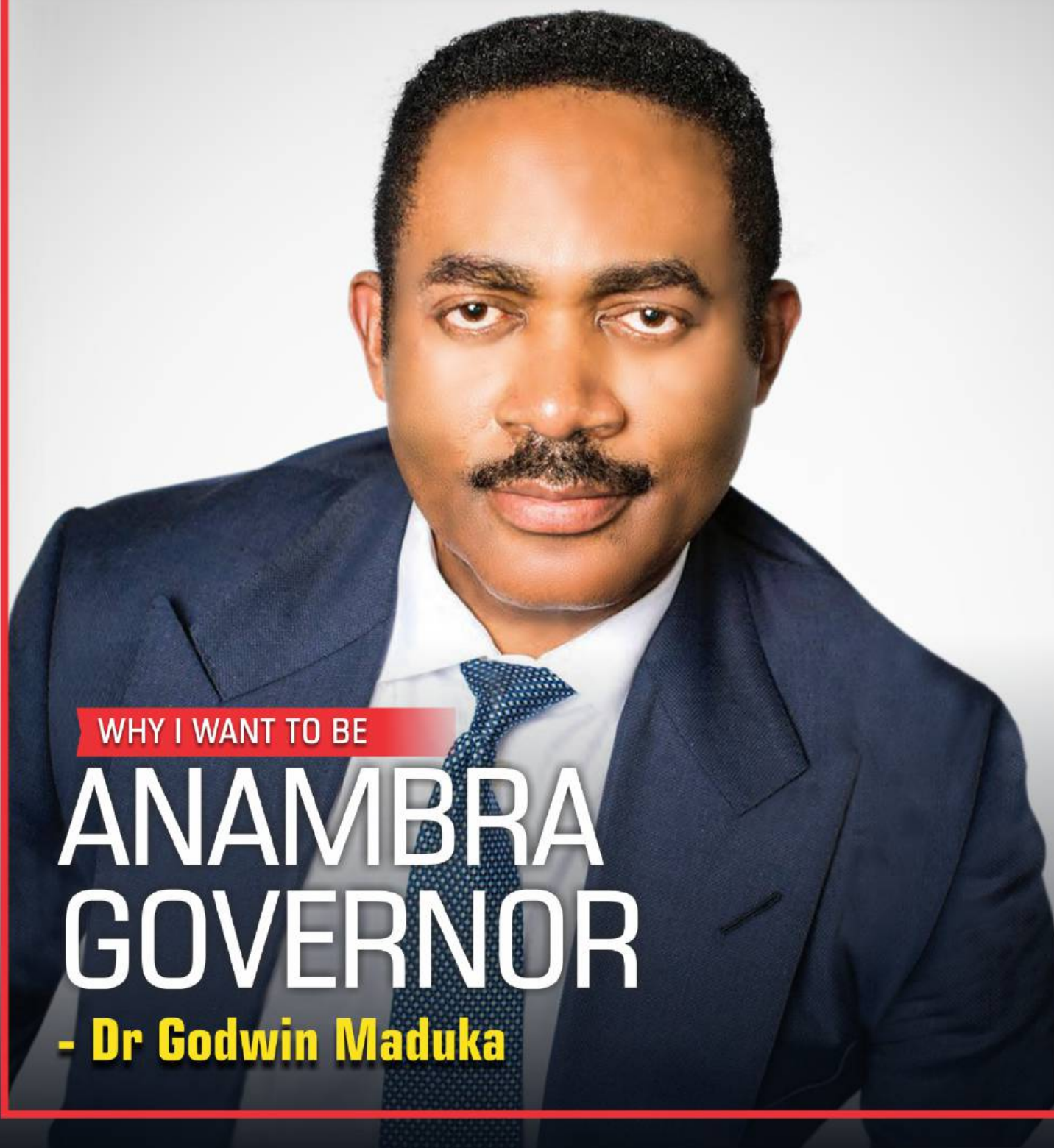


NEWS PLATFORM

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₦ 1000 — \$3



WHY I WANT TO BE

ANAMBRA GOVERNOR

- **Dr Godwin Maduka**



BREAKING NEW FRONTIERS



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- Construction of Commercial Building at Victor Attah International Airport.
- Incorporation of Ibom Airline with five Aircraft procured for operations. We have so far taken delivery of four.
- Security perimeter fencing at Victor Attah International Airport.
- Remodeling of departure hall of Victor Attah International Airport.
- Construction of the Main Terminal Building of Victor Attah International Airport (ongoing)
- Construction of private hanger for state Aircraft.
- Job creation for over 1000 people, especially the youths



HIS EXCELLENCY
MR UDOM EMMANUEL
GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE

GOV. UDOM EMMANUEL
5 YEARS OF TOUCHING LIVES

TOGETHER, THE FUTURE
IS ASSURED



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NDI ANAMBRA, WHY THE CHOICE OF DR. GODWIN MADUKA?

Over the past few years, there has been consistent discussion across many fora, in towns and villages in Anambra, with recurrent articles in local and National media, talks amongst people of different age, sex and class about one man, Dr. Godwin Maduka.

Who is this Dr. Godwin Maduka everyone is talking about and why is there mass call for him to be the next governor of Anambra State?

As they say, the rest was history. Since then Dr. Maduka had not looked back in his pursuit for knowledge. He was dogged, effervescent and unstoppable. The Harvard opportunity was humongous, and as that young Umuchukwu boy, born of an herbalist father, who knew what difficult life was like, and who toured forests in search of roots and herbs for survival, he knew where he was coming from, and so he took the opportunity with all he got and ran with it. Dr. Maduka ended up acquiring multiple degrees, including three PhDs and Professorship in three major areas of Sciences including Medicine and Surgery, Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy and also Anaesthesiology and then host of other degrees.

Haven gained authority in his field of study, in the white man's land, Dr. Maduka knew he would have to do more to gain the kind of wealth needed enough to impact his community. He had not forgotten his community, nor his state, Anambra. In fact those were part of the driving force that kept him going all the while he studied in the white man's land. To achieve the financial clout needed for the kind of impact he wanted, Dr. Maduka, now a Pain Specialist, set up the Las Vegas Pain Institute and over the years, grew it to become one of the best pain relief institutes in the USA with Six(6) different Centers.

It's as though he has achieved all he wanted, you would say, but like the Biblical shepherd, David in the Bible. Dr. Maduka never forgot all those moments he spent touring the bushes, dodging snakes, thorns and insects in search of herbs and roots with his father. He knew what it was like growing in a society where things were tough and though he had gained education, good quality life, better administration of business, he never stopped yearning for a better life for his people.

So for over 17 years, Dr. Maduka began coming home to make impacts in various ways. First he set up the Godwin Maduka Foundation, and then followed by setting up tremendous ground breaking projects across his community. The numerous projects were as humongous as they were

unimaginable, such that people from far distance would travel to see, truly were these things truly so.

The then executive Governor of Anambra State, HE Peter Obi was one of such persons that was moved by the tremendous impacts made by this great man, Dr. Maduka. Mr Peter Obi stated that he would himself go to see what he was hearing, and lo and behold he was as astonished as every other person as he visited Umuchukwu. In fact, he promised to compliment the efforts by supporting to construct some more roads in the community.

Umuchukwu formerly known as Nkerehi is a town not much known for development. In fact the absence of development over the years contributed to growing poverty and lack of opportunities in the land. There was high criminality, and hopelessness. In fact the crime rate was so high that Igwe Michael Ukaegbu, the traditional ruler of the place was kidnapped. And things continued to be bad until God used their own son, Dr. Godwin Maduka to change the fortune of the land.

