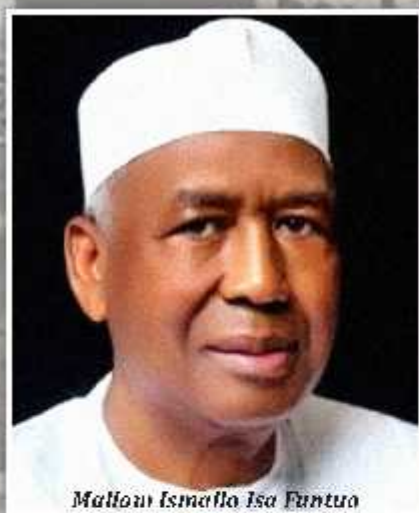


NEWS PLATFORM

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The Godfathers: Working To Make Nigeria Great Again.

...But How Far Can They Go.



Mallam Ismaila Isa Funtua



Manman Daura



Babo Gana Kingibe



Abba Kyari



Bola Tinubu



Archbishop of Canterbury



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The Godfathers.. Working To Make Nigeria Great Again.

But How Far Can They Go



The Godfathers.. Working To Make Nigeria Great Again. But How Far Can They Go.

By Vincent Egunyanga

No doubt President Muhammadu Buhari is the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He is fully in charge of his Administration. But there are people who are also helping him or assisting him to run the Administration and to ensure that his vision for the country is achieved. These are highly responsible and patriotic Nigerians who continue to render advice to the President.

A lot of people prefer to call them the cabals but we call them the godfathers. They came with lots of experience in government and are ready to deploy this experience in the service of their fatherland. Many people may not like the influence these people exert on the government but without them things would have got worse.

President Muhammadu Buhari may not have had good relationships with Nigerian Journalists or Media as he hardly address the Media on important National Issues. But incidentally most members of his inner caucus or cabals are actually Media men. Many don't know this. They include Malan Isa Funtua, Mamman Daura, Abba kyari among others. Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu may not have been a journalist but owns one of the biggest newspaper outfit in the country THE NATION NEWSPAPERS.

They have done their best to make Nigeria safe again. Through diplomatic and Political finesse they have been able to end the activities of the Niger Delta Militants, IPOB, BOKO HARAM and other ethnic militias that had threatened the corporate existence of the country. More still needed to be done to tackle Kidnapping and Election violence.



Baba Gana Kingibe

...The return of the Saint



Baba Gana Kingibe born 25 June 1945 is a Nigerian politician and politician appointed having held many high-level Nigerian governmental posts. He hails from Borno State in the northeastern part of Nigeria, and is of Kurumi extraction.

Amb. Baba Gana Kingibe also served from October 2002 to September 2006 as AU Special Envoy to Sudan and subsequently Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and head of the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and Darfur.

EARLY LIFE

Kingibe was born on the 25th of June, 1945 to the family of Mustafa Shawa and Yu Kingi Mallam. He grew up in city of Maiduguri and attended primary schools in the city. In 1958, he was admitted into the Borno Provincial Secondary School, however, in 1960, he traveled to London to complete his O'level and A-level at Bishop's Stamford College under a Borno Native Authority sponsored scholarship scheme. He took up further studies earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in International relations at the University of Sussex where he was mates with Thabo Mbeki; he started pursuing a doctorate programme in Switzerland but he left the program before completing his degree. He returned to Nigeria and started work as a Research and Planning Officer at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria but he soon left the college to become the head of Features and Current Affairs at the Broadcasting Corporation of Northern Nigeria. In 1972, he joined the Nigerian Foreign Service where he started work as a senior counselor and later became the head of the political desk at the Nigerian High Commission in London. During the Obasanjo administration in the late 1990s, Kingibe worked in the political department as principal secretary and was

involved in the government's return to civil rule programme, states creation and boundary adjustment, local government reforms and the constitutional drafting committee. In 1981 at age 36, he was appointed the Nigerian ambassador to Greece and later the country's representative in Pakistan.

FOURTH REPUBLIC

In June 2007, he was appointed Secretary to the Federal Government of Nigeria. He was unceremoniously removed from office on September 8, 2008 by the President, Umaru Yar'Adua after spreading rumors about the President's ill-health while believed to be contending for the presidency.

CONFERMENT OF HONOUR OF GCN

On the 6th of June 2018, the Federal Government of Nigeria declared June 12 as the new date for the celebration of Nigeria's Democracy Day, saying it is to honour late MKO Abiola, the presumed winner of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. The government also awarded Abiola with the Grand Commander of the Federal Republic (GCFR) honour. A statement signed by President Muhammadu Buhari said Baba Gana Kingibe, Abiola's running mate during the election, and Gani Fajana, one of Nigeria's foremost rights activist, now late, are also to be conferred with Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCN). He contested the position of the Running mate to Chief MKO against Atiku Abubakar in the run up to the 1993 Presidential Election. He defeated Atiku when majority of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) governors preferred him to Atiku. He was National Chairman of the party. He is also a Security personality helping to secure the country and given advice to the President on Security matters.

Abba Kyari



Abba Kyari is the Chief of Staff to the President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari and was appointed to the position on 27 August 2015

Education

Abba Kyari graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from the University of Warwick, England in 1980. He also possesses a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Law from the University of Cambridge, England and was called to the Nigerian Bar after attending the Nigerian Law School in 1983. In 1984, he obtained a master's degree in law from the University of Cambridge. He later attended the International Institute for Management Development at Lausanne, Switzerland and participated in the Program for Management Development at the Harvard Business School, in 1992 and 1994.

Career

Abba Kyari worked for the law firm Fani-Kayode and Sowemimo for some time after his return to Nigeria. From 1988 to 1990, he was Editor with the New Africa Holdings Limited Kaduna.

In 1990 he served as Commissioner for Forestry and Animal Resources in Borno State. From 1990 to 1995, Kyari was Secretary to the Board of African International Bank Limited. Abba Kyari was Executive Director, Management Services, United Bank for Africa Plc. (UBA) and was later appointed Managing Director and Chief Executive of the Bank. He was appointed a Director of Unilever Nigeria Plc. in 2002 and is a Director of Exxon Mobil Nigeria. He is a recipient of the Nigerian Honor Award of Officer of the Order of the Niger (O.O.N).

Mamman Daura



Mamman Daura is a Nigerian journalist and businessman who was appointed editor of the New Nigerian newspaper a few months after completing his graduate degree. He is a nephew and long time close associate of Muhammadu Buhari.

Daura finished secondary education at Okene Provincial School in 1956. He worked with the Daura Native Authority for a couple of years before joining the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation as a programme assistant. From 1962 to 1968, he studied economics and public administration at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1968, the Adamu Ciroma, editor of the New Nigerian was looking to recruit qualified and educated northern Nigerians for the newspaper. One of those recruits was Daura who was just finishing his degree in Dublin. Daura was hesitant to take the position when he returned to Nigeria but instead worked in the office of Abba Kyari, the military

governor of North-Central State. In April 1969, he finally joined the staff of New Nigerian as the paper's new editor.

The first two years of his stewardship was a focus on coverage of issues affecting Northerners and protection of northern interests. Daura later became the Managing Director of paper's holding company. When Murtala Mohammed's administration opted to takeover the ownership of the paper, Daura soon left the company.

Mamman, a nephew of the younger Buhari, was influential in the government of Buhari between 1984 and 1985. He was a board member of BCCI's Nigerian affiliate, Africa International Bank and founded a furniture factory in Kaduna. He was also a former chairman of the now defunct Nigerian Bank of Commerce and Industry.

Bola Tinubu



Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu (born 29 March 1952) is a Nigerian politician who was elected senator for the Lagos West Constituency in Lagos State, Nigeria in 1993. The election was just prior to a military take-over in December 1993. After the return to democracy, he was elected governor of Lagos State, holding office from 29 May 1999 to 29 May 2007. He is a member of the All Progressives Congress party; he also holds both the chieftaincies of the Asiwaju of Lagos and the Jagaban of the Borgu Kingdom in Niger State, Nigeria. He has been routinely referred to as the national leader of the APC during the presidency of Muhammadu Buhari.

Background

Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu was born on 29 March 1952 in the city of Lagos, Nigeria. His mother, Chief Ahibun, Mogaji, was a trader who eventually became the *Iyalaja* of Lagos.

He attended St. John's Primary School, Aroloya, Lagos and Children's Home School in Ibadan, South West of Nigeria. Tinubu then went to the United States in 1975, where he studied first at Richard J. Daley College in Chicago, Illinois, and then at Chicago State University. He graduated in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting.

Tinubu worked for the American companies Arthur Andersen, Deloitte, Taskins, & Sells, and GTE Services Corporation. After returning to Nigeria in 1983, Bola Tinubu joined Mobil Oil

Nigeria, and later became an executive of the company.

Early political career

His political career began in 1992, on the platform of the Social Democratic Party (Nigeria) (where he was a member of the faction of the Peoples Front led by Shahu Musa Yar'Adua and made up of other politicians such as Dapo Sarumi, Abdullahi Aliyu Sumaila, Rabiu Kwankwaso, Magaji Abdullahi and Yemi Edu. He was elected to the Nigerian Senate, representing the Lagos West constituency in the short-lived Nigerian Third Republic. After the results of the 12 June 1993 presidential elections were annulled, Tinubu became a founding member of the pro-democracy National Democratic Coalition, a group which mobilized support for the restoration of democracy and recognition of the results of the 12th of June. He went into exile in 1994 and returned to the country in 1998 after the death of the military dictator Sani Abacha, which ushered in a transition to civilian rule.

In the run-up to the 1999 elections, Bola Tinubu was a protégé of Alliance for Democracy (AD) leaders Abraham Adesanya and Ayo Adeniji. He won the AD primaries for the Lagos State gubernatorial elections in competition with Funso Williams and Wahab Dosunmu, a former Minister of Works and Housing. In January 1999, he stood for the position of Executive Governor of Lagos State on the AD ticket and was elected.

Mallam Ismaila Isa Funtua



Mallam Ismaila Isa was born in Funtua, Katsina State. He was a pioneer student of the Federal Training Centre Kaduna. He trained as an administrative officer at the Institute of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, ABU, Zaria and as an administrator at the Manchester University in the UK.

He was the Monitor General of the Course 9, the prestigious National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, NIPSS, Kuru. He served at the Katsina Native Authority for seven years as an Administrative Officer.

