



News as it breaks

Daybreak

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EDITORIAL

The sine qua non of any democratic society is freedom of speech and the freedom of the means of exercising free speech.

It is the norm in a democracy that people are free to hold and express even the most

Obnoxious clauses in NBC and NPC proposed amendments must be resisted

obnoxious and absurd views without let or hindrance by the state.

The beauty of democracy is that those who hold contrary views are equally allowed to express their

views openly. Freedom of expression is the bulwark and basis of

any democratic society. The underlying philosophy of freedom of speech in a democratic society is rightly expressed in these Voltairean paraphrases:

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No apologies for our relationship with China

—Lai Mohammed

“The cooperation between Nigeria and China is laudable and very commendable. In the area of infrastructure China has stretch its hand to pull us up and we are glad”



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Nnamdi Kanu and the Igbo question

“To answer the Igbo question is to answer the Nigerian question, the emancipation of the Igbo is the emancipation of all citizens from inequality and injustice”

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News

Nnamdi Kanu and the Igbo question

Nnamdi Kanu the leader of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, who had been on the run from Nigerian authorities for about four years after jumping bail in 2017, was rearrested last Sunday. In this article Ike Obi and Gabriel Udeh examines the activities of the separatist agitator within the context of the Igbo question in Nigeria.

After nearly four years of jumping bail, the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, Nnamdi Kanu, was arrested under questionable circumstances and extradited to Nigeria recently.

Daybreaknews recalls that for several years while residing in the United Kingdom, Nnamdi Kanu was a thorn on the flesh of the Nigerian government as he doled out propaganda daily attacking the Federal Government through his Radio Biafra and social media.

He used Radio Biafra, a registered radio station in the UK, to propagate his separatist agenda and to attack anyone who stood on his way including South East leaders.

Operating from London, his words were law and dutifully obeyed by his followers. Only recently he shut down the South East when he announced a seat at home order to commemorate Biafra Day.

Notably the angst of, IPOB supporters, against the Federal Government have always been against Igbo marginalization, inequitable resource distribution, lack of Igbo representation at the centre and heavy military presence in the South-East among others.

IPOB gained significant government and media attention as a result of frequent and forceful crackdown on its members through military operations.

The clashes between the IPOB members and security agents had

led to deaths, destruction and apprehension in the South-East.

On Sunday 27 June the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami (SAN), announced that Kanu had been rearrested.

The IPOB leader was subsequently charged to court again and remanded in the custody of the DSS.

His rearrest and subsequent detention raises fresh questions about the Igbo nation, their age old agitation for Biafra and place or otherwise in the Nigerian federation.

The ghost of the Civil War has refused to go away and the IPOB leader has come to represent an ideology in the views of many South Eastern Leaders who identify with the course of Nnamdi Kanu but may not necessarily agree with his methods.

Speaking with our correspondent, some analysts aired their views about the Igbo question and offered a way out to the Federal Government.

Reasoning that the Igbo question equates to the Nigerian question,

Nimi Wariboko a professor of economics at Boston University believes that the country has not set up an enabling environment which permits all citizens to realise their potential

"The Igbo question is the whole question about Nigeria. The Igbo question is not only an ethnic question, but it is also the metonymy of the Nigerian question".

In his submission "to answer the Igbo question is to answer the Nigerian question, the emancipation of the Igbo is the emancipation of all citizens from inequality and injustice". He said.

He identified the Igbo question as a network of six fundamental issues that Nigeria has failed to adequately address, and the Igbos have become the poster face of them.



"At the root of the Igbo problem are one, failure of the democratic principle of "rule and be ruled" in the governing of this nation; two, nature of politics that ultimately denies egalitarianism, but accents domination; three, absence of a proper definition of citizenship; four, absence of fairness and justice in every sphere of this nation; five, lack of a clear definition of the character of the autonomy and cooperation of the federating units in the republic, and six, aborted character of self-determining regional economic development, the freedom of the federating units to use their own God-given resources and talents to develop their own areas of abode without undue interference from the center".

He opined that the agitation of the South East and the rise of separatist groups not just in the South-East is a response to these six issues which can be addressed through restructuring.

Also weighing in on the issues a human rights activist, Gbenga Emmanuel reasoned that at the end of the Civil War in 1970 there

were genuine attempt to reintegrate the Igbos into the mainstream of Nigerian politics. "This mainstreaming of the Igbos ensured that barely 10 years after the Civil War an Igbo man, Alex Ekweme was elected as the vice president of Nigeria".

"His election was the high point of the Gowon policy of no Victor no Vanguish.

Today most of the gains of that policy have been lost".

He noted that since the dawn of the present democratic era the Igbos as one of the three major ethnic groups in the country have lost significant leverage.

"After Azikiwe and Alex Ekwueme, the political influence of the Igbo has reduced; this has led to cries of marginalization and the rise of separatist movements in the South-East".

However Chioma Daniel a public affairs analyst believes the inability of the Igbos to play a pivotal role in national politics is self-inflicted.

"With the return to democracy in 1999 the Igbos have not been

able to put their house in order for a coordinated push to grab power at the centre. There have been pronounced disunity and infighting among the Igbos such that consensus has been lacking.

Bad politics and divisiveness has ensured that they remain at the fringes of national political reckoning

While the Husa Fulani and the Yorubas have schemed to dominate political power, the Igbos are lagging behind".

She believes that the South-East has failed to build consensus or produced consensus leadership that can contest for power at the Centre.

She however reasoned that it is this atmosphere of a lack of leadership that has given rise to separatist agitations and the rise of characters like Nnamdi Kanu.

"The pro-Biafra agitation was largely supported by South Easterners because it drew attention to the marginalization of the zone.

"The idea was to bring the Igbo question to the fore-front and many supported them, but along the line, it was clear the agitation became a personal business enterprise. The leader of Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, Mr Nnamdi Kanu had a good cause but shot himself on the knee when he left the Igbo question to start addressing inconsequential ethnic issues, and then transformed himself into a god that his followers bowed down to kiss his feet

If Kanu had a good cause, he didn't package it well". She observed.

In the views of Fredrick Nwanbufo, a newspaper columnist and public affairs analyst,

"Kanu lost himself to hubris. He defied the elders; he spat on the leaders, ignored warnings and entreaties, made an enemy of associates, attacked critics, and unleashed his bloodhounds of hell on citizens and security agents in the South-East. He became defiant to reason. He became too powerful for himself. No man should wrestle with his Chi."

He noted that by inciting and allegedly sponsoring deadly attacks on citizens and security agents in the south-east - through the Eastern Security Network -- he lost those sympathetic to the Biafra cause.

Kanu lost the plot when he took up arms against the state. He lost whatever meaning to his agitation, which is not in the interest of the Igbo by the way, when he provoked bloody attacks against citizens in the south-east. He lost it there.

The culminating incidents are a consequence of arrogance, lack of tact, irrationality, and ignorance on the part of Kanu.

He however appealed to the federal government to ensure that due process is followed in the trial of Kanu.

"Despite his offence, the government must be seen to be fair-handed and not punitive. Resorting to vengeful measures could provoke unintended reactions. There should be no room for arbitrariness. Let the law take its course. Let the court decide"

I'm not interested in 2023 presidency - El-Rufai

Kaduna State governor, Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, has said on Saturday that he does not have any presidential ambition, contrary to widespread speculations in that regard.

El-Rufai, who claimed to have "suffered presidential ambition suspicion for 15 years", said at 62, he is too old lead Nigeria.

Making the foregoing clarifications in an interview with the Pidgin Service of the BBC, the Kaduna State governor also explained the reason behind his decision to quietly withdraw his two children from a public school in Kaduna.

He regretted that his purported ambition to become Nigeria's president had caused some people to paint him in bad light, including calling him a Jihadist, just to keep him out of presidential race.

He said that governing Kaduna State alone was telling on his age, not to talk of the entire country.

He said he considered governing

Nigeria as a job that is too much for a 62-year-old man.

He said: "Look at me, look at my grey hair. If you see my picture when I was sworn in, my hair was very black, but look at how it has become.

"This is a very difficult job, and that is just state governor, one state out of 36. A big one, yes; a difficult one, yes, but it is not the same as Nigeria.

"Presidency of Nigeria is a very serious job; it is too much for a 62-year-old."

Asked if he is interested in the office of the Vice-President, he said: "I have not thought about it at all. I have said it that in the political system we have, after eight years of President Buhari, the presidency should go to the south.

"I have been suffering this presidential ambition suspicion since 2006. I have suffered it for 15 years today, and I am sick and tired of it.

"There are people that are out to paint me in a particular picture so that I will be out of the presidential race, but they don't know that I am not in any race anywhere.

"They have called me all sorts of names. They said I am a Hausa-Fulani irredentist; I am Jihadist and all that. Jihadist when? Where? I am not even an active member of any Islamic organisation.

"I am Muslim, yes, a devout one. But I believe religion is private. Even here in this office, when it is time for prayer, I just excuse myself as if I am going to the restroom. I don't ask anyone to come and pray with me, because we will all go into our graves separately.

"Look around me as see; I am surrounded only by Muslims. This government is the only state government in this country that has at least people from 13 other states of the Federation as cabinet members.

"One of the most influential

persons in my life, one of my closest political associates is Pastor Tunde Bakare.

"It was Pastor Tunde Bakare that actually introduced me to Buhari and CPC. I didn't join the CPC because Buhari lives in Kaduna or he is a northerner.

"So, if I am an Islamic Jihadist, why will Pastor Tunde Bakare be speaking to me?"



EDITORIAL

Obnoxious clauses in NBC and NPC proposed amendments must be resisted

Continued from <<PAGE 1

“I don’t agree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it”

“Think for yourselves and allow others the privilege to do so too”

The underpinnings of freedom of speech is equally hinged on the free market principle which holds that in a free market place of ideas and opinions, the best ideas will always prevail.

It is for this reason that prior restraints is always frowned upon.

Consequently any law that seeks to curtailed freedom of speech in a democratic society is not considered as law.

This is because without freedom of expression or the rights to lay before the public domain our thoughts and feelings we have no real freedoms or democracy, what we are left with under such situation is authoritarianism, despotism, tyranny and repression.

In a democracy sovereignty resides with the people and government fear the people because they draw their power and authority from the people.

As Thomas Edison said: “When government fears the people, there is liberty. When the people fear the government, there is tyranny.”

In Nigeria today do government fear the people or the people fear the government?

Is the basic ingredient of a properly functioning democracy, which is freedom of expression not being eroded with the swift ban of Twitter; plans to prosecute users of the platform under an unknown law and the proposed new regulation and clampdown on other social media platforms and the broadcast media?

The current attempts to amend the Nigerian Press Council Act, the National Broadcasting Commission Act can all be viewed as an attempt to curtail and strifle freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Perhaps before we go further we should ask ourselves why has the American government been unable to place a ban or proscription on the activities of racist and hate filled White supremacists groups like the neo-Nazists, the KKK, QAnon and others who frequently use social media to propagate hate, fuel conspiracies and incite their members?

The answer is constitutionally enshrined. A close look at the First Amendment rights or bill of rights in the US constitution shows that there is no freedom of speech limitation or exception.

This was recently affirmed in a US Supreme Court

Judgment in the case between Matal v. Tam (2017) were the Justice Samuel Alito held that:

“The idea that the government may restrict speech expressing ideas that offend...strikes at the heart of the First Amendment. Speech that demeans on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, or any other similar ground is hateful; but the proudest boast of our free speech jurisprudence is that we protect the freedom to express the thought that we hate”.

The same view was express by Justice Anthony Kennedy who held that:

“A law found to discriminate based on viewpoint is an egregious form of content discrimination which is presumptively unconstitutional...instead; our reliance must be on the substantial safeguards of free and open discussion in a democratic society”.

In the United States freedom of speech and the means of expressing them is expressly protected against prohibition or restriction or at the whim of the US President.

It is impossible to have free citizens without freedom of speech. Any law that seeks to curtail freedom of expression is antithetical to the norms of democracy hence there is always a careful balance between freedom of expression and the need to protect public decency and national security.

National security issues must not be conflicted with issues of free speech. In a constitutional democracy like ours the rights enshrined in section 39 of the 1999 constitution should be revered.

In these fractious times the government must resist the urge to trample on the rights of citizens. Trying to silence those who are exercising their rights of freedom of speech using any platform of their choice must be denounced and resisted.

It is ludicrous that after two decades of unbroken democracy we are on reverse gear in promoting the basic rights of citizens.

Hence the attempt to insert obnoxious and striffling provisions into the NBC and the NPC Acts should be resisted by well meaning Nigerians.

The constitution remains the Supreme law of the land, an act of the National Assembly cannot be superior to the constitution which has already given Nigerians freedom of speech and of the means of exercising free speech as enshrined in section 39 of the 1999 constitution as altered.

Nigeria operates a constitutional democracy based on the rule of law we are free citizens and not subjects of an imperial leader.

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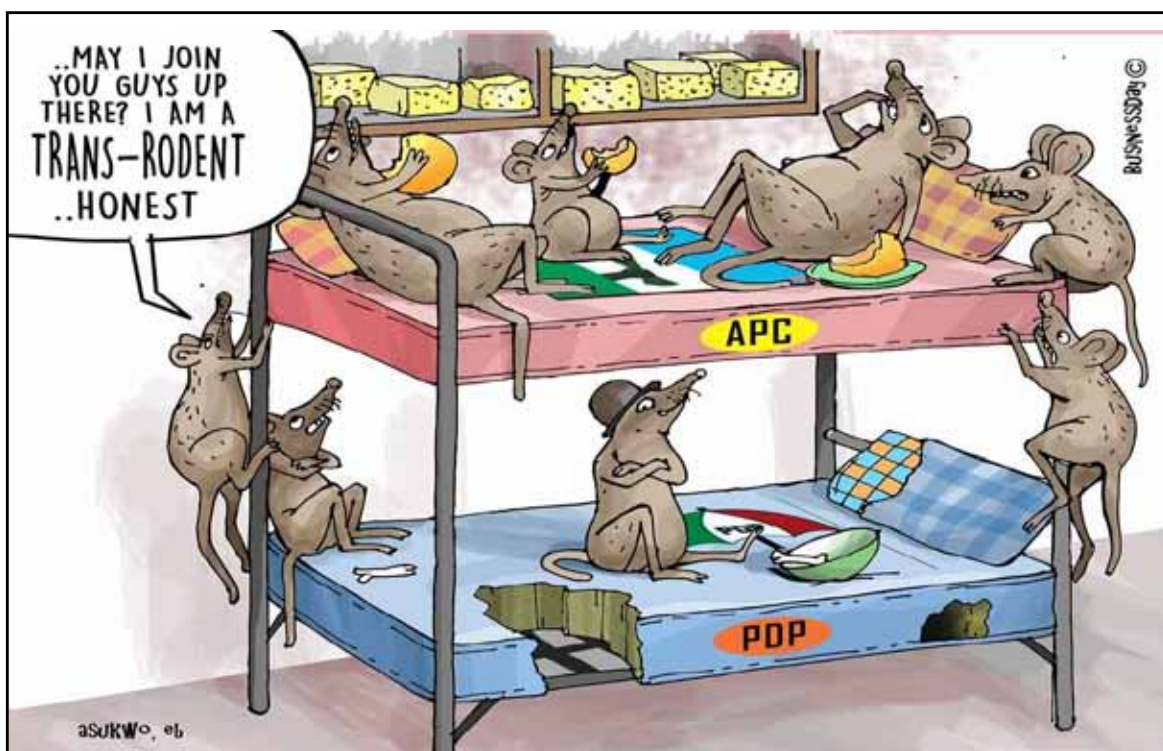
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Mission Statement

To tell the truth at all times and hold government accountable to the governed and to give the citizens the information they need to be active participants in the democratic process. In this light Daybreak newspaper refuses to be an ally of any special interest but to maintain objectivity, fairness and balance as its core principle especially in an age of misinformation and fake news.



Cover

What do you have to say about the raging controversy concerning the ban of Twitter in Nigeria, is it true that China is helping Nigeria to build a Firewall?

I don't know what we would have done if we have not banned Twitter, we suspended the operations of Twitter in Nigeria, and we see that Twitter has lend itself as a platform for separatist agitators who are agitating for the dismantling and disintegration of Nigeria that is why we suspended their operations indefinitely in Nigeria until such a time as the two parties can get together and will arrive at an amicable resolution of the issues at stake.

We have also followed up by asking every social platform in Nigeria to now register with the authorities which is the National Broadcasting Commission of Nigeria. You first have to register as a company and then you have to be licensed by the NBC that way each and every one of them will operate only according to the details on the licenses they were given. You asked whether it's true that there was a meeting between Chinese authorities with Nigeria to build a firewall to block some internet sites?. I read the story too, and I was supposed to be at that meeting but I was never there and I am not aware of it.

Have you had this fake news that Chinese customs officials seized 7021 pennies smuggled from Nigeria to China and what is your take? Because these goods were actually just seas food but many media deliberately distort the facts, bringing unhealthy information on both side sides, what do you think can be done to prevent these sorts misinformation?.

Thank you very much for that question. As far back as 2017 this office has realized the damage that fake news and misinformation can cause to the polity and decided to convoke a National Information Council meeting to discuss the issues in 2017.

