

# Daybreak

News as it breaks

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# News

## Police authorities suspends DCP Abba Kyari over Hushpuppi's allegations

*\*MACBAN Kicks: Accuses FBI of conniving with southern leaders to pull him down*

By Gabriel Udeh, Kaduna

The Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba has recommended the immediate suspension of DCP Abba Kyari, the Head of the Police Intelligence Response Team (IRT), from the Service of the Nigeria Police Force, pending the outcome of an ongoing internal investigations over a warrant of arrest issued against him by the FBI.

The IGP, in his letter to the Police Service Commission, signed by CP FRANK MBA, FORCE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER, dated July 31, 2021, noted that the recommendation for the suspension of the officer, is in line with the internal disciplinary processes of the Force.

The IGP further noted that the suspension is also expected to create an enabling environment for the NPF Special Investigation Panel to carry out its investigations into the weighty allegations against DCP Abba Kyari without interference. The suspension is without prejudice to the constitutional presumption of innocence in favour of the officer.

The Special Investigation Panel (SIP), comprising four Senior Police Officers, is headed by DIG Joseph Egbunike, the Deputy Inspector General of Police in-charge of the Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID). The SIP, inter alia, is to undertake a detailed review of all the allegations against DCP Abba Kyari by the US Government as contained in relevant documents that have been availed the NPF by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The SIP is also to obtain detailed representation of DCP Abba Kyari to all the allegations levelled against him, conduct further investigations as it deems fit, and submit recommendations to guide further actions by the Force Leadership on the matter.

Meanwhile, the IGP has reaffirmed the commitment of the Force to the Rule of Law and assured the public of the sanctity of the probe as well as the absolute respect for the rights and privileges of the officer throughout the period of the investigations.

MACBAN accuses FBI of conniving with southern leaders to pull him down

The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, (MACBAN) has condemned the Northern Elders Forum (NEF) for



DCP Abba Kyari

failing to speak against allegations of corruption, and the arrest warrant on Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Abba Kyari, by a US Circuit Court in California.

National President of MACBAN, Dr Garus Gololo, at the weekend in Abuja, said NEF has failed in its main responsibility of protecting the interest of the North.

According to him, "it is a shame that the Northern Elders Forum and other groups in the region would fold their hands and watch while sons of the north who have distinguished themselves in different fields are constantly being persecuted and maligned at the height of their careers."

Gololo lamented that same

treatment being meted to DCP Kyari was done to former Chairmen of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Ibrahim Lamorde and Ibrahim Magu and a former member of the House of Representatives and Chairman of the House Committee on Petroleum, Farouk Lawan.

He regretted that while the US and some elements in the South of Nigeria have connived to persecute "shining stars from the region using the media," stakeholders in the north have remained silent amid the crisis.

Gololo also condemned allegations of Human Rights abuses against former Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Buraitai, adding that "once they see that you're a shining star, and that you're from the North, they will want to finish you completely."

"The United States is not the most honest country in the world. What they are doing to Kyari, they did it to Donald Trump and Al Gore.

Let him stand firmly and defend himself because he is Nigeria's future Inspector General of Police, and he mustn't allow himself to be rattled," the MACBAN National President insisted.

### Four killed, many houses razed in communal clash In Plateau

By George Ukandi

No fewer than four people have been killed and many houses burnt in a clash between Fulani herders and Irigwe youths in the villages of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.

The spokesman of the State Police Command, ASP Ubah Gabriel, who confirmed the incident, said fifty houses were torched in the incident.

He said, "On 31/07/2021, the Command received a report that there was a conflict between gunmen suspected to be Fulani Militia and youth from Irigwe at Jebbu Miango, Bassa LGA of Plateau State.

"Unfortunately, fifty houses were torched and four natives were also shot dead.

"Upon receipt of the report, the tactical team of the Command were immediately

deployed to the scene to tighten the security of the area and to restore peace.

"The Commissioner of Police, CP Edward Egbuka, with other senior Officers of the Command, visited the scene and ordered a discreet investigation to fish out the perpetrators of the dastardly act.

"Normalcy has been restored in that area," he added.

More than 10 people were said to have been injured in the clash.

The clash began on Thursday last week to Saturday night with both parties blaming each other for the crisis.

The State Chairman of Gan Allah Fulani Development Association of Nigeria (GAFDAN), Garba Abdullahi, said, "More than 10 herders were injured and have been taken to the hospital for treatment.

"One herder was killed on

Thursday while rearing before the Saturday's clash."

Danjuma Autta, Secretary-General of the Irigwe tribe, told our correspondent that four corpses have been found so far after the clash and many houses belonging to Irigwe were burnt down.

He blamed the government for not being proactive before the crisis escalated to the current situation.

He said, "It is the negligence on the part of the government that led to the crisis. The situation has reached the level of war.

"It was expected that the government should swing into action before any violence. It should not have allowed the misunderstanding to turn into a crisis.

"We need peace, the government should rise up to its responsibility to protect lives and properties of all. All lives are important," Autta added.



### Why we invited Saraki for questioning – EFCC

By Mike Oboh

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has clarified the reason for having the former Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki in its custody.

Reports on Saturday had it that EFCC allegedly arrested the former Senate President.

But EFCC spokesperson, Wilson Uwujaren confirmed to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that Saraki was invited for questioning over allegations of corruption and money laundering.

He stated that the immediate past Senate president was in the commission's custody for continuation of interrogation.

Meanwhile, Saraki in a statement explained that he was not arrested but on his own volition went to the EFCC's office.

Part of his statement read: "It would be recalled that following the order of the Federal High Court, Abuja, on the Fundamental Human Rights case filed by Dr. Saraki during the period of the former chairman of the EFCC which precluded the commission from investigating the former senate President until the matter is dispensed with, the commission at the last hearing on July 14, 2021, pleaded with the judge that the order was preventing them from doing.

According to Saraki, he had nothing to hide and was at the commission's office to clear the matter.



# EDITORIAL

## The National fiasco at 2020 Tokyo Olympics

The recent disqualification of 10 Nigerian athletes from taking part in their respective events at Tokyo 2020 is nothing short of a national disgrace and a reflection of the shady preparation by our sports administrators.

Apart from the disqualification of 10 of our athletes, Tokyo 2020 has been a disappointment for not only millions of Nigerians, but supporters of Nigeria's track record in sporting competitions, especially at the global stage.

Regrettably, it has been a harvest of shocking losses for Team Nigeria since the beginning of the ongoing Olympic Games.

The 10 Nigerian athletes were banned from representing Nigeria at the ongoing Olympic Games for failure to meet the minimum testing requirements under Rule 15 of the Anti-doping Rules.

Meanwhile, the Athletic Federation of Nigeria (AFN) has taken responsibility for the qualification and offered explanation of what transpired in details.

Similarly, the Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports, has officially expressed its regret at the ugly development too.

Moreover, in our usual 'fire brigade' approach to issues bordering on lapses and systemic failure, the supervisory ministry has gone ahead to applaud the decision of the AFN to appoint one Prof. Ken Anugweje as Head of its Medical and Anti-doping Commission.

Can this step redeem the damage that has already been done or just a mere exercise to

create the impression that something is being done to address the malady?

Unfortunately our hopes of blessing Okagbare Ese and Adekuoroye to make the medals table was dashed.

Blessing Okagbare was provisionally suspended by the Athletic Integrity Unit (AIU) after a sample collected from the sprinter tested positive for human Growth Hormone.

According to the devastating report, she was notified of the adverse analytical finding and of her suspension in the early hours of Saturday while looking forward to participating in the semi-finals of the women's 100.

From the way things are going, this may well be our worst Olympics outing ever comparable only to London 2012.

Without mincing words, those saddled with the responsibility of managing sports in Nigeria really have to do a rethink and come up with proactive and pragmatic solutions to the myriad of problems that have held the sector down, over the years.

There is no better time than now for us to do the needful as a nation, so that our beloved country can progressively return to her winning ways at both regional and global sporting competitions.

We strongly believe that this is achievable because Nigeria undoubtedly remains a sport-loving nation that is so abundantly blessed with talented athletes that can make us really proud when things are done appropriately and professionally by sport administrators.



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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.

# News

## We Are Not Aware Of \$875m Ammunition Deal With US – Lai Mohammed

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed says the Federal Government is not aware of any \$875 million ammunition deal with the US which is being purportedly obstructed by some lawmakers in the States.

Mr. Mohammed stated this while speaking with newsmen on Friday in Abuja. According to him, there is no contract of such nature and sum between Nigeria and the US.

He described as #Fakenews, the purported sale of the weapons and explained that apart from the 12 AH-I-Cobra attack helicopters

of which Nigeria has taken delivery of six, the government is not aware of any contract as being speculated.

The Minister said the received AH-1- Cobra Attack helicopters would be launched sometime in August, adding that the Federal Government is “quite satisfied with the progress and cooperation that we received from the government of the US on this issue”.

Reports suggesting that influential U.S. lawmakers were obstructing a proposed sale of ammunition and attack helicopters to Nigeria over

allegations of human rights abuses and anti-democratic actions of the present administration have been making the rounds.

These reports suggest that the blocked proposed sale includes 12 AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters accompanied by defence systems, 28 helicopter engines produced by GE Aviation, and 14 military-grade aircraft navigation systems made by Honeywell.

Lai Mohammed however stated that the reports are false, emphasizing that “the relationship between Nigeria and the US is smooth and waxing stronger”.

## Gunmen Abduct Commissioner's Wife In Benue

Gunmen have abducted the wife of the Benue State Commissioner of Lands and Survey, Mrs Ann Unenge, in Makurdi metropolis.

The latest abduction in the State capital occurred less than one week after two housewives, including a medical doctor's wife, were abducted in Makurdi.

Witnesses alleged that the commissioner's wife could have been trailed by her abductors who forcefully took her away on Thursday at about 6pm shortly after she returned to Makurdi town from Daudu, a community situated about 25km from Makurdi where she had reportedly

gone to visit her parents.

It was also gathered that the kidnapers went away with a new model Toyota Highlander vehicle which the woman was driving in at the time of her abduction.

Witnesses added that the woman attempted to break free from her abductors by trying to open the vehicle door around the traffic light near the 'B' Division Police Station in Makurdi, but her captors fired gunshots sporadically to scare people away.

It was further learnt that she screamed repeatedly to attract people to her rescue but her captors sped off with her before those within the area could do

anything to stop them.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) for Benue Command, DSP Catherine Anene, however, said a case of a missing person and not abduction was reported to the police by her family.

Anene said even though the police intelligence was suspecting the incident as a kidnap case, there were yet not enough evidence to back up the claims that she was abducted.

“We [police] were told she had left the house going somewhere and the family didn't see her again so they reported a case of a missing person,” the PPRO said.

## FCTA spends N8bn on waste management annually – Minister

The FCT Minister of State, Dr Ramatu Aliyu, has said N8 billion is being spent annually on waste management in the Federal Capital City and the satellite towns.

The Minister made the disclosure in a statement issued by her Special Assistant on Media, Mr Austine Elemue, on Sunday in Abuja.

The statement said the Minister spoke at the maiden edition of the Annual General Meeting and Induction of Waste Management Association of Nigeria (WAMASON), FCT Council, in Abuja.

The Minister was quoted as saying that the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) spent an average of N6 billion, while the Satellite Towns Development Department (STDD) expended N2 billion on waste management annually.

Aliyu said that this brought the total sum of N8 billion to pay over 64 cleaning contractors, engaged in the management of waste in the nation's capital.

She called on communities to adopt sustainable waste management practices, “which include sorting at source, composting of organic waste for

horticultural/agricultural purposes amongst others.”

Speaking on the theme: “Waste management in a circular economy, financing stakeholders engagement and enforcement,” Aliyu also called for the transition to circular economy for sustainable growth and development in Nigeria.

She said that in a circular economy virtually nothing was discarded, stressing that products and materials were kept in circulation.

“For as long as possible by designing them to be more durable, reusable, repairable and recyclable.

“It is clear that waste management is a cross-cutting environmental issue, impacting many aspects of our society and the economy.

“It has strong linkages to a range of other global challenges such as health, food and resource security, sustainable consumption and production, climate change and poverty reduction,” Aliyu was quoted as saying in the statement.

She said the FCT Administration had been working assiduously in ensuring that new opportunities for sustainable growth were provided through increased budgetary provisions on waste management related services.

She pledged the FCT administration's commitment to providing the necessary legal framework that guaranteed return on investment for effective service delivery.

The statement also quoted the Councillor, Waste Management Association of Nigeria, Mrs Kitan Oluwagbuyi, as saying that the workshop was organised in collaboration between the association and tertiary institutions across the country.

She said that the collaboration was also designed to organise mentorship and provide opportunities in waste management and sustainable development.



Muhammad Bello

## Petrol Scarcity Looms In Eastern Zone, As Marketers Withdraw Service

The Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN), has stated that it would suspend the distribution of products in the Eastern zone effective from Monday over alleged harassment of its members by the Police.

The strike notice was contained in a circular signed by Alhaji Sanusi Fari, national president of IPMAN and made available by Mr Chidi Nnubia, the Secretary, to journalists in Awka, Anambra State capital, at weekend.

IPMAN said it would withdraw services including the dispatch of petroleum products in the Eastern Zone comprising Aba, Calabar, Enugu, Makurdi and Port Harcourt depots.

“Following the series of unwarranted attacks by Police against IPMAN, Eastern Zone comprising the NEC of IPMAN resolved that members withdraw their services at these units/depots immediately until further notice.

“The Zonal Chairman, East should kindly forward to chairmen, IPMAN, Aba, Calabar, Enugu, Makurdi and PH Depots/Units for compliance,” it stated.

Speaking on the strike, Nnubia, the Secretary, told journalists that the action was to protest the

forceful eviction of a duly elected executive at the Port Harcourt depot by the police to pave way for a group not known to them on Friday.

The Secretary said the Fari-led national executive had a Court order which authenticated its leadership and wondered why the Police would allow any group of persons to truncate a legitimate exco without due process.

“On Friday, a group loyal to a parallel faction which lost out in the court was led to forcefully take over the IPMAN office at the Port Harcourt depot.

“Dr Joseph Obele, the lawfully elected chairman of the depot was elected in October 2019 in an election which these people participated in, his tenure will expire in 2022, so they should allow him to finish his tenure.

“We are using this opportunity to call on the Inspector General of Police to intervene and prevail on his men so that they can allow the leadership of IPMAN recognised by law to have access to their office in Port Harcourt depot.

“We will not allow the reign of impunity in IPMAN. So we have resolved to withdraw our services in the Eastern zone indefinitely until legality is restored,” he said.

## NDLEA intercepts woman with 35 wraps of cocaine tucked in her underwear

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, says it has recovered 35 wraps of cocaine from a lady passenger at the Murtala Mohammed International Airport, MMIA, Ikeja, Lagos.

Femi Babafemi, NDLEA spokesman, disclosed this in a statement made available to the News Agency of Nigeria on Sunday in Abuja.

Mr Babafemi said that the suspect, Okafor Ebere Edith, was arrested on July 31, during the outward clearance of passengers on Air Cote d'Ivoire bound to Monrovia, Liberia.

He said the suspect, who tucked pellet of cocaine in her underwear to beat security checks at the airport, was however picked up for a search.

This, he said, included questioning during which the wraps of the illicit drug were found on her.

“During preliminary interview, the suspect claimed that the desire to make money pushed her into drug trafficking,” he said.

Mr Babafemi also said the operatives arrested another suspect, Echendu Jerry Maduakolam, an intending male passenger going to Istanbul, at Gate A Departure hall of the MMIA on July 27.

He said the suspect was arrested during outward clearance of Egypt Airline bound to Turkey in possession of 78grams of Cannabis mixed with dried bitter leaf.

“On the same day, another intending male passenger, Egbon Osarodion going to Milan, Italy

was arrested at the airport's Gate A Departure hall.

“This was also during outward clearance of passengers on Egypt Airlines with different quantities of 225mg Tramadol and Rohypnol concealed in foil papers wrapped in a polyethylene bag,” he said.

Mr Babafemi disclosed further that NDLEA operatives, Kontagora Area Command, Niger State, raided a warehouse at Mailefe village in Kontagora Local Government Area of the state.

The spokesman said the operation was carried out on July 29, at a warehouse where suspected drug supplies for bandits operating in parts of the state were stored.

“After thorough search of the warehouse, 125 bags of Cannabis Sativa were recovered while a man seen praying in front of the house fled into the forest when he sighted the narcotic officers from afar,” he said.

Mr Babafemi quoted the chairman of the NDLEA, Buba Marwa, as commending personnel of the MMIA and Niger State Commands.

Mr Marwa lauded their continued efforts in tracking down traffickers of illicit drugs in their areas of responsibility.

He charged them and their counterparts in other commands to remain focused and resolute in pursuit of the goal to rid Nigeria of illicit substances and drug related criminalities.