Umuchukwu today is a told to behold as lots of idle youths who were lured to crime are ably engaged in activities bringing values to themselves. Aside providing supports and cash for youths to start businesses, Dr. Maduka set up a skill acquisition centre that has engaged hundreds of youths in production of saleable wares.

A man known for his grassroots impacts, Dr. Maduka also engaged in other capital projects that have direct impacts on the people, thereby providing them with a good livelihood. Some of those projects includes: Building of Trinitas Hospital and Maternity, building of Immaculate Conception College 1 and 2, Building of a police station, building of a magistrate court, building of a standard market (Afor Market), building of barracks for the Civil Defense staff, building of two monasteries for churches, building of a community centre (Community Hall and his own Village Hall), building of a post office, building of a state high court, provision of transformers to boost electricity in the community, building of a palace for the monarch, civic centre, building of houses for clerics of Catholic and Anglican churches, building of five star hotel known as Lion of Africa resort, building of churches for Anglicans and Catholics, building of 17 storey tall structure that houses the World class International standard Hospital / Health research institute and building over 100 homes to indigent persons. Today, no one in Umuchukwu is living in a house with thatched roof. What else can a people ask for?

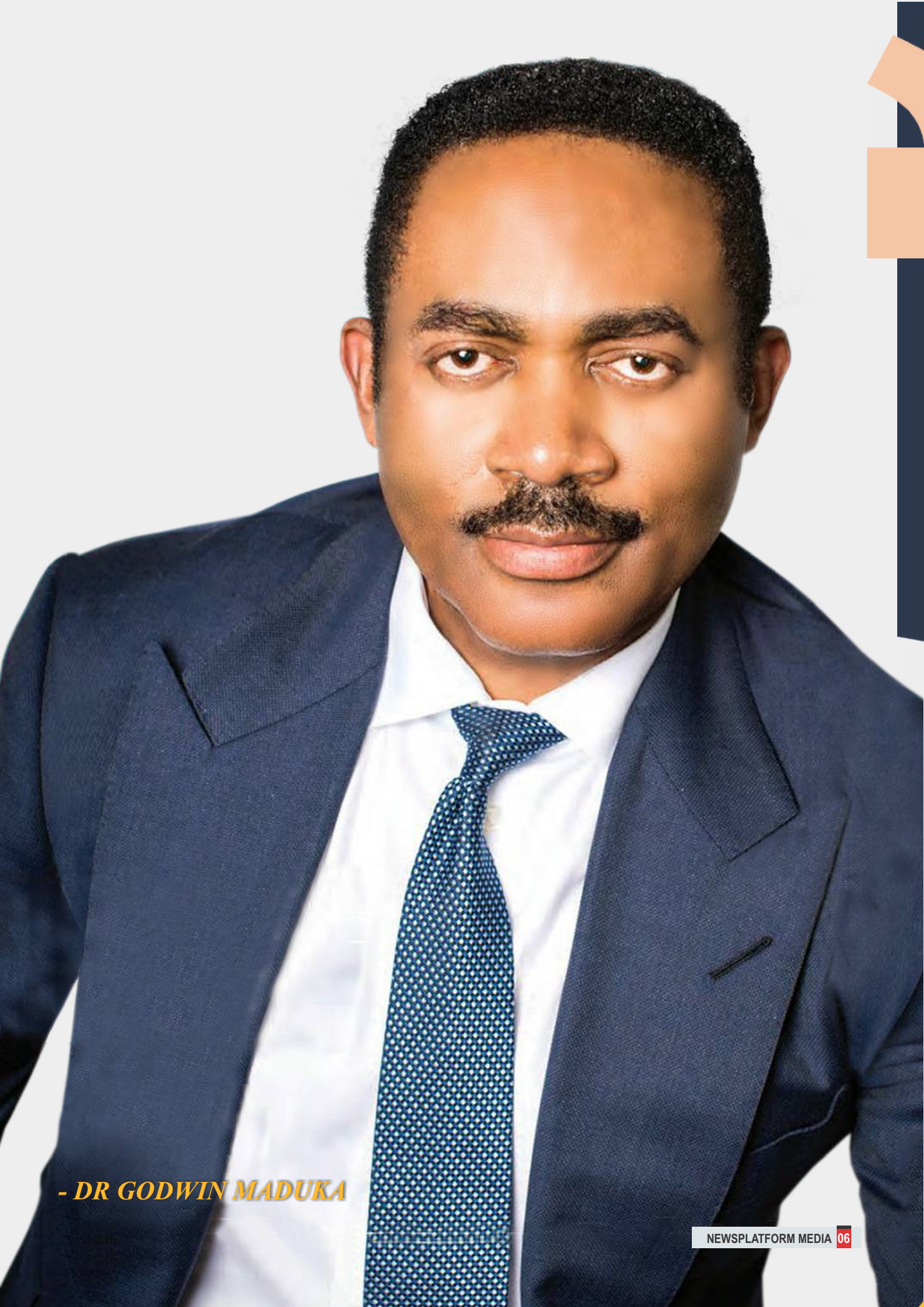
It would surprise you to know that all these were done through his personal funds; all to the Glory of God and to help humanity.

It is therefore not surprising why there is so much call for his leadership. Dr. Godwin Maduka has shown that he is a good administrator, a compassionate leader and a man with rapt understanding of the needs of his people. Just as he has turned his community to a land of admiration and interest, today he asks for an opportunity to transform Anambra State into a land of admiration and interest.

This is one of the reasons, our mothers, our fathers, our uncles, our sisters, our little children, our brothers and sisters and everyone in Anambra today is asking for us all to come together and give Dr. Godwin Maduka this onerous opportunity to transform Anambra State.

Ndi Anambra, the choice of Dr. Godwin Maduka will be best for us.

Tony Ekwoaba, Esq., and Onwurah Chinonso Anthony (Equity Lawyer).



- DR GODWIN MADUKA



2021: WHY I WANT TO BE ANAMBRA GOVERNOR

Dr. Godwin Maduka is a renowned medical doctor with a Specialty in Anesthesiology. He is the founder of the Las Vegas Pain Institute and Medical Centre in the United States, where he has received accolades for his expansive infrastructural and research work in medical science. Dr. Maduka is also an unrepentant philanthropist whose connection to the homeland is not lost. This has made him stretch personal resources to contribute to and develop his town, Umuchukwu, his state, Anambra State, and his Nation, Nigeria, in order to create a conducive landscape for generations. On the occasion of his birthday, Dr. Maduka engaged the media as he reflects on his journey and his newfound resoluteness on governance.

Can you give us insight into your background, what growing up was like?

I was born in 1959, before the civil war, I was a little boy during the war and it went a long way to shape me. If you survived the war, you will realize that fear, death, and uncertainty are no longer your enemies because we came face to face with them. After the war in 1970, I started primary one, I was around 11 years old, and so you can see that the civil war robbed part of my childhood. We lived in the village so there were no social amenities; we grew up using the lantern to see and read. The saying that "a responsible child makes a responsible adult" is true, you can not allow a child to play too long, if you do, it will get ingrained in his head, and he will never know how to take responsibility. We were taught how to take responsibilities; we had to get firewood, we fetched water, went to the farm before and after school. We read with lantern and sometimes we hunted for bush meat, and we were living with snakes and scorpions. The survival rate was low, so you saw young people dying of treatable ailments. We didn't have modern medication and 75% of adults in my community at that time were native doctors, including my father. We trekked to school because my town didn't have a

secondary school, except for a primary school, which I attended in my town. I continued with my secondary education at Nawfia Comprehensive School, which was too far and as a result, I had to come back to All Saints Grammar School, Umunze.

