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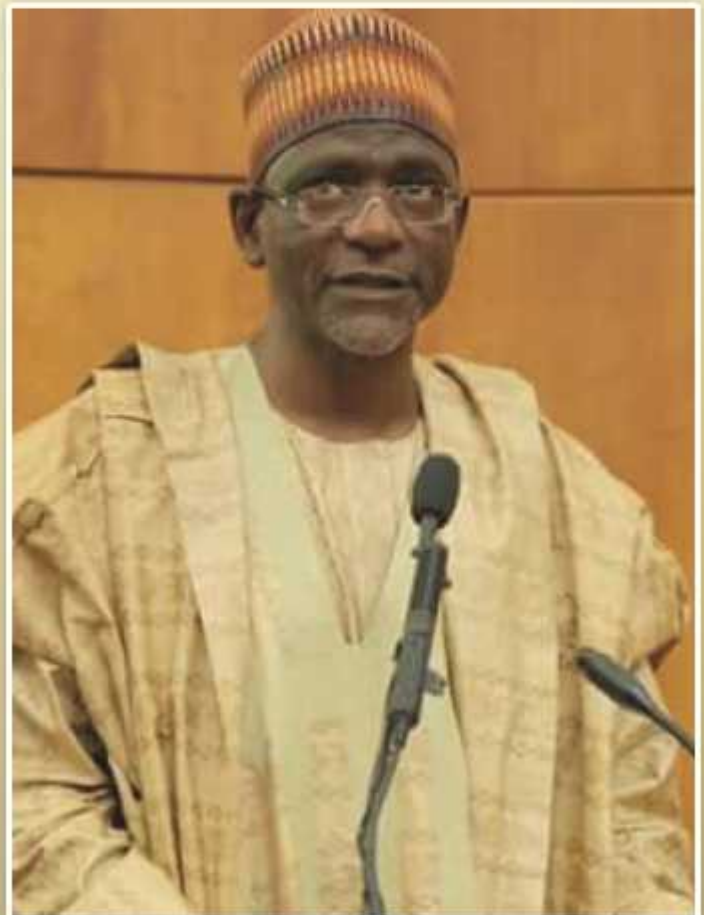
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HOW TO MAKE NIGERIA'S EDUCATION GLOBAL BRAND



Prof. E.A.C. Nwanze former
vice chancellor university of Benin



Adamu Adamu
The Minister of Education

2019: IBB, OBJ, DANJUMA LEAD ONSLAUGHT AGAINST BUHARI



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To be a leading news magazine in
Nigeria and indeed in Africa

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EPE CLOSE, AREA 1, SECTION 1, GARKI ABUJA.

PORT HARCOURT ADDRESS:

45 Ohia Street, Amadi, Old GRA

Email: newsplatformmedia@yahoo.com

newsplatform.media@yahoo.co.uk

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CITATION ON

PROFESSOR E.A.C NWANZE BSc, MSc, PhD, Dis.

Professor E.A.C Nwanze was born on 15th Jan, 1949 to the great teacher and Agric Master Mr. A. C. Nwanze of Umuda, Umuaji Qrts Asaba, Delta State.

He attended several Pry schools in the then Western Region of Nigeria, obtaining his Pry VI leaving Certificate in 1961 from Council/Township Pry Sch. Sapele. He was at Loyola College, Ibadan from 1962 and obtained his W.A.S.C in 1966 in Division 1.

He was at the University of Ibadan between 1968 and 1972 where he obtained B.Sc. (Hon) degree in Chemistry. Between 1972 and 1976, he was at the Department of Molecular Science, of the University of Warwick, Coventry, U.K. where he obtained both M.Sc. and Ph.D degrees in 1973 and 1976 respectively.

He joined the University of Benin as Lecturer II in 1976 and rose steadily to the position of Senior Lecturer in 1981. In 1987, he was appointed straight to the position of full professor of Biochemistry without going through Associate Professorship, a very rare feat in academia.

Professor Nwanze is a most distinguished and accomplished international scholar of world repute, who is renowned for his contributions in the field of Medical Sciences, particularly in



PROFESSOR E.A.C NWANZE

the specialty of Neurobiochemistry, in a University teaching career spanning over 36 years, he has been involved in the training of over 10,000 doctors, pharmacists and scientists. He has supervised and graduated over 12 Ph.D.s many of whom have gone on to become highly regarded Professors in their own right. Professor Nwanze has published over 70 Scientific articles and is a member of the New York Academy of Science (NYAS); international Brain Research Organization (IBRO) and Research Board of Advisor of the American Biographical institute.

He has held several Visiting Scholar/Professor positions notably at (i) the Dept of Biochemistry and Biophysics, Sterling Hall of Medicine, Yale University, New Haven. Conn. USA in 1974/75; (ii) the Dept of Histology, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden in 1980/81 and 1985/86 and (iii), Dept of Pharmacology, University of

Milan, via 32, Vanvitelli, Milano. Italy in 1990/91.

Apart from this scholarship, Professor Nwanze has excelled in his career by attaining the apex of his calling as a University administrator, when he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of one of the first generation Federal Universities, the University of Benin, in 2004 by the then President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR.

During his tenure, he steered the University of Benin to its highest levels of glory, culminating in its winning the position of Second Best University in the Commonwealth in 2006. Between 2006 and 2009 during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor, the University of Benin was the topmost ranked Nigerian University in the Webometric World University Rankings.

For this immense contribution to education in Nigeria, Mr. President in 2007 wrote him a special commendation letter. He was also elected chairman of the respected and pre-eminent body of all Vice-Chancellor in Nigeria (the Committee of Vice-Chancellors or CVC).

Professor Nwanze is married to Barr. (Mrs.) V.C. Nwanze and they are blessed with four children.

MADATORY MUST DOs FOR WORLD CLASS EDUCATION

BY E.A.C. NWANZE, BSc, MSc, PhD, DIS.

(Professor of Neurobiochemistry & Vice-Chancellor UNIBEN 2004-2009).

SUB-THEMES:

- (i) RE-ENGINEERING UNIBEN FOR GLOBAL STANDARD.
- (ii) THE FALLING STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA.
- (iii) A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF THE GROWTH OF MALPRACTICES
IN THE COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. [OUR COMMON GUILT]

PREAMBLE

The title page boldly and unapologetically proclaims the tautology implied by the phrase 'Madatory and commands. The author draws from his experiences with tertiary education in Nigeria and elsewhere in the last fifty years since he was admitted into the Prelim Honours Chemistry class, of the University of Ibadan in 1968 and more especially from the 30 years he has been a full Professor of Biochemistry, in Benin since 1987.

Furthermore, the series of hypothesis, propositions and conclusions being advocated here, derive from carefully orchestrated and systematically applied methodologies designed to bring the standard of education in the University of Benin to universally acknowledged and globally recommended levels in the period 2004 to 2009, when it pleased God to appoint the author, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Benin. It is beyond dispute that the standard of Education In our dear country Nigeria has failen, albeit almost collapsed completely. This sad state of affairs is a direct consequence of the neglect and malpractices in our communities and educational institutions over so many decades, most especially since independence in 1960. It is simply our common guilt and shame and the situation demands redress.

In acknowledging our failures in these matters, we must reflect on some very important

philosophical concepts that are abiding in Education. Underscore the three truths/aphorisms associated with Education. The first aphorism is that Education is simply the enlightenment of the entity be it an individual or Group. Secondly if we fix Education, we fix the society and finally, the third being that Education is an all life experience hence it is said to span from cradle to grave.

EDUCATION: FROM CRADILE TO THE GRAVE

The above aphorism is probably only true and fully applicable to education. We indeed begin to learn from the moment we are born until we die. Education of the individual can therefore be segmented time-wisely into pre-primary (crèche and nursery), primary, secondary, tertiary, and out of formal school (Diaspora) experiences. Damage cause by circumstances such as poor planning in the crèche and nursery domains can often be remedied in later life. This is in the sense that these two early stages of education, until very recent times were largely domiciled in the home under the most liberal, non-formal and expansive, as well as tolerant and permissive conditions. Hence any such short comings were said to be redeemable. On the other hand, damage caused in the more formalized setting of primary to tertiary education is almost practically irredeemable by comparism. It may even shock the reader that we may have to expand the slogan form 'Education is from cradle to grave' to 'Education is from conception / Antenatal to

grave' on account of recent findings regarding prenatal intelligence which some have coined as "amniotic fluid learning". The second aphorism "FIX EDUCATION AND FIX LIFE" from which this illustration takes its therefore even a more compelling truism.

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The problem in the Nigerian Education setting is traceable to the level of neglect of the sector by policy formulators over several years. Arbitrariness, impunity and lack of standards were the order of the day with the concomitant result that malfeasances such as admission racketeering, cultism, exam malpractices, plagiarism, sexual harassment etc become the order of the day. Collectively we studied and implemented designer antidotes to cure these maladies in the University of Benin between the years 2004-2009. It thus became very clear early in 2004 that we had to obtain adequate background data so as to be able to comprehensively attack the problem. We thus assembled a study team comprising all the experts in diverse but requisite specialties.

WHAT IS WORLD CLASS EDUCATION?

World class education is generally defined as Education compliant with internationally acceptable and globally applicable norms. It is well known that there are factors which can either positively or negatively impact education standard. The factors which inhibit or foster education were well chronicled as enumerated. From their findings and recommendations, we were therefore able to establish in very clear terms the factor needed to turn our university around. It is related to very important almost umbilical cord relationship between TOWN and GOWN for the successful execution of world class education. So also important education compliant to global standards.

In the synergy that should interplay between, global and international standards with the direct transferability in the standard of education procured anywhere in the world. Irrespective of language of transmission. To the right of the

diagram and are stated factors, such as underfunding, inadequate remuneration, malfeasances and malpractices, brain drain etc which seriously compromise standards.

EFFECTS OF 1985 SAP ON NIGERIAN EDUCATION

One of the most dramatic negative impacts on Nigerian Education was the implementation of the 1985 Structural Adjustment Programmed, The SAP effects of 1985 which practically devalued the naira so dismally compared to the dollar (exchange rate with the dollar plummeted from 1:1, dollar/naira too 1:11 dollar/Naira) so negatively impacted education from the dual perspectives of serious under funding of services of Nigerian educational institutions and the closely related remuneration of the teachers, leading to the mass exodus of supporting supplementary experts from African and Asian countries in particular. The years 1985-1990, Nigeria lost the services of over 10,000 Indian and 6,000 Ghanaian experts in diverse secondary and tertiary schools across the length and breadth of the country. Superimposed on the over 10,000 qualified Nigerian medical personnel [doctors & other health personnel] who similarly left our shores because of the prohibitive exchange rate of the naira, it is easy to see how our teaching hospitals declined in both competency and capacity.

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE IN EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

The military incursion into governance in Nigeria in the mid-sixties and the subsequent take over of schools by government marked the beginning of the erosion and decline in standards. The attendant over-militarization of the society and rise in culture of impunity to access deliverables within the institutions provided the platforms for groups to manipulate the system to their advantage. As time passed by, such groups quickly metamorphosed into secret cults with huge resources and access to power, for even greater self-sustenance and promotion of sectional interests. In institutions of higher learning in particular, fraternities and sororities quickly

became fertile ground for violent cults to take a hold in and flourish and perpetuate themselves as fiefdoms of power and influence. Secret cults were certainly not alien to the larger society. However the recruitment of active foot soldiers from the institutions by politicians and those seeking one form of dominance of the other produced the degenerate situation confronting us now.

THE VICIOUS CYCLE

Entitled Sociological studies of Campus Violence in Nigerian Universities-45 years of Remote and immediate Causes, is probably the high point and one of the main findings of the experts. It clearly identified the over-play of the displacement of democratic governance and increasing violence on account of the increasing militarization of the people's psyche in the intervening 45 years of the study period, between 1960 and 2004.

The figure titled 'Town and Gown in the Monster of Cultism' appropriately describes the inter-relationship and interface between the larger society and cult groups in our various institutions of learning. The infiltration of influence from the sphere of politics and governance and the general society into the educational sector with the negative desire of recruiting youths into their 'armies' to be deployed for violent attacks on political rivals has really dangerously compromised educational standards. The data presented here was obtained from an exhaustive research into the sociology of campus violence in Nigerian universities since independence in 1960.

It reveals clearly how cultism, in tertiary institutions in particular, is sustained by wealthy barons in all tiers of society. Top government officials in all sectors of the economy including the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, the security agencies and senior educators are part of this dangerous conspiracy.

Lower tiers of the educational sector are not left out. Primary and Secondary educational institutions have become breeder grounds that graduate violent adherents into the higher institutions resulting in a cataclysmic outcome in society. It is indeed a very vicious cycle that has practically consumed the society. All the ills of

terrorism, insurgency, armed robbery, kidnapping, abductions and other violent vices take root from the activities of these miscreants in our society.

These studies clearly revealed as has never been seen before, the strong correlation between violence on campus and stability of the academic calendar.

THE CLARION CALL

There is no way in which quality education, commensurate with global standards can co-exist with the present state of affairs in our schools. Unfortunately, most Education summits and their organizers erroneously embrace the usual clarion call by most advocates that more funding should be provided for the education budget. However I wish to reiterate my repeated calls for a complete paradigm shift in our approach.

The problem is much more fundamental than the usual call for improved funding, increase in funding to the institutions in their present state of anomy may not have the much desired effect, it may rather end up further enriching some greedy school managers. The paradigm shift is what we applied to the University of Benin in the years 2004-2009 during which time this author had the privilege of being the helmsman. Therefore, with humility, I posit that these views are borne out of over 50 years of direct outcome of a comprehensive sociological appraisal of the problems with the Nigerian university system. Experts in all aspects of human behavior were recruited and commissioned to examine the problem in its entire ramifications.