Mallam Ismaila Isa is a renowned Business Executive

and public officer with over thirty years of management experience. He was Personnel Manager in United Textiles Limited (UNTL), responsible for over ten thousand staff and a one-time Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

He is the founder of Bulet International Nigeria Limited (the largest wholly owned indigenous construction company) which built most of the iconic public buildings in Abuja. He is the founding Managing Director of Democrat Newspaper and served as President of the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) for 8 years.

He is a philanthropist and a life patron of the NPAN, a staunch defender of a free press and free speech.

Archbishop of Canterbury



The Archbishop of Canterbury is the senior bishop and principal leader of the Church of England, the symbolic head of the worldwide Anglican Communion and the diocesan bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury. The current archbishop is Justin Welby, who was enthroned at Canterbury Cathedral on 21 March 2013.

Welby is the 105th in a line which goes back more than 1400 years to Augustine of Canterbury, the "Apostle to the English", sent from Rome in the year 597. Welby succeeded Rowan Williams.

The current archbishop, Justin Welby, the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury, was enthroned at Canterbury Cathedral on 4 February 2013. As archbishop he signs himself as + Justin Cantuar.

HE is a Security personality and a former member of MI5 British Security apparatus. He might have advised the President Muhammad Buhari's administration not to ignore Israel security MOSSAD and America if he want to curtail the activities of Independent State of Biafra IPOB.

UNIBEN Ex VC,
Harps on the need for
Quality education in Nigeria...



Prof. Emmanuel Nwanze



former Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin, Prof. Emmanuel Nwanze, has been conferred with Professor Emeritus at the 45th convocation ceremony of the institution. Others conferred with Professor Emeritus of the institution were Prof. Esosa Bob Osaze and Prof. John Oamen Igene. Prof. Nwanze became the recipient of the title of Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Life Sciences.

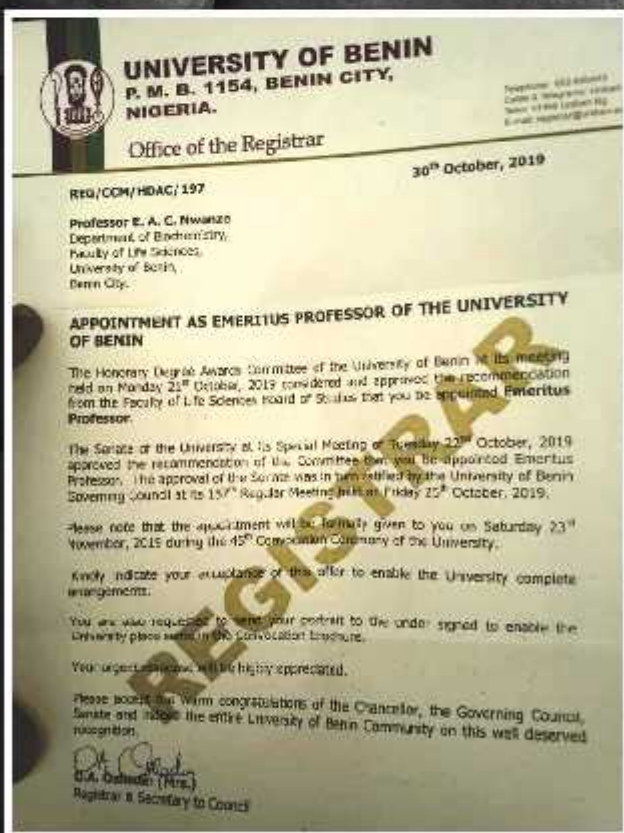
Prof. Nwanze said the consequences of mal-education of dysfunctional education were huge and grave for the society. He said there would not be democracy without education stating that free education at all tiers and levels is feasible and realizable. He called for strict adherence to Education tax laws as well as embarking on reform and restructuring Nigeria education

for 21st century global standards. A total 100 graduands were awarded with first class degrees honours while 273 were awarded doctorate degree (PhD) out of 10,198 graduands that were awarded various diplomas and degrees.

Former Vice Chancellor of UNIBEN, Prof. Faraday Orumwense, in his speech, said academic activities in the institution have taken a giant leap for the years he was VC.

Prof. Orumwense said the National Universities Commission gave full accreditation to the school's educational programmes.

Orumwense stated that a significant part of intellectual foot prints of his administration was the attraction of the Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Initiative (CERHI), a World Bank assisted project.



PROF SALAMI TAKES OVER AS UNIBEN 10th VC



We must harness our strength through cooperation so that we can take the university to the next level and continue to maintain its pride among the best university.

The New Vice Chancellor, University of Benin (UniBen), Prof. Lillian Salami, has solicited the support and cooperation of staff and students of the institution to make the institution compete with other institutions globally.

Prof. salami made the call in Benin shortly after taken over as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the institution.

"My administration will invest in innovation curriculum and teaching to deliver better ways of teaching and provide practical experience to our students. This will ensure that our student are marketable globally and relevant to present and future demand.

She said she had always done well in all the capacities she had served in the university before her current appointment.

"There is no doubt we have challenges but those challenges are surmountable and I am here to do justice to those challenges. The reasons why we are here is primarily for the students.

we would look into the accommodation, structure as well as staff welfare".

"We must have a very conducive environment. we cannot produce hoodlums. we need to have an environment that is friendly to students in order for them to learn better". Prof. Lillian promised to build on his predecessor's achievement to



advance the institution to an era of modern and world class high institution of learning.

Earlier, the immediate past Vice Chancellor, Prof. Faraday Olunmwense, described Prof. Salami as a very proactive and progressive minded person who will take the university to a greater heights

He called on the other management team of the institution to accord her the support and cooperation given to him during his tenure and assured her of his necessary support and protection in order to succeed.



PROFILE

Of PROF LILLIAN SALAMI

THE NEW VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN (UNIBEN)

Prof. Lillian I. Salami. (Nee Emovon.) Ph.D. Professor of Home Economics/Nutritional Education is a Benin and hails from Edo State, Nigeria, West Africa. She was born in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria on the 8th of August, 1956. Her early schooling started in Jos but was truncated by the Nigerian Civil War. Her both primary and secondary education were then completed in Edo State.

She obtained her West African School Certificate (O'levels) from Baptist High School, Benin City. In 1975 she travelled to the United States of America to University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point Campus and had her summer schooling in the University of Minnesota, St. Paul. She later transferred to North Dakota State University, Fargo after she got married in 1977. There she obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in 1979 in Home Economics and Master's degree in Nutrition in 1982.

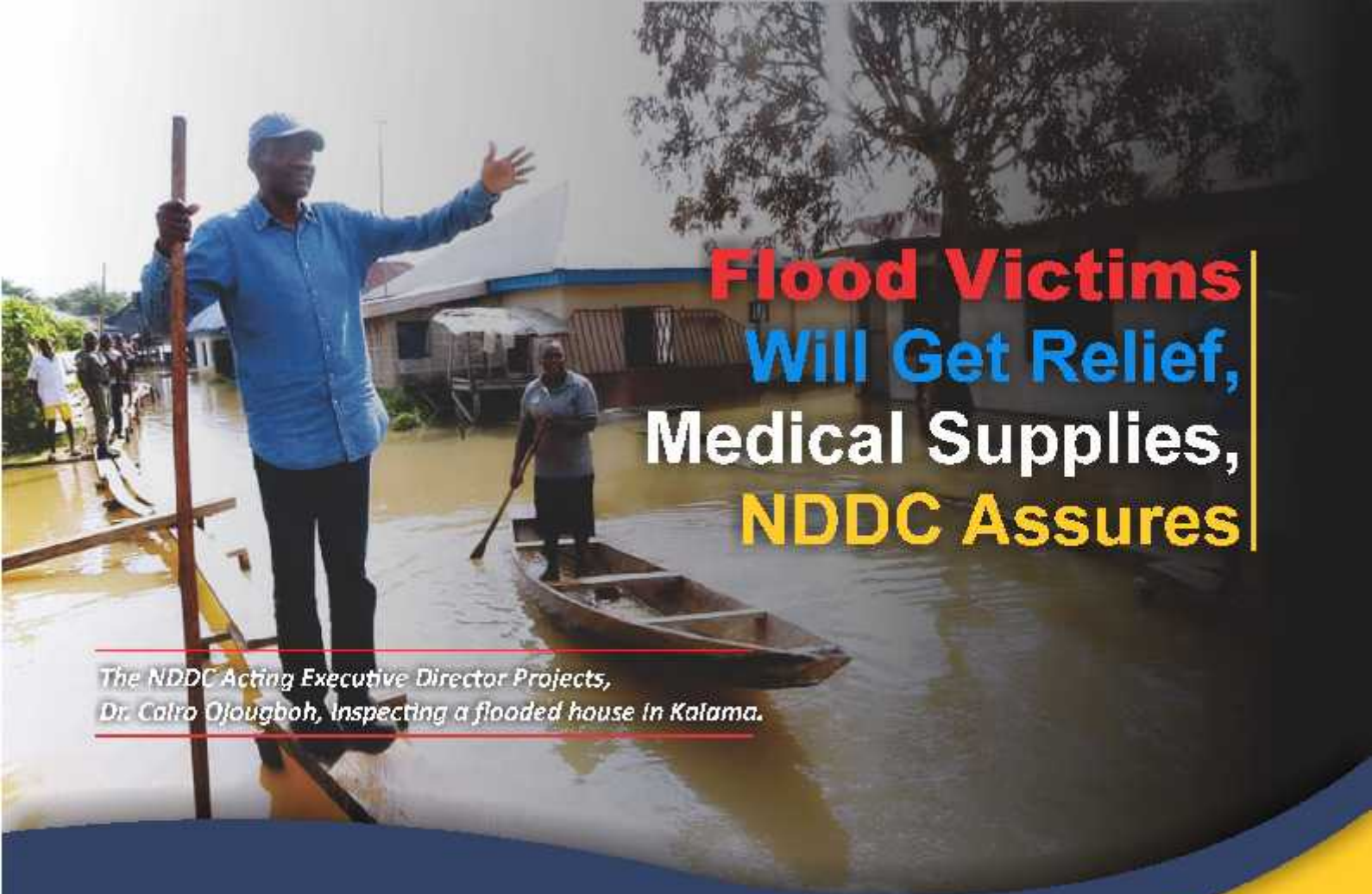
She returned back to Nigeria in 1985 and enrolled to serve in the National Youth Service Corps in Benin City. Upon completion of the national service, she made a brief start of her teaching

career with the then University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo, Nigeria. Between 1985 and 1994 she lectured Nutrition at the University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. This was interjected when she gained admission into University of Nigeria, Nsukka for a doctoral degree in Human Nutrition in 1989 which she obtained in 1991. In 1994, she was appointed a Senior Lecturer with the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria and acted as a Head of Department between 1996 and 1998 and rose to the rank of Professor in 2005.

