President Muhammadu Buhari's leadership has witnessed the highest number of killings of innocent Nigerians than the previous 17 years of uninterrupted democracy and past military administrations put together,” said Dede Uzor, the group's national spokesperson.

In July last year, the group had alleged that federal forces

were responsible for the deaths of about 6,000 Igbo youth as well as over 800 detained in various prisons without trial.

While denying all the claims, the Nigerian army also absolved its officers from an Amnesty International report indicting Nigerian Security Forces in the “killing of No Fewer Than 150 Peaceful Pro Biafra Protesters” in the South Eastern part of Nigeria with different captions in the media.

“These story lines are referring to the encounter between the Nigerian Army and MASSOB/IPOB protesters between August 2015 and August 2016,” Mr. Musa, a colonel, said.

“All these have been severally thoroughly refuted in many

media platforms by the Nigerian Army and it is the same position that this rejoinder has soundly adopted.”

Musa said the Nigerian Army under its constitutional authorisation to aid Civil Authority and Military Aid to Civil Power would continue to act in the best interest of the nation (in collaboration with other security agencies) to de-escalate violence and checkmate security threats across the nation.

“This task must be done, despite the sordid propaganda and possible politicisation of the issue by ill-meaning Nigerians.

“Finally, looking at the recurrent posture of this allegation, the 82 Division Nigerian Army wishes to state that relevant authority/ies in the South-east are at liberty to set up an inquiry into this accusation with the view to getting to the roots and end of this obnoxious and unfounded claim.”



Kano state Governor, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje (2nd left), signing the 2017 Budget, at the Government House, in Kano recently, while the Speaker, Kano state House of Assembly, Hon. Kabiru Rurum (right), Commissioner for Planning and Budget, Barrister Zubaida Damakka Abubakar (2nd right) and Attorney General, and Commissioner for Justice, Barrister Haruna Falali watch

By Usman Ibn A. Lapai  
Kaduna

Independent Hajj Reporters, a civil society organisation, has lauded the decision of Saudi Arabia to restore the 20% cut in Hajj quota to all hajj participating countries

This was contained in a statement signed by its national coordinator, Ibrahim Muhammed.

It read in part: “We lauded

the decision of Saudi Ministry of Hajj to return the 20% cut in Hajj quota in the last five years.

“According to Saudi Gazette newspaper, Saudi Arabia has decided to lift from this year the reduction in the quota of Haj pilgrims imposed five years ago. It said the higher authorities

approved a proposal by Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Naif, deputy premier and minister of interior who is also chairman of the Supreme Haj Committee, to restore the pilgrimage quota that existed prior to the cuts.”

Continuing, it read: “Saudi Authorities had in 2013 imposed

a 20 percent cut in the quota for foreign pilgrims, and a 50 percent cut for domestic pilgrims, to ensure safety during the expansion of the Grand Mosque, though it said that 20% cut will be gradually increased in a phased manner.

“Though the reason for the temporary cut in hajj quota

was meant to expand the two Holly Mosques for the comfort of pilgrims, nevertheless, the reduction greatly affected the chance of Muslims who wants to fulfill their religious obligations. Nigeria hajj quota seat was slashed from 95,000 to 76, 000, while India quota was trimmed from 170,000 to 136, 000 within the same period. Indonesia, who has the largest numbers of pilgrims, saw their allocation reduced from 211, 000 to 168,800.”

## Group applauds Hajj seats increase

# News

## ASUU seeks maximum penalty for member's killers

By Oyibo Salihu  
Lokoja

Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU) has appealed to the authorities saddled with the responsibility of protecting the lives and property of Nigerians to prescribe a maximum penalty for the culprits who kidnapped and killed a member of the union in Lokoja, Kogi state.

The zonal branch which comprises of University of Nigeria Nsukka, Enefu State University, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State University, Anyigba, and Federal University, Wukari, also appealed to the federal government to ensure that justice prevailed in the case.

Addressing newsmen in Lokoja at the weekend, the Chairman of the Nsukka zonal branch of the union, Prof. Ukooh David Ikoni, lamented that one of their members and a lecturer 1 with the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue state, Christiana Agbulu, who came to Lokoja on a personal visit in the month of December 2016, was abducted and killed even when her abductors had collected a ransom.

Ikoni, who said her body had been recovered and taken to Ugbokolo in Benue state for internment, pointed out that the Nigeria Police, had arrested three people suspected to have committed the heinous act, noting that the union "will go to any length to ensure that the culprits were prosecuted according to the laws of the land."

"We are using this medium to draw the attention of the law enforcement agents in the country to ensure that the perpetrators of this heinous and dastardly act are given maximum penalty as prescribed by our law.

"And to also let the members of the public to know that if government or the authority concern did not do the needful in this case, the national body of the union will take action in accordance with the law because we cannot allowed our colleague to die in this manner of death"

The union, therefore, warned that if criminals were apprehended and released without facing prosecution, the country would not be safe for its citizens.

## Abuja airport repairs: Sirika okays Kaduna for flight diversion

By AbdulRaheem Aodu  
Kaduna

Minister of State for Aviation, Sen. Hadi Sirika, has expressed satisfaction with ongoing work at the Kaduna International Airport to ensure smooth operation of local and international flights when Abuja Airport was shut down for repairs in March.

Speaking when he visited Kaduna at the weekend to assess readiness

of Kaduna International Airport to receive influx of local and foreign flights when the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport Abuja is shut down for repairs, the Minister commended the federal government for choosing Kaduna.

Sen. Sirika, who expressed optimism that ongoing work on the airport would be completed on schedule, said: "A lot of work has been done in the airport, but I decided to pay a visit to see things for myself

before the Abuja Airport is closed down.

"Work on the main terminal as well as the control tower would be completed by the end of February to meet the March 8, 2017 deadline."

Governor Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna state reiterated the state government's commitment to ensure smooth flight operations in the airport before during and after the shutdown, stressing that the state had put process in motion to ensure

smooth flight operations.

He said: "We are delighted for the choice of Kaduna International Airport by the federal government to divert traffic from Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport as a result of the proposed repairs of its runway to Kaduna airport. We have put in motion processes and activities towards making federal government decision a success.

"I want to assure all Nigerians and the international community, particularly stakeholders in the aviation industry that Kaduna state will rise up to the occasion."

El-Rufai, who was represented by the Speaker Kaduna state House of Assembly, Alhaji Aminu Shagali, said the state would provide adequate security and complete repairs on the



From left: Chairman, Civil Service Commission, Mrs Joan Ayo, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Engineer Babachir David Lawal, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo and others, during the Inter-Denominational Church Service for the 2017 Armed Forces Remembrance Day celebration, at the National Christian Centre, in Abuja yesterday

Photo: Ibrahim Sumaila/HB/NAN

## Kano launches door-to-door healthcare programme

By Bashir Mohammed  
Kano

Kano state government has launched a new grassroots "door-to-door health care delivery programme" for hard to reach rural communities within the state.

Commissioning the programme yesterday, the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Kabiru Ibrahim Getso, said the state government would continue to pursue masses-oriented health programmes with a view to enhancing health care delivery to the populace.

He disclosed that the

government will ensure the completion of the two multi-billion naira Giginyu General and Zoor Road Pediatric Hospitals inherited from previous administration before the end of this year.

Getso explained that when the two hospitals commissioned they would reduce the influx of patients seeking medical attention abroad, saying that the two hospitals would be provided with modern equipment that will make them to meet international standard.

The programme which was launched at Gamadan Village

in Kura local government area of the state, according to the Commissioner, was aimed at providing Free Medical treatment to the communities, especially those living in the hard to reach rural areas.

Getso said government had expended a huge amount of money in equipping and up-grading some medical facilities across the state with a view to boosting health care delivery services.

He maintained that apart from employing more doctors and other medical personnel, government had also procured drugs and other

consumables for hospitals across the state.

On his part, the Executive Secretary Kano State Primary Health Care Management Board, Dr. Muhammad Nasir Mahmoud, said the programme was targeted at rural communities whose accessible to health facility is somehow difficult due to difficult terrain.

Others, who spoke at the occasion, included District Head of Kura, Alhaji Bello Ado Bayero, the representatives of UNICEF, MNCH2 and the council chairman.

## 7 states to save 1.59m malnourished children, mothers

States in the North-West of Nigeria are fighting to stem the scourge of malnutrition which has affected more than 1,594,462 children in the region.

The United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that every single day, Nigeria loses about

2,300 under-fives and 145 women of child-bearing age, making Nigeria the second largest contributor to the under-five deaths and maternal mortality rate in the world.

Also, UNICEF's estimate showed that Nigeria has been adversely affected by Severe Acute

Malnutrition (SAM) with the number of malnourished children put at 2,539,704.

A check by the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) revealed that the seven states in the zone account for more than 75 per cent of the total severe malnutrition cases recorded in

Nigeria in 2016.

NAN reports that the governments of Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, Kebbi, Sokoto, Katsina and Sokoto states are, however, taking measures to provide medication to affected women and children, and prevent new cases.



# News

## Enumeration: Kaduna Electric engages 310 corps members

By AbdulRaheem Aodu  
Kaduna

Kaduna Electric has engaged the services of 310 corps members across its four franchise states for the customer enumeration exercise.

Head of Human Resources of Kaduna Electric, Hajiya Khadijah Kabir, said the ongoing Project 415 exercise which would be carried out in Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi

and Zamfara states, had begun in earnest in Kaduna metropolis.

Hajiya Khadijah said the human resources department specifically made a request for the number of youth corps members to the NYSC state secretariats in its franchise and that Kaduna Electric is glad they accepted the request.

She said: "We intend to engage 200 corps members, 50 in Kaduna; 50 in Sokoto; 50 in Zamfara and 10 in Kebbi state. The number

for Kebbi state is low because we have already engaged some students from the State University of Technology, Birnin Kebbi, that would be involved in the project.

"We are going to train them and each corps member will be given a tablet that is going to be used for the exercise and we are going to have some of our staff that will be monitoring them closely so that we achieve the desired goals of the exercise."

She added that by engaging the corps members, Kaduna Electric also aimed at demonstrating the company's support for the drive to help the corps members acquire some skills and experience that would be useful to them after the service year.

"The project, which is going to be conducted feeder by feeder to ensure proper monitoring, is expected to be completed within six months."



Erring police officers allegedly misused firearms in their possession during 10th December 7, 2016 rerun election while in the convoy of the Rivers state Governor, Mr. Nyesom Wike, were paraded at Police Headquarters, in Abuja recently

Photo: Ayuba Raji

## 1, 000 days: We'll rescue remaining Chibok girls – Buhari

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma  
Abuja

As the country commemorates the 1, 000th day of the abduction of schoolgirls from Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno state, President Muhammadu Buhari said yesterday that the federal government was committed to securing the release of the remaining girls kidnapped by Boko Haram insurgents.

The President said this in a statement issued in Abuja by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Mr. Femi Adesina.

"We are grateful to God that on this landmark day, we are not completely in the depths of despair, but buoyed with hope that our daughters will yet rejoin their families and loved ones. Three of them have been recovered by our diligent military, while the freedom of 21 others was secured through engagement with their captors. We

are hopeful that many more will still return as soon as practicable.

"I salute the fortitude of the distraught parents. As a parent also, I identify with their plight. Days turned to weeks, weeks turned to months, months turned to years, and today, it is 1,000 days. The tears never dry, the ache is in our hearts. But hope remains constant, eternal, and we believe our pains will be assuaged.

"Our hopes will not be shattered, and our hearts will leap

for joy, as more and more of our daughters return. It is a goal we remain steadfastly committed to," the statement quoted the President as saying.

The statement said the President commended all the people that have been in the vanguard for the recovery of the girls, both nationally and internationally, stressing that "someday soon, the country would rejoice over the return of the remaining girls."

"Our intelligence and security forces are unrelenting, and whatever it takes, we remain resolute. Chibok community, Nigeria, and, indeed, the world, will yet rise in brotherhood, to welcome our remaining girls back home. We trust God for that eventuality."

## 13 filling stations sealed in Lagos over 'fraud'

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Lagos State Command, yesterday said it had sealed 13 fuel stations, for allegedly under dispensing petroleum products.

The Public Relations Officer of the Command, Kenny Bada, made the confirmation in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos.

Bada said the NSCDC carried out the exercise in collaboration with the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR).

"The men of NSCDC, through its Intelligence Department, uncovered 13 filling stations in Badagry axis known for selling petroleum products to unsuspecting public below the stipulated dispensing measurement.

"These filling stations were sealed on January 5, 2017.

"They include Falcons Filling Station at MTN Bus Stop; Royal Stream filling station at Mowo extension, Energy filling station at Mowo and Labs filling station, Mowo.

"Also sealed are Energy filling station and Ramos filling station, Aradagun and two Total filling stations at Toga.

"Others are MRS filling station at Toga, JINMS filling station at Badagry Roundabout, Jackson filling station at Seme-Badagry, Olubisi Obinja Nig. Ltd at Joseph Dosu Way, and Nybo filling station Sawmill Bus Stop," he said.

Bada said that the operation was made possible as a result of intelligence gathering by officials of the corps.

"The Commandant of Lagos State NSCDC, Tajudeen Balogun, said it was not the duty of the corps to seal up filling stations found to be involved in malpractices.

"Hence, the need for collaboration with the DPR, statutorily mandated to carry out this exercise."

The spokesperson urged the public to report any suspicious act to the corps for immediate action, to further reduce criminal activities in the state.

Acting Executive Secretary, Kaduna State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board, Hussaini Tsoho-Ikara, has said that farmers were turning out in large numbers to pay for 2017 Hajj fare.

Tsoho-Ikara told the News Agency of Nigeria in Zaria yesterday that the development was contrary to what happened during the 2016 Hajj.

He attributed the new development to 2016 bumper harvest which enabled farmers to make more money.

"The patronage of Hajj seats from rural farmers this year outnumbered the intending

## Farmers apply en masse for 2017 Hajj – Official

pilgrims from urban centres.

"From our record, grassroots farmers have already dominated the payment of Hajj seats for 2017 operation compared to people living in cities," he said.

Tsoho-Ikara said prices of farm produce had been on the increase since a ban was placed on the importation of some food items by the present administration.

He said farmers are making more money from their produce last year.

The acting executive

secretary said the National Hajj Commission (NAHCON) had not fixed the amount of money to be paid by intending pilgrims for this year Hajj.

The board, however, fixed N800, 000 and N1.2 million as minimum and maximum amount, respectively, that would be deposited by intending pilgrims.

According to him, when the actual amount is fixed, the intending pilgrims will have to pay the remaining amount.

Tsoho-Ikara said the board had put an end to the activities of quacks by ensuring that intending pilgrims paid directly to the board's account.

"The measure becomes necessary in enhancing the integrity of the board and to block the chances of defrauding intending pilgrims.

"The board officials are to collect cash or bank draft directly from intending pilgrims and whoever wants to pay for Hajj seat must come to our office

himself.

"Such intending pilgrims should come with valid international passport and he/she must register with the name on the passport, not any other name.

"When he/she satisfies all these, then a customised teller of specific banks will be issued, so that payment into the board's account is not tempered with."

Tsoho-Ikara appealed to intending pilgrims to strictly comply and support the new initiative with a view to eradicate shoddy deals in the entire Hajj operation.

# News

## NCPC boss advocates better wages for civil servants

By Adoyi M. Aba  
Abuja

Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Christian Pilgrim Commission (NCPC), Rev. Tor Uja, has advocated for a better remuneration for the Nigeria Civil Service.

He made the call in

Abuja recently while inaugurating a seven-man committee to advice on the work and recommendations of the registry which was set up to review the registry system of the commission.

He stressed that the civil service should be a place of pride and dignity and as such

civil servants should earn better than anyone else.

The NCPC boss said it was just correct to do things right at all times, adding that "I don't need to be paid for doing things right."

He stressed the need for staff of the commission to focus on work and productivity,

explaining that for him to build a system that would stand the test of time he should be able to run a structured system.

"I must make NCPC efficient," he said and tasked staff on efficiency, productivity and honesty.

"A good system also works silently. We want our information and operational system to work silently. I want us to receive a fresh philosophy and justify your earnings."

While inaugurating the seven man committee, he said "this country does not lack

brilliant people, but honest people."

He urged them to provide the structure that would enable the system to work like a proper machine, stressing that "I want us to build an NCPC system that would make the system work."

He advised the committee to give the commission something excellent, something that would be world class; a system that works.

The seven-man committee is headed by the Assistant Director, Welfare, Mrs Constance Osondu.

## Thousands troop to see mystery trees in Ogun

Thousands of people have besieged the resident of one Michael Ibironke in Ogun since two trees appeared with what appeared to be an Arabic inscription believed to be the name of Allah.

The Moringa trees were located at No.6, and No.9, Unity Street, Ire-akari Estate, Iloye, Abule Iroko, Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State on December 24, 2016 and January 2, 2017, respectively.

Ibironke, the occupant of the house where one of the trees was found, said what happened remained a mystery to him.

He told a correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that since the discovery, thousands of people of different faith have visited to see the trees, offer prayers and appreciate the work of God.

"On December 26, 2016, we celebrated Christmas party in my compound and did not discover anything.

"But on the January 2, while I was doing my morning exercise with my wife, she called my attention to it. My wife was the one that discovered it.

"We are not Muslims, so we called a Muslim brother (Mr. Ajibade) to explain the strange thing. We also invited an Imam, who also confirmed it.

"What happened has not affected our faith as Christians. People are celebrating and praising God. It is a mystery to everyone.

"We have been receiving people from different places Mushin, Ifo, Owode-Yewa and even from Omu-Aran in Kwara.

"My house has become a tourist centre. What God revealed to us is that He is the greatest, no man is equal to Him and He can reveal Himself in anyway," he said.

A Muslim cleric, Hamzat Oyeyemi, told NAN that the sign was of God, adding it was a sign of goodness to the family and the people.

"It is a miracle. This Arabic word appeared in a Christian house, is a sign of goodness; it is a mystery to mankind and people should be good.

## Dickson canvasses support for legionnaires' families

By Joy Emmanuel  
Yenagoa

Bayelsa state Governor, Hon. Seriake Dickson, has called on well-meaning individuals, charities and corporate organisations to lend support to the Nigerian legion and its members to enhance their welfare and wellbeing.

Represented by his Deputy, Rear Admiral Gboribio John Jonah (ret'd), at the launch of the Emblem Appeal Week in Yenagoa, he urged all to donate generously, saying that the proceeds would be judiciously utilised towards meeting the pressing needs of their families.

While expressing appreciation to the sacrifices and contributions made by the legionnaires in nation-building, he assured that the government would continue to identify the needs and aspirations of the ex-servicemen within the limits of available resources.

Dickson, who emphasised the need for Nigerians to always honour the surviving veterans and families of the fallen heroes, urged them to buy and proudly wear the Armed Forces Remembrance Ceremonial poppies for the duration of the remembrance period.

He also enjoined Nigerians to emulate the United States nationals

and citizens of other developed countries, where they accord respect and recognition to legionnaires and the Armed Forces for their gallant efforts at protecting the territorial integrity of their nations.

He said: "I want to appreciate our men and women in uniform particularly our ex-servicemen and veterans who join us every year in parades and tributes to their fallen colleagues.

"Be assured that your well-articulated concerns and appeals are as fresh in our minds and memories as the price you paid for the work you do for Bayelsa and the nation as a whole. We have heard them

and we shall continue to ensure that they are addressed as resources are available."

In his remarks, the Assistant Commandant-General and State Chairman of the Nigerian Legion, Effiom Igrigi, reiterated the need for private bodies and individuals to support the veterans, as their welfare in retirement cannot be guaranteed by government's efforts alone.

He solicited assistance for the renovation of the state secretariat of the legion, reinstatement of the monthly overhead to the council and supply of new uniforms to legionnaires in the state, among other needs.



Passengers stranded at the Gombe Line Terminus, in Gombe yesterday

Photo: Joseph Atabo Shehu

## Kaduna LG bosses bag African Builders awards

By Usman Ibn A. Lapai  
Kaduna

Four Kaduna state local government councils' caretaker chairmen have been conferred with the 2016 African Builders Award for impacting positively on the life of their people at the grassroots.

The chairmen included those of Zangon Kataf Local Government Council, Hon. Wakili Anthony Aliyu who the organizers said was the overall best in the area of infrastructure, the Chairman

of Kachia Local Government Council, Hon. Bunyamin Umar Sani, who was the overall best in the area of electrification.

Others were Chairman of Jema'a Local Government Council, Hon. Dr. Katuka Bege Ayuba, as Peace Ambassador and Chairman of Lere Local Council, Hon. Sani Tanimu, as overall best in the area of poverty alleviation. Other awardees at the occasion which took place at Arewa House Kaduna, were Chairman, Northern Coordinator, NURTW Ondo Sunshine Express Motors,

Prince Dr. Aragon Ogunoye as a grassroots builder and Mr. Lamidi Kabiru as a grassroots entrepreneur.

Chairman of the occasion, Alhaji Balarabe Lawal Zaria, described the awardees as role models and grassroots mobilisers, hoping the award conferred on them would spur them to work harder for the general wellbeing of the people.

Publisher of African Builders Magazine, organiser of the event, Prince Olusa Ibukun, said the awardees had contributed greatly

to the development of the state.

"The effort of these builders who have carried out selfless service, needed to be restarted and documented to encourage them and also to challenge others to emulate their good deeds," he said.

One of the awardees, Hon. Anthony Wakili, who spoke on behalf of the other awardees, thanked the organizers for the award and assured that they would continue to do more for the growth and development of the state.



# News



Some candidates at the Nigerian Army recruitment screening exercise, at Sokoto Road, in Kaduna at the weekend

Photo: Tunde Garba

## Al-Makura lauds aviation ministry for cargo project

By Mohammed Yangida  
Lafia

Governor Umaru Tanko Al-Makura of Nasarawa state has appreciated the Federal Ministry of Aviation for granting approval for the construction of the Lafia cargo airport in the state.

He stated this while fielding questions to journalists in Lafia, saying that the laudable project when completed would be of immense benefit to the people of the state.

According to him, the airport is not only desirable, but will serve the socio-economic needs of the state.

Al-Makura said the cargo airport had multiple advantages, adding that “one is to serve as an alternative airport to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), which has the leverage to accommodate a lot of people, who are up to use air transportation, and also to facilitate and enhance the easy transportation of goods and services through air transport in the state.”

“The cargo airport is not going to provide opportunities for goods and articles but to also provide another means for the evacuating agric products and solid minerals; so there are multiple advantages of getting the Lafia airport on ground,” he said.

The governor assured people of the state of his commitment and readiness towards the construction and completion of the airport in the next 12 months.

“My administration is committed and really serious about this airport, by December 2017, we shall have a story to tell to the entire country by having cargo airport on ground.”

## ‘Kogi NSCDC treated 254 cases in 2016’

By Oyibo Salihu  
Lokoja

Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Kogi state Command, has revealed that it handled 254 cases in 2016, out of which 15 were fully prosecuted and 10 offenders jailed.

Addressing newsmen in Lokoja during a review of 2016 operations of the command, the state commandant, Mr. Evaristus Obiyo, who disclosed this, said 40 cases were on going in court, while 48 were still under investigations as 49 cases were treated and disposed off.

Obiyo added that 102 cases of

community misunderstanding, marital related cases were successfully mediated and resolved.

He said: “The offences range from pipeline vandalism, mischief, illegal possession of fire arms, vandalism of electrical installation and other critical breach of trust, threat to life and property, house breaking, negligence in relation to animals and other civil related cases.”

He said within the year under review, the command was able to successfully implemented fuel price regime through monitoring of fuel tankers to prevent fuel diversion.

“We destroyed and burnt

down illegal refineries at Ebiya in Ajaokuta local government area; we arrested and prosecuted suspected vandals of armoured cables at Kabba, and illegal vandals of transformer in Idah local government.”

Obiyo, who also pointed out that suspected vandals of crude oil at Budan/ Eggan/Labata axis of river Niger were arrested with speedboat, said two boat engines, three pieces of ring hose and 75 liters of crude oil were recovered.

He further disclosed that the command had settled age long community crises between Ikah-Iregu and some communities in

Ibaji local government area as well as herdsman and farmers crises, adding that “following the federal government’s diversification drive into solid mineral development the Corps was saddled with the mandate of overseeing all solid minerals development, all solid mineral sites and movement of solid minerals products.”

While calling on parents to warn their wards against any act of criminalities, Obiyo said the command under his watch will not relent in its effort to arrest and prosecute youths who indulge in act of sabotage.

## We received N5bn, not N9bn, from Paris Club – Kwara govt

Kwara state government said on Saturday that it had only received N5 billion as its share of the London-Paris Loan Club refund from the federal government.

In a statement released by the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Media and Communication, Muideen Akorede, the government described reports that it received N9 billion as “outright falsehood.”

According to the statement, the Commissioner for Finance, Demola Banu, said the Kwara government was yet to receive the balance of N3.7 billion.

He, however, disclosed that the state government was in the process of getting the Federal Ministry of Finance, Abuja, to process and release the remaining fund.

Banu explained that all states were supposed to receive 25 per cent of their claim, which in the case of Kwara, amounted to about N9 billion, pending final

reconciliation.