The baseline for global/international standards in education at all levels was defined unambiguously. It became evident that the decay was largely as a result of the flight of 'Best Practices and convivial education ethics and ethos' otherwise referred to as [global or international standards] as depicted. At the end of this far reaching study, the factors responsible for the fall in the standard of education in Nigerian post independence and up to the year 2004 were enumerated as previously reproduced, "The Sociological studies of campus violence in

Nigerian universities – 45 years of remote and immediate causes. “Therefore the clarion call became “To revamp Nigerian Education, we must enthrone best practices and international standards.”

THE 2004 “IDES OF MARCH” EXPERIENCE AT UNIBEN

The cult Renunciation, Reformation, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation Committee CR₁C₁ was borne out of the 'ides of March' experience. On March 12th 2004, barely one month into my administration as the 7th Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin, a heinously violent cult attack occurred in the grounds of the Medical School Complex of the University of Benin. I have labeled it “the baptism of fire” it was laced with all the hallmarks of fearsome brutality as well as a clear message of intimidation to the entire University community. The attackers descended on their victim in broad daylight by 1pm and in the full glare and gaze of over a thousand students writing their end of year examinations. They literally forced the young man to his knees and beheaded him, with blood splattering everywhere, even up to the 4th floor of the College complex overlooking the greens. The police report conveyed the elaborate criminal conspiracies and planning that must have preceded this unfortunate atrocity.

Based on our findings and on the Police report, we became convinced that we must review and indeed revolutionize our approach to dealing with menace. The tried conventional methods of banning the cult groups, expelling implicated members and handling adherents over to security agencies, had long become obsolete. Rather the cultists adapted by adopting increased secrecy and by progressively adopting more terrifying tactics in their methods. The Police report confirmed further, that the victim, a repeat final year medical student, who was trailed to the venue of his last examination by his assailants, was in fact a rival cult leader and had been fingered in previous cult killings. He had been on the radar of his executioners, who he had successfully eluded for over two years.

They trailed him to his last repeat examination paper, which they were sure he would miss only at the expense of forfeiting his medical degree altogether. It was indeed a gruesome and monstrous attack which drove us to the conclusions that a paradigm shift was urgently required. Clearly there was no way in which we could match force with force, with AK47 gun totting sadists in broad daylight on campus. These were clearly depraved minds and what we needed most urgently was a means of winning back 'lost souls' it had to be a method with firmness but laced with required understanding, compassion and humaneness. We tagged it the “Christ like” approach.

This approach we acronymed CR₁C or the Cult Renunciation, Reformation, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation Committee. It was a marked departure from the conventional cult Renouncing Committees which most institutions had established on campuses across the country. The conventional cult renunciation committee were themselves ultimatum machines, with the direct threat of quit or be expelled: which the culprits quickly developed a thick skin towards. But the CR₁C (as described here) has a biblical undertone and it derived from the events on Mount Calvary during the crucifixion and from the lesson from our Lord's benevolent and compassionate and humane reclamation of the repentant thief.

The gospel according to St. Luke 23:⁴⁰⁻⁴³ explicitly espouses renunciation (R₁) in the retort of the good thief to the bad thief in verse 40; whilst it espouses reformation (R₂) in his utterance in verse 41 and reconciliation (R₃) in verse 42 in his conceding the justice of his present station against the injustice of our Lord's case. He is eventually rehabilitated (R₄) when our Lord promises him Paradise in verse 43. The CR₁C was made up of ministers from all faiths and denominations on campus.

We were less interested in what punitive measures to mete out to the repentant cultist, than in the injunction to “go and sin no more”. It was made very clear from the onset that the Priest or Pastor or Reverend or Imam to which the

individual reported for renunciation, owed the University no Obligation to disclose the encounter. Any records kept of the encounter was completely confidential and only used for the purpose of monitoring compliance. It was not passed to management, because we had absolutely no need for it, since we were determined to keep our word, that there was no punishment for those who voluntarily opted to come out of the cults.

THE PARADIGM SHIFT TO BEST PRACTICES FOR GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

(a) Mandatory Must Do steps: At the end of our study we had defined in very clear terms those practices, which are not only compelling [Mandatory] but are at the same time essential [Must do] if you must aim for global standards. It is, in order to underline their vital necessity for revamping the decadence that had so brazenly taken over the entire education space, that we, taking advantage, of poetic license coined the phrase "MANDATORY MUST DO". Therefore the list of "Mandatory must do" for world class education. These steps capture the essence of the battle to be waged to reclaim or revamp the Nigerian education system; with particular reference to education at the tertiary level. The list is sufficiently exhaustive and it is recommended to management of each institution to prioritize them as required in their own peculiar setting. The emphasis of this report is on our very successful approach to sanitize admissions, via our introduction of the post university matriculation examination (PUME) and control and elimination of violence on campus via the CR₄C.

UNIBEN PRAYS

The role of religion and decent morality in society can never be over-emphasized. Even in the most atheistic society, regard for the rights of others must be inculcated in every member of that society, otherwise impunity and cavalier arbitrariness will become the order of the day. The UNIBEN Prays

programme was informed by the need to encourage prayer and Godliness in the community. Two days, one in each semester, were set aside each session for a well-advertised prayer crusade on campus. There was no compulsion to attend but we never lacked the overflow of the school stadium, Preachers from all denominations and even renounced cultists from schools and the larger the society were invited to give talks and share their experiences with the audiences. There is no doubting the fact that well organized prayer fellowships on campus synchronise well for the desired moral conduct and peace in school.

THE POST-UME DEBACLE

The level of decadence in our admission processes had attained intolerable dimensions. Students were finding themselves into our classrooms through a combination of the worst kinds of conspiracies between middle men and admission racketeers who had gone too far; sometimes to the extent of hacking into the JAMB records. We had a bruising battle with the authorities in JAMB until through a combination of fortuitous good luck, and with the conviction of the then Honourable Minister of Education, Mrs. Nora Obaji and indeed the objective mediation of the then President Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo we were permitted to screen (PUME) our new entrants. The results of our first attempt at PUME in the 2004/2005 academic session were so sensational as to be branded the reformation in University admissions in Nigeria. At the end of their 100L in 2005/2006 their sessional exam results confirmed the unequivocal conclusion that we succeeded in screening quality into the university. My biggest alarm is why in Heavens name are those who claim to love this country, constantly after the PUME.

UNIBEN WORK SCHEME

Our earlier studies had revealed to us that whilst the recruiters of cultists often target the children and wards of the rich and privileged, the impoverished and those who are idle can be sucked – sometimes, even before realizing what had happened to them. We figured that for any individual so impoverished as to be unable to meet everyday needs, we must offer the opportunity to earn a small stipend (usually not exceeding =N= 2,500.00 per week) which can obviate

their predicament. A proposal was sent to the University Governing Council to appropriate the funds. Therefore bonafide students who wished to earn a little stipend to augment their allowances, were offered minor hands on engagements such as laboratory attendants where they

helped in washing up in the labs; library attendants where they helped in cataloguing and shelving of books in the library; campus shuttle operators for those who possess genuine driving licenses etc. The point to keep in mind is that such engagement must be limited in time and scope as not to impugn the primary academic engagement of the student. The work scheme was so successful that within the first year of its introduction we were swarmed and overwhelmed by the patronage. There is indeed dignity in labour.

THE DESIGN FOR UNIBEN

The design for the University of Benin is a three-pronged approach incorporating, the CR,C, Uniben Work scheme and Uniben Prays simultaneously as depicted. The conscious and dutiful implementation of the Uniben design produced phenomenal results, leading to the transformation of the university.

In the space of just three academic sessions, (2004, 2005, & 2006) we progressed from being the most cult-ridden and violent campus in Nigeria; with no ranking whatsoever, among the first 300 universities in Africa or among the first 8000 universities in the world, to being ranked no 1 among Nigerian Universities, and no 32 among African Universities and no 4904 among World Universities. These rankings are recorded in the section dealing with the honours and awards.

ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT

Of necessity, the revamp of decrepit and almost abandoned structure is pursued holistically, almost to the point of total

overhaul. Cleanliness is next to Godliness the saying goes. This is even truer in an institution harbouring large numbers of young people. We thus took very conscious steps to raise the level of hygiene in the environment as was attested to by all who visited the University during the period in question. Huge costs were expended to regularly mow the lawns, maintain services in the hostels, classes and offices as well as ensure well paved and well lit roads all over the entire University. These can be seen from the pictures and exposures. The business houses were not left out as they also too the cue and constructed state of the art business premises and centres.

UNIVERSITY FUNCTIONAL ORGANOGAM/COMMITTEES

Every management worth its salt must not only familiarize itself with laws and edicts governing the institution, but must at all times be prepared to enforce same. The University has a guiding functional organogram and operates largely on the committee system. Both of these are designed to ensure optimal democratization of governance.

ENHANCE EXAM & TEACHING ETHICS

Ranking highest among the critical values that confer international and global standards on any institution are the integrity and conduct of the core businesses of teaching and assessments and examinations. When these are in anyway compromised then it is "garbage in garbage out". It thus is hardly surprising that the country has had such diminishing returns in the quality of products that

The Nigerian university system has been churning out in the last sixty years. We were resolved that this was so important as to warrant the establishment of a university wide ethics committee, with offshoots and domains in each faculty. Also, apart from the traditional external and internal accreditation processes, we set up University wide, Student Assessment of Teachers boards, which regularly reports on the teaching competencies of each teacher. With all these we were able to root out, to their barest minima, mal-practices and malfeasances such as blocking, sorting, sexual harassment, plagiarism, and other forms of extortion.

OUR RESULTS WERE PHENOMENTAL

In the short space of 2 years the pay-back and good yield was reporting in that.

- (i) Uniben was magically rid of violence by 2005.
- (ii) Uniben never lost a session to closures again between 2004-2009.
- (iii) Uniben adjudged best improved University in Nigeria in 2006.
- (iv) Uniben was adjudged second best improved University in the common wealth by the ACU in November 2006.
- (v) Uniben topped all Nigerian Universities in the Webiometric Ranking of World universities & was 32nd in Africa July 2007.

AWARDS & HONOURS**[a] INTERNATIONAL APPRAISAL**

Even before we got into the external radar of recognition, our measurement of the scope and success of our efforts were showing good progress of our revamping of the University. For example, figure 43 clearly shows the considerable reduction, to almost zero, of the percentage incident of cult related violence on campus with the introduction of the CR4C in 2005 & 2006. Similarly the data on students Union Elections in figure 44 confirms that contrary to what happened in previous years, as from 2004, the University recorded 100% violence free elections: a direct barometer of the peace on campus.

[b] NUC ASSESSMENT

The annual NUC award for the Nigerian University that has made the most significant improvement was won by Uniben in 2005.

[c] WEBOMETRIC RANKING OF WORLD UNIVERSITIES

World Universities are usually ranked biannually, by authorized ranking agencies. Among the most widely accepted ranking agency is the CSIC a European based ranking organization headquartered in Spain. In their July 2007 rankings, University of Benin ranked 32 among African Universities, topping all other Nigerian Universities, it was also, the first time of a Nigerian University emerging among the first 100 Universities in Africa. The Webometric Rankings as released in July 2007 are reported in figures 46-50. There is absolutely no gain saying the truth that these huge leaps in the ranking and internationalization of the University are a direct consequence of the overhaul and revamp and internationalization of the University of Benin.

[d] ACU RANKING

By November 2006, University of Benin emerged the second best improved university in the Commonwealth in a competition organized by the Times Higher Awards based in the United Kingdom and recognized and approved by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). The award was conferred at the Commonwealth University Education Ministerial Conference in Cape Town South Africa, in Nov. 2006. The nomination and selection are posted. The summary of the findings of the selection board for the best Commonwealth University in that competition is instructive and is reproduced. The

premium placed on best practices, culture of decent ethos and global and international standards is not in doubt at all. In figure 54, I have registered my frustration at the putrid state of affairs in our society in spite of our emerging second best in that competition.

7.0 THE PROPOSAL AND RECOMMENDATION FOR THE NATION

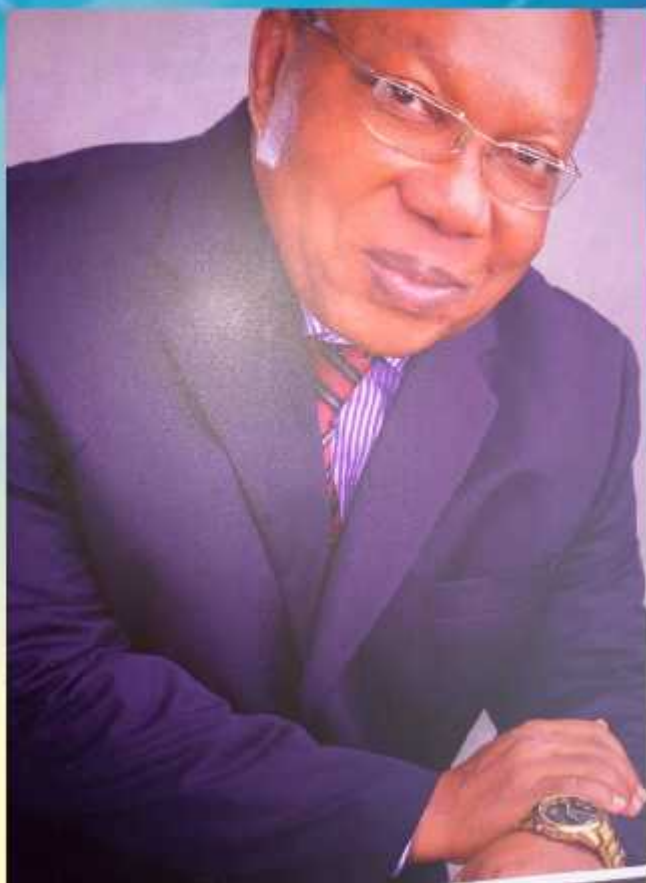
We therefore make bold to recommend the Design for Uniben as a template for the Design for the Nation. A major overhaul of curriculum is NOT being advocated here. Rather, institutions and their managers are required to implement the three pronged reforms in the design to suit their peculiar circumstances. In other words, every institution will be required to establish their version of CR,C whilst making sure that adequate moral counseling as provided for in Uniben Prays [to be re-designated “the institution Prays”] is encouraged. For institutions run by faith based organizations, they may already have adequate enough methods of achieving this in their curriculum. It is especially important that the third component of the design i.e the work scheme is implemented within available resources.