In her desire to be well-grounded in teaching, she gained and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Education in 2001 from the University of Benin.

In 2004, Prof. Salami proceeded to the Vaal University of Technology, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa as a post-doctoral fellow which she obtained in 2005. She has held numerous positions at the prestigious University of Benin, Director of General Studies, Part-time programme and Chairman of the Board of University of Benin Integrated Enterprise. She has also served as a member in many other committees. She is the immediate past Dean of the Faculty of Education and was a member of the apex body of the University, the Governing Council. Prof. Salami has taught numerous undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Home Economics and Nutrition.

She has successfully supervised over 40 masters and 15 PhD students. She is a fellow of Nutrition Society of Nigeria and International Federation of Home Economics/Home Professional Association of Nigeria. As an administrator, she has held numerous administrative positions in the University of Benin and currently the Director General/Chief Executive of the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA, Ondo). She has to her credit over 75 peer reviewed articles in national and international Journals. Outside academic, she is a member of the Advisory council to his royal majesty, the Oba of Benin, Oba N'Oba N'Edo, Ukuokpolokpolo, Ogidigun, Oba Ewuare II.



Flood Victims Will Get Relief, Medical Supplies, NDDEC Assures

The NDDEC Acting Executive Director Projects, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh, inspecting a flooded house in Kalama.

The Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDEC, has pledged to provide relief materials, including medical supplies to flood victims in communities across the Niger Delta region.

Speaking during an inspection of some of the affected communities, the NDDEC Acting Executive Director, Projects, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh, said that the Commission's Interim Management Committee, IMC, headed by Gbese Dr. Jai Numich, would assist the flood victims as directed by President Muhammadu Buhari.

The NDDEC team visited communities in Forcados Local Government Area and Kalama in Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State and Mbiamia in Abiodun West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Dr. Ojougboh said: "A lot of the villages in communities across the region have been flooded and scores of people have been displaced. Many of the rural dwellers are in Internally Displaced Camps, IDPs, and the NDDEC will make provisions for them. We will provide medical and relief materials so that they too can join in the Christmas festivities."

He told some flood victims in Kalama that the intervention of the NDDEC would go beyond taking care of the immediate needs of the displaced villagers to tackle some of the post flood realities, which include taking measures to ward off the outbreak of diseases.

Ojougboh explained: "The flood took most people

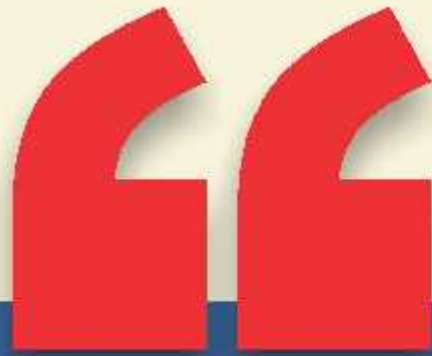
unawares but we can anticipate what follows when the water recedes. That is why we have decided to intervene to save our people from preventable diseases."

The NDDEC Acting Executive Director Projects observed that some lessons had been learnt from the recent flood, stating: "We now know that we should be better prepared next time. For now, we will do our best to help alleviate the suffering of the people."

He said that when the water recedes, the NDDEC would work out a comprehensive plan to ensure that the flood disasters did not take people unawares again.

“

As the flood is receding, we are making adequate preparations to provide some cushion for our people who may have lost personal belongings, crops and animals from their devastated farms.



We will campaign For Non-Violent, Clean Niger Delta, Says NDDC Boss

The Acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Ebenezer Dr. Jai Nunieh, says the Commission will drive a Niger Delta Next Level Re-Oriented Campaign to promote a non-violent and clean Niger Delta region.

Dr. Nunieh stated this yesterday during a courtesy visit by a delegation from the Ameyanabo of Okochiri, in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. King Ateke Tom, at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt.

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer was joined at the event by the Acting Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chief Ibanga Bassey Etang, the Acting Executive Director, Projects, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh and other directors.

Nunieh said: "We want all Niger delta stakeholders to join hands in the re-orientation for a better environment and a non-violent Niger Delta. With a clean and peaceful environment, investors will be interested to come to the region." She urged all Niger Deltans to support the efforts of the Federal Government to clean up Nigeria's oil-rich region, assuring that NDDC would encourage the various communities to keep their villages and waterways clean.

The NDDC boss called on all Niger Delta stakeholders to join in the new movement to take the region to the next level, assuring that President Muhammadu Buhari was determined to give the NDDC a new face and a new lease of life. She noted: "The President stands with us in the quest to turn things around for good in the Niger Delta.



That is why he approved the setting up of the Interim Management Committee to ensure that the process of the forensic auditing of the NDDC was carried out properly."

Nunieh stated that stakeholders in the region no longer had need to visit the NDDC to get things done because according to her, "our work will henceforth speak for us."

She emphasised, "We want to take development to the rural communities and we want the Community Development Committees, CDCs, to become very active in rural development. Consequently, we have advised the



youths that visit the NDDC to go back and wait for us in their communities because the water hyacinth contracts will henceforth be executed by communities through their CDCs."

Nunich said that the NDDC was going through a reformation process, which she observed went beyond the forensic auditing. She stated that the days of wastages were over, adding: "We must all put our hands on the deck to save the Niger Delta."

Earlier in his remarks, the leader of the delegation from the Amayanabo of Okochiri, Comrade Opia Joshua

Ojich, said they came to identify with the Interim Management Committee of the NDDC.

He regretted that the NDDC, which was set up to fast-track the development of the Niger Delta region, had not lived up to the expectations of the people of the region.

Ojich noted that the Commission was established as a result of the struggles of concerned Niger delatans. He, however, observed, "We are not satisfied with how the NDDC has been run in the past. That is why we support the position of President Buhari in setting up the Interim

Management Committee.

"It is unfortunate that having stayed in the crooks for years to fight for the development of the Niger Delta, we are yet to realize our goals because of poor management of our collective resources by the previous administrations in the NDDC."

Ojich commended members of the IMC, describing them as men and women of integrity with good track record. He thanked the Federal Government for giving a listening ear to the cries of the Niger Delta people, stating: "We are looking forward to seeing the new face of the Niger Delta."

NIMASA Moves to Inspire Educational Excellence, Donates Learning Materials To Schools in South-south, South-east



Students of Okrika Grammar School, Okrika, Rivers State, led by their principal, Abbey-Kalio Anibibia, receiving laptops and other educational materials from Head, Planning, Research, and Data Management Services, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Mrs. Ronke Thomas, who represented the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, during the distribution of learning materials to schools in the South-south and South-east geopolitical zones, in Port Harcourt.

Our CSR Aims to Stimulate Development, says Dakuku

In a gesture of goodwill intended to motivate quality education, the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has donated educational materials to schools in the South-South and South-East geopolitical zones. The gesture is part of the Agency's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

Schools in Imo, Rivers, Anambra, and Abia states benefited from the materials, which included desktop computers, laptops, uninterrupted power supply (UPS) system, white boards, exercise books, pens, pencils, white board pens, scientific calculators, and textbooks for English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Economics.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, said the donations were in line with the Agency's CSR mission to encourage educational excellence and stimulate national development.

Dakuku, who was represented by the Head, Planning, Research, and Data Management Services, NIMASA, Mrs. Ronke Thomas, stated, "We are making these donations to encourage learning and excellence in our education system, which will ultimately inspire development

"We also intend to encourage students to build a career in maritime and help to drive the on-going efforts to unlock the vast potential of Nigeria's blue economy.

"Though a few schools have been selected for this educational support exercise, which is being conducted simultaneously across the six geopolitical zones of the country, more schools will be benefiting from this gesture in the near future."

The benefiting schools were Okrika Grammar School, Okrika; Community Secondary School, Opobo; Royal Court School, Rumuekini; Community Secondary School, Ubioma; Umuariam Secondary

Technical School, Umuariam; Abayi Girls Secondary School, and Modebe Secondary School, Onitsha.

Thanking NIMASA for the kind gesture, a traditional ruler in Imo State, His Royal Highness, Eze Adison Nwaigwe, the Eze Ohachoro III of Umuariam, said, "NIMASA's choice of these public schools for this donation is symbolic and strategic. Education can make a lot of difference between the poor and the rich. If you commit yourself to quality study, you can get to the top, irrespective of your background."

The traditional ruler, who was represented by Engr. Ebere Anosike, urged the communities hosting the benefiting schools to support the government and the schools to secure the learning materials.

In his vote of thanks, the Director, Eastern Zone, NIMASA, Mr. Heaky Dimowo, praised the students' enthusiasm in learning, saying,



"We expect that this modest action of ours performed to convey our love for quality education will help to sustain and, indeed, increase the zeal of the students in education. And we urge the authorities of the recipient schools to ensure that the items are put to judicious use."

“

I Will Cut Nigeria's Crude Production Cost ...Petroleum Minister



Chief Timpre Sylva



The Federal Government will deepen the implementation of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act because it is an effective strategy for lowering Nigeria's high crude oil production cost, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timpre Sylva has said. The Minister stated this at the conclusion of his first working visit to NCDMB's head office in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, its new 17 storey headquarters building and other project sites.

Emphasizing that Government's primary target in the sector is to significantly reduce the unit cost of producing per barrel of crude oil, Sylva stated that "local contractors tend to be cheaper than expatriates and international contractors and that's why we want to encourage Local Content and give more opportunities to local contractors. By extension, we will reduce the cost of doing business in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria."



Local Content is part of cost reduction strategy. That's why I came here, to encourage more local participation in the activities of the industry."

The Minister also lauded the NCDMB for epitomizing its mandate by using an indigenous contractor to develop its new headquarters. He described the edifice as world class and a clear demonstration of the capacity of Nigerians contractors. Such superlative performance on projects would pave way for the engagement of other local contractors in the oil and gas and construction sectors, he suggested. "When you have seen one contractor perform this good, you are encouraged to patronize more local contractors."

He expressed confidence that the new NCDMB structure will attract a flurry of oil industry activities to Bayelsa State. He noted that "the problem we have had over the years was that the region where oil production takes place did not have proper structures to promote lots of events. That's why you see oil and gas events going to Abuja and Lagos. But when you have a

befitting facility here, going forward there will be a lot of oil and gas related activity in the Niger Delta."