He said only N5 billion of the claim was released to the state, adding that having made a strong case for the balance; the state government was expecting the release of approximately N3.7 billion from the federal government.

He, however, assured indigenes that once the money was received, Ahmed would approve the release of local governments’ share of the fund to pay staff salaries and pension arrears.

While assuring indigenes of government’s continued support, Akorede explained that from the N5 billion earlier received by the state government in November 2016, Ahmed had directed the release of N1.4 billion to local governments to augment payment of November and December 2016 salaries.

He added that another N892 million was released to clear salary arrears at tertiary institutions in the state.

## Ex-Niger Gov, Kure is dead

By Aideloje Ojo  
Minna

Former Governor of Niger state and Rani Lapai, Engineer Abdulkadir Kure yesterday died in a German hospital at the age of 61 years.

Kure’s death filtered into Minna at about 5pm with associates and mourners rushing to his residence along Bosso road grieving his loss.

While the family was yet to issue public statement on the passage of the former governor, his close friends and associates took to social media to mourn and confirm the sad news.

Datijo Aliyu, a former commissioner that served in the administration of Kure, was the first to break the news in his facebook wall describing it as painful while Yahaha Mohd Usman posted “an iroko has fallen across the bridge in Niger”.

In a statement former Governor of Niger state, Dr. Mu’azu Babangida Aliyu who took over from him in 2007, described the death of Kure as shocking and devastating, saying Nigeria has lost a great politician.

He said: “I find it difficult to come to terms with the reality that my brother, my friend, has left us so soon. I have been in touch with his wife since he travelled outside the country for treatment. I never knew his time was near.”

He added: “Niger state has lost an illustrious son, Nigeria has indeed lost a great human asset. My brother Kure died at a time his contribution was needed. He was a peacemaker, a role model and a bridge builder. May Aljannah Firdaus be his abode. May Allah condole his wife, children and the entire Niger state.”

Still mourning the death of the former governor, the 2015 PDP governorship candidate in Niger state, Umar Nasko, said my prayers are with the family of our former leader and all Nigerlites.

Meanwhile the Niger state government has declared a three-day mourning in honour of the late former governor.

The government in a statement issued by the state Commissioner of Information, Culture and Tourism, Mr. Jonathan Vatsa, yesterday confirmed the death

of Kure, said that he died after a brief illness at the age of 61.

He said that all flags would be at half mast throughout the state during the mourning period, adding that the state governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello has also declared a work free day on the day of the burial of the former governor to enable all Nigerlites accord the departed leader a befitting burial.

He said that the government will miss the wise counsel of the former governor, who despite political differences never failed to offer meaningful advice to the government.

“The intervention of the former governor during the recent labour crisis in the state was not only legendary but showed him as an elder statesman, whose main concern was for the good, progress and unity of the state.”

“Engineer Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure remain a leader who out of office showed concern for the development of the state. His statesmanship saw him jettisoning party affiliation when he personally intervened in the recent labour crisis in the state.”



# Defence

## Army refutes 'mass killing' of Biafra protesters

Stories by Musa Umar Bologi  
Abuja

Nigerian Army has refuted allegations of killing Biafra protesters and youths in Anambra state.

A statement by the Deputy Director Army Public Relations Enugu Col. Sagir Musa described the allegations as "false and malicious", and be ignored by Nigerians.

The statement said the new allegations, which story lines refereed to the encounter between

the Nigerian Army and MASSOB/IPOB protesters between August 2015 and August 2016, by Campaign for Democracy (CD) and Amnesty International, had been severally refuted in the media by the Nigerian Army, and which the statement has also adopted.

The statement read: "The attention of Headquarters 82 Division Nigerian Army has again been drawn to an unjustified, invidious and over flogged accusation, this time, by the Campaign for

Democracy (CD) of "Mass killings of Igbo Youths by the Nigerian Army". This allegation is contained in a statement issued by the Publicity Secretary, CD in Onitsha, Anambra State.

"In the statement, the CD claimed that "No fewer than 2000 Igbo Youths had been killed by the Nigerian Army under the guise of Rules of Engagement".

"Similarly there was also report claiming that Amnesty International indicted Nigerian Security

Forces in the "killing of No Fewer Than 150 Peaceful Pro Biafra Protesters" in the South Eastern part of Nigeria with different captions in the media. These story lines are referring to the encounter between the Nigerian Army and MASSOB/IPOB protesters between August 2015 and August 2016. All these have been severally thoroughly refuted in many media platforms by the Nigerian Army and it is the same position that this rejoinder has soundly

adopted.

"For emphasis and clarity, the Nigerian Army as an accountable, morally and professionally sound organization had variously through its Human Rights Desk at the Army Headquarters, painstakingly investigated allegations of rights violations and the results indicated specifically that this claim is false, malicious and should therefore be ignored for the sake of Nigeria.

"Instructively, the Nigerian Army under its constitutional authorization to aid Civil Authority and Military Aid to Civil Power must continue to act in the best interest of the nation (in collaboration with other security agencies) to de-escalate violence and checkmate security threats across the nation. This task must be done, despite the sordid propaganda and possible politicization of the issue by ill meaning Nigerians.

"Finally, looking at the recurrent posture of this allegation, the 82 Division Nigerian Army wishes to state that relevant authority/ies in the South East are at liberty to set up an inquiry in to this accusation with the view to getting to the roots and end of this obnoxious and unfounded claim."



Air patrol

In a renewed effort to deny Boko Haram terrorists that have escaped the latest onslaught against the insurgents from regrouping, Nigerian Air Force has intensified aerial patrol over the Sambisa forest.

According to Nigerian Air Force, the over 60,000 km2 forest is being patrolled day and night by NAF Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft to deny the fleeing insurgents the opportunity to regroup and launch attack against host communities and own surface troops on clearance operation.

"The NAF, in a similar operation, has deployed ISR platforms for surveillance activities over Samaru, Katab, Zonkwa, Kafanchan and other troubled areas in Southern part of Kaduna State including the Kaduna metropolis," NAF spokesperson, said in a statement.

He said the ongoing air operations was aimed

at supporting the ground forces and to restoring confidence in the people living in the affected areas while at the same time seeking out the hideouts used by criminal elements and armed bandits within the troubled areas.

"Aside employing air power to flush out the bandits the NAF also relays the intelligence gathered from its ISR operations to land forces to aid the conduct of the entire operations," he said.

Also, Director of Training and Operation of the Nigerian Airforce, Air Vice Marshal Isiaka Amao, has disclosed at a media briefing in Abuja that Nigerian Air Force has acquired two Mi-35M attack helicopter to fight terrorists and criminal gangs.

He said the Mi-35M is a rugged helicopter that offers round the clock

combat use of guided and unguided weapons in regular and challenging climate conditions, which he said is equipped with the latest navigation suite, target sights system, laser range finder and location finder.

AVM Amao said that the achievements of NAF in 2016 covered improvement in platforms and operational capabilities, infrastructural development, training and professionalism.

"Some of the major achievements of the NAF from January to December 2016 include the Acquisition of 2x Mi-35M helicopter with capabilities for night operations; acquisition of additional 2 new DA-40; reactivation of ATR-42 NAF 931; acquisition of A-Jet NAF 478 in addition to the operable 7 A-Jet ac fleet; induction of Super

Mushshak ac (SMK) into the NAF inventory as a primary trainer; and induction of 3x EC-135 helicopters handed over to the NAF by NNPC in Mar 16," he said.

Amao also said NAF provided most of the surveillance and intelligence activities towards the success of the counter-insurgency campaigns in the North-East and other special missions in the country.

He stated 62 per cent of Intelligence missions were conducted not only to determine the location of abducted Nigerians but to also provide battle field situational awareness for the land forces in 2016.

AVM Amao added that many liaison/logistics and re-supply sorties were flown to move large volume of materials in support of the Land Component's advance into

Sambisa. These include ammunition, water, tyres and other stores to staging areas in support of Op Crackdown.

He said: "CAS, logistics resupply and ISR missions aimed at dislodging the BHTs from their enclaves were further conducted in sustenance of the offensive operations on the ground.

"Additionally, MEDEVAC and CASEVAC were conducted in support of the surface forces. In the beginning of Jun 16, the Air Component's efforts were geared towards consolidating the successes achieved during NA OP CRACK DOWN. Considerable number of AR and some AI, CAS and CAP sorties were flown to further degrade BHTs capabilities. These missions were conducted in Northern Borno and the Sambisa general area."

## NAF commences air patrol of Sambisa



# Defence



Troops in frontline

## NAF 'll prevent Boko Haram regroup - CAS

Stories by Musa Umar Bologi  
Abuja

Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sadique Abubakar has said that Nigerian Air Force will ensure defeated terror group Boko Haram does not regroup in any part of the northeast as the military focuses on consolidating on the gains it recorded after the fall of Sambisa Forest.

He said this in Abuja during a press briefing to highlight major achievements and activities of the NAF in 2016.

The CAS said the NAF's major focus in 2017 would be to monitor every part of Sambisa forest to ensure that Boko Haram group does not regroup anywhere in the northeast.

He said the NAF was enhancing coordination with other Services, including the Army and the Navy for proper monitoring and effective control.

"We fly regularly to observe and monitor the works of the ground troops, imagine someone flying eight hours nonstop to conduct Intelligence and Surveillance, all these are done to ensure that Boko Haram does not regroup anywhere in the northeast, we will maintain robust presence and use our air power robustly," he said.

The Air Chief also disclosed that the NAF has acquired two Mi-35 attack helicopters to fight terrorists and criminal gangs.

He said NAF has also enhanced the infrastructures at the various Air Force bases,

declaring that "Unlike what happened in 2013, it is highly unlikely that an attack can be carried out on any of our bases now, it will be suicidal for anyone to attack us because of the enhancement we have done, we also cannot afford to lose any aircraft now."

He also disclosed that a total of 16 illegal refineries

were destroyed while 181 missions were conducted in its operations last year, adding that NAF spent over N2 billion on fuel in 2016.

He said the spread of security challenges led to various operations where gun boats and illegal oil containers were taken out in the Niger Delta.

The Air Chief said 16 illegal

refineries were engaged and destroyed during the period, adding that the operation impacted very much in stopping notorious camps for refining.

He expressed excitement about the comradeship existing between all the arms of the military especially under the "Operation Lafiya Dole".

On Operation Delta Safe, he said, it is a joint task force to replace Operation Polo Shield for South-West and South-South region.

He urged Nigerians not to express worries because the strength of the insurgents or even their ability to regroup in Sambisa is completely decimated.

## Fall of Sambisa: Group hails Buhari, military

National Commandant, Peace Corps of Nigeria (PCN), Ambassador Dickson Akoh has said that the capture of Sambisa forest hgas demonstrated that the military is winning the war against the Boko Haram sects and that President Muhammadu Buhari is not resting on his oars to bring insurgency to an end the North east and entire country.

He described the recapturing of the Boko Haram's strong enclave in the Sambisa Forest by the military as a good development and warning to other agitators.

Speaking while presenting a well-furnished police station built by him to the police authority in Obande Ugboju community of Benue State, Akoh called on Nigerians to support Buhari's administration to further secure the country.

Akoh said: "the capturing of the territory is also a warning signal for other agitators in Nigeria that there is nowhere you can defeat government. For other agitators they must know that constructive dialogue is the only way out.

"People should also help the security agencies in this regard to achieve success. Part of the function given to the Peace Corps

of Nigeria now is neighborhood watch. In the bill it states that every street now should be watched by Peace Corps."

The Commandant however appealed to the Federal Government to motivate other security personnel, while urging for medals of honour to be awarded soldiers who have fought tirelessly to capture Sambisa.

Also, Northern Youth Leaders Forum (NYLF) has also commended the Nigerian Army for its resilience and sacrifices that led to the victory over the insurgents.

National President of NYLF, Alhaji Adadu Adadu said during a press conference in Kaduna, that the defeat of the terror group united Nigerians of conscience along religious and ethnic divide.

He said the defeat of Boko Haram, is an event that has brought 2016 to a close on a positive note irrespective of any other unpleasant experiences that the country might have had experienced during the year.

He said: "The Northern Youth Leaders Forum (NYLF) heartily thanks the Nigerian Army, all the other military services, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt Gen Tukur Buratai and other military

chiefs for defeating the enemies of Nigeria.

"Boko Haram killed without thoughts for their victims ethnicity, creed or geographical origin, it was a thorn in our flesh collectively and the Army has therefore brought relief to us all and not just a particular location or people. The joy from this act of valour is across board.

"It is remarkable that Boko Haram was defeated against all odds. NYLF had at some point in the past appealed to the Nigerian Army not to be distracted by those reading political meanings into its action. We had also in the past urged the COAS not to slow down in his zeal on account of propaganda mounted against him by Boko Haram sponsor sand sympathisers.

"There were other occasions when we acknowledged the progress being made in the war in spite of propaganda to the contrary. We are happy that our counsel was not in vain and the Army has gone on to demonstrate that the state is supreme above crises entrepreneurs. That the army and the COAS hearkened to our appeals and those of like-minded Nigerians in the past to keep up the fight gives us great

joy. It showed a leadership and institution that is responsive to the populace it is securing. For this we say thank you the Nigerian Army and the COAS."

He said insurgency had killed of economic activities same way it killed many enterprising young minds, fall of Sambisa Forest and defeat of the Boko Haram terrorists would revive the economy in the north east, as investors who hitherto left will be encouraged to return.

He said: "Youths that were not killed in attacks were forced to flee to other parts of the country for safety before considering how to eke out living. Gen. Buratai has restored the hope that Nigeria but particularly the north in this case can again return to being an investment hub."

"We realise that this cannot happen overnight but the defeat of Boko Haram terror group is a new beginning towards this goal."

While appealing to the public to speak against attempts by the terrorists sympathisers to cast doubts on their group's demise, he urged Nigerians to be vigilant and furnish security agencies with information that could assist in the capture of fleeing Boko Haram members.

# Politics News

By Amaechi Okwara  
Asaba

The Secretary of Delta State chapter of the All Progressive Congress (APC), Mr. Chidi Okonji, has been suspended indefinitely over N600,000.00 grant to the party by the People's Democratic Party (PDP)-led state government of Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa.

The party through the state Chairman, Prophet Jones Ode Erue said the APC secretary unilaterally collected the money in the name of the party and solely appropriated same to himself.

Mr. Okonji was suspended indefinitely pending the report of a five-man disciplinary committee set up to investigate the financial allegation and other alleged anti-party activities leveled against him.

But, Mr. Okonji in a reaction said that there was no meeting of the party's State Executive Council (SEC)

## Okowa's grant tears APC apart, secretary suspended

made of 35 members which has the constitutional right to suspend him.

On the alleged N600,000.00, the suspended Secretary said that he was duly authorized by the state chairman to collect the grant of N600, 000 which he (chairman) appropriated half to himself.

According to Mr. Okonji, "Prophet Jones Erue authorized me, Chidi Okonji through a letter to collect the grant of N500,000.00 only on behalf of the party which the Prophet Jones Erue split into two and collected half.

He further insisted that the amount ought to be N600,000, and that he was going to see the SSA to confirm the amount."

The present crisis started when he (Okonji) asked the chairman to "return party bus donated by Atiku; call SEC meeting to address burning issues including the 13.5 million Christmas gift given to the party."

Okonji added that he also asked the chairman "to account for the N5 million given to run the party every month; and to stop using his personal account to siphon money

from the party account."

"Purported suspension is null and void as the nine person-meeting (State Working Committee) lack the constitutional power to suspend or apply any punitive action without the approval of SEC."

He therefore called on the national leadership of the party to set up a committee to look into the allegedly endless financial crisis of the state executive led by Prophet Erue, and that the chairman should give financial accounts of his stewardship since 2013.

## Abdurahman, Onukaba emerge EPA's president, secretary

By Bode Olagoke  
Abuja

The Ebiraland Peoples Association (EPA), the umbrella body of all Anebiraland at home and in the Diaspora, has constituted and inaugurated its National Executive Council with Dr Musa AbduRahman Adeiza and Dr. Adinoyi Onukaba--Ojo emerged President and Secretary- General, respectively.

The new EPA's leadership has the imprimatur of the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland, Alh Ado Ibrahim, who co-signed their appointment letters at the presence and endorsement of all the first-class rulers (Ohis) in their four local governments.

Speaking at the occasion, the new President-General called for unity, peace and harmonious co-existence among Ebiraland people and between them and other citizens in the country. These, he said are basic requirements needed by any human society to make meaningful progress and engender positive development.

Adeiza called on the people of the state to support the government of the day by offering useful suggestions on policies and programmes that would have positive impact on the lives of the people.

He also called for prayers for the Kogi state governor Yahaya Bello and his team and for the wisdom and guidance to succeed in office, even as he appealed to the government to come clean on the issue of salaries of workers by bringing a closure to the screening exercise, identify ghost workers and pay those who have been screened and cleared to address the pervasive poverty in the state.

EPA also called on the government to address the security challenges in the state, especially in Ebiraland where people are now afraid to go about their lawful businesses for fear of being abducted or killed.

Speaking at the event the governor of Kogi state, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, represented by his Special Adviser on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Arc Abdulmumini Okara, urged the people of the state to exercise patience with his government and give it a chance to transform the state

Other executive members include: Musa Aliyu as Deputy President-General; AbdulKarim Adavi Bello as Vice-President, North-Central zone; Isa Aliyu as Vice-President, North-West; Mohammed Salisu Omadike as Vice-President, South-South; Prof. M.E.Ibrahim, Vice-President, North-East; Abubakar Abdulsalam, Deputy-Secretary General; Sadiq Adaviriku Ibrahim, Asst. Secretary-General and Isa Abdullahi, Treasurer.

## Ebonyi announces monthly pay for ex-lawmakers, council chairpersons

Ebonyi State Governor, David Umahi has said he will pay "monthly stipends" to former lawmakers and local government chairpersons in the state.

Mr. Umahi made the announcement at his Uburu country home when the people of Izzi clan, comprising Abakaliki, Izzi and Ebonyi Local Government Areas, paid him Christmas and New Year visit.

The payments will begin in 2017 and will be backed by law, the governor said.

"My aim is to carry everybody along especially the political class and that's why I will be approaching the House of Assembly to ask them for approval so that those legislators that are not on seat now, we start paying them some stipends," the governor was quoted by his Chief Press Secretary, Emma Anya, as saying.

"Former Local Government chairmen will also be included. I believe this is how we can get them to help in developing and creating wealth in our state," he said.

The payments would be unprecedented as states and federal governments are not

known to pay pension or stipends to former lawmakers.

Serving and past Nigerian governors have been criticised for endorsing lavish post-office perks and benefits for themselves and their families.

More shocking, several of

such governors who later become Senators or Ministers, receive pensions as former governors and also salaries for their new positions.

Laws passed by states assembly, authorising those packages, do not cover former lawmakers and

past local government officials.

But the Ebonyi governor said he would approach the state House of Assembly soon, to make a law authorising payments to former state lawmakers and council chairpersons.



From left: National Chairman, Independent Democrats (ID), Hon. Edozie Madu, Mrs. Chizoba Madu and the former Senatorial Candidate of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), Hon. Christian Ikechukwu Otti, during the launching of the Women League of the Independent Democrats, in Orumba North Local Government of Anambra state at the weekend

Photo: ID Office

## APC warns El-rufai, Kwankwaso over crisis in North-west ...As Kaduna governor threatens to beat-up chairman

By Bode Olagoke  
Abuja

The North-west zone of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has warned the Kaduna state Governor, Mallam Narsir El-Rufai and a former state Governor, Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, calling on the duo to ensure decorum as regards some of the disagreements rocking the state.

National vice chairman of the party, Inuwa Abdul-Kadir, had also alleged that Mallam El-Rufai threatened to "beat him up".

Abdul-Kadir, who addressed a news conference at the weekend in Abuja over some of the allegations raised against him by the zonal Woman Leader, Hajia Aishat Kaita, alleged that he embezzled campaign funds among others, revealed that both Kwankwaso and El-rufai were behind his ordeal.

Speaking on the crisis rocking the party in Kaduna state, the zonal

chairman revealed that "on several occasions, I had meetings with him (El-Rufai) where as the leader of the party in the zone made passionate appeal for him to take leadership and drive a process that harmonise, reconcile and solidify the party in the state.

"One of such occasions, the appeal I made was in the presence of other governors from the zone in his office but his reaction was volatile and he threatened to beat me up and prevent me from coming into Kaduna.

"I kept my calm as a leader considering the volatility of Kaduna and the attendant threat it poses viz-a-viz the tremendous goodwill and support the party is enjoying in Kaduna state."

When asked what was the motive

of the accused persons, the zonal chairman said: "they are playing politics and I have some constraints as a leader of the party leading members in my zone so I don't really need to go into details of what they intend to achieve, whatever they intend to achieve either with me or anybody, I am appealing to every member of our party to be law abiding and to be very responsive and responsible in the conduct of this game of politics.

"I am supposed to be a rallying point within our party so I try to detach my personal interests where I have one, because of my duty and responsibility as a leader of the party in the zone.

"I think whatever their motive is, there is a better way to conduct themselves and pursue their personal interests within the party and

even outside the party. They have aspirations which they are entitled to and they can aspire to whatever office they wish in accordance with the constitution of our party and that of the land.

"There must, however, be decorum. Our party will not accept a lawless situation and we will not encourage anything that will bring about disharmony among our members. It is legitimate for anybody to aspire to any office he wants, I repeat."

On the allegation of embarrassment, the APC chieftain said "I wish to state here that the only funds that were disbursed to the zone were done through the party account which was opened and operated at the instance of the party's National Secretariat."



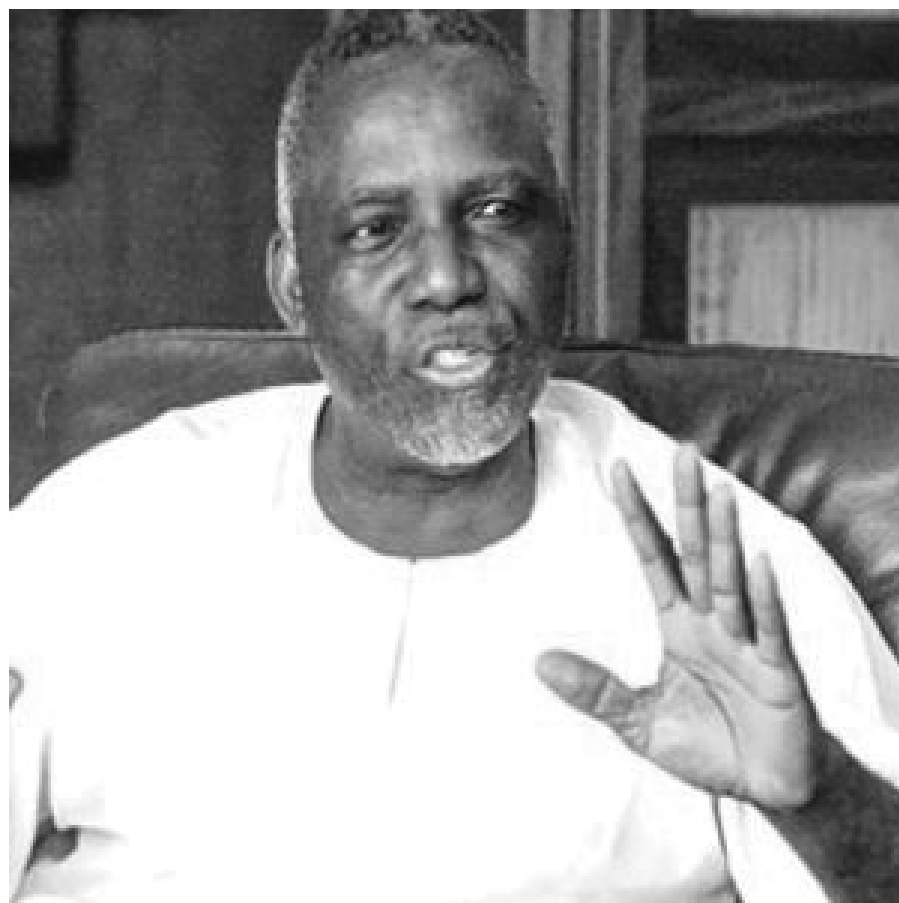
## Politics

# South-east economic, security summit: Matters Arising

RAPHAEL EDE writes on the just concluded South-east economic and security summit, which provided the platform to underscore unity against individualism. Expectedly, it was a political gathering with issues of restructuring as a recurring decimal



Obasanjo



Nnaji

The quest for socio-economic emancipation of Ndigbo in an unjust federal system in Nigeria, saw the Enugu State Government lodge surge with who is who in Igboland on 22nd December, 2016 at a Southeast Economic & Security Summit to brainstorm on how the private sector could work with the public sector to achieve infrastructure influx into the South east region.

Usually, those in government both elected and non-elected under the platform of the ruling All Progressive Congress APC; didn't attend. The lone APC governor from the zone was conspicuously absent without representation. Instead, they advised the President Mahamadu Buhari to not attend the summit even when the president had consented to attend and fixed 22nd December to enable him attends.

This did not with usual excuse, as the presidency reacted that 'in view of the closeness of the date to Christmas; that given the sensitivity of the period to the people, a presidential visit may come with overexertion and possibly, be disruptive of Christmas'.