What would you say are the remarkable things about your upbringing that shaped your personality?

My father was one of the best native doctors around then, and people may not know that much of the drive to go into medicine, stemmed from watching my father's prowess as a dibia. He never ventured into juju or witchcraft, but he cured malaria, infections, and several kinds of ailments. And these are the things we do today as medical doctors. We give hope to the sick, but the only time we don't give them hope is when we know that the end is near, so we prepare them for their passage with a high level of consideration. I was close to my father, and I watched with keen interest all his ways, methods and realized that empathy was Germaine for humanity. I think that shaped me a lot.

What is fascinating about your specialty, Pain Management, and how has medicine shaped your thoughts about life generally?

We have a lot of people who suffer pain in the world today. Personally, as an anesthesiologist; I can relieve pain with surgical procedures, medicine, and by talking to my patients. It is a humane specialty. If you have never been in pain, you will not understand what people in pain go through. No matter how your partner loves you, they can never take away your pain. So that makes the sufferer a lonely person. I am well trained in it, and we are the pioneers of interventional pain management. We own six medical centers in the US, and in Las Vegas alone, I own more facilities in pro-health pain management than any other doctor. We are the largest in Nevada, and in terms of quality, we are still one of the best in the US, as well as the world.

June 21 is your birthday, if you look back at where you started and now, what comes to your mind?

Looking back, the journey, the sacrifices, it is amazing how a young village boy that was surrounded by hopelessness could attain this level of success; playing at a global stage. I am thankful and full of gratitude to God, but then I do not think we should rest on our oars, because so much hasn't been done yet. It is not yet Uhuru. I believe so much in the power of hope. I think I work harder now than I worked about 20 years ago, because so many still need to have access to medical care, so many need to receive qualitative education. As an African, a Nigerian in the diaspora, I believe we should triple our efforts to bring our country and continent at par with what is obtainable globally.

We have witnessed all the works you did and the ones you are still doing in your town, Umuchukwu. What inspired you into philanthropy? How do you intend to extend this gesture to Anambra State?

I think watching my father a great dibia then healing people and bringing relief to many, must have rubbed off on me. I guess I picked up that humane side of life from him because medicine, whether native or orthodox is primarily a humanitarian job. Most times, my father gave people treatment without charging a dime. Secondly, my father was a philanthropist, I remember he built three houses in our compound, one for us; his immediate family, another for our wares and belongings, and the third for any relative or indigene of my community who visited Umuchukwu but had no house of his own. Another remarkable event that instilled a kind heart in me, was how my brother sold off everything he had in his shop to raise about five thousand Naira, which was the amount I needed to travel to the US at that time. I told God that if my brother gave me all he had, that I will never relent in my act of kindness to humanity. I will always give my all.

You built the tallest hospital in Africa which you envisioned to equip with state of the art facilities in your town; Umuchukwu. What motivated you to conceptualize that kind of structure for your town?

I have lived in America for a long time; I have seen and experienced how the developed world functions. As a black man, I am always driven to replicate what I have seen and experienced here in the US. The 17 storey hospital in my home town; Umuchukwu, is beyond a physical structure, it is a functional replication. It is a symbol of hope, the power of possibilities. Just like the statue of liberty in America symbolizes freedom. It is an indication that if we put our minds and commit our resources in the building of our motherland, there is no limit to what we can achieve. All things are possible.

What is your perception of Nigerian democracy and June 12 and how do you think we can improve our democracy for the good of the greater majority?

Let me say that our democracy is still nascent and growing. If you compare Nigeria with a country like the US where I reside, you will realize that we are still in infancy; America's democracy is about 300 years old. Therefore, our democratic journey is still a process; there are so many learning curves. I see democracy as the journey of an entrepreneur...a lot of ups and downs, today you are moving forward, the next day you dive. However, it is still not an excuse for underperformance. We can do better. Coming to the June 12 incident, it is one of the potholes in our journey to nationhood. It is imperative that we learn from it and do better going forward. But then, beyond June 12, the Niger Delta issues, the Biafra agitation, the farmer-herder crisis in the middle belt, restructuring, and so on, are all questions begging for answers. With all these agitations, people are saying they are marginalized, we should be able to listen to these voices and summon the courage, and the political will to solve these problems. This will go a long way in helping us build a great nation of our dream.

We have seen cases where philanthropists fail in leadership positions, is there any connection at all between philanthropy and leadership?

What we see most times in this clime is what I call political philanthropy; when elections are getting closer, people begin to share rice and garri. I think we sometimes mistake politicians with philanthropists. We should be able to look at the pedigree of some people who parade themselves as philanthropists. For example, in my case, I have been giving back to my people for over 20 years now. It is a passion, it's purely a commitment; I never had it in mind that I was going to be a politician. If in my dream, an angel had appeared to me and told me I will be aspiring to be a governor in my state, I would have doubted the message of the angel. This is because it was never in my plan. If you see an individual distribute rice, share tricycles, and in the next 2-3 years shows interest in any political position, he was never a philanthropist. But then, philanthropy is somehow connected to leadership, in the sense that a good leader must have compassion and a charitable heart. However, leadership goes beyond philanthropy, it is about experience, pedigree, sound education, vision, accountability, good judgment, and integrity.

Why do you want to contest for the Governorship position in Anambra State?

Let me tell you something, I have never nursed any political ambition at all in my life. I have always wanted to retire a much fulfilled medical doctor. Something happened to me when I first came to Nigeria from the US, I had started working by then, so when I came to Umuchukwu, things were so bad. It was all about poverty, despair, and underdevelopment. I was so sad about that visit and I promised myself that I won't allow the village where I grew up to remain the same. It was out of "positive anger" that I decided to build a semblance of an American city. So if you go to Umuchukwu today, you'll see that that "anger" has paid off. I'm worried and sad again, not against anybody, but sad about poverty and underdevelopment. I have clarity of vision of the kind of development; I want to bring in Anambra state. Anambra people are very special people, we are like the heart of Igbo land, and when things are not going very well here, there's the possibility that other places in Igbo land will be affected. We need the best man for the job now. To be frank, the next couple

of years won't be so easy in Nigeria, so we need leaders who can think outside the box in their effort to provide solutions. I tell people always that people who approach leadership with that kind of angry disposition are always the best. Prof Dora Akunyili (God bless her soul) lost her sister as a result of fake drugs, and when she was made the DG of NAFDAC, she fought the circulation of fake drugs with such a ferocious determination. I call it "positive anger," the kind of anger that gives you the motivation to go the whole hog, not the one that encourages a person to harm, malign people for selfish reasons. It is not the kind of energy that pushes you towards brigandage or any dastardly acts. It should be a motivation to create new developmental imprints while consolidating and building upon the efforts of your predecessors.