The second part of the design is hosted at the state level with the Governor as the chief host we envisage that one day in the year is set aside and declared as “State Prays day”. Prominent National/international figures may be invited to preach and sermonize and counsel on the premium of solid educational ethos at a 2-3 hour crusade.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Education is capital intensive and no investment in education if appropriately channeled and utilized is worthless. Education is the pivot on which society revolves; society neglects it as its own peril. Security, the very fabric from which society is woven is the first male born child of education. Education secures the child because fear or lack of confidence takes flight when the unknown becomes known. Knowledge is power so the saying goes. Education secures the citizenry. Education secures the society. Education secures the nation. We therefore are condemned to the extent to which are anxious to devote more time and energy on other irrelevance whilst looking away from the education sector. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, we are at the critical junction.

The erstwhile former Prime Minister of Britain posits in his manifesto in 2005 that he has only three priorities: EDUCATION!! EDUCATION!! EDUCATION!! The Government is therefore, in a very vantage position to drive the reorientation and revamping of the education sector in the state and nation. With profuse humility and no offence intended in any way, I maintain that this generation of managers of education and drivers of education, will be failing ourselves, our society, our state and our nation if we do nothing. Some home truths become imperative here; our generation, the senior citizens (those above sixty have become obsolete in this equation) if only because any energy devoted to reforming their inflexible ways can only be exercise in futility.



Therefore the meaningful target groups are those actively in schools, from primary to tertiary (age bracket 5-40yrs).

We must not play the ostrich. The ostrich is fabled for its evasiveness from real and impending danger. Worse still we must not play the millipede. The millipede is probably the only animal with a defence mechanism which is exclusively premised on the negative philosophy of changing course, at all times, in the event of an encounter with any obstacle.

Therefore in concluding, let us remember the slogan "fix education now and fix the future".

If we neglect to do that now; do not be

surprised to find that for decades to come we are still running from pillar to post trying to arbitrate in inter-ethnic boundary disputes.

As a way forward, I propose that a committee to prepare the appropriate blue/template/costing for intervention in the education sector in the entire nation be commissioned with a view to revamping and restoring global and international standards in ALL OUR SCHOOLS.

It is very achievable within our resources. Then like our experience in Uniben, you will in a very short while, marvel the transformation you would have brought about in the nation state.

SEX FOR MARKS

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY COUNCIL DECISION ON
THE AUDIO CONVERSATION BETWEEN
PROFESSOR RICHARD AKINDELE AND MS MONICA OSAGIE

Around the 7th of April, 2018 or there about, there was an audio conversation between a man and a lady which was sensationally trending on social



PROF. RICHARD AKINDELE



MS MONICA OSAGIE

media because of its explicit sexual tone. After thorough investigation, it was discovered that the said audio conversation was between a lecturer and a student of our University (OAU) who were later identified to be Professor Richard Akindele and Ms Monica Osagie.

To save the image of the University and to unravel the circumstances that surrounded the whole saga, the University Management set up a committee and mandated it to submit its report within a week. Furthermore, the Management issued a query to Professor Richard Akindele to explain his role after which he was suspended pending the final determination of the case in line with the University regulations.

Although the committee invited the two persons involved, only Professor Akindele could be initially reached and invited.

This necessitated the submission of an interim report. However, when the committee eventually succeeded in inviting Ms Monica Osagie, and finally concluded its sittings, it then submitted its final report to the Management.

To disabuse the minds of the general public on the issue of an alleged cover-up, the Vice-Chancellor, on two occasions, issued press releases that were personally signed by him. The press releases were maximally published by virtually all the media houses and aired by Radio and Television Stations across the globe. Last Thursday, 14th June, 2018, the University

Senate considered the Committee's Findings that: (1) Professor Akindele had an inappropriate relationship with his student Miss Osagie. This was established through their conversation in the audio recording; his reply to the query; the oral evidence; and the printed 'WhatsApp conversations' tendered before the Committee.

(2) He had acted in a manner that is seen to have compromised his position as a teacher and examiner, in that, his conversations with Miss Osagie were about examination scores and inducement of favour for the alteration of examination scores.

(3) He offered to change Miss Osagie's purported "33%" result to a pass mark in consideration for sexual favours, this was established in the audio recording which he admitted.

(4) His claim that Miss Osagie knew that she had passed with a score of '45' but was seeking to score an 'A' and that this led to him being sexually harassed by Miss Osagie cannot be supported by any evidence.

(5) Professor Akindele's actions in requesting for sexual

favours from Miss Osagie to change her examination scores was scandalous behavior that has brought ridicule to the name of the University and has tarnished the reputation of the University, as it portrays the University as an institution where its teachers and examiners trade marks for sexual favours.

(6) From the evidence, Miss Osagie had no idea that she scored '45', a pass mark as later claimed by Professor Akindele, although she later found out she did not fail the course.

(7) Professor Akindele's claim that he reported Miss Osagie's 'harassment' to his colleagues cannot be supported by any evidence as all his colleagues denied it and one mentioned that she only talked about the matter with him after the audio recording was released over the internet.

(8) Professor Akindele operated in a position of power and authority over Miss Osagie and as such sexually harassed her. (9) Professor Akindele was liable for all the allegations of misconduct levelled against him.

Accordingly, the Senate recommended that Professor Richard Akindele, having been found liable on all the allegations against him, should be dismissed from the services of the University.

The Council, at its meeting of today, Wednesday, 20th of June, 2018, having considered the recommendation of Senate, as well as the report of the Joint Committee of Council and Senate, decided that Professor Richard I. Akindele should be dismissed from the services of the University for gross misconduct.

The University has also taken further steps to ensure the total elimination of Sexual Harassment (SH) in the OAU Community. The University has a legal duty to prevent sexual and gender-based harassment within the institution and ensure that both men and women are protected from this menace; and thereby provide conducive environment for teaching and learning. To achieve this, the university:

(a) is creating more awareness and disseminating information on what constitutes Sexual Harassment (SH) within the university, and noting the veracity of SH concepts which include – sexual solicitation and advances, sex exploitation, prostitution, seduction, pimping, sexual assault, unwanted touching, vulgar sexual jokes, rape among others.

These concepts are well specified in the University Sexual Harassment Policy approved by the University Council in 2013;

(b) has put in place a strategic implementation framework for the SH Policy which will ensure effective/rapid redress mechanisms to incidents of SH. The SH Policy clearly states mechanisms for reporting and for dealing with SH cases through the committee system. This would be made more functional;

© will continuously educate staff and students about their right to seek redress in cases of SH;

(d) has uploaded, on its website, the Sexual Harassment Policy, under the administrative blog, while copies are being given to students at matriculations, and when staff are newly recruited;

(e) intends to add 'Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment' as part of its core values, and openly display this on bill boards.

A whistle-blower policy is also being developed by the University.

OAU is fully committed to the eradication of sexual and other types of harassment from our tertiary institutions and will do all that is possible to nip this menace in the bud. OAU has zero tolerance for Sexual Harassment and as a renowned University will do everything humanly possible to maintain the rules and regulations of the University.

Professor Eytape Ogunbodede
Vice-Chancellor June 20, 2018

NIGERIA HAS OVER 9,000 PROFESSORS IN VARSITY SYSTEM, SAYS NUC

There are only 9000 Professors in Nigeria. This is in the face of approximately 190 million people and with a youthful population of over 60 per cent, only about 9,000 Professors abound so far in the Nigerian university system as revealed by the National Universities Commission (NUC)

Out of the total number, as recorded in the commission's database of professors, it discovered that despite the low number, there were duplication of names due to sabbaticals and other engagements, while some who has been sent abroad as professors were in the actual facts not professors.

The Executive Secretary of the commission, professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, who disclosed this, recently, during the committee of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian (CVCN) retreat in Abuja, said the era of lecturers promoting themselves to the status of professors must come to an end as the commission is committed to curbing the tide of fake professorship.

He lamented the embarrassment that fake professors have caused the commission and the nation at large after being discovered by foreign institutions who had

accepted letters of recommendation from it, saying that a compilation of the database will be reviewed on an annual basis and with the correct and updated figure made public

According to him, "our record shows that there are over 9,000 professors in the Nigerian universities system and we have discovered that there are several duplications you might see the same name in Bayero university as well as in Ahmadu Bello University.

"Some institutions abroad have called us to say that the Professors we sent to them are actually not Professors. Sometimes the students are responsible for this for too long in the university the students begins to call him professor: within the first year, he feels uncomfortable but from the second year, he accepts the name and begins to address

himself as professor.

"A directorate of full professorship is very important. A list of all the professors in each university will be complied on every Vice Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors must ensure that right list is used for confirmation"

He decried the abuse of convocation ceremonies says that it has turned into jamboree and mere pageantry especially when honorary degree are been awarded.

He called on Vice Chancellors to ensure discipline in their institutions and learn to do that which is globally accepted. "universities must take convocation ceremonies very seriously it has been abused in Nigeria and this must be addressed. It is not a time for giving gift and reciting lengthy recitation.



Abubakar Adamu Rasheed,
Executive Secretary,
National Universities Commission, NUC.

IGBINEDION VARSITY GETS NEW VC



Prof Ezemonye

The Governing Ecotoxicology and Council Igbinedion Environmental Forensics University Okada, in the Department of Edo at the weekend Animal and announced the Environmental Biology, appointment of Prof. University of Benin was Lawrence Ikechukwu until his appointment Ezemonye as the new Vice Deputy Vice-Chancellor Chancellor of igbinedon (Administration of the University. University of Benin The Professor of (UNIBEN) with over 30

years of experience.

Prof Ezemonye is replacing Prof. Eghosa Osaghae, who had spent 14 years as Vice Chancellor of the institution.

Unveiling the new VC, the council chairman, Prof. Sheikh Ahmed Abdallah, charged Prof. Ezimonye to build on the success already established in the institution and make it greater than he met it.

He said the Prof. Ezemonye was chosen because of experience and qualification, assuring of the board's support in fulfilling the vision of academic excellence of the institution.

Earlier, Prof Ezemonye promised to work assiduously to move the university to greater heights.

"I intend to build and consolidate on the existing culture of academic excellence and engage our students in academic revolution that will serve as an antidote to unemployment and unemployability in Nigeria.

On his part, outgoing VC, Prof. Eghosa Oshage said, "I am handing over to someone who is more than able to not only consolidate on the thing we have done and but to take the university to a greater height."

IBB, OBJ, DANJUMA LEAD ONSLAUGHT AGAINST BUHARI



Former Military President, Gen Ibrahim Babangida (rtd), on Saturday expressed optimism that Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) could still rule for 60 years "provided it can put its house in order" the ordinary man will talk about PDP; that is the asset the party has and should use to spring back to reckoning. "Already, it is accepted and known. All you have to do is work harder and try to convince the people back to your fold," he said.

The former leader said that the PDP was the only political party whose presence had been felt, known and accepted by the people. Babangida spoke in Minna, when the Strategy and Inter Part Affairs Committee of the PDP presented its report on how to move the party forward, to him.

"PDP's presence is felt not only in Abuja or Lagos, but down to the lowest level. The former leader re-echoed his support for a two-party system, and declared that it was the best option toward depending democracy. "Gradually, my earlier suggestion about the practice of a two-party system is gradually coming to the fore in the country. "In 1999, when I was advocating for a two-party system, some of my colleagues had their doubts, but I told them that it provides a choice, which is the first essence of democracy," he said. Earlier, Prof. Jerry Gana, chairman of the committee,



had urged the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) to allow opposition political parties to always voice their opinion on issues.

Gana also advised the APC to allow rival parties to develop so as to offer Nigerians other options "at all times".

"The presence of opposition is key to democratic growth; we must allow Nigerians to listen to the other side," he said.

He described Babangida as "a visionary leader, who read the future and advocated a two-party system long ago".

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), reports that Gana was accompanied by Ahaji Aminu Wali, Chief Raymond Dokpesi, Chief Raymond Dokpesi, Chief Tom Ikimi, Mr Emeka Ihedioha, Prof. Rufai Alkali and former Niger governor Dr. Babangida Aliyu.