Speaking on the essence of the summit, the Chairman of the planning

committee of the summit and former Minister of Power, Prof. Bath Nnaji, said it was to brainstorm on how the private sector could work with the public sector to achieve infrastructure influx into the South East; which areas he said they are looking to work on include gas pipelines, railway, sustainable agriculture, among other areas.

Nnaji frowned at the incessant, unwarranted and unprovoked attacks on the people of the South East in parts of Nigeria and even right here in Igboland, especially attacks that are carried out by herdsmen, noting that was part of the challenges to be redressed.

The ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo, in his key note address asked Ndigbo and their governors to take their destiny in their hands by developing the South-East geographical zone instead of waiting

for the government at the federal, stressing that there was no need for the governors to wait for the Federal Government to develop South-East when they already had the instruments already.

According to Obasanjo, economy and security were two sides of the same coin, that none could be achieved without the other; even as he asked Igbo elders to intervene in the on-going agitation for Biafra Republic to bring the situation under control.

Describing the Igbos as unique people, Obasanjo said their entrepreneurial and communal efforts were driven with the spirit of adventure.

He said the aim of the summit was on how the industrious people of the zone could do things for themselves other than relying on government's intervention, noted that "insecurity in any part of the country affects the

other. The instruments of doing the jobs are already with you.

"The South-East had been known from time for entrepreneurship, community effort services and their spirit of adventure. The papa Okafor has been there in my village right from when I was growing up and nobody has taken those traits away from the Igboman, but how do we use it to achieve economic prosperity and security?

"You can't have security when the economy of your people is not well taken care of and you can't have security without economic prosperity. What we need to do here is to harness what we have. The people of the South-East are extremely unique and need to be harnessed. We should work together and that is the purpose of this summit", he alluded.

The former president told the gathering to look in the ways of their fertile agricultural land, the Aba industrial cluster; other minerals both on the surface and beneath the earth to grow their economy. "Whatever we can do for ourselves, let us do it for ourselves. If I could go to Maiduguri

“  
We knew South east for enterprise,  
entrepreneurial ability, communal interest  
and spirit of adventure

## Politics

# Maximising the economic potentials...

From the previous page

when Boko Haram was raging and I had to try to reach out to them in the interest of the country, I don't think I have to be eulogized for being part of the initiative of South-East summit.

"Security is all inclusive. If there is no security in any part of the country, there is no security in the entire country. All the governors have spoken. I am delighted. They said 'we have things we can do if given the instrument'. You have the instruments already.

Obasanjo who stole the show listed traits of Ndigbo: "We knew South-east for enterprise, entrepreneurial ability, communal interest and spirit of adventure. Nobody can take it away from them. What can we do with it in area of economy and security? The symbiotic relationship between economy and security has been mentioned by the governors and the chairman. You cannot have good economy when the security of your people is not taken care of. If security is not taken care of, the economy will diminish. What we have, how can we use it? "The people of South-East are extremely unique. That uniqueness of the South-East must be used to your advantage," Obasanjo said; citing the Aba-made shoes and Ebonyi rice as examples.

He described the potentials of the South-East region as legendary, saying that the South-East could be the food basket of the nation.

Justifying the agitation for a sovereign state of Biafra, Obasanjo described the challenge of youth restiveness in the region as understandable as the agitators had education and skills and yet they do not have jobs.

"There should be agitation by the youths but should we leave them with the agitation? There is this saying that where youths are cutting trees in the forest, the elders should caution them because they are the people who know where the tree will fall," he added.

In his brief remark, the Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu, lamented the unjust system of government run by President Buhari stressed that the South-East zone was not represented at the apex level of either the military or the police even as he asked federal government to obey an earlier court order compelling her to release the detained leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu.

On the rule of law and fundamental human rights as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution as amended, Ekweremadu who was displeased that, Kanu is still in detention insisted that he must have his day in court and if court orders his release, he must be



Ugwuanyi

released.

He said that without the inclusion of Ndigbo in governance, "there is no way there will be peace in Nigeria."

While calling for the restructuring of the country, noting that if Nigeria's democracy should thrive, the citizens should be ready to subject themselves to the basic rules of law.

"So long as we have unified economic structure, it cannot work. It is also important that all parts of the country are represented in the affairs of government. As we talk now, nobody from the South-East is among the security chiefs in Nigeria.

"I must say my mind because any part of country anywhere in the world that feels marginalized, that country cannot have peace and it is time for us to rethink and address the issue of marginalization and include all part of



Ohaneze President-General, Chief Gary Enwo-Igariwey

this country in the governance of this nation".

The DSP who complained bitterly that his picture was not contained in the brochure for the programme disclosed that he was not at war with President Buhari, citing recent meetings he had had with the President.

"Put me in the programme. Nobody is going to arrest you. I have no problem with the president," he said.

In his submission, former Secretary General of Commonwealth and Chairman of the occasion, Emeka Anyaoku, reiterated his call for the restructuring of Nigeria to have fewer and effective federating units for this country to have stability and faster pace of development.

"There is no need for Federal

Government to periodically bail out any of the 36 non-viable units from dire financial conditions," he said

Gov. Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia State in his goodwill message lamented sorry state of the Federal Roads in the South East which he attributed to the devastation of the Civil War because earth tremors caused by the war equipment affected the texture of the land, thereby making it impossible for the roads to last.

He advised that good contractors should be invited to work on the roads in the South East for them to withstand the test of time before they deteriorate.

On his part, Gov. Ugwuanyi called on the federal government to make haste and repair failed federal roads in the South-east and re-imburse the states for embarking on the rehabilitation of the Federal roads in the zone.

Ugwuanyi lamented that his state is lacking revenue that should accrue from federal institutions like UNN, Federal Government College, Eha-Amufu and Orthopaedic Hospital which he said were owing tax returns to the tune of over N12. 9 billion.

The summit was attended by dignitaries such as the former vice president, Alex Ekwueme, Jim Nwobodo, Emeka Anyaoku, Frank Nweke jnr, Gen. Ihejirika, Ogbonnaya Onovo, Ken Nnamani, governors of Enugu, Ebony and Abia state, among others.

“

There should be agitation by the youths but should we leave them with the agitation? There is this saying that where youths are cutting trees in the forest, the elders should caution them because they are the people who know where the tree will fall



# Entertainment

BLUEPRINT

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**AISHA TSAMIYA**



**I gate-crashed into acting  
and I'm not regretting**



## Entertainment

### Kannywood

# I gate-crashed into acting and I'm not regretting – Aisha Tsamiya

Aisha Aliyu Tsamiya is one of many Kannywood actresses that got their nicknames from a movie they feature prominently. Surprisingly, she got her nick from her first movie, 'Tsamiya' which was produced by Habibu Yaro in 2011. Actually, her elder sister was the one penciled down to feature in the film that made her popular. In this interview with ALIYU ASKIRA in Kano, the 25-year-old actress says even though she gate-crashed into acting profession, she never regrets doing so.

**Tell us a bit about your background and how you found your way into Kannywood.**

My name is Aisha Aliyu Tsamiya and I was born in Kano in 1992. I attended both my primary and secondary schools, including a diploma in Computer, in Kano.

How I joined Kannywood, I remember it is through AGM Bashir who was a friend to my elder sister then. The story surrounding it actually was when they were shooting a film at Daula Hotel and the name of the film was 'Tsamiya', then my elder sister, who was billed to feature in the film, did not make it. So the producer, Habibu Yaro asked me to step in for my sister and play the lead role. To cut the long story short, that was how I started acting and the name of the film, 'Tsamiya' has ever since become part of my name.

**Tell us a bit about pictures of male twins you posted on your Instagram. Though you used to complain that people often hack your instagram and facebook accounts, this one is your authentic accounts. People would want to know if these kids were yours.**

Well, that is why some of us always shun press interviews. Somebody even accused me that in 2015, I insulted former president Goodluck Jonathan on my instagram. Now I have changed it to 'Real Aisha Aliyu Tsamiya' whatever you see on the new facebook or instagram is from me. So I will

not talk about twins or not twins.

**Tell us about your most popular films?**

'Tsamiya', from where I got my Nickname. 'Gudan Jini', 'Zarge'. 'So', 'Haihuwa', and several others, but I like 'Dankin Amarya' and 'Haihuwa' the most because, the 2 films made me popular though I suffered on them, I even sustained injuries and had to be hospitalized. But all in all, I was extremely happy to feature alongside accepted and popular actors and actresses like Ali Nuhu, Halima Atere, Tanimu Akawo, Al-ameen Buhari and the rest. Let me tell you, since then I see myself transformed into the class of A-grade actors and actresses.

**Is it true that you are getting married very soon?**

Well, I don't know but my prayer is to settle down very soon. I am into a serious relationship but no date has been fixed yet.

**What do you hate in life?**

Gossip, and people who make other people's business to be their own, that is another word for Gossip. My saddest moment was when my grandmother died, while my mother is what I like most in my life. I also like eating rice and beans and pepper. While about weather, I like cold weather, about car, I like Vibe Matrix and that is all about me.



Aisha Tsamiya

## Why I start producing Kannywood films in English – Jammaje



Jammaje

**By Aliyu Askira**

The desire to give northerner entertainment industry a voice and to correct the erroneous impressions people outside the country hold against the region and the country as a whole has pushed the proprietor of Jammaje Academy, Kano, Mal. Kabiru Musa Jammaje to start producing Kannywood films in English.

The proprietor said that having visited several countries in Africa, Europe and other parts of the world and noticed how some people view the behavior of Nigerians or form an opinion about how Nigerians conduct their lives, he has produced two films that try to capture the real life style of an ordinary Northerner, "so pure and in accordance with Islamic culture, no sex kissing or hugging."

"Whenever those outside the country watch Nollywood films in which you will see female and male actresses kissing, hugging and some practically making what looks like real sex, what they used to conclude is that this is the real life style of Nigerians, even though we have muslims in larger population than our Christian brothers," he added.

The producer, who is also a Radio presenter, noted that the films he has so far produced are "Light And Darkness", "There is Way", which he will release into the market very soon.

Jammaje pointed out that out of a desire to produce quality films that could stans the test of time, he featured most A-grade actors and actresses like Rahama Sadau, MARYAM Booth, Rabiu Rikadawa and a host of others who have good command of the

English Language.

"If you watch nollywood films most of those that featured as gatemen or drivers are portrayed as Hausa people most of them speak poor English.

"So the struggle begins from home. We need to put it before these misinformed southerners that we have intellectuals as actors in the region.

"Henceforth we will try to show to the whole world that Northerners are not only highly educated, they have the best culture and religion that one can ever come across. We have renown universities, polytechnics and other research institutes in the north. The region also has the most powerful politicians in the country.

"Therefore, it is better to produce Hausa films in English so that the whole world will know the true history of Nigeria and its people," he concluded.

## Movie Review: Hijira

**By Muhammad Muhsin Ibrahim**

**Director:** Iliyasu Abdulmumini  
**Tantiri**  
**Producer:** Naziru Dan Hajija  
**Story:** Iliyasu Abdulmumini  
**Tantiri**  
**Language:** Hausa  
**Year:** 2016  
**Company:** Kumo Production

The Hijra (migration/exodus) of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his companions from Makkah to Madinah is an epoch in the history of Islam. It is featured notably in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Although the Prophet was born and raised in Makkah and had preached for many years there, persecution forced him along with the few that believed him to migrate. The Islamic Hijri calendar began from that time. The choice of the title for the film cannot be unconnected to the Prophet's Hijra.

Oftentimes, the bond between cinema and the orthodox religious and cultural institutions is marked by disquiet. Many people reject film, seeing it as a subtle way to debase their religion and culture. Presentations of bedroom scene, or virtually anything denoting sex or other tabooed subjects, for instance, are still frowned at in Kannywood. Several filmmakers are, therefore, relentless in their efforts to counter this argument, to correct the (mis)conception. Some have gone far and recently adapted the famous story of As-Habul Kahfi (The Seven Sleepers) from the Qur'an. There are quite a number of other films meant for Islamic evangelism. The epic drama, Hijira is arguably one of such.

**Plot summary**

The film is a mixture of a quite romantic comedy and adventure. It begins from a scene of mass burial of the victims of an infectious plague that ravages the village of Madaci. As they bury some corpses, more are brought forward. The King calls for an emergency meeting. There is disagreement as to whether to stay in the town or leave. The Chief Imam is of the opinion that everyone should remain, basing his point with the Islamic injunction that says when there is an outbreak of plague in a land, nobody should enter it; and

if the plague breaks out in a place one lives in, do not leave. The King accepted this, thus goes, along with other chiefs, to address the townspeople.

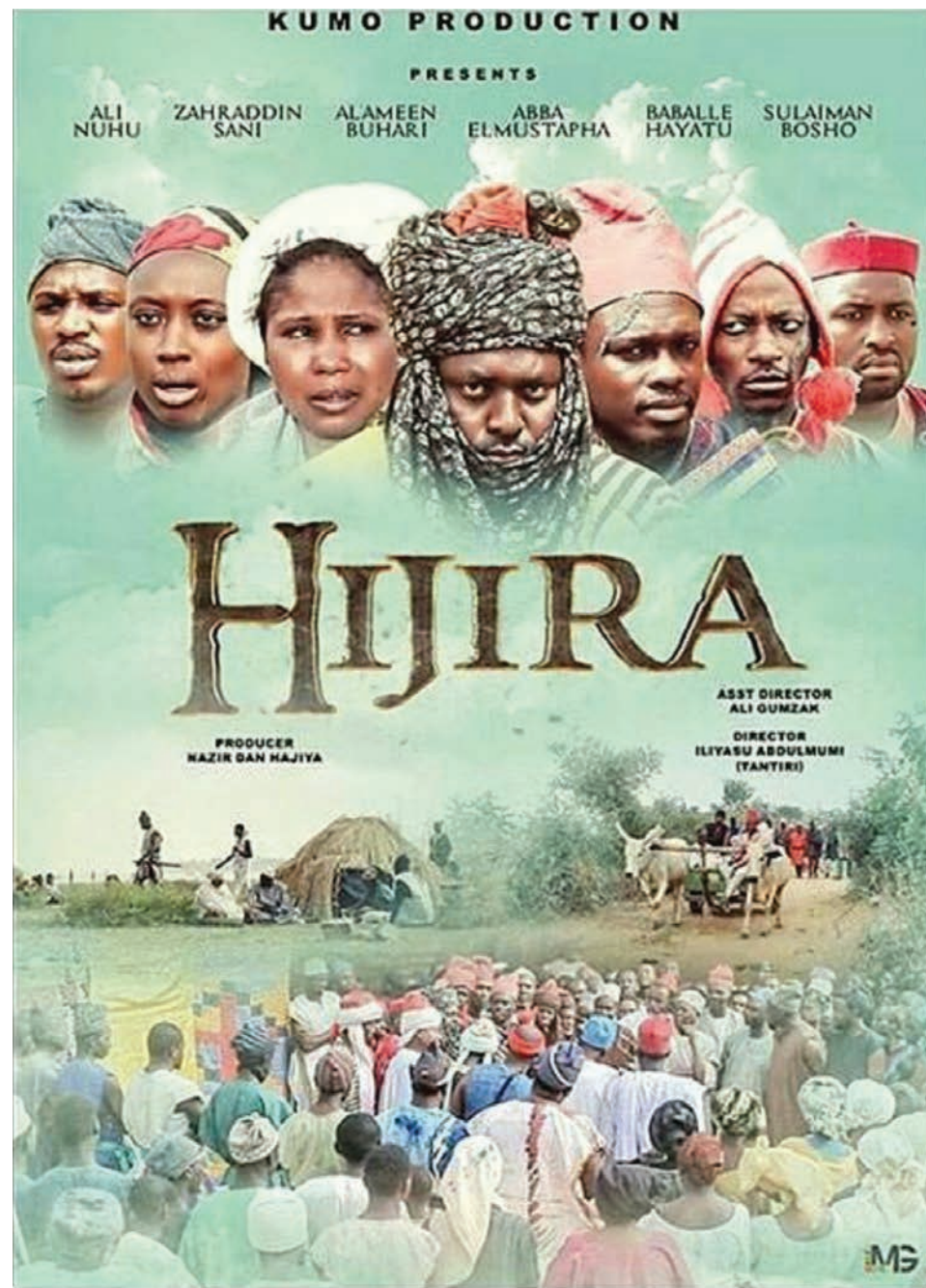
While addressing the townspeople, a member of the village, Bala comes with a sad story that the plague has finished ravaging the neighboring villages and has spread to Madaci. Asked how he came to know about that, he said he is from there and has seen corpses all around. He is thus instructed to stay back; he refuses. The Sarkin Yaki (i.e. Chief Guard) kills him. The remains of Bala is said to be very deadly as it should not be touched by anyone, and its decomposition will equally harm all. The King, therefore, has a quick change of mind and, there and then, declares the start of the exodus.

The execution of Bala is a can of worms. His mother vows to avenge him by imploring his choleric brother, Zubabu to slain Sarkin Yaki whenever and however he gets a chance. Other conflicts include the thievish and snobbish nature of the Prince; the love triangle between Rabo and Chiko where both love Saratu, a beautiful girl who is betrothed to the latter. An acerbic, old man called Baba Manga, on the other side, openly objects the exodus and fearlessly criticizes the King.

As the migration begins, mistrust, rancor, conflict, artificial and natural disasters envelop the migrants. A group of bandits launches a fatal attack on them. Chiko murders Rabo. Saratu avenges her heartthrob by getting married to Chiko only to stab him to death on their first night. The Prince poisons the King, takes charge and sacks Sarkin Yaki. Zubabu challenges Sarkin Yaki in a physical combat and loses. Terrible epidemic and deadly spirits descend on the other migrants, and kill many. Gambo, the town's physician tries his best possible but to no avail. Finally, the remaining few reach a town but its border guards deny them entry. Famine and wild animals devour them, including the Sarkin Yaki. Only a single child, the narrator of the story, survived.

**Critique**

The star-studded film, Hijira was apparently a big project, planned in a span of months or more, and carefully directed and produced. The casting



largely fits, the narrative sequentially connected, the mise en scene presented well, and so on and so forth. The filmmakers and the actors of Hijira can't be easily forgotten in the film industry. As with any film, nay, everything else, Hijira has some imperfections.

For instance, the story is told through an omniscient point of view, but in the end a narrator (a different point of view called restricted) is introduced. The narrator should have said at least a line from the beginning, to let spectators know that the film is actually a narration. Likewise, the makeup and the special effects leave much to be desired. First, you cannot have all the victims of a war with wounds on their neck or head only and no any other part of their bodies. Second, the scene where some spirits descend on the migrants looks so much artificial.

Other contextual mistakes include the mass grave scene. The people burying the dead use their bare hands. The least experienced person knows that the remains of the victims of any contagious disease are not touched with uncovered hands. This, even in the film, is soon contradicted as the Madaci townspeople are cautioned to not have any body contact with anyone infected with the disease. This is, in fact, the reason why they had to migrate, to run as far away as they can from the dead body of Bala.

From the religious perspective, the character of Gambo betrays the possible idea of the film. Doubtless, it is a common practice among the traditional doctors to

use incantation and invocation, showing Gambo doing the same is incongruous. His medicine should be Islamic-compliant to corroborate the points already highlighted by the character of the chief imam who uphold the virtues of Muslims.

**Verdict**

The trio of forced marriage, gender rivalry, and singing and dancing are the usual elements of Kannywood films. Hijira, however, defy this straitjacketing by avoiding all the three, for the aim is to proselytise Islam and to caution the faithful on the adherence to the Prophet's sayings. There have been similar films before it such as Ga Duhu Ga Haske (dir. Aminu Saira, 2011), Yankin Imani (dir. Imran S.I Ashir, 2013), Ana Muslim (dir. Abubakar S. Shehu, 2014), and, above all, As-Habul Kahf (dir. Aminu Saira, 2013). Yet, none is without song and dance – the practice generally condemned as caricaturing Hindi cinema – as Hijira is. Apparently, both the precepts of Hausa culture and Islam are considered and safeguarded in addition to the film's being very likely original. Therefore, the few content and technical lapses cannot take away all its other credits. The film is by and large worth your naira. I give it 3.5 out of 5 stars.

*Ibrahim is of the department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Bayero University, Kano. He can be reached via muhsin2008@gmail.com*

## Kannywood stars share New Year resolutions

**By Aliyu Askira**

It's 2017, and as a common New Year traditions, most people make vows to accomplish one or two goals or resolve to change an undesired trait or behavior in their lives. Kannywoodscene.com asked Kannywood stars to to open up on their new year resolution.

**Ali Nuhu**

"Boosting the marketing wings of FKD Productions"

**Nafisat Abdullahi**

"Marriage....."

**Yakubu Muhammad**

"I'll stop thinking too much and avoid anything that will keep me away from positivity."

**Nuhu Abdullahi**

"Overcome a fear, be sincere about punctuality and commitments."

**Baballes Hayatu**

"May peace and happiness be with everybody. May peace reign and recession be a thing of the past in Nigeria. May Kannywood business boom in 2017."



## Entertainment

### Tourism

# FG hail 'Ijakadi Festival'

## ...says key festivals to be made attractive

By Ibrahim Ramalan

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Muhammed has hailed the organizers of the "Ijakadi Festival" for reviving and sustaining the age-long event which does not only reinforces the community's tradition of strength and determination, but also addresses the notion of equality among all the indigenes of Offa.

The minister also said that the Federal Government is working with the private sector to make major festivals in the country attractive to domestic and foreign tourists and to leapfrog the events to the top cadre of global festivals.

He made the disclosure

in Offa, Kwara State, at the recent edition of the "Ijakadi Festival", a traditional wrestling event that dates back to the 14th century.

The Minister, who was represented by Mr. Raphael Arulogun, General Manager of NTA Ilorin, said the starting point is to train the managers of the festivals, which include the Ijakadi Festival

"As you may be aware, the training of Festival Managers is contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that we signed with the British Council. Also included in another MoU which we signed with the Tony Elumelu Foundation is the need to ensure that festivals like Ijakadi

are not just a mere jamboree but also a source of economic empowerment for the people, in terms of injecting foreign exchange into the economy and creating jobs, especially for the communities in which such festivals are situated," he said.

Mohammed said the beneficiaries of the partnership with the private sector would include major festivals like the

Abuja Carnival, which will be made to achieve

their full potentials and become household names like the Edinburgh International Festivals, the Rio Carnival in Brazil and the Notting Hill Festival in London, adding: "Our ultimate aim is to ensure that our festivals are among the top 20 festivals in the world."

He announced that in order to allow prospective visitors

to Nigeria to plan their trips around our festivals, "we will be releasing, early in the New Year, a Calendar of Festivals across the country. Once this is done, a tourist coming to Nigeria can then plan his or her trip around any of the festivals. We believe that this is one of the best ways to attract global visitors to our festivals and help to make them viable entities,"

## Goge Africa to establish cultural training centre soon

A culture and tourism firm, Goge Africa, says it has concluded plans to establish a cultural training centre in Lagos in this year.

Mrs Nneka Moses, the Managing Director of the company, made the disclosure in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos recently.

Moses, also a television presenter, said that the centre was expected to start operations from July 2017.

"We have been long and planning for the training centre, but all necessary facilities have been put in place now," she said.

The managing director said that the firm had been training youths in the past but not formally, adding that the centre was now a certified training institute.

"We have trained over 100 youths in culture and tourism programmes in the past.

"Youths from Ghana and some other neighbouring countries have also benefited from the training in the past."

Moses named some of the

courses to be offered when the centre takes off as: Tour Guide, Tour Packages, Media, Travel Agencies and Tourism Promotion, and Script Writing.

Others are Dancing, Drama, Drumming, Filming, Photography, Videoing and other related courses.

According to her, the training will hold in the morning and evening.

Moses urged the Federal Government to ensure that allocation to tourism in the 2017 budget was spent for the purpose intended.

The Goge Africa chief further urged government to as a matter of priority give attention to the development of infrastructure, especially in the tourism sector.

She also called for the upgrading of heritage sites and granting of loans to the private investors in the sector in 2017.

Moses further advised government to beef up security at local and international airports to attract tourists and to invest on the training and re-training of its security personnel.

She advised administrators on national festivals to package the festivals in line with the international standard to attract more tourists and investors into the country.

The managing director said that she had attracted millions of international tourists into Nigeria through her television programmes.

"I have been running my TV programme since 1999 and I have attracted several local and international tourists to the country's tourism and heritage sites.

"My TV programme is basically to promote African culture, lifestyle, fashion, tourism, heritage sites and arts across the country."

Moses also advised the government to work closely with the people at the grassroots to promote tourism, adding that the sector remained the only revenue generating alternative after oil.

"Government should take tourism sector seriously, other countries of the world have improved their economy through tourism."



Mohammed

## 5 things flying on a plane does to your body

It is the festive season and it is the period when many people travel from point A to point B. For those who prefer taking flights when traveling, you may not know that flying tampers or messes with your body. Yes, it does. In line with this, Jumia Travel, identify 5 things traveling does to your body so that you will be prepared to tackle this bodily reaction on your next flight.

### You will feel dehydrated

Dehydration is one of the obvious signs of flying. You will feel your skin drying up as well as your hair getting rough. This is because according to research, your body feels comfortable when humidity is between 40% and 70%. However, when you are in an airplane, humidity falls between 10% and 20%. TO stay safe, drink plenty of water before, during and after your flight.