People believe that instead of contesting for the governorship position in Anambra state, you should be thinking of how to actualize the Igbo presidency project considering the fact that you are a highly successful professional in the diaspora, to them being a Governor will not add anything to your profile rather it will be a minus

Public service is like community service; no one should be big enough to serve his people. That's why you can see the likes of Okonjo Iweala leave the comfort of her world bank job to come down to Nigeria and help fix the economy. I have seen a director at IMF; a Vice President at African Development Bank, being summoned by the people to serve his community as a traditional ruler, and he obliged. Therefore, I will never be ashamed to serve my people as a governor; I will rather be ashamed if I fail when the responsibility is given to me. Excelling in the job of a governor should be a stepping stone for a higher office. Friedrich Nietzsche said, "...he who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance; one cannot fly into flying."

People complain that you're coming from the diaspora and may not have a full grasp on the terrain, what are you bringing to the table?

Living in the US has exposed me to global best practices. I know how to manage institutions, human resources, creativity, and innovations; I possess the know-how of wealth creation. In a nutshell, I will bring immense capacity to governance. People shout about living in the diaspora as if it is a crime to do so, but it's not. Living in the diaspora should be an advantage because you have been exposed to how things are done right, and you will like to replicate that in your environment. For instance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala is from the diaspora and she did well as the finance minister. Mr. Peter Obi also came from the diaspora and he did well as a governor. Leadership is not about location, where you have been or not. Leadership and governance have a universal language, if you are doing well, you are doing well, but if you are not doing well, you are not doing well. Nevertheless, somebody could be living in the US and be so connected to his root, and another person may be living in Onitsha and be so alien to his roots.

People believe that your philanthropy focused more only on your town Umuchukwu, how will you allay the fears that if you become a governor, you will not focus development in your town only?

Yes, we indeed started from Umuchukwu, but then we have also done so much more beyond my community. We have contributed to a project in Ihite, we have done a road project in Owerri Ezukala and Ogbunka. We have gone as far as Mbano in Imo state and Nneato at Abia to execute projects. In Umunze, we have contributed to a project and in the next couple of years; we'll begin to develop a housing scheme to help reduce the housing deficiencies in that area. We have supported various dioceses both Anglican and Catholic, in Anambra. We shared palliatives to all the 182 communities in Anambra, and all the Bishops; both Anglican and Catholic, during the COVID19 total lockdown in Nigeria. Furthermore, those who have benefited from our healthcare intervention scheme at Annunciation Hospital Enugu are Anambrians across board. Our educational scholarship fund caters to many Nigerians all over the world. If you have been attentive in the course of this interview you will realize I have a global perspective. I am committed to the course of the black man. I always contribute to helping the black race find its place in the world stage.

What is your opinion about the zoning of Governorship position in Anambra state?



When there are unanimous agreements by stakeholders, zoning can be a good policy, because it ensures equity and gives all and sundry a sense of belonging, but it doesn't mean competence should be sacrificed on the altar of zoning. I am not just coming out from the angle of people from Anambra South Senatorial Zone, but also on capacity. When you talk about zoning, we are there; if you talk about competence we are there as well.

What do you consider to be your comparative advantage over other aspirants?

I am not a trial and error aspirant. I am not coming to learn on the job, I am well prepared and I have a very clear vision of what I want to do in Anambra state. Umuchukwu is a perfect test run of what we want to do on a larger scale in Anambra; it is a progressive experiment. The other day, I was reading an article from someone who came to Umuchukwu to understudy the things we have done. He said that Umuchukwu is simply a replica of the Sustainable Development Goals. What more is governance if not Healthcare, Justice delivery system, Security, Housing, Education, Ease of doing business, and other little but outstanding innovations.

Political parties sponsor candidates for elections, under which platform do you intend to contest the forthcoming election?

I am a member of the PDP, but the most important thing now is to drive our message to the people. In a democracy, power resides with the people. Party is just a vehicle through which people get to power. Whatever symbol that your party displays, once the people accept your message, you are good to go.

As a medical doctor, what prompted you to build a law court in your community?

Law is the foundation of every society, a building block of every other area of human endeavor. Law is what controls the animalistic nature of man. Without the law, we will be back to the Hobbesian state of nature; it will be man eat man or survival of the fittest. I recall how my people travel as far as Ekwuluobia, Onitsha, and Awka in search of justice. Most times, when the poor and downtrodden calculate the cost implication of getting justice, they will naturally want to leave their fate in the hands of God.

What is your concept of justice delivery?

Justice should not be cash and carry; justice should not be delayed, because justice delayed is justice denied. I am an advocate of an independent judiciary because that will give the bench the freedom to deliver justice without interference or external pressure. Justice shouldn't be shaken by the status of the accused or the defendant. It should, in the same way, serve the rich and the poor.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Of Dr.

GODWIN MADUKA







Maduka's Family House
Umuchukwu





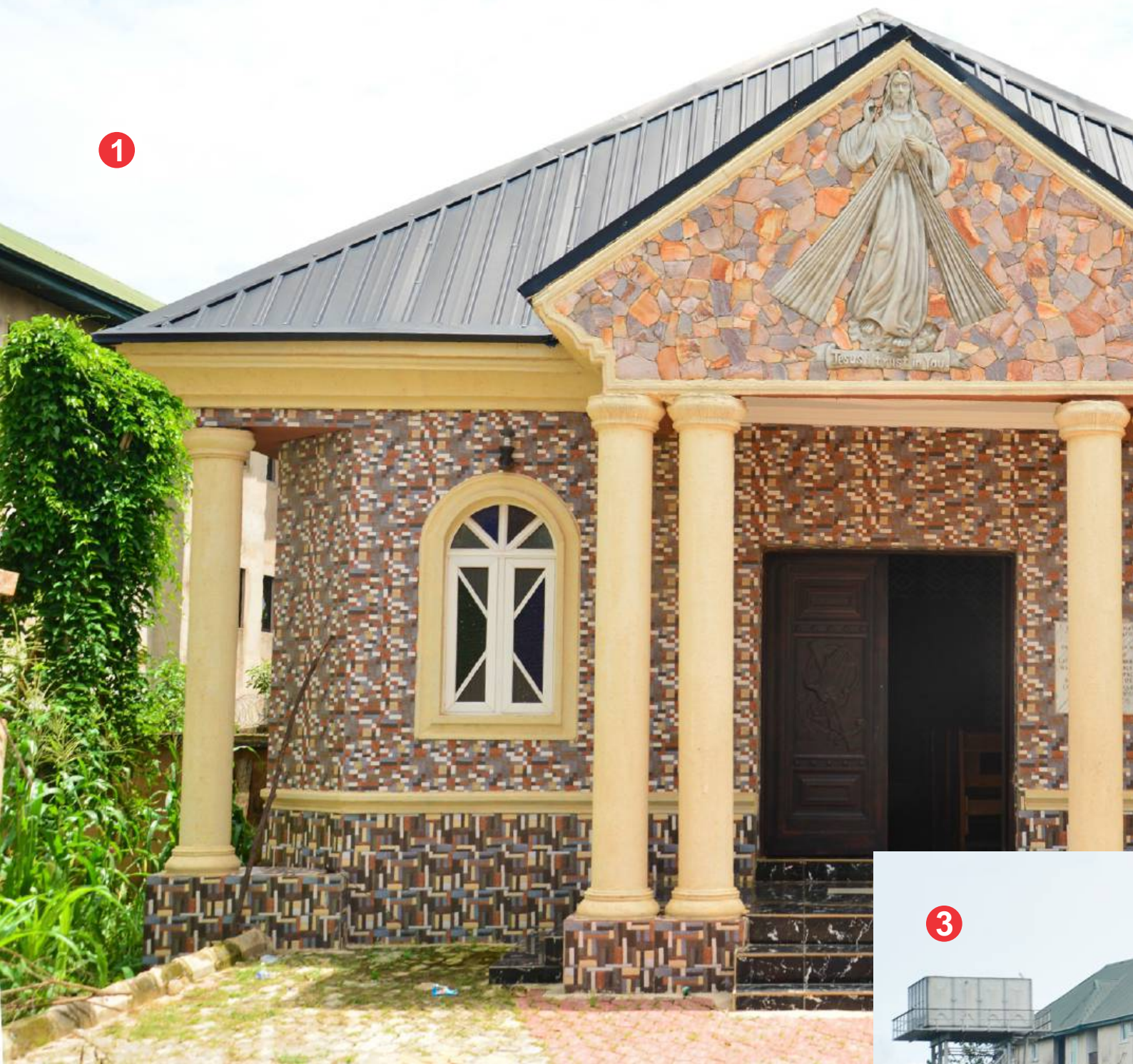














- 1 One of the Churches Constructed By Maduka
- 2 One of the roads constructed By Maduka in Umuchukwu
- 3 One of the Hostels constructed By Maduka