**Nasarawa: Government to turn waste materials to wealth**

By Leo Nzwankw, Lafia

The Nasarawa State Commissioner for Environment and Natural Resources Mr. Ibrahim Musa has said the State would soon turn their waste materials to wealth as plan are under way to recycling all their waste materials for sale.

The Commissioner disclosed this on Saturday, shortly after a routine monthly sanitation exercise in Lafia, the state capital.

He said Federal Government under ecological office has provide a recycling plan and the work has reached advance stage in completion; adding that what the ministry is doing now is to install the machines that would ease the work in the state.

According to him, "Very soon the waste is going to be a Scarce commodities in Nasarawa State because there is plan to recycling all waste materials and turn it to wealth.

"So we have already had off-takers on ground that are ready to buy pallet after the recycling, we advised people of Nasarawa State to to continue to comply with our directive because dumping of waste materials at water channel is not good for us," he said.

He also informed that for today's sanitation exercerss they arrested about 18 violators and they have been charged to court for sanction.

The commissioner further applauded the people of Nasarawa State for comply with the ministry's directive towards ensuring clean environment for good health in the State.

**Resident Doctors To Begin Nationwide Strike On Monday**

The National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) has directed its members across the country to embark on a total strike from Monday, August 2.

This directive was issued on Saturday at the end of the executive meeting of the National Executive Council (NEC) of the union held in Umuahia, the Abia State capital.

Briefing reporters at the end of the meeting, NARD National President, Dr Okhuaihesuyi Uyilawa, disclosed that members have been asked to proceed on a nationwide indefinite industrial action.

"We are embarking on a total and indefinite strike on August 2, 2021. You can recall we had a memorandum of action on March 31, 2021, and had an addendum to it on April 9, and since then, we still have had irregularities in the payment of salaries to the house officers.

"We had issues with them

being non-regular payment and as part of the memorandum of action, it was said that they should be captured back into the IPPS platform," he said.

Uyilawa added, "You are aware that we lost 19 members to COVID-19 and death in service insurance was supposed to be paid to their next of kin.

"The last time we met the minister of labour and minister of health, we were told that our members are part of those to be given the insurance benefit, but we found out that their names are not even their."

He cited the inability of the Federal Government to meet the demands of the doctors as part of the reasons for the decision to go on strike.

The NARD president, however, apologised to Nigerians for the decision which he insisted was a result of the government's failure in its responsibilities.

The doctors had embarked on industrial action in April, leaving many patients

unattended across various government-owned hospitals in the country.

They later suspended it 10 days later following a virtual meeting with members which lasted about 15 hours on April 10.

Some of the issues raised by the medical practitioners as of then included the immediate payment of all salaries owed to all house officers, including March salaries (regardless of quota system) before the end of business on March 31.

They also sought an upward review of the hazard allowance to 50 per cent of consolidated basic salaries of all health workers and payment of the outstanding COVID-19 inducement allowance, especially in state-owned-tertiary Institutions.

The doctors called for the abolishment of the exorbitant bench fees being paid by their members on outside postings in all training institutions across the country.

**Gunmen Attack General Hospital In Zamfara, Abduct Health Worker**

Armed bandits have attacked a General Hospital within the Dansadai community in the Maru local government area of Zamfara State.

The attack which took place in the early hours of Friday led to the abduction of a health worker and one other individual.

Confirming the attack, the chairman of the Nigerian Medical Association, Zamfara

State branch Dr. Mannir Bature stated that the gunmen stormed the hospital and started looking for medical doctors and nurses and in the process abducted a ward attendant and a patient's relation.

He further stated that two other female staff of the hospital were wounded in the raid.

Worried about the unfortunate incident, Dr. Bature noted that the NMA Zamfara branch will

hold an emergency state officers council meeting on Saturday 31st July 2021 at NMA Secretariat to deliberate on the issue.

Dansadai community has been in the news recently for several attacks by bandits, leading to the kidnapping of residents.

The community has been reaching out to the Federal and State Governments, pleading that more security personnel be deployed to the troubled area.

**Kaduna Govt Attempting To Frustrate El-Zakzaky's Release – Falana**

Human rights lawyer and Senior Advocate of Nigeria has condemned the Kaduna State Government for filing fresh terrorism charges against the leader of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria, Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky and his wife, Zeenat.

El-Zakzaky and his wife were freed of all charges levelled against them by the Kaduna State Government on July 28, five years after being detained by the Department of Security Service (DSS).

In a ruling that lasted over eight hours, the presiding judge, Justice Gideon Kurada upheld the no-case submission filed by Sheikh Ibraheem El-Zakzaky and his wife in an alleged culpable

homicide, unlawful assembly and disruption of public peace levelled against them by the Kaduna state government.

However, Governor Nasir El-Rufai's administration filed a fresh seven charges against the IMN leader at the Federal High Court 24 hours later.

Falana, who is the lead counsel to El-Zakzaky, described the development as a "desperate bid by the Kaduna State Government to frustrate the release of the defendants from further incarceration."

"The new charge was maliciously filed when the Kaduna State Government anticipated that the ruling fixed for July 28 in respect of our no case submission would succeed,"

Falana said via a statement issued on Sunday.

The senior lawyer also praised the trial judge for "displaying exceptional courage and judicial independence amid what he described as intimidation by the forces of oppression".



Falana

**Boko Haram and ISWAP fighters surrender to troops**

Troops of 202 Battalion have taken custody of eight Boko Haram Insurgents and their families, comprising 10 adult females and 22 children, who surrendered to troops at Ruwaza village in Bama Local Government Area of Borno state.

In a similar development, troops of Forward Operational Base (FOB) operating along Bocobs- Bama road have arrested 20 Boko Haram fighters and their families, who surrendered to troops at Nbewa village, also in Bama Local Government Area of Borno state. The surrendering families of the insurgents comprised 15 adult females and 26 children. The suspects all surrendered to the troops, during clearance operations in the areas on 29 July, 2021 following ongoing intense clearance operations by troops in the general areas.

The children among the surrendering suspects have been vaccinated with polio vaccines, while the adult and female suspects, who have been documented and screened are currently undergoing preliminary investigations.

In a separate operation, troops of 73 Battalion, Forward Operating Base (FOB) in conjunction with combined team of Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and Hunters have intercepted a Boko Haram Terrorists Logistics Supplier during a fighting patrol along Molai - Damboa Road. On being alerted, the combined team swiftly mobilised and stormed the location, where they arrested the suspect, while he was perfecting plans to deliver logistics to the insurgents in the forest.

Items recovered from the suspect include a vehicle, 4 jerry cans of 30 Litres of PMS, one 4 Litre gallon of engine oil, one motorcycle pump, one oil treatment, one torch light, one mosquito net, two praying mats, two blankets, four Spanners, 10 packets of 1.5v battery and three dozens of diamond rubber solution. Others are five packets of candies, five packets of seasoning and measures of other food stuff.



# News

## We have only three Igboho's aide with us not 12 – DSS

The Department of State Services (DSS) has told a court that only three associates of Yoruba nation advocate Sunday Igboho are in its custody. This is contrary to 12 people named in a suit before a Federal High Court in Abuja by some lawyers including Pelumi Olajengbesi and Allen Sowore, after the raid of Igboho's Ibadan (Oyo State) residence on July 1.

He gave the names of those being detained as: The detainees Abdullateef Ofeyagbe, Amuda Babatunde (alias Lady K), Tajudeen Erinoyen Diekola Ademola, Abideen Shittu, Jamiu Noah, Ayobami Donald, Adelabe Usman, Oluwapelumi Kunle, Raji Kazeem, Taiwo Opeyemi and Bamidele Sunday.

The court, on July 23 granted an ex-parte application by the applicants and, among others, ordered the DSS to produce them on July 29 and to show cause why they should not be granted bail.

At the resumed hearing in the case yesterday, the DSS failed to produce the applicants.

DSS' lawyer, I. Awo, apologised for his client's inability to produce the applicants in court, arguing that they were being detained

based on an order from another court pending the conclusion of investigation.

Awo said the order got for their detention would lapse on August 2 (Monday) and prayed the court to allow the DSS time to conclude its investigation after which it would decide on whether to release or charge them to court.

The lawyer noted that as against the applicants' claim, the DSS has three – Amoda Babatunde (aka Lady K), Diokola Adeyemo Admola and Bamidele Sunday – in its custody.

Awo added that the DSS also had Abdullateef Ofeyagbe (the first applicant) in its custody until July 27 when he was released.

Lawyer to the applicants, Olajengbesi faulted Awo's claim and insisted that all his clients were being held by the DSS.

He also faulted the remand order tendered in court by the DSS' lawyer saying it was not certified.

Olajengbesi however sought time to enable him respond to the affidavit filed by the DSS in relation to the court's order for it to show cause.

Ruling, Justice Obiora Egwuatu restated the order for the applicants' production on the next adjourned

date.

Justice Egwuatu also ordered the DSS to allow the applicants' lawyers access to them between today and Monday.

He adjourned till Monday for the DSS to produce them in court and for further hearing in the case.

In its affidavit, the DSS said its July 1 raid on Igboho's residence was a joint operation by its operatives and men of the Nigerian Army.

It stated that the raid was informed by suspicion that Igboho and his associates were involved in criminal activities.

The DSS added that its operatives recovered a number of arms and ammunition during the raid, noting that investigation in the case "has assumed a wider dimension and sophistication."

It stated that "the activities of the applicants in custody constitute threat to national security of Nigeria.

"Any attempt to grant the applicants bail at this stage of investigation, may jeopardise on-going investigation in the matter.

"The respondents will not hesitate to formally charge the applicants to court or bring them before the court at the conclusion of investigation."



El-Zakzaky and Wife

## Court Orders Release Of El-Zakzaky and Wife

Kaduna State High Court has freed the embattled leader of the proscribed Islamic Movement in Nigeria, Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky and his wife.

In a ruling that lasted over eight hours, the presiding judge, Justice Gideon Kurada upheld the no-case submission filed by Sheikh Ibraheem El-Zakzaky and his wife in an alleged culpable homicide, unlawful assembly and disruption of public peace levelled against them by the Kaduna state government.

The judge in his ruling held that the prosecution failed to establish a prima facie case against the defendants.

The duo has been standing trial for four years on an eight-count charge of alleged culpable homicide, disruption of public peace and

unlawful Assembly among others levelled against them by the Kaduna State Government.

The defendants were brought to court on Wednesday morning by officials of the Nigerian Correctional service amidst tight security.

Their lead counsel and a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Mr Femi Falana, had on July 1, argued that all the 15 witnesses presented by the prosecution counsel were unable to establish any connection between the alleged crimes of Sheikh El-Zakzaky and his wife.

Falana then prayed the court to rule in favour of his clients and dismiss the charges levelled against them as there was no criminal case that has been established against them so far by the Kaduna State Government.

## US lawmakers stop \$875m defence equipment sale to Nigeria Over 'Poor Human Rights Record'

United States lawmakers are holding down a proposed sale of attack helicopters to Nigeria amid mounting concerns about the Muhammadu Buhari regime's human rights record as it grapples with multiple security crises.

US lawmakers on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have reportedly delayed clearing a proposed sale of 12 AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters and accompanying defence systems to the Nigerian military.

The deal is worth \$875 million, according to US officials and congressional aides familiar with the matter.

In addition to the helicopters, the proposed sale included 28 helicopter engines produced by GE Aviation, 14 military-grade aircraft navigation systems made by Honeywell, and 2,000 advanced precision kill weapon systems—laser-guided rocket munitions, according to information sent by the State Department to Congress and reviewed by Foreign Policy magazine.

A report by Foreign Policy on Tuesday said the behind-the-scenes controversy over the proposed arms sale illustrates a broader debate among Washington policymakers over how to balance national security with human rights objectives.

The hold on the sale also showcases how powerful US lawmakers want to push the Biden administration to rethink US relations with Nigeria amid overarching concerns that Buhari is drifting toward authoritarianism as his government

is besieged by multiple security challenges, including the Boko Haram insurgency.

But Western governments and international human rights organisations have ramped up their criticisms of the Buhari regime, particularly in the wake of its ban on Twitter, systemic corruption issues, and the Nigerian military's role in deadly crackdowns on #EndSARS protesters last October.

Chairperson of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Bob Menendez, called for a "fundamental rethink of the framework of our overall engagement" with Nigeria during a Senate hearing with US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken in June.

Both Menendez and Sen. Jim Risch, a top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, have placed a hold on the proposed arms sale, according to multiple US officials and congressional aides familiar with the matter, who spoke to Foreign Policy on condition of anonymity.

The details on the proposed sale were first sent by the US State Department to Congress in January before then-former Vice President Joe Biden was inaugurated as president, according to officials familiar with the matter.

Nigeria has just received six out of the 12 Tucano jet fighters purchased from the US government.

Some experts said the United States should hit the pause button on major defence sales until it makes a broader assessment of the extent to which corruption and mismanagement hobble the Nigerian military and whether

the military is doing enough to minimize civilian casualties in its campaign against Boko Haram and other violent insurrectionists.

Administration officials say they are tired of regular efforts by Capitol Hill to review arms

"There doesn't have to be a reason why we don't provide weapons or equipment to the Nigerian military," said Judd Devermont, director of the Africa program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a think tank. "But it has to be done with an assessment of how it will actually, one, change the direction of conflict in Nigeria, and, two, that they will use it consistent with our laws. In both cases, it's either a question mark or a fail."

"There is a culture of impunity that exists around abuses by the military," said Nigeria researcher at Human Rights Watch, Anietie Ewang.

Ewang cited the Nigerian military's killing of unarmed protesters during the massive #EndSARS demonstrations against police corruption and brutality last year as well as cases documented by human rights organizations of abuses in the military's campaign against Boko Haram.

"I'm sure it's a difficult situation. There are so many conflicts springing up across the country now," Ewang said.

"The authorities, I presume, are trying to do the best they can to save lives and properties. But this must be done in accordance with human rights standards. You can't throw one out just to be able to achieve the other."

## Aso Villa Staff Swear Oath of Secrecy

Staff at the State House in Abuja have taken an oath of secrecy and warned that disclosing confidential information without authorisation will attract penalties under public service rules.

The warning was issued by the Permanent Secretary, State House, Tijjani Umar at the administration of Oath of Secrecy and Declaration of Secrecy to 42 staff of the State House, administered by Justice Hamza Muazu of the FCT High Court on Tuesday.

This was disclosed in a statement signed by the Assistant Director Information, State House, Patience Tilley-Gyado

Tilley-Gyadi said the Permanent Secretary explained that the oaths were administered to staff members who handle classified documents.

"We discovered that due to deployment of officers and retirement a number of our staff need to be placed under the radar so that they will be aware that their jobs, the kind of documents or information they are handling from day to day and beyond, are so important and must be safeguarded.

"That's the reason we decided to

do the needful by administering the Oath of Secrecy, highlighting the importance of letting them know what information they are managing and the consequences of the breach of such information," Umar was quoted as saying.

Disclosing that the exercise will be continuous, Umar expressed delight that so far the State House has not recorded any breach of information.

"We have not had any breach. We don't anticipate having any breach.

"But then it's our duty to let them understand that if there is any, there will be consequences after investigations and that also includes after they have retired from the Civil Service," he said.

Earlier before the administration of the oaths, Mr Tukur Yahaya, the Director of Special Services Department, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, took the staff through sensitisation, explaining the essence of the Official Secrets Act, 1962.

"The essence of this exercise is to ensure the safety and security of government information, documents and facilities," he said.





## Hushpuppi risks 20-year jail as he pleads guilty

**A** Nigerian Instagram influencer, Ramon Abass, popularly called Hushpuppi has pleaded guilty to charges filed against him by the United States government bothering on money laundering. Recall that the 38-year-old man, who was made popular by

his luxurious lifestyle on social media, was arrested in Dubai by Emirati police officers and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) operatives in June 2020 and was subsequently extradited to the United States.

Hushpuppi who was also accused of internet fraud now

risks 20-year jail term when declared guilty.

His guilty plea bargain was filed at a U.S. Central District Court of California.

It was signed by Hushpuppi, his lawyer, Louis Shapiro, and the Assistant United States Attorney, Anil Antony, on July 4.

## Abba Kyari breaks silence on alleged bribe to arrest Hushpuppi's ally

**D**eputy Commissioner of Police Abba Kyari has denied receiving a bribe from a Nigerian Instagram celebrity, Ramon Abass, popularly known as Hushpuppi.

The United States Department of Justice had said ongoing investigations showed that Hushpuppi allegedly bribed Kyari to arrest one Kelly Chibuzo Vincent, one of his accomplices in Nigeria.

Reacting to the allegations on Thursday morning, the DCP in a statement on his verified Facebook page said his hands are clean.

According to Kyari, nobody demanded money from the embattled Instagram influencer, stating that the focus of the police was to save people's lives that were purportedly threatened.

Kyari explained that Hushpuppi had informed the police that somebody in Nigeria was threatening to kill his family. He added that the social media celebrity, who was based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, before his incarceration, also sent the suspect's phone number, urging

the police to act fast to save his family.