The Minister commended the NCDMB for the numerous achievements it has recorded in the implementation of the NOGICD Act. He said, "I am quite impressed with what they have done in a very short time of existence."

The new headquarters building is a testament to that impressive performance and of course, you have the 10 mega watts independent power plant. It is a modular plant that can be increased up to 25 megawatts."

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote confirmed that Local Content implementation lowers the cost of crude oil production, particularly in the long run. He listed other key elements that contribute to high crude oil production cost in Nigeria to include security and infrastructural challenges as well as protracted contracting cycle.

He affirmed that several Nigerian oil service companies had executed several projects at costs much lower than their international counterparts. He also clarified that countries like Brazil, Malaysia and Norway that had practiced Local Content in their oil sector for decades had long enjoyed significant cost reduction in their per barrel cost. Wabote also explained that Local Content serves as an opportunity cost for the Federal Government to empower its citizens and get them involved in the activities of the oil and gas industry.

He added that Local Content guarantees security of supply in the industry, recalling that local service companies and skilled Nigerians personnel ensured that operations of the oil and gas industry continued apace during the height of restiveness in the Niger Delta region a few years ago, when most foreign companies and their staff had pulled out. Providing details on the new NCDMB facility, the Executive Secretary reiterated that it will be ready in December 2019 but relocation of staff will be in phases.

He stated that the project recorded huge impact on the local community. According to him, "when we started, we took about 50 youths from the host communities and trained them in carpentry, masonry, laying of tiles and other skills. Today, those youths are working on the facility and because of the skills they have acquired, the contractor will take them to other projects."

"In terms of Corporate Social Responsibility, we worked with the contractor and built a town hall for the Swai community which we commissioned last year. Many members of community also supplied sand, granite and other inputs. They have been an integral part of the construction."

The Executive Secretary also informed that NCDMB had developed a sustainability plan for the facility, which includes renting out some of the floors to reputable oil and gas organizations. "Currently we have two applications from operating companies."



Join Campaign for Safe, Clean Niger Delta, NDDC Urges Ex-Agitators

The Acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Gbese Dr Joi Nunieh, has charged former agitators in the Niger Delta to join the campaign to promote a safe and clean Niger Delta region.

Dr. Nunieh made the call yesterday when a group of ex-agitators from the oil-rich region paid her a courtesy visit at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt.

Seated with the NDDC Chief Executive Officer during the visit were the Acting Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chief Ibanga Bassey Etang, and the Acting Executive Director, Projects, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh. Nunieh said: "We have a duty to clean up the Niger Delta and make it safe for investors. With a clean and peaceful environment, investors will be willing to bring businesses to the region."

She urged Niger Delta stakeholders to support the efforts of the Federal Government to clean up the polluted environment in the region, assuring that NDDC would

encourage the various communities to keep their villages and beaches clean.

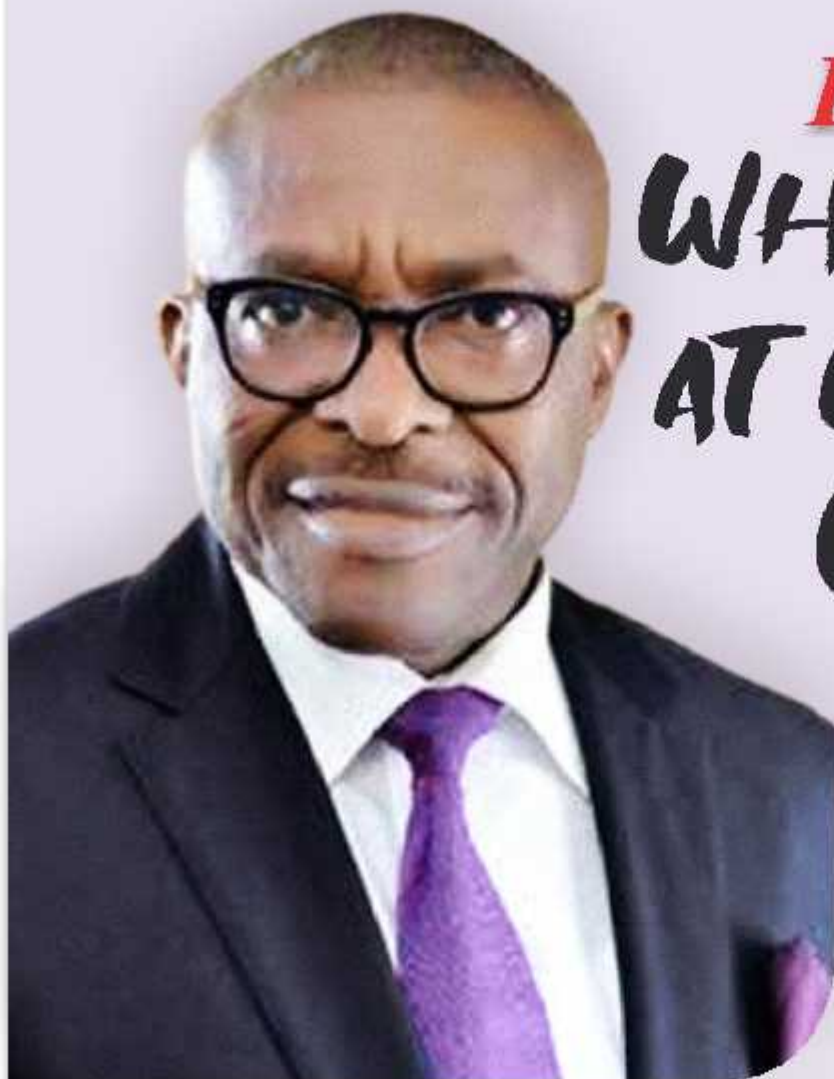
She declared: "The NDDC will institute a prize for the cleanest village in the Niger Delta. We need to provide safe drinking water for our people."

Nunieh said it was important for all communities in the Niger Delta to be part of the movement to take the region to the next level, assuring that President Muhammadu Buhari was determined to touch the lives of the people at the grassroots.

She re-affirmed the resolve of the NDDC to extend development to the rural communities, adding, "We are very determined to take development back to the rural areas."

Speaking earlier, the leader of the ex-agitators group, Comrade Jirjiri Elenwo, said that the coming of the Interim Management Committee, IMC, had brought changes to the NDDC and rekindled the hope of the people of the Niger Delta.

Elenwo promised that the ex-agitators would key into the clean-up campaign initiated by the new leadership at the NDDC.



EDO 2020: **WHY WE'RE AT WAR WITH OBASEKI**

... Gen Airhiavbere

next August, in a high-stakes election, expected to be characterized by backstabbing, violence and betrayals.

Airhiavbere, who contested for the plum job with Obaseki in 2016, said the APC would never know peace in Edo with the way the governor was relating with other members of the party.



Chieftain of All Progressive Congress (APC) in Edo State Gen. Charles Airhiavbere has explained that a faction of the party is at loggerheads with Gov. Godwin Obaseki because the governor has "refused to listen to voice of reason."

Airhiavbere, a former soldier turned politician, while speaking in Benin said that Obaseki lacked interpersonal skills needed to make the difference in the exalted office.

The party chieftain said that the governor had resorted to use of raw power in dealing with his political associates, a development, he said, had alienated many APC stalwarts in the state.

Edo State is billed for governorship polls

He said that contrary to what Obaseki wanted people to believe, agitations in the state were not because of "stomach infrastructure" or a quest for the resources of the state by the party members.

"It was never about godfather and god-son struggling for the control of government or resources of the state.

"It is all about ensuring governance with human face and our resolve is to check the destructive approach to governance in Edo State and put our party on the path of moral rectitude, transparency and inclusion.

"The struggle is all about a governor who lacks interpersonal relationship skill; who is vindictive and repelled by the presence of his party members and without provocation, resorts to anger and pugnacious display of raw power."



Airhavbere said that Obaseki had failed to fulfil his electoral promises and had refused to embrace dialogue, consultation, negotiation and compromise.

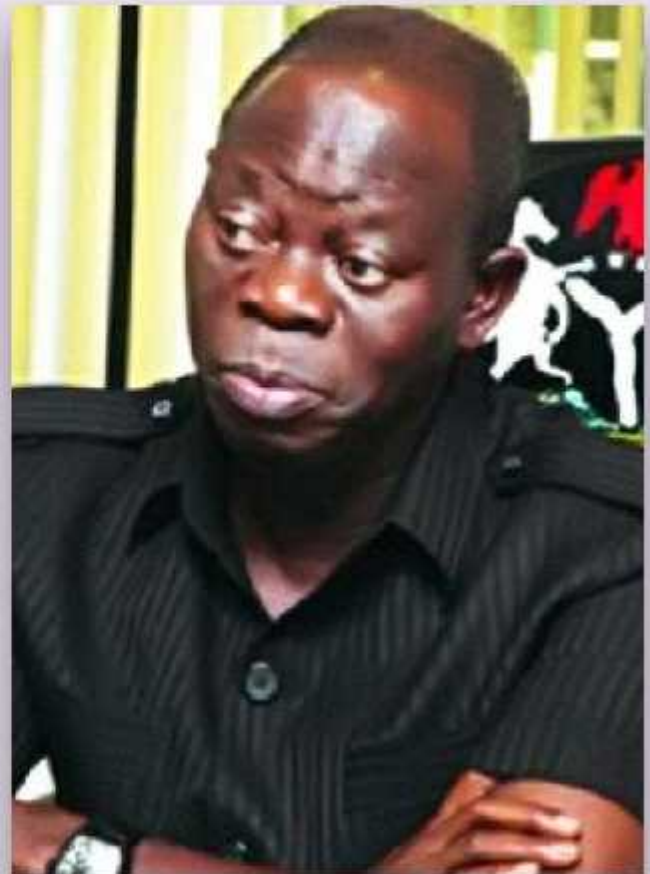
“This is a governor who believes in all ramifications that he is above the people and who has suddenly become a tyrant.

“We cannot fold our arms and watch helplessly. With these traits, it is obvious that the governor was never psychologically and emotionally prepared to be a leader.”

The party chief said it was because of these issues that ‘authentic’ members of the party came together on Nov. 13, to abolish the Edo Peoples Movement and suspend the governor, his deputy Philip Shaibu and the Secretary to State Government, Mr Osarodion Ogie.