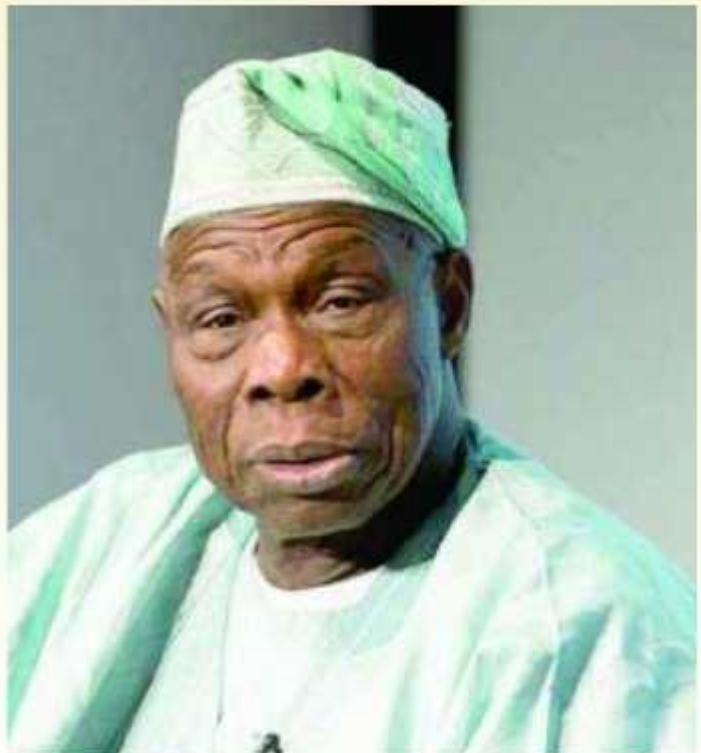
Babangida also said there was the military wing of the PDP **STRESSING THAT THE MOTIVE OF THE MILITARY WING**

WAS TO RULE FOR 60 YEARS.

Naming those behind the military wing included himself. Gen TY Danjuma, Gen Aliyu Mohammed and Gen Olusegun Obasanjo which he called IRA Military wing of the PDP.

PDP RELINGQUISHED POWER TO SAVE NIGERIA

Facts has also emerged that all the former Military leaders also supported General Muhammadu Buhari winning the Presidential election in 2015. Part of the reasons why they supported Buhari was because of their believe that he could end insurgency and Terrorism especially in the North, Islamist Terrorist group Boko Haram was already in control of some local government areas in the country especially in the North East they are also aware of his cult followership especially among the youths and the poor in the North and the need to return power back to the North.





Dansuki a well known Babangida loyalist said that much before he was formally arrested and kept in house arrest that he worked for Buhari winning the election but Buhari was ungrateful, punishing him instead for the role he played in the 1984 coup that ousted him as a former Military head of State.

But surprisingly Buhari's emergence as President further divided and polarized the country especially clashes between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers across the country, increase in kidnapping, extra judicial and sectarian killings, Militancy in the Niger Delta, Economic Recession and threats of break up by different ethnic Nationalities in the country such as calls for Biafra Republic, Oduduwa Republic among others.

It was also revealed that the former President Goodluck Jonathan was aware of the plan and that he would not be supported to win the re-election but that he would be given a safe landing, meaning if he handed over power peacefully without bloodshed, he would not be probed and would not be arrested. The former National Security Adviser to former President Jonathan Col Sambo

With all these at the back of their minds it has become imperative that the leaders who were also in the forefront in the battle to keep Nigeria united during the last civil wars should intervene once again to save the country from



PDP, 38 PARTIES RATIFY UNITY CANDIDATES FOR 2019 POLLS



Engr. Buba Galadima

Opposition political result in a government of Generation Party (NGP), parties, signed a pact national unity. The Chairman People for Democratic Change that would facilitate of the parties took turns to (PDC), Peoples Democratic the emergence of a common condemn the APC Party (PDP) Providence presidential candidate in next administration. They accused People's Congress (RAPC). year general elections. President Muhammadu The Meeting witnessed the They also agreed to present Buhari of being nepotistic and return of the NPDP leader, unity candidates for lamented growing insecurity in Kawu Baraje, who is a loyal governorship candidates for the country member of the Saraki Political They admitted the battle dynasty in Kwara State. 36 states. would not be easy but His return fuelled speculations senate President Bukola Saraki The Peoples Democratic Party expressed determination to might have concluded plans to (PDP) signed the give it all it takes. return to the PDP, last Memorandum of The grand coalition included weekend, Saraki visited Rivers Understanding (MOU) with 38 Action Alliance (AA), Alliance State Governor Nyesom Wike, others in a political alliance for Democracy (AD), Africa a PDP stalwart. under the aegis of Coalition of Democratic Party (ADC), The Chairman of R-APC, Buba Unity Political Parties (CUPP). Action Democratic Party Galadima, vowed Buhari They resolved to commence (ADP), Democratic Alternative would lose the 2019 election. work on a blueprint manifesto. (DA), Democratic Peoples The terms of reference of the The alignment is expected to Party (DPC), National Conscience Party (NCP), New

MoU, read by PDP members, of more APC Government into Chief Tom Ikimi, states that the PDP. some of these Governors The question is will other parties "shall promote a and the member of the aspirants support whoever positive reaction to the failures National Assembly are leaving emerged as the party's of the present regime and give the APC because they were not candidate in the primaries, or hope to all our people. The guaranteed automatic ticket in will they also make a protest parties shall ensure that the the party. will PDP give support back to Buhari as they coalition is committed to automatic ticket? if no, what did in 2014.

working together in support of happens to them, and their Can Obasanjo who now has the single presidential ambitions. sympathy for PDP trust Atiku,

candidate to contest the 2019 can Atiku trust kwankwaso presidential election to Already there are over five who was his boy under PDM successfully enthrone a true Presidential aspirants roasting group but later pitched tent democrat who will salvage the for the ticket of the PDP. they with Obasanjo. Can nation from the misrule of the include former Vice President Kwankwaso and Shekarau for APC government."

Atiku Asasakar, former former Government of Kano

But the biggest problems the governors of Kano State Rabi'u State Trust one another. These PDP might face in the months Musa Kwankwaso and Ibrahim are the questions the party at least is how to manage the Shekarau, former Governor of must answer before going into gains of the defections of the Jigawa State Alhaji Sule the primaries.

All Progressive Congress (APC). lamido, former Governor of

We expect more member, of leading State and former or should they just supports the National Assembly and National Chairman of the Party neutral person, the person of State House of Assembly into Alhaji Ahmed Makarfi, Alhaji Aminu Tambuwal, the PDP from APC.

Governor of Gombe State governor of Sokoto State, who

Alhaji Danawambo coming is said to have the backing of

We also expect the defections others.

the caliphate



Chief Olu falai



Adams Oshiomhole

HISTORY OF

ATIKU'S PRESIDENTIAL AMBITION



Atiku Abubakar

The history of Atiku Abubakar Presidential Ambition dates back to 1992 when the then Military President Ibrahim Babangida banned Old Politicians from contesting future elections. Atiku's political godfather former Chief of staff Supreme Headquarters. General Shehu Yar Adua was one of the casualties of ban.

Yar Adua then decided to push forward his anointed son to run. They both belonged the Social Democratic Party [SDP] Among the people that contested the SDP primaries included Chief Moshood Abiola, Alhaji Babagana Kingibe, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, Sarah Jubril etc. after the SDP primaries chief MKO won. But Abiola needed Yar Adua structures to make an impact in the general election of June 12, 1993. Yar Adua gave Abiola conditions for his supports which included picking Atiku his running mate Abiola agreed, but state governors the platform of the SDP warned Abiola not to take their support for granted,

they preferred Babagana Kingibe as their candidate for the vice president and they won. That was how Atiku presidential ambition started. With the death of General Shehu Yar' Adua, Atiku become the Natural and National leader of his political machine the PDM.

IN 1999 Atiku Abubakar contested the governorship election in Adamawa state, won the election on the platform of the Peoples Democratic party but ended up been the running mate to Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. OBASANJO/ATIKU won the presidential election in 1999.

In 2003 fearing that Obasanjo will not pick him as his running mate for the 2003 re election Atiku tried to run against his boss, that was how their crisis started. Obasanjo picked Atiku as his running mate to prevent him from contesting the poll, but Obasanjo never forgave him for making him to prostrate.

In 2007 Atiku contested presidential election on the platform of the Action Congress. He contested the 2011 PDP primaries against Goodluck Jonathan and also primaries against Muhammad Buhari

He left the PDP in 2006 and desperately persuaded Bola Tinubu to join him form the Action Congress (AC) and contested the presidency under its platform in 2007, Atiku was simply pursing his own self-ambition. But, perceptively election as he came a distant 3rd with a mere two million votes. What happened after he lost that election and lost at the tribunal was shocking. Without telling any of his compatriots in the AC, he sneaked into Abeokuta to beg Obasanjo for reconciliation! Not only Obsanjo did not forgive him, but he further lost the confidence of his AC compatriots who stood by him in his ill-advised fight against

Obasanjo. That brought the end of AC, expects that Bola Tinubu, being a man of will, foresight and means, restructured it into Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and forged back into the PDP in July, 2010, shortly after the death of President Umaru Yar'Adua, in the hope of pushing out the supposedly weak and inexperienced President Goodluck Jonathan. But again events were not kind to him, for in the December presidential primaries, Atiku managed to scoop a mere 800 against Jonathan's over 2000 votes.

So, when in August 2013, Atiku, along with others, derisively walked out on the PDP at its national convention and subsequently joined the newly formed All Progressives Congress (APC), which he described as his last and final political bus-stop, all those who understand his politics knew that he would still jump ship the moment the APC fails to satisfy his self-interest. Just like his returning to PDP after President Yar'Adua's death was aimed at displacing the inexperienced Jonathan, his joining APC was also with the native plan of using the power money to defeat 'poor General Muhammad Buhari's and gain APC's presidential nomination. Again, like in the previous two elections, events were not kind to him as he woefully lost the contest, coming a distant 3rd, after Buhari and Governor Rabiu Kwankwaso – thanks to Tinubu who refused to allow himself be bitten twice by the same insects.

ATIKU THE RACE OF MY LIFE

Atiku Abubakar once described his journey towards the presidency as the race of his life calling on all Nigerians to join hands with him to bring the needed change of change. He actually started the change Campaign he said the contest was about uplifting the lives of the forgotten millions of Nigerians who work very hard but get very little. It is a contest for and about millions of our people who have no work at all, it is a contest for about millions of hardworking middle class families in Nigeria whose standard of living is

progressively been eroded, it is a contest for and about the transformation of the socio economic landscape of Nigeria. It is a contest for and about enthronement of a more just and equitable society'.

The former Vice President said 'the advent of democracy in 1999 brought with it a great expectations of a dramatic improvement of the living standard of our people. But as you know the vast majority of our people still wallow in abject poverty and misery while unemployment and under employment remain unacceptably high, for instance, despite the huge increase in our foreign exchange earnings and external reserves and our vast human and natural resources, approximately 15 million Nigerians continues to live in abject, one in five children died after reaching the age of five, over 12 million children are not in schools and hospitals lack necessary facilities and millions of our people die of HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other preventable disease

HE continued 'in spite of our rich natural endowments, Nigeria remains a net importer of food products, our country is one of the least industrialized countries in the world and our country's infrastructure is grossly inadequate and embarrassingly dilapidated'

Atiku Abubakar also listed key area of National emergency that requires his immediate attention if he becomes the President of Nigeria

They include....-

- [a] Employment generation, wealth creation and Agriculture
- [b] Security, War against corruption and good governance
- [c] Energy and Infrastructural development
- [d] Education and Social Service
- [e] Atayese of Ijeshaland
- [f] Zanna Zentelma of Borno.
- [g] Zege Mule U Tiv
- [h] Silettima Biu
- [i] Suka of Ogoniland
- [j] Otun Balogun of Mopaland



President Mohammadu Buhari

WHY APC WON 2015 ELECTIONS

The crisis rocking the Peoples Democratic Party [PDP] is yet to be over even as the 2019 general elections in the country is getting nearer. The leadership of the party is still divided on the way forward as efforts are still being made to reconcile all the warring factions.

But there are still lots of irreconcilable differences within the party that might jeopardize their chances in the 2019 general elections if not well handled before then.

But before we continued with the internal crisis within the party let us also look at the possible reasons for the defeat of the party in the last general elections in 2015.

Various reasons contributed to the defeat of the PDP in the 2015

general elections. Perhaps the biggest reason for the defeat of the PDP in the elections was the betrayal of the party by members.

This started from the leadership of the party. The then National Chairman of the party ADAMU MUJAZU openly declared support the candidate of the All Progressives Congress [APC] Muhammadu Buhari. Unknown to Goodluck Jonathan Many other members of the party who even followed him all through the campaign period were not really with him and they were given information regularly to the opponents.

Even the former National Security Adviser to Jonathan col Sambo Dasuki also testified to that, when he was harassed by Security Agents before he was finally incarcerated,

that he helped Buhari win the elections.

The North was solidly behind Buhari and they wanted power back. All cards were mobilized including Ethnic and Religious cards.

The former governor of Jigawa state and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Sule Lamido said Religious factors were put in place to defeat the PDP. He said the campaign at that time in the North was that the contest between Buhari and Jonathan was a contest between Muslims and Christians and that Muslims were told not to vote for a non believer if they want to go the paradise. To an average Northern an unbeliever is a non Muslim.

In the South people did not vote on Religious lines they simply voted



Goodluck Jonathan

for personal reasons. The South South voted for the PDP because it was a traditionally PDP zone, but also more especially because the candidate of the PDP Goodluck Jonathan was from the zone. The South East voted for the PDP not just because it was a traditionally PDP zone but also because they felt Buhari had not treated well in the past and will not treat them well not even if he won the election, they felt more comfortable voting for an EBELE than voting for a MUHAMMAD. THE South West split their votes between the PDP and the APC. THIS is because there is no state in the South West where both Jonathan and Buhari did not get the required 2/3 of the votes cast.

Following this scenario was the greed of the PDP members. Monies voted by the party to distribute to members, supporters, party agents and voters were pocketed and never got to the voters. Some of these monies are now been recovered by the Buhari Administration.

Secondly the desperation and the sophistication which the APC deplored for the election was just

too much for the PDP to withstand.