He however said the suspect was allowed to go after investigation showed they were long time friends with disagreements over money. Kyari insisted that he did not demand a dime from Hushpuppi, saying the only time they had discussions about money was when the fraudster demanded to know who sews his native clothes and caps, adding that after linking both party, Hushpuppi sent N300,000 for five sets of attires.

Kyari said the clothes and caps were delivered to his office after which someone collected them for Hushpuppi. He urged anyone interested in further pursuing the matter to contact Vincent for confirmation.

He urged his supporters to remain calm, stating that those working towards damaging his reputation would be disgraced.

The statement reads in part, "For those who are celebrating that this is an indictment on us and mentioning some fictitious big money, They will be disappointed once again as our hands are clean

and our record of service for two decades is open for everybody to see. They will continue seeing us serving our fatherland and we will continue responding to ALL distress calls from ALL Nigerians provided they are life threatening.

"For good Nigerians who appreciate our service, please don't worry as our hands are clean and they should please not respond to those celebrating and creating many false narratives without any evidence. We are used to such types of people and false newsmakers and distributors".



Kyari

## ... As IGP orders review of allegation against Abba Kyari

**T**he Inspector General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, on Thursday ordered the review of the allegation against Abba Kyari, Deputy Commissioner of Police by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI.

Kyari, who is the head of the Intelligence Response Team (IRT), was linked to fraudster, Hushpuppi, whose name is Ramon Abass.

Hushpuppi, an alleged international fraudster risks jail term of 20 years after pleading guilty to fraud.

Reports had it that Hushpuppi

had bribed the IRT boss to jail a disloyal member of his gang. This, Kyari has denied

However, the IGP said the review was in line with the commitment of the Nigeria Police Force to ensure justice and professionalism.

This was contained in a statement by the Force spokesman, Frank Mba entitled: "Alleged indictment of DCP Abba Kyari: Inspector General of Police orders a review of the information."

The statement reads: "Sequel to the receipt of allegations and indictment processes from the

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) against one of the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force, DCP Abba Kyari, the Inspector General of Police IGP Usman Alkali Baba, has ordered an internal review of the allegations.

"The Nigeria Police Force reaffirms its commitment to the pursuit of justice and the strengthening of its professional relationship with the FBI and other international partners.

"Further developments on this case will be communicated to members of the public accordingly."

## Passengers Who Abscond From Quarantine Risk Prosecution, FG Warns

**T**he Federal Government has vowed to sanction returning passengers who abscond from quarantine facilities, including possible prosecution of such individuals.

Addressing a news conference in Abuja, the Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire, believed such persons constitute a major risk to the country's health system.

He raised concerns over reports from port health officials that some passengers from high risks countries have continued to abscond from facilities where they were quarantined.

"The Federal Ministry of Health Point of Entry (PoE) pillar of the COVID-19 response has been continuously monitoring passenger arrivals especially from high-risk countries like India, Turkey, and Brazil.

"This process has been an arduous one given that port health staff have continued to report a trend of abscondment

by quarantined passengers, an act detrimental to our pandemic response and public health safety," the minister said on Monday.

He added, "I entreat all persons to comply with our port health staff or risk facing sanctions, including prosecution. Non-compliance with their directives constitutes a risk to national health security and will be handled with commensurate severity."

Osagie noted that the world has witnessed an increase in reported cases of COVID-19 across a significant number of countries, due to the high transmissibility of the Delta Variant.

He explained that the threat included importation from countries that were popular travel destinations for Nigerians, including the United Kingdom, United States, UAE, France, and Turkey, which have a high incidence of the virulent strain.

## Prepare For The Worst, FG Warns Nigerians

**T**he Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA), an agency of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources, has predicted more devastating floods from the end of August to early October.

NIHSA said flood will get worse in some states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) within that period.

The Agency said in line with its earlier predictions, Lagos, Nasarawa, Anambra, Abia, Kwara, Kaduna, Rivers, Enugu, Borno and Ondo states had witnessed severe flooding as a result of heavy local rainfalls compounded by poor drainage system.

The Director-General of the Agency, Engr. Nze Clement Onyeaso, in an interaction with some journalists in Abuja Wednesday, said all areas earlier identified as flood prone this year as well as those along the Rivers Niger and Benue might likely begin to experience more devastating flooding from the end of August.

"Nigeria is located within the River Niger Basin which is occupied by nine countries namely Benin, Burkina- Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire,

Guinea, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Nigeria is located at the lowest position of the Basin and this means that once the upper catchment of the Basin gets flooded, Nigeria should be prepared to experience flooding. The period of flooding in these upstream countries is August and September of every year," he said.

The DG said his Agency was monitoring the development, adding that it will also continue to monitor Cameroonian authorities with regards to flood scenarios in the upper catchment of the sub-basin.

Engr. Nze warned Lagosians against the practice of dredging and sand filling the Atlantic Ocean, to build what they usually call model cities like those in Lekki and Banana Island, saying such may, in the future, pose serious threats.

As part of the preparation for the expected floods, the DG called on Nigerians, especially the state governments to be fully prepared by ensuring cleaning of blocked drainage system and canals remove refuse, weeds, water hyacinths and floats on water channels.



By Zhong Sheng



# Perspective

## How China lends: Truth and reality

On March 2021, Georgetown Law, the Peterson Institute for International Economics, AidData, Center for Global Development and Kiel Institute for the World Economy of Germany jointly issued a report titled “How China Lends: A Rare Look into 100 Debt Contracts with Foreign Governments”. Through a comparison of 100 sovereign debt contracts signed by Export-Import Bank of China (China Eximbank), China Development Bank (CDB), Chinese state-owned commercial banks and Chinese government departments and 142 sovereign debt contracts signed between Cameroon and bilateral, multilateral and commercial creditors, the report points to the differences in the lending rules between China and mainstream Western institutions such as the Paris Club in the four aspects:

First, Chinese contracts contain unusual confidentiality clauses, which were introduced around the time of the inception of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). According to the report, confidentiality clauses would give rise to the problem of “secret debts” to countries across the Global South, and make it difficult for the West to calculate those countries’ debt sustainability.

Second, contracts offered by Chinese official creditors expressly commit borrowers to exclude the debt from restructuring in the Paris Club or any other multilateral restructuring, which hinders the implementation of the core principles of the Paris Club.

Third, Chinese contracts contain cross-default and cross-cancellation clauses, which tend to give China relational power over countries of the South and stronger influence over their domestic and foreign policies.

Fourth, Chinese loans to foreign countries require the maintenance of special accounts for the purpose of risk management, taking up the foreign exchange reserves of countries of the South and affecting the precision of Western analysis of those countries’ debt servicing ability.

Actually, the argumentation method and process of the report lack scientific basis, and its conclusions are untenable.

### Problematic contract samples

The samples used in the report are seriously flawed. For example, the source of the contract samples is unclear, and the choices of samples and comparison methodology are subjective and biased. Therefore, the conclusions are hardly convincing.

The samples represent base evidence for the research and conclusion of the report, and the legality, authenticity and relevance of the source of evidence directly determine the neutrality, credibility and scientificity of the conclusions. While claiming all the contracts were obtained from open sources, the report accuses China of keeping sovereign loan contracts confidential and not transparent.

The report does not explain a contradiction: How the researchers obtained their information if the contracts were confidential.

The report examined 100 sovereign debt contracts signed between 24 developing nations and China from 2000 to 2020, and compared them with 142 sovereign debt contracts signed by Cameroon between 1999 and 2017. The problem with this approach is the mismatch and lack of heterogeneity of the country chosen for comparison: Cameroon is only one country, and its financing needs and development structure are not sufficiently diverse and heterogeneous. Comparing a benchmark country with little variety and a group of 24 countries with great variety reduces the validity of the research conclusion.

Another problem of the report involves comparing 100 bilateral sovereign debt contracts of China with 142 multilateral and bilateral debt contracts of Cameroon. Of all the Chinese contracts, the 76 contracts signed by China Eximbank include preferential government loans, preferential buyer’s credit and buyer’s credit; the eight CDB contracts are in the category of development financial loans, which are basically commercial bank loans. In comparison, Cameroon’s contracts are mainly signed with multilateral development banks, with more favorable terms than the ones offered by China Eximbank.

Within the international development financing market, multilateral development banks, bilateral government aid agencies, development financial institutions and commercial banks are fundamentally different in their function, which is why government preferential loans, development loans and commercial loans constitute different types of loans, with different earning levels and means of risk prevention and control. The method used in the report, which is like comparing apples and oranges, makes the

intent questionable.

A scientific and neutral research report would choose to compare the preferential loan contracts of China EximBank with similar contracts of government-backed institutions of preferential loans such as Agence française de développement (AFD), Japan International Cooperation Agency and KfW of Germany.

The failure of the report to provide equal numbers of similar bilateral sovereign loan contracts offered by Western countries reveals two things: First, the research method of the report is flawed, and the correlation between evidence and conclusion is insufficient. Second, the report seeks to make China the target for all while avoiding an assessment and judgement of bilateral lending institutions in the West.

### On confidentiality clauses

According to the report, Chinese contracts contain “unusual” confidentiality clauses, which prohibit borrowers from disclosing clauses or the existence of debts. However, the principle of confidentiality is widely applied in international loan contracts, and the practice of not disclosing detailed information about the terms of loans is also quite common.

With few exceptions, creditors and sovereign debtors normally do not publish their contract texts in full.

There is no uniform public disclosure standard or practice for bilateral official lenders. Even the authors of the report themselves admit “almost all OECD official creditors and non-OECD creditors have not publicly released their loan contracts.” Similar confidentiality clauses can be found in the official bilateral debt contracts of the AFD. The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the Islamic Development Bank, the OPEC Fund for International Development and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development all require the borrower to keep the documents and letters of the lender confidential. Even the Asian Development Bank has confidentiality clauses in its loan agreements. Debtor governments usually would not publish the text of their loan contracts either.

The above-mentioned examples show that setting confidentiality clauses is a common practice for lenders, yet the report singles out China, which is either due to a lack of understanding of common commercial practices or out of ulterior motives. Besides, China is not an OECD member, nor a party to the OECD creditor reporting system, the OECD Export Credit Group (ECG) or the Paris Club. Thus, it has no obligation to disclose its loan information.

### On ‘No Paris Club’ clauses

According to the report, close to three-quarters of the debt contracts in the Chinese samples contain the so-called “No Paris Club” clauses, which expressly commit the borrower to exclude the debt from restructuring in the Paris Club of official bilateral creditors and from any comparable debt treatment. The report maintains that such clauses are inconsistent with China’s position and attitude on signing the G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments. Such a one-sided conclusion picks only opinions in their favor. Without proper framing of the argument, it takes the Western model of sovereign debt treatment as the best option for the international community, and attempts to obstruct the efforts of emerging creditor countries to build a new scheme for sovereign debt treatment.

By underscoring the issue of Paris Club clauses, the Western countries are actually attempting to bring China into their framework of debt rules, while taking a step back lowering

lending limits, and, at the same time, “softly absorb” the potential influence of China’s foreign lending with their framework of rules, and share in the reputational benefits of China’s sovereign lending.

The principles of the Paris Club reflect merely the interests of Western creditor countries and are not recognized by other emerging creditor countries. Arrogantly asking others to observe the rules shows a lack of “basic courtesy”. Commercial and official bilateral creditors that are not party to the Paris Club have no obligation to abide by these principles.

Over recent years, the international development financing market has gone through big changes, and the size of lending of Paris Club countries has dropped. That said, the current global debt governance system is still dominated by the “Paris Club - IMF - World Bank” structure of the West. But, with its expanded scale of China’s sovereign loans and the lending practice with Chinese characteristics, a new order that is more friendly to developing countries is in the making.

By calling into question the “No Paris Club” clauses in Chinese contracts, the Western countries are interfering in the free choice and internal affairs of debtor countries, casting a hegemonic shadow on the cause of international development financing.

The signing of loan contracts containing “No Paris Club” clauses between debtor countries and China is entirely based on the principle of equality and mutual benefit. It is a choice made by the debtor countries for the best of their national interest. All countries should respect the right of other countries to make their own choice, instead of taking the rules of the Paris Club as universal norms that must be observed by all.

In regulating the sovereign debt market, the Western countries have not given full consideration to the development financing needs of developing countries. Even worse, they have set obstacles for developing countries to make their own choices, and sacrificed their development rights to protect the so-called “Paris Club standards”. This is putting the cart before the horse. To put it bluntly, politicians and scholars in some developed countries believe they should not lend to developing countries, and also deny these countries the chance to borrow elsewhere.

### On special contract terms

According to the report, compared with their peers in the official credit market, Chinese lenders offer contracts containing more elaborate repayment safeguards as well as cross-default, cross-cancellation and stability clauses, which gives them an advantage over other creditors. This conclusion ignores the particular context of China’s outward lending. To achieve sustainable development, developing countries need to fill a huge infrastructure gap. Since the early 20th century, the Chinese government and state-owned banks have provided a large amount of infrastructure loans to low-and middle-income countries.

However, as infrastructure investment and financing often involve substantial capital and increased risk, meeting the financing needs of developing countries has been a thorny issue. To ensure the safety of their sovereign loans, Chinese creditors have included commonly-accepted clauses such as cross default and cross cancellation in the contracts.

CDB is in essence a commercial bank. Compared to China Eximbank, it has a stronger need to manage credit and liquidity risks through contract terms and make use of credit enhancement instruments

when lending to high-risk borrowers. Nevertheless, the text used in China’s loan contracts is the one generally accepted by the market and the terms are consistent with the principles of fairness and balance of rights and obligations of parties concerned.

As the times change, China’s presence in the international sovereign lending has become more significant. The international community needs to foster an objective view of China’s overseas sovereign lending.

Taking the financing needs of receiving countries as the top priority, China does not hesitate to take risks that other lenders cannot or are unwilling to take. This requires Chinese financial institutions to improve risk control mechanisms.

Despite their dire need for financing in infrastructure and other fields, commercial loans to developing countries, especially infrastructure loans, have been limited for a long time. This has become a major challenge to the world economy. The main reason is that infrastructure investment and financing requires significant capital input and involve a longer payback period.

In the past two decades, China has provided a large amount of bilateral loans to developing countries through policy and commercial funds, giving them important financial support for growing the economy, creating jobs, improving infrastructure and promoting industrialization.

*Source: Embassy of China in South Africa.*

*Graphics: GT* And, policy loans provided through the bilateral channel is not a Chinese invention. Major Western countries all have similar official development financing institutions. The only difference is that these institutions have been on a decline. On the surface, such a decline is a manifestation of the budget constraints facing Western governments, but fundamentally, it is the result of liberal market ideology that makes livelihood projects a more likely beneficiary of ODA. As a result, infrastructure projects urgently needed by developing countries receive little attention: ODA providers are not capable of funding such projects, and commercial institutions also take no interest in them due to high risks. China’s financing cooperation with other developing countries goes beyond the binary aid model of “government vs. market” of the West. It not only helps fill the funding gap, but also revolutionizes the concept of financing cooperation.

In terms of risk management and control methods, China explores replacing traditional means of ex-post dispute resolution with preventive measures taken before lending is provided. Such an approach encourages the debtor countries to become “responsible” borrowers in the process of development financing and increase their efforts toward sustainable development.

China’s financing model, combining policy-based funds with commercial funds, represents the future of development financing. In recent years, new types of mixed loans with official and commercial institutions as joint lenders have increased in the global financing market.

That said, when providing development financing to developing countries, it is important to control and reduce investment risks and ensure security of capital. Therefore, China tries to replace traditional means of dispute resolution with contract tools that prevent default in sovereign loans. Combining the practices of commercial banks and official institutions, Chinese contracts aim to secure maximum repayment by adjusting the standard contract tools, including setting up a revenue account based on the proceeds of the project to provide additional funding for debt repayment and relieve the pressure on government budget.

It is a legitimate measure to ensure the capital safety of lenders and a commonly-accepted commercial practice. It is also a practice adopted by some OECD official creditors - as pointed out in the report, 7 percent of OECD official creditors sampled use repayment security devices.

Arrangements such as default clauses, to some extent, constrain the debtors to fulfill their obligations, which is the very purpose of signing a contract. It urges debtor countries to properly manage their debt and fulfill repayment responsibilities, and become “responsible” borrowers with international credibility, while enjoying convenient access to loan concessions. This helps to enhance the countries’ reputation in the international development financing market and ultimately contributes to their economic and social sustainability.

The authors are from Shanghai University of International Business and Economics.



By Nnamdi Ogbo, Asaba

One of the most profound sayings in the southeast region of Nigeria, is an adage that says, “The world is a marketplace”. When put in clearer context, this adage carries two meanings, the first, which seems to be the most obvious is that the Igbo ethnic nationality, fondly called Ndigbo, spread across the southeast and parts of the South-South, are majorly traders and business-minded people. The second, which carries a deeper connotation, is that the marketplace is the core of social, community and business interaction.