### Jet lag

You will probably be used to Jet lag if you regularly. If is a well-known effect of flying. Jet lag means when you are very tired or disoriented after a long haul flight. To prevent jet lag, you should create the right sleeping environment. You can also use ear plugs.

### Your taste buds becomes numb

During and even after your flight, you will discover that

you will find that the meals you eat are bland and tasteless. This is as a result of your flight. Your taste buds will be restored. But in the interim, you should go for spicy means because they taste stronger.

### You might struggle with breathing

If you are flying at high altitude, it means the oxygen level are very low. You might find it difficult to breathe due to the absence of oxygen.

You should avoid drinking alcohol because it makes the body less effective in absorbing oxygen.

### Blood gathers in your legs

When you sit for a long period of time, blood gathers in your legs. And before you know it, your leg begins to swell. This is because the blood circulation has been hampered. You should take a few minutes' walk to stretch your legs.

# Women lawyers can do more than fighting for women's rights - Okafor

Arthur Obi Okafor, a senior advocate, in this interview with VIVIAN OKEJEME, speaks on some challenges that confront women, gender parity and how men should help liberate women.



Okafor

## Violence against women

When you talk about gender-based violence, it is synonymous with violence against women. During the congress of women lawyers in Abuja I had the opportunity to deliver a keynote address. In all, one discovers that there is one thing that militates against a society free from violence against women, and that is lack of knowledge on the part of the men folk

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So, when you talk about FIDA, the impression people have is that they are agitating for the rights of women. They are agitating about the rights of the entire people of this country and the society, because the society is built up on family blocks; without a family there is no society.

and also lack of awareness on the part of women as regards their rights and some processes available to them. You know, in this country which is a developing country, our people, especially, the men don't understand the need to embrace the women folk and help them to come up in society. We all belong to various families, and we know the importance of women in our families, but we have chosen, may be as a result of customs which we have over the years and some statutes which are not feminine compliant like the penal code not to give a thought to why women should be protected and why their interest should be advanced. I believe that in every developing society, women should be given prominence, but here in Nigeria and so many other African countries, men have taken up everything. They see women as their property that they can deal with the way they like. So, that is the problem we have. In Nigeria, women are in a better position to liberate the country because they have the golden heart towards all, both men and women. So, when you talk about FIDA, the impression people have is that they are agitating for the rights of women. They are agitating about the rights of the entire people of this country and the society, because the society is built up on family blocks; without a family there is no society.

## As male-chauvinists

I have to say that when you talk about the National Assembly, you are talking about politics. Politics is a part of our lives and existence but the plight of women should go beyond politics; it is something that is so fundamental that we must have to address it without thinking of what to gain.

If we don't have a strong participation

of women in the affairs of the society, the society will not develop properly. So, in order to have a properly developed society, women should be allowed to make their own contribution. Women must be part of our match towards development.

So, when women talk about gender equality, given where they are coming from, you have to look at the historical antecedents. In the past, where were we? In the past where we converted our women folk as properties, where you have a right under the penal code to discipline your wife, where you think that the duty of the woman is in the home; and that is why they (women) are pushing for that equality.

Therefore, women are coming from a background where men have taken everything and women agitation is not for them alone; when a woman gets all these things they are talking about, she brings them home. Where is this home? The home is for the man, the children and the woman.

## Women's rights and the Kitchen

Obviously, if our President has said that it is a great setback. Look at what is happening in Western countries. Mrs. Hilary Clinton vied for the US Presidential election, in Germany, a woman is at the helm of affairs, even in the United Kingdom. Why should we not in Nigeria give women the opportunity to participate actively and positively in developing this country?

## The plight of women as self-inflicted

Women are open-minded. If women would abandon their female folks and vote for men during elections, why wouldn't men do same when women vie for elective positions, if they are qualified to hold such offices?



The point I'm making here is that we are talking about a self-inflicted problem facing women, but I am looking at it from the point of view that women are more open-minded. We (as men) have a duty to protect women and give them a platform to operate. If you want to develop, you have to bring everybody on board.

Because of customary practices over the years, their minds have been caged by male chauvinists, by the laws which we have. The same men should help in having women liberated so that they can contribute their quota to development of the country.

## FIDA as the only vibrant women association in Nigeria

I do not think that we need to have so many organizations before we can achieve the goal of gender parity. FIDA and other non-governmental organizations should be alive to their responsibilities. FIDA should take a look at the laws and see the ones that are beneficial to them and exploit it to the fullest. For instance, a provision in the penal code that says, 'a man has the right to correct his wife without inflicting grievous bodily harm.' Now, women in the Northern part of the country where the Penal Code is holding sway, you don't expect them to go to court because they are afraid of what happens to them if they go to court to question the law.

So, FIDA as an entity under the current Fundamental Rights Procedure Rules can go to court and fight for such women. The law has now gives people the opportunity to go to court on behalf of others. So, it is not a question of having so many NGOs; it's a question of being more robust in the way we approach such issues. The point I am making here is that the government must come out and help women by subsidizing the activities of FIDA and other NGOs.

## Do you carry out pro-bono (free legal services) for the less-privileged?

It is even in our rules that if you don't execute pro-bono cases and have the certificate, you won't be conferred with the rank of a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN). In our time, it was not there. It is not just about doing pro-bono cases; we are talking about helping humanity in anywhere you find yourself. So, it is not about doing one criminal trial on pro-bono, but every Nigerian must see himself as his brother's keeper. You must add value to our match towards a democratic society, not just doing one or two probono cases in order to have the certificates and then apply to become a SAN. You must positively do something to see that the society moves forward.



## Judiciary

# Biafra: Kanu's secret trial begins tomorrow

Stories by Vivian Okejeme  
Abuja

The trial of the embattled leader of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) Nnamdi Kanu and three others before Justice Binta Nyako of the Federal High Court, Abuja, with the identities of prosecution witnesses shielded from the public, commences tomorrow.

Kanu was previously facing a six-count treason charge with Benjamin Madubugwu and David Nwawuisi, before the federal government amended the charges to include Mr. Chidiebere Onwudiwe as one of the defendants.

At the last sitting, Justice Nyako's ruling granted the federal government's application to shield the names and addresses of the prosecution witnesses who are largely security operatives.

Nyako's ruling was greeted with angry pro-Biafra storming the court premises, protesting against the ruling with Kanu and other defendants who are answering to an 11-count charge bordering on treasonable felony and terrorism, expressed their displeasure over the decision.

Delivering the judgment, Nyako ruled, "I hereby order that the names of the prosecution witnesses who are security operatives should appear in combination of alphabets and such witnesses will be given screens which will be provided by the court.

"The defendants and their counsel will be able to see the witnesses who will be given special access to and from the court," Justice Nyako ruled.

The pro-Biafra agitators engaged prison warders and

other security operatives in a scuffle at the court premises over the development.

The prosecution had applied for all the witnesses to be allowed to testify behind screen and for identities of the witnesses not to be revealed in any record of the proceedings.

However, the defendant through his counsel, Mr. Ifeanyi Ejiofor, opposed the application, arguing that granting such request would amount to a gross violation of their rights to fair hearing.

"We vehemently oppose

secret trial of the defendants. They were accused in the open, we also request that they be tried in the open.

"The defendants need to see those testifying against them eye-ball-to-eye-ball," he said.

It will be recalled that the federal government alleged that they committed the offence along with others now at large, on diverse dates in 2014 and 2015, in Nigeria, London and United Kingdom.

It told the court that the defendant conspired among

themselves to broadcast on Radio Biafra which is monitored in Enugu and its environs, preparations they were making for states in the South-South zones and other communities in Kogi and Benue states, to secede from the Federal Republic of Nigeria with a view to constituting same into a Republic of Biafra.

The defendants had on November 8, pleaded not guilty to all the charges against them, even as the court adjourned to hear their bail applications.



Kanu

## Stop these killings, NHRC tells FG, security agencies

The Acting Executive Secretary of National Human Rights Commission, Mrs. Oti Ovwah, has called on the government and security agencies to ensure effective protection of lives and properties of defenseless Nigeria who have been victims of incessant attacks by suspected herdsmen in the country.

Ovwah made the call in Abuja while reacting to the recent report of the attacks by suspected herdsmen which led to loss of lives and properties in Southern Kaduna, Kaduna state as well as similar reports in different parts of the country. She noted that the government and the security agencies must act fast to put a stop to these callous acts.

The NHRC boss also called on security agencies to be more proactive, professional and more committed in the discharge of their duties in containing persistent attacks by herdsmen, adding that there is an urgent need to prioritize preventive measures to curtail these attacks.

Mrs. Ovwah further stated that the commission, having received some complaints on alleged attacks by herdsmen, was partnering with other stakeholders to work out amicable solution to these avoidable attacks.

She noted with regret that the incessant attacks led to thousands of deaths accompanied by countless cases of displacement and further advised communities to embrace the age long beneficial relationship of peaceful coexistence and to desist from taking arms against themselves.

While observing that conflicts were usually fueled by human rights abuses, she noted addressing those abuses requires an inevitable process of peace building.

## NHRC, FCT Police to collaborate on human rights enforcement

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has reiterated that they are committed to continual support and enforcement of human rights in the country.

The security agency also assured the observance of human rights by its officers.

The Commissioner of Police, FCT Command, Mustapha Mohammed, during a courtesy visit to the acting Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC),

Mrs. Oti Ovwah, also assured on further collaborations with the Commission on the development and defense of human rights.

Mohammed said it is important to synergize and discuss issues of common interest to the NHRC and the NPF and foster further collaborations, because, according to him, the Police and the commission as custodians of law and order, are at the fore front in the defence of Human Rights.

In promising better synergy between the Police and the NHRC, Mohammed also assured on the observance and enforcement of human rights by officers of the Nigerian Police Force.

He said: "The FCT Police is striving hard to observe human rights in our profession because we need it. We try as much as possible to train our officers and the commission also contributes in the training of our men.

Earlier, the NHRC's acting

secretary, Mrs. Ovwah, noted that the visit will afford the opportunity to work out other areas of partnership with the police.

She said many of the NHRC staff were already relevant with the work of the police, being first responders, first human rights defenders people run to, stressing that it's pertinent the NHRC partners with the NPF.

"We have had lots of trainings and programmes together and by

next year, we hope to improve on it because human rights promotion, protection and enforcement is not just the job for one institution, we all must play our part and continue to improve on it," she said.

The NHRC Director, Protection and Investigation, Mr. A. Yakubu, on his part, commended the support of the Nigerian Police and the FCT Command in particular, in several areas of mutual concern.

## Judiciary

# Diezani to forfeit \$153m to FG, court orders

Stories by Vivian Okejeme  
Abuja

Justice Muslim Hassan of a Federal High Court, Lagos Division, has ordered the alleged siphoned \$153,310,000, by a former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Mrs. Diezani Alison-Madueke, from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC and stashed in three banks in the country, namely Sterling Bank Plc, First Bank Plc and Access Bank Plc, temporary forfeited to the federal government.

The anti-graft investigator, Moses Awolusi, in a nine-paragraphs affidavit in support of the ex-parte application, averred that the agency discovered through its investigations, how sometime in December 2014, Diezani invited a former Managing Director of a bank to her office where they allegedly hatched the plan of how \$153,310,000 would be moved from NNPC to be saved for Diezani.

Moses declared that Diezani allegedly instructed the bank MD to ensure that the money was "neither credited into any known account nor captured in any transaction platforms" of the bank.

He further maintained that the said bank MD accepted and implemented the instruction leading to the movement of \$153,310,000 from NNPC to the bank.

He added that the said two former Group Executive Directors of Finance and Account of NNPC, B.O.N. Otti and Stanley Lawson, allegedly helped Diezani to move the cash from NNPC, Abuja to the headquarters of the bank in Lagos.

Continuing, the anti graft investigator, insisted that in an alleged desperate bid to conceal the source of the money, the MD, instructed the Country Head of the bank to take \$113,310,000 cash out of the money to the Executive Director, Commercial and Institutional Bank, Sterling Bank Plc, Lanre Adesanya, to keep.

He claimed that the remaining \$40m was taken in cash to the Executive Director,

Public Sector Accountant, First Bank, Dauda Lawal, to also keep.

The investigator said out of the \$113,310,000 handed over to Adesanya, a sum of \$108,310,000 was invested in an off balance sheet investment using Sterling Asset Management Trustees Limited.

He alleged that the said \$108,310,000 was subsequently changed to N23, 446, 300,000 and saved in Sterling Bank. Awolusi averred that the EFCC had recovered the N23.4bn in draft and had registered it as an exhibit marked, EFCC 01.

Moreover, he said the EFCC had also recovered another \$5m out of the money kept with the MD of Access Bank Plc, Mr. Herbert Wigwe adding that the \$5m was recovered in draft and had been registered as an exhibit marked, EFCC 02.

According to him, First Bank's ED, Lawal, had converted the \$40m kept with him to N9, 080, 000, 000.

Awolusi, added that the EFCC had recovered that also in draft and registered it as Exhibit EFCC 03.

Counsel to EFCC, Mr. Rotimi Oyedepo, while moving the ex parte application, urged the trial



Diezani

judge, Justice Hassan to order the temporary forfeiture of the funds to the Federal Government and to order Sterling Bank and Lawal, who were joined as defendants in the application, as well as any other interested parties, to appear in court within two weeks to show cause

why the funds should not be permanently forfeited to the Federal Government.

Oyedepo said that granting the application was in the best interest of justice citing Section 17 of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act No. 14, 2006 and Section 44(2)(c) of the

1999 Constitution.

Justice Hassan however, granted the order filed by the anti-graft agency and adjourned till January 24, 2016 for the respondents to appear in court to explain why the funds should not be permanently forfeited to the Federal Government.

## \$1.1b Malabu oil deal: Italian govt files charges against Etete, others

The government of Italy has issued interest to file criminal charges against a former Minister of Petroleum, Dan Etete, for his alleged role in the \$1.1 billion Malabu oil deal.

Recall that the federal government filed a criminal charge against Etete, former Attorney-General of the Federation, Mohammed Bello Adoke, SAN and six others over USD1.1b Malabu oil deal.

According to a source, charges have been filed

against the former petroleum minister in Milan, the Italian Capital.

Etete is expected to be charged alongside 12 others for criminal conspiracy is one Chukwuemeka Obi, whose company, EVP laid claim to about \$110 million of the \$1.1 billion paid by Shell and Eni for OPL 245.

The money is currently alleged to be trapped in Switzerland where it has been frozen by a court.

Mr. Obi sued Malabu for the \$110 million in London

which he said was his entitlement for helping to facilitate the deal between the oil majors and Malabu.

In July 2013, the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division presided by Lady Justice Gloster ruled in favor of Mr. Obi that he was entitled to "a fee of 8.5% of the total disposal consideration of \$1.3 billion.

Others listed in the charge include DescaJzi Claudio, the CEO of Eni; his predecessor, Paolo Scaroni; Roberto Casula,

Armanna Vincenzo, Antonio Pagano, Ednan Agaev, Luigi Bisignani and Falcioni Gianfranco.

Italian prosecutors are also charging Eni and Royal Dutch Shell for their involvement in the deal as multinational firms.

In the charge, it is alleged that Italian oil giant, Eni, may have received \$50 million bribe from the \$1.1 billion the company and Shell paid into a Nigerian government account in 2011.



## Judiciary

# 2017: Aye ! Aye!! The sails are set

His clothes were rumpled and smelled of dust. The frail, scrawny man must have journeyed so far –kilometres, miles, who knows? He seems to still have some way to go but clearly lacked direction. 'Hello, can I help you?' 'Oh, yes' came the faint but quick reply. "I have travelled for sixteen days now but can't seem to get to my destination, can you help? "If I can, why not?"

The good Samaritan was willing to help. There was just one thing: the man did not know where he was going and worse still had no idea where he was coming from. He wanted to get to a town called There but didn't know what it looked like-couldn't describe it, couldn't trace it; so in spite of the desire to help, the helper couldn't help the lost man.

There are very few tragedies that compare to a lack of compass in life. If a man or woman does not know where he is coming from nor knows where they are going to there would never be a destination. It gets worse if the situation is about a country. The question is: Does Nigeria know where it is coming from or where it is headed to? Welcome to 2017. It is a new year and an opportunity for a fresh start. We can leap forward or double backwards depending on what we chose as a nation.

One sure way to understand the dynamics of the motion of our nation is to take a clear, hard look at the rear mirror before we look on to the road ahead of us. History is important. It is as important as the present or the future. In a different setting, this statement would have seemed self-evident but our spinning on same spot as a nation makes this a point to dwell on especially because we live in a period of rapid change, a moment where inertia has no room because time forges its own path.

Let's take our economic history as example. Within ten years after independence, there was a steady 3.1 percent annual growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). During the oil boom era, GDP remarkably grew by 6.2 percent. This growth grew in the negative in the early 80s, a period that coincided with General Muhammadu Buhari as president. Industry



Buhari

and manufacturing grew negatively by - 3.2 per cent

and - 2.9 per cent respectively. The growth of agriculture plummeted, the contribution of agriculture to GDP, dropped not because the industrial sector increased its share but due to neglect of the agricultural sector. Predictably the economy had become a net importer of basic food items. Capital formation in the economy had not been satisfactory. Gross National Saving became low and consists mostly of public savings. Unemployment rates went high and the economy went into recession.

Fast forward 2016 and Nigeria hits a recession with the country's economy contracted by 2.06 percent. Everything in the early 80s repeats itself. Nigeria is especially hit by the decline in oil since crude oil sales account for 70 percent of government income. 2016 was a really hard year. Nigerians are glad it has come and gone. Will President Buhari find the grit and gumption to pull the country out of recession? It remains to be seen.

The second issue which is primary for governance is security. The year ended with some news about Boko Haram conquest. The forest have been said to be combed

off terrorists. Despite the news, several persons who have had relatives kidnapped have not received their loved ones back. Over a hundred and fifty of the Chibok girls are still at large. The billions of naira spent have not resulted in the prosecution of the master minds as opposed to the foot soldiers who put our country in such needless distress.

Worse still, there is the consuming herdsmen terrorism where several communities are sacked by vicious marauders who attack, maim, rape and kill victims. Houses are burnt. People are mowed down and attackers are reported to disposes original inhabitants only to take over ancestral lands. The situation is grave. Audu Maikori, lawyer and Chocolate City boss, has decried what he described as a wiping out of a generation while the government looks on. His depiction flies in the face of a massacre so gruesome that it makes no exception of suckling children and infants.

That long term measures are yet to be employed to insecurity, places the country at the lower rung of the ladder in terms of protection of human lives and looking out for the welfare of the people. 808 people have been reported killed, thousands of houses have been burnt and many more displaced. I agree with Maikori when he says government is more reactionary than proactive and that even in being reactionary, it fails to show empathy to citizens as in the case of Southern Kaduna where the death of over 800 has not attracted the President's visit to the area nor a strong directive to security chiefs.

Part of what is important for moving any country forward is to communicate hope to citizens. When hope is not translated, it affects the cohesion in society, the economy, and does not spare the destiny of the people. This hope must be an assurance that when things look ugly, the people believe that their government are committed enough to turn things around.

Sadly, our reconstruction of history reveals that most

BALLASON

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## LAW & SOCIETY

people in leadership position are only qualified to lead their small cliques and not the vast majority they preside over. We have groped through this dark path to get to where we are only by sheer luck. But from where we stand, this path can no longer lead us to where we are going. The primordial sentiments that colour the eyes are now threatening to blind us as we move very rapidly to our undoing. Same goes with our insistence to putting square pegs in round holes thus destabilizing systems. People who have no expertise when asked to man positions produce the predictable result of failure. This has formed part of our ugly history and is an area we must make adjustment.

There must also be a plan for where we are going and a destination where we must arrive. Like the traveller in the earlier illustration, our failure to know where we took off and where we would alight is best reflected in our inability to plan. Beyond seeking to meet up with the Sustainable Development Goals, Nigeria needs a plan that shows short term and long term goals. At the moment, none of us can say for sure what our government intend for our nation in the next ten years, five years or even two years and because there is no picture that features, there is no future to be seen.

Little wonder that the destiny of our nation has been left in the hands of political jobbers and mischief makers. It is the reason a year begins without a budget and since we fail to plan we invariably plan to fail. As we look to the year 2017, one can only hope that we emerge into a situation where we are deliberate about the results we want to see. May we say like the captain aye! aye!! the sails are set. May we find the will to get the right counsel and have the right economic team who would cause our economy to bounce back. May the law speak the same language in times of distress as in times of tranquility. May we together form a common resolve to take the ruins in our country and breathe life in them. God bless Nigeria.

“  
Like the  
traveller in  
the earlier  
illustration,  
our failure to  
know where  
we took off  
and where  
we would  
alight is best  
reflected in  
our inability to  
plan.”

# Something Else

## Woman gives birth during auto shop oil change

Some auto shops offer 10-minute oil changes. That still would have been about seven minutes too long for a Pennsylvania woman who gave birth while her husband's pickup was getting an oil change at an auto dealership.

Amanda Sherman and her husband, Adam, tell the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review that Amanda gave birth when she went to the restroom at #1 Cochran Nissan of South Hills in suburban Pittsburgh on Monday.

The couple is from Harrisville, about 60 miles north of the dealership.

Amanda Sherman says another customer, who happened to be a registered nurse, and the dealership's staff helped her, while a 911 dispatcher talked Adam through tying off the baby's umbilical cord with his bootlace.

An ambulance took Amanda and 7-pound-12-ounce Heather Lynn to a Pittsburgh hospital, where they were released Wednesday.

## Bitter husband finally talks to his wife after 20 years

This is the moment a stubborn man spoke to his wife for the first time in more than 20 years after an epic sulk.

The father-of-three would talk to his children normally but said nothing to his wife.

Long-suffering Katayama Yumi chatted normally to her husband, but he would never respond.

And now the reason for his silence has been revealed - he was jealous of the attention his wife gave to their children.

The Japanese couple's 18-year-old son, Yoshiki, wrote to a TV show asking for help with his family's problem.

He told one of the presenters he has never heard his parents have a conversation.

His sisters, 21 and 25 years old, also said they had never heard their parents speak to each other.

He said: "My father doesn't talk to my mother but my mother talks normally to him."

His father, Otou, told the show: "When the kids were born my wife was very involved and busy in raising the kids."

"I was kind of... jealous. I was sulking about it."

"There's no going back now I guess."

He spoke to his wife for the first time in more than 20 years and told her: "Somehow it's been quite a while since we talked."

"I know you have endured a lot of hardship."

"I want you to know I'm grateful for everything. I also want to talk after this, I hope we can work together from here."

As they watched their parents have a brief conversation on a park bench the children cried with joy.

## Canada lottery jackpot won with numbers from a dream

A Canadian woman who has used the same lottery numbers for nearly 30 years has won the jackpot, winning a CA\$5.3m (\$3.9m; £3.2m) cash prize.

Olga Beno from Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia, says she "dreamt up" the winning set of numbers in May 1989 and has regularly used them ever since.

The win is a fillip for the cancer sufferer, who has had to sell her home to fund her treatment.

She now plans to build an easy-access ranch-style home with her winnings.

"I know my numbers by heart, and I thought I saw them on the television screen the evening after the draw, but my eyes aren't good," Ms Beno was quoted by Atlantic Lottery as saying.

"So I forgot about it."

The next morning, she was going through the newspaper when she saw the winning digits again.

"At first I thought - it can't be. It's a mistake in the paper. Then I said to my sister, 'I think I won the lottery'."

"She said 'Phone me back

when you want to tell me the truth'."

Ms Beno was one of two people to win CA\$5.3m from the 28 December draw. The second ticket was sold in western Canada.

Ten years ago she was diagnosed with Stage Four cancer and had to sell her home and start renting.

She said that her husband, children and grandchildren had helped her to survive the illness, and that her intention now is to spoil them by taking them to Disney World.



Olga Beno did not initially realise she was a winner

ATLANTIC LOTTERY Image

## Boy Scout leader downs 23 ghost peppers to raise funds for troop

An iron-stomached Boy Scout leader in Texas downed 23 ghost peppers in a bid to raise scholarship money for the troop.

Troop 137, based in Fredericksburg, posted a video to YouTube that opened with the troop's scoutmaster, Gayne

Young, explaining that Assistant Scoutmaster Johnny was about to eat 23 ghost peppers.

Young says Johnny's attempt took place 20 hours earlier and the man was in bed with "really, really bad stomach pains" after being "sick at both ends."

"Do not try this at home," the scoutmaster says.

The footage cuts to the previous day, when Johnny began to casually eat the peppers.

The assistant scoutmaster becomes noticeably uncomfortable as he continues to eat the peppers.

He finishes the peppers and initially makes a show of rejecting a glass of milk -- and then the aforementioned sickness arrives.

The attempt was designed as part of an effort to raise scholarship money to buy uniforms for the scouts and send them on trips.



A Texas Boy Scout leader eats a plate of ghost peppers to raise money for his troop.

Screenshot: Storyful



# Something Else



## US emergency crews spend 20 hours rescuing raccoon from drain

Emergency crews in California, USA embarked on a 20-hour mission to rescue a raccoon trapped inside a drain.