It even internationalized the campaign that even former President Barack Obama Public Relations consultant was employed. The last straw that broke the camels back for the PDP defeat was when the electoral umpire was

wooded on the side of the APC. The rigging from the INEC started when the commission started to differentiate on the distribution of permanent voters card.

Now the biggest contributor to the defeat of the PDP in the last election is the issue of mindset of Nigerians towards the party. The party and the administration was seen and labeled as very corrupt. This was even now been demonstrated by the Buhari's administration exposure of trillions of Naira allegedly been stolen during the last PDP administration. The Buhari administration had succeeded in convincing the very poor population of the huge masses in the country especially in the Northern parts of the country that the corrupt practices of the PDP and the Jonathan administration was responsible for their poverty. They will continue to resist any attempt for such party to rule the country again. The people are so uneducated to remember that poverty had existed in the country and in the world even before Jonathan was born. It is yet to see how the PDP hope to kill this mindset before the 2019 elections.



Dr. Olusola Saraki

I SERVED OKOROCHA FOR OVER 20 YEARS, ...Imo Deputy Governor, Madumere explodes



The Deputy Governor of Imo State Prince Eze Madumere said he regrets plot by his boss Owelle Rochas Okorocha not only to impeach him from office but also blackmail him.

The deputy Gov. who spoke to our correspondent on phone said this is not the best way to be treated after serving Okorocha for over 20 years, even when both of them were in the United States of America.

He said his ordeal started when he made known his intention to contest for the Governorship of Imo State, a position the Governor reserved for his inlaw.

He said 'It's time to move on', pointing out that even if he were to be an apprentice serving his master, by now he deserves to be settled to be on his own.

Prince Madumere had successfully managed Owelle Rochas Okorocha Media and Publicity throughout the time he was gunning for the Presidency of the Country and even when he was Special Adviser to former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

It will be recalled that the move for the impeachment of Imo state Deputy Governor, Prince Eze Madumere has already commenced at the state House of Assembly.

Careful political watchers in the state were jolted, when then the assembly men who at their last sitting, announced a two month vacation were recalled by the leadership of the

House yesterday.

The Pro-Governor Rochas Okorocha Lawmakers had last month, suspended Four lawmakers believed to be loyal to Madumere Prior to the main issue of the day and in a bid to get the required number to commence and actualize the impeachment process, another lawmaker, Donatus Onuigwe representing Our West constituency was summarily suspended.

The member representing Owerri

Municipality, who doubles as the house majority Leader, Iugard Osuji, moved the motion for Onugwe out of the way, the Deputy Speaker, Mr. Ugonna Ozuruigbo, took his turn and read out what he alleged were the sins of the Deputy Governor

Madumere's Sins

The office of the Deputy Governor of Imo State, says it has received the "notice of gross misconduct currently circulating round the state, shared on various platforms on the social media and signed by 13 members of imo state HOUSE of Assembly. The Deputy Governor, Prince Eze Madumere, who confirmed the development through his media aside, Mr Uche Onwuchekwa, Itemised duly obtained from office for a period of three months.

The House also accused him of failure to perform any of the constitutional functions of office of Deputy Governor of Imo State, Executive Council, Failure/refusal to attend constitutionally mandate proceeding of the State Security Council. Madumere was equally accused of refusing to attend and hold meetings with the governor and commissioners of the government of Imo state for the governance of imo state made compulsory by and under S.193 (2) of the 1999 Constitution. He was also accused of "concealment of felonious conduct affecting the presentation of self as eligible candidate of Office of Deputy Governor, Imo State, having been convicted and imprisoned for theft in the United State of America"

Madumere responds

The first claim of absence is rather an old ploy of calling a dog a bad name to hang it. Fortunately, the Deputy Governor of Imo State, Prince Eze Madumere, is an administrator par excellence who does not joke with his duties especially his constitutional responsibilities. Of superintending boundary Commission. By our records, the Deputy Governor of Imo state has never abdicated from such responsibility. Considering the period under review the people of Umuoma of Ihite-Uboma local government, Ihube of Okigwe Local

Government among others can testify of the Deputy Governor's sagacity in crisis resolution with particular reference to April 11, April 16, 2018.

Onwuchekwa equally explained that his boss also participated in a one day retreat for stake holders in the management of Nigeria boundaries, which held in the Airforce Confrence center, Abuja on may 7, 2018 in the company of the Surveyor General of the State and the Principle Secretary to the Deputy Governor. On the alleged refusal to attend constitutionally mandated proceeding of the State Executive Council, Onwuchekwa said "it is also one of the allegations that cannot stand any administrative procedure", stressing that there are laid down procedure through which a deputy governor or any member of the executive council can be invited for executive council meeting

"We hereby state that the deputy governor has never been invited for such meeting either through a memo or any official notices and thereby cannot stand against the Deputy Governor with the period in review," Onwuchekwa said

Okorocha Stopped Inviting Me For Meeting—Deputy Gov

Continuing, the media aide said: "Refusal to attend, and to hold meetings with the governor is to say the least another exercise in triviality as the deputy governor cannot force himself on the governor, especially when he has been tagged a pariah in the government circle. We state here that Governor Okorocha has never created such opportunity to meet with the deputy governor to discuss the programmes and activities of the government other than the ones we embarrassingly hear by the road side and other sources.

Madumere described the allegation of "concealment of felonious conducts" as "annoying, spurious as and most embarrassing" among the allegations.

"This is not only astonishing but an extreme show of lack of due diligence. The Deputy Governor of Imo State, Prince Eze Madumere has never been convicted of any civil matter let alone theft," he stated.

LEADERSHIP FAILURE, CAUSE OF KILLINGS IN NIGERIA – TAMBUWAL



Owerri-governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State has attributed the recurring killing in most part of the country to the failure of leadership, lamenting that the harvests of deaths were not what Nigerians voted for in 2015.

Tambuwal stated this on a day former Kano State governor, Ibrahim Shekarau described as senseless, despicable and unjustifiable, killing of innocent and defenceless Nigerians in their country by dare-devil gunmen.

Canvassing a comprehensive overhaul of the nation's security architecture, Tambuwal noted that the growing spate of innocent blood, especially of policemen and other security personnel on their lawful duty post, had brought a new dimension to the reprehensible state of

insecurity in the country.

The governor, who also commiserated with families of citizens who lost their lives in the killings, said in a statement that with the killing of security agents on their duty posts, the question from every law-abiding citizen today was "who will protect us, us when even those constitutionally charged with the responsibility charged with the responsibility of protecting our lives and property have, themselves become vulnerable targets of criminals?"

"Where shall we run to for protection, when the institutions of state put in place to protect us are being progressively criminality and the trained personnel are also on run?"

INSIDE NIGER DELTA



NCDMB, IOCs PLEDGE TO FAST-TRACK PROJECTS EXECUTION

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and international oil companies (IOCs) operating in the country have made commitment to fast-track execution of oil and gas projects. This will lead to an increase crude production and create opportunities for the growth and development of Nigerian Content.

The IOCs gave the assurance when the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Simbi Kesiye Wabote visited some IOCs in Lagos to seek collaboration and get their commitment to support upcoming projects.

Wabote visited Chevron, Total Up stream and Shell with management of the Board and confirmed that NCDMB had adopted mechanisms that accelerate processing time for Nigerian Content plans, technical and commercial evaluation and issuance of Nigerian Content certificates.

He urged other entities involved in the contracting cycle to adopt similar strategies for the sector to achieve the six-month contract processing target set by the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Dr. Ibe Kachikwu. He also expressed the Board's readiness to partner various stakeholders in resolving challenges they have in executing their projects.

According to him, the visits were conceived to engage stakeholders, and explain strategies adopted by the NCDMB to foster projects and ensure domiciliation of work scopes and maximization of in-country capacities.

One of those strategies is the categorization of service companies by their capacities, which he said, will be used in the contracting process. He stressed that all new projects must comply with the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and

Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act 2010 and urged the operating companies to ensure that their contractors and sub-contractors remit on percent of their contract value to the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF) as required by law.

The NCDMB chief praised the establishment of pipe coating facilities and steel pipe mills in-country and directed operators to patronize the facilities. He said the Board would sanction operators that award contracts without approved Nigerian Content Compliance Certificates (NCCC).

He also informed the companies that the Board was developing a 5-year Road Map for Nigerian content development. The final document would be shared with stakeholders for their inputs and identification of roles they will play in the actualization.

Speaking at Chevron, Wabote canvassed for the participation of operating companies in the Nigerian content Opportunities Fair planned for March 29 and 30 at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The goal is to showcase

opportunities in upstream, midstream and downstream sectors and provide multinationals the opportunity to link up and utilize in-country capabilities, he said.

He added that "most Nigeria companies do not know when projects will come through so they do not prepare themselves adequately. The fair will provide a platform where we can share information that are not confidential."

At Shell, the team led by the Vice-President Nigerian and Gabon, Mr. Peter Costello discussed the company's projects including the Bonga Southwest / Aparo (BSWA). They also officially presented their plans to align the project timelines with the Board, achieve early Final Investment Decision (FID) and carry out joint contracting workshops and in-country capacity re-assessment/revalidation among others.

Speaking at Total, Wabote commended the company for its Nigerian Content achievements on the Egina Deepwater project, which helped to sustain many Nigerian service companies despite the crash of crude oil prices.





I LOVE NIGERIA

... I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT IT AND IT'S GREAT POTENTIALS

Interview with Engr Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary NIGERIAN CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING BOARD

Tell us about the stakeholders sensitisation workshop on NCDF remittances and third party forensic audit you had in Lagos. Forensic auditing , You know since the inception of the Board in 2010, the Ats mandates operators and contractors in the up

The workshop was about enlightening stream sectors to pay one percent of every stakeholders on the new platform and was contracts that is awarded to them to the designed in conjunction with the Central Bank NIGERIAN CONTENT DEVELOPMENT FUND of Nigeria and the Nigerian Content Fund , all and we have realized that some of them have the operators, service providers, The Content not been remitting the funds as stipulated by Fund had been upgraded and change, so we Act so we called them together to enlighten needed to enlighten them on how to do their them of our intent to carry out our forensic remittances, because we realize that the audit of all the funds that are out there, so remittances were going down because they that's the essence of the workshop, it was well didn't understand how to use the software and attended , interactions and feedback from the then the second part of the workshop was on workshop is going to be implemented .

There was this report that some IOCs and even NNPC were breaching the Nigerian Content Act, what's your reaction to this. The Senate is said to be probing this.

The Senate enquiry is a recurring decimal as the Legislative arm of government, they also try to act as Policemen to ensure that people are not flouting the law, that report came as a result of the visit of Senate committee on local content to FCC Factory, cause FCC directly reported to them that they were not been patronized by the IOCs and NNPC they decided to investigate the veracity of the claim by the FCC, ITS AN ONGOING PROCESS. Since the inception of the Board the National Assembly have been interested in the activities of the Board to find out compliance with the law and the Act and as such with the view to strengthen the law further

People are happy with the way you are carrying on with the assignment as the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Board what has been your driving force and motivation.



First my driving force is being a Nigerian and secondly a Nigerian worried at lack of employment in the country which is bedeviling the youths population, as we have, so its how to make sure that we create opportunity for these youths to create jobs for them, most importantly also is how to protect investments that are in the country that is producing about two million barrels per day of oil. My driving force is to create opportunity for Nigerians to create jobs for Nigerians, because nobody will build this country than us. Am passionate about Nigeria, I love this country, it has youth potentials that has not been tapped, so how do we ensure that we tap into those potentials and given the people the opportunity to participate in the oil and gas sector and again I believe as a person I like to do my job diligently and I like to deliver value anywhere I find myself so these I grew up with and maintain in any position I find myself throughout my 27 years of my career.

What had been your challenges.....

Challenges, of course include infrastructural challenges are there in the country, in as much as you want to strive for industrialization of Nigeria, you are also inhibited by some of the infrastructural challenges, road network, rail network, power infrastructure is a challenge, the other is lack of sectorial linkages where you have other sectors of the economy not firing at the same cylinder as you are in the local content on one hand you are pushing for the Industrialisation of the country on the other hand other people are pushing for more tax, the other challenge is the nature of the oil and gas business, when you think there is strong capacity and no work coming through because of the rise and fall of oil price, it also a times dampen ones moral.

Am aware you are a technocrat, are you atimes under pressure from Politicians.

Ofcourse it's a normal occurrence and when you have one or two pressures here and there from Politicians but I think what I realize is that once they know what you stand for, once they know that you abide by the rules and you follow your processes they go off. Those pressures only come to stay if they believe that

you have the capacity to bend the rules, the pressures are there but the process that has been established is what we used to ward off some of these pressures. Talking about political pressures.

In a nutshell what has been your achievements so far both to Individual and to the country in general

I cant put it in a nutshell , because that would be too small. The achievements had been tremendous in terms of what we had done in the last couple of years, increase the local content attainment in the country both from less than 5 percent to 86 percent today in terms of local content attainment , a world class fabrication yard had sprung up, you have manufacturing capacity that had been developed , you have people manufacturing paints , manufacturing cables, manufacturing pipes, today we have been able to integrate FPSO in the country not too many African countries can boast of that. Today almost 85 percent of the contracts in the country are awarded to Nigerian companies, today Nigerians are managing oil fields successfully too, so the achievements has been tremendous, they are just too many. For the

individual there had been achievements in terms of employment creation. Because of the drive and the attainment so far a lot of Nigerians had been employed , we have built a lot of capacity for employment, as I said almost 85 percent of the contract awarded in the oil and gas sectors are awarded to Nigerian companies. Nigerians have built a lot of capacity on the back of local content drive, we have retained five billion (\$5b) out of the \$20 billion annual industry spent .

How has other African countries keyed in the Local content in their countries.