The National Information Council is made up of all commissioners of information in the 36 states and Abuja, all the directors of information in all the states. The broadcasting television information outlet all over the country, it's the highest body that makes decisions in Nigeria as far as information is concerned. At that meeting in 2017 we issued a warning to the world that the next war will be triggered by fake news, but nobody listened, in 2018 we started an advocacy program through which we visited every media house in Nigeria warning them about the dangers of fake news and that especially in a country like Nigeria where we have plural values, we have Christians we have Muslims, we have Hausas we have Igbos, we have Yoruba Itsekiris, Edos, Ijaws etc. We have people of different values, now what fake news does is that it's

No apologies for our relationship with China

— *Lai Mohammed*

- *Denies reports that China is helping Nigeria build an internet firewall*
- *Says there is nothing wrong in borrowing as long as funds are invested in infrastructure*
- *Celebrates CPC at 100*

The editorial team of Daybreak newspaper was part of a team of Chinese foreign journalist that had an audience recently with the honorable Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed in his office in Abuja, where the Minister, spoke extensively about China/Nigeria relationship, the contribution of China and Chinese companies to the development of the country's infrastructure and sundry issues. The interview section also coincided with the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China. Our correspondents Becky Adi and Iyke Obi were there.



explores this fragile relationship and could set one part of the country against the other, I remember very vividly one of the fake news that shook this country was when a celebrity announced that a Christian student in college of education in Benue has been killed but for the prompt filter of this fake news it could have led to killings in other parts of the country. I remember during one of the conflagrations in Kaduna state the Bishops said that fake

news has contributed more to death, we started this advocacy and visited every media house to explain to them to join us in the fight against fake news and fight against misinformation, some newspapers even wrote editorial against us and said: what are you talking, we are not your problem, the problem of Nigeria is development, but we did not stop, it got to a stage that the use of advocacy will not work, we must regulate the social media,

don't misunderstand me regulating the social media is not stifling press freedom we want only content that is not harmful to the country, when we talk about harmful contents it's not about the government alone, many people committed suicide because of the bullying they received on social media and we are not alone in this drive to regulate the social media, I no that in Turkey, Australia, Singapore even in EU nations, even though no law in regulating social media in EU but today they gave recommendations they should remove any news that threatens national securities, and the UK just reviewed that there is going to be a law now that will penalize people who use social media platforms for hate news, fake news Or use it to influence young children. And the fine is about 25 million dollars, 18 million pound for those who are criticizing us for trying to regulate the social media should understand that there are differences between regulating the social media and free speech all we are talking about is that the content of the media must be healthy both for the government and for the people, today I have some grandchildren that are of 5years they are more adapt at using the telephone than I am, and if we don't control social media the kind of information they are going to get from there will be unhealthy for them morally.

You can see today there is a lot more of incest, lesbianism, rape because people have been exposed to these unhealthy sites, like www.sex.with.all.women, you will see different naked pictures so can you imagine giving my phone to my grandchild who knows how to use the phone. We need

to regulate it. Fake news has caused lots of problems all over the world, herdsmen from Somali with AK47 pictures are used in Nigeria, every day you listen to news about things said about me it's confusing. Recently we did a survey there are about 476 online publications in Nigeria alone whose major occupation is fake news, misinformation and attacking government that is why we are using this opportunity of the suspensions of Twitter to regulate and register all social media platforms in Nigeria. We are not stifling the press, Facebook is still available for them, Google hangout, WhatsApp is there, so it is not correct to say our decision to suspend Twitter in Nigeria is actually to stifle the press. Let me say this, Nigeria has the most free media in the world I can defend it, if you check online today, you see a lot of things they say about Mr president and me and other people but nobody is arresting anybody.

What do you have to say about COVID-19 and the fake news it has generated?

Incidentally I am a member of the steering committees on COVID-19 and at the beginning of the pandemic, we were fighting two pandemic, we were fighting COVID-19 and "infodemic", the infodemic was more serious to fight than the pandemic, some people simply believe that there is nothing called COVID-19, that it's not true, some said they had cure, and they were exploiting people and making money at the expense of health and lives of Nigerians, if you see the number of herbal shops that grew out of COVID 19, and it was also distorting the effort of government in putting information across to Nigerians the need to obey the COVID-19 protocols many people in our big cities today simply don't believe that COVID-19 exists, as a matter of fact people run away from me because I am always on my mask because they think I have COVID-19, we need to double our efforts in the areas of the 9 pharmaceutical interventions, because in Nigeria today it might take us 2-3 years before the vaccination would attain what they call herd protection by the time 70% Nigerians are vaccinated then we can be fairly certain that there is protections for all of us. But with the current vaccine nationalism it is very unlikely we are going to get that number very soon.

In Nigerian that is about 70 million so we need to vaccinate about 70 million, we have only vaccinate 2 million you can see it's a far cry from what we need. Even when MTN came to visit Mr president they promised to deliver 25 million worth of COVID-19 vaccine I am not sure whether it's for the whole of Africa but what they said is they do not feel we can receive it before August, so in the absence of this vaccine I think we need to intensify our campaign and our advocacy on the need to maintain the COVID-19 protocols.

Very simple things, wear your mask



in public, wash your hands with soap or sanitizers, avoid large gatherings and don't amass in one place and keep social distancing, this is not the time for big parties or religious festivals.

When you tell people not to gather in a church or In a mosque because of the sensibilities of Nigerians to believe that God does not want you dead but to stay alive, the only way we can resume our lives in the normal way is by abiding by the rules, and there is high chance of not contacting COVID-19 if you abide by the rules until the time when we can get vaccines

What do you have to say about the relationship between Nigeria and China especially as both countries marked 50 years of bilateral relationship this year and as the CPC celebrates its centenary?

The cooperation between Nigeria and China is laudable and very commendable in the area of infrastructure in particular we know China has stretch its hand to pull us up and we are glad, whether we talk about Lagos and Ibadan railway's, PortHacourt and Maiduguri railway, Kano Kaduna railway, I thank the Chinese government and Chinese companies they have been quite prominently in these and whatever we can do to deepen infrastructural development I think it should be continued and encouraged

As to the criticism it is unfortunate, Nigeria is a strange democratic country and it takes a leader very thick-skinned to forge ahead

Don't know whether you had the chance to watch the documentary we did on the second anniversary of the

administration's second term which is running on every television station and social platforms.

We are also amazed and surprised that we did part one, two, three and four that shows the kind of and the volume of achievements of this administration. We have reason to be proud of the relationship between us and China in areas of infrastructure. For example it took Nigeria 35 years or thereabouts to finish from conception the Ajaokuta, Itakpe Warri railway line. It took this administration working with Chinese government less than 3 years or 4 years to finish the Lagos to Ibadan railway line. The difference is clear those who are accusing the Federal Government of borrowing money from China are wrong. There is nothing wrong in borrowing as long as you are using the money to invest in infrastructure, which in 50yrs time when many of us won't be around would be enjoyed by our children which will remain the back bone for our economic development. Anywhere in the world that they don't have infrastructure can never grow, so the cacophonies of voices about the borrowing and relation with China are not necessary.

These money we are borrowing people see what we are going with it. That is why we are commissioning projects, if not because of COVID-19 Mr president can go and commission project every week, if you look at our infrastructure.

And development. We are borrowing for a purpose every country borrows it is what we do with the borrowing that matters, we are very proud of our relationship with China, because these is the first time an administration will start a project and complete it, I am talking of the magnitude of the Lagos Ibadan railway line.

Now it will take 2-3 hours from Lagos to Ibadan, and when you going there its in comfort and safety. We have no apology with our relationship with China because we are using the money for good and we hope our relationship with China will continue to grow.

What do you have to say to the government and people of China as the Communist Party marks its 100th anniversary since its formation?

For the records I want to on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria congratulate the CPC and the government of China. It is not a mean fit for a political party to exist for 100 years I have been involved in party formation. I started with AD, from AD to ACD, from ACD to ACN, from ACN to APC, there have been mergers there have deaths along the line. So for a political party in a country anywhere in the world to survive for 100 years I think it must be celebrated and the best we can do is to wish the CPC better luck, more success and to express solidarity to the people and government of China on this occasion.

The cooperation between Nigeria and China is laudable and very commendable. In the area of infrastructure China has stretch its hand to pull us up and we are glad

News



The publisher of Daybreak newspaper Dr Maho A. E in a group photograph with the honourable Minister of Information Lai Mohammed after the interview in his office in Abuja.

'Why I withdrew my son from public school'

El-Rufai also revealed that there was a plan by three groups of bandits to kidnap his son, Abubakar Sadiq, from Kaduna Capital School; a public school where he was enrolled in 2019.

The governor said following the intelligence at his disposal, he had to withdraw the kid from the school so that he would not fall victim to kidnappers or expose his schoolmates to danger in the event of an attack by gunmen.

The governor said he had also enrolled Sadiq's younger sister, Nasrine, in the same school when she turned six years before the security situation in the state forced the family to withdraw the children temporarily.

The two children are currently taught at home but go to the public school during the examination period.

He said the kids would resume fully once the security situation in the state improves.

His words: "My son and also my daughter are registered in the school because his (Sadiq's) sister also clocked six and we registered her in the school.

"But we had to temporarily withdraw them for the security of the school because we received a security report that three groups were planning to attack the school and kidnap my son.

"I don't think they (kidnappers) would have succeeded because there is enough security in the school to prevent them, but it would expose other pupils of the school to danger.

"We didn't know the kind of weapons they would have brought.

"I had taken a stand against payment of ransom and we had reports that three groups were planning to kidnap my son from Capital School to see whether I would pay ransom or not if my son is kidnapped."

He said he was persuaded by the advice of security agencies to



El-Rufai

withdraw the kids for the time being.

"Both Abubakar Sadiq and Nasrine will go back to the school when there is confidence that their attendance will not put the school at risk," he added.

Abubakar Sadiq was enrolled in the school by the governor in September 2019 in fulfillment of a promise he made in 2017 as a guest of Freedom Radio's Hausa phone-in programme 'Barka da War haka.'

During the programme, he pledged to revamp public schools in the state and enroll his child in a public school upon turning six years.

He told reporters moments after enrolling Abubakar Sadiq that it was a commitment that had been fulfilled.

His words: "I made that commitment because I believe that it is only when all political leaders have their children in public schools that we will pay due attention to the quality of public education.

"I went to a public school like this. In fact, the school I went to is not as good as this one, but here I am, because of the quality teaching I got.

"My intention is to ensure that all our public schools offer quality education, and so we are encouraging all our senior public servants to send their children to public schools.

"Once the public schools are improved to a point they are nearly as good as or even better than private schools, no one will waste his money taking his child to private school."

Gov Matawalle sacks Special Advisers

Gov. Bello Matawalle of Zamfara, has relieved all his Special Advisers of their appointment.

This is contained in a statement by the acting Secretary to the State Government and Head of Service, Alhaji Kabiru Balarabe in Gusau.

Balarabe, however, said the Special Adviser on Security, retired DIG Mammam Tsafe was not affected by the development.

"It is hereby notified for general information that Gov. Bello Matawalle, has relieved all Special Advisers of their appointments, except the Special Adviser on Security matters.

"This decision is in line with the recent defection to the APC and to allow for an in-depth search of

more but competent hands in the administration of the state, irrespective of political affiliations," he said.



Gov Matawalle

Igbohos's lawyer sues FG demand N500m, apology

By Joshua Patrick

Lawyer to Yoruba Nation activist Sunday Adeyemo (Igboho) has demanded the sum of N500 million and a public apology from the State Security Service (SSS) on behalf of his client over the invasion of his residence.

In a letter signed by the lawyer Yomi Aliyu, the invasion of Igboho's residence was described as 'grossly illegal and unconstitutional.' It also stated that ammunition recovered by the SSS during the raid was planted in Igboho's residence as an attempt to frame him.

Urging the Federal Government to order an investigation into the raid, Aliyu demanded the release of those arrested and compensation for the families of persons murdered in the process.

"Our client should also be paid N500million as reparation for damage to his exotic cars that include Mercedes Benz G-Class and 2019 Lexus car," it read.

The lawyer noted that Igboho, in his crusade for Oodua Republic, had preached peace and warned his followers

against resorting to violent acts.

Aliyu also said the security operatives had invaded his client's home with the intention to kill him and added that several valuables were carted away by the operatives during the raid.

The statement said €1000, N2million, expensive jewellery worth millions, travel documents, amulets, iPhone 12 belonging to him, phones of about 15 others living in the house, including those killed by the raider, and other belongings yet to be identified belonging to his wives were carted away.

"The only guns were those of the police escorts of his guests," it read.

At least seven people were killed at Igboho's residence in Ibadan, Oyo State, during an attack that occurred in the early hours of Thursday.

Spokesperson for the SSS Peter Afunanya confirmed that the SSS was responsible for the raid while saying that the security operatives had acted based on intelligence that the activist was stockpiling arms to cause chaos within the South-West.

Niger Delta Congress rejects PIB

The Niger Delta Congress (NDC) has rejected just passed Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), describing it as antics of thieves in National Assembly and a tool to "plunder resources" and "enslave" the people of Niger Delta.

After 12 years, the National Assembly passed the Petroleum Industry Bill, approving three per cent for the host communities.

Reacting to the passage of the Bill in a statement by its acting spokesperson, Ovunda C. Eni, the NDC condemned the bill, saying it is a tool for further plundering of the region's resources.

"The news of the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill by both Chambers of the National Assembly does not come as a surprise to the Niger Delta Congress.

"This, as expected, is only a new legislation to be added to other legislations that have been used as tools to plunder our land and resources, and to further enslave our people; and a new addition to the plethora of reasons for the upcoming Niger Delta Peoples Conference slated for 8th and 9th October 2021," the statement reads in part.

The group accused some

politicians from the Niger Delta region for their treacherous role in the passage of the Bill, adding that the PIB is not different from flawed 1999 Nigerian Constitution.

"Just like the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, the PIB to us, is a criminal document since we've never assented to it, and its enforcement can only happen by force and not with the cooperation of our people," NDC said.

Dismissing the PIB as an antics of thieves in National Assembly, the NDC said with the Bill, oil companies in the region are carrying out legalised robbery, adding that all the issue will be discussed in forthcoming Niger Delta Conference

"We'll also use this opportunity to remind oil companies operating in the Niger Delta that what they're engaged in is legalised robbery which is also an act of aggression.

"The NDC calls on the people of the Niger Delta to focus on the upcoming Niger Delta Peoples Conference where we will collectively decide on our future as a people, and not be distracted by the antics of honourable thieves and their appendages in our midst," the statement reads.

Gov Diri rejects APC overtures, vows to remain in PDP

By Ekaunkumo Agbere

Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, has rejected the overtures by the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state, to dump the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), declaring that he was going nowhere and more committed to the PDP.

Diri, who expressed appreciation to the APC for acknowledging his good works, described the call for him to dump PDP as unfortunate, provoking and unwelcome.

A one-time deputy governor of the State, Rt. Hon. Peremobowei Ebebi, had at the weekend during an APC stakeholders meeting in Ekeremor local government area, called on Governor Diri to dump the PDP which he described as a sinking ship.

But Governor Diri, through his director of New Media, Mr. Kola Oredipe, declared that he remains a strong, committed and one of the leaders of the PDP in the country and has no reason to leave the party to another platform now or in the near future.

According to the statement issued on Sunday and signed by Oredipe, he berated the APC leaders, saying: "It will be a political suicide to leave the only party that exist in Bayelsa State, to join a party that has no root, no structure."

"Ebebi, must be a joker. We know him for many acts of theatrics and at this time too, it is not different. He has confessed that the governor is not doing badly meaning that the PDP is on the right track, why then go to join a party that has taken Nigeria many years back?"

The media aide to the governor wondered if Ebebi was not aware of high-profile members of the



Diri

opposition APC who have since joined the PDP and aligned with the vision of the Prosperity Government for a united and greater Bayelsa State.

He said, "Where was Ebebi all these months when many chieftains dumped his APC to return home in PDP. He knows APC ranks have been heavily depleted and that is why he is calling on them to return. It is too late. We have accommodated them in the PDP."

"We know Ebebi is not a fulfilled man where he is. It is him that will come back to the PDP. For now, he has no electoral values in his community, Aleibiri in Ekeremor Local Government Area. This much came out clear in the Bayelsa West Senatorial election he contested late last year where

he lost woefully. My conclusion on his comment is that he must be looking for relevance in his new party."

Oredipe noted that the rising political profile and general acceptability of Governor Diri, was giving Ebebi and his co-travelers headache, ahead of the 2023 elections because no one in the APC would have the capacity to stop the re-election of the governor.

He stated that Ebebi should be reminded that only recently the people of his constituency in Aleibiri under the leadership of Hon. Tari Porri, the member representing Ekeremor 1 in the State House of Assembly passed a vote of confidence on Diri for his developmental efforts.

Again, Southern Govs Meet, Open Grazing, Restructuring to Top Agenda

Seventeen governors of Nigeria's southern states will on Monday converge on Lagos for the second time this year to continue their search for solution to the myriad of problems confronting the country. At the last meeting, hosted by Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State and attended by 15 of the 17 southern governors, they arrived at a 12-point resolution, which included the banning of open grazing in all the states.

Sources said the meeting on Monday in Lagos would examine the progress made regarding the Asaba Declaration, examine oppositions to some of the demands and come up with a better strategy for actualising the demands.

The source said: "The governors are working towards a better Southern Nigeria within the Nigerian nation. This meeting is in continuation of that agenda. It is a continuation of the meeting held in Asaba. The southern governors will be looking at the gains of the last meeting and come up with their next move. "You know the southern governors agreed that the progress of the nation requires that urgent and bold steps be taken towards the restructuring

of the Nigerian federation leading to the devolution of power.

They want inclusive government at the federal level, state police, a review of revenue allocation formula in favour of the sub-national governments, and creation of some other institutions, which will legitimately advance commitment to the practice of true federalism. Strategies are needed to actualise all these. This is why they are meeting again in Lagos."

Another source close to Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, who is chief host, said in the spirit of Lagos hospitality, the Lagos governor has promised to provide a conducive environment for the 17 governors to brainstorm properly. During the first meeting in Asaba, the southern governors resolved to ban all forms of open grazing in the southern states of the country.

Although, the governors came short of calling on President Muhammadu Buhari to reshuffle heads of top agencies to reflect federal character against the backdrop of the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nature of Nigeria, they urged the President to ensure that the sensibilities of the people were

respected and reflected in federal appointments.

While affirming the commitment of the peoples of Southern Nigeria to "the unity of the country on the basis of fairness, equity and oneness," the governors expressed grave concern about the security challenge plaguing the country and charged the President to act decisively to address the situation. Specifically, the governors of the southern states called on President Buhari to convoke a national conference to address the insecurity and other challenges in order to restore the confidence of the citizens in the Nigerian geo-political entity.

The communiqué said that the southern governors "observed that incursion of armed herders, criminals and bandits into the southern part of the country has presented a severe security challenge such that citizens are not able to live their normal lives, including pursuing various productive activities leading to a threat to food supply and general security." But the federal government responded, saying the southern governors' proposed plan to enforce the ban on open grazing "is of questionable legality."