Prominent in this region is the city of Onitsha, a town located on the eastern bank of the Niger River. Onitsha is the economic hub of commerce and industry in the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It hosts the largest market in Africa in terms of geographical size and volume of goods and is strategically positioned as a regional hub for trade, business, and logistics in the region. Regardless of the several business ventures and investments that people from the South-East have scattered around the country, every end of year, during the festive season, almost everyone from the region comes back home to meet with their kinsmen, celebrate their achievements and engage in cultural activities.

Homecoming is everything. It offers the most valuable opportunity for integration. This integration alongside an impressive ingenuity for business and trade across the region has fostered an inspiring degree of social mobility that continues to drive economic growth and development in the region and across the country. In the middle of this all, stands, the Niger bridge, a symbol of hope, commerce, culture, and progress.

After over 50 years of connecting people both within and to the region, regular traffic, imposing heavy static loads on the bridge is taking a toll on the first Niger Bridge, giving rise to the urgent need for a second bridge crossing – The Second River Niger Bridge. For many stakeholders in the region, the completion of the Second River Niger Bridge will be a dream come true, as many have spent an important part of their lives looking forward to the impact and immense benefits that the bridge will bring to their personal lives, social engagements, and businesses.

A project of the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Works and Housing, in collaboration with the Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority, the Second River Niger Bridge is expected to, among other things, minimize traffic congestion affecting

the current bridge and ensure a safe and sufficient river crossing.

The Second River Niger Bridge is not just another regional amenity; it is a key national infrastructure that will play a major role in enhancing everyday life and social integration for dwellers while also driving trade and economic activities. As a significant bridge in the region and the nation, the Second River Niger Bridge will contribute immensely to

the expansion of a well-developed road transportation network, providing ease for commuters and enhancing regional connectivity. It will make homecoming even sweeter.

Handling the construction of this bridge is Julius Berger, the company known for its quality and reliability, which has delivered some of Nigeria’s most important buildings and infrastructure and demanding engineering feats, such as the Lekki-

Ikoyi Bridge in Lagos.

For the average resident in the South-East and environs, the drive for progress is an everyday activity. From making large supplies and sales on a regular basis, to expanding chain stores, or even successfully climbing the ladder of the apprenticeship system, to become a proud business owner. These amongst other stories of advancement, are the kind of progress, the Second River Niger Bridge will enable once completed. With the Second River Niger Bridge, inter-state travel within the region becomes more convenient. Social and economic integration also becomes more enhanced. It would also foster trade activities and other commercial engagements, like transporting raw materials and finished goods to factories, warehouses, suppliers, distributors, stores, and the end-consumers.

As shown on the project microsite where progress on the bridge is made transparent to the public, so far, reports around the ongoing construction, show good progress on the Second River Niger Bridge Project since commencement. For example, the superstructure is in progress, the geotechnical design and In-construction service are recording good and steady developments; the culverts have been completed, while work is in progress on both the Owerri Interchange and the Toll Station.

The project has started to deliver value for the community and this progress we can hope to continue till the full completion of the Second River Niger Bridge project.



# Feature

## Enhancing Social Integration And Regional Connectivity: Spotlight On The Second River Niger Bridge





By Farooq A. Kperogi

In this moment of grave legal uncertainty regarding the fate and future of our political party; the All Progressives Congress (APC), it is incumbent on me just like all other leaders and administrators in our party as well as a legal minds to proffer solutions that are altruistic, non-self-serving and ultimately capable of preserving the sanctity of the APC. It is upon this premise that I write.

I must confess that I have not seen the Judgment and my opinion is premised upon reports, snippets and listening to counsel in the matter speak to the media.

The decision of the Supreme Court in *JEGEDE V AKEREDOLU* in SC/481/21 was a victory for Arakurin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN the incumbent Governor of Ondo State and I congratulate him and the people of Ondo State for this great victory as another 4 years of phenomenal work is guaranteed.

However, in granting His Excellency Arakurin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN victory, the learned Justices of the Supreme Court had to touch on the question of whether the office and powers of National Chairman can be exercised by Governor Mai Mala Buni who is the sitting Governor of Yobe State?

In response to this question, it would seem that the 7 Justices of the apex court were not unanimous in viewing the nomination of His Excellency Arakurin Akeredolu by Governor Mai Mala Buni acting as National Chairman of APC as a violation of Section 183 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended) and Article 17(iv) of the APC Constitution. However, the Court seemed divided as to how to treat this violation. Three Justices agreed that it contaminated the nomination process whilst 4 other Justices did not seem to have pronounced on same but rather dismissed the Appeal on other grounds.

This creates a legal quagmire for APC in respect of all elections and actions carried out by the Governor of Yobe State in his acting capacity as Chairman as there seem not to be a clear position of the Apex Court on same. A close reading of Section 183 of the 1999 Constitution provides a basis for the attitude of the Supreme Court. It states that:

“The governor shall not, during the period when he holds office, hold any other executive office or paid employment in any capacity whatsoever”.

Just in case this Section of the Constitution is not self-explanatory enough for anyone, the minority in the apex court cleared any ambiguity when it relied on Article 17(4) of the APC Constitution which provides thus:

“No officer in any organ of the Party shall hold executive position office in government concurrently”.

These provisions were not directly pronounced on by the majority decision of the Supreme Court and that creates a bigger problem in view of



## Opinion

### The Decision Of The Supreme Court In *Eyitayo Jegede & Anor V APC & Ors (Sc/481/21)* And It's Impact On The Current Leadership Of APC

the minority decision which extensively discussed this point and resolved same against the APC. It safe to conclude that the judicial attitude of the apex Court is that APC would be dealt a fatal blow should Governor Mai Mala Buni remain at the helms of affairs of the APC and he is joined in a future suit.

Therefore, in response to the well publicized opinion of my brother silk Chief Niyi Akintola, SAN the apex Court gave the APC both a hint and a wink at the same time.

The minority decision backed by the majority's action of not ruling otherwise on this point sends a strong message which we cannot ignore. Without equivocation, the law is not on the side of perpetuating serving Governors including Governor Mai Mala Buni in the leadership of the Caretaker Extra-Ordinary Convention

Planning Committee. So what do we do as a party?

I have read suggestions by my brother silk, Festus Keyamo, SAN to the effect that the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Party as well as its Board of Trustees (BOT) should take charge of the affairs of the Party through a committee set up by either organ. This is a very wise proposition except that NEC alongside all other organs of the Party were purportedly dissolved at a meeting convened and presided over by Governor Mai Mala Buni. Sadly, the Notice for the NEC meeting was issued by the same tainted leadership of the party.

Therefore, it is my view that the meeting may not have been properly convened in the eyes of the law and its resolution(s) may have been void ab initio. This gives a leeway for the

NEC to resume its duties and convene meetings immediately where it will decide the future of the party.

The Board of Trustees of the Party was never and has still not been constituted till date. So in effect, the Party does not have a BOT that could convene even a meeting of the BOT, talk more of convening a National Convention or indeed any statutory meeting of the Party.

The reinstatement of the dissolved National Working Committee (NWC) without the erstwhile Chairman who was suspended from office by Order of a court of competent jurisdiction should be seriously considered in other to cloak the impending Ward, Local Government Area and State Congresses as well as National Convention with the imprint of legality. Many of the NWC members have since moved on to better things and would be reluctant to return to their positions but this is the hard decision we must all take for the sake of saving our dear party.

It is my opinion, that in this moment, there is no place for parochial ground-standing. Just as the former NWC accepted their dissolution without much hassle, it is time for the current Caretaker Committee to sacrifice for the posterity of APC.

The fate of APC is at stake in that all successes, victories and triumphs gained by the party will continue to hang on a very thin thread in the face of the progressive attitude of our courts on election and political matters.

Meanwhile, the decision of the Supreme Court has opened the flood gates for endless litigation challenging every action and decision of the APC leadership as presently constituted.

In closing, I acknowledge the Supreme Court for its' decision and specifically note the hint the Court gave to us to clean our acts and come into the bounds of legality before the worse happens at the forthcoming general elections.

*Babatunde OGALA, SAN.  
Immediate Past National  
Legal Adviser,  
All Progressives Congress*





# Business & Economy

## FG Reduces Gas To Power Price From \$2.50 To \$2.18

The Federal Government has announced the reduction of the price of gas to power from \$2.50 to \$2.18 with immediate effect.

Gas to power is measured in Standard cubic feet (scuf). It initially sold at \$2.50 per scuf.

While declaring open the 2021 Gas Sector Stakeholders Forum organised by the Gas Aggregation Company of Nigeria (GACN) and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for the Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano (AKK) gas pipeline project holding in Kano, Minister of state for Petroleum Resources, Timipre Sylva, announced the price reduction, which he said was an offshoot of a negotiation between the federal government and the organised labour.

The minister said the forum is geared towards sensitizing the Northern part of Nigeria of the opportunities that will come with the revamping of moribund industries in Kano and other states in the corridor of the pipeline.

He noted that experts have estimated that it will take two-three years to revamp these industries to function at optimal level and this will come at the right time when the AKK project is delivered in 2023.

While speaking at the event also, the Minister of Power, Mamman Saleh, thanked the federal government for the reduction of the gas price.

Represented by Abba Aliyu, his Special Assistant on Policy, Saleh noted that the power sector uses more than 60% of the gas currently generated in the country to generate electricity and as such the price reduction will assist the federal government's goal of delivering sustainable power for the country.

## CBN Bans Sale Of Foreign Exchange To BDC Operators

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has announced an end to the weekly allocation and sale of foreign exchange to Bureau De Change (BDC) operators in the country.

CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele, made the announcement on Tuesday while briefing reporters on the outcomes of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

"In total disregard of the difficulty that the (apex) bank is facing in meeting its mandate of maintaining the country's foreign exchange reserves to safeguard the value of the naira, we have continued to observe that stakeholders in some of the sub-sectors have not been helpful in this direction," he lamented.

Emefiele added, "In particular, we have noted with disappointment and great concerns that our Bureau De Change operators have abandoned the original objective of their establishment which was to serve retail end users who need \$5,000 or less.

"Instead, they have become (illegal)

wholesale dealers in foreign exchange to the tune of millions of dollars per transaction."

He accused the BDC operators of facilitating grafts, illicit financial flows, and money laundering in the country.

According to the CBN chief, the nation's financial regulator will not hesitate to sanction any bank operating in the country found to be collaborating with BDC operators to facilitate illegal forex dealings.

He also accused international organisations, development finance organisations, and embassies of patronising BDC operators to fund local operations contravening Nigeria's foreign exchange regulations.

"Despite the fact that Nigeria is the only country in the world today where a central bank sells dollars directly to Bureau De Change operators, operators in the Nigerian Bureau De Change segment have not reciprocated the bank's gesture to help maintain price stability in that market.

"Given this behaviour, it is not

surprising that since the CBN began to sell foreign exchange to Bureau De Change, the number of operators has risen from a mere 74 in 2005 to over 2,700 in 2016 – and almost 5,500 BDCs as of today (July 27, 2021)," Emefiele said.



Emefiele, CBN Governor

## CBN issues fresh directives to banks after ending forex sales to Bureau De Change operators

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has directed Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) to set up teller points in designated branches for the sale of Foreign Exchange (forex) to Nigerians.

Daybreak reports that the directive was sequel to CBN's decision to discontinue the sale of forex to Nigerians through the Bureaux de Change operators.

The directive was contained in a letter to the DMBs by Haruna Mustafa, Director, Bank Supervision Department of the apex bank, on Thursday in Abuja.

"Further to the Monetary Policy Committee briefing of July 27, all

DMBs are hereby reminded to set up teller points at designated branches across the country.

"This is to fulfil legitimate FX requests for Personal Travel Allowance, Business Travel Allowance, tuition fees, medical payments and SMEs transactions, among others.

"In this regard, DMBs are also required to adequately publicise the locations of the designated branches and make necessary arrangements to sell FX to customers in cash and/or electronically in compliance with extant regulations," he said.

Mustafa further advised DMBs to ensure that no customer was turned back or refused FX provided

that documentation and all other requirements were satisfied.

"Equally, undue delays, rationing and/or diversion of FX is strongly discouraged whilst DMBs are required to establish electronic application and alert systems to update customers on the status of their FX requests," he added.

He explained that a toll-free line had been set up at the CBN for bank customers to escalate unresolved complaints related to their FX requests.

Mustafa said that the CBN would continue to closely monitor banks' conduct and compliance with the directive in order to ensure an efficient FX market for all legitimate users.

## Revenue Generation: Kogi IRS Rakes In N17.5 Billion In 2020

By Noah Ocheni, Lokoja

The Acting Chairman of Kogi State Internal Revenue Service, Mallam Yusufu Abubakar on Thursday in Lokoja disclosed that his agency generated N17.5 Billion revenue to the coffers of the state government in 2020.

The Acting Chairman who disclosed this while interacting with Members of the Correspondents' Chapel of the Kogi NUJ in his office hinted that the Revenue Service also made tremendous progress of raking in N1.3 Billion on monthly bases.

Abubakar said the focus of the new management in the last six months was targeted at blocking all leakages in the system to make life easier for the numerous tax payers in the state.

The Acting Chairman gave an assurance that in the next three weeks, Kogi Revenue Service will introduce online innovation for the processing of tax payments and vehicle registration/renewal of particulars to avert cases of issuance of fake documents and sharp practices.

According to Abubakar "We are aiming at a situation where motor owners can access

their particulars, register their vehicles and renew their papers through Kogi Revenue Service portal. They can even stay at their homes to carry out all these transactions Online. Most documents outside there are fake and not genuine" he explained.

He recalled that Kogi State Internal Revenue Service harmonization law of 2016 passed into law in 2017 and became operational in 2017 and saddled with the sole responsibility of carrying out assessments, collection of taxes and reporting of taxes collected to the Executive Governor of the state.

The Acting Chairman said the Kogi State Internal Revenue Service with its headquarters in Lokoja has eleven other areas offices across the 21 local government areas of the state and staff strength of 600.

Earlier, the Chairman of the Correspondents' Chapel of Kogi NUJ, Friday Idachaba, promised of adequate publicity of the organisation's activities by his members.

He solicited continued partnership with the Finance Agency to boost the state economy and giving adequate publicity to its Lauderdale achievements.



# NEWS AS IT BREAKS

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# Politics

## Nasarawa Speaker Lauds Peaceful APC Ward Congress in Toto LG

*Says Exercise Demonstrate Unity, Strength of APC.*

By From Leo Nzwaneke, Lafia

The Speaker, Nasarawa State House of Assembly Ibrahim Balarabe Abdullahi has expressed satisfaction with the peaceful conduct of APC ward congress in Toto LG as all the new officials emerged through consensus.

The exercise which took place on Saturday across all the electoral wards in Toto LG started and ended peacefully as party stalwarts met and adopted a consensus option of affirmation to elect the ward executives.

The Speaker, who is the party leader for the congress in Toto LG said the success achieved in the exercise is a clear demonstration of unity and understanding among members and called for its sustenance.

While expressing his happiness over the entire process and how all interests across polling units are adequately represented, the State Number Three Citizen said the exercise has further demonstrated the unity and strength of the APC party.

Balarabe congratulated all the new APC ward executive members and urged them to justify the confidence reposed on them.

## Insecurity: I have no joy governing in this difficult time – Gov Masari

Katsina State Governor, Aminu Masari, has said that he has no joy governing a state plagued by insecurity.

Masari said the security situation in Katsina has been giving him sleepless nights.

The governor made this known during an interview with DW Hausa on Friday.

This is coming less than a week after scores of armed bandits on motorbikes blocked Jibiya-Batsari road in Kabobi village, Katsina, after the Juma'at prayers and made away with 11 passengers.

He said, "In this difficult time and uncertainty, all the issues of governance have been dominated by security matters from sunset to dawn. I receive security reports at any moment through many channels daily.

"No sensible leader who has the feelings of his people at heart will be happy in such a situation.

"Governing in this difficult time, I see no joy that people are saying we are enjoying."

He added, "In this kind of situation, we are having sleepless nights. You only have a few hours to sleep with your phone beneath your ears and whoever calls you at midnight won't

do that to greet you but to tell you a problem that is happening.

"People misunderstood us (governors) as people enjoying themselves. Some people are just assuming things and we must not assume what we think is right because if someone is not in the system, he cannot understand the situation."

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Jegede

## APC Suspends Congresses In Imo State

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Imo State has suspended the party's ward, local government and state congresses scheduled for Saturday.

An FCT Federal High Court in Abuja had halted the exercises following a suit brought before it by a member of the party, Okey Anyikwa.

Anyikwa, who is the APC chairman of Ideato South Local Government Area, had approached the Court for an injunction restraining the APC from going ahead with the Saturday's congresses because of the judgment of the Appeal Court that upheld the tenure of the State Exco elected in 2018.