Interior of high court of Justice



Magistrate Court Built by Maduka in Umuchukwu







Civil Defence Office Built by Maduka

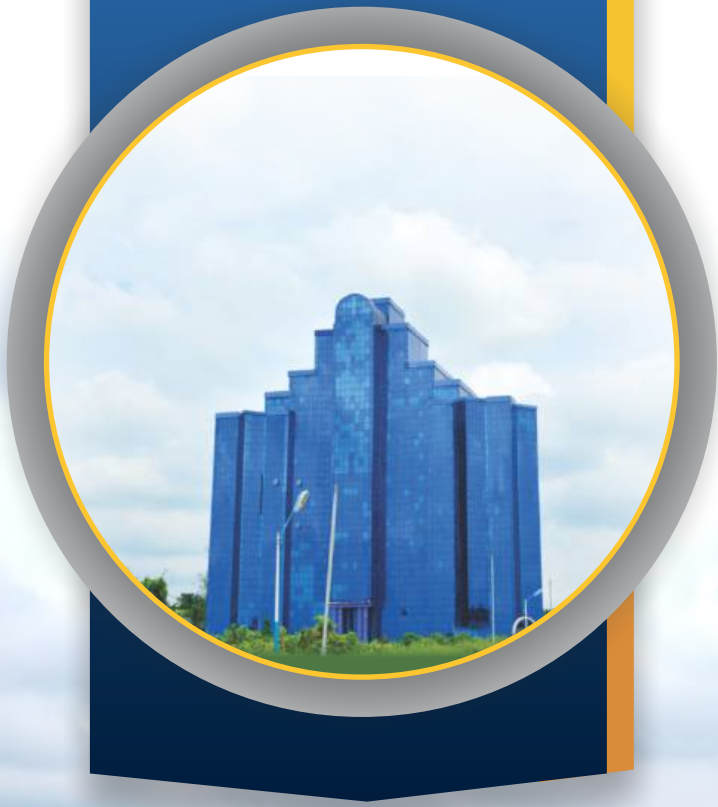


Police Divisional Headquarters



















Another Church constructed by Maduka









World Bank: 96 Million Nigerians Will Be Living in Poverty by 2022



The COVID-19 Pandemic is predicted to drive up the poverty rate in Nigeria, pushing almost 6 million additional people into poverty by 2022, The World Bank has said.

In a report released last week, the bank predicted that there would be 95.7 million Nigerians living below the poverty line by 2022.

The bank stated that without the virus, 90 million Nigerians were projected to be in poverty by 2022. However, the virus would add about 6 million to that figure in two years.

The report stated that: "With real per capita GDP growth forecast to be negative in all sectors in 2020, poverty will deepen for the current poor, while those households that were just above the poverty line prior to the COVID-19 crisis will fall into poverty.

"Were the crisis not to have hit (the counterfactual scenario), the poverty headcount rate would be forecast to remain virtually unchanged, with the number of poor people set to rise from 82.9 million today to 85.2 million in 2020 and 90.0 million in 2022 due to natural population growth.

"Given the effects of the crisis, however, the national poverty headcount rate is instead forecast to jump from 40.1 percent today to 42.5 percent in 2020 and 42.9 percent in 2022, implying that the number of poor people will be 90.2 million in 2020 and 95.7 million in 2022.

"Thus, taking the difference between these two scenarios, the crisis alone is forecast to drive an additional 4.9 million people into poverty this year, with an additional 5.7 million people living in poverty by 2022."

The report stated that a disproportionate share of those pushed into poverty by the COVID-19 crisis would likely be those living in urban areas and earning income from services.

The bank further predicted that: "More than one-third of the additional people forecast to be pushed into poverty by the COVID-19 crisis are expected to be in urban areas, while just 15.9 percent of the current poor are urban dwellers.

"Only 13.1 percent of the additional poor people in 2022 are predicted to be in households where the head works primarily in agriculture, while, today, 56.0 percent of poor Nigerians live in agricultural households.

"Many Nigerians who are not poor today are vulnerable to falling below the poverty line during the COVID-19 crisis. People living only just above the poverty line are more susceptible to becoming poor when shocks occur. Those with consumption levels between the poverty line and 1.5 times the poverty line may be defined as 'vulnerable'."

According to the bank nationally, 40.1 percent of Nigerians (82.9 million people) live below the poverty line, while another 25.4 percent (52.6 million people) are vulnerable by this definition.

It noted that in rural areas, more than three-quarters of the population were either poor or vulnerable, yet even in urban areas—where the poverty headcount rate was far lower at 18.0 percent—around a quarter of the population would be vulnerable to shocks.

NIDCOM boss Partners Anambra To woo Diaspora Investors



The Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa has promised to make good her desire to attract Foreign Direct Investment into the Country by strongly engaging Nigerians in the Diaspora.

The NIDCOM Boss stated this when she received the Anambra state Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs, Culture and Tourism Hon. Christian Madubuko in Abuja.

Hon Dabiri-Erewa maintains that Anambra State is blessed with a lot of tourism potentials that the Diaspora Community can tap into.

The NIDCOM Boss said the Commission has a lot of activities that will be of interest to Anambra State.

For instance the Annual Badagry Festival: Door of Return, which provides a Spiritual, cultural, social, economic and political reconnection process.

She urged the delegation to open up its doors for Diaspora investment into the State.

The Chairman/CEO NIDCOM, commended the State Governor for being the first to appoint a Commissioner for Diaspora

COVID-19: NDBDA Acquires 84 Hactres of land for farming

The Niger Delta Basin Development Authority, NDBDA, says that it has acquired 84 hactres of land for farming as part of it's food security to cushion the effect of post COVID-19 pandemic in it's catchment areas.

It said the measure is part of the Authority's food security and job creation to cushion the harsh effect of post COVID-19 pandemic.

The Authority said it was working in line with the policy of President Mohammedu Buhari in the area of food security, job and wealth creation for the teeming population of the youths of the Niger Delta region and by extension the generality of Nigerians.

Disclosing this during a media tour of some of the ongoing

projects of the Basin Authority in Kpon community of Khana local government area of Rivers state at the weekend, the project manager of the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority, Mr. Kobo Nekabari Marklin said that at the completion of the massive farm projects going on in the area, thousands of jobs would be created and sufficient food provided for the region's sustenance.