NCC Remits N150bn To FG In 5 Months

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has exceeded its N36 billion projected revenue from spectrum license fees for 2021, having recorded over N150 billion from this revenue source within the five months of the year, the commission's Executive Vice Chairman Prof Umar Garba Danbatta has said.

The figure represents over 400 per cent increase in revenue budget performance in respect of spectrum fees generated by the Commission between January 1 and May 31, 2021, Danbatta said in a statement on Sunday.

The money made from spectrum sales reflects significant contribution to the revenue drive of the Federal Government, the NCC boss added.

"Accordingly, the N150 billion spectrum revenue achieved in the first half of the year has been remitted to the Federal Government in line with the provisions of the Nigerian Communications Act (NCA), 2003, which mandates the Commission to remit proceeds from spectrum resources wholly into the government's Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF)", he said.

He said the Commission, in its 2021 Budget which was considered and approved by both chambers of the National Assembly in December, 2020, projected a revenue of N36 billion from spectrum fee for the year 2021 but has remarkably surpassed this estimate.

"Over the years, the NCC has put in place an effective regulatory regime which has significantly

facilitated advancements in the nation's telecoms industry, boosted Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and improved the operations of licensees as well as boosted Federal Government's revenue generation", Danbatta said.

He said the impressive uptick in spectrum fee was the result of the favourable turn of events for the telecom sector, which at the time of preparing the estimates for the 2021 Budget of the Commission was not clear due to the ravaging impact of COVID-19 on the global economy.

Danbatta further noted that the 10-year spectrum fees made by some of the major operators directly impacted the projected spectrum fee favourably, adding that the Commission believes that entrenchment of effective regulation will continue to improve the general performance of the telecoms sector.

On October 28, 2020, Danbatta told members of House Committee on Telecommunications while on an oversight function to the Commission that the NCC had generated and remitted N344.71 billion to the Federal Government's CRF in the last five years.

During the oversight visit, the Chairman of the Committee, Hon. Akeem Adeyemi, commended NCC's Management for the feat and urged the Commission "to sustain its regime of effective regulation of the telecoms sector in a manner that would be more mutually beneficial to the industry stakeholders, including the consumers of the telecoms services, the operators and the Nigerian government."

I Promised To Smoke You Out - Asari Dokubo Mocks Nnamdi Kanu

Mujahid Asari Dokubo, a former Niger Delta militant, has mocked Nnamdi Kanu, leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, over his re-arrest by the federal government.

Recall that Dokubo had vowed to destroy Kanu, who he described as 'evil' and also accused him of defrauding Biafrans.

In his latest video, the ex-militant warlord claimed that the IPOB leader receives defence funds without giving account of his spending.

He also alleged that Kanu demanded payment from all Biafrans on a monthly basis to be part of the Biafra nation when actualized.

"Nnamdi Kanu, I'm not in your category but for this, I will surely bring you down. I will destroy this evil empire that is working as a hindrance to the restoration of Biafra. Biafra is your business now; you have no other avenue for gainful income. It is a pity how Igbo people have fallen for this evil, but your time is up. I am out for you. And I will get you," Dokubo had said at the time.

Few days after Kanu was caught, Dokubo mocked the IPOB leader, saying his ordeal has not started.

In a video, Dokubo accused Kanu of defrauding Biafrans, saying he has been unable to account for

funds remitted to him.

"Nnamdi Kanu, I promised I will smoke you out. Your madness never start, this one wey start now, na market e dey go. You have harmed Biafrans and traded with us so much.

"You collected our money in the name of defence funds and you cannot give account. You are demanding that all Biafrans should pay money to you on monthly basis or they will not be allowed to enter Biafra. Doesn't that make you a conman, an extortionist?"

"You alleged that that you gave me N20 million, video doesn't lie. When I stated it last year leading to election, you were so cowardly not to respond to me. You sent your followers to respond to me and they said a lot of things and I demanded the evidence that I demanded N20 million from you.

"I have never been a member of IPOB, you gave me N20 million, tell us is it by bank transfer, is it by cash, who brought the cash to me? I'm waiting. Produce the evidence."

Dokubo taunted Kanu by saying he had been detained over 70 times yet he has remained in the country.

"I can't run away from my land because they will overrun it. I am not like you Ben Johnson... I fought all the way to the supreme court. My record is in the Supreme Court, you can check it."

By Joyce Remi- Babayeju

There is no doubt that the trace of the Indian strain of the COVID-19 variant B.1.627 declared a highly transmissible variant of global concern by the World Health Organization, WHO is in Nigeria.

The Nigerian government is keeping up with the game of vaccinating Nigerians to stop the spread of the virus in the country.

Figures from the National Primary Health Care Agency reveals that the COVID-19 vaccination has gone past the first dose with over 2,099,568 million Nigerians vaccinated to the second dose on-going to the end of August. As at the recent briefing by the agency, over 1,005,234 people have taken the second jab.

According to the Director General of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, NPHCDA, Dr. Faisal Shuaib at a recent press briefing on the update of the vaccine in the country said that the government is doing all its possible best via mass vaccination of eligible persons to ensure that COVID-19 pandemic is stopped from spreading and also possibly kicked out of Nigeria, Africa and the world.

In fact the agency admonishes individuals to go for the second jab.

This is coming in the mist of the Federal Government's struggle to keep the first and second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic under check by vaccination and adherence to the different precautionary non pharmaceutical protocols measures in place.

Arrival of the first consignment of the AstraZeneca vaccine donated by WHO used for vaccinating Frontline workers and people in the priority group, local politics continue to engulf the COVAX facility vaccine Oxford AstraZeneca vaccination administered to the Nigerian population.

A random investigation carried out by Daybreak revealed that although a large chunk of the population have received their first dose and even the second doses, myths and rumours keeps intercepting the vaccine trust among majority of Nigerians.

For those who decide to take the vaccine, they do not have options while others say they are forced by their employers to take at the vaccine.

Some even allege that the vaccine variant is the leftover from Western world and so would not take it while others have linked it to implant of microchips to alter the human DNA. Others accuse government if inflating COVID-19 figures to get donor attention for exhibitant grants which they do not account for.

The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 continuously dispel the myth and rumours surrounding the



Feature

Dealing with COVID-19 vaccines myths



“

We must be sceptical of every friendship and make sure it is genuine before we accept aid from them, adding that it is pertinent for government to check the medical theories surrounding COVID-19 and it's vaccines.

”

vaccine while giving assurances of its safety.

In a TV programme, Siverbird News 24, a former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Dr Obadiah Mailafia expressed doubt about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Mailafia who spoke on the France-Africa Vaccine Summit slot talked about the politics surrounding COVID-19 vaccines. He cautioned Nigerians on the use of COVID-19 vaccine imported into Nigeria from ‘friendly countries’. He emphasized that those friendly countries do not have the interest of Africa at heart.

He said that although the vaccine is available in the country people should be guided about it. Citing that even the US government is strict on the use of the vaccine on their citizens, adding that the US Supreme Court said that it is against the Constitutional rights of their citizens to force them to have the vaccines if they don't wish to.

“We should not just be receivers of things we do not understand but we should do enough scientific work to understand the implications of these things.”

Some people believe there is a sinister agenda behind this whole vaccine thing. Like the case of Ebola in Africa, it was predicted by an opposition leader in France as far back as 2013 that Ebola would kill people in West Africa and just six months after that statement Ebola broke out in the region and even came to Nigeria but for the heroic efforts of our medical crew especially the Lagos State government was able to tame the monster.

Dr Mailafia, an Economic and International Development Specialist advised that Nigeria should begin to be sceptical of the intentions of foreign governments when it comes to things like vaccine supplies.

“We must be sceptical of every friendship and make sure it is genuine before we accept aid from them, adding that it is pertinent for government to check the medical theories surrounding COVID-19 and it's vaccines.”

The France- Africa Summit held in Paris converged about 20 African leaders to discuss how to help African countries financially to survive the pandemic period

President Muhammadu Buhari attended the financial summit which focuses on relief over the devastating effect of the coronavirus pandemic on African countries.

The Summit tagged “New Deal with Africa” is basically to finance Africa economies.

French President, Emmanuel Macron emphatically called for waiving of COVID-19 vaccine so Africa could begin to produce its own vaccines.

Constitution Review: Gbajabiamila seeks collaboration between NASS, State Assemblies

...says legislature remains most important arm of Govt

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rep. Femi Gbajabiamila, has called for collaboration between the National Assembly and the 36 State Houses of Assembly to make the ongoing review of the 1999 Constitution successful.

Gbajabiamila, who spoke at a meeting of the Conference of Presiding Officers of Nigerian Legislatures (COPON) in Abuja at the weekend, also stated that the Legislature remained the most important arm of government in any democratic setting.

He said the intention of the "wholesale review of our nation's constitution" was "using the constitutional amendment process to address the foundational deficiencies in our constitution that continue to mitigate against the attainment of an honourable, peace and universal prosperity in our country."

The Speaker said once the National Assembly was done with its part, it would forward the constitution review document to State Houses of Assembly for their own constitutional inputs.

"That process of constitutional review cannot succeed without strategic collaboration between all of us who are here today.

"So, I ask of you that we take the opportunity of this conference to agree on the things we wish to achieve so that we can begin now to devise the strategies through which we can achieve our objectives", he added.

Gbajabiamila said by virtue of

its roles, which included coming together to protect the interests of the diverse people in the country, the legislature had a more direct and immediate connection with the people at the grassroots.

The Speaker urged legislators to remain true to their constitutional roles.

He spoke further, "I believe that the legislature is the most important arm of the government. Some might say I am biased, having spent most of my political career in the legislature. And they will be right. But the fact remains, that by design, it is only the legislator that has the constitutional obligation to come to work each day and advocate for the interests of the people on whose behalf we serve.

"This is both a high honour and a heavy responsibility. And I am pleased that at this time in our nation's history, we have as presiding officers of parliament across the country, capable people who recognise the importance of this moment and are equal to the task of nation-building at this critical time."

Gbajabiamila noted that though there are three arms of government with the Judiciary and the Executive having their roles clearly understood by all, there is usually a misconception about the role of the Legislature.

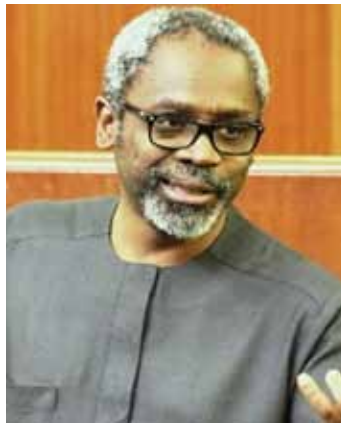
"In governance, there is a role for the Legislature. Unfortunately in our clime, and perhaps in most climes, the role of the Legislature is often conflicted and bungled together to include the role of the Judiciary, the

role of the Executive, and even the role of a private organisation.

"We have to play all these roles as legislators. What I find solace in is the fact that this misconception and misunderstanding of the role of the Legislature is a worldwide phenomenon. It is universal, and it is not peculiar to Nigeria alone", he said.

On the conference, Gbajabiamila said since the last meeting of COPON 12 years ago, "...our democracy has changed. We have matured and improved, yet in many important ways, and on many important issues, there is still a lot of work left to do.

"As legislators, our ability to do what is required of us in this joint task of nation-building depends, in some measure, on how well we can work together within the federal legislature, and across the legislatures of the thirty-six states."



Gbajabiamila

More digital banks for Nigeria as Fairmoney secures \$42m Series B

There is something different about lying down on your couch, a phone in your hands, starting and completing any banking transactions without having to set foot in any bank's premises. It is the ultimate convenience that new financial services providers known as digital banks are trying to deliver.

On Friday, one more fintech company, Fairmoney received \$42 million in Series B to transform itself from just a loan company into a digital bank.

The funding round was led by Tiger Global Management, a US hedge fund, and investment firm. The company co-led the \$170 million investment in Flutterwave earlier in March. That funding took the valuation of Flutterwave to \$1 billion making it the second fintech unicorn after Interswitch.

Participation in the funding also came from Flourish Ventures, Newfund, partners of DST Global, and Speedinvest.

Founded in 2017, Fairmoney provides small loans from N1,500 to N500,000 ranging from days to six months to people. It currently has 3.5 million registered users with 1.3 million being unique bank account holders, according to TechCrunch. The company plans to deploy \$300 million in loans before the end of the year.

While expanding its loan offering

is exciting, it is the new chapter of Fairmoney as a digital bank that is most remarkable.

"The ambition is that by the end of the year, the customer has the full-fledged banking experience from P2P transfers and lending to debit cards and current accounts," said Laurin Hainy, CEO of Fairmoney. "In addition to that, we are working on a number of additional savings products, stock trading, and crypto-trading products potentially depending on where regulation is heading."

A digital bank describes an organisation that can offer banking activities online that were historically only available at a bank branch.

In that sense, services a digital bank conducts online include money deposits, withdrawals, and transfers; checking/saving account management; applying for financial products; loan management; paying bills/invoices; and account services.

Essentially, a digital bank should be able to provide all the banking functions that have once been exclusive at bank head offices, branches, and via bank cards at ATM machines.

In Nigeria, digital banks have evolved from the days of ATMs to USSDs, online and web payments, and mobile money. The adoption of digital banking is evolving

alongside. In 2019, the country saw over 370 million mobile money transactions from 15.3 million customers.

The growing adoption is mainly driven by Nigeria's robust mobile penetration, the largest on the continent. Broadband penetration may not be growing at 39 percent of May 2021, but digital bank operators are learning to include non-internet dependent channels like USSDs and SMS to get their services across to the end-users. Still, most of the services that digital banks provide depend on the internet.

Digital bank incumbents, Kuda Bank, Carbon, VBank, Fundall, Sparkle, Eyowo, and many others are bound to take notice of Fairmoney's new ambitions. The digital banks' adoption pie is not expansive enough yet, due to slow smartphone adoption at less than 35 percent. Players like Kuda Bank needed to adopt unique strategies to attract users. In the case of Kuda, it was 'bank of the free' in which it offered prospective users free transaction charges and ATM cards.

Fairmoney would need its own strategy. Its loan segment has not been a smooth ride and the numbers it has achieved did not all come from users who were willing to repay loans.

SERAP Sues Buhari Over \$25bn Overdrafts Taken From CBN

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has filed a lawsuit, asking the court "to compel President Muhammadu Buhari to disclose spending details of the overdrafts and loans obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) since May 29, 2015, including the projects on which the overdrafts have been spent, and repayments of all overdrafts to date."

SERAP is also seeking an order to compel the president to "explain and clarify whether the \$25bn (N9.7trn) overdraft reportedly obtained from the CBN is within the five-percent limit of the actual revenue of the government for 2020."

The suit followed SERAP's Freedom of Information (FoI) request to President Buhari, stating that: "Disclosing details of overdrafts and repayments would enable Nigerians to hold the government to account for its fiscal management and ensure that public funds are not mismanaged or diverted."

In the suit number FHC/ABJ/CS/559/2021 filed last week at the Federal High Court, Abuja, SERAP is also seeking: "an order directing and compelling President Buhari to disclose details of overdrafts taken from the CBN by successive governments between 1999 and 2015."

In the suit, SERAP is arguing that: "Secrecy and the lack of public scrutiny of the details of CBN overdrafts and repayments is antithetical to the public interest, the common good, the country's international legal obligations, and a fundamental breach of constitutional oath of office."

Joined in the suit as respondents are the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN; the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed; and the Governor of CBN, Godwin Emefiele.

SERAP is also arguing that: "Ensuring transparency and accountability in the spending of CBN overdrafts and loans would promote prudence in debt management, reduce any risks of corruption and mismanagement, and help the government to avoid the pitfalls of excessive debt."

According to SERAP: "By the combined reading of the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the Freedom of Information Act, the UN Convention against Corruption, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, there are transparency obligations imposed on the government to disclose information to the public concerning details of CBN overdrafts, loans and repayments to date."

SERAP is also arguing that: "The Nigerian Constitution, Freedom of Information Act, and these treaties rest on the basic principle that citizens should have access to information regarding their government's activities."

The suit filed on behalf of SERAP by its lawyers Kolawole Oluwadare and Ms Adelanke Aremo, read in part: "Transparency and accountability in the spending of CBN overdrafts would also ensure that public funds are properly spent, reduce the level of public debt, and improve the ability of the government to invest in essential public goods and services, such as quality education, healthcare, and

clean water."

"It is the primary responsibility of the government to ensure public access to these services in order to lift millions of Nigerians out of poverty and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030."

"Transparency and accountability in the spending of CBN overdrafts and loans would also improve the ability of the government to effectively respond to the COVID-19 crisis. This means that the government would not have to choose between saving lives or making debt payments."

"The recent overdraft of \$25.6bn (about N9.7trn) reportedly obtained from the CBN would appear to be above the five-percent limit of the actual revenue of the Federal Government for 2020, that is, N3.9trn, prescribed by Section 38(2) of the CBN Act 2007. SERAP notes that five-percent of N3.9trn is N197bn."

"While Section 38(1) of the CBN Act allows the Bank to grant overdrafts to the Federal Government to address any temporary deficiency of budget revenue, sub-section 2 provides that any outstanding overdraft 'shall not exceed five-percent of the previous year's actual revenue of the Federal Government.'"

"Similarly, Section 38(3) requires all overdrafts to 'be repaid as soon as possible and by the end of the financial year in which the overdrafts are granted.'"

"The CBN is prohibited from granting any further overdrafts until all outstanding overdrafts have been fully repaid. Under the CBN Act, 'no repayment shall take the form of a promising note or such other promise to pay at a future date, treasury bills, bonds or other forms of security which is required to be underwritten by the Bank.'"

"Similarly, the Fiscal Responsibility Act provides in section 41 that the government 'shall only borrow for capital expenditure and human development.' Under the Act, the government 'shall ensure that the level of public debt as a proportion of national income is held at a sustainable level.'"

"Section 44 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act requires the government to specify the purpose of any borrowing, which must be applied towards capital expenditures, and to carry out cost-benefit analysis, including the economic and social benefits of any borrowing. Any borrowing should serve the public good, and be guided by human rights principles."

"SERAP has consistently recommended to the Federal Government to reduce its level of borrowing and to look at other options of how to finance its budget, such as reducing the costs of governance, and addressing systemic and widespread corruption in ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) that have been documented by the Office of the Auditor-General of the Federation."