Wildlife Emergency Services arrived to the scene to rescue a raccoon which was found trapped after a homeless man reportedly heard grunts coming from a pipe in a local market.

"I was on scene by 3:00 p.m. The animal's moans were unlike anything I'd ever heard," Rebecca Dmytryk said in a Wildlife Emergency Services blog post. "It's unusual for an adult animal to cry out, so, this meant the animal was in extreme distress. Just heartbreaking."

Crews discovered an adult raccoon trapped about 8 feet inside the pipe as water began to collect around the animal's body.

The crews used shovels to remove sludge and drain the water away until Watsonville Utility Crew Leader Henry Cervantes arrived and suggested it was necessary to cut through the asphalt to the pipe in order to rescue the raccoon.

"That plan didn't set well with Bill, the property manager," Dmytryk said. "He would not grant us permission to dig up the newly paved parking lot... but, the property owner, Shirley – a real animal lover, gave us the go-ahead...under one condition – that we put it back the way we found it."

Several crew members volunteered beyond their work hours to help free the raccoon by attempting to cut through the asphalt with a handheld masonry saw.

The saw was only able to cut so deep before Cervantes was forced to call for a giant utility truck which allowed the crew to jackhammer down to the pipe.

By 9 p.m. one of the crew members managed to grab a hold of the raccoon, but the trapped creature would still not budge from its spot.

## Break-in suspect caught doing laundry, smoking in homeowner's bed

A homeless man in US was caught on New Year's Eve smoking in the bed of a Virginia home after breaking in, deputies said.

Samuel Ciopasiu broke into a home on Barrington Lane, in the Kiln Creek area, on Dec. 31, according to the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office.

William Phillips said he owns the home, but no longer lives there, and was checking it for packages while his wife was away on vacation.

"As I walked in the house, I smelled smoke, and no one in the house smokes, so it was weird to smell cigarette smoke, so I wasn't sure what was going on."

As he walked upstairs, Phillips said he was stunned to see a man in bed through a crack in the door.

"Then I approached the gentleman that was in the house... asked him what he was doing there and his response was, 'I was about to take a shower. I was just getting my stuff.' I said, 'This isn't

your house. This is my house.' I said, 'You need to get out.'"

Deputies said Ciopasiu appeared to have eaten salmon from a package that was delivered to the house, smoked cigarettes, made himself at home on several couches and beds, and even used the bath. Phillips said his adrenaline was pumping when he saw the man, and the encounter could have ended badly.

"If I had a gun on me, he could have been shot, easily," Phillips said.

Phillips said Ciopasiu ran from the home and hopped a fence, then Phillips got in his car and stopped him across the street with the help of a nearby driver who pulled a gun.

Lt. Dennis Ivey with the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office said some have been comparing the crime to the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

"This may appear to be a fairy tale story to people, from a kids' story, but this is traumatic for people who live in

the home. I mean, imagine, somebody sleeping in your bed, somebody taking your food. I mean, it violates the sanctity of somebody's house and that's hard to get past... If you're homeless, look for places that can help you. I know that there's the Peninsula Rescue Mission in downtown Newport News... There are resources out there. You just can't break into somebody's house and stay there," he said.

Phillips said he wants to see justice served, but hopes Ciopasiu can change his life.

"I certainly don't want him doing it to anybody else, and when I think about the fact that he could have been in there when my wife and daughter got home, I mean, that infuriates me, but on the other hand, you know, I wish that he was in a place where he didn't have to look for a place to get warm, to get food. I wish there were better options for him," Phillips said.



Ciopasiu

## Surfing dog raised half a million dollars for charity

A surfing dog has raised half a million dollars for various charities since she started participating in fundraising events for six years.

Ricochet, known as the only SURFice dog, reached the \$500,000 fundraising milestone which benefitted more than 250 different causes dedicated to kids

with special needs, people with disabilities, veterans with PTSD and animals in need after raising nearly \$7,000 on New Year's Eve.

"Reaching this major milestone demonstrates how much Ricochet's worldwide community supports her efforts," her handlers said in a press release. "She sincerely thanks her individual donors, social media followers, corporate sponsors and members of the media for their continued support."

Ricochet became the first dog committed to adaptive surfing after jumping on a surfboard with quadriplegic surfer Patrick Ivison in 2009.

Since then she has participated in several fundraising efforts as well as working on community outreach programs for PTSD and other forms of therapy.



Ricochet the SURFice dog reached a fundraising milestone of \$500,000 on New Year's Eve. She began fundraising for kids with special needs, people with disabilities, veterans with PTSD and animals in need when she on a surfboard with quadriplegic surfer Patrick Ivison in 2009. Screen capture/Surf Dog Ricochet/YouTube

# Business

## FG will not buy grains from hoarders – Lokpobiri

By John Oba  
Abuja

The federal government has stated that it will not patronise any third party grains hoarders saying the plan to sell grains to the government at exorbitant rate will be disappointed.

The Minister of State for Agriculture

and Rural Development, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, in a statement said the government has made high breed seeds available to farmers, while soil test and relevant fertilizers are also within the reach of farmers as parts of effort to encourage all season farming.

This according to him will reduce pressure on grain purchase hence

discourage any form of hoarding that may increase the price of grains. He said:

“There are reports of the hoarding of large tons of harvested grains by some individuals who hope to sale at exorbitant price to the government. I will warned that government, especially the ministry has no plans to buy grains from any unscrupulous third part and anybody hoarding grains is doing that at his own risk.

“The government is determined to ensure that the country enjoys food

security and self-sufficiency and has therefore put measures in place to enhanced increased food production, especially grains.

“The government policy is to greatly ensure the drive towards achieving self-sufficiency in grains, to meet local demands from North to South and East to West, nevertheless, to encourage farmers in a situation where there are huge grains due to increase production, Government last resort is to buy off excess grains from farmers to be stored

and released when the need arises,” he explained.

He said the Ministry in its efforts to enhance agricultural sector’s self-sufficiency policy, has engaged in all-year-round agriculture including dry season farming through increased investment in irrigation and that those hoarding grains should make them available for consumers saying hoarding them will affect their quality and that they may eventual loss both of the grains and their much desired profit in monetary terms.

## Heritage Bank partners NYPF, offers N50m to entrepreneurs

By Amaka Ifeakandu  
Lagos

As part of efforts to bring the economy out of recession, Heritage Bank Plc in partnership with the Nigerian Young Professionals Forum (NYPF) has supported young entrepreneurs with Grant of N50 million under the Young Entrepreneurs & Students Grant Scheme (YESGrant).

The Grant was awarded to about 35 young entrepreneurs from agricultural, creative industry and the information & communication technology (ICT) sector. They grant was approved after a rigorous and transparent review process conducted by an independent body, out of the tens of thousands who applied for the grant.

Speaking at the YESGrant award ceremony held in Lagos, the Managing Director /Chief Executive Officer of Heritage Bank, Mr. Ife Sekibo, who said that the nation’s economy has experienced severe down spiral, affirmed that the 35 successful entrepreneurs will be provided with the required guidance on fund management as individual beneficiaries would get at most N2 million each.

Sekibo who was represented by the Divisional Head, Retail/SME, Mrs. Ori Ogba stated that the bank supported this initiative because of its belief in Nigerian youths, who make up about 80 percent of the country’s population.

She further explained that Heritage Bank was impressed with

the nature in which talents were sought out for, the rigorous selection process and the integrity with which the overall scheme was delivered.

Ogba expressed her satisfaction in the long term sustainability of the initiative, stating, “We will not support something that will not stand the test of time.”

In his remarks, the Chairman/ Founder of the NYPF Mr. Moses Siasia, said the idea of the grant was born out of the desperation of young Nigerians to build businesses in an economy fraught with a seemingly endless onslaught of challenges.

He explained that the society does not encourage young talents and innovations, while stating that the country is yet to tap up to 5per cent of its youthful resource. He called on all stakeholders to see youth growth as a priority for National development.

## Gov. Bello lauds Dangote for promoting tourism

By David Agba  
Abuja

Kogi state Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello has commended Dangote Industries limited for promoting tourism potentials in Nigeria and especially in Kogi State by sponsoring the state’s 6th Ebira Carnival.

Noting that tourism can make the nation less dependent on Oil, as another avenue for foreign exchange earnings, the governor urged all other corporate bodies and rich individuals to emulate Dangote in the area of promoting culture

and the tourism potentials in the country.

Lauding the foremost Nigerian conglomerate for playing a vital role in wealth creation, Bello further reiterated that events such as Ebira Carnival has the capacity to drive economic growth and development through a multiplier effect on others sectors.

He said: “This administration intends to reposition Kogi State as the hub of tourism in Nigeria. We greatly appreciate the roles culture and tourism could play in achieving sustainable development and in promoting social and economic empowerment of citizens. The sub-sector has huge foreign and domestic investment potentials, with wide spaces for small and medium enterprises to thrive. We are grateful to the Dangote Group for its support to the tourism sector in the country and we are also using this opportunity to appeal to other corporate bodies and well-meaning Nigerians to emulate what Dangote is doing, so as for the sector to be vibrant enough to attract foreign exchange into the country”

He added that his administration is planning to tap fully the potentials of cultural diversity in the state as to create more employment opportunities adding that he is ready to support activities that would showcase the beauty of the state’s cultural diversity. He said that

with the support of the Dangote Group in promoting cultural heritage and cooperation, Kogi State would become a global tourism destination.

The Governor also stated his resolve to grow the employment rate in the by 25 percent annually.

Replying, Honorary Adviser to the President/Chief Executive of Dangote Group Engr. Joseph Makoju, said the Group is committed to partnering Kogi State government in creating employment and opening the state for business. He commended the governor for ensuring a peaceful and conducive business environment.

It would be recalled that the President/CE of Dangote Group, Alhaji Aliko Dangote was appointed an honorary member of the State’s Executive Council in 2015, owing to his massive investment in the state and financial empowerment of women in the state. Dangote’s Obajana Cement Plant which is located in Kogi State is the single largest cement plant in sub-Saharan.

Middle: Governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Adoza Bello, HRM, Ohinoyi of Ebiraland , Dr. Ado Ibrahim , Second left, Suberu Onimisi Nusa, National Cordinator, Ebira Carnival, and Second from the right, Engr. Abubakar Ohere, SA Local Government and Chieftancy Affairs at the Dangote sponsored carnival in Kogi state, recently.



From left: Director of Investment Banking, Chapel Hill Advisory Partners Limited, Mr. Ayo Fashina, Group Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Access Bank Plc, Dr Herbert Wigwe, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange, Mr. Bola Onadele-Koko and Managing Director, Coronation Merchant Bank Ltd., Mr. Abubakar Jimoh, during Access Bank’s Commercial Papers Quotation ceremony, in Lagos recently

## Flight Schedules

### ARIK AIR

Abuja-Lagos 7:00, 9:00, 13:00 17:00  
Lagos-Abuja 7:00, 9:00, 13:00 17:00  
Abuja-Kano 14:20, Kano-Abuja 15:50  
Abuja-Gombe 11:45, Gombe-Abuja 13:30  
Abuja-Sokoto 9:40, Sokoto-Abuja 11:30  
Abuja-Yola 16:30, Yola-Abuja 7:40  
Abuja-Port Hacourt 7:00, 11:00, 16:30  
Port Hacourt-Abuja 8:40, 12:40, 18:10  
Kano-Lagos 13:10, Lagos-Kano 11:05  
Lagos-Kaduna 11:30

### OVERLAND AIRWAYS

Abuja-Minna 7:30, 17:50; Abuja-Bauchi 9:00  
Lagos-Ilorin 7:00, 15:00, Abuja-Ibadan-  
16:00Bauchi-  
Ibadan-Abuja 7:45, 16:00  
Bauchi-Abuja 10:30, Minna-Abuja- 17:50

### AZMAN AIR

(MONDA- FRIDAY) Kano-Lagos 7:30am, 3:45,  
Abuja-Lagos 1:20 am, 5:30 pm, 7:00  
Lagos-Abuja 9:45am, 3:30pm  
Abuja- Kano 2:30pm  
Kano- Abuja- Maiduguri- 8:15am  
Abuja-Maiduguri 9:30am  
Maiduguri- Abuja-Lagos- 9:30am  
Abuja-Yola 11:30am

### AERO CONTRACTORS

Abuja-Lagos 7:00, 8:45, 10:45, 12:45,  
14:45, 16:45, 19:45  
Abuja-Lagos 09:20, 17:20  
Kano- Lagos 8:30, 17:05, 18:05  
Lagos-Abuja 6:45, 8:45, 10:45, 12:45, 14:45  
16:45, 18:45  
Lagos- Kaduna 7:00, 15:00  
Lagos-Sokoto 8:45; Sokoto- Lagos- 8:45  
Sokoto- Abuja 12:15

### DANA AIR

Los - ABV 8:01, 12:06, 13: 05, 14:04, 16:29  
(MON- FRI)  
9:00, 13:05, 16:29 (SUN)  
8:01, 12:06, 16:29 (SAT)  
ABV-LOS 9:54, 10:53, 14:13, 16:02, 18:18  
(MON- FRI)  
10:53, 11:07, 18:18, (SUN)  
9:54, 14:13, 18:18 (SAT)

Exchange Rates				
Date	Currency	Buying(NGN)	Central(NGN)	Selling(NGN)
7/24/2016	US DOLLAR	279	279.5	305
	POUNDS STERLING	408.4839	409.216	400
	EURO	316.1628	316.7294	335
	CFA	0.3179	0.3279	0.3379
	YUAN/RENMINBI	24.8262	24.9069	24.9876
	RIYAL	41.2607	41.394	41.5273
Bureau De Change				
	Dollars	Euro	Pound	
Buying	N279	N316	N408	
Selling	N284	N317	N409	



# Business

## NEWS

### UBN's shareholders authorise N50bn rights issue

Shareholders of Union Bank Nigeria Plc have approved five resolutions authorizing the board of the bank to raise up to N50 billion through rights issue.

The shareholders gave their approval at an extraordinary general meeting of the bank held in Lagos on Wednesday, December 7, 2016.

In a bid to accommodate the new shares, the shareholders' approved the increase of authorised capital of the bank from N9.5 billion (made up

of 19 billion ordinary shares) of 50 kobo each to N17.5 billion (made up of 35 billion ordinary shares) of 50 kobo each by the creation of additional of approximately 16 billion ordinary shares of 50 kobo each ranking equally with the existing shares of the bank.

Consequently, the memorandum and articles of association of the bank will be amended to reflect the increase in the authorized share capital to N17.5 billion. "Obtaining shareholder approval for our

capital increase is a necessary step bringing us closer to the rights issue.

Incremental capital will further strengthen Union Bank's near-term positioning and enable us realize our long-term growth aspirations," said Emeka Emuwa, chief executive officer of Union Bank.

He added: "We view the right issue approval as a strong sign of shareholder support for Union Bank's growth strategy and our plans to scale up operations and strengthen our position

in readiness for uptake when the macroeconomic direction changes."

Amending the bank's memorandum of association and the articles of association in order to authorize an increase in the bank's share capital required the approval of at least a 3/4 majority of votes present at the EGM.

The issue was supported by shareholders representing together 99.6 per cent of the votes. Union Bank of Nigeria (UBN) Plc had announced its

earnings for the third quarter, showing 27 per cent growth in pre-tax profit to N13.3 billion within the period. The bank also saw considerable growth in the topline as gross earnings rose by 12 per cent to N93.4 billion.

The interim report and account for the Union Bank Group for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2016 released at the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) showed that group gross earnings rose by 12 per cent to N93.43 billion in third quarter 2015 as against N83.72 billion recorded in comparable period of 2015.

Interest income had grown from N66.91 billion to N70.96 billion. Net interest income was improved by 19 per cent from N40.27 billion to N48.07 billion.

### PenCom laments states' attitude towards pension affairs

The National Pension Commission (PenCom) has expressed concerns about the poor attitude of many state governments to pension contribution.

The commission said that presently, only 10 out of the 36 states of the federation have started the remittance of contributions into the RSAs of their employees, while eight have begun funding of their Retirement Benefit Bond Redemption Fund Accounts.

The remaining 26 states, it disclosed, were yet to start the remittance of contributions into their workers' RSAs or fund their accrued rights.

A report from PenCom clearly disclosed that only 10 states out of the 26 states that have enacted their Pension Reform Laws as of March 2016 are remitting deducted funds into the RSAs of their employees.

Records also indicated that 673,116 contributors, who are workers of the various state governments, are registered with different PFAs.

According to the commission, Lagos, Ogun, Kaduna, Niger, Delta, Osun, Rivers and Anambra states have commenced the remittance of contributions to six PFAs and are funding their accrued rights.

Imo State, the commission said was yet to commence the remittance of pension contributions, but that the Imo State University was currently implementing the CPS, but not yet funding its accrued rights.

Zamfara State also commenced the remittance of pension contributions of its employees to the PFAs, but has yet to fund its accrued rights.

PenCom stated that Jigawa State had transferred its pension assets to six PFAs for management, while Kano had yet to transfer its assets to the PFAs.



Group Managing Director, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Dr. Maikanti Baru (right), briefing the Chairman, Media Trust Ltd, Malam Kabiru Yusuf, on the operations of the Corporation, during the visit of the management of the newspapers to the GMD, in Abuja at the weekend

Photo: Tidzalla Zacchaeus

## CBN warns against charging double-digit interest rate

The Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr Godwin Emefiele, has warned Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) in the country against charging double-digit interest rate on intervention funds guaranteed by the CBN.

According to a statement by the CBN acting Director, Corporate Communications, Mr Isaac Okorafor on Wednesday, Emefiele gave the warning in Abeokuta, Ogun.

He did so during an interaction between the Presidential Task Force on Agricultural Commodities and Production and young farmers at the Owowo Model Farm Estate.

The governor assured the young farmers of the CBN funding support through their respective PFIs.

Emefiele asked them to report any bank that charged above 9 per cent interest on loans guaranteed by the CBN.

He assured them that development finance officers of CBN were available to assist them on how to access credit from its various intervention funds to create wealth and meet the country's food needs.

The governor advised the young farmers to take advantage of the Bank's Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Fund (MSMEDF) to create wealth.

Also, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbah, assured the youth that the Federal Government

would support their quests to make legitimate earnings from agriculture.

Ogbah expressed confidence in the ability of the youth to produce agricultural commodities that would earn the country the much-needed foreign exchange.

He also commended the effort of the CBN governor, who he noted was very concerned about the import bills of the country, particularly as it had to do with rice importation.

Also, Gov. Atiku Abubakar Bagudu of Kebbi commended the CBN for its support to revamping agricultural value chains across different crop types.

Gov. Ibikunle Amosun of Ogun thanked the presidential task force for visiting the state.

He said that his administration would partner with the CBN and do all within available resources to fund the agricultural sector.

It will be recalled that President Muhammadu Buhari, on Nov. 17, 2015 launched the CBN Anchor Borrowers' Programme in Kebbi.

The programme is aimed at upgrading small farmers to commercial farmers, thereby achieving the trio objective of stimulating the needed capacity to meet the nation's increasing food needs.

Some of the intervention fund by the CBN in the agricultural sector include Agricultural Credit Support Scheme, Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme and Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme.

# Business

## CAPITAL MARKET

# Equity market sheds N214bn in 4 days

Stories by Amaka Ifeakandu  
Lagos

Trading activities on the floor of Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) last week closed in a negative trend, shedding N214 billion. Market capitalisation of listed equities which closed year at N9.246 trillion depreciated by 2.32 per cent to N9.032 trillion at the end of transactions on Friday. The NSE All Share Index (ASI) also closed lower for the week, shedding 623.23 basis points to 26251.39 points from 26874.62 traded the previous week.

NSE Premium dropped by 54.05 to 1641.46, The NSE Main Board index shed 21.40 to 1182.39, NSE ASeM Index went down by 19.92 basis points to 1,169.77, NSE 30 index declined by 24.52 to 1,170.68 points, NSE Banking index fell by 4.31 basis points to 270.01. NSE Insurance index down by 0.21 to 126.08, NSE Consumer Goods Index dipped by 16.24 to 696.41, NSE Oil and Gas Index 5.13 basis points to 307.55, NSE Lotus II 41.22 basis points to 1800.37, NSE Industrial Goods index 48.14 basis points to 1547.19 points and NSE Pension Index depreciated by 1.93 per cent to 808.11 points. The trading which lasted only four working days of the week as federal government declared Monday Public holidays to celebrate new year, showed that investors bought 4.319 billion shares worth N7.376

billion in 9,330 deals in contrast to a total of 405.939 million shares valued at N3.724 billion that exchanged hands last week in 6,363 deals.

The Financial Services Industry led the activity chart with 4.177 billion shares valued at N5.306 billion traded in 5,047 deals, contributing 96.71 per cent and 71.94 per cent to the total equity turnover volume and value respectively. The Oil and Gas Industry followed with 65.827 million shares worth N594.522 million in 1,385 deals. The third place was occupied by Conglomerates Industry with a turnover of 26.487 million shares worth N48.163 million in 299 deals.

Trading in the top three equities namely – Unity Kapital Assurance Plc, Omoluabi Savings and Loans

Plc and FCMB Group Plc accounted for 3.863 billion shares worth N3.013 billion in 286 deals, contributing 89.45 per cent and 40.85 per cent to the total equity turnover volume and value respectively. Analysis of trading for the week showed that 18 equities appreciated in price during the week, against 37 recorded the previous week. The result indicated that 31 firms depreciated in price, higher than 21 stocks of the previous week, while 126 equities remained unchanged against 117 equities recorded in the preceding week.

UAC Property Development Co. Plc led gainers table for the week, increasing

by 34.50 per cent or N0.38 kobo to close at N3.00, United Capital Plc followed with a gain of 10.62 per cent or N0.29 kobo to close at N3.02 kobo, while Access Bank grew by 6.68 per cent or N0.41 kobo to close at N6.28 kobo. Other companies appreciated in price were Eterna Plc 6.45 per cent, FCMB Group Plc 6.36 per cent, Unity Bank 5.45 per cent, FBNHoldings Plc 4.48 per cent, United Bank for Africa Plc 4.00 per cent, Fidson Healthcare Plc 3.91 per cent and Cap Plc 3.13 per cent.

National Aviation Handling Company Plc recorded the highest loss for the week, decreasing by 13.92 per cent or N6.44 kobo to close at N2.72 kobo, Cement Company for Northern Nigeria trailed with a loss of 13.40 per cent or N0.67 kobo to close at N4.33 kobo.

N.E.M Insurance Co Nigeria Plc fell by 9.52 per cent or N0.10 kobo to close at N0.95 kobo. Other firms depreciated in price were Sterling Bank 6.45 per cent, Cadbury Nigeria Plc 6.36 per cent, Union Bank of Nigeria Plc 5.45 per cent, Mobil Oil Nigeria Plc 4.48 per cent, Dangote Flour mills Plc 4.00 per cent, Ashaka Cement Plc 3.91 per cent and Custodian and Allied Plc 3.13 per cent.

Also traded during the week were a total of 55 units of Exchange Traded Products (ETPs) valued at N505.65 executed in 11 deals, compared with a total of 9,965 units valued at N56,446.35 transacted last week in 16 deals.

A total of 5,100 units of Federal Government Bonds valued at N5.120 million were traded this week in 2 deals, as against no bond transaction last week.

## Vitafoam declares N125m dividend

Vitafoam Nigeria Plc has declared total dividend payout of N125 million for the financial year ended September 30, 2016. The amount translated to N0.12 kobo per every share held by investors. The company's statement of account submitted at the NSE showed that the revenue for the year dropped from N16.853 million to N13.589 million while gross profit went down to N4.661 million from N5.100 million recorded the previous. Year. The analysis of

the company performance indicated that the profit before tax trend down ward to N61.198 million from N213.097 million achieved in the corresponding period. Total assets which stood at N12.849 billion in the corresponding period grew to N13.345 billion while total liabilities rose from N9.536 billion to N9.837 billion. The Company within the period under review posted loss of N32.032 million against loss of N71.981 million in the preceding year.

# NSE transactions reverse negative trend by 0.15%

The market indicators of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) at the weekend recorded marginal growth increasing by 0.15 per cent after dropping for three consecutive days following gain posted by Guinness.

The All-Share Index appreciated by 39.30 points or 0.15 per cent to close at 26,251.39 compared with 26,212.09 recorded on Thursday.

Also, the market capitalisation which opened at N9.018 trillion inched N14 billion to close at N9.032 trillion.

Guinness recorded the highest gain to lead the gainers' table, gaining N1.10 to close at N80 per share.

Zenith Bank followed with a gain of 27k to close at N14.77, while Oando appreciated by 15k to close at N4.69 per share.

UAC Property and Access Bank improved by 14k each to close at N3.02 and N6.28 per share respectively.

Conversely, Mobil topped the losers' table with a loss of N13.95 to close at N265.05 per share.

Nestle came second with a loss of N1 to close at N809, while Cadbury shed 50k to close at N9.50 per share.

Union Bank lost 27k to close at N5.22, while UACN dipped 26k to close at N16.64 per share.

In spite of the increase posted by market indicators, the volume of shares traded closed lower as investors bought and sold 210.21 million shares valued at N1.51 billion achieved in



Brokers on the floor of the NSE

2,659 deals.

his was against a total of 137.69 million shares valued at N898.71 million recorded in 2,488 deals on Thursday.