Marklin explained that the 84 hectares of farmland will be used to cultivate palm oil, hybrid citrus, hybrid dwarf mango, plantain and pawpaw plantations as well as poultry, fish ponds and other agricultural products.

"He said that the irrigation farm project in Kpon community, the biggest in the state and by extension the Niger Delta, is a

complete farm settlement with solar power station and residential quarters for staff and also provides a ready market for both the local community and the outsiders for patronage.

Marklin explained that with sufficient funding and patronage, the Kpon irrigation farm would absorbed over 10,000 direct and indirect labor and make an annual profit of over N100million. "That is besides the auxiliary benefits by the community people who see the project as their major source of livelihood," he said.

"With adequate funding and patronage, we are very sure of creating thousands of jobs and making millions of naira in profit when the project operates in full capacity. We have massive projects going on here. The biggest farm project in the Niger Delta region. We need more funds to inject into the project

to meet up the President Mohammedu Buhari's policy of food sufficiency and security for Nigerians

"Between now and the end of the year 2020, some of these projects will begin to function maximally. Virtually, everything will be produced here. We pray for good government policy and favorable economic environment. We plan to have palm oil mill, fish pond, we have poultry farm already and a lot more

"We have ambitious plans for hybrid mango, pawpaw, plantain, palm tree and citrus plantations. When they are fully mature, obviously, we can feed the entire Niger Delta region and by extension Nigeria as a whole. The project is massive and the present management of the NDBDA is poised at achieving this objective within the shortest possible time", he said.



PRINCE LAWRENCE EZEH CONGRATULATES CHIEF DAN ORBIH, AS HE ASSUMES OFFICE AS PDP NATIONAL VICE-CHAIRMAN, SOUTH-SOUTH

Ezeh, who contested in the 2019 Senatorial elections for Enugu East, was present at the party secretariat, where he expressed hope that the party will take over leadership in the country.

Congratulating the new South-South boss of the party, Ezeh said his capable leadership of the party in Edo State led to the weakening and eventual splitting

of the opposition party in the state.

He also expressed optimism that the party will grow, not just in the geopolitical zone, but across the country as a result of Orbih's fighting spirit.

Those in attendance include the Akwa Ibom and Cross River states Chairmen of the party, as well as numerous other stakeholders in the zone.

FG Flags off Recruitment of 774,000 Unskilled Workers for 3 Months at N20,000/month Salary

The Federal Government says it will recruit 1,000 itinerant, unskilled workers in each of the 774 Local Government Areas (LGA), in the country from October to December for roads rehabilitation, construction, sanitation, among others.

Mr Festus Keyamo, Minister of State for Labour and Employment, said this during the inauguration of the States' Selection Committees for the Extended Special Public Works Programme on Monday in Abuja.

Keyamo said that the programme was approved by President Muhammadu Buhari and aimed principally at recruiting 774,000 itinerant and unskilled Nigerians.

According to him, the 1,000 persons that the committee will recruit per LGA will be engaged by the Federal Government between October and December this year.

"This is for the workers to carry out public works that are peculiar to each Local Government Area.

"They would be paid a total of N60,000 each, that is, N20, 000 per month.

"They would be engaged in roads rehabilitation and social housing construction, urban and rural sanitation, health extension and other critical services.

"Depending on how successful the programme is or how buoyant the Federal Government's purse is, this programme may either be extended or repeated every year.

"There are also various suggestions on some exit strategies for this programme, one of which is to move these workers to some agriculture projects, but nothing is concrete yet," he said.

The minister, therefore, charged members of the committees to ensure that the task was taken seriously and with patriotism.

Keyamo added that the programme could rightly be described as one of President Buhari's many star programmes for the lowly, weak and vulnerable people in the society.

"We are already running out of time on the execution of this programme. This is because a lot have to be done before the various works begin in October.

"After the selection of those to be engaged, they still have to be captured by some selected banks," he said.

The minister noted that the government was discussing with some banks for the capturing to

enable the workers to have their Bank Verification Numbers (BVNs).

"This is because Mr President has directed that everyone must be paid through their BVNs to eliminate fraud in the programme. With this measure, no single person can be paid twice," he explained.

He, therefore, directed all States' Selection Committees to within three weeks complete the selection processes and return names of those selected for further processing by the banks.

"We are hereby releasing immediately all names and phone numbers of every member of the various committees in the entire country for easy access by Nigerians to make case for their inclusion.

"Members of the committee, in turn will also reach out to various sectors of their different states to recruit eligible Nigerians.

"The finer details of how these would be done will be communicate to the committees through their various Chairmen and Secretaries.

"These would be ready in the next few days in the form of guidelines for the Operation of the States' Selection Committees," he said.

The minister also directed that all meetings by the committees should be done in the various states' offices of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), or at neutral venues to avoid undue influence.

Keyamo urged the committees to adhere to the guidelines given to them as they were bound to achieve the targets set by the President to reach 774,000 Nigerians who are largely indigent workers.

He, however, added that the Federal Government would not hesitate to replace any committee member who failed to adhere strictly to the guidelines given or whose actions were not in line with the programmes objectives.

Mr Afolabi Joseph, who responded on behalf of the committees, commended President Buhari for the opportunity given to them to serve on the laudable initiative.

"We believe that it is an opportunity to impact the lives of a lot of Nigerians and we believe the programme will be successful with our support.

"We will also ensure that all guidelines that will be released soon will be followed accordingly, for us to deliver in line with the expectations of the minister," he

said.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), recalls that an Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Extended Special Public Works Programme, headed by the Director-General of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), was inaugurated on April 29.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee, drawn from eight ministries, was to recommend on ways and means of executing the programme.

It was from the recommendations of the inter-ministerial committee that the States' Selection Committees emerged.

The States' Selection Committees was saddled with the responsibility of identifying the public works to be executed in each LGA in the states and also to identify and recruit those to be engaged under the programme.

Court reinstates 4 lecturers Demoted In Otuoke Federal Versity

The National Industrial Court of Nigeria sitting in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state has ordered the reinstatement of four out of seven lecturers demoted by the management of the Federal University, Otuoke, in Ogbia local council area of the state and awarded N20 million fine to the school as damages to affected lecturers.

The University management had in 2018 demoted a Professor and 6 other lecturers with doctorate degrees over what it termed as "lack of requisite scholarship"

Those affected are; Dr. Steve Nwabuzor, who was downgraded from the rank of Professor to Lecturer 1; Dr. Leonard K Shilgba, downgraded from the rank of Professor to Senior Lecturer; Dr. Timothy Falade Obalade, downgraded from the rank of Associate Professor to Senior Lecturer; Dr. Felina Nwadike, downgraded from Associate Professor to Senior Lecturer.

Others were; Dr. Sepribo Lawson-Jack, downgraded from the rank of Associate Professor to Lecturer 1; Dr. Marcellina Offoha, downgraded from the rank of Associate Professor to Lecturer 1; and Dr. Evans Eze, downgraded from the rank of Associate Professor to Lecturer 2.

Dissatisfied with the institution's authority decision, four out of seven of the affected lecturers filed a suit at the National Industrial Court of Nigeria sitting in Yenagoa on 2019, with a suit number; NICN/YENO1/2019.

Delivering the judgement on the dispute on the Presiding Judge, Justice Bashiru Alkali ruled that claimants be reinstated to their full status, privileges and entitlements by the institution.

Justice Alkali also mandated the

institution management to pay each claimant N5 million for defamation and two hundred thousand each for cost of litigation.