"Our requests are brought in the public interest, and in keeping with the requirements of the Nigerian Constitution; the Freedom of Information Act; the Fiscal Responsibility Act; the Central Bank Act; the Debt Management Office Act; and the country's international legal obligations."

By Adefolarin A. Olamilekan

Dear Governor Sule, I am writing this open letter to you as a keen observer of your administration, residing in Nasarawa State, a political economist and development researcher. Moreso, as a Nigerian with profound concern over the current hanging industrial labour disputes in the state.

I send you this open letter in the hope that you would read it since it would be published in national dailies and online platforms. The underlying issues this open letter address is precisely predicated on three center of attention resting on the industrial labour disputes in the state.

First, is that it is one of the oldest and most deep-seated issues in Nigerian governance and politics. Secondly, it is an ideological one that stems from neoliberal instrument and, lastly, it's about operationalisation of finance in terms of what comes to state purse from Federal Allocation Committee and the state Internal generated Revenue.

As a resident in Masaka area of Karu LGA in the state, your desire for infrastructural development is laudable, that is convincing enough for residents and indigenes to appreciate. Meanwhile, your drive to ensure Nasarawa state become an industrial hub in North Central zone is plausible to the general economy health of Nigeria, to engage youth employment, income generation and poverty reduction. Your impressive concern for civil servants welfare and development demonstrate commitment to a professional civil service with 21st century facts and imminent. This you ensure at the inception of your administration.

Persuasively, industrial disputes are one of the oldest and most deep-seated issues in Nigerian governance and politics. This scenario existed long before Nigeria got independence in 1960s, overrun through military adventure into our politics and birthed dangerously in the last 22 years of uninterrupted democracy we valued as fourth republic. And this goes into our understanding of both economic and political forces has it's impinges on workers welfare, the nature and character of the Nigerian state.

Am not here to lecture your Excellency on this, a perspective discussion would help, even although you prepared yourself intellectually in the flight



Opinion

Open Letter to Governor A A Sul

to becoming governor of one of Nigerian most promising state. Auspiciously, industrial disputes reoccurrences in Nigeria is basically because the class interest that drives the forces which stimulate the crises remained unchanged. Undeniably, the struggle for National Minimum wage was a drama of its own as the demand of N52, 000 by the workers was back down to N30, 000 from a crisis of negotiation.

In the prevailing circumstance this in particular is the burning point between your administration and workers in the state.

Even, though you show commitment to state implementing from GL0 to 6, this labour union not comfortable with. Industrial dispute globally is an ideological context that stems from of neoliberal enigma.

This can be properly dissected on the controversial question of Wage and Wages. Wages is the amount paid for certain period of work or for a certain amount of work. Nevertheless, Karl Marx explicitly put it this way, wages are only a special name for the price of labour power, and are usually called the price of labour, it is the special name for the price of this peculiar commodity, which has



no other repository than human flesh and blood. To this end is to see wage translate to better conditions of workers regular payment of salary and promotion Neoliberals over the years, especially in the third world countries with particular reference to Nigeria have been on the fore fronts attacks on the workers. This is in a bid of economic principles handed over to their governments in respect to loan obtained from World Bank, International Monetary Fund and others. Ideally, loans could be obtained to ease domestics resources constraints in a country but the recklessness which loans are contracted in third world countries has made loans

a clog in the wheel of development and social progress of the third world. In fact; the policies to right size downsize and reform of the civil service from below are neoliberal agenda. I may not have enough space to expatiate on this, since this is just a letter. The imperative of ideological context is that, the civil servants in Nasarawa state have sowed in flesh and blood as there labour power.

And this is the sacrifice of their life. To the issue of operationalisation of finance in respects to the monies from federal allocation committee and the state internally generated revenue. This is all about distribution and redistribution of resources. The contentions here start from previous governors paying civil servant in percentages of which you overturned and start paying them full salary. I commend you for that, even though you meet the problem on ground especially the issue of arrears' and promotion your administration is strategically trying to resolves.

Conversely, the controversies surrounding the amount received by your administration from FAAC, especially the allegation from Labour Union that your government received N4.5 billion on monthly basis to me is what is fueling the crisis.

In Nigeria today no state government would agree to have enough to upset the monthly wage bill of state civil service, as many would cites poor revenues and blotted civil service. When state government hold on to these two things are bound to happen, nonpayment of workers' salaries or industrial dispute in the form of strikes by workers. In conclusion, your Excellency, I have no doubt that your administration have good intention for civil servants in Nasarawa state, am positive that you would not just end this strike by workers, but you put robust measures in place to foster future occurrence in Nasarawa state.

On the other hand, here is my modest suggestion, kindly, published what your administration received from FAAC on monthly basis, established an adhoc committee on labour and government relations. Very apt to this is dialogue, dialogue and dialogue at every point in your administration.

With, Respected Special Regards.
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A.A. Zaura: A Cornucopia of Success

By Muhammad Kabir

Needless to say that, whosoever erect formidable pillars beneath a structure will have lesser or no apprehension of implosion in the nearest or distant future.

It has become a common knowledge that the unique, all-inclusive administrative template which Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje is using to salvage the scourge and affliction of Kano's citizenry despite the glaring inability and ineptitude of some of his counterparts across the federation

coupled with the sharp decrease in IGR, internally Generated Revenue, calls for deeper reflection.

The experienced handling of Kano state in the hand of Khadimul Islam from 2015 to date has compelled the sociopolitical sages among us to start predicting the likely state of uncertainty in the aftermath of his tenure.

Looking at how Ganduje has transformed the people and the landscape of Kano, the bigger political question that should bother all the stakeholders is who has the potential to succeed and consolidate upon the gains of Ganduje's administration?

As countdown to the year 2023 starts gathering a systematic momentum it has become clear that A.A.Zaura is a worthy successor whose zest for societal emancipation from the shackles of poverty, inflation and unemployment is obvious as already evidenced in the massive social rehabilitation initiatives he puts in place.

You may doubt the edibility of the apple tree but the same cannot be said of the apple at hand.

Muhammad Kabir Wrote from Kano City.



Business & Economy

FG to spend N900bn on subsidy in 2022

The Federal Government has projected to spend N900 billion on subsidy payout to oil marketers in 2022.

Minister of Finance Budget and National Planning made this disclosure on Thursday at presentation of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework/Fiscal Strategy Paper for 2022-2024 in Abuja.

She also disclosed the Federal Government will spend N13.98trillion in the 2022 fiscal year.

In 2022, the government said it will slash capital expenditure to N3.61trillion in 2022, from the N4.37trillion approved for 2021.

Kano Hisbah bans use of Mannequins to display clothes

The Kano Hisbah board, established to maintain the norms of Sharia, on Wednesday, announced the ban on mannequins used by tailors, supermarkets and boutiques to display clothes.

The government agency is set to raid the state to remove the articulated dolls on the grounds that they are used for idolatry and immoral activities.

The Commander, Sheikh Aroun ibn Sina declared that the use of mannequins contravened the provision of Islamic injunctions.

“Hisbah prohibits the use of mannequins at shops, commercial and private residences and other public places.

“This violates Islamic provisions. It is also responsible for immoral thoughts among some members of the public, all these are against Islam”, Tribune quoted him as saying.

Sina said Kano has been divided into five areas for the effective monitoring and implementation of the ban.

The commander added that the people will be sensitised on how Islam frowns on the use of the dolls.

Those who fail to comply with the order, he warned, will be arrested and prosecuted.

Senate Passes Petroleum Industry Bill

The Senate has passed the Petroleum Industry Bill known as PIB.

The bill was passed during the plenary on Thursday after careful consideration of each of the clauses.

The Senate before passing the bill met behind closed doors with the Minister of State for Petroleum, Timipre Sylva, and the Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mele Kyari.

The passage of the bill comes exactly 13 years after it was first presented to the National Assembly in 2008.

On 28 September 2020, President Muhammadu Buhari presented the PIB to the National Assembly for reconsideration.

The Bill seeks to introduce changes to the governance, administrative, regulatory, and fiscal framework of the Nigerian oil and gas industry, in order to ensure transparency, strengthen the governing institutions, and attract investment capital, among other objectives.

Senate President Ahmed Lawan said the Senate expects President Buhari to sign the bill as soon as it is transmitted.

He added that the bill got the input of both the executive and legislative arms of government.

The Senate then adjourned till July 6, 2021.

Oil demand will gain momentum in H2 2021 – OPEC

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries has said that the demand for crude oil will gain momentum in the second half of 2021, beginning from Thursday.

OPEC Secretary-General, Mohammad Barkindo, disclosed this at the 31st Meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee, which was held via videoconference.

He said, “Oil demand is forecast to grow by six million barrels per day to around 96.6mb/d on average for the year.

“Similar to the economy, growth in the second half of the year is expected to gain momentum, potentially surpassing 99mb/d in the fourth quarter.

On the supply side, Barkindo said the

forecast by the organisation was that non-OPEC supply would grow by an estimated 0.8mb/d in 2021 for an average of 63.7mb/d.

He said, “We appear to be well on the road to recovery, with oil demand growth expected to accelerate in the second half of the year, however, let us be aware that there are still uncertainties that could entail risks for market stability.

“Firstly, we are not completely out of the danger zone with the pandemic. We have seen in recent days an uptick in the spread of the so-called Delta Variant, which is highly infectious and could prey upon those sectors of the population who have not yet been vaccinated.”

He, however, noted that OPEC’s early numbers for 2022 indicated a significant

imbalance between supply and demand from the second quarter of 2022 onwards.

The OPEC scribe stated that in the second quarter of next year, the forecast was that supply would exceed demand by 5.4mb/d, adding that in the third quarter, it would be by 3.6mb/d and by 2.3mb/d in the fourth quarter of 2022.

“Given all of the painful lessons and sacrifices over the last 16 months, this is a scenario that none of us would like to see materialise,” Barkindo stated.

He therefore called members and non-members of OPEC to begin to plan for the next chapter in the indispensable format that was the Declaration of Corporation process in stabilising the business, beyond April 2022.

Zenith Bank Retains Number One Tier-1 Bank Ranking

Zenith Bank Plc has been ranked as the number one bank in Nigeria by tier-1 capital in the 2021 Top 1000 World Banks’ Ranking published by The Banker Magazine, a publication of the Financial Times Group of the United Kingdom.

The bank, with a tier-1 capital of \$2.64 billion, retained its ranking as the number one tier-1 bank in Nigeria for the third consecutive year.

It, however, emerged as the 454th bank globally and the only Nigerian bank in the top 500.

The bank, in a statement yesterday, said the ranking, which was published in July 2021 edition of the magazine, was based on the 2020 year-end tier-1 capital of banks globally.

Zenith Bank’s financial performance for the year was underpinned by an eight per cent growth in non-interest income, with an improved market share in both retail and corporate sectors despite a challenging macroeconomic environment exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tier-1 capital describes capital adequacy, and it is the core measure of a bank’s financial

strength from a regulator’s point of view.

According to the ranking, tier-1 capital, as defined by the latest Bank for International Settlements (BIS) guidelines, includes loss-absorbing capital, i.e. common stock, disclosed reserves, retained earnings and minority interests in the equity of subsidiaries that are less than wholly owned.

Speaking on the ranking, the Group Managing Director/Chief Executive, Mr. Ebenezer Onyeagwu, said: “This ranking is a demonstration of our resilience and doggedness as an institution given the very challenging macroeconomic environment brought about by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which had a significant deleterious impact on businesses globally.

“It is also an affirmation of our commitment to delighting and creating value for our customers through a broad range of superior product offerings, best-in-class service and top-of-the-range technology.”

He thanked to the bank’s customers for making Zenith Bank their choice.

This award was the latest amongst many awards and recognitions that the bank has received in recent times for its track record of excellent performance and commitment to global best practices.

Zenith Bank was voted as Bank of the Year (Nigeria) in The Banker’s Bank of the Year Awards 2020, Best Bank in Nigeria in the Global Finance World’s Best Banks Awards 2020 and 2021, and Best Corporate Governance ‘Financial Services’ Africa 2020 and 2021 by the Ethical Boardroom.

Also, the bank emerged as the Most Valuable Banking Brand in Nigeria in the Banker Magazine Top 500 Banking Brands 2020 and 2021, and Number One Bank in Nigeria by Tier-1 Capital in the “2020 Top 1000 World Banks” Ranking by The Banker Magazine.

The bank was also recognised as Bank of the Decade (People’s Choice) at the THISDAY Awards 2020, Retail Bank of the year at the 2020 BusinessDay Banks and Other Financial Institutions (BOFI) Awards, and Best Company in Promotion of Good Health and Well-Being as well as Best Company in Promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment at the Sustainability, Enterprise and Responsibility (SERAS) Awards 2020.

Naira closes strong despite 61.90% drop in liquidity

Nigeria’s currency on Thursday firmed by 0.19 percent against the dollar at the official market in spite of over 60 percent drop in liquidity.

Naira/dollar exchange rate closed at N410.70k/\$ on Thursday as against N411.50k/\$ closed on Wednesday at the Investors and Exporters (I&E) forex window, data from the FMDQ said.

Currency traders who participated at the trading session on Thursday maintained bids at between N400.00k and N420.95k per dollar.

The foreign exchange market daily turnover declined by 61.90 percent to \$61.00 million on Thursday from \$160.12 million recorded on Wednesday.

Naira steadied at N503 per dollar on Thursday after weakening by N1 from N502/\$ on Wednesday at the parallel market.

It also closed flat at N500 per dollar at the Bureau De Change (BDC) segment of the foreign exchange market.

At the money market, the Overnight (O/N) rate remained unchanged at 12.00 percent, and the Open Buy Back (OBB) rate also remained unchanged at 11.50 percent.

The Nigerian Treasury Bills secondary market closed on a flat note on Thursday, with the average yield across the curve remaining unchanged at 6.58 percent, according to a report by FSDH Research.

Average yields across short-term, medium-term, and long-term maturities closed flat at 4.35 percent, 5.46 percent, and 8.10 percent, respectively. However, selling pressure was seen in the NTB 26-May-22 maturity bill with a yield increase of 19 bps, while buying interest was seen in the NTB 9-Jun-22 maturity bill with a

yield decrease of 18 bps.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) held its scheduled Primary Market Auction on June 30, selling NT-Bills worth N163.62 billion across the 91-day (N2.26 billion), 182-day (N3.32 billion), and 364-day (N158.04 billion) tenors. The stop rates for the 91-day and 182-day remained unchanged at 2.50 percent and 3.50 percent, respectively.

However, the stop rate for the 364-day tenor cleared lower at 9.15 percent (-25 bps). The auction was highly oversubscribed by 446 percent, with bid-to-cover ratios settling at 1.75x (91-day), 0.26x (182-day), and 7.41x (364-day).

In the Open market Operations (OMO) bills market, the average yield across the curve decreased by 1 basis point to close at 9.86 percent as against the last close of 9.87 percent. Mild buying interest was seen across the long-term maturities with the average yield falling by 2 bps. However, the average yields across short-term and medium-term maturities closed flat at 9.29 percent and 9.78 percent, respectively. Buying interest was seen in the OMO 15-Mar-22’ (-12 bps), OMO 1-Mar-22’ (-8 bps), and OMO 15-Feb-22’ (-2 bps) maturity bills, while yields on 21 bills remained unchanged.

The bonds secondary market closed on a mildly positive note on Thursday, as the average bond yield across the curve cleared lower by 7 bps to close at 9.76 percent from 9.83 percent on the previous day. Average yields across the short tenor, medium tenor, and long tenor of the curve declined by 4 bps, 20 bps, and 11 bps, respectively. The 18-JUL-2034 maturity bond was the best performer with a decline in yield of 55 bps.



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Politics

DSS confirms raid on Igboho's house, Declares him Wanted

...Parades 13 Suspected Armed Yoruba Nation Agitators, Recover Arms

The Department of State Services (DSS) on Thursday said a team of joint security operatives raided the home of Yoruba Nation agitator Sunday Adeyemo aka Sunday Igboho in Ibadan, arresting 13 of his armed men.

DSS Spokesman, Dr. Peter Afunanya, disclosed this in a briefing with journalists late this evening. He said the raid was based on intelligence that Igboho was stockpiling arms to cause chaos within the region.

Afunanya said when the security operatives approached the house, they were attacked by nine of Igboho's boys who engaged them in a gun duel but were subsequently overpowered.

According to him, two of Igboho's men were killed while an operative sustained injuries, however, Igboho escaped during the gun battle and is currently on the run.

Afunanya who said the long arm of the law will still reach Igboho, urged the agitator to turn himself in or be tracked down.

The 13 suspected armed agitators that were arrested consist of 12 males and 1 female. A large cache of arms and ammunition was also recovered by the operatives.



Igboho

Kenya Govt. denies involvement in arrest, extradition of Nnamdi Kanu

Kenya government on Friday denied involvement in the arrest of IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu, saying "it does not want to be dragged into Nigeria's internal affairs."

Kenya High Commissioner to Nigeria, Amb. Wilfred Machage spoke in Abuja on Friday.

He said; "I wish to categorically state that we are not happy at this ridiculous attempt of dragging the name of Kenya and President Uhuru Kenyatta on this matter of arrest and extradition of self-claimed IPOB leader."

Gov. Wike approves N200 million for State Ministry of Social Welfare

River State Governor, Nyesom Wike has approved a grant of two hundred million naira (N200m) for the State Ministry of Social Welfare.

The Governor announced the approval, Friday at the commissioning ceremony of the reconstructed state rehabilitation centre in Iriebe, Obio Akpor local government area of the state.

The Governor said the grant is aimed at

ensuring the smooth running of the centre by the ministry.

In his words "For the commissioner of Social Welfare, for what I have seen here today, I will give you the grant to make sure here is run smoothly. I'm not going to wait for any budget. It's from my own office. I will give you money to keep here in the standard it is supposed to be".

"I don't want to hear that there is no light

or there is no food. So we will give you a grant of 200 million naira to make sure the less privileged people get all the help they can. I don't want to hear that they lack food".

The governor, however, threatened that the job of the Commissioner for Social Welfare will be on the line any day he receives any excuse on why the rehabilitation centre is not running optimally.