Presiding Justice Valentine Orji also threatened to invalidate the outcome of the congresses if the party disregards the position of the Court.

In a statement signed by the Director General, APC Media Centre in the State, Cajetan Duru, the party urged members to be calm and comply with the court order.

The statement said: "All Progressives Congress, APC, in Imo State by this statement wishes to acknowledge receipt of the order of a High Court of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), which has mandated cancellation of every arrangement for the Congresses slated for, tomorrow, Saturday, July 31, 2021.

"However discomfiting this development might be, as a law-abiding party, the State Caretaker Committee and the leadership of the party, rising from an emergency meeting this evening, direct thus: Consequent upon today's Order of the High Court of the FCT, the Imo State APC Ward Congress is hereby suspended forthwith.

"All officers, stakeholders and members of our party are also directed to comply with this resolution, maintain decorum and await further directive from the party.

"It is important to clarify that this temporary setback is the handwork of enemies of our party, using one Okey Anyikwa, who parades himself as Chairman of our great party in Ideato South Local Government Area.

"We, therefore, urge our teeming members to remain calm, law abiding and not to be irked by this unbecoming provocative activity of disgruntled elements," the statement added.

## Governor Lalong Praises Smooth Conduct Of APC Ward Congresses In Plateau

Governor Simon Bako Lalong has commended members of the All Progressives Congress in Plateau State for their peaceful conduct and maturity during the Ward Congresses of the party's held throughout the State.

Governor Lalong who went round some wards in Jos North Local Government alongside the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Rt. Hon. Idris Wase, Minister of Women Affairs Dame Pauline Tallen, Secretary to the Government of the State Prof. Danladi Abok Atu, State Party officials and other political leaders, witnessed a peaceful exercise.

The Governor's first point of visit was the Gangagare Ward where the elections were conducted through consensus and officials emerged by affirmation.

A similar scenario played out at the Ibrahim Katsina and Jos Jarawa Wards where the exercise also went smoothly without any rancour.

At each of the Wards, the elected party officials pledged to work hard for the unity, progress and peace of the party, making sure that it does not only win elections, but provide quality leadership for the people. They affirmed their loyalty to all hierarchy of the party and to Governor Lalong as the leader of the party in the State.

Governor Lalong in a remark said he was delighted with the reports emanating from the 17 Local Government Areas of the State where the ward congress elections were conducted peacefully.

He said the fact that most wards reached consensus to elect their leaders showed

that there is maturity, tolerance and understanding amongst members of the party irrespective of the various interests prevailing.

Lalong said the exemplary conduct of the APC members is a pointer to the fact that the party remains strong and will continue to wax stronger and also maintain its dominance of the political environment in Plateau State. He said it will ensure that the fortunes of the party continue to soar higher in forthcoming elections.

Deputy Speaker House of Representatives Idris Wase praised the leadership Governor who has brought the party together by insisting on fairness, justice and inclusivity. He urged the party members to rally round and take the party to the next level.

## Borno APC Adopts Unopposed Mode Of Congress Elections

By Dauda R Pam-Maiduguri

All Progressive Congress (APC) Borno state, has adopted the unopposed mode of elections at the ward, council and state levels of their congresses.

Our man reported that, stakeholders of the party endorsed the decision during a meeting, Tuesday, at the Multi-Purpose Hall, Government House, Maiduguri.

The motion was moved by the state Deputy GOVERNOR, Usman Umar Kadafur, seconded by a legislator, Alhaji Abdu of the Borno State House of Assembly and

thereafter put to a voice-vote to ratify the adoption.

The stakeholders, included members of the National and State Assembly who unanimously agreed for consensus or unopposed mode of elections at ward, council and state levels.

In a remark, Governor Babagana UMARA Zulum, charged the stakeholders to strictly abide by the party rules and regulations during the Congresses slated for Saturday, July 30, 2021.

"Non-compliance with election rules and regulations have resulted in litigation in some states," and warned the stakeholders not to engage in any acts that could threaten the unity

of the party in the state.

On party leadership, Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume, representing Borno South Senatorial District, said: "We are used to the adoption of consensus in electing party leaders at the ward, council and state levels."

Equally, Sen. Kashim Shettima, Borno central and former governor of Borno state, emphasized inter-alia; "We've already resolved as a family to adopt the consensus mode of congress elections, which is allowed by the party constitution.

Pointing out that, all the segments of the party will have a sense of belonging, as stakeholders have always acted as a united political party.



# Inside China

## It's clear who's the one undermining the norms of science

By Zhong Sheng, People's Daily

A joint statement was issued Tuesday, July 27, in the name of so-called science officials from the US and its allies, in support of the second phase of the WHO-led COVID-19 origin study.

It says if China rejects the second phase of the study, then the country is not taking its responsibility to help the world learn a lesson from the crisis, and destroying the recognized norms long held by the science community.

As a matter of fact, this statement, which shows no respect to facts at all, shall be thoroughly studied by the US, rather than China, as it's clear enough who's not working to get rid of the pandemic and not protecting the norms of science.

The second phase of the origin tracing study recently proposed by the WHO is a document that has nothing to do with

objectivity or the spirit of cooperation. It is not a plan that seeks the origins of the novel coronavirus, but one that tries to discredit China. China will never accept it.

China not only is the first country to have put COVID-19 under control, but also tries its best to offer materials, information and vaccines for the international community to tide over difficulties. Meanwhile, China is also the first country to share relevant data with the WHO and join the origin tracing work in an all-round manner.

Earlier this year, a WHO-China joint team on the global study of the origins of COVID-19 launched a science- and evidence-based investigation into China. Being open, transparent, science-based and cooperative, China fully supported the work of the joint team and totally met its demands for investigation. The country has set a good example for international cooperation on origin tracing.

The joint team studied how the virus was introduced to the human world with scientific evidence, and reached a conclusion that a lab leak was extremely unlikely, which was later broadly recognized by the international science community.

In fact, the China part of the global study of the origins of COVID-19 has been completed. However, the US, the most developed country in the world, is still experiencing a tragedy of over 611,000 deaths and nearly 35 million infections, and its arbitrary policies are making the virus spread to neighboring countries in a very fast manner. Given such facts, which country is not taking responsibility to help the world get out of the crisis?

The origin tracing study is a race between science and the virus, which is both serious and urgent. The second phase of the study shall be an extension of the first-phase one, and what was done in the first phase, especially by those that have reached a clear conclusion, should not be repeated, as to waste time is to disrespect lives.

More and more scientific studies indicated that COVID-19 could have originated in multiple countries and regions, and the cases of infection in the US and some other countries were earlier than the first case in China's Wuhan.

However, the second phase study insists that lab leak shall be a focus, and ignores the significant clues of cold chains and the studies of early patients. Pointing fingers at China, it not only groundlessly denies the science-based conclusions reached in the first-phase study, but also turns a blind eye to the grave situation in the US and other countries.

Who's damaging scientific rules by making such a plan that goes against science and common sense? This question makes people infer that the so-called second phase of the origin tracing study has been severely disturbed by politics and deviates from science. Just as an expert said, the second phase of the study is an insult to the scientists who have spent months searching for the origins of the pandemic, as well as a betrayal to science and facts.

The second phase of origin tracing disturbs and destroys international cooperation and the global efforts to fight the pandemic. The Resolution 73.1 adopted by the 73rd World

Health Assembly requests the WHO to keep close cooperation with relevant international organizations and member countries, and search for the origins of COVID-19 on animals and its routes of transmission to humans through scientific collaboration and field investigations. This means that the next phase of the origin tracing study must be led by WHO member countries and the WHO must conduct extensive consultation with them for a final consensus. The draft of the work plan should be open and transparent, and shouldn't be manipulated by a few countries. However, the second phase study was proposed in a non-transparent manner, and is a product of political manipulation. So far, 60 countries have sent letters to the WHO to express their recognition of the first-phase results and opposition against politicizing the issue. It fully indicated international justice and the voices of these countries must be respected.

To find the origins of the virus can effectively prevent the rise of similar pandemics. Origin tracing must not be contaminated by political virus, and is not a tool for a few countries to shirk responsibilities and oppress other countries. No one should employ it to divide the international society. Opposing the politicized second phase origin tracing study, China is indeed safeguarding the scientific nature and impartiality of origin tracing, the general picture of the global efforts to fight the pandemic, as well as the health and wellbeing of mankind.

When requesting China to safeguard the norms of science in the joint statement, the so-called science officials said they hope the standards could apply to the whole world, including their own countries. However, such fake impartiality is just ironic. If they really mean it, they should ask their own countries and governments to be open and transparent, and invite WHO experts to launch origin tracing studies in their own countries, just like what China has done. They should also suggest their own governments to abandon political manipulation over origin tracing and deal scientific issues with science. That's what science officials should do.

*(Zhong Sheng is a pen name often used by People's Daily to express its views on foreign policy and international affairs.)*



Photo taken on March 30, 2021 shows an exterior view of the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland. (Xinhua/Chen Junxia)

## Postgraduate students help vitalize rural areas in SW China's Guizhou province

By Cheng Huan, People's Daily

Since 2017, Guizhou University in southwest China's Guizhou province has sent doctoral students and master's students to help villages of the province with development under a program designed to boost the vitalization of rural areas in Guizhou.

In midsummer this year, the kiwi fruit industrial belt in Shuicheng district, Liupanshui city of Guizhou, is about to embrace a good harvest, thanks to the guidance of Mo Feixu, a doctoral student majoring in plant protection at the College of Agriculture of Guizhou University.

Seeing plump kiwi fruits weigh down thick vines with lush leaves, farmers happily take and share photos of their orchards with friends on social media platform WeChat.

Zhang Rongquan, a horticulturist at the management committee of an agricultural industrial park of Shuicheng district, saw unusual white spots on some kiwi fruits from farmers' photos. Zhang was so concerned about the situation that he then consulted Mo about it.

"It looks like the tree has soft rot, but I can only confirm it after checking the tree on site," said Mo, who then went to the industrial belt together with four of his fellows. As the head of the kiwi fruit cultivation team under the program, Mo has been very meticulous about his work.

"It is indeed soft rot, a disease that causes the fruit to go bad from the inside of its pulp. It is hard to be discovered at the early stage," Mo concluded, adding that 10 percent of the kiwi trees in the industrial belt had been infected and the output would be reduced by at least 20 percent unless prompt and effective measures would be taken to control and prevent the disease.

With the help of his doctoral supervisor Long Youhua, chief expert in kiwi fruit industry of Guizhou, Mo and his team members soon formulated a detailed plan for disease control. The plan was provided for all fruit growers in Guizhou as fruit management guidelines by Guizhou fruit and vegetable industry association.

"I'm proud to be able to help villagers solve problems using what I have learned at school,"

said Mo, who felt relieved that the disease of kiwi fruits got eased.

Centering around its 12 expert teams specializing in pillar industries of rural areas,

Guizhou University has established practice teams made up of doctoral students and master's students, with doctoral students being the main participants, for the program. These





# Inside China



Photo taken on June 13, 2021, shows the construction site of the eastern shipping route extension project at Qinzhou Port in south China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. The project aims to build a 100,000-ton two-way shipping route that stretches 23.34 kilometers at the port. (Photo by Chen Xuehua/People's Daily Online)

## China's thriving foreign trade drives upgrading in ports

By Luo Shanshan, Li Zong, Xiao Jiaxin, People's Daily

Ports in China are witnessing increasing cargo throughput, broadening sea routes, and constantly improving the quality of foreign trade.

In the first half of this year, the cargo throughput of ports in China rose 9.2 percent year on year to nearly 2.36 billion tons, while their container throughput grew by 15 percent from the same period last year to about 138 million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units).

By rolling out a series of measures to reduce costs and enhance efficiency, ports and customs in many Chinese cities have put shipping resources to better use and increased efficiency in foreign trade, providing support for continuous and steady growth in foreign trade.

Qingdao Qianwan Container Terminal Co., Ltd. (QQCT) based in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province, launched a total of 15 new shipping routes during the first six months of this year, among which ten connect the city

with countries and regions participating in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Zhang Jun, deputy general manager of QQCT told People's Daily.

This year, there has been a significant increase in the growth rate of the container throughput of Chinese ports, while the demand for container shipping services has been rising in the majority of ports, suggested the Outlook of Container Throughput at Global Top 20 Ports in 2021 report recently released by the Center for Forecasting Science under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

According to a model-based prediction from the Center for Forecasting Science, nine of the top 20 container ports in the world will be from China, and the development of China's container transport plays a major role in boosting and underpinning the overall stable development of the world.

On July 14, 130 containers containing home appliances including refrigerators and

ovens were loaded onto a ship at a wharf in Shunde district, Foshan city, south China's Guangdong province.

After customs clearance through an innovative customs clearance mode, these goods were transported to Nansha port in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong, by inland river barge, and then, without going through customs procedures again at the Nansha port, carried to their destination country by an international container vessel.

The new customs clearance mode allows exports and imports to finish all customs clearance procedures at nearby inland river ports on Zhujiang River in Guangzhou and be directly transferred to seagoing vessels when they arrive at Nansha port, according to Liang Zhangcheng, an official of the customs at Nansha port.

The customs clearance mode enables imports and exports to be directly transferred at Nansha port and pass the port quickly 24/7 all year round without having to wait for a schedule at wharves, Liang said.

In order to simplify the procedures and shorten the time for customs clearance, some cities are actively optimizing the business environment of ports by exploring smart port construction.

In Qinzhou Port area of the Beibu Gulf Port in south China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, customs and port authority jointly launched a smart control system that helped realize information visualization at the container handling area. In addition, they have also promoted the implementation of reform measures including automatic entry of tally data to make it easier to transmit shipping bills.

The overall customs clearance time of imports at Qinzhou Port was 16.88 hours on average between January and June this year, 19.91 percent less than that of last year, according to Wang Xilong, chief of customs at Qinzhou Port.

At present, both the throughput and the fleet size of ports in China rank among the top in the world, making the country an influential major country in water transportation. The development of ports is crucial for giving play to the important role of sea transportation in foreign trade and stabilizing international logistics and supply-chain systems.

According to the National Comprehensive Three-dimensional Transportation Network Planning Outline jointly issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the State Council in February 2021, China will promote the construction of a number of international hub ports and national hub ports.

"In the future, we will earnestly put into practice arrangements and requirements set out in key guidelines including the Outline for Building a Transport-strong Nation and the National Comprehensive Three-dimensional Transportation Network Planning Outline so as to facilitate high-quality development of water transportation," said Yi Jiyong, an official from the Water Transport Bureau under the Ministry of Transport.

Efforts will be made to speed up the construction of modern sea transport fleet, improve global sea transport service network, build up capacity for the transportation of key products, and enhance the resilience of container transportation, Yi said.

The country is also going to improve the comprehensive service capacity of ports, extend the industrial chain of port logistics, and promote integrated development of ports, industries, and cities, according to Yi.

nce

teams have facilitated the vitalization of rural areas in Guizhou by contributing to the endeavor of the province to reduce poverty by developing industries and providing technical and talent support for these areas.

"Since the program was launched, we have sent over 300 teams involving more than 10,000 participants to help rural areas with development," said Qi Ya, deputy head of the postgraduate student office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guizhou University committee.

"As researchers on agricultural technologies, we need to connect our papers with the actual situation in fields and turn ourselves into pragmatic dream-seeker in modern agriculture," said Ji Da, a postgraduate student majoring in aquaculture at the College of Zoology of Guizhou University, as well as leader of the ecological fishery team under the program. Ji will soon lead his team to Duyun city in Guizhou to carry out artificial breeding of red carp.

"We have cultivated the first batch of hybrid fry, and will try to develop high-quality new varieties that grow fast as soon as possible to help farmers obtain greater economic benefits," Ji noted.



Photo taken on July 24, 2021, shows the busy Qianwan Container Terminal in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province. (Photo by Han Jiajun/People's Daily Online)



# Politics

## APC Is The Most Vibrant And United Political Party In Nigeria - Sen. Wamakko

By Muhammad Goronyo, Sokoto

In its efforts to ensure unity and respect to party rules and regulations, the Sokoto state chapter of the APC has conducted its wards congress in the state.

Speaking during the formal speeches, Senator Wamakko who happens to be the leader of the party while welcoming visitors from Abuja national headquarters said APC is very vibrant and united and would remain like that till eternity, God willing.

“Despite the fact that we are not the ruling party in the state, we have the majority in the Senate, House of Representative and other national appointments, we therefore extend our sincere and hearty thanks the Supreme Creator, Allah”.

Earlier, the acting state party chairman, Alhaji Isah Sadiq Achida disclosed that they had conducted the Congress as directed by the national headquarters of the party adding that all the former leaderships have done what was expected of them and therefore

need not be changed. It was done through consensus and again, that led to stronger unity and peace in all the 23 LGAs in the state.

“They purchased forms, fill and returned accordingly, we have seen no reason why we should distract the needs of the electorates, they are always needed for their importance in political set up, without them there is no politics or elections because one cannot elect himself into any office, they loved their former leadership, ours is to back them in order to achieve success and peace”.