He said that the suspension was also to send a signal to Obaseki that it was not going to be business as usual in the countdown to upcoming governorship elections.

Airhavbere said that APC members remained



loyal to the National Chairman of the party, Mr Adams Oshiomhole, assuring that everything would be done to protect the party from people bent on destroying it.

But reacting to the latest developments in the APC, the Edo Commissioner for Information, Mr. Paul Ohonbamu, said the intra-party crisis was a battle for dominance and liberation between the National Chairman of the party and the Governor. He described the purported suspension of Obaseki and other people from the party as an exercise in futility.

The commissioner said that Airhavbere and his group were being used to embarrass the governor, stressing that the governor was elected by the people and that the disgruntled APC members lacked powers to suspend him.

He recalled that the South-South Vice-Chairman of the party, Mr Elias Enag, had since described the suspension as null and void. Ohonbamu described Obaseki as a “beautiful damsel of democracy”, who is being sought by many political parties.

Nigeria to Save \$360m USD From NCDMB Sponsored Modular Refinery.

...To begin Operation in July 2020



Waltersmith modular refinery, a 5,000-barrel-per-day production capacity facility being promoted by Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), will commence operations in July 2020, an official

says. The Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Mr. Simbi Wabote, made the fact known at the opening ceremony of the 9th Practical Nigerian Content conference and Exhibitions in Yenagoa.

The theme of the conference is "Leveraging Local Expertise for Market Growth and Expansion".

Wabote said that the board was determined to push Nigerian content in the oil and gas sector to 70 per cent by 2027.

He said that under his leadership, Nigeria content had grown from 26 per cent to 37 per cent in the past two years.

He said that the board would focus on gas value chain, LPG cylinder production and offshore platform projects.

He said that the establishing of such in Nigeria would help to reverse an estimated capital flight of 360 million dollars per annum associated with production outside the country.

"We are working hard to ensure that local content is extended to other sectors of the economy."

In his remarks, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, lauded NCDMB for providing a world class facility at its newly built 17-storey office complex in Yenagoa.

The minister urged international and local Oil companies to emulate NCDMB and ensure full support for local content in their operations.

Sylva said that the Federal Government remained committed to deploying Nigerian content to drive down the cost of crude oil production to make more revenue for development.

He said the government was leveraging on the success of the Nigerian Content Act 2010 and planned to deploy the policy to other sectors of the economy through Executive Orders.

"Under my watch at the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, my priorities will include ending the smuggling of petroleum products into neighbouring countries, further reduction in gas flare and increasing oil output to three million barrels daily."

"We shall also work to bring down the cost of crude oil production by between three and five per cent," Sylva said. The Group Managing Director of Nigerian National



Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Malam Mele Kyari, said the corporation had supported all efforts to ensure local content in the oil industry.

Represented by Chief Operating Officer Corporate Services, Aliji Faruk Sa'id, the NNPC Managing Director said that it had become imperative to raise the bar for local content in the sector.

He said that there was need to ensure local content in oil lifting, exploration among others and pledged the corporation's support for the development of the oil and gas sector.

Abia Assures NDDC Of Collaboration



The Governor of Abia State, Dr. Okezie Ikpeazu, has pledged to support and collaborate with the Interim Management Committee of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, in its quest to take development to

the rural communities of the Niger Delta region.

The Governor gave the assurance on Tuesday while receiving a delegation led by the NDDC Acting Managing Director, Ghene Dr. Joi Nenieh, on a courtesy visit at the Government House Umuahia.

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer was accompanied by a member of

the House of Representatives Committee on NDDC, Hon Okezie Kalu; the NDDC Acting Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chief Ibanga Bassey Etang and other directors of the Commission.

Dr Ikpeazu urged the NDDC to continue with its inclusive approach

to development, which he noted, had made it possible for key stakeholders to make contributions to the activities of the foremost interventionist agency in Nigeria's oil-rich region.

He stressed the need for development actors in the region, especially the state governments, to

was necessary to avoid duplication of projects.

He called for streamlining of procurement and project selection by NDDC and advised that contracts should be awarded outside the season of elections to minimize political influences that often work against the interest of the people.

He called the attention of the NDDC to the 46-kilometre Obohia-Ohanku-Aba Road, urging the NDDC to address the challenges that had delayed its completion.

Earlier, the NDDC Acting Managing Director, Dr Nunieh, told the governor that the Interim Management Committee was determined to partner with the governors and key stakeholders of the Niger Delta to drive development in the rural areas.

The NDDC boss appealed to the governor to lend support to the new spirit of collaboration between the Commission and development partners. She observed, The NDDC is making a deliberate effort to collaborate with the governors and other major stakeholders in the Niger Delta region to ensure that development projects and programmes were carried out in such a way as to avoid unnecessary duplications.

She presented a list of 633 NDDC projects in Abia State to the governor, explaining that it included those at various stages of completion as well as the completed ones.

According to her, the list of NDDC projects in Abia "is very important" as it would enable the state government to assess how far the interventionist agency had impacted on the lives of the people, adding that the projects included roads, water, electricity, primary healthcare centres, university hostels, among others.

She stressed the importance of the list as a tool for harmonizing the development projects of both the



We are standing with Mr. President on this and we're saying that it is high time we cleaned up the NDDC

state and the NDDC.

Nunieh stated that the Interim Management Committee had a mandate from Mr President to sanitise the Commission and reposition it for better service delivery.

In his own remarks, the spokesman of the House of Representatives and member of the House Committee on NDDC, Hon. Kalu, said that federal lawmakers were in support of Mr. President's decision to appoint an interim management to sanitise the NDDC.

"We have seen the programme of the IMC and we are convinced that it has what it takes to provide the necessary results. With the kind of collaboration promised by the Commission, we are convinced that they will deliver."

Hon Kalu affirmed that the leadership of the House of Representatives believed in the new leadership of the NDDC and was ready to support the three-man committee to take the Commission to new heights.

He said he was delighted to be on the inspection team of the NDDC to assess the progress and status of the various projects being executed in Abia State.

The lawmaker joined the NDDC team in inspecting completed and on-going projects in Bende Local Government Area.



play a strategic role and indeed take leadership in the harmonization of the development strides in the region.

He declared: "We need to collaborate more in the execution of projects. There is no need for the NDDC to embark on projects that are already being handled by the state," adding that harmonization

Nigerian Army Is Now Cutting-edge Force, By Buratai



The Nigerian Army has achieved its objective of a cutting edge force in 2019 through innovations, inventions and professionalism.

Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Tukur Buratai, disclosed this at the opening of the Chief of Army Staff Annual Conference 2019 in Kaduna.

The theme of the conference is "Application of the Cutting Edge of the Nigerian Army in Tackling Contemporary Security Challenges".

He said that the conference was for appraising the activities and efforts toward achieving the overall objective of positioning the Nigerian army to face the task of 2020 and beyond.

Buratai disclosed that the successful invention and production of the first indigenous combat vehicles at the Command Engineering Depot was one of the greatest achievements of the army during the year.

He said that the production of the Mines Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) nicknamed, Uzugwu MRAP was an entirely indigenous production effort from start to finish by the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON).

According to him, the 44 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital was upgraded to the UN Ultramodern Level 4 Hospital in Nigeria that will cater for the medical needs of troops and other Nigerians.

"These two projects will no doubt save significant foreign

exchange of the country which could be used for other developmental purposes.

"Within the period under review, the Nigerian army embarked on massive infrastructure development in line with the Nigerian order of battle 2019.

"We conducted several local and overseas trainings, we carried out various operations as well as optimised logistical supports among others.

"We also evolved seamless and effective measures and improved tremendously in our welfare packages as approved to us by Mr president to boost the morale of troops across the nation.

"Additionally, we have intensified our civil-military relations effort and we improved on our media relations.

"We have also imbibed the best global practices in the conduct of our operations in line with the principles of the law during armed conflict as well as promotion and respect for fundamental human rights of all.

"All these efforts constitute the cutting edge of Nigerian army which have been employed to tackle the array of contemporary security challenges," he said.

Buratai commended President Muhammadu Buhari for his unwavering support to the Nigerian army.

"I want to humbly assure Mr president of our unalloyed loyalty and respect to the constitution," he said.

News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the president declared the week-long conference opened with notable dignitaries in attendance.

Notable among the dignitaries are the former Head of State, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, the Minister of Defence, Maj.-Gen. Bashir Magashi (retired), Gov. Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna State and members of the National Assembly.

Others are the Chairman, Senate Committee on Army, Sen. Ali Ndume and the House of Representatives counterpart, Mr Abdulrazak Ndamas as well as the Chief of Defence Staff and past chiefs of army staff.

FG Committed To Eradicating Smuggling Of Petrol Across Nigeria Borders

... Minister Commends NCDMB CEO

The Minister of State for Petroleum, Chief Timipre Sylva, has expressed the Federal Government's determination to eradicating the smuggling of Petroleum Products across the Nigerian borders

The Minister, while declaring open the 9th Practical Nigerian Content (PNC) organized by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state hinted that the priority areas of his ministry, includes; the completion of gas flare commercialization and reduction of the cost of crude oil production by at least 5%.

He commended the management of the NCDMB, under the leadership of the Executive Secretary, Engr. Simbi Wabote and the International Oil Companies (IOCs) operating in the country for creating the platform on yearly basis to discuss and proffer solutions to some problems confronting the oil sector.

He said: "The Ministry of Petroleum under my watch, is

focused to ensure the passage of the petroleum industry bill, increase of domestic refining capacity and implementation of the amended deep offshore and the production schedule acts.

"The key outcome of the priority areas will be job creation, poverty eradication which have been cardinal aspiration of the next level agenda of President Muhammadu Buhari's government.

"Let me reassure our partners and stakeholders of our commitments to the promotion of a fair and robust business environment for the private sector involvement and growth in the oil sector.

"With the theme of the workshop which is 'Leveraging the local expertise for market growth and expansion' the practical Nigerian Content provide the opportunity for policy makers, captain of industries and various stakeholders across the entire oil and gas value chain to convene and discuss in higher level and find solutions to most important issues surrounding the Nigerian Content implementation.



It further provide the opportunity to discuss the keys to unlock the industry's potential through effective Nigerian Content development.

FG To Sanction University Without Federal Character In Students Admission

From Vincent Egunyanga

President Muhammad Buhari has warned that the federal government will sanction any federal university that failed to comply with its directive to apply federal character in the admission of new students into the institution. Buhari, represented by the Deputy Secretary, National University Commission (NUC), Sulaiman Yusuf, gave

warning yesterday in Benin during the 45th Convocation/49th Founders Day Ceremony of the University of Benin.