DSS approves Nnamdi Kanu's meeting with his lawyer

The Department of State Security Service has agreed to allow the leader of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu to meet with his lawyers.

This was disclosed by Nnamdi Kanu's counsel, Ifeanyi Ejiofor through his Twitter handle on Friday.

"Update, Thankfully Our effort is

yielding the desired result, We have just received a communication approving Our visit to Our Client- Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. Shall keep the World posted on the outcome, immediately after the meeting, later in the Day. God is with Us," Ejiofor tweeted.

Kanu has been in the custody of the Nigerian Secret Police since he was arrested

and repatriated from Kenya to Nigeria on Sunday to face trial after jumping bail in 2017 for charges bothering on terrorism, treasonable felony, illegal possession of arms among others, levied against him.

The IPOB leader has been scheduled to appear before the Abuja Federal High Court for the continuation of his trial from the 26-27 July 2021.

Mass Sack: NLC begins nationwide strike mobilization against Kaduna State Govt ...Notify all State Council Chairpersons

By Gabriel Udeh, Kaduna

Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC, has commenced mobilization of workers nationwide for industrial action and protest against what it described as extreme anti-workers policies of the Kaduna State Government.

This was contained in a letter of notice to all State Council Chairpersons in all NLC State Councils, titled: "Notice on Mobilization for Nationwide strike action". The letter issued Wednesday by the national headquarters of the union and dated 30 June 2021, stated that National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of the

Congress took the decision in June 22 2021.

Signed by the Union's Ag General Secretary, Comrade Ismail Bello and national President, Comrade Ayuba p. Wabba, and two other officials, the letter explained that the "meeting of the Congress held on June 22, 2021 resolved to activate the earlier decision to withdraw all services by workers nationwide.

It read in parts: "You may recall that the last National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of the Congress held on June 22, 2021 resolved to activate the earlier decision by the NEC of the Congress to withdraw all services by workers nationwide as part of an industrial action and protest against the

extreme anti-workers policies of the Kaduna State Government.

According to the release, the decision of the NLC Congress is In tandem with the requirement of the law.

"The NEC through its communique released at the end of its meeting held on June 22, 2021, issued a notice for a nationwide strike action to all employers of labour.

"In line with the resolution and notice, you are requested to immediately convene a meeting of the State Executive Council and report back to the Congress headquarters. "This is to ensure broad based participation and mobilization of all workers in the state for the proposed action", it added.

Imo: Supreme Court to hear PDP suit seeking Uzodinma's sack, Ihedioha's return

The Supreme Court will soon fix a date to hear the motion filed by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) demanding the sack of Imo Governor, Hope Uzodinma.

The party, through its lawyer, Phillips Umeadi filed additional processes in relation to the motion filed in 2020.

The PDP wants the Supreme Court to reverse its decision that removed Emeka Ihedioha as Governor months after he won the March 9, 2019 election.

The respondents to the motion on notice marked: SC/1384/2019 are Uche Nwosu, Action Peoples Party (APP), Uche Nnadi and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The PDP faulted the apex court for declaring Uzodinma of the All

Progressives Congress (APC) the winner after disqualifying Nwosu on the grounds that he was nominated as the candidate of both the Action Alliance (AA) and APC.

The opposition is demanding that the court declare that both the AA and the APC did not produce a candidate in view of Nwosu's double nomination and his disqualification by the court on December 20, 2019.

The PDP urged the court to order that Uzodinma was not a candidate by himself or of any party, and to order INEC to withdraw the certificate of return issued to him.

The suit is seeking a certificate of return for Ihedioha as the duly elected Governor "having scored the second

highest number of votes in the said election sequel to the judgment of this court in Appeal No: SC/1462/2019.

The PDP said the APC could not have substituted the Nwosu with Uzodinma as the candidate because such is not recognized under the Electoral Act.

"Senator Hope Uzodinma could not have been a candidate in the election as an independent candidate as such right is not available to him."

"Emeka Ihedioha, who scored the second highest number of votes after Senator Hope Uzodinma, from the judgment of this court, ought to be issued a certificate of return by the fourth respondent (INEC) and sworn in accordingly", the motion read in part.

Special Reports

China will stick to and continuously improve its political party system



The Zhejiang Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference holds a meeting on promoting the comprehensive treatment of plastic waste in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang province, March 30, 2021. (Photo by Song Jianhao/People's Daily Online)

By People's Daily

On the occasion of the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the State Council Information Office of China recently issued a report on the country's political party system, which demonstrated China's determination and efforts to uphold CPC leadership, develop socialism with Chinese characteristics, and improve its political party system.

The report, which looked back on how the system has been created, developed and improved, and elaborated on the distinctive characteristics and strengths of the system in political and social life, will effectively help people understand that China's political party system is the result of a historical process as well as a structure of enormous strength, creativity and vitality.

A country's political party system is a major component of its political framework and makes a critical contribution to democracy. The system best suited to a country is determined by its history, traditions, and realities, the report pointed

out.

The system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC is a new type of party system growing from China's soil, and plays a unique role in building consensus, optimizing decision-making, coordinating relationships among parties and maintaining political stability, stressed Xi Jinping, general secretary of CPC Central Committee.

Following the principles of long-term coexistence, mutual oversight, sincerity, and sharing the rough times and the smooth, the CPC and eight other political parties in China have created a multiparty cooperation system in which the CPC exercises state power and the other parties participate fully in the administration of state affairs under the leadership of the CPC.

Besides, the CPC has worked in solidarity with other political parties and non-affiliates, and traveled an extraordinary and glorious journey together, registering remarkable achievements in multiparty cooperation.

Since the 18th National Congress of the

CPC in 2012, China has further consolidated the ideological and political foundation of multiparty cooperation, and perfected the framework of the party system under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core. China's political institution and political party system are exerting more extensive and stronger influence.

China's political party system embodies the essence of Chinese traditions, reflects the intrinsic requirements of socialism and conforms to China's realities and its needs in state governance. As a basic component of China's political system, it contributes to China's development, national rejuvenation, and social progress, and is of great benefit to the people's well-being.

To govern a country, ensure safety and order in society require building sound systems. China's political party system creates a unique political model, and is essential to the task of modernizing China's governance system and capacity.

The country's political party system, as a combination of Marxist political party theory and its realities, truly, extensively and in the long term represents the fundamental interests of all people and all ethnic groups and fulfills their aspiration, avoiding the defects of the old-fashioned party system which represents only a selective few or the vested interest.

It unites all political parties and people without party affiliation toward a common goal, effectively preventing the flaws of the absence of oversight in one-party rule or power rotation and nasty competition among multiple political parties.

Moreover, it pools ideas and suggestions through institutional, procedural, and standardized arrangements and develops a scientific and democratic decision-making mechanism, steering away from another weakness of the old-fashioned party system, in which decision-making and governance, confined by interests of different political parties, classes, regions and groups, tears the society apart.

Over the past seven decades and more, this system has grown and matured. It provides Chinese ideas for the world in terms of modern party politics, and offers a new model for global political progress.

The political party system fits China's reality and fine traditional culture of the pursuit for the common good, inclusiveness, and seeking common ground while shelving differences, and is a great contribution to political civilization of humanity, according to Comrade Xi Jinping.

China will, as always, learn and draw from the positive experiences of other countries, but will not imitate other political party systems mechanically, or impose its own on any other country. China respects the right of other countries to choose a political party system best adapted to their own realities. Based on equality and mutual respect, China is willing to strengthen cooperation and mutual learning with other countries, promote democracy on the international stage, and eventually build a global community with a shared future for mankind.



CPC always puts people above everything

By He Yin, People's Daily

As the Communist Party of China (CPC) is about to celebrate its 100th anniversary, the international society is also closely observing the world's biggest Marxist ruling party that has gone through 100 glorious years, governed the world's largest socialist country for over 70 years and owned 91 million members, trying to find an answer to why and how the CPC works there.

More and more international personages are realizing that remaining committed to serving the people and relying on them in all endeavors, and putting them at the very center is the key to the CPC's success, as well as a source of vitality for this 100-year-old party.

The CPC's efforts to seek happiness for the Chinese people are lauded by foreign political parties and dignitaries, as well as people from all walks of life. They believe the journey of the CPC proves that a political party can achieve anything when it takes people's

interests as its top priority. Speaking for and working with the Chinese people, protecting their fundamental interests, and practically solving the problems of their top concerns, the CPC is sincerely recognized and supported by the Chinese people. That's why it is able to unite and lead the Chinese people to achieve great strides of national development.

It was written in the Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels that the proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense



A member of a Communist Party of China voluntarily works in planting camellia seedlings in Yongfeng county, Ji'an, east China. (Photo by Liu Haojun/People's Daily Online)

Special Reports

Over 100 Foreign diplomats visit exhibition on CPC history in Beijing



Jordanian Ambassador to China Hussam Al Hussein (left) and Lebanese Ambassador to China Milia Jabbour visit an exhibition on the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at the Museum of the CPC in Beijing, June 24. (Photo by Zhang Bolan/People's Daily)

By Zhang Bolan, People's Daily

Over 100 diplomatic envoys of foreign countries and representatives of international organizations to China visited an exhibition on the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at the Museum of the CPC in Beijing on June 24.

Through the exhibition under the theme "staying true to the founding mission," they got a better

understanding of the extraordinary journey of the CPC over the past century.

At the exhibition hall for the site of the first National Congress of the CPC, they saw photos and manuscripts that bring back memories of the revolutionary practice of the CPC in its early days and felt the original aspiration of the CPC members.

"I saw how the CPC has struggled for its goals at the exhibition. The founding of the New China helped the Chinese people 'stand up,'" said Ahcene Boukhelfa, Algerian Ambassador to China, who noted that every Chinese has the opportunities to realize his/her dreams today.

Through art forms including paintings, sculptures, music and videos, as well as technological means related to sound and lighting, the exhibition aims to bring immersive experience to visitors.

A glasses-free 3D animated film at the exhibition showed envoys and representatives vividly the Long March military retreat in the CPC history. They recorded the film with their mobile phones, then gave a big round of

applause after hearing the interpretation of the narrator's words: "Every generation has its own long march, and every generation must see that march through."

Sudanese Ambassador to China Gafar Karar Ahmed pointed out that the CPC has led its people out of poverty and backwardness, and developed China into the world's second-largest economy, sincerely keeping its promise to the Chinese people.

China's experience in development belongs to both the country itself and the entire world, the Sudanese ambassador said.

At a simulated high-speed train cab, foreign envoys and representatives tried driving trains and experienced the speed of China's railways.

Jose Luis Bernal, Mexican Ambassador to China, has been in China for over 4 years, and marveled at China's rapid development. "I have witnessed changes in China with my own eyes. From my trips to many Chinese cities and villages, I find that China's transportation is getting more convenient, and its technologies have continuously advanced," he said.

More and more people in China have enjoyed modern life, said the Mexican ambassador, adding that smartphones and computers are widely used even in remote mountainous areas in China.

The CPC has strived to leave no region or individual behind on the road to realizing common prosperity, according to him.

Through the exhibits from different stages in the CPC history, envoys and representatives got to learn about the stories behind the development miracles the Chinese people have achieved under the leadership of the CPC.

After visiting the exhibition, they took selfies and posed for group photographs in front of a huge CPC flag sculpture at the west square of the Museum of the CPC.

It's really necessary to build such a museum for permanent and comprehensive exhibitions of the CPC history, said Carlos Miguel Pereira, Cuban Ambassador to China, who considers understanding the CPC history a necessity for learning about China.



Over 100 diplomatic envoys of foreign countries and representatives of international organizations to China visit an exhibition on the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at the Museum of the CPC in Beijing, June 24. (Photo by Zhang Bolan/People's Daily)



majority, in the interest of the immense majority. That explains why the matters of people are a touchstone for the quality of a political party and a regime.

Since the birth of the CPC, it has been a proletarian party. It was born for the people and prospers for the people. It always stays with the people and fights for their interests, which is a fundamental goal of the party's development. General secretary Xi Jinping of the CPC Central Committee said the CPC has no special interests of its own, and puts the interests of the people at first at any time.

In early 20th century, American journalist Jack Belden predicted that the CPC would succeed as the party completely won the support of the people. Since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the CPC has taken striving for the wellbeing of the people as its ultimate mission, and constantly enhanced people's sense of fulfillment, happiness and security. Robert Griffiths, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Britain noted that the CPC is a party that's always close to the people.

CPC hears the voices of the people and draws wisdom from them before making every policy and reform measure. Martin Albrow, fellow of the British Academy of Social Sciences pointed out that one of the secrets to the CPC leading Chinese people to achieve development is that the political party has always been serving the people whole-heartedly. The success of poverty alleviation, as well as



Members of the Communist Party of China help villagers harvest wheat in Yinan county, east China's Shandong province, June 9, 2021. (Photo by Du Yubao/People's Daily Online)



Leader group instructs farmers to graft and cultivate in China's Jiangxi province, May 18, 2021. (Photo by ...)

the major strategic result of epidemic control came from the CPC's people-centered development philosophy. Kishore Mahbubani, a distinguished fellow of the National University of Singapore believes that the 1.4 billion Chinese people are embracing a new peak of the Chinese civilization under the leadership of the CPC.

The increasingly closer relationship between the CPC and the Chinese people

is boosting the confidence of China to overcome all challenges and risks. It is a source of ceaseless energy for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The CPC will always make it its fundamental mission to strive for people's wellbeing and its fundamental purpose to serve the people whole heartedly, and rely on them for its historic cause, so as to make more contributions to the progress of human civilization.

Politics



El-zakzaky

El-zakzaky Trial: Ruling on 'No case submission' fixed for 28th July

By Gabriel Udeh, Kaduna

A Kaduna High Court on Thursday, adjourned till July 28 to rule on the defense counsel's No-Case-Submission in the "secret trial" of the leader of Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), Ibrahim Zakzaky and his wife Zeenat.

Justice Gideon Kurada adjourned the case after the prosecution and counsel to the defendants, addressed the court on the no case submission prayer. Mr Femi Falana, Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), and lead counsel to Zakzaky, who spoke to reporters shortly after the adjournment, prayed the Court to rule in favor of his clients.

"The prosecution and the defense addressed the court on the the no-case-submission prayer. "We did indicate last time that even though the prosecution called 15 witnesses, we felt that no case has been established to warrant our clients being in court.

"In other words, we addressed the court that there is nothing to defend.

"The court took our addresses and adjourned to July 28 for ruling on the No-Case-Submission," Falana said.

Recall that Mr Dari Bayero, lead Counsel in the "secret trial" had at the close of their submission, on March 31, prayed the Court to sentence the defendants.

Bayero had asked the court to over rule the defence, and sentence Zakzaky and his wife, Zeenat as provided by the law.

"We are satisfied with the way the case has gone so far, we have presented 15 witnesses, including Army Generals, who are key actors and players that led to the filing of the case against the IMN leader.

"One of our prayers are that the court should over rule the No-Case-Submission, over rule the defence, convict the defendants accordingly, and pass the necessary sentence as provided for in the law," Bayero said.

Nigeria-UK Discuss Electoral Act Amendment, PIB And Twitter Ban

Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN has hosted the High Commissioner of Great Britain, Ms. Catriona Laing on Thursday.

The meeting which lasted for almost an hour served as a platform for discussing bilateral issues relating to Asset Recovery, Anti-corruption crusade, amendment of the Electoral Act, the Audit Bill, Petroleum Industry Bill, Twitter ban, and counter-terrorism approaches.

Malami said the fundamental interest and objective of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration was to leverage the bill to enhance value in terms of creating an amiable environment for investment, protecting the public interest for the maximum benefit of the country.

On Petroleum Industry Bill, the Minister said necessary steps have been taken to ensure the pending

bills are transmitted to the President for assent.

Malami said the essence of the amendment of the Electoral Act was to enhance the democratic system thereby aiming at addressing delays in judicial determination of pre-election matters, as well as ensuring justice and fairness in the conduct of election processes including party primaries.

He said to strengthen the fight against corruption the government came up with the Proceeds of Crime Bill and Audit Bill among others.

Malami said public interest has been the uppermost consideration within which the context of freedom of expression should be regulated noting that reasonable restrictions to freedom of expression are locally and internationally recognized.

"Our government is not averse to freedom. Freedom is not borderless. Freedom of expression must not be used in such a manner that incites citizens to violence or calls for an

overthrow of a democratically elected government. There are bounds to freedom within the laws," he said.

On Twitter ban in the country, Malami said the government has established a committee on the matter and that the company has approached the government over the issue. He maintained that the interest of Nigerian interest matters most for any company that wants to do business in the country.

"If you want to operate as a business entity in Nigeria, you must do so within the context of Nigerian laws. Nothing offensive and nothing that breaches the Nigerian laws should be entertained".

In her remarks, the High Commissioner of Great Britain, Ms. Catriona Laing, thanked the Minister for the "clarification" of the issues maintaining that the steps taken in the fight against corruption and electoral reforms are "really encouraging".

Yoruba Nation Rally must hold in Lagos - Sunday Igboho insists

Despite the Department of State Security (DSS) raid on residence of Yoruba Nation Agitator, Chief Sunday Adeyemo aka Sunday Igboho, the Yoruba Nation rally in Lagos will go on as planned.

But Lagos Commissioner of Police, CP Hakeem Odumosu warned Igboho and other agitators not to stage any rally in Lagos.

He stated that anyone caught participating or facilitating the rally would be dealt with within according to the law.

In a live broadcast monitored by The Nation on Friday morning, Igboho's spokesman, Olayomi Koiki, explained that the rally will

go as planned at Ojota, adding that Igboho will be back stronger.

He said: "I can still confirm officially that the Lagos rally in as much as whatever news or rumours you've been listening to from different outlets, will go as planned.

"The 3rd of July Mega rally will go as planned. All arrangements for the rally has been planned and nothing has changed.

"I have spoken to the organisers, nothing has changed so far. 3rd of July from exactly 9:00am in the morning. The whole arrangement and planning is going on." "I've spoken with the general Secretary of Ilana Omo Odua, George Akinola and also in the early

hours before noon, I spoke with Banji Akintoye and he is working tirelessly for the release of those taken away.

"The rally in Lagos is going to be a peaceful rally, it is going to be a mega rally, do not be disturbed about what happened. So many development took place at Igboho's house.