Oando was the most traded with

51.13 million shares worth N223.54 million.

FCMB Group came second on the activity chart having accounted for 25.87 million shares valued at N41.54 million, while Zenith Bank

sold 20.81 million shares worth N306.09.

ETI sold 17.14 million shares valued at N171.17 million and Sterling Bank exchanged 12.08 million shares worth N8.45 million.



# Business

## BANKING

# Be vigilant on recession's impact on banks, regulators urged

Stories by Amaka Ifeakandu  
Lagos

The regulatory and supervisory authorities in the financial industry has been urged to be proactively positioned to forestall any systemic problems that would arise in the banking system as result of economic recession being experienced in the country. Director, Research and International Relations Department, Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation, Mohammed. Y. Umar who made this state at workshop said that during recession there is the possibility of some banks experiencing liquidity problems, which in extreme cases could result in threats to their continued existence. This he said will require the regulatory and supervisory authorities including NDIC to be proactive to prevent any problem that would occur from recession.

Umar said that the direction of monetary policy as a response strategy for the current recession has tendency to affect the earnings from the Corporation's investment either negatively or positively depending on the decision of the monetary authorities.

Speaking further he said "if rates on Treasury Bills are pushed down, this will affect the returns on the Corporations

investments and vice versa. He said that as recession bits harder, operators in the financial system who are in business to make profit, may start seeking ways to reduce or avoid costs in order to remain profitable. Apart from overheads, he said banks may seek for a reduction in their cost of

funds such as insurance premium payments to the NDIC, adding that as the financial institutions begin to clamour for a cut in premiums payable, it would affect the funding of the Deposit Insurance Scheme (DIS). He said in order to address the likely issues of reduced collection of premium payable by the insured

institutions and by extension the growth of its insurance funds as a result of economic downturn and the fluctuations in the treasury bills rates, the NDIC needs to begin to explore other investment avenues in which to invest its funds.

On the other hand he said "governments needs to

remain focused on its efforts at diversifying the economy and other policies put in place to ensure quick recovery from the current recession. When that is done, the economic environment will be conducive for the banks to operate safely which reduces the risk of failure and hence consequences on the NDIC.

## 12 millionaires emerge in new Sterling Bank promo

As part of its enriching lives proposition, Sterling Bank Plc has made 12 of its customers millionaires in the New Sterling Bank Sterling Plus Cash Reward promo. Other winners also emerged in other categories of the promo with a total payout of N80 million. The New Sterling Plus is a new proposition for the retail segment of the market.

The breakdown of winners in the 2016 edition of the promo made available to newsmen in Lagos at the weekend showed that, 25 customers went home with N500,000 each, 80 won N100,000 each while over a thousand won N50,000 each.

The newest millionaires are Mr. Ekiwu Daniel of Okpara branch, Enugu of the Bank and Yaya Saidu Habu of Unity Road branch, Kano. They were selected during the El-Malud and Christmas draws

via an electronic raffle draw and winners emerged from various parts of the country.

Sterling Bank in a statement signed by its Group Head, Branding and Communications, Mr. Henry Bassey, said the promo was instituted to reward customer loyalty and encourage a savings culture among Nigerians.

The Sterling Bank spokesman who disclosed that the season three of the promo would commence soon, explained that all customers with a minimum balance of N5,000 automatically qualify for the draws with 1 ticket while subsequent multiples of N5,000 result in additional tickets.

He described the Sterling Plus account as a hybrid offering with the promise of many goodies and freebies such as free Lenovo smartphones pre-

loaded with cool financial and entertainment applications among others for individual customers.

Mr. Bassey disclosed that the account which can be accessed at any Sterling Bank branch with a minimum balance of N5,000 is the perfect solution for individuals interested in enjoying the benefits of both current and savings account offerings, without the associated cost of running a current account.

He stated that customers with the New Sterling Plus account will be entitled to a free cheque book, free debit card and free transaction alerts (SMS and e-mails) on their transactions adding that 20 people would win N50,000 every week for a period of one year while 10

people would win N100,000 monthly. According to him, "two people would win N500,000 quarterly and one lucky individual would win N1 million on special holidays; as declared by the federal government".

His words: "The New Sterling Plus account was developed after an extensive market research to address the need of our existing and potential customers. It is part of the bank's contribution to boost and encourage savings in the country. The choice of gifts for customers, especially the free smartphones was in consideration of the increasing demand and use of mobile platforms for financial and non-financial transactions in the Nigerian market."

## UBA empowers MSMEs with masterpass payment

By David Agba  
Abuja

United Bank Africa (UBA) has introduced its first merchant-focused app in Africa with the aim of creating a SMART (secure, mobile, accessible, reliable, transparent) network of 100,000 micro merchants.

The announcement follows the pan African commitment made by UBA and Mastercard in July 2016 to introduce safer and more convenient ways to pay for goods and services in Nigeria and across the continent.

The merchant app will include Masterpass QR, a mobile payment solution powered by Mastercard, and it is immediately available for download to any feature or smart phone in the country.

Meanwhile, Nigeria has been selected as the first market to go live with the merchant app because of

the country's eagerness to adopt smart tech solutions. Masterpass QR is being introduced across all UBA's subsidiaries in the rest of Africa.

While speaking, UBA's Group Head Consumer and Digital Banking, Dr. Yinka Adediji, said: "As a group, we are committed to driving financial inclusion and empowering businesses across Africa. Our partnership with MasterCard enables us to deploy safe digital solutions for customers and the banking public. UBA MasterCard QR Merchant App is another of such solution."

Adediji confirmed that UBA will be working with other Mastercard partners that are experts in their respective fields thereby further supporting the local industry.

He stated that Innovectives, an integrated

fintech company and Nigeria's leading Agent Network Manager will support with technical development and value added services component of the roll-out while Grooming Center, the leading Micro Finance Institution in the country will provide the micro merchants access to finance.

He reinforced that the powerful collaboration will be a game changer for micro merchants in Nigeria, and across Africa.

More so, with UBA Masterpass QR Merchant App, business owners are able to receive instant notification of payments in real time, view their current banking statement and get insights about sales trends. These features will help merchants to plan their businesses better thereby enabling easier access to financial support.

It also provides micro

merchants the ability to offer value added services such as bill payments or airtime top-ups to their customers, thus enabling the merchants to expand their current business model and develop a SMART network of micro merchants that are moving beyond cash.

While commenting, Vice President and Area Business Head for West Africa, Mastercard, Omokehinde Adebajo, said: "As part of our commitment to empowering MSMEs, the introduction of Masterpass QR through our partner's mobile merchant app is one of the most significant contributions we have made to Africa."

"It speaks directly to our global goal of connecting 40 million MSMEs to our payment network by 2020, in support of our global Financial Access 2020 commitment."



### BICHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KANO STATE

#### INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION TO TENDER

1.0 The management of Bichi local Government invites interested reputable Contractors to make submission for the pre-qualification and Tender :

#### 2.0 SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

The scope of the project is as follows.

(i) Construction of 22.069 km surface dressed road from yakasai-yallami-zalli and 7 spans Bridge

#### 3.0 PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Prospective companies who wish to participate in the execution of the project are required to submit their pre-qualification bids containing the under listed documents.

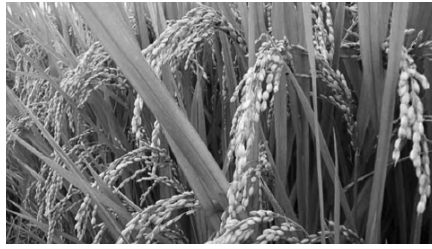
- certified true copy certificates of registration / incorporation with corporate affairs commission
- Evidence of company audited Accounts for three (3) years.
- Certified true copy of company Tax clearance certificate .
- Evidence of equipments and Technical capacity .
- Any other information that may qualify the contractor

All interested contractors should forward their application bids to the secretary Tender Board , Bichi Local Government Secretariat, Kano in sealed envelop and are given two (2) weeks from the date of this advertisement

SIGNED

Director Personnel Management (DPM)  
Bichi Local Government Kano State

# Business



## Agriculture

### I will support agenda 2060 on agric if... – Obiora

One of the three Nigerians contesting for the position of Commissioner for Gender, Agriculture and Rural Economy in the forthcoming election of the Executive Council of the African Youth Commission, Obiora Anthonias in this interview with JOHN OBA, says proper implementation of AU agenda 2060 and engagement of youth in Agriculture will lift Africa out of poverty.

#### Why do you choose to contest for Commissioner of Agriculture despite other positions?

I have always been enthusiastic about agriculture for some times now and I have several projects engaging youths and women in agriculture. So expressing interest in the race to be the ECAYC commissioner for agriculture comes naturally. Because I see it as an opportunity to reach out to other Africa nations with these project because the council will serve as a bigger platform to achieve my vision.

And I know that coming with this initiative, I am confident that this is the right time and right place to join in the restructuring and development of Africa in this Global race. And I know that my wealth of experience in urban farming and in the entire agricultural sphere will improve the sector in Africa.

As an individual with understanding of the relationship that connects food, people, health, and the Planet together, it is just normal that you join a council such as this that can really impact people where a youth and a woman like me can work with others in ensuring Africa's involvement in the global sustainable development Goal process.

Because if we want reintroduce food security and agriculture to our young generations, it will also take youth to be the vehicle and you know that agriculture and women empowerment are two inseparable source to contribute to the rural economy.

#### How would your election help African women and youth in agriculture?

Well for years, my vision, ideas and programs toward ensuring that food and agriculture become more socially and



Anthonias

ecologically sustainable, more accessible, and toward putting food quality, food safety and public health above corporate profits has been a mission I embarked on for sometimes now. My Office as the Commissioner for Gender, Rural Economy and Agriculture if elected, based on my experience will serve as a catalyst to unify and strengthen the movement toward sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, biodiversity and agricultural diversity, and that will help to alleviate hunger and poverty globally with youth and women in the forefront.

Encouraging youths and women into agriculture will ensure that Africa takes it rightful place in feeding itself and the world since the loss of smallholder farmlands to wealthier landlords and global corporations has been one of the primary cause of hunger and poverty. So we will support all measures to help people remain on or return to their traditional lands. My election will enable me to actually achieve my vision of reaching out to the people in Africa with the help of Head of States of member nations to ensure that where people and communities have been deprived of their traditional lands resulting in inability to grow their own foods, or to live in a self-sustaining manner, we will strongly support distributive land reform to put people back on the land, and the empowerment of local communities to control their lives.

With the government's focus on encouraging

#### youth to go into agriculture, do you think your election will enhance this?

Right now, hundreds of millions of Africans rely on farming for a living, but they don't grow as much and they don't sell as much of their surplus as they could. As a result, Africa had to import \$40 billion worth of food last year. Something is not functioning properly when half of the continent's labour to produces food, and the continent still buys its food from somewhere else!

In Nigeria, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, 2012 national youth survey report; youths of working age, between 15 to 35 years are nearly 70 million persons in a population of 166 million Nigerians; of these youths 54% are unemployed.

Before now we have been working to help mop up some of these youth by engaging them in agriculture across the value chain but this platform will enable us to better through our programs and projects engage more of them in Sustainable Agriculture trainings and Practise, though now I our focus will be Africa.

#### Hydroponic farming is one of the agricultural technologies you have been promoting in Nigeria. How do you intend to replicate this in other African countries?

Some of the Africa illustrious sons, like Kofi Annan and Sam Dryden both agreed that the new African food system should be built around the idea that agriculture is about more than producing calories;

it is about changing society. Saying its five components should be valuing the smallholder farmer, empowering women, focusing on the quality as well as the quantity of food, creating a thriving rural economy, and protecting the environment." Aliening with them I dare say, we must dare to think big and change our mind set. Soon it will be AFRICA's turn to help feed the world!

Since hydroponic technology will ensure there is food production all year round without the fear of climate change I am sure our leaders will embrace it once they understand the benefits. So we will ensure that we use every opportunity to enlighten our African leaders on the important of this and their need to introduce it in their countries.

#### Women empowerment is an issue that has gained increased attention in recent time, do you think you will be able to engage them if elected?

When you empower a woman, you empower a nation. Women are the people who are educating the next generation and we are sure that women can raise their children in a stable, healthy environment, we will be helping to raise a more educated and inspired generation of Africans. I see women empowerment as a process that involves recognition, capacity building and action. Then again, the Africa woman faces discrimination at her home, starting from womb to tomb. She ventures out to the street and she's not sure what harassment would greet her at the corner. If she bears a daughter, she doesn't know why the rest of her life won't be the same again! The saga continues; generation after generation; leaving little chance for the society to take a giant leap.

In order to make the women realize their inner strength and importance in the society, Agenda 2063 has taken a pledge to illuminate their lives with Pride and Dignity. I also support the AGENDA 2063 and will not hesitate to support it implementation by enlightening young African women like me not to be discourage.

#### Political participation of women in Africa, what would you say?

Women engagement in politics in Africa is poor and moving on a snail speed, though many countries have legal frameworks guaranteeing seats for women in parliament; 10 countries in Africa have achieved the 30% target for women representation in parliament and the process is continuing. But I support the target of African Union Agenda 2063. At least this will ensure that Africa of 2063 would achieve full gender parity. It would see women occupying 50% of elected offices at state, regional and local bodies, and 50% of managerial positions in government and private sector would be women. The economic and political glass ceiling hindering women's progress would finally have been broke.



# Business

## AGRICULTURE

# Diversification: How Kano attained highest in agriculture under Ganduje

For years now, the talk of diversification from oil as the major source of income has been on the lips of governments at all levels but implementation of such lofty idea was, however, a serious challenge to political office holders.

Until May 29, 2015, Kano state was one of the states without oil and was still being confronted with lack of political will to bring to fruition the much talked about diversification.

Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje led administration, has, however, attained what seem to be unattainable with Agricultural Performance Survey (APS) conducted in partnership with National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, rated the state as viable, resourceful and self reliance.

Giving the status of Kano as one of the most populous states in the country that plays host to hundreds of millions of people from other parts of the country and even neighbouring countries who troup in on daily bases to transact business and engage in various commercial activities, it will be difficult to venture into questioning why governor Ganduje's administration with its foresight will give a thought to investing vigorously in agriculture sector.

This latest attainment wouldn't have been possible without strong collaborations being championed by the Kano Agricultural Agency with prominent local and international organisations like United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Dangote group of Companies, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), IAR, NAERLS, NAPRI, SG 2000, GIZ, ZASTAL, IITA, ICRISAT, CDA, MFB, ABCOA, GEMs programs among others.

The aim of the survey is to assess the overall performance of field crops in the state and to provide basis for research and policy decision.

The survey also gave opportunity to review areas of collaboration, develop a comprehensive agricultural database for the state, and chart a new course for agricultural development in the state, even as the collaborators pledged their continued support to KNARDA and the state government.

Worthy of note is KNARDA's collaboration with ICRISAT in a project tagged "Groundnut up scaling in Kano state" in seven selected LGAs of the state. The project is to among others, enhance farmer's knowledge on improved groundnut production techniques, seed production and marketing, access to small scale processing technology, as well as aflatoxin management practices. The project so far established seven hectares seed production plots and trained selected extension agents across the state.

Again, KNARDA entered into collaboration with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in a project tagged "Cowpea up scaling". The project is to showcase best varieties of cowpea to farmers, thereby increasing their productivity. The project also encourages community seed production

With the negative effect of the fall in the price of oil on the allocation that goes into state governments' purse every month, it becomes compulsory for state governors to think outside the box in order to survive but how many states have taken the bull by the horn? BODE OLAGOKE compares the efforts of the Kano state government in Agriculture with others.



Ganduje

at community levels. The project procured and distributed inputs worth of N2,000,000 to farmers across the state free of charge.

KNARDA and ICRISAT entered into a collaborative project tagged "Tropical legume iii cowpea seed system" with the purpose of bringing about increase in production and productivity of cowpea in a bid to attain sufficiency in nutritional value, improve farmers' welfare and income. Today, this collaborations have recorded so much achievements, notably is the training of 1050 farmers and mobilization of farmers across 30 communities covered by the project.

Also, the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP) entered into collaboration with KNARDA known as WAAPP-KNARDA Project. A lot of achievements have been recorded in this regard, notably are, disbursement of the sum of N4, 372,222.62 as assistance to local seed producers; training of 72 farmers and extension agents on safe and effective use of pesticides, environmental issues, and seed certification.

There is also Commercial Agriculture (CADP) and Fadama iii additional financing Projects that are World Bank assisted carried out several activities and

recorded tremendous successes especially in the area of roads construction and empowerment of women and youths in the state under the current administration.

These collaborative efforts of the Ganduje administration has not only led to recruitment of 729 extension workers that are not in existence in other states across the federation, training and retraining of the newly recruited extension workers jointly with national and international development agencies such as IITA, ICRISAT, SG 2000, markets ii, CDA among others has also put the state ahead of many others.

To encourage and bring out the best from the recruited extension workers, the Ganduje administration approved distribution of motorcycles on loan basis and on 40% discount to the staff.

More so, installing of Water Irrigation Project in Bagwai LGA, training of 60 youths in artificial insemination (AI) at the republic of Turkey, disbursement of 16 Motorcycles courtesy of GIZ (NGO), distribution of 5000 units of water pumps to fadama farmers free of charge and provision of 1000 units of tube wells and wash bores to fadama farmers free of charge which is still on-going, are laudable achievements which can be

verified.

Others are: N150, 000,000 loan to wheat farmers association through the state Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, CBN/ Kano state Rice Anchor Borrowers Program which still on-going in the state, CBN /Kano State Wheat Anchor Borrowers Program also on-going in the state and the laudable one Billion Naira disbursed to commercial farmers in the state on loan basis recently among other achievements are feat worth boasting of.

Moreover, the present administration had revived and put to use the over 20 years abandoned KASCO for the production of fertilizer and also purchased new harvester machines among others.

Just at the weekend, the governor Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, flagged off the 2016 Rainy Season Recovery from CBN /KNSG Rice Anchor Borrowers programme at Kadawa seed processing plant Garun Malam Local government in the outskirts of the state.

The event which was an interactive session between the governor, representatives of several stakeholders like Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Bank of Agriculture (BOA), farmers association, and the farmers directly focused on the success and otherwise of the anchor borrower programme which has made Kano to be the number one rice producer, by producing 1/6 of Nigeria's rice requirement.

The recovery programme is aimed at ensuring that the farmers that benefitted from the year 2016 loan scheme return the money so that next batch of beneficiaries will enjoy the same intervention by the state government. The programme gave farmers close to N1billion loan.

A total of five thousand five hundred and four thousand farmers benefitted from this loan, each of them received N163,710 per hectare (totaling about N906 million), and a hectare is expected to produce 60 bags of rice but only 13 bags when sold at the current market price of rice will repay the loan and 47 bags will be pocketed as profit.

While speaking at the event governor Ganduje, according to a statement signed by the Director General Media and Communication, Salihu Tanko Yakasai, promised "to ensure that all the issues raised during the interactive session like delay in giving out the loans and issue of inadequate fertilizer will be addressed, and then urged all the beneficiaries to ensure that they repay the loan as it is a revolving one in order to give to another set of farmers for the 2017 farming season, as this year the state is expected to increase its rice production to about 1/2 of the country's rice requirement."

# WorldStage

## Jerusalem attack: 4 dead after lorry driver rams soldiers

Four people have been killed in Jerusalem by a Palestinian who rammed a lorry into a group of soldiers, in what police say was a terrorist attack.

Three women and one man, all in their twenties, were killed and at least 13 more were wounded, medics say.

Police said the driver was shot dead by soldiers from the group.

Over the past 15 months there have been many attacks on Israelis by Palestinians - using knives, guns and sometimes vehicles.

Israel's police chief Roni Alsheich said the assailant in Sunday's attack was a Palestinian from East Jerusalem.

CCTV footage showed the truck driving off the road and ploughing at high speed into the soldiers, before reversing over the victims.

"He drove backward to crush more people," eyewitness Leah Schreiber told reporters. "That was really clear."

The attack took place on the popular Armon Hanatziv promenade overlooking the walled Old City of Jerusalem.

Police spokesman Micky



A truck with bullet holes in the windscreen

AFP Image

Rosenfeld said security had been heightened throughout the city in response.

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat called on residents not to "let terror win" and said militants would "pay a heavy price".

"There is no limit to the cruelty of the terrorists who are willing to use any means possible to murder Jews and to damage the life routine of Israel's capital," he said.

The Palestinian militant

group Hamas praised the attacker, according to the Associated Press. Hamas spokesman Abdul-Latif Qanou called it a "heroic" act and encouraged other Palestinians to "escalate the resistance".

Before this latest incident, 35 Israelis had been killed in a wave of knife, gun and car-ramming attacks by Palestinians or Israeli Arabs since October 2015.

More than 200 Palestinians - mostly attackers, Israel says

- have also been killed in that period.

Israel says Palestinian incitement has fuelled the attacks. The Palestinian leadership has blamed frustration rooted in decades of Israeli occupation.

The BBC's Yolande Knell in Jerusalem says the number of attacks had begun to subside in recent months, but Sunday's incident is one of the most serious there has been.

## Queen makes 1st appearance after heavy cold over Christmas

The Queen has made her first public appearance of 2017 after ill-health affected her during the festive season.

She attended the morning church service at St Mary Magdalene in Sandringham, Norfolk, on Sunday.

There were concerns about the monarch's health after she missed services on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, which she normally attends with other members of the royal family.

Buckingham Palace said she was "recuperating" from a heavy cold.

Media caption The Queen was welcomed as she arrived at St Mary Magdalene's church in Sandringham, Norfolk

The Queen, dressed in blue, arrived with Prince Philip at about 11:00 GMT in a maroon Bentley.

Shortly after, she was joined by other members of the royal family, including the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, as well as the Middleton family.

They stayed at the church for an hour, before being driven back to their estate at 12:00 GMT.



The monarch missed two church services over the festive period

PA Image

## 'Mugabe blows \$36m on foreign, domestic trips'

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, 92, reportedly spent at least \$36m on foreign and domestic trips in the first 10 months of 2016. According to Zimbabwe Independent, this piled pressure on his cash-strapped government, which "is failing to buy painkillers for public hospitals".

The report said the nonagenarian's trips outweighed expenditure by ministries such as

Macro-economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Energy and Power Development, Transport and Infrastructure Development and Industry and Commerce as well as the Parliament of Zimbabwe.

Mugabe is currently on a month-long vacation. He left Harare for the Far East last month with his entire family and a large entourage of security aides.

## Seychelles' 1st president dies

Seychelles' founding president James Mancham, who spent only a year in office before being ousted in a coup, died on Sunday aged 77, his nephew and staff said.

The former politician and lawyer, who spent his years in retirement writing several books and promoting his island nation, was found dead at home.

"This morning his wife told us that Mr Mancham was not moving and we did the necessary to get him transported to hospital," one of his security guards Philippe Figaro told AFP.

"Doctors confirmed he was dead," said the former president's

nephew Derick Pothin.

Mancham, who initially opposed the Indian Ocean archipelago's breakaway from British rule, won the country's first election by a small margin in 1976.

A year later he was overthrown in a bloodless coup by his prime minister, France-Albert Rene, while he was attending a Commonwealth conference in London. Rene set up a one-party socialist state.

In 1981 South African mercenaries led by notorious British soldier-for-hire in Africa Colonel "Mad Mike" Hoare planned a coup to return the pro-Western Mancham to power.

## 20 die in cold snap across Europe

At least 20 people died in the past two days as a cold spell spread across Europe, authorities said on Saturday, with the frigid temperatures expected to continue through the weekend.

Russia meanwhile celebrated the coldest Orthodox Christmas in 120 years and Istanbul was covered with a blanket of snow.

Ten of the latest victims of the cold perished in Poland where sub-freezing conditions remain with minus 14°C on Saturday.

The spokesperson for the Polish government centre for security, Bozena Wysocka, said: "Seven people died on Friday in what was the deadliest day so far this winter."

"We recorded three other victims the previous day," she said. "This takes to 53 the number of hypothermia victims since November 1."

In Italy in the past 48 hours the cold has been blamed for seven deaths, including five homeless people, two of them Polish nationals, authorities said.

There was heavy snowfall in central Italy and also in the southeast where the airports at Bari and Brindisi as well as in Sicily were closed on Saturday morning.

## Don't go to Gambia, US warns citizens

The West African regional bloc stands with the people of Gambia and will apply diplomatic solutions to solve the country's political crisis, the body's chair said on Saturday.

The Economic Community of west African States has before threatened to send troops led by neighbouring Senegal to Gambia if President Yahya Jammeh does not step down when his mandate ends on January 19.

The longtime leader lost a December 1 election to opposition coalition candidate Adama Barrow.

Jammeh initially conceded, but later called for a new vote.

The United Nations, the United States, the European Union and others have united in criticising him.

Jammeh's party filed a petition to the country's Supreme Court against the election, and a key court ruling is expected January 10.

Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said on Saturday the West African bloc, which she chairs, hopes diplomacy will help democracy prevail in Gambia.

"We want to apply diplomatic solutions to solve the problem," Sirleaf said.

Asked if troops would be moved into Gambia she responded, "No, we want to keep the region peaceful."

However, in recognition of the solidifying crisis, the United States on Saturday advised American citizens not to travel to Gambia "because of the potential for civil unrest and violence in the near future."