"Government hereby directs all federal universities to ensure that henceforth every local government, all states and all geopolitical zones are represented in their admission of new entrance."



APC Govs' forum Rates GANDUJE Highest among States

in APC States report.

In a letter signed by the Director General of Progressive Governors Forum, Salihu Mohammed Lukman, and forwarded to governor Ganduje, reads "There is an all-round increase in the pattern of initiatives introduced by the states with Kano State recording the most of the initiatives for this Month with nineteen (19) strides, spreading across empowerment, job creation, healthcare, education, security, transportation, power, environment, sports (among others)."

In a monthly rating of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Governors Forum, tagged Progressive Governors Forum assessment of individual APC states, Kano state under Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, is rated with highest points in developmental activities.

Kano takes the lead in two consecutive Months, beating all other APC states, in what is called October 2019 Progressive Strides- Tracking Developmental Initiatives

Kano is followed by Lagos state with 18 strides, Ekiti state with 17 strides, while Edo state records 13 strides, Katsina and Kwara states follow with 11 each, Yobe state 10 and Jigawa state with 9 strides

Others, according to the letter are Kaduna, Niger and Ogun states that record 7 strides for each state. Borno and Kebbi states follow with 6 each, Ogun and Plateau states with 5 each and finally Gombe, Kogi, Nassarawa and Ondo states follow with 4 strides each.

According to the letter, the overall characteristics of the report shows that "All states in the Forum were represented and featured in the edition "

He directed the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), and NUC to ensure compliance commencing from the 2020 admission season.

He added, "NUC and JAMB have been directed to thereafter carry out a comprehensive student audits to ascertain compliance. You can be assured that government will not hesitate to apply sanctions against erring institutions," he said.

He noted government is aware of the ongoing efforts of the NUC to undertake a comprehensive review of the benchmark minimum academic standards and reform the curricula in all academic disciplines in Nigerian university systems.

"In this regard, universities must involve innovative strategies for curricula development. Such new curricula must address and proffer solutions to breach the real and perceived skills and knowledge gaps between labour market expectations and what graduates bring to the labour market which presently appears to blight the quality of our graduates."

While acknowledging the positive contributions of

Association Staff Union of University (ASUU), in instigating government's increased funding interventions, he advised ASUU and other campus based unions to pay closer attention to issues pertaining to the internal governance of the universities and other tertiary institutions rather than focus almost exclusively on governance at the national and subnational level.

He said the universities are increasingly being ravaged by maladministration, corruption, indiscipline, immorality and different variance of unethical practices such as sex-for-grades right under their noses and challenges ASUU to beam searchlight on the way and manner in which universities are governed.

On his part, the institution's outgoing Vice Chancellor, Profaday Onumwense, noted the institution has achieved much in the academic development under his administration.

He charged the graduates to be good ambassadors of the school as they have been found wanting in character and learning.

NASS To Invite NLNG, Shell, 15 Other Oil Coys Over Multi-billion Naira NDDC debts

The National Assembly is set to invite 17 international and local oil companies including the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Limited (NLNG), Shell Petroleum and Conoil over multi-billion Naira being owed the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

The move was part of an expanded probe being carried out by the joint Senate and House of Representatives committee on the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) on its activities.

Co-chairman of the joint committee, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo (APC, Ondo) who disclosed this while speaking to journalists said various companies and government Ministries Department and Agencies will be invited to explain their roles in all transactions between the NDDC and other private and public entities

Tunji-Ojo explained that, the minister of finance, Hajia Zainab Ahmed, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) governor, Godwin Emefiele, the Accountant General of the Federation, Alhaji



Ahmed Idris as well as the Auditor General of the Federation, Anthony Ayine will be invited to testify before the joint committee.

He added that, private organisations in the petroleum industry will also be invited by the committee to testify and explain their various transactions and agreements with the NDDC.

Nigeria May Break Up Violently - Gen. Ogomudi

A former Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Alexander Ogomudia (rtd.), has remarked about recent negative developments in the country, saying they are indications that the country is overdue for restructuring and in urgent need of a new way of governance. Ogomudia said he feared for the future of the country and the present security

situation in the country, saying "a country where a former Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshall Alex Badeh, was killed in the streets like an urchin, and nothing happened, is a sign that the nation is not moving in the right direction."

The former Chief of Defence Staff who delivered the keynote address at the Good Governance Lecture organised by the

Presidency Tackles Former Defence Chief for Advocating 'Violent Restructuring'

The Presidency on Sunday alerted the nation on the activities of some groups of citizens advocating for restructuring of Nigeria through violent change and social unrest.

The President's Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Malam Garba Shehu, raised the alarm while reacting to a statement credited to a former Chief of

Defence Staff, retired Gen. Alexander Ogomudia, who submitted that, 'Nigeria may be restructured violently.'

According to him, the greatest threat facing Nigeria as a geo-political entity comes from those mindsets and entities rooted in the idea of violence as a means to change.

The presidential aide stated that, "this vituperation, coming from a former military Chief speaks volumes about the mindset of groups of citizens who have yet to accept

Catholic Church of Warri's Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) warned that the continued suppression of the agitations for the restructuring of the country could lead to a violent breakup of the country.

He urged those opposed to restructuring to borrow a leaf from the breakup of Yugoslavia and Sudan saying that even in Spain the Catalonians want to break away and that in Britain, Scotland seeks autonomy.

He said restructuring was a global trend which every right-thinking government should embrace for national integration and development especially in a country like Nigeria, where he said we practice "a fake federal system"

But a spokesman to President

Muhammadu Buhari, Mallam Garba Shehu described Ogomudia's statement as vituperations of someone who is "yet to accept democracy as a form of government"

"It is very important to stress that we as a nation, are a constitutional democracy and changes to the country in structure, its systems, policy and politics must abide by the norms of democracy otherwise they would be extrajudicial and therefore unconstitutional," Garba Shehu said.

Ogomudia equally criticised the death penalty for the hate speech bill. He created a mild drama in the hall when paused to ask anyone who can define hate speech to come forward. When no one came out, Ogomudia said "something that no one can truly

define, they want to impose death penalty for? Where is this country headed?"

He described the type of politics practised in Nigeria today as toxic and detrimental to national development, saying "we have a fractured politics, and everyone is doing things that will hurt the country." He said Nigeria needed true federalism to advance like other nations, saying that Nigeria is the only country where states share money coming from only one source monthly.

He argued that Nigeria was overdue for change, adding, that restructuring the country would guarantee, ethnic harmony, accountability, freedom of speech, independence of the Judiciary and a fair electoral process.

democracy as a form of government. "It is very important to stress that we as a nation, are a constitutional democracy and changes to the country in structure, its systems, policy and politics must abide by the norms of democracy, otherwise they would be extrajudicial and therefore unconstitutional.

"This system has subsisted, uninterrupted, for upward of 20 years and still going, and the country's law courts, with its armed forces are primed at all times to defend it using all means that are lawful.

"The biggest challenge to the country today is not necessarily from perceived regional or state imbalances or conflicts between the government at the centre and states but from the mindsets and entities rooted in the idea of

violence as a means to change.

"Such individuals, groups and entities peddling ideologies of violence and hate are closed to the notion of healthy dialogue through popular platforms including elected parliaments, hence only open to violence and destruction as their means."

He, however, maintained that the Buhari administration would continue to promote the virtues of democratic principles to counter "the growing calls for violence as a means to change" in the country.

He said: "This administration under President Muhammadu Buhari is strongly of the view that democracy that is self-correcting under the laws as we have is the answer to growing calls for violence and a means to change in the structure, form and content of

the union that binds us as one country."

Shehu also dismissed the assertion that nothing had been done by the Buhari administration on the unfortunate gruesome murder of retired Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh, a former Chief of Defence Staff. "Equally important is to deny the General's assertion that nothing had been done on the unfortunate gruesome murder of Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh, a former Chief of Defence Staff.

"Truth is, the investigation instituted by General Olonisakin, the current Chief of Defence Staff, has led to the arrest of 14 suspects based on their alleged involvement in a report that has been sent to the police and the Nigeria Air Force for further action," he added.

“Why I Left PDP

...Pastor Ize Iyamu



Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) former governorship candidate Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu recently led former Edo State House of Assembly

Speaker Bright Okothodion, former Deputy Speaker Festus Ebea and former state chairman of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria Tony Omogbo to defect to the All Progressives Congress (APC). Others were Mrs. Tawa Idubor, Chief Blessing Agbomliere, Ulinosa Ogherwa, Immanuel Momoh and several others.

They announced their mass resignation from the PDP through a voice vote after a motion was moved and seconded by Ebea (Edo Central), Immanuel Momoh (Edo North) and Idubor (Edo South).

Giving reasons for leaving the PDP, Okothodion said they had an intense and exhaustive deliberation on the political wrangling and demise of internal democracy in the Edo state chapter of PDP as well as consulted widely across the three senatorial districts of the state.

Okothodion noted that the present leadership of the Edo PDP had lost its

political direction, adding that all attempts to suggest ways of redirecting the fortunes of the party were resisted by the leadership of the party. Okothodion said the action of suspending top leaders of the party on spurious allegations were undemocratic and has reduced the morale of members to its lowest.

“That as a result of leadership failure, Edo State PDP no longer command the electoral sentiment of the Edo people. We, therefore in our numbers collectively resolve that Edo state PDP has failed in its objective mission to the people and we have this day resigned our membership of the PDP and have resolved to join the All Progressives Congress.” Addressing party supporters, Pastor Ize-Iyamu said the resignation was not to give room for speculation or give impression that they were retiring from politics.

Pastor Ize-Iyamu cautioned them against throwing stones at the house we once inhabited, a house we have many friends and many associates. He said, “PDP and any other political party for that matter were not our enemies. Please refrain from any attack that suggests that we are leaving PDP in anger or in bitterness. What is important is our primary objective in politics, why we

chose to be in politics.

“Many people have different reasons for being in politics but for most of us in this group we see politics as an opportunity to represent our people, we see it as an opportunity to assess government and bring the dividends, the benefits of government to our people and we cannot be fulfilled if we play politics without being able to achieve these goals.

“People might call us names, but many understand why we have to do what we did. We have come what we have done because we believe that we just assist to bring development to our people. We must assist to bring solutions. It is not enough to just criticise and criticise. We want to be in the forefront of providing solutions. “We want to assure our brothers there that we are not coming to a strange place. APC is home to many of us just like PDP was home.