"We might get a form of video from Igboho about the Lagos rally, which might be released, we'll be deciding that in the next 24 hours."

He added: "He (Igboho) asked me to tell you all, not to be weighed down about what happened, he is standing with the Yoruba Nation agenda".

Reps reject lifting of Twitter suspension in Nigeria

The House of Representatives has rejected the lifting of Twitter suspension in Nigeria.

The rejection came on Thursday while the House was considering the report of its Committee on the issue.

Daybreak recalls that the Federal Government recently suspended the operations of Twitter in the country following allegations that it allows content capable of threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria.

Despite the suspension, some Nigerians

have continued to access Twitter using the Private Virtual Network, VPN.

Reacting to the violation of the order, the federal government had promised to prosecute defaulters.

The House of Reps had thereafter, mandated its Committees on Information, ICT, Intelligence, Justice and Orientation to investigate the circumstances of the suspension by the Federal Government.

Considering the report on Thursday, Toby Okechukwu, the Deputy

Minority Leader of the House, suggested an amendment to one of the recommendations.

The recommendation asked that "the Federal Government take into cognizance the negative effect of the Twitter suspension on Nigerians who depend on the platform for their livelihood" and lift the suspension.

Formally supported by another member, the motion was rejected by the majority of the House when put to the vote.

PIB: NNPC now accountable for bill – Lawmaker

Kingsley Ujuma, representing APC, Imo at the House of Reps says the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) will now be accountable for the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB),

Ujuma who is also a member of the Petroleum Industry Bill Committee said this while briefing newsmen on Friday in Abuja, following the passage of the PIB on July 1, by the two chambers of the National Assembly.

He said the NNPC would now be a limited liability company whose

profits would be accrued to the country and subsequently moved to the Federation Account.

Ujuma said the bill would galvanise all assets, including the economic and security inherent therein which would bring effective production, transparency and good governance to the country.

"Today, with the passage of the bill, we are talking about an oil sector that is organised with governance policy and profitability and viability," Ujuma said.

He said 99 percent of lawmakers voted for the passage and agreed with the content of the recommendation of the PIB committee.

"This bill has been in the cooler over a decade because of disagreement over grey areas. It got to a point where there were too many vested interests and that could not help the passage," he said.

For the host communities, the lawmaker said the bill, if assented to, would give power to them to participate in their own resources.

Ondo Assembly Passes Anti-Grazing Bill, Two Others

The Ondo State House of Assembly on Friday passed a bill to regulate security, rearing and grazing of livestock and establishment of ranches.

The Chairman House Committee on Agriculture, Honourable Taofeek Oladele observed that the bill when passed into law will prevent the destruction of farm crops in the state.

Oladele noted that the law will address clashes between herders and farmers, enhance the growth of livestock farming, prevent control and manage the spread of diseases and as well encourage modern techniques of animal husbandry.

After a thorough debate on the bill, it was considered necessary for approval and the Speaker, Rt. Honourable Bamidele Oleyeloogun ruled in favour of the bill after a voice vote.

The lawmakers also passed two other bills into law: the judicial autonomy bill as well as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) bill.

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Taofeek Oladele

Inside FCT



AMAC withdraws Marshal Guards from transport activities

The Chairman of Abuja Municipal Area Council AMAC, of the Federal Capital Territory FCT, Abdullahi Candido, has directed the immediate withdrawal of AMAC Marshal Guards from all transport activities in the area council.

The council Chairman gave the directive in a statement by his spokesman, Dayo Lawal, on Thursday, saying that the decision was sequel to developments in the area council and in response to public interest, adding that the guards had since been redeployed to continue with their statutory functions of assisting the conventional security agencies in ensuring a secured society.

He warned that any person or group of persons found in AMAC uniform or otherwise carrying out any transport activity should be reported immediately.

AMAC established the marshal guards as a special security outfit to complement the effort of the conventional security agencies in combating crime, and in the course of their operations, they were deployed to the streets to enforce traffic laws.

2 motorcycle snatchers apprehended in Kubwa

Two people have been arrested by the police for attempting to snatch a motorcycle in Kubwa, Abuja.

A resident of Kubwa, Yusuf Gambo, who said the incident happened at about 5pm around Lion Share, explained that the two snatchers attacked a cyclist with pestle after they flagged him down and told him to assist them convey a patient to the hospital.

He said, "The cyclist agreed to collect N300 to carry the patient, but on getting close to a building, they asked him to stop and one of them hit the cyclist with a pestle and he fell down, but raised alarm and the police came and rounded them up and rushed the cyclist to a hospital.

"We are calling on the security agencies to up there game in terms of beefing security efforts in our communities. And we are appealing to council Chairman to encourage local security to curb such crime in the areas"

Afreximbank to build world class African Medical Center in Abuja

The African Export Import Bank Afreximbank, a pan-African multilateral trade finance institution with its headquarters in Cairo, Egypt is set to construct an African Medical Center of Excellence in Abuja.

The President and Chairman, Board of Directors of the Bank, Professor Benedict O. Oramah made this known during a visit to the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory Administration in Abuja.

Professor Oramah said the bank's team was in the FCTA to brief the Minister on the progress made on the construction of the African Medical Center of Excellence and the African Trade Center in Abuja.

He also commended the FCT Minister for the tremendous support the bank has enjoyed from the FCTA, especially as it begins to implement some of its initiatives in Nigeria that are based in Abuja.

While explaining on the establishment of the Medical Center, the Bank's Director Export Development and Ag. Director Project and Asset Based Finance, Oluranti Doherty said that the bank was working closely with leading international medical, human resource and construction consultants and expressed optimism that the ground breaking ceremony will be carried out by November of 2021.

The FCT Minister, Malam Muhammad Musa Bello who received the delegation, expressed his excitement about the project

and said that establishment of the Medical Centre in Abuja will not only attract people seeking medical attention within the African continent to the Center, but also reduce medical tourism from Nigeria.

Malam Bello who commended Afreximbank for its various projects and investments in the FCT said, "We feel highly honoured with your tangible presence in respect of the projects you are doing here and we look forward to your investments either directly or as an enabler because as you know, Abuja itself is a city that started from scratch and it's a work in progress. So, we want enablers like you."

The Minister also urged the bank to support the FCT Administration in the provision of infrastructure, especially in the proposed location of the Medical Centre of Excellence as well as the powering of street and traffic lights within the city.

Speaking further on electricity generation and possible areas of support from the bank, the Minister said that Nigerian laws made provisions for the Eligible Customer that consumes electricity in excess of 2 megawatts to independently source for electricity. He said that the FCT could explore this possibility with support from the bank.

He said "the power laws in Nigeria now allows for what we call Eligible Customer. Once

your consumption is up to two megawatts and obviously the consumption of the city is far above two megawatts, that allows us to create a solution that is off grid, and then of course we look at renewable options."

The FCT Minister, had in May last year presented the Certificate of Occupancy of the land for the African Medical Center of Excellence to be situated in the proposed Abuja Medical City Development Project, to Mr Abdoulaye Kone, Afreximbank's Regional Chief Operating Officer, Anglophone West Africa.

Also present at the meeting were the FCT Permanent Secretary, Mr. Olusade Adesola, Chief of Staff to the Minister, Malam Bashir Mai Bornu, Solicitor General, of the FCTA Barr. Yusuf Wodi, Director Lands, Adamu Hussain Jibrin, amongst other staff of the FCTA and the bank.



Benedict Oramah

FCTA empowers 120 rehabilitated drug addicts

The FCT Administration has rehabilitated and empowered over 120 persons who were involved in drugs addicted persons in the nation's capital Abuja.

The victims, mostly youths, have been reintegrated as part of measures to conquer the menace in the territory.

Making this disclosure, acting director, FCT Youth Development Department in the Social Development Secretariat SDS, Hadija Ladi Umar said the FCTA is empowering rehabilitated youth with variety of skills, in order to guard against relapsing to the menace.

Umar, who noted that one of the greatest problems that is bedeviling youth today is the issue of illicit drugs abuse, as out of the over 14 million Nigerians are involved in the menace, a higher percentage of that demography is among youth.

She spoke during the commemoration and enlightenment campaign against illicit drug abuse and trafficking against persons, Nyanya area of

the nation's capital city.

According to her, in the past one week, we have been engaged in a lot of activities to commemorate the day, and there is ongoing skills training on confectioneries, leather works, metal fabrication and ICT.

"Illicit drug addiction has become what actually destroy our youth. So we in the Youth Department, have always put machinery in place to ensure we do the best within the available resources to us to conquer the menace.

"Now internationally, the campaign against illicit drugs addiction this year is "Share the fact", but we added "Engaging the Mind while engaging the hand", as our sub theme in the FCT.

"The sub theme is guiding our activities, that's why we are infusing skills empowerment programme into the, because beyond this broad sensitisation and advocacy campaign, we have a continuous programme in partnership with an NGO, we support them, but they bring the

manpower.

"When you rehabilitate someone, you detoxify the person by doing all sorts of therapy and follow up to their families and environment, so that they don't relapse to it. And reintegration is very important, that's why we are empowering them with skills," she stressed.

Earlier in a keynote address, SDS acting secretary, Mr. Kelvin Ike, who bemoaned the negative impact of the menace especially on youth in the society, said it calls for intensive collective strategic intervention.

Ike therefore reiterated FCTA's resolve to eradicate the menace through continuous comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration of illicit drugs addicts in the territory.

He added that the secretariat through its youth department would not relent on intensive sensitisation and advocacy campaign as well as continuous youth empowerment initiatives, aimed at tackling illicit drugs abuse and issues affecting youth in the territory.

FCT council's poll: PDP accused of substituting candidates in Gwagwalada

Ahead of next year's Area Council Election in the Federal Capital Territory, the People's Democratic Party, PDP, Gwagwalada Chapter has been accused of substituting democratically elected candidates in the primary election held in April this year.

One of the affected candidates who contested for the primary election for Kutunku Ward, Shuaibu Ibrahim stated this while speaking with journalists in Abuja.

Ibrahim said seven aspirants indicated interest in the PDP primary election after purchasing their forms and passed through the screening process and issued clearance certificate signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the screening committee for the primary election for Kutunku Ward.

According to him, after due consultation as directed by the party leadership in Gwagwalada, six other stepped down for him before the election while he was duly elected as the Councillorship Candidate for Kutunku Ward and ratified by the 15 man committee set up by the Party for the primary election in the ward.

He further stated that after the primary election his name was submitted online in INEC website and was issued an acknowledgement slip on Thursday, May 27, 2021.

"To my surprise, we heard that our names had been substituted by the Chairman of the Party, Mr Abdullahi Yunusa and other renowned leadership of the party at the state level for some All Progressives Congress, APC, members who could not secure ticket in APC and have agreed to defect to PDP to contest the 2022 Area Council Election in Gwagwalada" Shuaibu Ibrahim explained

He alleged that the leadership of both APC and PDP in Gwagwalada had approached him on the issue and offered money and job opportunity for his wife but he declined to save his political career in Gwagwalada due to the massive support he has been getting from his people in the area.

Shuaibu Ibrahim therefore appealed to PDP in Gwagwalada not to tamper with his ticket and allowed him to contest for next year's FCT Area Council Election.

Meanwhile, all attempts to get the reaction of Chairman of People's Democratic Party, PDP, Gwagwalada Chapter, Abdullahi Yunusa on the issue proved abortive after several telephone calls and text messages.

Entertainment



Baba Ijesha: Princess blasts veteran actress Iya Rainbow over recent interview

Princess says Iya Rainbow was instructing her to facilitate Baba Ijesha's release from police custody.

In a recent interview with BBC Yoruba, the veteran actress said she appealed to Princess to drop the molestation case against movie star Baba Ijesha.

In a series of videos posted via her Instagram page on Thursday, July 1, 2021, Princess slammed Iya Rainbow for her comments.

"Mama Rainbow, I am ashamed of you. You are not a good mother. I regret I ever respected you. I regret that I ever saw you as a mother and grandmother. You said you called for four days and that I did not answer you and that

now they have released him," she said.

"For your information, you called me just once, telling me that I should go and release him. You were instructing me and I never disrespected you. I even took my time to explain to you. You told me that Baba Ijesha called you to help him beg me that he has offended me. I then asked you if he told you what he did and you said no he didn't."

"You can just imagine. Mama Rainbow that I held in high esteem. If I was your child or the victim was your child, would you have done that? I did not expect this from you at all. You came and you were so insensitive to say you

called me and were pleading for the case not to be escalated," she said.

"How can you say such a thing. Don't ever! Anything that concerns me please just stay away from it because I used to respect you up until this evening. It is a shame."

"If I was your child, would you come to me and say I should go and release somebody that is in police custody for a crime they are investigating? and then you go online to start saying I wanted to sneak out(of the court). Were you there? Were you with me when I was in court?"

"Who are you Mama Rainbow? You are supposed to be a role model,

a grandmother, a strong christian? I am ashamed of you that you can come for me in that way at your age. Are you praying for this to happen to your children or your children's children? If this happened to you, would you handle it this way? Must you talk Mama Rainbow?"

Baba Ijesha was arrested in April for allegedly molesting the foster daughter of comedian Princess.

In a video that has since gone viral, the disgraced actor confessed to molesting the little girl when she was 7.

He was arraigned before a magistrate court in June on a four-count charge.

He has, however, been granted bail.



Nollywood actor Baba Ijesha

Bella Shmurda to release 8-track sophomore EP, 'High Tension'

On June 3, 2021, Headies-nominated Nigerian singer, Bella Shmurda announced the imminent release of his sophomore EP, 'High Tension Vol. 2.'

On his Instagram page @bella_shmurda, he wrote that, "Anubis told hanuman to take control... Though [sic] communication wasn't frequent, but the connection is sanguine in nature and that's why my life issa temptation plus a young man persuaded by optimism, boy

couldn't resist murmurs of the strike, which made his temperament Tension underneath the cloud and now a lifestyle so lightened by the weakness of pessimism.

"I go shock anybody wey no take caution. Republikans ft. myself on all tracks we made and that's why I remain a fan now and forevermore "This is the Time of our lives, do you have any options? 2.0 kindly take the next Turn! I hope you got some thyme? I got some!"

"Goals of a drummer boy 1960 - duaka ekwensi. Top member of the federal republik in publik."

The EP will have eight tracks. You can pre-order HERE. The EP will drop under Dagbana Republik and OneRPM.

Early in 2020, he released his debut EP, High Tension.

King Promise can match Davido boot to boot - Andy Dosty

Davido though short in physique is seen as 'Goliath' when it comes to his music and impact across the globe.

However, despite the valour his music holds, Andy Dosty believes Ghana's King Promise, has everything to match Davido boot for boot to take Ghanaian music to the promised land where Davido with his colleague Nigerian acts have been taking Nigeria.

The Hitz FM presenter was speaking on Paul Adom Otchere's Good Evening Ghana, where he discussed the just ended VGMA's with other showbiz pundits on the flagship show aired on Metro TV.

Andy Dosty was arguing that

Nigerians have a better industry "because they have the numbers, that's number 1, number 2, their stars are rising" and Paul quizzed "are they not better talented" to which he replied "no way".

But Paul said, "when I watch the Nigerian guy ... Wizkid, 2 Face Idibia from Nigeria ... the Nigerian people I mean back in the day we can talk about Kanda Bongo Man, the guy from Ivory Coast, Freddy Meirway, Alpha Blonde, even then we felt that these foreign musicians seem to have some mettle we don't see here".



Diplomatic Corner

Chinese President Xi Jinping last Thursday 1st of July gave a speech at Beijing's Tiananmen Square to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party. For the records Daybreak provides an official English-language translation of the full speech provided by the CCP.

“Comrades and friends, Today, the first of July, is a great and solemn day in the history of both the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese nation. We gather here to join all Party members and Chinese people of all ethnic groups around the country in celebrating the centenary of the Party, looking back on the glorious journey the Party has traveled over 100 years of struggle, and looking ahead to the bright prospects for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

To begin, let me extend warm congratulations to all Party members on behalf of the CPC Central Committee. On this special occasion, it is my honor to declare on behalf of the Party and the people that through the continued efforts of the whole Party and the entire nation, we have realized the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. This means that we have brought about a historic resolution to the problem of absolute poverty in China, and we are now marching in confident strides toward the second centenary goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects. This is a great and glorious accomplishment for the Chinese nation, for the Chinese people, and for the Communist Party of China!

Comrades and friends, The Chinese nation is a great nation. With a history of more than 5,000 years, China has made indelible contributions to the progress of human civilization. After the Opium War of 1840, however, China was gradually reduced to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society and suffered greater ravages than ever before. The country endured intense humiliation, the people were subjected to great pain, and the Chinese civilization was plunged into darkness. Since that time, national rejuvenation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation.

To save the nation from peril, the Chinese people put up a courageous fight. As noble-minded patriots sought to pull the nation together, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, the Reform Movement of 1898, the Yihetuan Movement, and the Revolution of 1911 rose one after the other, and a variety of plans were devised to ensure national survival, but all of these ended in failure. China was in urgent need of new ideas to lead the movement to save the nation and a new organization to rally revolutionary forces.

With the salvos of Russia's October Revolution in 1917, Marxism-Leninism was brought to China. Then in 1921, as the Chinese people and the Chinese nation were undergoing a great awakening and Marxism-Leninism was becoming closely integrated with the Chinese workers' movement, the Communist Party of China was born.

The founding of a communist party in China was an epoch-making event, which profoundly changed the course of Chinese history in modern times, transformed the future of the Chinese people and nation, and altered the landscape of world development.

Since the very day of its founding, the Party has made seeking happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation its aspiration and mission. All the struggle, sacrifice, and creation through which the Party has united and led the Chinese people over the past hundred years has been tied together by one ultimate theme-bringing about the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

To realize national rejuvenation, the Party united and led the Chinese people



We have realized the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society -Xi Jinping

in fighting bloody battles with unyielding determination, achieving great success in the new-democratic revolution.

Through the Northern Expedition, the Agrarian Revolutionary War, the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, and the War of Liberation, we fought armed counter-revolution with armed revolution, toppling the three mountains of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism and establishing the People's Republic of China, which made the people masters of the country. We thus secured our nation's independence and liberated our people.