We gathered that all the litigants had returned from the Diaspora to serve in the institution upon the establishment of the Federal University, in 2011 by Goodluck Jonathan administration.

The University management had in 2018 offered reasons why the seven lecturers were demoted and six non-teaching staff sacked over "lack of requisite scholarship and absconding from the school."

The Registrar, Mr. Iruo Yousuo, in a statement then, stated that the Governing Council of Federal University, Otuoke at its 10th meeting made key decisions involving appointments and discipline including the resolution to sanitise the system in order to take the university to the greater height.

According to him, "Consequently, the Governing Council of the Federal University Otuoke have re-classified some academic appointments by downgrading seven teaching staff appointments to lower ranks for lack of requisite scholarship."

Reacting to the judgement, the counsel to the claimants, Barr Okoko Mark, expressed happiness that the justice has been done to the affected lecturers, noting that the court had granted all their relieves.

He said: "The judgement has been delivered in favour of the claimants, ordering for their reinstatement and awarded damages to them. The judgement is to be complied with within the next 30 days."

A portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a bright red blazer over a black top with white polka dots. She is resting her chin on her hand and looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is dark and out of focus.

HOW OUR LITERATURE IS BATTLING CONSPIRACY THEORIES **OF COVID-19**

There are some writers and artists who enjoy moments of isolation and solitude, saying it is an appropriate time to write or create. Is this period of Covid-19 lockdown suitable for you as an author to write more new books?

Writing is what you never do in a hurry. One of the ironies of being a writer is that, in order to accomplish the urge to communicate something to others, you end up spending enormous amounts of energy and time on your own. In the case of a book, it can take up to years of solitude; some of it may be satisfying, even delightful, so to speak. The irony being that one of the reasons many writers have this longing to communicate in the first instance is that they have consciously or unconsciously experienced one type of isolation earlier in life and writing seems like a good means to overcome it, by connecting with others. Some others found themselves writing as a result of quiet observations of the events of life.

As a matter of fact solitude is an inherent part of writing. Unfortunately, in our contemporary society we have become accustomed to noise and to avoiding solitude at all costs and thus, surrounding ourselves with distractions, such as the cell phones, friends, and television and internet crowd.

Most writing happens when one is alone, you really have to assume yourself into your stories, and you need to feel true empathy with others in order to be able to write convincingly.

Personally, I work from home a lot. I write at home. I often exercise at home. Alone I achieve a lot without distraction because I can easily control the noise around me at home.

I love spending time with my family, then occasionally with a few people for short periods.

The Pandemic lockdown does not worry me at all; sitting at home is part of my lifestyle. I had longed for a space and time like this. I had imagined it as an opportunity to dedicate more time working, writing and contemplating. I had spent time literally fantasizing about it- having enough time to write.

Nonetheless, we are in an incredibly difficult time, and we are all adjusting our lives. But the fact remains that creativity often happens more in solitude. Many great artistic masterpieces were done in isolation.

COVID19 has created deep uncertainty in nearly almost all aspects of daily life.. It is possible that one can even benefit from interacting and brainstorming with others over the phone, but awesome creative work can be achieved by shutting out the outside world.

For now, we are all quarantined and in isolation. But even within that solitude we can also find a way to reconnect with humanity.

What issues do you think writers ought to concentrate on in order to explicitly explore the nuances of corona virus?

This epidemic has changed the people's life style; caused extensive job losses and threatened the sustenance of millions of people; as businesses and every other institution have shut down to control the spread of virus.

COVID-19 seems to have made the entire world pause for a moment. Starting from small business to the Olympic Games, all are shut down. Things have been changing extremely rapidly and everywhere you look there's information on the virus and how to protect yourself from it. Some of the information are real facts, some incorrect, some exaggerated, and some mere propaganda.

We are living in historic times, entirely new way of life for everyone including contemporary artists.

Nigeria has a number of exceptionally talented writers, from screenwriters to novelists and playwrights to poets and journalists.

For now with so much is going on about the COVID19 writings everywhere you look, I doubt if anyone is eager to read, listen to or watch anything about creative writing on COVID19.

From the look of things, taking a pivot towards themes with a slightly cheerful outlook, like humor or comic, may probably

catch people's fancy at this point. Creative industries have a huge role in keeping the public entertained even while we are all staying at home.

What writers need to do is to organize their thoughts and vent their emotions, especially in anxiety-ridden times like now. Subjects or themes that can relieve tension will be a welcome ideal.

On a broader level, creativity brings joy, a sense of pride, and helps one to forget about the ills of the environment.

At times like this, conversations with family and friends could constitute fruitful seeds of compelling stories.

Again humour also has a prominent place in time of crises. At least that's what I think.

There is an online teaching and learning for students across board. As an author and lecturer, how do you incorporate the new development into your programme?

The COVID-19 has a confounding impact on global education. Covid-19 has disrupted academic year, cancelled classes, suspended examinations, shifted matriculations and much more.

All these have resulted in schools shut all across the world. Our education system is losing relevance. The society has never experienced anything like this.

In response to significant demand for continued teaching and learning, many online learning platforms are offering free access to their services.

While some believe that the unplanned and rapid move to online learning – with no training, insufficient bandwidth, and little preparation – will result in a poor user experience that is un conducive to sustained growth, others believe that a new hybrid model of education will eventually emerge, with significant benefits. For those who have access to the right technology, there is evidence that learning online can be very effective in a number of ways.

However, there are a lot of misgivings and challenges to overcome. Education is in serious crisis. Even before the coronavirus pandemic struck, in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries including Nigeria, many children who should be in school are not. Many who are, their schools often lack the facilities and resources to provide adequate instruction.

In this advent of on-line learning, a lot of students have no computers to work on. Students who have computer, many cannot guarantee reliable internet access but still struggle to participate in digital learning.

There are problems of internet data, problems of bandwidth, of there is anxiety of multiple disconnections taking place during an online class.

What has been made clear through this pandemic is the importance of disseminating knowledge across borders, organizations, and all parts of society.

One thing is clear, the integration of information technology in education will be further accelerated and online education will eventually become an integral component of school education.

As an author, a story teller, how do the various conspiracy theories surrounding Covid-19 appeal to you?

A theory is an idea which is used to explain a situation or justify a course of action. An acceptable general principle offered to explain phenomena, a system of ideas intended to explain something,

While conspiracy signifies a secret plan by a group to do something, which, may be harmful or illegal. When you hear the word conspiracy, what come to mind is plan, collusion intrigue, and connivance.

So a conspiracy theory rejects the standard explanation for an event and instead credits a surreptitious group or organization with carrying out a secret plan, yet to be substantiated. That is what we see in the COVID-19 conspiracy theories.

A lot has been achieved under My Administration ...Buhari



**Agriculture
remains
the key to our
economic
Diversification
strategy.**

Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari on Friday morning addressed Nigerians on the occasion of the Democracy Day.

The 2020 celebration of Democracy Day marks 21 years of uninterrupted civil administration in our dear country. This day provides us an opportunity to reflect on our journey as a nation, our achievements and struggles.

It is a day to honour our founding fathers who toiled to establish our republic and every Nigerian who has worked tirelessly to sustain it.

We are celebrating this year's Democracy Day despite the COVID-19 pandemic which afflicts our nation and the whole world.

It is indeed a very difficult time for everyone especially those who have lost loved ones to the virus and those whose sources of livelihood have been severely constrained by the stringent measures we introduced at every level of government to contain the virus and save lives.