Nigeria has become a reference point in terms of local content development in Africa , we have been having series of visits from various African countries wanting to come and study and understand how we have been able to drive local content to this level , we are constantly been invited to seminars workshops to share our experiences, other countries are working to borrow a leaf from Nigeria because they believe it's a model that has brought some level of prosperity to our country and they are looking forward to sharing our experiences with us as well as want us to help them in their local content attainment.



NCDMB IS WORKING

Busy weekend for a Technocrat passionate about Nigeria's greatness. It was indeed a busy weekend for Engr Simbi Wabote the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board. This is a man that is so passionate about Nigeria's greatness and development and is doing everything possible to make Nigeria great again. On Friday last week reports had it that Nigeria Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) stakes \$10m on Waltersmiths Modular Refinery, an agreement he signed in Lagos and the next Monday he was in Abuja for another National Assignment for a Nigerian Content seminar. If all the government agencies are this busy and working hard to make Nigeria great the country would be a better place to be. Last Friday in Lagos the Nigeria Content Development and Monitoring Board signed a \$10m equity investment agreement with Waltersmiths refining and petrochemical company limited for the construction of a 500 barrels per day modular refinery to be located in Ibigwe, Imo state.

The Executive Secretary of NCDMB Engr Simbi Kesiye Wabote and the Director of Finance and Personnel Managements Mr Isaac Yalah signed on behalf of the Board while the Chairman of Waltersmiths Mr Abdulrasaq Isah and the Executive Vice Chairman Mr Danjuma Sale signed for the

company. Engr Wabote said the investment decision was in line with the Board's vision to be the catalyst for the Industrialisation of the Nigeria oil and Gas industry and its linkage sectors. He added



Engr. Simbi Wabote

that the Board was also keen to support Federal Government's policy on modular refineries and meet the key objectives of the Petroleum Industry's seven big wins launched by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2016. And the Economic Recovery and growth programme. It will be recalled that the Federal Government recently announced plans to replace illegal oil refineries with modular refineries as part of a wider plan for the development of the Niger Delta, and the country's oil and gas industry.

The Minister of state Petroleum Dr Ibe Kachikwu said recently tha

discussions have already begun on the modalities for operating modular refineries. He said "In the past few weeks, we have had open and prospective discussions with some of the refiners and government is assiduously working to ensure this initiative is carefully implemented without destruction to the environment. "This will not only provide a legal job and source of income for the populace, but also contribute to our national productivity. "

In another development the Nigeria Content Development and Monitoring Board is set to commence a forensic audit into \$200m Nigerian Content Development Fund. Executive Secretary of NCDMB Engr Wabote stated this in Abuja on Monday while speaking on the theme 'driving Nigeria's oil and gas industry towards sustained economic development and growth' at a seminar on Nigeria's oil and gas conference. Speaking at the conference Mr Wabote warned that if the Board discovers any sabotage in the remittance of one percent NCDF Charge it will not hesitate to handover such defaulting company to the EFCC.

He regretted that despite efforts of the Board to ensure the success of the local content in the country, some International oil companies were in the habit of coming up excuses why the local content cannot be achieved. He said 'this is no longer acceptable'

NDDC To Provide More Facilities For NYSC In Niger Delta

The Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, has promised to sustain its support for the National Youth Service Corps, NYSC, especially in the area of providing facilities in the orientation camps in the Niger Delta region.

The NDDC Managing Director, Mr. Nsima Ekere, gave the assurance during a courtesy visit by the Director-General of the NYSC, Brig-Gen. Suleiman Kazaure, at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt.

He affirmed that the NYSC scheme had been very beneficial to the country, noting that it had helped to build a sense of belonging among Nigerians, as well as helped to unite the country. He added: "For someone like me, I went to the northern part of Nigeria for the first time during my service year. I am very happy that I served in Kano because some of the lessons I learnt there have helped me to live a better life today."

Ekere called on all Nigerians to promote and support the NYSC programme, because of the role it was playing in nation building, particularly in electioneering, where most of the ad hoc staff used by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to conduct elections were youth corps members.

He noted: "This has become very helpful because before now, when INEC was using locals for elections, they come in with their individual biases,

But the youth corps members, who are mostly not from the area, help in ensuring credible and fair elections."

The NDDC boss suggested that the NYSC programme should incorporate some basic military training, stating: "I know that in some western countries, that is the system in vogue. There are basic military trainings that will help our youths to become better men by inculcating the virtues of discipline, punctuality and responsibility in them. The trainings will help the participants to grow up with some basic knowledge."

The NYSC Director-General, Brig-Gen. Kazaure, acknowledged the "tremendous help" NDDC had rendered to the scheme in the past. He said: "We felt the need to solicit for more assistance in the provision of facilities in our orientation camps because some of the amenities in these camps have broken-down."

Kazaure decried the poor state of facilities in the camps, calling on the NDDC to extend more assistance to the NYSC. He promised to put more corps members at the disposal of the Commission.

It could be recalled that the NDDC built a 44-chalet ultra-modern lodge for members of the NYSC serving in Otuoke, Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.



The Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Mr. Nsima Ekere, receiving a gift from the Director-General of the NYSC, Brig-Gen. Suleiman Kazaure, during a courtesy visit at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt.



ABAK 5 ENDORSES EKERE FOR 2019 GUBER POLL

The Managing Director of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Mr. Nsima Ekere, has been endorsed by the people of the five local government areas making up the former Abak Division to contest the 2019 gubernatorial election in Akwa Ibom State.

The endorsement came during a mega rally organized to honour Ekere by the Abak 5 Redemption Movement at Government Technical College, Abak, on Friday, which attracted an unprecedented crowd.

In a motion moved by the Member representing Ukanafun/Oruk Anam Federal Constituency in the House

of Representatives, Obongunwana Emmanuel Ukoete, seconded by the former Member representing Abak/Etim Ekpo/Ika Federal Constituency, Obongemem Ekperikpe Ekpo, and unanimously carried, the people resolved to call on Ekere to throw his hat into the ring for the governorship contest.

In his response, the NDDC boss expressed appreciation to the Abak 5 people for what he called their show of love and confidence and promised to react to their call at the appropriate time.

"This call by Abak 5, I have taken note of and I will consider it very seriously at the appropriate time," he said.

"Today, I am still the Managing Abak 5," he said.

Director of NDDC. I have work to do for the Niger Delta and Akwalbom State. The President graciously gave us this job. We are committed to delivering on it. When the time for election and politics comes, I will come back and remind you of this resolution you passed today and I will ask you whether this resolution still stands."

Ekere, in turn, seized the opportunity to move a motion for the endorsement of President Muhammadu Buhari for a second term, stressing that the President had demonstrated uncommon love for Akwalbom State, particularly in terms of appointments.

He commended Buhari for the enormous support to the NDDC, especially his approval for the harmonization of outstanding remittances from the Federal Ministry of Finance and release of outstanding funds due the commission for the development of the Niger Delta region.

Ekere decried the disruption of NDDC projects by agents of the State Government, reasoning that it was counter-productive because "the money NDDC is using to develop Akwalbom State is our own share of money for the development of the Niger Delta."

The NDDC boss promised that the commission will continue to seek ways of constructive engagement with all governments in the region "so that we can bring development to all nooks and crannies of the Niger Delta."

He urged the people of Akwalbom State to vote for the All Progressives Congress (APC) to end "bad governance" in the state.

The Akwalbom State APC Caucus Chairman, Atuckong Don Etiebet, who chaired the occasion, said the people of Abak 5 had resolved to purchase the APC governorship nomination form for Ekere because he had done well for them.

"He is not yet Governor but he has already intervened in the problems of

The Managing Director of Oil and Gas Free Zones Authority, Mr. Umana Umana, announced that long before the Abak 5 people, the people of Akwalbom North-East Senatorial District had resolved to purchase the APC governorship nomination form for Ekere because of his outstanding performance at the NDDC.

"We have come here to support and show solidarity with the people of Abak 5 who have taken the right decision to honour Obong Nsima Ekere for his outstanding performance as the Managing Director of NDDC," he said. "We have come here to say that this honour is well-deserved. You cannot hide performance... So this is somebody who performs. That is why we have come here."

He stated further: "And I know his ideas about Akwalbom State. His programmes for Akwalbom State will not be about promises and groundbreaking. There is nothing as traumatic as somebody will come and break your grounds and after two years the site will be overgrown with weeds. We are here to align with the people of Abak 5 that things cannot continue like this in Abak 5. And we have a capable hand who will make our party proud. Has he not made our party proud? We thank the President who found him worthy. Our brother, you have done well and the reward for hard work is more hard work. We are very happy with you."

Umana dismissed newspaper reports of rift between him and Ekere, saying, "Those who continue to write in papers that Nsima and Umana are fighting, tell them that there is no fight. We are one. Our party is one and united."

A former Minister of Women Affairs, Obong Rita Akpan, said she was overwhelmed by the sheer size of the crowd: "People talk about sea of heads but this is an ocean of heads. I have never seen this kind of crowd before. Abak 5, you are a trail blazer."

She canvassed for a female Deputy Governor or 50 per cent cabinet positions for women in the incoming APC government.

A former Special Assistant to Governor Udom Emmanuel on Electoral Matters, Barr. Chris Okorie, who chaired the event planning committee, explained that the reception was organized to appreciate Ekere for "standing by us to rebuild the bridge that has brought change to Abak 5 and indeed the entire state."

He enumerated NDDC projects facilitated by Ekere in the five local government areas to include construction of Hospital Road, Abak, and adjoining Obot Street, construction of Spring Road, Abak, and Mercantile Bank Road in Ekparakwa, Oruk Anam and renovation of school buildings in 20 schools, expressing delight that all those projects were executed by indigenous contractors.

"He epitomizes the saying that a good friend is better than a bad brother, son or son-in-law," Okorie said.

A former Deputy Speaker of the State House of Assembly, Mr. Uwem Udoma, described Ekere as the real deal for Abak 5, assuring him of the support of the people of the area.

He attributed the element weather that characterised the day to divine intervention.

Others who delivered goodwill messages at the event were a former State Chairman of Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), Arc. Otufta-Toyo, a former PDP State Women Leader, Lady Victoria Mel-Udoh, a former Deputy Majority Whip of the State House of Assembly, Obonganwan Mabel Udongwo, a former Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Dr. Emem Wills, a representative of the APC in Diaspora, Dr. Abasiubong Udofia, and a computer mogul, Mr. Inibhe Oloho.

At the occasion, Ekere was presented with a symbolic sword of authority and a native cow by the people of Abak



The Ondo State Government and before the expiration of the tenure Okitipupa electrification the Niger Delta Development of the current NDDC Board, project would be completed Commission, NDDC, have jointly thanking the Commission for soon.

flagged off the construction of the partnering with his administration In his speech at the occasion, N19.2 billion Araromi-Akodo/Ibeju- to provide good governance to the the NDDC Managing Lekki Road, connecting Ondo and people. Director, Mr Nsima Ekere, Lagos states. Speaking at the In his remarks, the Chairman of the recalled that the ceremony to mark the NDDC Governing Board, Senator Commission had on Tuesday, commencement of work on the 50- Victor Ndoma-Egba SAN, stressed April 4, 2017, signed a kilometre road at the Araromi that the Commission was focusing Memorandum of Seaside, Ilaje Local Government on projects that would truly Understanding, with the Area of Ondo State, the Governor, integrate the Niger Delta region. Ondo State Government, to Mr. Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, He, therefore, urged all the build the 50.918km road. described the event as "epoch- governors in the region to emulate He noted that the project making and indescribable." He their Ondo State counterpart in was very important because declared: "This is the project for us. collaborating with the NDDC. it would open up To link our state almost He said that people should discard new frontiers, for growth, seamlessly to Lagos is the big deal. the notion that NDDC projects were prosperity and regional It has been our vision and we thank hardly completed; assuring that the integration. God that it is now being realised." Ondo regional road project would He said: "The Araromi-Akeredolu, expressed optimism be executed faithfully. He also Akodo/Ibeju-Lekki Road will that the project would be delivered assured that the Omotosho- connect the agricultural-rich

communities of Araromi seaside - On completion, it will cut travel terrain, it would cost a total of Igbo Erelu, Eba, Awodikora, time between Ondo State and ₦19, 274, 195, 882.70 at an Elefon, Ode-Omi, Imedu, Lagos to less than one hour, and average cost of ₦378, 534, Igboguna, Akodo in Ondo State facilitate easy evacuation of 032.81/km.

with Ise in Ibeju – Lekki area of agricultural produce from these

Lagos States. It is the first part of communities."Ekere explained The NDDC Chief Executive Officer the very important coastal road that the main alignment from praised the Ondo State Governor project which the Federal Irokun to Ise was 36.035km, with for collaborating on the project Government has conceived to seven different spurs totaling and signing the MOU within six link our coastal towns with a 14.883 kilometres. He observed weeks of assuming office. "He strategic road network. that because of the difficult brought a sense of urgency for



collaborative development of our Niger Delta Region to the table," he said. "Today's occasion celebrates the limitless possibilities for growth and development when state governments and partners in the region team up with the NDDC for the common good. It is also a pointer to the new direction of the Commission. In our 17 years, NDDC has undertaken landmark, ground-breaking projects that have truly broken new grounds for growth and prosperity. We have built a lot of road, bridges, jetties, schools, hostels, health facilities, etc. These have met the immediate need for the transformation of our states and communities and primed us to shift gear."