Also Alhaji Abubakar Suleiman from the APC national while commending the leadership of the party for the hospitality and reception accorded to them on arrival said the party is very focused and united and commended the stakeholders for efforts and wished the party more success, saying he would extend whatever they had witnessed the headquarters of the party.

All the stakeholders serving and former were present during the brief Congress speeches.



## Anxiety in APC as Supreme Court rules Buni's APC Chairmanship Unlawful

There is fear among the leadership of the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) following the findings by the Supreme Court that the Chairmanship of the party under Governor Mai Mala Buni of Yobe State is unlawful and unconstitutional.

Seven Justices of the Apex Court had held that Buni's position as an incumbent executive governor and also as executive Chairman of APC at the same time contradicts and violates the constitution of Nigeria and that of the party.

The revelation by the Supreme Court emanated in the judgment on the appeal marked: SC/448/21; including the cross-appeals marked: SC/501/21; SC/508/21 and SC/509/21.

Justices Emmanuel Agim, John Okoro, Lawal Garba, Tijani Abubakar, Mary Peter-Odili, Ejemi Eko and Mohammed Saulawa gave the judgement in Abuja.

They said the position of the law in the appeal filed before them by the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the Ondo election, Eytayo Jegede SAN in which they challenged the competence of Oluwarotimi Akeredolu's nomination/sponsorship for the election by the APC, claiming that the letter conveying his nomination/sponsorship to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was incompetent, having been signed by Buni and others.

Jegede and PDP contended that by the provision of Section 183 of the 1999 Constitution and Article 17 (4) of the APC constitution, Buni acted unlawfully by being the Yobe Governor and also serving as APC's Chairman at the same time.

The two appellants had argued that as such, the nomination/sponsorship letter signed by governor Buni for APC, notifying INEC of the candidacy of Akeredolu and Lucky Aiydatiwa (as governorship and deputy governorship candidates) was void.

The apex court Justices after their finding of facts agreed that the law prohibits a person from holding

two executive offices as in that of a governor and chairmanship of a political party in Nigeria at the same time.

Four of the Justices, however, on technical grounds declined to remove Akeredolu as Ondo governor on the ground that Mai Mala Buni's name was not expressly stated on the appellants' papers for him to defend himself.

Other three Justices held contrary decisions stating that since APC's name was on the court process and its letter paper used in conveying the incompetent nomination, Akeredolu ought and should be removed from office.

Justice Emmanuel Agim read the lead majority judgment of the four justices which was supported by Justices John Okoro, Lawal Garba and Tijani Abubakar.

Justice Agim held that, since Jegede and the PDP made Buni the centre of their allegation of constitutional breaches, he (Buni) ought to have been made a party in the case to enable him to defend himself in line with the doctrine of fair hearing.

“The decision to allow Buni act as its National Committee Chairman was made by the APC, despite the provision of Article 1z(4) of its constitution, thereby making the decision internal to the party”.

The other three, Justices Mary Peter-Odili, Ejemi Eko and Mohammed Saulawa held otherwise in their dissenting minority judgment.

Justice Odili was of the view that since the APC, for which Buni acted, was a party in the case, there was no need to include him as a party.

She added that having allowed Buni to act on its behalf in signing the nomination/sponsorship letter of its candidates in Ondo despite the clear provisions of section 183 of the 1999 Constitution and Article 17(4) of the APC constitution, the party should leave by the consequences of its lawlessness.

“I do not agree with the majority judgment, “she said, noting that the APC, by Article 17(4) of its constitution has provided for how its affairs should be managed and what

offices its membership occupies at a time.

“This Article draws strength from Section 183 of the 1999 Constitution. Therefore when the second respondent (APC) put up a person not qualified to author its nomination by virtue of the provision of Article 1z(4) of its constitution and Section 183 of the 1999 Constitution to do so, therefore, that document has no validity, and thereby void,” she said.

Justice Peter-Odili held that it was unlawful and a violation of Article 17(4) of the APC constitution and Section 183 of the 1999 Constitution for Buni to be serving as the National Chairman of the APC and the Governor of Yobe State at the same time.

Meanwhile, following the Supreme Court findings of facts, there has been apprehension and anxiety at the APC National Secretariat revealed in the states and among national leaderships as to what may become the fate of the party in the build-up to the 2023 general elections.

A chieftain of the party who did not want his name in print told DAILY POST that the party has got good and great hints from the Supreme Court and would do the needful in the next few days.

“No one person has the monopoly of legal knowledge. At the time of making His Excellency the APC executive chairman, we did not consider that aspect of the law. I am so sure Governor Buni will soon be here for us to decide the next line of action”

“Our governors have become aware of the new position and they will all converge here to sort out ourselves from the claws of that law before it becomes too late”.he said.

“Several state chairmen of committees inaugurated by governor Buni have bombarded the national secretariat to know what is going on here in respect of the matter and we have assured them that there is no cause for alarm

“What happened in Zamfara in 2019 will not be allowed to repeat itself. So, as I said, we will do the needful very soon”

## Anambra 2021: PDP Guber Aspirant, Obiora Okonkwo dumps party



Chairman of United Nigeria Airlines (UNA) Chief Obiora Okonkwo has resigned from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) ahead of the November 6 governorship election

In a letter of resignation addressed to National Chairman of PDP dated July 24, Okonkwo said his decision was final

He said he had equally written to his ward chairman in Ogidi, Idemili North local government area of Anambra State.

Okonkwo was one of the

16 governorship aspirants that contested the primary for the PDP ticket on June 26, 2021.

He listed some of the reasons for his decision as unresolved litany of Court cases in the party and PDP not practicing real democracy

He maintained the PDP would not give him the platform needed to serve his State.

Though he had not announced the party under which he would contest the November 6 election, a source reliably informed The Nation it may be the Zenith Labour Party (ZLP).



# Inside FCT



FCT Minister of state Dr Ramatu Tijjani Aliyu during extension of support to indigent family with multiple births at the National Hospital Abuja recently

## Minister supports triplet's family in Abuja

Stories by Ephraim Joshua

Federal Capital Territory Minister of State, Dr. Ramatu Aliyu, on Friday extended support to an indigent family with multiple births at the National Hospital Abuja.

Aliyu who visited the triplet at the In-born Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the hospital made a cash donation of N250, 000 to the couple, baby clothing, diapers and assorted toiletries for the upkeep of the babies.

The minister who was conducted round the hospital by the Director of Clinical Services, Dr. Aisha Umar, also stated that the FCT Administration was profiling eligible families that deserve support from government in line with the mandate of FCT Social Development Secretariat

“The FCT Administration, through its Social Development

Secretariat, has a policy for supporting indigent families with multiple births, especially the less privileged ones. But with economic down-turn, the policy was set aside temporarily, but it's being revisited.

“We are here in my private capacity. I am here today as a mother and as a human being. Hopefully when we resume on Monday after the break other families will be profiled for visitation which will be carried out by the Gender Department of the SDS to ensure only deserving families are visited,” she stressed.

She also disclosed that beneficiaries of the welfare policy of the administration had hitherto abused the process, thus depriving eligible families.

Her words: “Actually most of the time government discontinues processes like this because they are being abused by indigent and citizens and we have seen situations

where beneficiaries abuse such supports, piling up bills and depriving eligible families. So now we want to follow due process and ensure that only deserving families with multiple births and indigent families benefit from this support of the Federal Capital Territory Administration.

“In the past we have seen situations where supports such as shelter are provided for those categorised as the poorest of the poor and could not afford shelter for themselves. By the grace of God under this administration we are revisiting that but for now I am here in my capacity as a mother and a human being to support some indigent families”.

One of the beneficiaries and father of the triplet, Evangelist Advocate Tommy, expressed gratitude to FCT Minister of State for her kind gesture, praying for God's guidance and favour upon her.

## Labour Party Councillorship candidate promises basic infrastructure in Kuje

The councillorship candidate of the Labour Party LP, for Gaube Ward, Kuje Area Council, FCT, Comrade Fanimi Oluwabusayo, has promised to give priority to education and basic infrastructures if elected.

Oluwabusayo who made the call in an interview with Newsmen in Kuje, promised to be accountable and responsive to the needs of the people with priority to education and infrastructures.

According to him, education is the foundation and key to all human development, adding that he would also intensify on poverty alleviation programmes with specific focus on youth employment and empowerment.

“No nation develops without a very sound and solid educational

policy and programmes because education develops the total man.

“I am also believing that if we give our people real and solid education and opportunity for empowerment; especially empowerment that is linked to agricultural development, then we will make our people self-sufficient.

“People can never develop without a solid foundation in education, and that is why I am coming, and really prepared to give my people the real education programme that will develop the area,” he said.

The candidate also said there was need for every administration to initiate policies and programmes that would stimulate economic growth and development as well as job creation for the youths in the country.

However, he expressed confidence of clinching the ticket of the Labour Party if given the enormous goodwill of the electorates, saying that he would create policies that would enhance youth development in the council.

“We all know that the future belongs to the youths who are ingenious, innovative and industrious, they are also the bedrock for development if empowered.

“I want to also state that if given the opportunity to serve, I will be accountable and responsive to the problems confronting the people in the area,” he said.

He said he would not only increase youth empowerment, but will also ensure rapid development of the area if elected, among other programmes within the period of his administration.

## Cholera outbreak: Death toll hits 60, as suspected cases rise to 698 in Abuja within 72 hours

Federal Capital Territory Administration has revealed that suspected cases of Cholera have risen from 604 to 698 in The nation's capital city, within 72 hours, as death toll leaps from 54 to 60.

FCT Minister of State, Dr. Ramatu Tijjani Aliyu, who revealed this at the continuation of community sensitization on cholera and other severe acute diarrhoea diseases outbreaks in Pyakasa and Gwagwa respectively, also said

Gwagwalada area council records 220 suspected cases with 9 deaths, Kuje area council records 23 suspected cases with 4 deaths and Kwali area council records 37 suspected cases with 3 deaths.

Represented by the Ag. Executive Secretary of FCT Primary Health Care Board, Dr. Iwot Ndaeyo, the Minister noted that Abaji area council records 3 suspected cases, no death, Abuja Municipal Area Council AMAC, records 281 suspected cases with 22 deaths, while Bwari Area Council records 134 suspected cases with 22 deaths.

Aliyu, however, vowed that this ugly trend was unacceptable in the Federal Capital Territory, adding that the administration would not fold its hands and watch residents die helplessly over preventable diseases.

According to her, “We must take every necessary steps to curb further spread”, just as she urged FCT residents and critical stakeholders to publicize the message of cholera disease prevention, proper sanitation with practice of hand hygiene in their respective communities.

In his remarks, chairman of Abuja Municipal Area Council AMAC, Hon. Abdullahi Adamu Candido, affirmed the commitment of his council to forestall continuous spread of the disease to adjoining and other communities

He added that the Primary Health Care Department of the council had embarked on sensitization tour to all the four chiefdoms in AMAC so as to enlighten the traditional rulers and their councils about the cholera outbreak and preventive measures.

His words: “On our part as an area council, we swung into action immediately we received the news of the outbreak and its confirmation in June. We quickly mobilized our health personnel in all our primary healthcare facilities for prompt responses. Following the recommendations from the outbreak report, we provided funds for quick purchase of drugs, infusions and other treatment materials/ consumables in addition to the ones we received from the FCT Public Health Department.

“The Disease Control Unit of our Primary Health Care Department through Disease Surveillance Notification Officers have been working tirelessly in different communities of the council including hard-to-reach fields in order to trace and report cases at the primary healthcare facilities for free treatment”.

Candido, therefore, commended the professional competence, commitment and zeal of the council's health workers and the Health and Human Services Secretariat of the FCTA in combating this life-threatening disease.







## Inside FCT



Candido, AMAC



Gabaya, Bwari



Chiya, Kwali

# FCTA, Council Chairmen debunk claims of dispute

The six Area Council Chairmen in the Federal Capital Territory and the leadership of Area Council Services Secretariat have debunked claims of disputes between the councils and the FCT Administration, saying all offices in the territory have been operating in accordance with their constitutional mandates.

The reports claimed that the Area Council Chairmen take decisions without recourse to the office of the Minister of State who supervises the activities of the councils and other auxiliary matters or FCT representatives at the National Assembly who oversight the FCT Administration.

However in a swift reaction, both the authorities of the area council and the FCT Area Council Services Secretariat have described the allegations as mischievous and a deliberate attempt to pitch the area council chairmen against the office of the FCT Minister of State and representatives of the National Assembly.

A joint press statement issued by the six area council chairmen and FCT Area Council Services Secretariat stated that mischief-makers and political detractors are bent in ensuring that they sow seeds of discord between the office of the Minister of State and the council chairmen.

The chairman, Abuja Municipal Area Council, Abdullahi Adamu Candido, who signed on behalf of the council chairmen said; "our attention has been drawn to a news item trending in both traditional and social media platforms orchestrated by some disgruntled characters. Ordinarily, the authorities of the area councils would have ignored the entire report and remain taciturn, but silent is consent.

"The publication is a desperate attempt to plant seed of discord between Her Excellency and the council chairmen and must not be allowed to stay. We will not take

her motherly love for granted. We are very loyal to her and have never had it so good till her coming. Therefore, nobody should disturb this peace.

"If reporters or media organisations have personal issues with any chairman, they should go and settle their matters, and not drag other council's chairmen into it by discrediting the entire body. We should be rational on issues and not be laced with emotions or ignorance on matters that oftentimes we know nothing about.

"We are, therefore, calling on our people to disregard the malicious publication aimed at overheating the system. We will not be deterred in carrying out our constitutional mandates of providing welfare and security to our people."

The council authorities also pledged their loyalty to representatives of the National Assembly who oversight the activities and workings of the FCT Administration, stressing that no amount of cheap blackmail would deter them from working for the common good of rural communities.

According to him, "We are not just loyal to Her Excellency, the FCT Minister of State, Dr Ramatu Tijjani Aliyu, but also to

our esteemed representatives at the National Assembly. As area council heads, we cannot work in silos if we must deliver dividends of democracy to our residents."

The Acting Secretary FCT Area Council Services Secretariat, Mrs Omolola Olanipekun, also discredited the report, affirming that both the Area Council and the secretariat are having a harmonious relationship

in driving the policies of the administration.

"To state the obvious, the secretariat is amazed at the immeasurable phew of the reporters and its sponsors in conjuring events and hallucinating conversations that are not related to the subject matter. They could be best described as an indefatigable genius in dishing out tissues of

lies.

"And to set the records straight, let me state categorically here that, we enjoy a harmonious relationship with the six area councils in the territory. We advise them to please carry out their individual background checks on the activities of these revered bodies with the able supervision of the Honourable Minister of State," she added.



Abdulraman, Abaji



Abdullahi, Kuje

## FCT Natives condole with Chikum Chieftdom over demise of Barde, SA Gbagyi of Kaduna

President Abuja Original Inhabitant Youths Empowerment Organisation AOIYEO, Amb. Isaac David has condoled with people of Chikum Community and the Emirate Council of Kaduna state over the death of their traditional ruler, His Royal Highness Danjuma Shekwogaza Barde, the SA Gbagyi of Kaduna state.

The AOIYEO Presidenta in a

condolence message, described the demise as a great loss to Kaduna State's traditional institutio.

The message was contained in a statement personally issued by the AOIYEO President Amb. David on Wednesday in Abuja.

"Though his demise is painful, his legacies of service, love and compassion remain indelible as he has impacted

the younger generation to continue in his footsteps.

"We sympathise with the entire Kaduna state, as well as the Kaduna Emirate Council over the demise of the traditional ruler" he said

Amb. David prayed to God to grant the soul of the deceased eternal rest, comfort the Chikum Traditional Council and the family and the Gbagyi nation at large.



Late traditional ruler, His Royal Highness Danjuma Shekwogaza Barde, SA Gbagyi of Kaduna



# Entertainment



**Nollywood veteran Rachel Oniga is dead**

According to a statement released by her family, the movie star died from a heart related issue.

Until her death, she was one of the most popular and influential actors in

Nollywood.

Originally from Eku in Delta State, the movie star was born on 23 May, 1957, in Ebutte Metta, Lagos State.

She made her Nollywood debut in the 1996 hit movie

‘Onome.’

Oniga went on to star in several big productions including ‘Sango,’ and Wale Adenuga’s television series, ‘Super story.’

Her most recent movies

include ‘Chief Daddy,’ ‘Royal Hibiscus Hotel’ and ‘My Village People.’

She was survived by three children and several grandchildren.

May her soul rest in peace.

## BBNaija’s Mercy Eke spoils herself with a Mercedes Benz worth N30M

Former Big Brother Naija housemate and winner of its fourth season, Mercy Eke, has acquired a Mercedes Benz Coupe.

The reality TV star shared photos and videos of her latest addition via her Snapchat account on Friday, July 30, 2021.