We are going into the APC with good intentions. We are not going there to join factions. We are going to join APC. We are going there to help strengthen the party and we intend to give our full allegiance to those in charge, those in authority. We will not undermine the powers that be. We will not join in any fight or name calling but we have come with the best of intentions.”

UN, Italian Govt Scores Edo High In Human Trafficking Fight

The United Nations Women Country Representative to Nigeria and Economic Community of West Africa State (ECOWAS), Ms. Comfort Lamprey and the Deputy Ambassador of Italy to Nigeria, Tarek Chazli, have scored the Edo State government high in addressing illegal migration and human trafficking in the state.

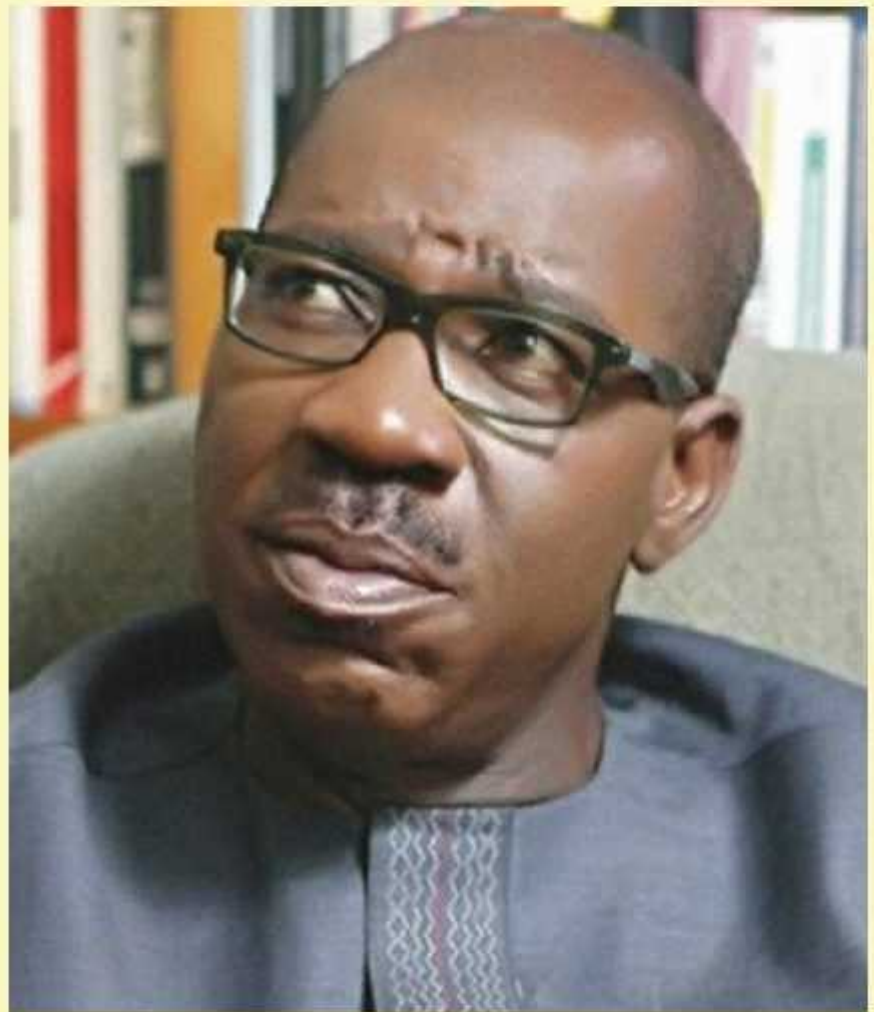
They gave the commendation in Benin yesterday during the official launching of the Preventing Forced Migration and Trafficking of Women and Girls in Nigeria.

Ms. Lamprey noted that the signing of the bill prohibiting Violent Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) into law by the state government was apt in reducing the scourge of forced migration and trafficking of women and girl-child in the state.

He said the implementation of the bill will be key to addressing some of the root causes underlying the phenomenon of trafficking of women and girls.

"We will also build synergies with ongoing interventions by sister UN agencies, including UNODC, IOM, and UNHCR who have made important contributions in support of the state government's efforts to curb this menace", she said.

She said globally, UN Women has built a solid and robust knowledge-base and expertise in the areas of addressing gender, forced migration and trafficking of women and girls. Ms. Lamprey however noted that



Nigeria has presented itself as country of origin, transit and destination for all streams of migration and trafficking.

According to her, beyond irregular migration, Nigeria also experiences significant trafficking in Women and children which constitute the majority of those trafficked to Europe.

On his part, the Deputy Ambassador of Italy to Nigeria, Tarek Chazli, said the state government has proven itself to be a reliable partner in the fight against human trafficking.

He added "that is the reason Italian government is willing to assist in all possible ways to address the scourge.

Also speaking, the Edo State governor, Godwin Obaseki represented by Prof. Yinka Omorogbe, chairperson, Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking/Attorney General and the Commissioner for Justice, said his government is committed to addressing the scourge of human trafficking and irregular migration in the state.

The Lucrative World of Sex Trade, Human Trafficking And The Nexus Between Italian / Nigerian Cartels



Our Reporter visited Italy and reports on the underground booming criminal sex-trade in Human Trafficking between Nigeria and its Italian cartel.

Beyond the aesthetic and a blend of architectural master piece that attract millions of tourists annually to the cities of Europe, particularly Italy, the City over the years has become one of the receiving world capital of a growing booming sex trade and human trafficking.

The United Nations migration agency report indicated that more 80 percent of trafficked women from Nigeria especially from South-South state of Edo are brought to Italy for sexual exploitation.

The lure of lucrative jobs and promised of a better life by their traffickers become a mirage the moment they step their feet on the soil of Europe. In fact to many of the victims it is the beginning of a journey into the world of sex for euro and drug dealings.

The stories of exploited young African migrant girls abound right from the point of being trafficked from the source Country through the perilous journey of crossing the Libyan deserts and the Mediterranean Sea to the coast of Italy where hundreds and thousands of migrants are rescued by Italian coast guard.

Most of the rescued victims are taken into various settlement centres seeking asylum from the Italian authority. While they wait in rehabilitation centres some of them are engaged skill acquisition and farm work.

However, global efforts by the European Union (EU), the International Organization on Migration (IOM), and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO's) in waging the fight against illegal human trafficking, sex-trade, appears to have taken a new dimension as the perpetrators both from the source nation and Europe have formed a powerful cartel in the thriving sex-trade.

Our correspondent, who was part of a visiting delegation on the instance of a Sicily-based NGO, International Cooperative South South (ICSS), was funded by the European Union.

Part of the focus of the engagement was to build and foster synergy between Edo state government and other stakeholders against human trafficking.

It was however gathered that despite recorded efforts in the reduction in influx of trafficked girls by their madams, some Italians in collaboration with their Nigerian counterparts are deeply involved and benefiting hugely from the dehumanizing business said to be second globally to drugs trafficking.

Confession of Repentant 'Madams' Some of the 'madams' in the Cities of Palermo, Catania and Barcellona had abided by the declaration of the Oba of Benin who had two years ago placed curses on traffickers and freed the victims of sex exploitation confessed that they are still haunted by their past from their victims even as opened up that they have stopped the illegal trade.

One of the repentant 'madams' from Benin City, who pleaded not to be mentioned in the report confessed: "Since the Oba placed curses against trafficking in girls, we have since stopped the business, we respect and fear our monarch. No true sons or daughters of Benin can go against Oba's directives. I don't have any girl in my custody anymore". "Even at that, we are still being arrested by the Italian Police every now and then. Some of the freed girls at any flimsy excuses will just call the police that we still trafficked in girls to Italy. This is our predicament right now, some of our Benin women and men are presently in prison". "I'may enough, the girls we brought still go to the road to prostitute and we don't ask them for money since our Oba's pronouncement. We want to appeal to the Oba to also help us by placing curse on anybody that will lie against repentant madams because this is what our people do now in Italy". She stated.

Other repentant traffickers also alleged that some Edo leaders in Palermo connived with police authority on trumped up allegation of against former traffickers of engaging in trafficking, thereby sending many of them to prison.

For instance, in his city of Palermo alone with a population of about 400 Edo indigenes had shun to join any association in the City for fear of betrayals among its kinsmen.

According to Happy Agbo, a resident of Palermo stated: "Human trafficking has stopped". She said: "We Benin's revered our Oba, we no longer do it. They are however informants among us who lied to the Police in Italy. Oba should also place curses on informants among the Edo's in Italy. Imagine someone lying to the police that you still trafficked in girls; just because the police will pay them between €500 to €1,000. This is the problem we facing now in Italy."

In one of the resettlement centre located at Casa, in Palermo, housed over 100 girls. One of the trafficked Nigerian girls who identified herself as Precious narrated that she came to Italy through Libya and had since remain in the camp in the last 2 years said the condition at the centre is better than returning to Nigeria.

"I have spent two years in this place. The Italians are taking care of us, they normally pay us €75 monthly, but in the last months we have not being paid and they don't allow us to travel or go out. We are about 140 girls in the centre. Whatever the situation here life is far better than in Nigeria". She added.

Building Synergy Against Sex-Trade An interpreter, Maria Raimondo, work with one of the NGOs that caters for trafficked girls in Palermo, described the condition of the girls in Italy as pathetic. "The situation of trafficked girls in Italy is very sad at the moment. Some who were trafficked many years ago have become 'madams' themselves because it is the only business they can do. At the moment there is serious economic crisis in Europe, even for those of us who are Italian we are struggling to survive".

"Many of the girls came in their young age and left young children behind in Nigeria to pursue greener pastures. We are concern about the girls; they need protection especially knowing that some of them had taken oath from their traffickers".

"However, I can't want to under estimate what the Oba has done; his pronouncement on the matter has been very helpful too. The tools the madams use now are threats, and physical attack to compel the girls to do their bidding, you can see visible scars on the victims and fractured arms as a result of beating".

"Another issue we are facing is the health situation of the migrant girls, some of the girls at the age 13, has been raped severally on the way and got pregnant. When they arrived the shores of Italy such person is no longer of sound mind because of the trauma she had passed through. Some of the girls we are handling their cases are tired and in fact they want to go back but they are afraid of the stigma of not making a success of their journey". She stated.

At a round table meeting convened by CISS, held at the Nigeria Embassy in Rome, attracted among others forum of NGOs and Italian prosecutors.

