

**BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF EDO, AS OBASEKI,  
OSHIOMOLE FIGHT GET MESSIER**

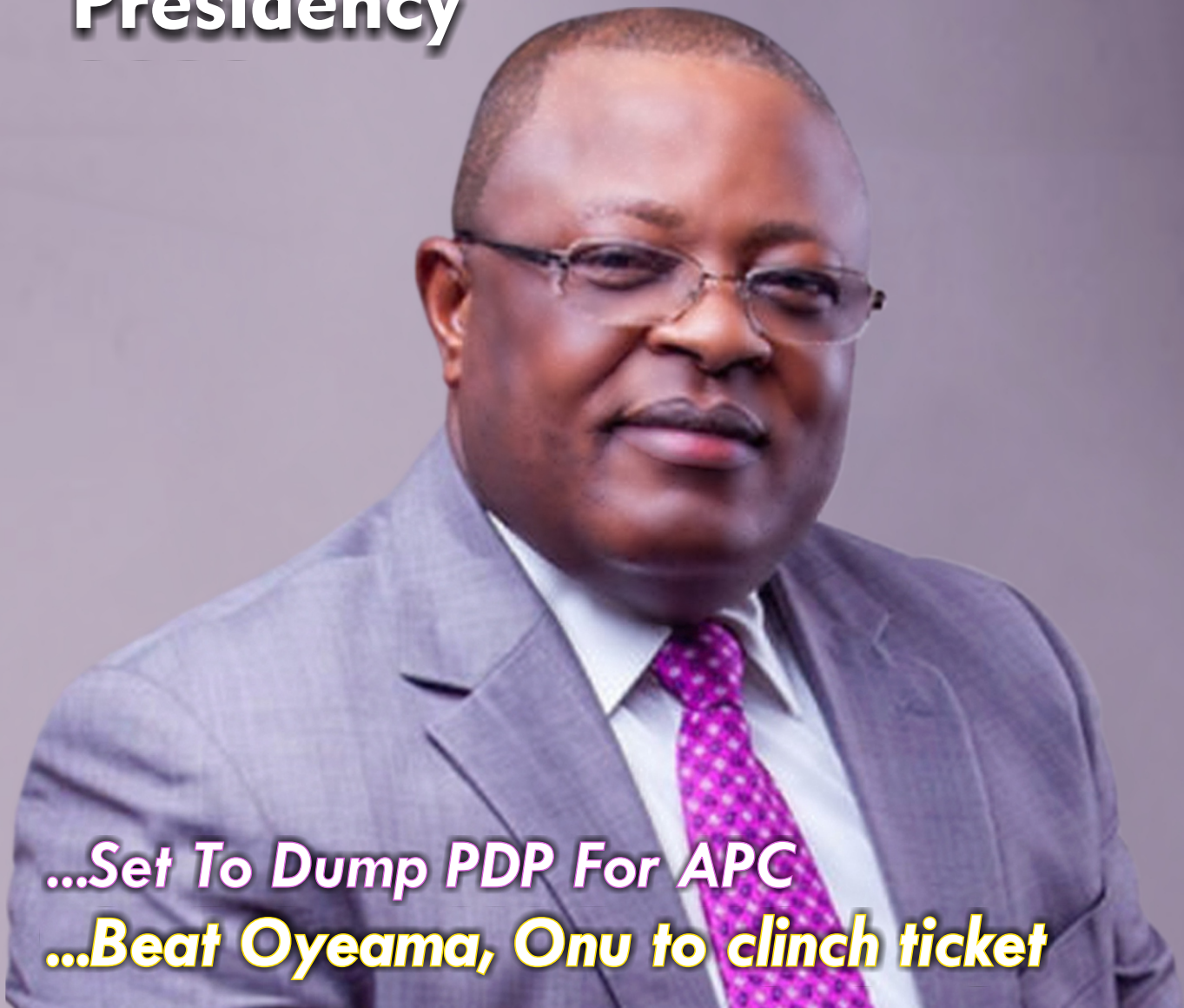
**LASSA FEVER: MOBILE LAB MISSING  
FROM IRRUAH HOSPITAL**

# **NEWS PLATFORM**

Vol. 16 No 13. 17th Feb. - 29th Feb. 2020, A Publication of News Platform Media Ltd