In the video, the reality TV star is seen test-driving her new ride.

Interestingly, this is Eke’s second Mercedes Benz in three months. In April, the reality TV star bought a Mercedes Benz G-Wagon.

She already owns a Range Rover Velar which she acquired in September 2020.

Then there’s the Mercedes

Benz GLC which she launched in March 2020.

Eke emerged as the 4th winner of BBNaija after she was announced the winner of the 2019 edition tagged Pepper Dem.



## BBNaija 2021: Maria accuses Yerins of harassment, says she caught him ogling her

‘Shine Ya Eye’ wild card housemate, Maria has accused fellow housemate Yerins of sexual harassment.

In a chat with housemates Saga, Pere, Nini and Arin, Maria alleged that Yerins ogled her in the shower while she was taking a bath.

When she caught his eyes in the mirror, she claimed he smiled and began singing a popular lyrics of her name. The mixed race gorgeous housemate described the event as disgusting and unacceptable. But she did not share plans to escalate the issue with Big Brother.

If investigated, Yerins stands a chance of instant disqualification for violating Big Brother’s sexual harassment rule. Recall the same fate befell BBNaija season 2 housemate, Kemen who got disqualified for sexually harassing TBoss.



## Erigga exits Emirate Records, launches Area To The World

In five years with Emirate Records, Erigga has gone from a talented Warri rapper to releasing six bodies of work who has also received two Headies nominations.

The announcement came via a statement on Erigga’s Instagram page, @eriggapaperboi.

In five years with Emirate Records, Erigga has gone from a talented Warri rapper to releasing six bodies of work who has also received two Headies nominations. In the statement, Erigga also announced his new label, Area To The World INC, presumably owned by Erigga himself.

Born Erhiga Agarivbie, the 34-year-old rapper has been repping the South-South since he launched. In 2012, he got his first Headies nomination and followed it up with another nod in 2019. Earlier in the year, Erigga released Before The Chaos EP, a precursor to his album.





# Entertainment

## BBNaija 2021: 5 highlights from housemates' 1st Saturday night party

The 'Shine Ya Eye' housemates got a fair dose of fun for their first-ever Saturday night party especially with celebrity DJ Big N behind the deck.

In case you missed the show, check out five exciting highlights:

1. DJ Big N understood the assignment

Going by viewers' census and, of course, how the housemates rocked the dance floor, DJ Big N delivered on the assignment. The celebrity Disc Jockey shared hit after hit from classics to newly released tracks.

Big N's playlist also made an applaud worthy impression on Wizkid's Starboy FC.

2. Laycon had his 'Verified' single remixed with housemates' names

Laycon's season might be long gone but the rapper made an appearance with a special prerecorded remix of his 'Verified' single.

3. Liquorose and Saga's dance battle

The housemates sure brought the energy to the dance floor. Unfortunately, their electrifying performance did not get enough screen time.

But viewers still got ample view of Liquorose and Saga ripping the dance floor apart.

4. Cramped space

Cramped spaces can be a tough call especially when dancing is involved. The party room appeared cramped with all 22 housemates moving for the vantage points. Regardless, the housemates made lemonades and danced the night away.

5. Angel with the vibes

Angel certainly knows how to steal the spotlight and for their first party. The housemates did a good job rocking the dance floor but Angel absolutely murdered it engaging other housemates especially her budding love interest, Sammie.



## Daddy Freeze says he is not scared of FBI interrogation over relationship with Hushpuppi

Nigerian On-Air personality Daddy Freeze, has debunked rumours that he is scared of being named as one of those who enjoyed the largesse of Internet fraudster, Ramon Abbas also known as Hushpuppi.

In a video released on his social media page, the veteran OAP said he is not scared of being interrogated by the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

"You guys need to get away from this mentality that anybody who gets to hang out with anybody must be collecting money from

that person. I will not lie I am disappointed in Hush and if I see him I will tell him. Because you fed the rumours, tomorrow if somebody is buying a Ferrari then the person must be a thief," he said.

"Someone said Freeze dey fear. I don talk am if you nor get sense you go dey talk nonsense. I don talk if FBI wan question me, make dem dare me, I ready answer anybody question. What do I have to hide?"

Freeze said the reason he had a bromance with the Internet fraudster, was that he wanted to

score an interview with him.

"They will come and I'll give them all my bank details. Let them check all the money with me and see if I have any Dubai money in my hands that is traced to Hushpuppi. It is when you have something to hide that you'll be worried. What I wanted from Hushpuppi was an interview," he added.

The OAP's statement comes days after Hushpuppi confessed to the authorities in the United States that he bribed top Nigerian police officer, Abba Kyari, to keep one of his numerous schemes alive.

## Gov Ortom decorates Francis Atela youth ambassador

Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom, on Wednesday, in the State Executive Council meeting, decorated Nigerian Idol TV talent show runners up, Francis Atela as Youth Ambassador of the State.

Governor Ortom, who performed the decoration at the New Banquet Hall of Benue Peoples House Makurdi said Atela had showcased his thrilling performance to the world and

deserved to be honoured.

He stated that Benue youth remain the hope of the state and Nigeria, stressing that their mature behaviour during the End SARS Protests and demonstration of competence in many other areas of endeavours were worth celebrating.

The Governor urged the youth to identify and develop their talents so as to add value to the state and country in general.



## Super TV Boss, Usifo Ataga, laid to rest

The slain Super TV Chief Executive Officer, Usifo Ataga, has been buried at Ebony Vaults, Ikoyi, Lagos.

He was buried around 12.30pm in a low-key ceremony attended by his family members, including his wife, and friends.

Journalists were restricted from covering some aspects of the burial. Photos taken by our correspondent were also deleted by a relation of the deceased.

Ataga, aged 50, lived from 1971 to 2021.

His corpse was found on June 16 at a short let apartment on Adebowale Oshin Street, Lekki Phase I where he had checked in with his lover, 21-year-old Chidinma Ojukwu, a 300-level Mass Communication student at the University of Lagos.

Ojukwu was consequently arrested on June 23 in her father's house in Yaba and paraded at the Lagos State Police Command headquarters in Ikeja.

She confessed to having stabbed Ataga multiple times with a knife under the influence of alcohol.

The young lady, who fled the crime scene and withdrew a sum of N380,000 from the victim's account with his ATM card, later backtracked in a video, absolving herself from the murder.



## Media Helping People to Find Their Voice: The Maloney FM 95.9 Keffi Paradigm

By Adefolarin A. Olamilekan

There is a popular saying that "Nemo dat quod non habet" meaning: you cannot give what you do not have". Without equivocation the fourth estate of the realm, the media cannot be considered indispensable in the development of any democratic setting.

Globally, the media remain the most feasible platform consciously and unconsciously have given to the society the voice its needs, the intellectuals to proffer solutions and the facts to remedy the lost truth. The importance of media in contemporary Nigeria is very rewarding going by the space it occupied in lives and time.

The media I studied, still studying

and wrote about ruminatively project a society that supposed to cater for every living being and betterment of all. Creatively, the media even though have had its challenges, however, it relevance and influences is second to known.

The media helping people find their voice especially as this relate to their influencing roles in fighting for their life. Take for example when people who lives in the most miserable condition on the planet, relative to resources endowment cannot find their voice.

What is important here because the question of media influence and how it could help people find their voice cannot be over emphasize. Moreso, it clear that Nigerians and particularly Nasarawa state indigene

and residents finds their voice through Maloney fm 95.9 Keffi.

Maloney FM 95.9 Keffi is one of the contemporary radio stations operating in the north central Nigeria with huge listenership cutting across young and old. Maloney fm 95.9 is justly credited with blazing a trail in high brow journalism, professionalism and generation of intellectual and radio broadcaster.

Established five years ago in the ancient city of Keffi Nasarawa state and founder by Hon. Ahmed Aliyu Wadada. A successful politician, businessman, a philanthropist, humanitarian and lover of polo sport and religious person. Coincidentally, he found of Maloney FM 95.9 for the promotion of service to the people of Keffi, Nasarawa state and Nigeria in

general.

Maloney fm 95.9 has since grown in bound, listenership and followers. The radio station programmes are broadcaster in English, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other indigenous local languages. This has endure listeners and followership of all its programmes within north central states of kogi, Niger, Kaduna, Benue, Plateau and the FCT Abuja. Hausa programmes such as Batunmu A Yau (Political Discourse) and Zuba Baka are delights listenership and given voice to people in around Nasarawa state and beyond. The Discourse on Maloney FM remains one of the policy shaping views and opinions on cogent national issues.

Maloney fm 95.9 has played well the importance of media influence

and role in nation building, unity and cohesion through it numerous programmes as anchored by seasons ON AIR Personality (OAP), as well experts in various Sectors Featured on air.

Significantly, Maloney FM clearly engaged in helping people find their voice cannot be over accentuate through unalloyed power of the media to influence, through theory in which opinions and views modulate government policies. Am glad the agenda setting functions of the media is Maloney fm get halo effect. Kudos to Maloney fm management lead by Gumji Baton, Habila Yusuf (DOC), AB Dollar, Mubarak Al-Amin, Zainab Yusuf, Hajia Rehinatu Gana and staffs for diligence and professionalism.



# Diplomatic Corner

The death toll from this week's flooding in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nuristan has risen to at least 113, with dozens of people still missing, officials said.

Rescue operations were still under way on Sunday, days after heavy rains overwhelmed Kamdesh district in the remote, Taliban-controlled province, about 200 kilometres (120 miles) northeast of the capital, Kabul, on Wednesday.

Abdul Samai Zarbi, spokesman for Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), told dpa news agency more than 170 houses had been either "partially or completely" destroyed, affecting about 300 families.

While he gave an injury toll of 34, Zarbi noted figures were preliminary and subject to change.

The flooding has also destroyed a major bridge in the district, according to the disaster authority, which said it was not able to provide essential support such as food, temporary shelter and medical support to the victims.

"Unfortunately [since] the area is under the control of the Taliban, we were unable to send our provincial teams to the area," Tamim Azimi, spokesman for Afghanistan's state ministry for disaster management, told the AFP news agency.

However, survey teams from the Afghan Red Crescent Society have travelled to the area to assess the damage and the support needed.

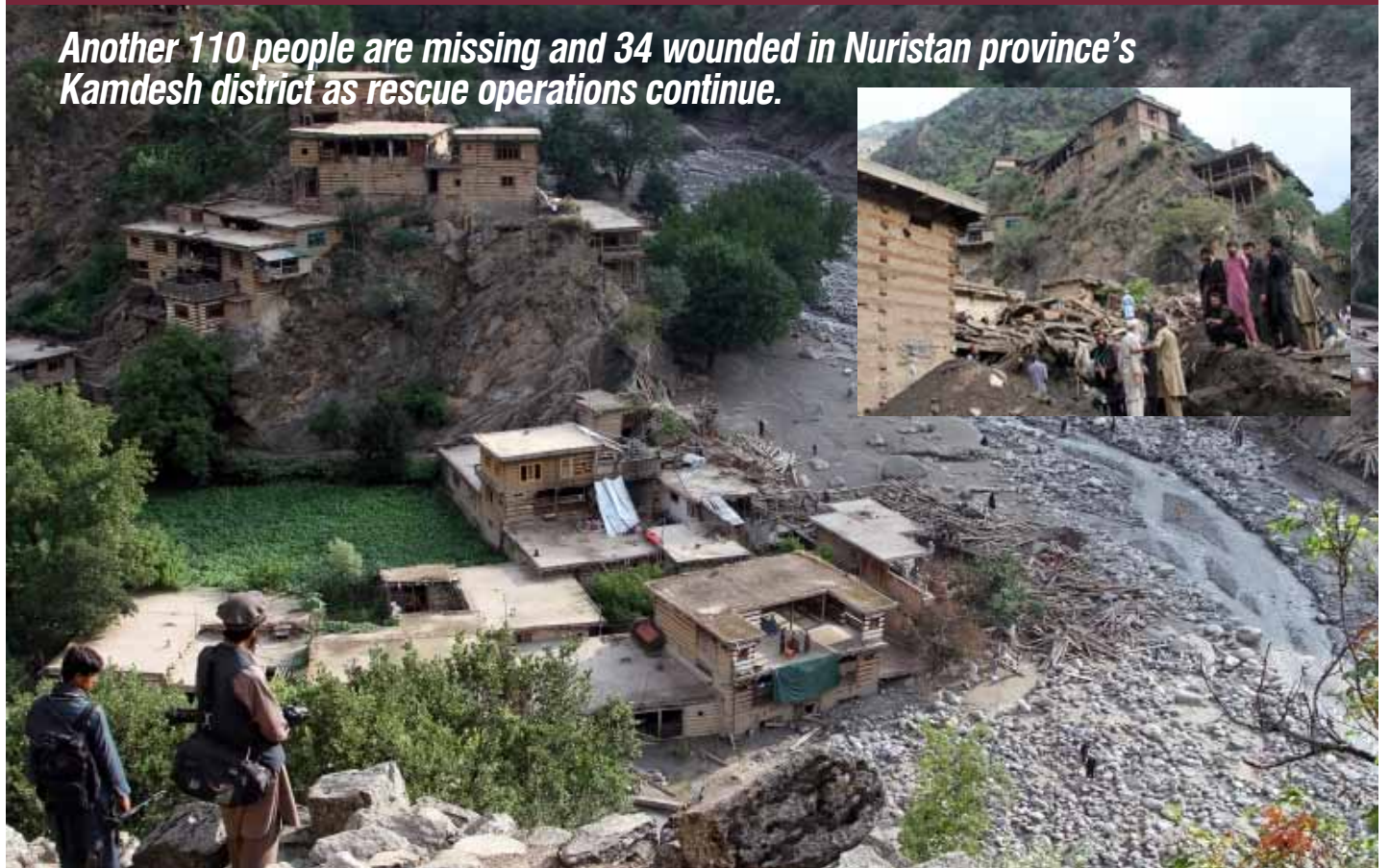
Reporting from Kabul, Al Jazeera's Charlotte Bellis said the United Nations was also trying to access the district to provide assistance, including clean drinking water.

The Taliban has seized large tracts of rural territory and captured key border crossings since early May when US-led foreign forces began a final withdrawal from Afghanistan that is now almost complete.

With its fighters gaining more control of such areas, Bellis said, the

## Death toll in Afghanistan floods tops 100, dozens still missing

Another 110 people are missing and 34 wounded in Nuristan province's Kamdesh district as rescue operations continue.



situation in Nuristan presented "a real test" for the Taliban over the kind of support it could provide to people affected by "these types of situations" if they were to remain in control there.

Afghanistan is frequently hit by seasonal flooding that damages homes, agricultural land and public infrastructure.

In August 2020, more than 150 people died in 13 provinces due to

flash floods.

Decades of conflict, coupled with environmental degradation and insufficient investment in disaster risk-reduction have contributed to the increasing vulnerability of Afghans to natural disasters, according to the UN.

On average, natural disasters affect 200,000 people every year in the country.

## Canada officially marks first nationwide Emancipation Day

August 1 is now recognised across Canada as Emancipation Day, marking the end of slavery in the British Empire in 1834.

After years of campaigning by Black legislators and community advocates, Canada on Sunday is officially marking the abolishment of slavery nearly 200 years ago in its first nationwide Emancipation Day.

Canadian parliamentarians unanimously voted in March to recognise Emancipation Day across the country on August 1, the same date in 1834 that an act came into effect banning slavery in former British colonies, including Canada.

Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard, a leading figure in the years-long push for federal recognition of Emancipation Day, said the day "is not a celebration" but rather "a time of reflection, a time of remembering our ancestors and a time for honouring our ancestors".

"The national recognition of Emancipation Day signals the beginning of what we do next," Thomas Bernard said during an online event ahead of Sunday, explaining that Black history must be taught across Canada year-round, and that an apology and reparations need to be discussed.

"If we use our collective power, Emancipation Day and the recognition of Emancipation Day should propel us to move forward in very positive ways," she

said.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in a statement on Sunday that "Emancipation Day is a representation of social activism, justice, and our commitment to an equitable future".

"Today, we recommit ourselves to fighting anti-Black racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination, and related intolerance faced by people of African descent in Canada," he said.

But the history of slavery in Canada remains largely unknown, with much more attention paid to – and more education available on – slavery in the United States, which in June made Juneteenth a national holiday to commemorate the end of the practice.

In Canada, slavery took place over a 200-year period prior to the signing of the Slavery Abolition Act in the United Kingdom in 1833. The act came into effect on August 1, 1834.

Slavery was practiced in the early colonies of what later became Canada, with one historian estimating that 4,200 people were enslaved in New France (the modern-day province of Quebec) and then in Upper and Lower Canada (Quebec and neighbouring Ontario) between 1671 and 1831.

Both Black and Indigenous people were enslaved in the early colonies of what is now Canada.

"After British colonial settlers established Upper Canada, the number of enslaved Africans and their descendants increased significantly. It is estimated that 3,000 enslaved men, women and children of African descent were brought into British North America and eventually outnumbered enslaved Indigenous Peoples," the Canadian government says on its website.