Representatives of Nigeria Ambassador in Italy, Salawu Helo, the minister, Consular & Immigration, insisted that one of the solution to the trafficking in human and sex trade can come when all stakeholders

come together to find a uniform approach to it.

"Research has shown that after drugs, human trafficking is the highest money spinner. Nigeria like you know is signatory to many treaty against trafficking. Perpetrators have been punished and that why we have NAPITP. We are still looking at clauses where parliament can be useful intervention.

Bello, noted that it is also pertinent for the Italian government to also sanction perpetrators at the receiving state adding that if there is no demand there won't be supply.

"The stringent visa policy to Europe encourage illegal migration, this I think should be review so that those seeking to travel for one reasons or the other can do so through appropriate entry channel. European government should also as a matter of urgency help us to recover losted funds that would help to develop Nigeria and thereby keep our youth at home. President, Coordinamento Italiano, Maria Ludovica posited that the implementation of conventions is very key to the fight against human trafficking.

"I think there is need to double action and network globally. Lack of economic development forced people to migrate, women empowerment is important and must be taken seriously, education has to reach every nook and cranny of Africa and free flow of information.

A member of Edo state Task Force against Human Trafficking and former aide to Governor Godwin Obaseki, Comrade Solomon Okodwa, told the Italian stakeholders that Edo state is the most affected and called for urgent intervention and assistance geared towards rehabilitation and empowerment for victims.

"One of the approaches to end the scourge is intensive advocacy and massive campaign. In Edo, we have taken the campaign to markets, schools, churches, market place and mosques. The Edo state government alone cannot do it".

"The reintegration plan of governor Obaseki is see how to cater for those who returned from other Countries. The task force set up by the government is working and taking the campaign to nook and cranny of the Edo state". Understanding Criminal Global Network Sex trade between Nigeria and its Italian criminal gangs continue to boom because most of the victims find it difficult to disclosed the identity of their traffickers.

It was however learnt as enumerated earlier that some Italians pay huge sum of money to their contacts in Nigeria who trafficked girls to Europe. The girls are forced to pay over 100% of the sum they spent to get to Italy before they can be set free.

It was gathered that Italian Police and Interpol through intelligence are working to unravel the network of the criminal sex-trade gang. Though some arrested made were said to have opened upon their activities both in Palermo and Catania. Corroborating the global criminal network, a member of Edo community and a human right activist, Pastor Mike Oputek, said the sex-trade in Italy has continued to grow into a huge lucrative business owing to the criminal collaboration with some Italian traffickers that benefit from the trade.

He said: "From investigation, I discovered that not all traffickers are mainly Nigerians, some Italians are also deeply involved who are not seen in the pictures. Italian madams will sponsor Nigerian traffickers to bring girls to the Country".

"The trafficker usually contacts his Nigeria counterpart who scouts for girls to be trafficked to Europe where they forced the girls to prostitute and money will be paid to the Italian sponsors.

"Though they are few in the trade but they do exist. The Italian traffickers paid more to the madams to bring girls, sometime they collect between €5,000 to €10,000 per girl in return they pay about twice the amount to the Italian madam within 2 months. Thereafter, the Nigeria madams automatically inherit the girls who now pay between €10,000 to €50,000 to their Nigerian madam that brought them before they can be free to work for the own money".

CISS, Project Manager, Margurita Maniscalco, said one of the challenges migrants face is the respect of their right which she noted is what CISS over the years is committed to its organization. "We perfectly understand the need of Nigeria boys and girls migrant.

We have to be honest here. In Europe, we have significant problem in respecting the human right of migrants but with our NGO it means that we are independent from the government, we promote and stand for the rights of migrants.

"We believe as humans, we are equal with the same rights, the main issue is opening the migration policy of Europe and we are supporting a big change in policy but we are yet to see the change".



College Of Medical Sciences, RSUTH, My Legacy -Wike

Rivers State Governor, Chief Nyesang Wike has declared that the College of Medical Sciences and the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital (RSUTH) form part of the legacy that he plans to leave for Rivers people.

Speaking during a courtesy visit by the resource verification team of the National Universities Commission (NUC) to the Rivers State University College of Medicine and Rivers State University Teaching Hospital and School of Nursing at the Government House, Port Harcourt on Friday, Governor Wike assured that his administration will sustain the investments in the health sector for the development of Rivers State.

“The Rivers State University College of Medical Sciences and the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital are part of the legacies that I will leave for the people of Rivers State.

“Health is key, and we will sustain the investments in the sector. Rivers State was created in 1967, without a College of Medicine to train qualified medical personnel. We only had the University of Port Harcourt Medical College, which is a Federal institution. What we are doing is to ensure that we have a College of Medical Sciences to groom our own medical personnel in the state”, he said.

He assured that his administration will continue to approve the employment of relevant academic and medical staff for the College of Medicine and the RSUTH.

He also announced that the construction of the Department of Clinical Sciences and Clinical Students Hostel will be completed on schedule, adding that all the necessary medical facilities designated to work as part of the RSUTH will be upgraded to serve the purpose.

The Governor informed that the Mother and Child Hospital, which will come on stream in May 2020, will serve as the support facility for gynecology and pediatrics of the RSUTH.

The Governor, who announced that his administration will supply all necessary vehicles for the functional operation of the medical school and Teaching Hospital, also stated that the state Government will construct a new School of Nursing building because of the dilapidated nature of the current school, saying that in the interim, the school will operate from the School of Midwifery.

Earlier, the leader of the National Universities Commission (NUC) Medicine Verification Committee, Prof MBT Umar, congratulated Governor Wike for the quantum leap in the provision of facilities for the College of Medical Sciences and the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

He said at a time other states are afraid of setting up medical college, Governor Wike remains committed to the establishment and growth of the Medical College.

“This is a time when several states are afraid of setting up medical schools. I am not surprised on what we have seen at the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital. After all, you are Mr. Projects. If you have students at the clinical level, you are set”, the NUC boss said.

He continued that given the zeal with which the Governor is driving the College of Medicine, Sciences and the RSUTH, the two will be the legacies by which Rivers people will remember him.

Pro-Chancellor of the Rivers State University, Justice Iheke Ndu, on his part, said the approval from the NUC will lead to the Rivers State University offering M.B.B.S. and Bachelor of Nursing Sciences.

Justice Ndu thanked the State Governor for approving and developing the former Brathwaite Memorial Specialist Hospital to the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital while also commending the Governor for developing key facilities for the development of the institution.

He also commended Governor Wike for employing 75 specialist doctors to teach at the College of Medical Sciences and the Rivers State University Teaching



Indictment: South-East Governors Back Air Peace Boss, Onyema



"He has remained in Aviation industry which is highly challenging in our country when many people could not cope.

"Onyema is at peace with the federal government and has on various occasions commended President Buhari for assisting him to get up to five international licenses. Many officials of Buhari's administration had stood for him many times in promoting and encouraging Air Peace operations in and outside Nigeria.

"Air Peace is a business and most businesses usually have one issue or the other to settle and this one is not an exception. We plead with Buhari to please continue to give Onyema all the necessary support and protection to enable him sort out this matter peacefully.

"Onyema has highly assisted the aviation industry in Nigeria and we must all stand to defend this business. The governors of the South East will do everything within the law to support Onyema overcome this issue so as to continue to offer more excellent services to Nigeria.

"We request the US Ambassador to Nigeria to please step into the matter so as to peacefully resolve the issue without destroying Onyema's reputation.

"We also urge Onyema to engage experienced and external financial managers to work with the US government in resolving and rectifying his business tax matter if any, according the statement."

The five governors of South East have thrown their weight behind the embattled

Air Peace boss, Mr Allen Onyema over the alleged money laundry leveled against him.

The governors particularly pleaded with President Buhari to support and protect Onyema and his business until the matter is resolved.

Onyema was accused by the US authorities for allegedly laundering over \$20 million from Nigeria through United States bank accounts in a scheme involving false documents for the purchase of airplanes.

In a statement signed by Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, of Enugu, Willie Obiano of Anambra, Emeka Ihedioha of Imo, and Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia, the forum frowned at insinuations that some government officials are against the Air Peace boss, and as such, want to pull him down, stating that such statement only breeds hatred and disunity.

The forum pointed out that even Onyema has on different occasions commended President Buhari for assisting him to get up to five international licenses.

"We have read a lot of comments by different individuals and interest groups on the matter and want to point out that the insinuations that some Nigerians or government officials are against Onyema and want to pull him down by all means is a ploy to instigate hatred against him.

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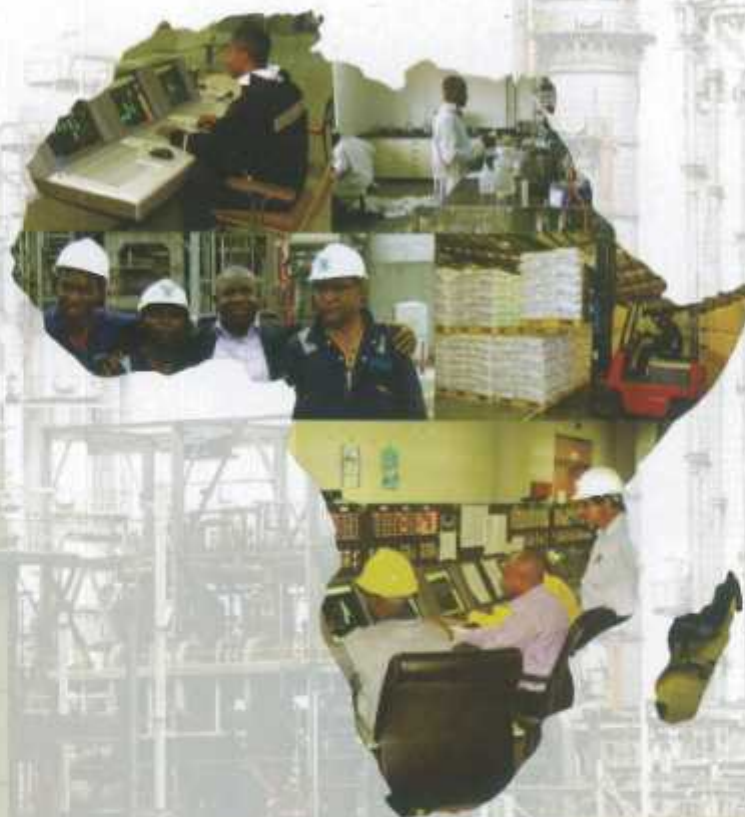
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