## WorldStage

# UK cannot keep 'bits' of EU membership – May

The UK cannot expect to hold on to "bits" of its membership after leaving the EU, Theresa May has said.

The prime minister's comments come as the government prepares to begin talks on Brexit, including whether the UK stays in the European single market.

She told Sky News her approach was not "muddled", following criticism by the

UK's former EU ambassador.

Mrs May, whose critics have demanded more detail of her aims, promised to provide this in "the coming weeks".

But Labour accused the prime minister of failing to reveal whether she was prioritising "immigration over access to the single market".

Brexit talks with the EU

are expected to begin as early as April.

There has been much debate in recent weeks about the nature of the deal the government is aiming for, in particular whether controls on the movement of EU citizens will mean the UK leaves the European single market and customs union.

Sir Ivan Rogers, who resigned as the UK's

ambassador to the EU last week, criticised "muddled thinking" among ministers.

But Mrs May told Sky News's Sophy Ridge on Sunday: "Anybody who looks at this question of free movement and trade as a sort of zero-sum game is approaching it in the wrong way."

"I'm ambitious for what we can get for the UK in terms of our relationship with the European Union because I also think that's going to be good for the European Union."

"Our thinking on this isn't muddled at all."

But it was "important to take some time" to look at the "complexity of the

issues", she added.

Mr May said: "Often people talk in terms as if somehow we are leaving the EU, but we still want to kind of keep bits of membership of the EU."

"We are leaving. We are coming out. We are not going to be a member of the EU any longer."

"So the question is what is the right relationship for the UK to have with the European Union when we are outside. We will be able to have control of our borders, control of our laws."

In the referendum last summer, voters opted by 51.9% to 48.1% in favour of Brexit.

## Thailand floods: 12 dead as rainfall persists

At least 12 people have died and many villages been submerged after heavy rains caused severe flooding in southern Thailand.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been affected with water levels reaching "roof-high" in some areas, Thailand's interior ministry said.

Transport services, including flights, have been disrupted and rescue efforts are under way to reach those stranded.

The heavy downpour is expected to continue for at least two more days.

The flash floods have also damaged hundreds of schools and toppled power cables across southern Thailand.

Residents in villages across the region are using inflatables, such as rubber rings, to cross submerged roads.

Meanwhile, the airport in Nakhon Si Thammarat province has been forced to close after the area received a record 162mm (6.4 in) of rain on Friday, officials said.

An official for Thailand's Meteorological Department told AFP news agency that the situation was "very bad", adding that it was still "raining heavily" in the south.

In response to the crisis, the Thai navy has stationed its largest ship in the South to act as a floating command centre, dispatching aid using helicopters and small boats.

Last month, aerial footage showed flood damage to parts of southern Thailand with only rooftops visible above the flood waters. Supplies were being delivered to residents by boat.

Despite it being dry season between November and January in central and northern parts of Thailand, this time of year can see some of the heaviest rainfall in the southwest, where temperatures are more consistent throughout the year.

In 2011, devastating floods in Thailand displaced thousands of people in more than a third of the country's provinces, resulting in more than 600 deaths.



May

## Ivory Coast's army ends 2-day mutiny

A rebellion in Ivory Coast over soldiers' pay appears to have passed.

Residents and correspondents in the second city, Bouake, described calm on the streets - a day after troops briefly seized the defence minister.

The rebellion had spread from there to other cities, including the commercial hub, Abidjan, but that city, too, is now quiet.

A deal was struck between the mutinous soldiers and the government on Saturday, though details are scant.

A correspondent for AFP news agency in Bouake said on Sunday that there had been no firing there since Saturday evening.

"Traffic has resumed this morning and the shops have reopened."

The mutiny began in Bouake early on Friday with soldiers firing rocket-launchers. On Saturday soldiers took over the army headquarters in Abidjan.

Protests also took place in the cities of Man, Daloa, Daoukro, Odienne and Korhogo.

Media caption President Alassane Ouattara: "This manner of making demands is

not appropriate"

President Alassane Ouattara went on national TV on Saturday night to announce a deal.

"I confirm that I have agreed to take into account the demands of the soldiers over bonuses and better working conditions," he said. At the same time he criticised the rebellion.

Aside from better pay, the agreement is reported to include an amnesty for the mutineers.

Defence Minister Alain-Richard Donwahi - who had gone to Bouake to negotiate with the protesters - was held for two hours there late on Saturday.

The mutiny raised fears of a resurgence of the violence seen during Ivory Coast's 10-year civil war, which ended in 2011.

Some of the mutineers were thought to be former rebels who joined the army after the conflict.

The rebels swept into Abidjan from Bouake in 2011, helping Mr Ouattara take power after his predecessor Laurent Gbagbo - now on trial at the International Criminal Court - refused to accept defeat in elections the previous year.



Unseasonal downpours in southern Thailand are expected to continue for at least two more days

GETTY Image

## Turkey dismisses thousands of civil servants in post-coup purge

Turkey has dismissed more than 8 000 civil servants for alleged ties to terror organisations, the latest purge under a state of emergency imposed following the failed July 15 coup attempt.

The latest dismissals were announced on the Turkish government's Official Gazette late on Friday.

They include 2 687 police officers, 1 699 Justice Ministry employees and 631 academics. They join more than 100 000 people already suspended or dismissed.

Turkey's crackdown through dismissals and the arrest of some 41 000 people was begun to root out followers of US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, who is accused by

the government of orchestrating the coup attempt.

The purge has been expanded to include ties to other "terror organisations", including alleged links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party. Journalists critical of the government have been imprisoned for alleged "propaganda".

## WorldStage

## US Transition

# Obama set for pardon frenzy as he leaves office

Some US presidents have used this regal power of leniency in a pointed way near the end of their term in office.

On the last day of his term in 2001, Democratic president Bill Clinton granted pardon in a highly controversial move to late fugitive trader Marc Rich, whose ex-wife had been a major donor to Democrats.

Sixteen years later, Obama is fielding pressure from all sides to grant unlikely pardons or commutations of sentences to people whose supporters say have been unjustly sentenced or sought out by the justice system.

Among them is Bowe Bergdahl, a US Army sergeant held captive for five years by the Taliban before his release in a prisoner swap, who is due to be court-martialed for desertion.

Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist convicted for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents in what his supporters say was a setup, is also hoping to enjoy Obama's good graces.

Then there's Edward Snowden, who made the shattering revelation in 2013 of a global communications and internet surveillance system set up by the United States.

The 33-year-old, a refugee in Russia, is backed by numerous celebrities like actress Susan Sarandon and singer Peter Gabriel, as well as Amnesty International and the

American Civil Liberties Union.

If Obama fails to pardon Snowden, his supporters say he may face the death penalty under the incoming administration of Republican Donald Trump, who has called him a "terrible traitor."

In another leak case, Chelsea Manning is serving a 35-year sentence in solitary confinement for handing 700,000 sensitive military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks, some of them classified.

Activists say her sentence is excessive and point to the psychological frailty of the transgender soldier who has already made two suicide attempts.

Even though the White House has dismissed a possible pardon for Snowden and Manning, their supporters are still hoping for a final magnanimous gesture from a president about to leave the constraints of his high office on January 20.

But both cases present unique challenges: Snowden has yet to be sentenced and merely faces espionage charges in the US, while Manning has an appeal pending before military court.

The US Constitution allows a president to pardon "offenses against the United States" and commute -- either shorten or end -- federal

sentences.

Obama has so far granted 148 pardons since taking office in 2009 -- fewer than his predecessors, who also served two terms, George W. Bush (189) and Bill Clinton (396).

But he has surpassed any other president in the number of commutations, 1,176.

- Or posthumous mercy -

Most of those who benefited from the president's clemency were minor drug dealers no longer considered a threat.

Obama has promised to use his clemency powers to help serve penal justice, rather than to grant special favors.

"I don't think we will see high-profile names on the list of President Obama's final clemency grants," Mark Osler of the University of St. Thomas told AFP.

"It is most likely they will be the types of cases he has previously commuted: nonviolent narcotics offenders."

He noted that last-minute clemency is a recent phenomenon.

"Up until President Clinton, they usually spread them out over their full term. Hopefully, in the future presidents will return to that practice, which seems less prone to abuse," Osler said.

Presidents can theoretically

pardon people before they are even sentenced.

In 1868, president Andrew Johnson granted a "full pardon and amnesty" to Confederates of the 11 southern states who unsuccessfully fought the Civil War to secede from the union.

Citing this precedent, some have urged Obama to preventively pardon defeated Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton over her use of a private email server while serving as secretary of state in light of Trump's threats to have her prosecuted.

Obama could also be tempted to grant amnesty to his onetime "favorite general," James Cartwright, who lied to the FBI about his discussions with journalists about Iran's nuclear program.

Some pardon requests can be far-fetched, such as one for the late Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican political leader who backed Pan-Africanism and helped inspire the Rastafarian movement.

Supporters are seeking a posthumous pardon for Garvey, who died in 1940. He was convicted of mail fraud in the United States and later deported back to Jamaica. Some Rastafarian followers consider him to be a prophet.

## President-elect names Coats as intelligence chief

President-elect Donald Trump on Saturday named retired Senator Dan Coats as national intelligence director, saying the former member of the Senate Intelligence Committee was the right person to lead the new administration's "ceaseless vigilance against those who seek to do us harm."

Trump's announcement came a day after the release of a declassified government report on Russian efforts to influence the presidential election. The report predicts Russia isn't done intruding in US politics and policy making.

Trump wants to improve relations with Russia and repeatedly has denounced intelligence agencies' assessment that the Kremlin interfered in the election, when he defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton. But the report released on Friday explicitly ties Russian President Vladimir Putin to the meddling and says Russia had a "clear preference" for Trump over Clinton.

Coats, an Indiana Republican, will await Senate confirmation to head the office, which was created after the September 11 attacks to improve co-ordination among US spy and law enforcement agencies.

Coats now finds himself in line to be at the centre of an intelligence apparatus that the president-elect has publicly challenged.

Trump said that Coats "has clearly demonstrated the deep subject matter expertise and sound judgment required to lead our intelligence community." He said Coats "will provide unwavering leadership that the entire intelligence community can respect and will spearhead my administration's ceaseless vigilance against those who seek to do us harm."

Coats, in a statement released by Trump's transition team, said: "There is no higher priority than keeping America safe and I will utilise every tool at my disposal to make that happen."

Trump's team has been examining ways to restructure intelligence agencies as part of an effort to streamline operations and improve efficiency, but Coats' nomination could ease fears that Trump would push for a significant overhaul.

Coats, 73, is a Capitol Hill veteran who served eight years in the House before moving to the Senate in 1989 to take Dan Quayle's place when Quayle became President George HW Bush's vice president. Coats stayed in the Senate until 1998, then left to become a lobbyist.

## Trump's lewd remarks about women 'unacceptable' – May

Theresa May has told Sky News Donald Trump's lewd remarks about women were "unacceptable" ahead of meeting him this spring.

Speaking to Sophy Ridge on Sunday in her first TV interview of the year, the Prime Minister was critical of offensive comments previously made by the President-elect, but pointed out he had since apologised for them.

Mrs May also said she believed the US remained "fully committed" to NATO, despite Mr Trump's criticism of the military alliance, which he has described as obsolete.

Mr Trump faced an angry backlash during last year's presidential campaign after a 2005 recording emerged of him boasting about groping women and that he could "grab them by the pussy" because of his celebrity status.

Asked by Sophy Ridge about her response as a woman to the comments, Mrs May said: "I think that's unacceptable, but in fact Donald Trump himself has said that and has apologised for it.

"But the relationship that the UK has with the United States is about something much bigger than just the relationship between the two individuals as president and prime minister.

"That's important, but actually

we have a long-standing special relationship with the United States.

"It's based on shared values and it is a relationship where, actually in the UK, we feel we can say to the US if we disagree with something that they are doing."

Mr Trump has tweeted he was "very much" looking forward to meeting the PM, adding that he considered Britain to be a "very special" ally - a signal the "special relationship" between the US and the UK will be maintained under his

administration.

Image Caption: Sophy Ridge's interview with Theresa May will be repeated on Sky News

The pair are due to meet in Washington in the spring after the PM's closest advisers travelled to the US in December to forge links with the President-elect's team and pave the way for the visit.

A date for the mini-summit is yet to be announced, but it is expected to come within weeks of Mr Trump's inauguration on 20 January.



May



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CLASSIFIELDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

KING OF GLORY INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTRE

THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE ABOVE NAMED CHURCH HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION ABUJA FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACTS, 1990.

**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

MICHAEL CHUKWUEMEKA AKUECHE (CHAIRMAN)

2.

GEOFFREY OKECHUKWU AKUECHE (SECRETARY)

**THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE:**

1.

TO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

2.

TO RAISE END TIME GOSPEL BEARERS TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET MAITAMA, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:  
TRUSTEES

PUBLIC NOTICE

IJIH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

HANNAH RACHAEL IJIH

2.

BEM PETERS

3.

IBI IORWUESE

4.

BARRY MZUAH IJIH

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

1.

TO CARE AND SUPPORT THE LESS PRIVILEGED IN THE SOCIETY.

2.

TO REDUCE POVERTY RATE IN THE SOCIETY THROUGH SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMS FOR SELF DEVELOPMENT AND SELF RELIANCE AMONG THE POOR

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET MAITAMA, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:THE SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

DON MACSYLVIA FOUNDATION

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**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

JAMES MUOLOZIE CHINYERE EVANS

2.

JAMES OKWUCHUKWU EBUBECHUKWU MACDONALD

3.

JAMES OKWUCHUKWU IFUNANYA SYLVIA

4.

MUOLOZIE NKIRUKA MIRIAM

5.

MUOLOZIE EKENE STANLEY

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

1.

TO CARE AND SUPPORT THE LESS PRIVILEGED IN THE SOCIETY.

2.

TO CARE FOR THE ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN THE SOCIETY.

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET MAITAMA, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED  
SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

PHILIPPIANS FOUR THIRTEEN FOUNDATION

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**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

OLUWABUKOLA AYINDE

2.

LAWRENCE OLUMUYIWA AYINDE

**THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE :**  
TO PROVIDE HELP FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH CEREBRAL PALSY.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED :  
SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHRIST THE ONLY WAY OUT EVANGELICAL MINISTRY INT’L

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**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

PASTOR ABIDAKUN MICHAEL OLUDARE-GENERAL OVERSEER

2.

DEACONESS ABIDAKUN EUNICE OLUKEMI-TREASURER

3.

ENGR. ABIDAKUN DAMILOLA- SECRETARY

4.

MRS ALAKIJA MODUPE- P.R.O.

**AIM AND OBJECTIVE**

1.

TO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET MAITAMA, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:  
TRUSTEES

PUBLIC NOTICE

CANDLE OF PEACE NIGERIA INITIATIVE

THE ABOVE MENTIONED ASSOCIATION WISHES TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC OF THE CHANGE OF NAME FROM CANDLE OF PEACE INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY TO CANDLE OF PEACE NIGERIA INITIATIVE WITH REGISTRATION NUMBER CAC/IT/NO 88721 DATED 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 2016, CHANGE OF TRUSTEES, AND THE AMENDMENT OF THE NAME ON THE CONSTITUTION TO REFLECT THE NEW NAME.

**OLD TRUSTEES**

1.DR. MAIGA ABDOU,

(RESIGNED)

2.BISHOP DANIEL IBE OKAYI

(RESIGNED)

3.REV. MARTINS OKEME

(RESIGNED)

4.BISHOP (DR.) CROWN GABRIEL ADEBO

(RESIGNED)

5.BISHOP JAMES IGHO KPEBI

(RESIGNED)

6.APOSTLE MIRACLE TEMITOPE HENRY

(RESIGNED)

**NEW TRUSTEES**

1.REV. ONOJA RALPH

2.HON. ESTHER FELIX BMITOSAH

3.MRS. CHUKWUEMEKA CHIWENDU EDITH

4.OTENE NOAH OJOABENECHU

5.DR. NWACHINEKE ONYEKA CHINAZO

6.IBRAHIM IDRIS MUSA

ANY OBJECTION TO THE APPLICATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:  
SECRETARY.

PUBLIC NOTICE

HOUSEHOLD OF CELEBRITIES MINISTRY

THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE ABOVE NAMED FOUNDATION HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION ABUJA FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART C OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT NO. 1 OF 1990.

**TRUSTEES**

1.

AKARUE CARECA AGHOGHO

2.

AKARUE ADABUZOR CYNTHIA

3.

ONAEMOR JAMES

4.

OVIE VICTOR AWOMEYISIRE

**AIM:**TO PROPAGATE THE WORD OF GOD THROUGH CHARITABLE MEANS.

ANY OBJECTION TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENREAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET, MAITAMA, ABUJA, WITH 28 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:  
BARR. THOMAS OSEGHLE EGBELE

PUBLIC NOTICE

BAM AND SAM FOUNDATION

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED FOUNDATION HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

ABUBAKAR IDRIS SECRETARY

2.

RABI IDRIS CHAIRMAN

3.

SAFINA IDRIS

4.

ZAINAB IDRIS

5.

RALIAT IDRIS.

**THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE :**

1.

TO PROVIDE HELP AND ASSISTANCE TO THE NEEDY AND LESS PRIVILEGED IN THE SOCIETY.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED : JIMBA FELIX S. LEGAL ADVISER

PUBLIC NOTICE

RAM AND BRAM POVERTY ALLEVIATION INITIATIVE

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED INITIATIVE HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

IDRIS MUSA VATSA CHAIRMAN

2.

GANA YUNUSA VATSA SECRETARY

3.

IBRAHIM IDRIS

4.

ABDUL-KARIM IDRIS

5.

MARUFAT IBRAHIM IDRIS

**THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE :**

1.

TO INITIATE POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAM THROUGH ORGANISING FREE TRAINING WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS AIMED AT SKILLS ACQUISITION.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED :  
JIMBA FELIX S. LEGAL ADVISER

PUBLIC NOTICE

AFRICAN INDIGENT CARE FOUNDATION UMUAHIA

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**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

REV. FR. DR. ALOYSIOUS IGBOAJCHI AGBAEZE NWABEKKE

2.

OKECHUKWU JOSEPH BOB AMANZE

3.

GLORIA OKWUKWE AMALAHA

4.

NOBLIN NKECHI IGBOEUSI

**THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE:**

1.

TO TAKE CARE OF THE POOR AND THE NEEDY IN OUR SOCIETY

ANY OBJECTION TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION MAITAMA ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION

SIGNED:  
SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

TRUSTED HANDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED FOUNDATION HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

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PROF. JULIA TOLULOPE ENI-OLORUNDA.

2.

LAMBO TOLANI MODINAT

3.

SOBULO STEPHEN ADENIYI

4.

SOBULO KEHINDE OLAIDE

5.

MORONFOLU OLUODLAPO OLANIKE.

**THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1.

IDENTIFYING AND HELPING TO ADDRESS SOCIAL VICES AMONG THE TARGET POPULATION THROUGH COUNSELING.

2.

TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND REHABILITATION.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:BARR KAYODE LAWANI

PUBLIC NOTICE

KAWAJI ESTATE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION ABUJA FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART C OF THE COMPANY AND SLLED MATTERS ACT NO.1 OF 1990

**THE TRUSTEES ARE:**

1.

AHAMED UMAR

2.

BABA ISHAKU

3.

MALAMI YALE

4.

IMAMU SHUAIBU

5.

IBRAHIM MAGAJI

6.

ISMAIL ADAMU

7.

A.J. BELLO

8.

ALHAJI ABDULLAHI

**AIM AND OBJECTIVE**

1.

TO PROTECT THE INTEREST OF MEMBERS

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION MAITAMA ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION

SIGNED  
SECRETARY

CLASSIFIELDS

<div><div>GREATNESS</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>OKAFOR ANULIKA PROMISE</b>, now wish to be called and Addressed as <b>MISS OKAFOR GREATNESS CHINAEMEZE</b>. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and general Public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>ISAAC</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>UDEKWE ISAAC BAKER</b>, now wish to be known and addressed as <b>ISAAC ISAAC BAKER</b>. All former documents remain valid. General public and authorities concern to take note</div></div>	<div><div>IBRAHIM</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>MUTIU KELVIN AYODELE</b>, now wished to be addressed as <b>IBRAHIM AYODELE</b>. All documents remain valid. NYSC, Skye Bank, Access Bank and general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>HARRIS</div><div>I formerly known as <b>ISTIFANUS IBRAHIM</b> now wish to be known as <b>ISAAC IBRAHIM HARRIS</b> all former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and General public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>DAUDA</div><div>I formerly known as <b>SULAIMAN MUHAMMED</b> now wish to be known as <b>MOHAMMED SULEIMAN</b> all former documents remain valid.Authorities concerned and General public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>KELVIN</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>SAAWUAN GOODNESS TERNENGE</b> now wish to be called and Addressed as <b>SAAWUAN KELVIN TERNENGE</b>. All former documents remain valid. All authorities concerned and general Public to please take note.</div></div>
<div><div>EMMANUEL</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>EMMANUEL STEPHEN AGBA</b>, now wish to be known and addressed as <b>EMMANUEL STEPHEN</b>. All former documents remain valid. General public and authorities concern to take note</div></div>	<div><div>ALOYSIUS</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>ISAAC ORJI</b>, now wished to be addressed as <b>ISAAC IFEANYI CHUK ALOYSIUS ORJI</b>. All documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>JATAU</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>SAMUEL STEPHEN</b> now wish to be known as <b>STEPHEN SAMUEL JATAU</b>, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>OPALEKE</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>RASHEED BABALOLA</b> now wish to be known as <b>ABDULRASHEED OPALEKE</b>, date of Birth 3rd of September 1988, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>ENOCH</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>EMMANUEL BULUS</b> now wish to be known as <b>EMMANUEL ENOCH</b>, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>SUNUSI</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>SUNUSI DANBURAN</b> now wish to be known as <b>SUNUSI YAKUBU GAR</b>, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.</div></div>
<div><div>MOHAMMED</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>HAMZA MAHAMMED ABDULLAHI</b> now wish to be known as <b>BALA HAMZA MOHAMMED</b>, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>JOSEPH</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>KAZAH ESTIFANUS STEPHEN</b> now wish to be known as <b>KAZAH JOSEPH</b>, date of Birth 21 August 1995, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>SOLOMON</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>SOLOMON K. DAVID</b> now wish to be known as <b>SOLOMON DAUDA</b>, date of Birth 23 - 10 - 1995, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>YERO</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>GAMBO AUTA</b> now wish to be known as <b>AMINU LUKA YERO</b>, all former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>OLADOYE</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>OYEDELE NIKE</b> now wish to be known as <b>OLADOYE ADENIKE</b>, all former documents remain valid. NYSC any authority concerned and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>SHEYIN</div><div>I, formerly known as <b>BILHATU TITUS</b>, now wish to be known as <b>BILHAH SHEYIN</b>. All former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.</div></div>
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## EAGLES WILL MAKE AMENDS FOR AFCON MISS - PINNICK

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BLUEPRINT

Monday, January 9, 2017

# Sport

## INSIDE TODAY:

### BEST FIFA FOOTBALL AWARDS 2017



The Best FIFA Football Awards take place on January 9 in Zurich, Switzerland, as the governing body of the beautiful game attempt to revive their World Player of the Year accolade, which was merged with the Ballon d'Or in 2010.

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## AJC Tennis Qualifiers:

# Igbिनovia, Abamu make Team Nigeria's final list

Wilson Igbिनovia was the surprise package at the week-long camping of Team Nigeria to the 2017 ITF/CAT African Junior Championship Zonal Qualifiers scheduled to hold in Lome, Togo from January 11th - 21st.

On his first invitation to national camp, the 13-year-old

sealed his place in the team that will be defending the top place finish by Nigeria at the last edition held in Abuja almost a year ago.

Other players that will be in the 15-nation tournament alongside include the quartet of Oyinlomo Quadri, Marylove Edward, Michael Osewa and David

Dariwaye, who were named earlier at the camping in Ekiti facilitated by NTF 1st vice-president, Yemi Owoseni are Matthew Abamu, Michael Ayoola, Saminu Abubakar, Tosin Asogba, Omolade Aderemi, Omolayo Bamidele and Rebecca Peters.

"It has been a very good preparation for us; Ekiti has

been an ideal place as there was no distraction. The courts and hotel are just a minute walk. The atmosphere is just perfect for us to have a great outing in Lome," Nigeria's coach, Mohammed Ubale said after the team rounded off training with a light physical exercise Sunday evening.

Ubale added that the target for the team is to finish top of the medals' table despite the fact that the tournament is taking a new format with the introduction of team event.

The team is scheduled to move to Lagos today from where they will depart for Lome tomorrow (Tuesday).



Action in the NPFL involving Rangers and Sunshine of Akure

## Rangers trade tackles with FC IfeanyiUbah for Charity Cup

Stories by Lekan Olaseinde  
Abuja

Ahead of the kickoff of the 2016/17 season Nigeria Professional Football League

(NPFL) champions Enugu Rangers will battle cup holders FC IfeanyiUbah in this year's season-opening Charity Cup on Wednesday in Abuja.