The victory of the new-democratic revolution put an end to China's history as a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, to the state of total disunity that existed in old China, and to all the unequal treaties imposed on our country by foreign powers and all the privileges that imperialist powers enjoyed in China. It created the fundamental social conditions for realizing national rejuvenation.

Through tenacious struggle, the Party and the Chinese people showed the world that the Chinese people had stood up, and that the time in which the Chinese nation could be bullied and abused by others was gone forever.

To realize national rejuvenation, the Party united and led the Chinese people in endeavoring to build a stronger China with a spirit of self-reliance, achieving great success in socialist revolution and construction. By carrying out socialist revolution, we eliminated the exploitative and repressive feudal system that had persisted in China for thousands of years, and established socialism as our basic system. In the process of socialist

construction, we overcame subversion, sabotage, and armed provocation by imperialist and hegemonic powers, and brought about the most extensive and profound social changes in the history of the Chinese nation. This great transformation of China from a poor and backward country in the East with a large population into a socialist country laid down the fundamental political conditions and the institutional foundations necessary for realizing national rejuvenation.

Through tenacious struggle, the Party and the Chinese people showed the world that the Chinese people were capable of not only dismantling the old world, but also building a new one, that only socialism could save China, and that only socialism with Chinese characteristics could develop China. To realize national rejuvenation, the Party united and led the Chinese people in freeing the mind and forging ahead, achieving great success in reform, opening up, and socialist modernization.

We established the Party's basic line for the primary stage of socialism, resolutely advanced reform and opening up, overcame risks and challenges from every direction, and founded, upheld, safeguarded, and developed socialism with Chinese characteristics, thus bringing about a major turn with far-reaching significance in the history of the Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China. This enabled China to transform itself from a highly centralized planned economy to a socialist market economy brimming with vitality, and from a country that was largely isolated to one that is open to the outside world across the board. It also enabled China to achieve the historic leap from a country

with relatively backward productive forces to the world's second largest economy, and to make the historic transformation of raising the living standards of its people from bare subsistence to an overall level of moderate prosperity, and then ultimately to moderate prosperity in all respects. These achievements fueled the push toward national rejuvenation by providing institutional guarantees imbued with new energy as well as the material conditions for rapid development.

Through tenacious struggle, the Party and the Chinese people showed the world that by pursuing reform and opening up, a crucial move in making China what it is today, China had caught up with the times in great strides.

To realize national rejuvenation, the Party has united and led the Chinese people in pursuing a great struggle, a great project, a great cause, and a great dream through a spirit of self-confidence, self-reliance, and innovation, achieving great success for socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

Following the Party's 18th National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics entered a new era. In this new era, we have upheld and strengthened the Party's overall leadership, ensured coordinated implementation of the five-sphere integrated plan and the four-pronged comprehensive strategy, upheld and improved the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, modernized China's system and capacity for governance, remained committed to exercising rule-based governance over the Party, and developed a sound system of intraparty regulations. We have overcome a long list of major risks and challenges,

Diplomatic Corner

fulfilled the first centenary goal, and set out strategic steps for achieving the second centenary goal. All the historic achievements and changes in the cause of the Party and the country have provided the cause of national rejuvenation with more robust institutions, stronger material foundations, and a source of inspiration for taking greater initiative. Through tenacious struggle, the Party and the Chinese people have shown the world that the Chinese nation has achieved the tremendous transformation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong, and that China's national rejuvenation has become a historical inevitability.

Over the past hundred years, the Party has united and led the Chinese people in writing the most magnificent chapter in the millennia-long history of the Chinese nation, embodying the dauntless spirit that Mao Zedong expressed when he wrote, "Our minds grow stronger for the martyrs' sacrifice, daring to make the sun and the moon shine in the new sky." The great path we have pioneered, the great cause we have undertaken, and the great achievements we have made over the past century will go down in the annals of the development of the Chinese nation and of human civilization. Comrades and friends,

A hundred years ago, the pioneers of Communism in China established the Communist Party of China and developed the great founding spirit of the Party, which is comprised of the following principles: upholding truth and ideals, staying true to our original aspiration and founding mission, fighting bravely without fear of sacrifice, and remaining loyal to the Party and faithful to the people. This spirit is the Party's source of strength.

Over the past hundred years, the Party has carried forward this great founding spirit. Through its protracted struggles, it has developed a long line of inspiring principles for Chinese Communists and tempered a distinct political character. As history has kept moving forward, the spirit of the Party has been passed on from generation to generation. We will continue to promote our glorious traditions and sustain our revolutionary legacy, so that the great founding spirit of the Party will always be kept alive and carried forward. Comrades and friends,

We owe all that we have achieved over the past hundred years to the concerted efforts of the Chinese Communists, the Chinese people, and the Chinese nation. Chinese Communists, with comrades Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and Hu Jintao as their chief representatives, have made tremendous and historic contributions to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. To them, we express our highest respect.

Let us take this moment to cherish the memory of comrades Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, and other veteran revolutionaries who contributed greatly to China's revolution, construction, and reform, and to the founding, consolidation, and development of the Communist Party of China; let us cherish the memory of the revolutionary martyrs who bravely laid down their lives to establish, defend, and develop the People's Republic; let us cherish the memory of those who dedicated their lives to reform, opening up, and socialist modernization; and let us cherish the memory of all the men and women who fought tenaciously for national independence and the liberation of the people in modern times. Their great contributions to our motherland and our nation will be immortalized in the annals of history, and their noble spirit will live on forever in the hearts of the Chinese people. The people are the true heroes, for it is they who create history. On behalf of the CPC Central Committee, I would like to pay my highest respects to workers, farmers, and



...first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society

intellectuals across the country; to other political parties, public figures without party affiliation, people's organizations, and patriotic figures from all sectors of society; to all members of the People's Liberation Army, the People's Armed Police Force, the public security police, and the fire and rescue services; to all socialist working people; and to all members of the united front. I would like to extend my sincere greetings to compatriots in the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions and in Taiwan as well as overseas Chinese. And I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to people and friends from around the world who have shown friendship to the Chinese people and understanding and support for China's endeavors in revolution, development, and reform.

Comrades and friends, Though our Party's founding mission is easy to define, ensuring that we stay true to this mission is a more difficult task. By learning from history, we can understand why powers rise and fall. Through the mirror of history, we can find where we currently stand and gain foresight into the future. Looking back on the Party's 100-year history, we can see why we were successful in the past and how we can continue to succeed in the future. This will ensure that we act with greater resolve and purpose in staying true to our founding mission and pursuing a better future on the new journey that lies before us. As we put conscious effort into learning from history to create a bright future, we must bear the following in mind:

We must uphold the firm leadership of the Party. China's success hinges on the Party. The more than 180-year-long modern history of the Chinese nation, the 100-year-long history of the Party, and the more than 70-year-long history of the People's Republic of China all provide ample evidence that without the Communist Party of China, there would be no new China and no national rejuvenation.

The Party was chosen by history and the people. The leadership of the Party is the defining feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics and constitutes the greatest strength of this system. It is the foundation and lifeblood of the Party and the country, and the crux upon which the interests and wellbeing of all Chinese people depend.

On the journey ahead, we must uphold the Party's overall leadership and continue to enhance its leadership. We must be deeply conscious of the need to maintain political integrity, think in big-picture terms, follow the leadership core, and keep in alignment

with the central Party leadership. We must stay confident in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. We must uphold the core position of the General Secretary on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole, and uphold the Central Committee's authority and its centralized, unified leadership. Bearing in mind the country's most fundamental interests, we must enhance the Party's capacity to conduct sound, democratic, and law-based governance, and ensure that it fully exerts its core role in providing overall leadership and coordinating the efforts of all sides.

We must unite and lead the Chinese people in working ceaselessly for a better life. This country is its people; the people are the country. As we have fought to establish and consolidate our leadership over the country, we have in fact been fighting to earn and keep the people's support. The Party has in the people its roots, its lifeblood, and its source of strength. The Party has always represented the fundamental interests of all Chinese people; it stands with them through thick and thin and shares a common fate with them. The Party has no special interests of its own—it has never represented any individual interest group, power group, or privileged stratum. Any attempt to divide the Party from the Chinese people or to set the people against the Party is bound to fail. The more than 95 million Party members and the more than 1.4 billion Chinese people will never allow such a scenario to come to pass.

On the journey ahead, we must rely closely on the people to create history. Upholding the Party's fundamental purpose of wholeheartedly serving the people, we will stand firmly with the people, implement the Party's mass line, respect the people's creativity, and practice a people-centered philosophy of development. We will develop whole-process people's democracy, safeguard social fairness and justice, and resolve the imbalances and inadequacies in development and the most pressing difficulties and problems that are of great concern to the people. In doing so, we will make more notable and substantive progress toward achieving well-rounded human development and common prosperity for all.

We must continue to adapt Marxism to the Chinese context. Marxism is the fundamental guiding ideology upon which our Party and country are founded; it is the very soul of our Party and the banner under which it strives.

The Communist Party of China upholds the basic tenets of Marxism and the principle

of seeking truth from facts. Based on China's realities, we have developed keen insights into the trends of the day, seized the initiative in history, and made painstaking explorations. We have thus been able to keep adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of our times, and to guide the Chinese people in advancing our great social revolution. At the fundamental level, the capability of our Party and the strengths of socialism with Chinese characteristics are attributable to the fact that Marxism works.

On the journey ahead, we must continue to uphold Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the Theory of Three Represents, and the Scientific Outlook on Development, and fully implement the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. We must continue to adapt the basic tenets of Marxism to China's specific realities and its fine traditional culture. We will use Marxism to observe, understand, and steer the trends of our times, and continue to develop the Marxism of contemporary China and in the 21st century. We must uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics. We must follow our own path—this is the bedrock that underpins all the theories and practices of our Party. More than that, it is the historical conclusion our Party has drawn from its struggles over the past century. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is a fundamental achievement of the Party and the people, forged through innumerable hardships and great sacrifices, and it is the right path for us to achieve national rejuvenation. As we have upheld and developed socialism with Chinese characteristics and driven coordinated progress in material, political, cultural-ethical, social, and ecological terms, we have pioneered a new and uniquely Chinese path to modernization, and created a new model for human advancement. On the journey ahead, we must adhere to the Party's basic theory, line, and policy, and implement the five-sphere integrated plan and the four-pronged comprehensive strategy. We must deepen reform and opening up across the board, ground our work in this new stage of development, fully and faithfully apply the new development philosophy, and foster a new pattern of development. We must promote high-quality development and build up our country's strength in science and technology. We must ensure it is our people who run the country, continue to govern based on the rule of law, and uphold the core socialist values. We must ensure and enhance public wellbeing in the course of development, promote harmony between humanity and nature, and take well-coordinated steps toward making our people prosperous, our nation strong, and our country beautiful.

The Chinese nation has fostered a splendid civilization over more than 5,000 years of history. The Party has also acquired a wealth of experience through its endeavors over the past 100 years and during more than 70 years of governance. At the same time, we are also eager to learn what lessons we can from the achievements of other cultures, and welcome helpful suggestions and constructive criticism. We will not, however, accept sanctimonious preaching from those who feel they have the right to lecture us. The Party and the Chinese people will keep moving confidently forward in broad strides along the path that we have chosen for ourselves, and we will make sure the destiny of China's development and progress remains firmly in our own hands.

We must accelerate the modernization of national defense and the armed forces. A strong country must have a strong military, as only then can it guarantee the security of the nation. At the point that it was engaged in violent struggle, the Party came to recognize

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the irrefutable truth that it must command the gun and build a people's military of its own. The people's military has made indelible achievements on behalf of the Party and the people. It is a strong pillar for safeguarding our socialist country and preserving national dignity, and a powerful force for protecting peace in our region and beyond. On the journey ahead, we must fully implement the Party's thinking on strengthening the military in the new era as well as our military strategy for the new era, maintain the Party's absolute leadership over the people's armed forces, and follow a Chinese path to military development.

We will take comprehensive measures to enhance the political loyalty of the armed forces, to strengthen them through reform and technology and the training of competent personnel, and to run them in accordance with the law. We will elevate our people's armed forces to world-class standards so that we are equipped with greater capacity and more reliable means for safeguarding our national sovereignty, security, and development interests.

We must continue working to promote the building of a human community with a shared future. Peace, concord, and harmony are ideas the Chinese nation has pursued and carried forward for more than 5,000 years.

The Chinese nation does not carry aggressive or hegemonic traits in its genes. The Party cares about the future of humanity, and wishes to move forward in tandem with all progressive forces around the world. China has always worked to safeguard world peace, contribute to global development, and preserve international order.

On the journey ahead, we will remain committed to promoting peace, development, cooperation, and mutual benefit, to an independent foreign policy of peace, and to the path of peaceful development. We will work to build a new type of international relations and a human community with a shared future, promote high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative through joint efforts, and use China's new achievements in development to provide the world with new opportunities. The Party will continue to work with all peace-loving countries and peoples to promote the shared human values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom.

We will continue to champion cooperation over confrontation, to open up rather than closing our doors, and to focus on mutual benefits instead of zero-sum games. We will oppose hegemony and power politics, and strive to keep the wheels of history rolling toward bright horizons.

We Chinese are a people who uphold justice and are not intimidated by threats of force. As a nation, we have a strong sense of pride and confidence. We have never bullied, oppressed, or subjugated the people of any other country, and we never will. By the same token, we will never allow any foreign force to bully, oppress, or subjugate us. Anyone who would attempt to do so will find themselves on a collision course with a great wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people.

We must carry out a great struggle with many contemporary features. Having the courage to fight and the fortitude to win is what has made our Party invincible. Realizing our great dream will require hard work and persistence. Today, we are closer, more confident, and more capable than ever before of making the goal of national rejuvenation a reality. But we must be prepared to work harder than ever to get there.

On the journey ahead, we must demonstrate stronger vigilance and always be prepared for potential danger, even in times of calm. We must adopt a holistic approach to national security that balances development and security imperatives, and implement the national rejuvenation strategy within a wider



context of the once-in-a-century changes taking place in the world. We need to acquire a full understanding of the new features and requirements arising from the change to the principal contradiction in Chinese society and the new issues and challenges stemming from a complicated international environment. We must be both brave and adept in carrying out our struggle, forging new paths and building new bridges wherever necessary to take us past all risks and challenges.

We must strengthen the great unity of the Chinese people. In the course of our struggles over the past century, the Party has always placed the united front in a position of importance. We have constantly consolidated and developed the broadest possible united front, united all the forces that can be united, mobilized all positive factors that can be mobilized, and pooled as much strength as possible for collective endeavours.

The patriotic united front is an important means for the Party to unite all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, both at home and abroad, behind the goal of national rejuvenation.

On the journey ahead, we must ensure great unity and solidarity and balance commonality and diversity. We should strengthen theoretical and political guidance, build broad consensus, bring together the brightest minds, and expand common ground and the convergence of interests, so that all Chinese people, both at home and overseas, can focus their ingenuity and energy on the same goal and come together as a mighty force for realizing national rejuvenation.

We must continue to advance the great new project of Party building. A hallmark that distinguishes the Communist Party of China from other political parties is its courage in undertaking self-reform. An important reason why the Party remains so vital and vibrant

despite having undergone so many trials and tribulations is that it practices effective self-supervision and full and rigorous self-governance. It has thus been able to respond appropriately to the risks and tests of different historical periods, to ensure that it always remains at the forefront of the times even as profound changes sweep the global landscape, and to stand firm as the backbone of the nation throughout the process of meeting various risks and challenges at home and abroad.

On the journey ahead, we must keep firmly in mind the old adage that it takes a good blacksmith to make good steel. We must demonstrate greater political awareness of the fact that full and rigorous self-governance is a never-ending journey. With strengthening the Party politically as our overarching principle, we must continue advancing the great new project of Party building in the new era.

We must tighten the Party's organizational system, work hard to train high-caliber officials who have both moral integrity and professional competence, remain committed to improving Party conduct, upholding integrity, and combating corruption, and root out any elements that would harm the Party's advanced nature and purity and any viruses that would erode its health. We must ensure that the Party preserves its essence, color, and character, and see that it always serves as the strong leadership core in the course of upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Comrades and friends,

We will stay true to the letter and spirit of the principle of One Country, Two Systems, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong, and the people of Macao administer Macao, both with a high degree of autonomy. We will ensure that the central government exercises overall jurisdiction over Hong Kong and Macao, and implement the legal systems and enforcement

mechanisms for the two special administrative regions to safeguard national security. While protecting China's sovereignty, security, and development interests, we will ensure social stability in Hong Kong and Macao, and maintain lasting prosperity and stability in the two special administrative regions. Resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification is a historic mission and an unshakable commitment of the Communist Party of China. It is also a shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. We will uphold the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, and advance peaceful national reunification. All of us, compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, must come together and move forward in unison.

We must take resolute action to utterly defeat any attempt toward "Taiwan independence," and work together to create a bright future for national rejuvenation. No one should underestimate the resolve, the will, and the ability of the Chinese people to defend their national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Comrades and friends,

The future belongs to the young people, and our hopes also rest with them. A century ago, a group of young progressives held aloft the torch of Marxism and searched assiduously in those dark years for ways to rejuvenate the Chinese nation. Since then, under the banner of the Communist Party of China, generation after generation of young Chinese have devoted their youth to the cause of the Party and the people, and remained in the vanguard of the drive to rejuvenate the nation.

In the new era, our young people should make it their mission to contribute to national rejuvenation and aspire to become more proud, confident, and assured in their identity as Chinese people so that they can live up to the promise of their youth and the expectations of our times, our Party, and our people.

Comrades and friends, A century ago, at the time of its founding, the Communist Party of China had just over 50 members. Today, with more than 95 million members in a country of more than 1.4 billion people, it is the largest governing party in the world and enjoys tremendous international influence. A century ago, China was in decline and withering away in the eyes of the world.

Today, the image it presents to the world is one of a thriving nation that is advancing with unstoppable momentum toward rejuvenation. Over the past century, the Communist Party of China has secured extraordinary historical achievements on behalf of the people. Today, it is rallying and leading the Chinese people on a new journey toward realizing the second centenary goal.