"Many enslaved Black people resisted slavery by fleeing Upper Canada to a territory known as the Northwest Territory, which included Michigan and Ohio, as well as to Vermont and New York, which had banned slavery in the late 18th century."

Canadian municipalities and provinces – including Ontario, the country's largest province, and Nova Scotia, home to an historic Black community – also have formally recognised Emancipation Day.

Several events are planned across the country on Sunday.

Community advocates, for their part, are also pushing for authorities to go beyond symbolic recognition and address the longstanding effects of slavery in Canada, such as systemic anti-Black racism.

## Hushpuppi: US Court Issues Arrest Warrant For Abba Kyari

A US court has issued an arrest warrant for a Deputy Commissioner of Police, Abba Kyari over his links to alleged fraudster, Ramon Abbas, popularly known as Hushpuppi.

The arrest warrant was issued by a U.S magistrate judge, Otis Wright, a spokesperson in the United States Attorney's Office confirmed to Channels Television.

According to documents unsealed this week in the US, Mr Kyari had arrested and jailed one Chibuzo Vincent, at the behest of Hushpuppi.

Mr Kyari also allegedly sent Hushpuppi bank account details into which Hushpuppi could deposit payment for Vincent's arrest and imprisonment.

Mr Kyari, in a Facebook post on Thursday, denied the allegations.





# Sports



## 10 Nigerian Athletes Banned From Tokyo Olympics

Ten athletes from Nigeria have been banned from participating in the Tokyo Olympics.

While the names of the affected athletes were not released, a statement from the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), revealed that a total of 18 athletes have been declared ineligible, with Nigeria being the most affected.

According to AIU, the 10 athletes from Nigeria failed the minimum testing requirements under Rule 15.

“Under the framework of

Rule 15 governing National Federation Anti-Doping Obligations, which came into force in January 2019, National Federations are accountable for ensuring appropriate anti-doping measures are in place in their respective jurisdictions.

“Among other things, the Rule sets out minimum requirements for testing on the national teams of ‘Category A’ federations deemed to have the highest doping risk and considered as a threat to the overall integrity of the sport.

“The key requirement in

Rule 15 is that an athlete from a ‘Category A’ country must undergo at least three no-notice out-of competition tests (urine and blood) conducted no less than 3 weeks apart in the 10 months leading up to a major event. Only then do they become eligible to represent their national team at the World Athletics Championships or the Olympic Games.

“For the year 2021, the seven identified ‘Category A’ National Federations are: Belarus, Bahrain, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and Ukraine.

## Tokyo Olympics: Sports minister apologises to disqualified athletes, promises probe



Nigeria's sports minister, Sunday Dare, has apologised to 10 Nigerian athletes that were disqualified from the ongoing Tokyo 2020 Olympics. This was contained in a press

statement by the Federal Ministry of Sports, titled, ‘Statement: Ministry Wades to stem crisis’, on Friday.

The statement also said that the minister promised to investigate the circumstances surrounding their disqualification.

The statement read in part, “The Ministry of Youth and Sports Development has stepped in to stem the further crisis by addressing the issues that have arisen concerning Team Nigeria athletes.

“The Ministry is looking into some of the issues raised by the athletes and they are being addressed as quickly as possible.

“The Honourable Minister on Thursday morning in a meeting spoke directly with the 10 track and field athletes who will not be competing and assured them of their welfare. He apologized to them for the unfortunate development that led to their exclusion and promised that it would be fully investigated.”

The statement also quoted the Director, Federation of Elites Athletes Department, Dr Simon Ebojiaye, as saying that “the Ministry is abreast of the situation on the ground and addressing them. Payment of various allowances commenced last week and it’s ongoing.”

## Olympics 2020: Disqualified Nigerian athletes protest in Tokyo

Nigerian athletes staged a protest in Tokyo after 10 of them were disqualified from taking part in the track and field events of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

The protesting athletes carried placards with the inscription “Why should we suffer for someone else’s negligence”, “All we wanted to do was compete” and “We are not just alternates but potential medalists.”

## Tokyo Olympics: D’Tigeress Suffer Second Straight Defeat

The Nigerian female basketball team, D’Tigeress, suffered a second straight defeat at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics on Friday.

The Afrobasket women champions were routed 87-62 by the French side

Gabby Williams, Endene Miyem, Marine Johannes, and Alix Duchet each added 13 points as five players scored in double figures for France.

Nigeria had an impressive showing in the opening round of the tournament despite losing to the U.S by nine

points.

D’Tigeress was also attempting to break a basketball jinx and become the first African nation to win an Olympic contest in women’s basketball since 2004.

France made an impressive show of dominance in the first quarter by going six points up and further leading by three in the second quarter.

Les Bleues closed the half with a 22-8 scoreline and made it a 44-27 halftime advantage with Williams adding six points and Duchet adding five points.





# Sports

## Tokyo Olympics: Nigeria's Divine Oduduru Disqualified From 100m Race

Divine Oduduru, a Nigerian athlete, has been disqualified from a 100m race at the ongoing Tokyo Olympics.

Oduduru was supposed to compete in the fifth heat of the race but he was disqualified over a false start.

Nigeria has had an unpleasant outing at the ongoing Olympics in Tokyo, Japan.

Earlier in the day, Blessing Okagbare, the country's medal hopeful, was banned from the games after she failed a drug test.

D'Tigers, the country's senior men's basketball team, also crashed out of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games after losing 71-80 in their last Group B game on Saturday.

Although they had rounded off their pre-Olympic preparations with impressive wins over the U.S. and Argentina, they put up epileptic performances at the Olympics.

Three days ago, 10 Nigerian athletes were banned from the games.



## Press-ups, quizzes and Love Island - Inside Liverpool's 'unique' pre-season camp

The Reds have been preparing for the new season in Austria and France, where Jurgen Klopp has been delighted by what he has seen from his players

Naby Keita thought he could get away with it, but Sadio Mane had other ideas.

It was the end of another gruelling Liverpool training session, and Jurgen Klopp had some news.

"We've had a look at the video..." the Reds boss began. Before he could finish, Virgil van Dijk dropped to the floor. Twenty press-ups.

He knew. Keita knew, too, though tried to hide himself away behind Klopp, only for Mane to ruthlessly expose his plan.

Cue much laughter and, yes, 20 press-ups for the Guinea midfielder, part of a four-man team that had been caught bending the rules in an exercise earlier in the session.

"We have VAR these days, even in training!" grinned assistant manager Pep Lijnders.

It has been a gruelling few weeks for Liverpool's players and staff. Pre-season is supposed to be tough, but this has been a unique summer for Klopp and his team.



## Lobi Stars Football Club Suspends Three Players Over Insubordination, Gross Misconduct

The Management of Lobi Stars Football Club, Makurdi led by Emmanuel Aondofa has suspended Ebube Duru, John Lazarus and Ossy Martins over insubordination and gross misconduct having failed to answer various queries served them.

In a statement by Lobi Stars Head of Media, Mr Uja Emmanuel contended that Ebube Duru was suspended over insubordination and sabotage for defiling the Vice Chairman's instruction that he

must make the match day 33 trip to Katsina, and for persistently feigning injuries to opt out of several games without the club medical Officer's excuse duty certificate.

"The duo of John Lazarus and Ossy Martins had feigned injuries and opted out of the Aiteo Cup round 16 against Bayesa United and were later spotted in the camp of another NPFL club for a contract without notice, which the management considered it an act of

sabotage", Uja explained.

According to the Media Officer, the suspension of the three players is with immediate effect to serve as a deterrent to other players, adding that the club have played four matches undefeated without the aforementioned players.

Uja who pointed out that though the trio were rated as the three best, stated however that the Aondofa led management has zero tolerance for indiscipline for faster growth of the club.

## Osimhen scores two-minute brace as Napoli beat Bayern Munich

The Super Eagles striker continued his fine goalscoring form in pre-season with his brilliance at the Allianz Arena

Victor Osimhen helped Napoli crush Bayern Munich 3-0 with his two-minute brace in Saturday's friendly match.

After scoring the match-winning goal against Serie C club Pro Vercelli last Saturday, the Nigeria international led the Partenopei's attack in Munich.

The 22-year-old linked up with Algeria midfielder Adam Ounas in quick succession as the visitors scored two goals within two minutes.

Osimhen fired Napoli ahead in the 69th minute, courtesy of an assist from Ounas and shortly after, he doubled their lead after they connected again.

With five minutes left on the clock, Zinedine Machach completed the rout for Napoli.

Senegal captain Kalidou Koulibaly put in a great defensive

shift to stop Bayern Munich's attack which had Robert Lewandowski, Malik Tillman, Leroy Sane and Cameroon's Eric Choupo-Moting on parade.

Despite their comfortable win, Napoli suffered a late blow as Ounas, introduced for Matteo Politano in the 69th minute, was replaced 11 minutes later after he picked up an injury.

The club confirmed the 24-year-old had suffered blunt trauma to his right ankle.

Meanwhile, Osimhen was replaced by Gennaro Tutino in the 80th minute.

In his assessment, Spalletti lauded his players for their strong performance away from home against the German champions.

"Yes, of course, there is still a lot of work to be done but the path is the correct one," Spalletti told the club's website. "Zielinski, who has been training recently, also gave positive signals. Everyone went beyond my expectations.

"The boys have to be given credit

for having adapted, given the conditions we are in. The group has proven to have qualities on which to focus."

Next up for Napoli is a trip to Poland for another friendly match against Wisla Krakow on Wednesday.

They will open their 2021-22 Serie A campaign against Venezia at the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona on August 22.



## Iheanacho and Daka were 'exceptional' - Rodgers raves about Leicester City strikers

The Foxes boss was full of praise for the Nigeria and Zambia internationals after they both scored in a pre-season game

Leicester City manager Brendan Rodgers has labelled new signing Paston Daka as a "natural striker" after his partnership with Kelechi

Iheanacho helped his team to come from behind to secure a 3-3 draw against Queens Park Rangers on Saturday.

The Foxes found themselves trailing at half-time after Charlie Austin scored for QPR in the 45th minute, and they were 2-0 down courtesy of a 55th-minute

strike from Yoann Barbet.

City then started their comeback in the 75th minute when Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall fired home a loose ball to reduce the deficit before Daka, who signed for Leicester from Red Bull Salzburg, slotted home his maiden goal to make it 2-2.

## Tokyo Olympics: Blessing Okagbare suspended After Failing Drug Test

Nigerian athlete, Blessing Okagbare, has been provisionally suspended after failing a drug test at the ongoing Tokyo Olympics on Friday July 30.

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues for the sport, announced the decision. According to the body, Okagbare tested positive for Human Growth Hormone.

"Growth Hormone is a non-specified substance on the 2021 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Prohibited List and a provisional suspension is mandatory following an adverse analytical finding for such substance under the World Athletics Anti-Doping Rules.

The AIU collected the sample from Ms. Okagbare during an out-of-competition test on 19 July. The WADA-accredited laboratory that analysed the sample notified the AIU of the adverse analytical finding at mid-day Central European Time yesterday, Friday 30 July.

The athlete was notified of the adverse analytical finding and of her provisional suspension this morning in Tokyo. She was scheduled to participate in the semi-finals of the women's 100m this evening.

The AIU will make no further comment on this matter at this time," the AIU said in its statement.

The 32-year-old medal prospect for Nigeria won silver in the long jump at Beijing 2008 Olympics.

At the 2013 World Championships in Moscow, she won long jump silver and 100m bronze, while she won the 100m/200m double at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

She is competing in her fourth Olympics for Nigeria.







BRITONS hugged themselves and celebrated Monday, July 19, 2021 "Freedom Day" as the eclectic Boris Johnson government eased COVID-19 restrictions. That day, a dark sturdy man with tribal marks was led away from the Cadjehoun Airport in Cotonou, Benin Republic.

He had lost his freedom, and an uncertain future awaited him. The arrest or capture of Sunday Adeyemo, alias Sunday Igboho, led to a tussle among the Benin Republic authorities, the Nigerian Government that saw him as a prized trophy, and his lawyers and supporters who want him freed to continue his journey to Germany.

It was Sallah eve and supporters of the Buhari administration who hail his skewed sense of nationalism, celebrated this human 'gift' at a public holiday period which despite the severe pains of economic deprivation and unprecedented insecurity, promised to be a time to feast and drink.

Usually in short supply at festivals is common sense, and this was no exception. Otherwise, revellers celebrating the arrest of Igboho should have realised that it would be no solution to the slide into disintegration that threatens our beloved country as the political elites have viciously mismanaged our ethno-religious, political and cultural diversity.

Igboho is a product of the frightening inability and failure of the Muhammadu Buhari administration to protect lives and property, and the resultant resort of the victims to self-help. Ironically, the Nigerian Ambassador in Benin Republic, retired Lieutenant-General Tukur Buratai who is prancing that country to get Igboho extradited, is the same man who as Chief of Army Staff between July 2015 and January 2021, could not protect Nigerians from attacks by terrorists and bandits. The National Assembly had to join other Nigerians to get him removed from office for incompetence, only to be rewarded with an ambassadorial posting.

Igboho is not the only prized dissident the Buhari group had been after. On June 29, 2021, it effected an extraordinary rendition of Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra, IPOB, from Kenya. Kanu claimed he was abducted in Nairobi and tortured for a week before being bundled to Nigeria.

Both men had their homes invaded by heavily armed Nigerian security forces who killed and maimed people found on their premises. So clearly, the aim was not to bring them to justice; the modus operandi seemed to be their physical elimination.

I am not sure any rational human being would blame them for subsequently putting a distance between themselves and their dear native land. In Nigeria, Igboho and Kanu would be like rats

## BACKPAGE COLUMN

BY OWEI LAKEMFA



Sunday Igboho



Nnamdi Kanu

## Spare your enemy, he might become your saviour

trying to make a case in a gathering of cats; both men face an uncertain future, but so do their captors, fellow Nigerians and the country itself.

In South Africa, the then ruling White minority regime was quite afraid of the growing demand for Black majority rule. Most Whites were convinced that they could be wiped out. Then, they uncovered irrefutable evidence of a plot to overthrow the government by force of arms.

They arrested the brains behind the plot, recovered documents and arms and gathered credible witnesses. With these, between October 9, 1963 and June 12, 1964, they put the suspects on trial in what became known as the Rivonia Trial. The state demanded the death sentence.

The evidence was overwhelming and indisputable; so despite the death sentence that awaited them, the nine suspects saw no need putting up a defence. In mentally

preparing themselves for the death sentence, they picked one of them, Nelson Mandela, to speak for them stating for posterity why they decided to embark on armed struggle.

In his four-hour submission which came to be known as the "I Am Prepared To Die" speech, Mandela famously declared: "During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against White domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

However, the White establishment thought wisely that while it would be easy to hang the men, a time might come when they would need credible people

with whom to negotiate an agreement and save the country from mindless massacres. So rather than the death penalty, it imposed life imprisonment. A quarter of a century later, when violence peaked and it seemed there was no way out of a likely genocide, the Apartheid regime reached out to Mandela and his colleagues, and the country worked its way towards a negotiated settlement.

Turkey by 1999 had witnessed a 14-year armed uprising by the outlawed Kurdish Workers' Party, PKK which demanded the creation of a Kurdish homeland in south-eastern Turkey. By that time, some 30,000 Turks had been killed in the conflict. Then the Turkish National Intelligence Service and the American Central Intelligence Agency, CIA, in February 1999, intercepted the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, in the streets of Nairobi, Kenya where Nnamdi Kanu was abducted 22 years later – while being escorted by diplomats from the Greek ambassador's residence to the airport.

The extraordinary rendition of Ocalan threw Turkey into days of ecstasy. The case against Ocalan was air tight; he had established the PKK in 1978, built it into a formidable armed group which began a bloody secessionist war in 1984 and led the rebel forces until his capture.

But rather than sentence Ocalan to death and send him to the hangman, the Turkish authorities gave him a life sentence. When the Turkish government thought the best way out of the civil war was to negotiate with the Kurds, they went to Ocalan in prison, and he secured a ceasefire in the country, leading to peace talks.

East Timor was a Portuguese colony until 1975 when revolt by the populace forced the colonialists to leave. However, in December 1975, neighbouring Indonesia invaded East Timor and annexed it as a province. This resulted in a bloody armed resistance by the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor led by Xanana Gusmão. In 1992 Gusmão was captured, but rather than kill him, the Indonesians sent him to prison.

When seven years later, Indonesia needed a ceasefire and political settlement, it reached out to the Gusmão. Eventually, independence was agreed and in the April 2002 elections, the 'terrorist' Gusmão was elected East Timor's founding President.

Only fools rejoice at the prospect of eliminating their perceived enemies because your worst enemy might become your saviour; Nnamdi Kanu and Sunday Igboho might turn out to be the very persons needed to negotiate Nigeria out of strife and disintegration.