The dedication of our health and other

essential services staff towards containing this virus is a testament of our courage and resilience as a people and as a great nation, and I use this opportunity to say thank you to all of you for your service to the nation.

Sustaining our democracy thus far has been a collective struggle, and I congratulate all Nigerians and particularly leaders of our democratic institutions on their resilience and determination to ensure that Nigeria remains a shining example of democracy.

In my 2019 Democracy Day address, I promised to frontally address the nation's daunting challenges, especially insecurity, economy and corruption. I, therefore, find it necessary to give an account of my stewardship on this day.

We have recorded notable achievements in the course of implementing our nine priority objectives and are establishing a solid foundation for future success.

On the economic front, our objectives have remained to stabilize the

macroeconomy, achieve agricultural and food security, ensure energy sufficiency in power and petroleum products, develop infrastructure, fight corruption and improve governance.

We have witnessed eleven quarters of consecutive GDP growth since exiting recession. The GDP grew from 1.91% in 2018 to 2.27% in 2019 but declined to 1.87% in the first quarter of 2020 as a result of the decline in global economic activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every single economy in the world has suffered a decline. Ours has been relatively moderate.

In order to stabilize the economy, the Monetary Authority took steps to build the external reserves which resulted in improved liquidity in the foreign exchange market.

The external reserves grew from \$33.42 billion on April 29th 2020 to about \$36.00 billion in May 2020 which is enough to finance seven months of import commitments.

The Presidential Fertilizer Initiative

programme continues to deliver significant quantities of affordable and high-quality fertilizers to our farmers.

This initiative has also revived 31 blending plants and created a significant number of direct and indirect jobs across the value chain.

Government is also revamping the cotton, textile and garment sector via a CBN Textile Revival Intervention Fund that would considerably reduce foreign exchange spent on cotton and other textile imports.

Through the food security initiative, we are promoting "Grow What We Eat" and "Eat What We Grow". I am also delighted that more and more Nigerians are taking advantage of the opportunities in the agriculture and agribusiness sector.

I assure you that government will continue to support the Agriculture sector through the CBN Anchor Borrowers Programme and similar schemes.

To protect our farming investments, we have deployed 5,000 Agro-Rangers and employed 30,289 in our para-military agencies.

We are also integrating rural communities to the formal economy by extending access to credit and inputs to rural farmers and building feeder roads.

Our efforts on growing non-oil exports have started to yield some results. For instance, in the past year, our revenue from Cocoa and Sesame Seed increased by \$79.4 million and \$153 million.

Africa presents a huge opportunity for our export base diversification and we are developing our strategy to grow intra-Africa trade through the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.

Nigeria has risen by 25 places on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking from 146th to 131st and is now rated as one of the top ten reforming countries.

This development is due to the Visa on Arrival policy, consistent promotion of initiatives that expand facilities available to Micro Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, robust electronic registration and payment system, seamless processing of business registration and reduction of cost of registering business by 50%. We are confident that on-going efforts would result in further improvement of this rating.

We remain committed to expanding our mining sector. To this end, I have directed the resuscitation of the Ajaokuta Steel Plant based on Government-to-Government financing and a Public-Private Sector financing.

With foreign and domestic investments and the participation of Small Scale Miners, we are harnessing the supply value chain in gold production.

We would also be launching a fully digitized mineral rights management platform for quick processing of mineral rights application, digitization of records and plugging revenue leakages.

The Power Sector remains very critical to meeting our industrial development aspirations and we are tackling the challenges that still exist in the delivery of power through different strategies.

We are executing some critical projects through the Transmission Rehabilitation and Expansion Programme including the: Alaoji to Onitsha, Delta Power Station to Benin and Kaduna to Kano; 330kv DC 62km line between Birnin Kebbi and Kamba; Lagos/Ogun Transmission Infrastructure Project; Abuja Transmission Ring Scheme; and Northern Corridor Transmission Project. Our agreement with Siemens will transmit and distribute a total of 11,000 Megawatts by 2023, to serve our electricity needs



Uzodinma Shocks Critics, Seals Reconstruction Deal With Berger On Orlu, Okigwe Roads

Imo State Governor, Senator Hope Uzodinma recently shocked his critics by taking a bold step on infrastructural renewal in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Julius Berger Nigeria Plc on the reconstruction of Owerri to Orlu and Owerri to Okigwe roads in the State.

Governor Uzodinma described the event, which took place at the Sam Mbakwe Exco Chambers, Government House, Owerri, as a special day in the life of Imo State.

He said the two roads are major gateways to neighbouring States hence the road infrastructure linking Imo State to her neighbours will help improve the economy of the State when completed.

He said that the choice of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc is predicated on the company's track records of quality and value for money which is very important to Imo people.

Governor Uzodinma reassured Imo people that, with what is known of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc, the projects would be delivered within a record time and "this will surely be a partnership that will sustain the test of time."

Governor Uzodinma appealed to Imo people, especially communities on the right of ways of the projects to give the company maximum cooperation and needed support to enable them deliver the projects on time.

Earlier, the South East Regional Manager of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc, Juergen Fischer, expressed appreciation to the Government of Imo State for the invitation to sign the MOU.

He said that they had looked forward to participating in the infrastructural development of the state and assured that a good cooperation and partnership between the State and his company has started, promising to deliver the projects on time.

The State Commissioner for Works, Mr. Ralph Nwosu signed the MOU on behalf of Government of Imo State while Fischer signed for Julius Berger Nigeria Plc.

The Deputy Governor of Imo State, Prof. Placid Njoku; Secretary to the State Government, Chief Cosmos Iwu; Chief of Staff, Barr. Nnamdi Anyaehie; and other members of the expanded State Executive Council attended the ceremony.

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BREAKING NEW FRONTIERS



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MORE JOBS | MORE INCOME | LIMITLESS OPPORTUNITIES



The dream of Economic diversification by the Akwa Ibom state government is anchored on the provision of world class infrastructure.

Gov. Udom Emmanuel has left no stone unturned in his infrastructural consolidation and expansion agenda which cuts across all economic segments.

Other infrastructural achievements in waste management and environment sectors are:

- Renovation of 85 flats, quarters for soldiers at wellington Bassey Barracks, 6 Amphibious Battalion, Ibagwa.
- Construction and renovation of Governor's lodge in Lagos and Abuja respectively.
- Re introduction of monthly Environmental

Sanitation resulting in improved level of cleanliness and participation in the exercise such that in a recent survey carried out by 'clean up Nigeria' Akwa Ibom state and Uyo Capital City were adjudged the cleanest state and cleanest state capital in Nigeria.

- Facilitation of Akwa Ibom state participation in the Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP) a world bank assisted project.
- Facilitation of the installation of Early Flood Warning System NEWMAP in Oron LGA.
- Facilitation of the installation of Hydro Meteorological Systems by NEWMAP and Cross River Basin Authority in Abak, Onna and Etinan.

- Intervention in St. Luke's Hospital and Etim Umana gully erosion sites.
- Successful hosting of the first Akwa Ibom state Climate Change and Clean Energy Summit/ Expo and development of a Roadmap for
- Hosting of Sideline Event at COP 22 in Marrakesh, Morocco, where His Excellency, the governor presented Akwa Ibom state's Roadmap for Sustainable Development to Foreign Investors.
- Establishment of Mineral Resources Environmental and Management Committee (MIREMCO).
- Completion of four point by Sheraton Hotel, Ikot Ekpene.

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