The traditional cup tie normally signifies the kick off of a new season in the country

Rangers will represent the country in this year's CAF

Champions League, while IfeanyiUbah will feature in the CAF Confederation Cup by virtue of their Federation Cup triumph.

The new Nigeria league season

will kick off on Friday, January 14, when hosts Kano Pillars battle IfeanyiUbah in Kano.

The rest of the opening week fixtures will be played on Sunday.



## Sport

### Ranieri hails Ndidi after super debut

Leicester City boss Claudio Ranieri described the performance of new signing Wilfred Ndidi as "unbelievable" after 'The Foxes' went past hosts Everton 2-1 in the FA Cup.

Nigeria star Ahmed Musa fired a brace for Leicester to avenge a home loss to Everton.

Compatriot Ndidi also caught the eye in his first game for the Premier League champions after his big-money move from Belgian club Genk.

"Ndidi trained just two training sessions with us, but played with fantastic personality," saluted Ranieri.

"He recovered a lot of balls and played well.

"For 20 years old to make his first game against Everton, it's unbelievable."

The manager was equally pleased with the overall team showing.

"I'm very pleased with our performance," Ranieri said at full-time. "We wanted to win and we wanted to go through in the FA Cup, which is an important competition.

"Then [we wanted to go through] even more because we lost to Everton at home, so we wanted revenge. It was a good match because of course at the beginning Everton pushed a lot and wanted to score a goal, but I'm very pleased with our performance before and after the goal.

"When we conceded a goal, everybody wanted to react immediately. After there were chances for them and us, but it was a very good performance."

### Nasarawa United confirm 10 new signings

Nasarawa United have signed 10 new players and have promoted five players from the feeder team with a view to ensure that the Solid Miners secure another berth on the continent at the end of the coming season.

The Lafia side represented Nigeria in the Caf Confederation Cup but crashed out in the first round. Club's chairman Barrister Isaac Danladi revealed that the Solid Miners have the wherewithal to perform better than they did last season this term.

"Nasarawa United will be even be stronger than last season," Danladi told Goal. "We have tried to give the technical crew all they desire to make the season another good experience for us and we are confident that the team won't relax this term.

"We tried our best last season and even though we didn't do too well in the league, we gave a very good account of ourselves in the Federation Cup and didn't perform too badly on the continent judging by what we faced during the competition."

Nasarawa United will start the season with a road trip to Bauchi as guests of Wikki Tourists.

# Eagles will make amends for AFCON miss - Pinnick

Nigeria Football Federation president, Amaju Pinnick has disclosed that the Super Eagles will compensate for AFCON 2017 miss by qualifying for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Gernot Rohr's men failed to qualify for their second Africa

Cup of Nations at a bounce after being displaced by Egypt during the qualifying series despite winning the 2013 edition with late Stephen Keshi in charge.

"We are not happy we aren't going to the Nations Cup," Pinnick told media.

"I am really sad because I am not just the president of the NFF but also a fan of the Super Eagles which makes it really hard for me.

"But we want to try and compensate Nigeria by going to the World Cup; not just going there, but making our

presence felt and breaking new grounds when we get there.

"So, by God's grace, we will make Nigerians very proud come Russia 2018."

Gernot Rohr's men host Cameroon on August 28, 2017 in their next qualifier.



Super Eagles prays before a match

## ABS FC wallop Black Stars in pre-season friendly

Taiye Ayinde came off the bench before NPFL side Abubakar Bukola Saraki (ABS) could dump stubborn Black Stars of Lokoja 4-0 in a pre-season friendly played at the Confluence Stadium in Lokoja.

The defence of the non-league Lokoja side was a hard nut for 'The Saraki Boys' to crack as they defended with everything they had.

All efforts by ABS to break the defence of the resilient Black Stars proved abortive in the first half, which ended 0-0.

Coach Henry Makinwa made five changes in the second half, bringing in Adeshina Gata, Taiye and Kehinde Ayinde, Lukman Abdulhameed and Kehinde

Idowu.

Taiye Ayinde beat the offside trap to open scoring for ABS in the 75th minute.

He got his second goal of the day two minutes later,

when he again beat the offside trap of the opponents.

Wasiu Alalade, who came in for Ossy Martins, put the game beyond the Lokoja outfit when he scored the third

of the evening by lobbing the ball over the goalkeeper.

Gata, who also came off the bench, scored the 4th goal for the teams to seal a 4-0 victory for the newly promoted side.

## Nationwide League: Alkali insists on age limit

The management of the Nationwide League One (NLO) has revealed that arrangements have been put in place to rebrand the third-tier division.

Independent Chairman of the NLO, Mohammed Alkali, disclosed that one of the first steps to rebranding the league with the introduction of age limit for teams from the 2016/2017 season.

He revealed that the NLO

is set to toe the line of the elite division for whom the League Management Company (LMC) was incorporated, and will work hard to attract more sponsors for the Nationwide League One.

"As part of the changes in the administration of the Nationwide League One, we'll introduce age limit for players that will play in the league from the upcoming season, this is grassroots league and it's strictly

for youths players," Alkali said.

"I am happy to say that some firms are talking with us about sponsorship and I'm convince that at the end of the 2016/2017 season the NLO will be adjourned the best in the Nigeria with some fresh innovations that will transform the league."

The month of March has been tentatively fixed for kick off of the 2016/17 season of the Nationwide League One.



## Sport

### Dimitrov beats Nishikori to take title

Grigor Dimitrov claimed his first title in over two years as he beat Kei Nishikori 6-2 2-6 6-3 to win the Brisbane International.

The world number 17 took one hour and 48 minutes to beat Nishikori, who is ranked fifth in the world.

Dimitrov, 25, won the first set quickly before Japan's Nishikori won four consecutive games to level the match.

The Bulgarian then broke Nishikori in the final set - despite tweaking his ankle - to secure the title.

Nishikori has reached the Brisbane final six times but he has never won the tournament.

Elsewhere, number two seed Roberto Bautista Agut claimed his first Chennai Open title with a 6-3 6-4 victory over Russian Daniil Medvedev.

The Spaniard took one hour and 13 minutes to win in straight sets.



# Best FIFA Football Awards 2017

The Best FIFA Football Awards take place on January 9 in Zurich, Switzerland, as the governing body of the beautiful game attempt to revive their World Player of the Year accolade, which was merged with the Ballon d'Or in 2010.

The ceremony will see a number of awards given out across multiple categories, but the main event is undoubtedly the Best FIFA Men's Player 2016.

The final shortlist sees Ballon holder Cristiano Ronaldo battle Barcelona icon Lionel Messi and Atletico Madrid rising star Antoine Griezmann.

Here is how you can watch the glittering awards ceremony:

Date: Monday, Jan. 9  
Time: From 5:30 p.m. GMT/6:30 p.m. CET/12:30 p.m. ET  
Venue: Zurich, Switzerland

Live Stream: FIFATV, FIFA.com  
Here are the main categories to be decided:

Best FIFA Football Awards 2017 Categories

Awards: The Best FIFA Men's Player

The Best FIFA Women's Player

The Best FIFA Men's Coach

The Best FIFA Women's Coach

The FIFA Fair Play Award  
The FIFA Puskas Award  
The FIFA Fan Award  
FIFA FIFPro World11

FIFA.com

After scooping the recent Ballon award, football fans will expect Ronaldo to double up on his individual achievements after leading Real Madrid to further UEFA Champions League success in 2016.

Messi was gazumped by his great generational rival, who also won a shock success at Euro 2016 with Portugal.

The pair have won multiple Ballon d'Ors between them as they dominate and monopolise the football landscape.

Griezmann has had a breakout season for club and country, and fully deserves his place alongside two legends.

The women's player award will be contested between U.S. superstar Carli Lloyd, Brazil sensation Marta and Germany midfielder Melanie Behringer.

Lloyd is the reigning FIFA World Player of the Year, which has been exclusively given to female players since 2010.

As the Ballon lingers freshly in the mind, it is difficult to believe football fans will greatly recognise the new award after FIFA disassociated itself from the iconic France Football individual accolade.

Ronaldo was the obvious choice to scoop the last Ballon, and history will show the Best Player award will duplicate success for the Madrid superstar.

## Zimbabwe players delay flight over bonus row

Zimbabwe's national football team refused to board a flight for the Africa Cup of Nations tournament in Gabon, officials said Sunday, in a dispute over allowances and winning bonuses.

The team were due to fly together on Saturday to Cameroon to play a friendly on Tuesday before proceeding to Libreville.

After tense meetings with the Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA), some players finally left Harare on Sunday morning while the rest of the squad were set to depart later in the day.

"We had a fruitful meeting and the players and administration reached an amicable solution," ZIFA spokesman Xolisani Gwesela told AFP, declining to elaborate how the impasse was resolved.

On Friday, players sat in hotel corridors and refused to

attend a farewell dinner at which the country's Vice-President Emmerson Mnangagwa was guest of honour.

"ZIFA totally condemns the behaviour portrayed by the team and their desire to hold the nation at ransom in their quest to earn money that this economy cannot sustain," the association said in a statement late Saturday.

Among a raft of grievances, the players rejected \$1,000 (950 euros) appearance fees

and demanded \$5,000 instead, sources at the association said.

They also demanded \$150 daily allowances for locally-based players and \$500 for foreign-based players, instead of \$50 and \$100 respectively.

The players had earlier refused to use "substandard" accommodation at a facility run by the association and were barred from training at the national sports stadium over a \$60 debt owed by ZIFA.

Zimbabwe's economy has

been wrecked by hyperinflation, corruption and agricultural collapse, and the national football team has often relied on well-wishers to pay its players and coaches.

A cash shortage in the country has also seen football match attendances plummet.

Last year the country was expelled from the 2018 World Cup preliminary competition over non-payment of a \$67,000 debt owed to former coach Jose Claudinei Georgini.

## ...Morocco's Amrabat pulls out with injury

Nordin Amrabat has been replaced in the Moroccan squad for the African Nations Cup finals by Omar El Kaddouri, the Morocco Football Federation confirmed on Saturday.

The Watford winger limped off in the second half of last Sunday's 4-1 home loss to Tottenham and, after medical examinations, was ruled out of the tournament in Gabon, which starts next

weekend.

The 26-year-old Belgian-born El Kaddouri has won 22 caps for Morocco, having first made his debut in 2013.

Morocco open their Nations Cup campaign

against the Democratic Republic of Congo in group C in Oyem on 16 January. They have a warm-up international against Finland in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday.

CLASSIFIELDS

<div><div>NYONG</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>SAMUEL OKON NYONG</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>EZEKIEL OKON NYONG</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note</div></div>	<div><div>ZAKARI</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as, <b>AMIZA ZAKARI</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>AMINU ZAKARI</b>. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note</div></div>	<div><div>HADIZA</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as, <b>HADIZA MUHAMMAD</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>HADIZA JA'AFARU</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>HADIZA</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as, <b>HADIZA SALIHU</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>HADIZA BELLO</b> All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>HASSAN</div><div>I, Formerly known as <b>ALKASIM BABAJI HASSAN</b>, now wish to be known and Called <b>ABDULMALIK BABAJI HASSAN</b>. All former documents remain valid. GTBANK and the general public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>GOKIR</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as, <b>ORDER GOKIR RIMDET</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>EMMANUEL JOHN SUWA</b> . All former documents remain valid. FIRST BANK / UNITY BANK All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note</div></div>
<div><div>KATAGUM</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>UMAR ABDULHAMID YAHAYA</b> , now wish to be known and called <b>UMAR ABDULHAMID LIMAN KATAGUM</b>. All former documents remain valid. FIDELITY BANK / NIMC and the general public should please take note</div></div>	<div><div>MUHAMMED</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>MAL.YUSUF IBRAHIM</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>YUSUF MUHAMMED ABDULLAH</b> That I was born on 12 -07 -1981. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note</div></div>	<div><div>NAFIU</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as, <b>MUHAMMAD NAFIU</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>AHMED NAFIU</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>AMINU</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>AMINU MOHAMMAD MOHAMMAD</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>AMINU MUHAMMAD</b> All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>KABIRU</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>ISSA ABDULLAH</b> <b>KABIRU</b>, now wish to be known and Called <b>ISA ABDULLAH</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned and the general public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>HARUNA</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>MUHAMMED HARUNA SAIDU</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>MUHAMMED MUHAMMED HARUNA</b>, my date is 15 march 1988 not 15 march 1984. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note</div></div>
<div><div>YINUSA</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>AZAIAH ADAMS</b>, now wish to be called and Addressed as <b>AZAIAH YINUSA ADAMS</b>. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and general Public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>ADAMU</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>GABRIEL ISUWA</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>JULIUS ADAMU</b> my date of birth is 11 november 1994 not 1 january 1994. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note</div></div>	<div><div>UGOCHUKWU</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>UGOCHUKWU CHIMEZIE HYGINUS</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>NWOSU CHIMEZIE UGOCHUKWU</b>. DATE OF BIRTH BORN 01/01/1987. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>IGOCH</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>ABU GODWIN IGOCH</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>ANTHONY GODWIN IGOCH</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>ABBAS</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>ABBAS MOHAMMED</b>, now wish to be known and Called <b>ABBAS MOHAMMED AMIN</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned and the general public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>KANO</div><div>I, formerly known and addressed as <b>BALA KANO</b>, now wish to be known and called <b>IBRAHIM LITI</b>.. All former documents remain valid. Concerned and the general public to please take note.</div></div>
<div><div>ABUBAKAR</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>ILIASU A B D U L R A H A M A N ABDULRAHAMAN</b> wish to be known and called <b>ILIASU ABDULRAHAM ABUBAKAR</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>MURTALA</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>MURTALA YUSUF</b> wish to be known and called <b>MURTALA YUSUF ABUBAKAR</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>DAVID</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>DAUDA D. AUDU</b> wish to be known and called <b>DAVID OKOLIKO</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>UMAR</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>UMAR MAMUDA MUHAMMAD</b> wishh to be known and called <b>UMAR MAMUDA</b> . All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>HALADU</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>ABDULMALIK HALADU</b> wish to be known and called <b>ABDULMALIK HALADU IBRAHIM</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</div></div>	<div><div>IDREES</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>HUSAINA EDRIS</b>, Born on 22-03-1985 wish to be known and called <b>HUSAINAH SHUAIBU IDREES</b>, Born on 19-07-1984. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>
<div><div>MARYAM</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>MARYAM ABDULLAH</b> wish to be known and called <b>MARYAM SALEH</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>SULAIMAN</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>ABDULRASHID SULAIMAN</b> , Born on 01-01-1989 wish to be known and called <b>ABDULRASHID SULAIMAN ABDULLAH</b>, Born on 25-12-1995. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>IDRIS</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>ISMAIL IDRIS ISMAIL</b> wish to be known and called <b>IDRIS ISMAIL</b> . All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>MUHAMMAD</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>HAMISU MUHAMMAD DANLADI</b> wish to be known and called <b>HAMISU MUHAMMAD ABUBAKAR</b>. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>ABDUL</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>SUMAYYA ATIKU YUSUF</b> wish to be known and called <b>SUMAYYA ABDUL YUSUF</b> . All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>	<div><div>GARBA</div><div>I formerly known and addressed as <b>BELLO MALAM GARBA</b> wish to be known and called <b>BELLO MUHAMMAD GARBA</b> . All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note</div></div>

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, KANO STATE OF NIGERIA  
IN THE HIGH COURT PROBATE REGISTRY

WHEREAS the persons whose names out in the first column here under died intestate in the date and at the specified place in the said column. AND WHEREAS the persons whose names and addressed appear below in the second column( Herein-after called the claimants) claim relationship to the deceased person named opposite in the first column and have applied to HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, Kano State for the grant of letters of administration of the personal properties of the said deceased. NOW THEREFORE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN. That letters of administration will be granted to the claimant, ‘UNLESS A NOTICE TO PROHIBIT’ the grant is filed in the PROBATE REGISTRY, HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, Kano State within TWENTY ONE (21) DAYS of the publication of notice.

SCHEDULE

DECEASED NAME AND ADDRESS

1.IBRAHIM MUSA LATE OF SHAGARI QTRS DIED ON 7-11-2016 AT M.A.W.SP.HOSP

2.ILIASU IBRAHIM BABBA LATE OF GIGINYU QTRS DIED ON 5-10-2016 AT NIG. POLICE MED. SERVICE WUDIL

3.HASSAN MOHD KUNYA LATE OF KUNYA TOWN DIED ON 23-8-2013 AT HOME

APPLICANTS FOR GRANT

1.HALIMA IBRAHIM SULEIMAN OF SHAGARI QTRS KANO THE PROPOSED ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SAID DECEASED

2.ABDULMALIK ILIASU IBRAHIM AND SHEMA’U ILIASU IBRAHIM ALL OF GIGINYU QTRS KANO THE PROPOSED ADMINISTRATORS OF THE SAID DECEASED

3.MOHD BABA HASSAN OF KUNYA TOWN MINIBIR LGA KANO THE PROPOSED ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SAID DECEASED

DATED THIS 6th-01-2017  
(JAMILU SHEHU SULEIMAN)  
PROBATE REGISTRAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

EAGLE HEIGHTS ACHIEVERS INITIATIVE

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED INITIATIVE HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1.ANI OGBONNA JOHNSON PRESIDENT  
2.ANI IFEOMA JUSTINA  
3.NNAMANI OLUCHUKWU MARANATHA

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES ARE:

1.Advancement of socio-economic well being of women and youths.  
2.To enhance self reliance of women and youths through skill acquisition.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED:  
GSA SOLICITORS  
Gsa.solicitors@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

PAMELA ADVOCACY FOUNDATION FOR VETERANS AND CHILDREN

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED FOUNDATION HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1.PAMELA ELAMEYI AMEH  
2.ADEYI-AMEH ISEKO  
3.ADEYI YADID AMEH

CHAIRMAN  
SECRETARY

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

TO EMPOWER WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF SERVING AND VETERANS OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY THROUGH TRAINING AND SKILL ACQUISITION.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED :  
SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

FREEDOM MISSION PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1) MRS RUTH AJOKI FOLORUNSHO SAMUELSSON (FOUNDER).  
2) CRISTER INGMAR SAMUELSSON (FOUNDER)  
3)ORIYOMI LENA FOLORUSHO SAMUELSSON  
4) KOLAWOLE ABAYOMI OYEDELE  
5)OLUSEGUN OLABODE KOBARI  
6)ABBEY OLAYINKA ANIFOWOSHE (TRESURER)  
7) SADIAT OLASUNKANMI AKIINDELE  
8)JOSEPH SEGUN BANKOLE (SECRETAR)

THE AIM AND OBEJECTIVE :

TO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED :  
BAR BABADE

PUBLIC NOTICE

AFRICAN INDIGENT CARE FOUNDATION UMUAHIA

THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE ABOVE NAMED HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1. REV. FR. DR. ALOYSIOUS IGBOAJCHI AGBAEZE NWABEKEE  
2. OKECHUKWU JOSEPH BOB AMANZE  
3. GLORIA OKWUKWE AMALAHA 4. NOBLIN NKECHI IGBOEUSI

THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE:

1. TO TAKE CARE OF THE POOR AND THE NEEDY IN OUR SOCIETY.

ANY OBJECTION TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION MAITAMA ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION

SIGNED:  
SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

FRIENDS OF BUSTLINE MEDIA FOUNDATION

THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED FOUNDATION HAS APPLIED TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART “C” OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

(1) YETUNDE AFOLAKE ODUWOLE (CHAIRMAN).  
(2) ALEXANDER AJIBOLA ADEGBENJO (SECRETARY).  
(3) ZACK AZEKERU AMATA,  
(4) KINGSLEY ELIKPO.

THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE :

1. TO PROVIDE FOOD AND SHELTER TO THE NEEDY, WIDOWS AND SINGLE MOTHERS.

ANY OBJECTIVE TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION NO 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET PMB 198 MAITAMA DISTRICT ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION.

SIGNED : BARR G UDE.



# Mahmoon Baba-Ahmed

## MATTER OF THE MOMENT

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## Curious exchange visits

It is often said that success breeds ambition, especially the one that involves a remarkable achievement. The deft political move by two seemingly incompatible political parties to fuse in 2014 was unprecedented and had really achieved the impressive feat of forming a formidable alliance which some political groupings are currently attempting to replicate. The alliance involved the Congress for Progressive Change APC, a behemoth from the North, and the Action Congress of Nigeria ACN, a leviathan from the Southwest. The ruling All Progressive Congress, APC was therefore a product of carefully thought-out plan intended to float a platform for contesting elections expressly to capture power in most states and at the center

That development had greatly jolted and belied the political bigots who believed that a union between northern elements and southwestern components of the two parties was impracticable and out of the question. Many doubtful Nigerians where startled out

of disbelief and came face-to-face with stark reality with the eventual success of the merger. As a result, other politicians became obsessed with that feat and wanted to encore it in their own different ways. That explains why presently there are so many clandestine and subterranean moves to realign political forces with the ultimate aim of forming another mega party, perhaps out of a merger between dissenting factions of some political parties.

Nevertheless, the euphoria that initially greeted the coming to power of two merged groups was soon to wither away as people who had solidly supported it started to become disgruntled, feeling unfulfilled and totally dissatisfied with the way things were going; and soon things began to fall apart within the ruling party as its leading and most influential members began to manifest a breakaway tendency. Three of its governors in a most populous

geo-political zone: Abdul-Aziz Yari of Zamfara and Chairman Nigerian Governors Forum; Aminu Waziri Tambuwal of Sokoto and Abubakar Bagudu of Kebbi State, were brazenly hobnobbing with key and hostile governors of Rivers and Akwa Ibom states, both members of a powerful opposition party. They have exchanged visits at auspicious moments and festive occasions, stirring anxiety and shock within the highest hierarchy of their party.

Although the three APC governors denied embarking on skilful and subtle moves aimed at floating an alternative political outfit of like-minded people working closely together to precipitate a new order, their colleagues were gravely concerned with that development, insisting that the first visit to Rivers State made some leaders of the party suspicious, viewing it as a solidarity visit to a political

opponent to ginger support for him ahead of crucial rerun elections in his state. That gave room for doubts and apprehension that the three northern governors might be the arrowhead of an impending political re-alignment in the country.

Accordingly, some APC stalwarts have openly displayed their displeasure over the whole affair, saying they were fully aware of the ludicrously eccentric actions which did not go down well with them. The governors' unilateral actions were severely condemned by displeased party members in the opposition states who bitterly complained of going through hell due to the host governors' indifference to the their plight, occasioned by economic hardship and maladministration.

Still, other members of the APC are of the opinion that there is nothing wrong in exchanging visits or comparing

notes between state governors, but they see such trips as blunders at a time when they seek redress or justice for their oppressed members in the affected states. In as much as individual members of the APC are free to express their opinions about the exchange visits in a favourable or displeasing manner, the party did not see anything wrong with, or infer any motive to it since the governors, on their own, can decide to visit each other and socialize. Nevertheless, if the party has a reason to suspect foul play about the governors' visits it certainly may not hesitate to take appropriate actions.

The reaction of APC may also be informed by the response of its members who may either endorse or condemn the governors' moves. In fact majority of northerners are disenchanted with the antics of some of their elected leaders who from all indications are poised to return to their old habit by secretly extending support to the arch rivals of the north through active connivance to frustrate their efforts to utilize their numerical supremacy in actualizing their grand ambition of capturing and solidifying political power.

In the past, some northern politicians, to the chagrin of their compatriots, actively promoted the proliferation of mushrooming political groups that sought to further balkanise the region and make it vulnerable to the detrimental influence of the South. They all profess to defend and promote the interest of the north but are forcefully held back by their manifested inability to forge an ordinary platform on which the motley collections of northern tribes and religious interests could strengthen their fraternity. The three governors are now under watch by their doubtful and distrustful followers while their moves will be carefully scrutinized to determine their ultimate intentions.



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## Djokovic beats Murray to win Qatar Open

Novak Djokovic withstood a comeback from Sir Andy Murray to defend his Qatar Open title and end the Briton's winning streak of 28 consecutive ATP Tour matches.

Murray remains world number one despite the 6-3 5-7 6-4 defeat by the Serbian world number two.

The Scot saved three match points to come from a set and a break down to win the second set and level the match.

But Djokovic broke in game seven of the decider to win in two hours 54 minutes.

Both players now head to Melbourne for the Australian Open, the year's first Grand Slam, which starts on 16 January.

"It's a tough one to lose," said Murray, 29. "It was high level tennis, some of the points were physically tough. But it's a great way to star the new year and I look forward to the next few weeks."

This was the 36th meeting between the pair and Murray had won the last time they met at the ATP Tour Finals in November, a victory that kept him at world number one.

The Scot has never beaten the Serb after losing the first set and he was soon trailing as Djokovic broke in the eighth game following a string of unforced errors from Murray.

Djokovic broke again in the second set and served for the match at 5-3 but Murray fought back and reeled of four straight games to level.

The 12-time Grand Slam champion looked to be tiring in the third and was 0-30 on his own serve at 2-3 down but he fought back to hold and then broke Murray for the third time in the match as he won his second title in Doha.

"To win here, against the biggest rival, is a dream start," said Djokovic, who was penalised a point in the second set for smashing his racket.