To all Party members, the Central Committee calls on every one of you to stay true to our Party's founding mission and stand firm in your ideals and convictions.

Acting on the purpose of the Party, you should always maintain close ties with the people, empathize and work with them, stand with them through good times and bad, and continue working tirelessly to realize their aspirations for a better life and to bring still greater glory to the Party and the people.

Comrades and friends, today, a hundred years on from its founding, the Communist Party of China is still in its prime, and remains as determined as ever to achieve lasting greatness for the Chinese nation. Looking back on the path we have travelled and forward to the journey that lies ahead, it is certain that with the firm leadership of the Party and the great unity of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, we will achieve the goal of building a great modern socialist country in all respects and fulfill the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

Long live our great, glorious, and correct Party!

Long live our great, glorious, and heroic people!"



The Party was chosen by history and the people. The leadership of the Party is the defining feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics and constitutes the greatest strength of this system. It is the foundation and lifeblood of the Party and the country, and the crux upon which the interests and wellbeing of all Chinese people depend.



Sports



Nigeria vs Mexico: Why the Super Eagles got pummeled by El Tri

The Super Eagles were hit for four by Gerardo Martino's team at the Los Angeles Coliseum, and Goal tries to explain what went wrong.

Apart from Ibrahim Sunusi who plays for Major League Soccer side CF Montreal, the rest of Super Eagles players who were on parade ply their trade in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

This played a key role in the outcome of the international friendly as El Tri capitalised to hit them for four in the United States of America.

Although Stephen Jude, Sunday Adetunji and Franklin Tebo were introduced in the second half, they could do little or nothing to help their team halt the rampaging Mexicans.

The three-time African champions began the game on a stuttering note and that saw them end up on the losing side.

With just two minutes into the game, they leaked in the first goal as Jesus Corona teed up Hector Herrera who fired past goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali.

In the fourth minute, Gerardo Martino's side doubled their advantage courtesy of Rogelio Funes Mori who profited from Hirving Lozano's assist.

Those early goals changed the complexion of the game and ultimately, Nigeria got hit for four by the Mexican senior national team.

Although the team trained for one week in Abuja, that was not enough to help them gel for the Mexico friendly.

From the very blast of the whistle up until the end, the Super Eagles lacked organisation which could be attributed to the few days they trained together.

They could barely string together three to four passes together before getting disposed by the North America team. So, it was not surprising that they could not muster a single shot on target.

Instead of playing a group, the team played as individuals and Mexico took advantage of that.

This is another reason why the Super Eagles were subdued by the 11-time Concacaf Gold Cup

champions.

Playing under unfamiliar weather conditions, Nigerian players struggled for the most part of the second half as they suffered exhaustion.

Also, most players of the West African side suffered minor knocks and that slowed their pace drastically. And as such, that gave room for the Mexicans to dictate the pace of the encounter from start to finish.

The scoreline certainly was not a true reflection of Stanley Nwabali's performance against El Tri.

The Lobi Stars goalkeeper put up a commendable shift in office, however, he was often let down by his defenders who seemed to have forgotten the rudiments of basic defending.

Imoh Obot, Tope Olusesi, Adeleke Adekunle and Olisa Ndah marshalled the Super Eagles backline but schoolboy mistakes on their part saw them leak four goals.

For the errors, one could attribute that to their experience on the international stage.

First undroppable, now unstoppable: Kane can lead England to Euro 2020 glory

Gareth Southgate never doubted his No.9, and after a double in the 4-0 victory over Ukraine, the Three Lions' captain has hit form at the perfect time

When Andriy Shevchenko embraced Harry Kane at full-time on the Stadio Olimpico grass after England's thrashing of Ukraine, it was one great striker acknowledging the undoubted quality of another.

Less than five minutes after the game had started, the Three Lions' captain delivered a massive blow to Shevchenko's hopes of an unlikely Euro 2020 quarter-final upset.

At a similar stage of the second half, he obliterated them for good. A natural-born goalscorer, Shevchenko could only watch on helplessly as his team tried, and

failed, to stop Kane.

The Tottenham forward was only denied a hat-trick by a brilliant save from Georgiy Bushchan, who got his fingertips to an outrageous 20-yard volley, and by Gareth Southgate, who replaced him with Dominic Calvert-Lewin ahead of Wednesday's semi-final with Denmark at Wembley Stadium.

After the destruction of Ukraine in Rome, England are now coming home, and it is Kane who is ready to put an end to the 55-year wait for a major senior trophy.

If Southgate's side were to have any chance of success at Euro 2020, it always seemed unlikely they would be able to achieve it without the help of Kane.

But less than a fortnight ago, people were beginning to question the striker after a lacklustre start to the tournament.



Onyekuru: Fenerbahce and Besiktas table offers for forward - agent

The Super Eagle's agent claims they have already landed in Istanbul and the deal to either side could be wrapped up soon

Nigeria international Henry Onyekuru has arrived in Istanbul to seal a transfer to either Fenerbahce and Besiktas, according to his agent.

The player's representative, William D'Avila, said the AS Monaco forward is already in Istanbul after Galatasaray kept them waiting for five weeks over a possible move to sign him permanently.

According to the information given by D'Avila, both clubs are ready to pay the 4.3 million euros demanded by Monaco.

D'Avila said in a statement to Ajansspor while giving the latest transfer news on the player: "We are in Istanbul with the player and Onyekuru was waiting for news from Galatasaray for the last five weeks, but they have not contacted us, but now Fenerbahce and Besiktas have entered the table."

On January 29, Onyekuru returned to Galatasaray from Monaco on a six-month loan with an option to make it permanent, that had elapsed at the end of the season.

Thanks to his inspiring performances for KAS Eupen, where he finished the 2016-17

Belgian First Division A season as joint top-scorer with 22 goals, the winger was signed by Everton for a fee of £7 million.

Nevertheless, he was sent to Anderlecht owing to his failure to get a work permit, which would have seen him realise his ambition of playing in the Premier League.

After completing spells in Belgium and Galatasaray - where he won the 2018-19 Turkish Super Lig title - he was sold permanently to Ligue 1 giants Monaco.

He struggled to find his feet at Stade Louis II and has been restricted to just four league games for Niko Kovac's side.

Bayern have Nubel call-back clause

Bayern Munich have a clause in Alexander Nubel's loan contract that would allow the club to recall him if needed, per Sport1.

The shotstopper is headed to Monaco, having struggled to

break past Manuel Neuer for a starting shirt in the Bundesliga.

But should the latter pick up an injury, Bayern would be able to bring the highly-rated talent back immediately to fill his gloves.

Palace eye up Celtic's Christie

Crystal Palace look to be in the hunt for Celtic man Ryan Christie, with the Eagles considering a move for the playmaker, per the Daily Record.

With just six months left on his contract, the Scottish outfit may

look to sell the 26-year-old, with Nice thought to be keen on his services.

But he could make a shorter trip south instead and settle in the Premier League, where Palace are a possible destination.

Sports

Christian Eriksen spotted in public for first time since cardiac arrest

The Inter man has kept a low profile since he left hospital on June 18 but has now been seen out and about after he was photographed with a fan

Christian Eriksen has been pictured in public for the first time since he was discharged from hospital following his cardiac arrest during Denmark's Euro 2020 clash with Finland.

The Inter playmaker was rushed to Rigshospitalet in Copenhagen after he collapsed during the Group B clash at Parken Stadium, where he was fitted with a cardioverter defibrillator.

Having been discharged on June 18, Eriksen has kept a low profile since returning home to continue his recuperation with his family, but has now been spotted out and about for the first time since the incident after he was photographed with a fan.



Barcelona offer to release Pjanic and Umtiti as they attempt to slash wage bill

The midfielder and defender each made just 13 appearances in La Liga last season and will not play a big role next season either

Barcelona have offered to release Miralem Pjanic and Samuel Umtiti from their contracts, Goal understands, as the midfielder and defender do not fit into Ronald Koeman's plans for the future.

Pjanic, 31, joined from Juventus last summer in a deal worth €60 million (£55m/\$67m) but started only six of the 13 Liga games in which he featured last season.

Umtiti meanwhile has not been able to hold on to a place in the starting XI since arriving from Lyon five years ago and was also limited to just 13 league matches in 2020-21.



Brazil hang on to beat Chile at Copa America after Gabriel Jesus sent off

Brazil beat Chile in their quarterfinal match at the Copa America in Rio on Friday night despite playing the majority of the second half with 10 players following a straight red card shown to Gabriel Jesus.

Brazil had their best early chance just after 20 minutes when Neymar picked out Roberto Firmino at Claudio Bravo's far post, but the Liverpool striker missed the target altogether when he looked more likely to score.

Ederson was called into action shortly after, going down and to his right to keep out an Eduardo Vargas shot after the Chile

attacker had fooled Thiago Silva with a pair of moves on a solid individual effort.

Jesus had a good chance to fire Brazil in front shortly before half-time after being played in by Neymar, but his shot was tipped well over the bar by Bravo and the teams remained level at 0-0 at the break.

Second-half substitute Lucas Paqueta scored 60 seconds after coming on following the intermission, volleying home from close range after a neat bit of build-up play from Brazil.

The fireworks to start the second half continued when Jesus was sent off right after

Brazil had taken the lead with a straight red for a harsh high kick that caught Eugenio Mena in the face and shoulder.

Chile ratcheted up the pressure with the extra man, but Brazil held firm and saw out the result as Tite's side, who have never lost a Copa on home soil, advanced to the semis.

The result means Brazil will face Peru, who beat Paraguay earlier in the day, in the semifinal round of the Copa America.

The other quarter-finals will be played on Saturday, featuring Argentina against Ecuador and Uruguay playing Colombia.

Brazil beware! Messi-inspired Argentina are now real Copa America contenders

The Albiceleste captain may now be technically unemployed but he is certainly not shirking his duties at the head of an improving team

Ever since Diego Maradona passed away last November, the Argentina great has been invoked by grieving fans as a sort of secular proto-saint, with all manner of 'miracles' attributed to his divine intervention from above.

From narrow Boca Juniors victories to the arrival of the latest consignment of Covid-19 vaccines, Diego's tongue-in-cheek responsibility for the feat rarely goes unnoticed on social media.

Brewing giant Quilmes even played up on this phenomenon in an ingenious commercial prepared for the Copa America, where the late idol engineers a nail-biting win over Brazil in the final to seal the trophy and send supporters into ecstasy.



Euro 2020: What confirmed Ukraine's defeat to England – Yobo

Andriy Shevchenko's men paid dearly for conceding a second goal against the Three Lions, according to the African football great

Ukraine's exit from Euro 2020 was imminent after they conceded a second goal in their 4-0 defeat to England, according to former Nigeria international Joseph Yobo.

Courtesy of Harry Kane's fourth-minute strike, the Three Lions took a slim 1-0 lead into the half-time break of the quarter-final showdown.

They doubled their advantage

in the 46th minute after Harry Maguire rose above his markers to head Luke Shaw's free-kick past goalkeeper Georgi Bushchan.

Kane completed his brace four minutes later, while Jordan Henderson added the fourth to propel Gareth Southgate's team into the last four.

Speaking after the game, the former Olympique Marseille and Everton centre-back expressed his disenchantment at the dodgy defending put up by Andriy Shevchenko's men.

Furthermore, he claimed the second goal Ukraine conceded

confirmed their place out of the European competition.

"The second goal is the one I am disappointed at - because in football, goals change the game," Yobo said on SuperSport.

"As a defender, I was taught to stay in the game at all times. Mistakes can be made but then, that second goal at that crucial time [changed everything]."

"They are professionals, they fought so hard to get to this level, so there was no need to be complacent or relax."

"They were meant to come into the game to even put more pressure on the England team and not to sit back, but we didn't see that happen and they conceded the second goal just two minutes into the second half."

"That was very disappointing because for me at that point, I said game over because you can't go two-nil against a better side like England and expect a comeback from a team the Ukrainians had today. They didn't really come to the party."



USMNT star Pulisic criticised after falling off boat on to endangered goliath grouper fish following ball juggling stunt

The Chelsea attacker has found himself in hot water after going viral on social media

Chelsea and USMNT midfielder Christian Pulisic has found himself at the centre of a storm involving a goliath grouper.

On Saturday, a video went viral on social media showing the 22-year-old sitting on a boat, juggling a ball over one of the giant fish, which was held on a line.

Pulisic, rather embarrassingly, lost control of the ball and fell into the water, on top of the fish, which struggled as a result.



The early 1980s were the furnace in which the activism that gave birth to radical student unionism, anti-military rule and the pro-democracy movement were forged. In 1978, the military regime had smashed central student unionism, expelled principled student leaders and lecturers across the country.

In December 1980, the remnants of the student leadership established the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) But within three months, its founding leadership at the Bayero University in Kano, led by Tanimu Kurfi was expelled.

There were frantic efforts to reunite the NANS which in 1981 had splintered into five factions. I was the Secretary General of the umbrella organisation of all the radical student groups on the campuses called the Patriotic Youth Movement of Nigeria (PYMN) which set out to retake the campuses. That year, we succeeded in taking over the leadership of a reunited NANS with Chris Mammah as President and Eddie Igaro as Secretary General.

The University of Ibadan, UI Students Union was led by a charismatic 'Lagos Boy' Bayo Olowo-Ake who though supported NANS, was a hard nut to crack as we had to convince him on every step the organization had to take. We looked forward to a more radical leadership in UI. Then, a UI student, Lucas Oladele, also known as Femy Falana came to us in Ife seeking support to run as UI President. He was a friend of our former Public Relations Officer, Femi Falana, now a Senior Advocate of Nigeria. We were uncomfortable as we thought him politically unstable. In the race for the UI Student Union Vice Presidency, was a little known 21-year old student, Tunji Bello. Both won the elections through unique ways of campaigning. While Femy in place of any serious programme, simply told the UI students "You know me, I know you" Tunji sent the student populace dancing. That 1982 was when the funk band, Kool and the Gang hit the airwaves with the song "Let's Go Dancin" The chorus was

"Oohh, Yeah,

Ooh la la la, let's go dancin'

Ooh la la la, reggae dancin'

Ooh la la la, let's go dancin'

Ooh la la la, reggae dancin'

Tunji adopted it and substituted some of the lyrics with his name. So, his campaign singsong became:

"Oohh, Yeah,

Ooh la la la, Tunji Bello

Ooh la la la, Tunji Bello

Ooh la la la, Tunji Bello

Ooh la la la, Tunji Bello!

The politics of Lucas Oladele 'Femy'

Backpage Column

BY OWEI LAKEMFA



TUNJI BELLO: In the flight of youth

Falana pushed the UI student union down the hill with Tunji as the stabilizing force trying to stop it upturning. Eventually, that leadership was removed.

I went into journalism as did Chris Mammah who joined the Concord Newspapers. One day, he brought one of his colleagues who was working on a labour story to me. He introduced him as Tunji Bello. I made the connection with the former UI Student Leader. We became friends visiting each other with the quiet Tunji introducing us to some 'point-and-kill' pepper soup joints around Mushin.

When Chris got married to the African swimming champion, the then Miss Ngozi Enuwuzo, Tunji was the Best Man while I proposed the Toast.

Our circle of radical journalists widened to include colleagues like Lanre Arogundade, Kayode Komolafe, Ladi Lawal, Femi Ojudu, the unforgettable Joel Gure and the dedicated female trio of Funmi Jolaosho Komolafe, Funke Fadugba and Agatha Edo Aina. We founded the New Trend Movement

in the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) with the objective of moving the union and journalism towards a radical path. We evolved a guiding philosophy of 'Journalism With Social Relevance.' As part of our objectives, we worked to take over the leadership of the powerful Lagos State Council of the NUJ and the union's national leadership. We succeed in both. We took full control of the Lagos NUJ and Tunji became the Treasurer. Later, our New Trend candidate for the NUJ National Presidency, Sani Zorro won and after two terms, he was succeeded by another 'New Trender' Ladi Lawal.

In the Lagos NUJ, we faced lots of challenges including journalists welfare, insurance, media closures and detention of journalists. But one of the most serious challenges, was lack of professionalism by some media organisations and journalists which led to the publication of false reports and plagiarism. This was at a time the Nigeria Press Council was non-functional and the National NUJ was a toothless bulldog. So the Lagos

Council Executive established an Ethics Committee with its Vice Chairman, Richard Akinnola as Chair and the Treasurer, Tunji Bello as member. Five other members were appointed from the Chapels; Ben Etaghene, Chris Ngwu, Francis Komolafe, Frank Igwebueze and Femi Ojudu. A legal practitioner, Chief Mike Ozekome, was appointed as the Judge Advocate. Even when some challenged the powers of the Lagos NUJ to put media organisations and erring journalists on trial, that Committee courageously went ahead to do so. In one case, it found a leading soft sell magazine 'Akapa Top' magazine and its publisher, Lawrence Akapa guilty of publishing false stories, and suspended the latter from the NUJ for six months. Although it was a moral sanction, the decision carried so much weight that it drowned the magazine as vendors refused to sell it and the public was warned that what was being published by the magazine were fabrications.

In another case, the Committee tackled a publisher-journalist and one of the leading columnists in the country and found him liable of plagiarism.

In the June 1993 Presidential elections, some members of the New Trend including Tunji and Kayode Komolafe, joined the campaign team of Chief Moshood Kashimawo Abiola while many of us stayed away on the basis that though we were politically active, we should not be politically partisan. However, when that election was annulled, we reunited to fight the annulment and continued military regime.

We stepped out of the newsrooms to the streets where we fought with distinction. Some of our members like Dapo Olorunyomi were forced into exile, a number like Ojudu, detained, and tragically, we lost Bagauda Kaltho who was abducted in Kaduna and was never seen again.

After military rule came to a disgraceful end in 1999, one of the politicians we fought the pro-democracy wars with, Senator Bola Tinubu became the Governor of Lagos State and Tunji joined his government as Commissioner for Environment. He was retained in that post by successor Governor Raji Fashola, and became Secretary to the State Government under Governor Akinwunmi Ambode. Today, he is the Commissioner for Environment and Water Resources in the Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu administration. Lagos State appears reluctant to let go a quiet, experienced, reflective and resourceful person like Tunji. This Thursday, July 1, 2021, Tunji Bello, that restless youth of the 1980s, will turn sixty.