Ekere said that under the current NDDC Board, more attention would be focused on projects that would engender sustainable and comprehensive

regional economic and social integration of the Niger Delta. He added: "Very shortly, the Commission will conclude and execute similar partnership projects with Edo and Delta State Governments for the construction of the Benin-Abraka Road and Omadino-Okerekenkoko-Escravos Road. We are also looking to partner with the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing, for the construction of the Abak-East-West Road." Ekere re-stated the resolve of the NDDC to engage with all the nine Niger Delta Governors as the Commission was not in competition with any state.

"We are looking at the big picture and our role is to resolve the developmental challenges of the region and support the development ambitions of the states by working together as partners," he said.

NDDC TO EXPLORE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN MODULAR REFINERIES

Managing Director and new players in line with plans by the populace, but also contribute to our Chief Executive Officer Federal Government to convert illegal national productivity."

of the Niger Delta refineries into modular ones. Mr. Ekere also disclosed that the Development Commission, NDDC, "He added: "We have scheduled interventionist agency plans to Mr. Nsima U. Ekere lead a strong meetings and engagements that will display the works of some young delegation to this year's Oil enrich our knowledge and open up innovators from the region, under the Technology Conference to explore new partnership opportunities for the Niger Delta Young Innovators partnership opportunities in modular benefit of the Niger Delta Region and Scheme, at the conference, NDDC is refineries for the Niger Delta region its people. supporting participating innovators

The conference, which took place in "The Federal Government recently and entrepreneurs to take their Houston, United States, in May will announced plans to replace illegal oil innovations to the global stage, as a brought together leading refineries with modular refineries as strategy to attract new business, professionals and players in the global part of a wider plan for the strengthen indigenous capacity and oil and gas industry. development of the Niger Delta, and boost employment and economic

It is the number one forum for industry. Discussions have already NDDC, which was established in knowledge exchange in drilling, begun on the modalities for operating 2000 to facilitate the rapid, even and exploration, production development, modular refineries. The Minister of sustainable development of the Niger environmental protection, innovation State for Petroleum Resources, Dr. Delta, has undertaken more than and technology. Mr. Ekere said NDDC the Kachikwu said recently: "In the 7,500 infrastructure projects across is attending the conference as it past few weeks, we have had open and the nine states of the Niger Delta prepares to implement Federal prospective discussions with some of since inception and equipped more Government's proposal to replace the refiners and government is than 10,000 youths with market-thousands of illegal refining facilities assiduously working to ensure this relevant skills.

scattered across the region with initiative is carefully implemented About 1211 indigenes of the region modular refineries. "Our participation without destruction to the have also benefitted from the in this year's conference is a proactive environment. Commission's foreign post-graduate

strategy," Mr. Ekere said, "to fully scholarships, while up to 3 million prepare the region for a new era of "This will not only provide a legal job people have been impacted directly downstream operations by small and and source of income for the under its medical outreach mission,



Senator Ugoima Egba



Nsima U. Ekere

Indorama's second world class fertilizer (train 2) is designed to produce 1.5 million metric tonnes of Urea fertilizer per annum. This is a replication of the first plant (train 1). This means that by June 2021 when the plant will be completed, Indorama will be producing a total of 3 million metric tonnes of Urea per annum.

About 1 million of this huge production will be consumed by Nigerian farmers across the country while the balance of 2 million will be exported to earn for the country.

Since Indorama started the production of Urea fertilizer in June 2016, it has continued to supply about 750,000 tonnes of Urea nationwide on annual basis. The company also carries out extensive free agronomic services and training of farmers nationwide.

This has increased the application of fertilizers by three fold across the country, especially in the northern parts of the country where agriculture is a major vocation of the people. It also supplies Urea to the 13 blending plants spread across the country under the aegis of the Federal Government Presidential Fertilizer Initiative (PFI).

The blending plants use the Urea to produce NPK fertilizers. Indorama has succeeded in bringing down the cost of fertilizers to about N5,500 per bag according to the Managing Director of Indorama Fertilizer & Chemicals Limited, Mr Manish Mundra.

The current Indorama fertilizer plant under construction will cost the company the princely sum of \$1.1 billion. Recently, the

INDORAMA'S SECOND WORLD CLASS FERTILIZER



International Finance Corporation (IFC), an arm of the World Bank, announced that it has extended a loan facility of \$1 billion to Indorama to build the fertilizer plant to boost agricultural produce in Nigeria and the West African sub-region and to reduce hunger and poverty.

According to the Mr Mundra, the company has so far invested a total of \$3.2 billion USD since it came into the country in 2006. This is huge Foreign Direct investment (FDI) that has helped to boost the economy of Nigeria through the production of petrochemicals and fertilizers.





INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT: GOVERNOR WIKE IS SETTING THE PACE SAYS SENATOR OKOWA

Delta State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa has stated that Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike is setting the pace in infrastructural development for others to follow.

Speaking before commissioning the Mgbuoshimini Model Primary School and Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area on Thursday, Governor Okowa said that Governor Wike is one of the special heroes of the current democratic dispensation.

He said: "He is re-defining the health sector, he is re-defining the education sector, re-defining the road infrastructural sector and other key areas of governance.

"He is one of our special heroes in Nigeria today. In re-defining these sectors, Governor Wike is setting the pace for us to follow".

The Delta State Governor added Rivers State came out tops on infrastructure in a national survey conducted.

Senator Okowa said that Governor Wike not only executes projects, but ensures that the people are blessed with quality projects.

"Governor Wike is not only Mr Projects, he is Mr Quality Projects. When you see good things and you don't admire them, you are either blind or a wicked man. I am excited to be here to witness these life changing projects ", Okowa said.

He said Governor Wike is committed to the service of Rivers people, pointing out that the Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre is outstanding and may stand as a hospital in some states. He said that the Model Primary School is also



a quality project that will develop the community. Also speaking, Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike thanked the people of Mgbuoshimini community for allowing the state government take over the disputed land which had claimed several lives

He said: "I thank the host communities for allowing the state government take over the disputed land. When we came on board, this land had claimed lives and became a centre of criminality. We took over the land and constructed the school and health centre, which were lacking in the area".

The Rivers State Governor informed that the ongoing road project in front of the health centre and model primary school will be completed before the end of the year.

He commended Agip Nigeria Limited for furnishing the hospital, urging them to do more for the community in terms of corporate

responsibility. Governor Wike stated that the market very close to the school and health centre will be re-located to create the right environment for the institutions to serve the people.

The Rivers State Governor said that his Delta State counterpart is one of the governors he has respect for, because of the developmental projects in his state. He noted that he engages in peer review with the Delta State Governor for greater performance.

Rivers State Health Commissioner, Professor Princewill Chike said that the Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre is a modern facility with the necessary equipment to enhance access to quality health care.

Dr Tamunosisi Gogo-Jaja, Rivers State Commissioner for Education said that the model primary school has laboratory, library, information



Mgbuoshimini Model Primary School



Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre

and communication technology centre and play arena. Caretaker Committee Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Prince Noble Amadi said the projects aside providing service, have grown peace in Mgbuoshimini community.

There was a goodwill message from Agip Nigeria Limited delivered by the District General Manager, Mr Tiani Alexandro. He assured that Agip will continue to work with the Rivers State Government on community development.

Hundreds of Mgbuoshimini people defied the heavy downpour to witness the commissioning of the two projects. Simeon Nwakaudu, Special Assistant to the Rivers State Governor, Electronic Media. 14th June, 2018.

Picture 1: L-R: Deputy Governor Ipalibo Harry Banigo, Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, Delta State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa, Former Rivers State Governor, Sir

Celestine Omehia and Senator George Sekibo during the commissioning of Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre and Mgbuoshimini Model Primary School by the Delta State Governor on Thursday.

Picture 2: R-L: Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, Delta State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa and Former Rivers State Governor, Sir Celestine Omehia during the commissioning of Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre and Mgbuoshimini Model Primary School by the Delta State Governor on Thursday. Picture 3

Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, Delta State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa (l) and Rivers State Education Commissioner, Dr Tamunosisi Gogo-Jaja (r) during the commissioning of Mgbuoshimini Primary Healthcare Centre and Mgbuoshimini Model Primary School by the Delta State Governor on Thursday.

NDDC Commissions Oku Iboku Roads, Inspects UNIUYO Projects



The Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Mr. Nsima Ekere, cuts the tape to commission the 5.15-kilometre Oku Iboku Internal Road Project in Itu Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. First left is the Akwa Ibom State Representative on the NDDC Board, Dr Samuel George Frank, while from right is the village head of Ikot Essien, Chief Evans Enwan and the NDDC Executive Director Projects, Engr (Dr) Samuel Adjogbe.

The Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, has inaugurated the 5.15-kilometre Oku Iboku Internal Road Project in Itu Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. It also inspected the road and erosion control project which it is executing at the University of Uyo.

Speaking at the commissioning of the Oku Iboku roads and drainage, the NDDC Managing Director, Mr Nsima Ekere, urged the benefiting communities to be grateful to the All

Progressive Congress, APC, administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

The NDDC Managing Director was accompanied by the Commission's Executive Director Projects, Engr (Dr) Samuel Adjogbe, FNSE, the Akwa Ibom State Representative on the NDDC Board, Dr Samuel George Frank, and other directors from the Commission.

Ekere said: "I am very happy with what I am seeing today in this community. Oku Iboku is one of the very prominent towns in Akwa Ibom

state. It has a history and pedigree. It is not wrong that the community was not even remembered before now.

“Recall that we have had various vilifications and attacks by the government of Akwa Ibom State. They have repeatedly said that NDDC has not constructed even one kilometre of road in Akwa Ibom State.

“Earlier today, we inspected the road that links Nsasak Junction-Akon in Essien Udim Local Government Area that connects Abia State. This is a 30-kilometre road project, out of which 15 kilometres have been completed. The contractor is currently working on the bridge to link both states. I saw 15-km of solid and quality road being handled by an indigenous contractor, who is also from Akwa Ibom State.”

The NDDC boss noted that the Commission also engaged a local contractor to execute the Oku Ibokun internal roads. He expressed satisfaction with the quality, stating that it would compete with roads in any part of the world. Ekere expressed disappointment with the attitude of some officials of the Akwa Ibom State Government whom he accused of misleading people.

He said: “Somebody needs to educate some of the officials of the Akwa Ibom State Government that as responsible officers of government, they should not speak until they are sure of their facts. Again, I repeat, NDDC is not competing with any of the state governments in

the region. We are just here to complement the efforts of the state governments.”

The village head of Ikot Essien, Chief Evans Enwan, commended the NDDC for building a quality road for his people. He, however, pleaded with the Commission to extend the road to Mben Inyang.

At the 1.2-kilometre University of Uyo dual carriage access road, Ekere said that NDDC took on additional responsibilities when the university authorities appealed for help to tackle the drainage challenges on the road.

The MD said: “We include the 1.4 kilometres drainage outfall to address the challenge. That way we are sure that when the road is completed it will stand the test of time. Again, a local contractor has proved his mettle here and that is why we are committed to using them so long as they are qualified and have technical and financial capacity.

“We want to empower them to improve on their capacity so that ultimately they can engage the engineering graduates from our universities to give them hands-on experience in construction projects.”

Ekere commended the UNIUYO students for maintaining peace and allowing the contractor to work without hindrance. He promised that the NDDC would put in more efforts to complete the hostel in the university.

According to the MD, “the hostel has been largely completed, what is left is external works

and landscaping as well as a few finishing touches to the building. The contractor will meet the NDDC Director of Project Monitoring and Supervision so that whatever needs to be done is done urgently.”

Ekere stated that the NDDC was building hostel projects in other universities, adding that they were experiencing some hitches which would soon be resolved. He said: “Most of the hostel projects were awarded many years ago and the contractors unfortunately had not delivered on them. Some of them were awarded when a bag of cement was sold for 60 Naira.

“In some of them, the scope of work has had to be reviewed and the process of getting approvals from the Bureau of Public Procurement to increase the contract sums takes time. Right now, we are in the process of reviewing them to ensure that these projects are completed. We want our students to as much as possible study in comfort. NDDC is committed to doing whatever has to be done within its capacity to ensure that we add value to the educational system in the Niger Delta.”

He assured that the NDDC hostel projects in the various universities in the Niger Delta region would be re-activated as soon as possible and the contractors would be mobilised back to site to complete them.

Ibitoye Abosede, Ph.D
Director, Corporate Affairs
July 21, 2018.

BUHARI'S GOVERNMENT INCOMPETENT, CORRUPT, NOT UNITED - ATIKU

Abakaliki- former Vice president Atiku Abubakar yesterday described the President Muhammadu Buhari-led Federal Government as incompetent, corrupt and disunited in handling the affairs of country and welfare of Nigerians at large.

The former Vice President who stated this at an enlarged Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) meeting in Abakaliki emphasized that the present Federal Government since the emergence of civil rule in the country. According to him: "I am here to introduce myself to the people of Ebonyi State to introduce myself to the people of ebonyi state to seek your support and that of our party so that we can throw out Muhammad buhari from Aso Rock. Yesterday, 40 political parties came together to meet to present one candidate for presidential for presidential election. The coalition is going to have one candidate for presidential election, one candidate for governor, one candidate for

party chairman.

"we need this alliance because what I have seen in the last three years is what not seen in this country.

"Therefore, we are determined, we are united and we are ready to make sure that in the next election whether state or national or federal, we will kick out the all progressives Congress (APC), in every state in this country. We have never experienced the level of poverty we are facing today.

They are selling crude oil around \$70 dollars per barrel, when we came in 1999, it was around \$10 per barrel

"I want to assure you that your party is ready to take that power but we can only do so through your support and your unity of purpose. You are our bosses, if you tell us to go left, we will go but at end of the day you must accept responsibility if you take us to the wrong direction.

What is happening today in our

country is in contraventions with all the provisions of our constitution. In our federation, we are supposed to have an inclusive government but you know that this federal Government is not inclusive. You know that this Federal Government is not united; you know that this Federal Government is incompetent; you know that this Federal Government is more corrupt than any government we had since 1999.

"So, let nobody come and deceive you on corruption, they are more corrupt than any government that I know since 1999 and we shall be revealing their level of corruption alone is not the only responsibility of government.

"Our unemployment is accelerated high and there had never been a time we had more than 11 million unemployed people. Today, we are witnessing high inflation the APC government has brought to us in country.

killings unjustifiable, senseless-shekarau

Meanwhile, former governor of Kano State Ibrahim Shekarau, has condemned what he described as the senseless, despicable and unjustifiable killings of innocent and defenceless Nigerians in their country.

Shekarau, who stated this while fielding questions from journalists in Owerri, also expressed shock over the inability and unwillingness of the federal Government to take decisive steps to stop the bizarre, inhuman and unwarranted termination of the lives of Nigerians.

He said "Nigeria is in dire need of leadership with focus, unbridled interest and love in the welfare and security of Nigerians of all ethnic and religious backgrounds."

While expressing deep shock and grief over the current socio-economic woes and violent killings across the nation, Shekarau, however, called on Nigerians to pray for and assist families of victims of the senseless killings. The former governor said he was optimistic that Nigeria would regain its lost glory as the most peaceful, progressive, united and enviable nation in Africa.

Speaking on his presidential ambition, Shekarau said he possessed credentials, contacts, ability and capability to pilot the affairs of the country to a glorious and enviable height where Nigerians would be proud to remain, work at home and ever willing to contribute to the growth and unity of the country.

OBASANJO RAISES ALARM AGAIN OVER ALLEGED INTIMIDATION BY BUHARI'S GOVERNMENT

Former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has raised allegation against the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari claiming security and anti-graft agencies were now being used to go after opposition.

Obasanjo made these allegations at a colloquium to mark the 70th birthday of Josephine Anenih, former minister for women affairs and social development. He claimed the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) have now become tools in the hands of the government.

He said: "Some institutions created for normal administration and dispensation of justice, like EFCC, Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission, Federal Inland Revenue Service and Ministry of Justice, are being directed to witch-hunt and pursue political opponents. "The use of intimidation, violence and physical attacks have started in some states. It is understood that

judges are already being intimidated so as to prepare them to do the ruling party's bidding in election petitions. All these are visible in today's practice of democracy in Nigeria."

The former president insisted that democracy allows for opposition and therefore, the government must allow it to thrive. He said: "For me, that after almost 20 years of the beginning of the present dispensation, it has not been derailed, is enough a development in progress, even though there are many unpalatable practices and dangerous signs that have shown their ugly heads, which is the strongest indication that our democracy is alive.

"But it cannot be said to be hale and hearty. Practitioners of democracy must be democrats, if you have a lot to be desired." Also at the same event, Obasanjo called for the amendment of the 1999 Constitution to improve governance in Nigeria. Obasanjo said the constitution should include 40% slots for women in the National Assembly and other levels of government. The former president said Nigeria's democracy would grow at slow pace without the active participation of women.

Senate Passes NOSDRA Amendment Bill to Curb Oil Spillages and Tackle Environmental Degradation

Today, the Nigerian Senate passed the Report of the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) Act 2006 (amendment) Bill, 2018(SB. 557). The Report, which was presented by the Senate Committee on Environment, chaired by Senator Oluremi Tinubu, was read for the third time in the upper legislative chamber.

Speaking on the passage of the Bill, the President of the Senate, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki, who also served as the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology in the 7th Senate (2011 to 2015) said: "Thank you for passing this very important Bill that will go a long way in addressing oil spillages. The focus of this Bill is to ensure that

we prevent, as opposed to chasing culprits after the incident has happened.

"In doing this, we will inculcate the habit of adequate prevention and control of oil spillages.

This is a very good development for the environment," the President of the Senate said. The NOSDRA Amendment will also address any kind of restriction and ambiguity in the Agency's mandate.

This will help to ensure that there is no ambivalence in the agency's mandate. Additionally, the NOSDRA Amendment Bill will give the agency the requisite capacity to regulate the activities of the operators as it affects the environment.

NPA IS IMPLEMENTING FG ORDER ON EASE OF DOING BUSINESS AT SEAPORTS....MD

The Managing Director of The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ms Hadiza Usman has said that the organisation is implementing its own part of the Presidential Order on the Ease of Doing Business (EODB) at the Nigerian Seaports and will continue to do so. The NPA managing director made this declaration when a delegation of the Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA) led by its Acting National President, Dr Kayode Farinto visited her in Lagos and complained that some government agencies were flouting the Presidential directive. The Order streamlined the activities of all agencies in the nation's ports to achieve a 24-hour cargo clearance target.

Farinto had first lauded the NPA Managing Director for the limited successes she has achieved through her collaboration with some

security agencies in bringing some level of sanity to the chaotic traffic situation in the Ports Access roads, thereby making way for other road users... The Federal Government had directed NPA to take charge of the coordination of the implementation of the Ease of doing business at the Nigerian Ports but ANLCA felt everything has been quiet concerning the issue.

This made Dr Farinto to suggest that ANLCA is capable and willing to assist NPA in enforcing the order, using their Chapters structure, if NPA officially intimates stakeholders, especially ANLCA.

According to ANLCA, inactivation of the EODB, has made the Ports home to several agencies that extort Licensed Customs Agents, especially during cargoes examination, escalating cost of transactions, delays and sometimes totally

obstruct cargo delivery processes, thereby compounding the operational challenges in the Ports. "NPA is implementing its own part of the Order. We cannot compel other agencies to do what they are supposed to do," she said. She further said in her response to the poser by ANLCA that it was regrettable that some agencies had not fully complied with the Order but stated that she would seek the intervention of Vice President, Prof Yemi Osinbajo over the issue if ANLCA would direct its complaint in writing to her office.

Usman reiterated that the authority would continue to fulfill its own part of the Order, adding that NPA could however not compel other agencies to do what they were supposed to do. She noted that aggrieved stakeholders should also report the defaulting agencies to the appropriate authorities. The National Vice President of ANLCA, Dr Kayode Farinto also urged the managing director to intervene to ensure that officials of the Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine are prevented from entering the ports.

Farinto also made an appeal that NPA should ensure that the newly-constructed temporary Truck Park at Tin Can Island Port (TCIP) is put to immediate use.



Ms Hadiza Usman

2019: GOMBE GOVERNOR WARNS YOUTHS AGAINST POLITICAL THUGGERY

Gombe Governor warns youths against political thuggery. As the 2019 General Elections draw near, Executive Governor of Gombe State, Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwambo, has warned young people to be wary of politicians who delight in using them as political thugs to achieve selfish interests. Governor Dankwambo gave the charge in Gombe, the state capital, during the official opening ceremony of National Unity Convention of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN).

Represented by his Deputy, Mr. Charles Iliya, the Governor also advised the youths to eschew religious, ethnic, or political violence in the coming general elections, urging them to take advantage of the Not-Too-Young-To-Run Bill and seek elective positions rather than being used as thugs.

"I will like to call on the youth of this great nation, to be wary of politicians who took delight in using them as political thugs to achieve their political goal, only to dump them when they achieve their aims.

"Be warned therefore, even as preparation for the 2019 elections is drawing near. I challenge you also to take full advantage of the 'Not-Too-Young-To-Run Bill' that has just been signed into law by being contestants into various elective political positions. "You should also eschew violence of whatever nature, be it religious, ethnic, regional or political, to enable us achieve a Sustainable National Unity and Development", Dankwambo said. The youthful Governor also called on political elites to start seeing Nigerian youths as "reservoir of energy, which if properly harnessed, can transform into veritable tools for development", and not as tools for election malpractices. On his part, the Minister of Sports and Youths Development, Barr. Solomon Dalung, acknowledged the fact that the NYCN was going to hold a successful congress since the last one in Abuja 2008, due to factions.

The Minister who was represented by the Director, Education and Youth Development, Mrs Bakari Girei, said it is only when United, that the youths can take their rightful position in the society.

Earlier in his speech, the Chairman of Board of Trustees of NYCN, Amb. (Dr.) Dickson Akoh, advised the delegates to carefully elect young people



Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwambo

that would ensure stability in the council and attract international collaborations.

Akoh lamented the inability of NYCN to hold successful convention since 2010, saying, the board under him, with the cooperation of the federal government and stakeholders, has made everything humanly possible "to break the jinx", by midwifing a befitting unity congress billed to hold in Gombe Saturday. Aside promising a free and fair election, the Board chairman assured that the new leadership of the council shall be youths within the ages of 18 and 35. In their separate remarks, the Commissioner of Youth Empowerment in Gombe State, Mallam Faruk Yarma; former Senior Special Assistant to President Goodluck Jonathan on Youths and Students Matters, Jude Imakwe and the outgoing President of NYCN, Mayor Enujeko; assured the delegates and stakeholders of peaceful and transparent process.

The trio urged leadership of the Youth Council to engage in massive sensitisation of young people across the country to encourage them to be actively involved in youth council activities, stressing that the youth must intensive efforts to collect their Permanent Voters Card (PVC) ahead of 2019 general elections. Highlight of the ceremony include, the conferment of 'Pillar of Nigerian Youth' award and 'Life Patron' of the National Youth Council of Nigeria on Gombe state Governor, by the Board of the Council, which were also endorsed by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development.

BUHARI ADMINISTRATION IS BUILDING CAPACITY FOR TRANSPORT SECTOR...AMAECHI

The Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi has said that the President Muhammadu Buhari led Government is committed to building capacity for all the segments of the Transport sector in order to progress the Nigerian economy.

Speaking at the 2nd Nigerian Maritime Technical Summit organised by the Association of Marine Engineers and Surveyors (AMES) with the theme Ship Operations in Nigeria: Policy, Technical, Financial Challenges and Solution, held in Lagos recently. The Honourable Minister noted that the Government is committed creating policies that would enhance the growth of the entire transport sector.

The Minister who was represented at the event by the Director General Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) Dr. Dakuku Peterside noted that Marine Engineers and Surveyors are critical to the growth of the Maritime Sector adding that they play major roles from the building of the Ships through the entire lifespan of the vessel. According to the Minister "Marine Engineers and Surveyors are at the very heart of shipping, the life of a ship begins on the table of a marine engineer and the surveyors and they continue to play a role on the ship through the entire life span of the vessel", he said.

Amaechi who also noted that shipping stands on a tripod of funding, right policies and proper technical direction said that the government is doing everything within its powers to ensure that the maritime industry thrives.

He said that the Government has taken a bold step to audit all Agencies and parastatals under the transport sector in order to strengthen them to perform optimally.

The Honourable minister further informed that efforts are in top gear to resuscitate the National Fleet adding that the committee made up largely of stakeholders in the industry will soon submit its report and recommendations for the setting up of a National Fleet.

While also informing the audience of the on going reforms in the maritime sector, Amaechi said that Government has taken steps to develop the port master plan. He stressed that the Federal Government have also mandated NIMASA to invest in manpower development that would raise successors for the experienced practitioners in the industry.



He finally commended AMES for championing the reforms in the sector stating that the Government has continually relied on the Association's counsel and advises to move the maritime sector forward.

He charged industry players to continue to patronize AMES stating that in the Association the Country possess the best hands in the continent.

Earlier in his remarks, the President of AMES, Engr. Charles Uwadia said that he is moved by the enthusiasm of the President Buhari led administration to revamp the maritime sector.

He pledged that AMES would continue to work with the Government in order to ensure that the sector reaches its full potentials to the benefit of the Nigerian economy.

STATE OF THE NIGERIAN NATION: BISHOP KUKAH BLOWS HOT AGAIN



Bishop Kukah

plateau state was murdered by a certain group of Fulanis almost a year now and no one has been arrested not to talk of prosecution; there are many villagers in my parish who cannot go to farm again except to farm their backyard because their farms have been forcefully annexed by their Fulani murderers; that in Bokokos a wife and a daughter can be taken away right before her husband or father and be repeatedly raped then released at the convenience of the barbaric Fulani tribesmen and no one dares talk; police will advise you to go and settle the matter through dialogue? I want independence from a country where terrorists are embraced and agitators are terrorized.

At the slightest excitement Hausa or Fulani man can kill you and get away with it; it has happened and continues to happen but when you gear up to defend yourself because security will not, then you are caught by the same security who will lecture you on how to be peaceful and law abiding. This country will end unless there is justice for all. Rubbish! I hate the lie that Nigeria is. Let's say the truth and die but it is what will set us free. Nigeria is negotiable to me the oppressed even if it's not to the oppressor and that is normal.

"The only right Nigerians concede to you is the right to agree with them" - Bishop Kukah.

Anyone who thinks the Biafra agitation is a nuisance and irritating should know that it is not the collective aspiration of all Igbos but especially that no one has the monopoly of nuisance. Nuisance begets nuisance. When you stay with potash loaders you too will share in their dusty hair. It is in this country that the same standards are not held against all. Some can get away with anything but others cannot get away with something. I shudder at those who blame the agitators for agitating. Everyone knows what is good for them. If you don't know what is good for you then shut up and don't obstruct those who know what is good for them. If I have my way I will cease to be a Nigerian because there is

no sense of nationhood. Those who have leverage over others use it to oppress them. Otherwise how can you explain the audacious impunity of a certain section of this country. They can intimidate everybody even a sitting president and get away with it. When GEJ was president he was literally harassed by this same people until they sent him packing and we thought they will be appeased. But alas we were mistaken!

Now how do I love a country where a murderous terrorist group like the herdsmen acclaimed even internationally as deadly is being openly defended by a govt. that wants my loyalty. Do you know as I make this comment, a first class Chief of Bokokos LGA in

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