₦ 1000 — \$3

## **2023: David Umahi Emerge As Northern Candidate For Igbo Presidency**



**...Set To Dump PDP For APC**

**...Beat Oyeama, Onu to clinch ticket**





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# Content

Fix Education and You  
Have Fixed Life  
.... Prof.Nwanze

05

How Buhari Saved NDDC  
From Shutdown - IMC

07

Trump floors democrats, as  
Senate acquits him of all  
Charges

14

Panic As Lassa Fever  
Returns To Nigeria

18

22

Ganduje, Sultan  
Of Sokoto Disown  
'Operation Shege  
Ka Fasa'

24

Buhari Bowed  
to Pressure  
... Back Igbo  
Presidency

30

Battle for the  
Soul of Edo  
...As Obseki  
Probe  
Oshiomhole's  
Tenure

32

Oshiomhole  
Behind Every  
Electoral  
Tension in Edo  
Since 2009

34

**EDO 2020:**  
Why We're are  
at War With  
Obaseki

36

I will cut  
Nigeria's Crude  
Production Cost  
... Petroleum Minister



# FIX EDUCATION AND YOU HAVE FIXED LIFE ...PROF NWANZE

## CALLS FOR FREE EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS

A former Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin Professor Emmanuel Nwanze has called for urgent attention to Education in the country to move the country forward.

The Professor who spoke recently after his investiture as the Professor Emeritus of the University said the consequences of mal-education or dysfunctional education are huge and very grave indeed for society. Education is the centre piece of civilization: the cement of nation building. It is the vital ingredient that defines homo sapiens.

If education is absent or worse still, flawed, then we classify as homo utilitarian. Without education, you cannot get democracy. Democracy is premised on rationality, which implies shared prosperity in the context of a common mutuality.

He therefore advised relevant authorities that free Education at all levels is feasible and realisable.

His full text reads;

### 1. PREMIUM ON EDUCATION:

But permit me to digress a little to talk about the premium I place on Education. Education is enlightenment; Education is knowledge; Education is life. All the great philosophers, from Plato to present day thinkers engraved it in their writings and speeches: "Ignorance, the root and stem of all evil" Plato [428-348 BC] "The truth is incontrovertible, malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in

the end, there it is. Sir Winston Churchill [1874-1965].

"Ignorance is always afraid of change" Jawaharlal Nehru [1889-1964] "I never let my schooling interfere with my education" Mark Twain [1835-1910]. "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one learnt in school." Albert Einstein [1879-1955].

"Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela [1918-2013] Education is therefore less of mathematical acuity and more of enlightenment: the opening up of the mind.

World leaders also capture the essence of Education in their manifestos. Tony Blair captured it appropriately in his 2005 Labour Party campaign manifesto when he said that the core theme of his manifesto was "Education: Education: Education." [See the book Education, Education, Education: Reforming England's Schools. By Andrew Adonis, Abe Books 2013].

Angela Merkel, the German Amazon, gave this year's Harvard Commencement lecture and in three short exhortations, she summarized her emphasis on Education as the only instrument of human development and global integration:

- i) "Don't disguise lies as truth and truth as lies."
- ii) "Tear down walls of ignorance and narrow mindedness."
- iii) "More than ever, our actions have to be multilateral rather than





unilateral.”

#### **FIX EDUCATION AND YOU HAVE FIXED LIFE:**

Therefore the consequences of mal-education or dysfunctional education are huge and very grave indeed for society. Education is the centrepiece of civilization: the cement of nation building. It is the vital ingredient that defines homo sapiens. If education is absent or worse still, flawed, then we classify as homo utilitarian. Without education, you cannot get democracy. Democracy is premised on rationality, which implies shared prosperity in the context of a common mutuality.

Homo sapiens can understand and embrace the concept of democracy because he is wise and accommodating; homo utilitarian on the other hand is brutish and cannot understand the concept of commonwealth. He takes and takes until the system goes burst. The brute or depraved misfit, who runs unto the highway from his hideout in the bush and begins to mow down travellers with an AK47 cannot be said to be educated.

He is impunity consolidated and the anti-theses to democracy. The first step to fix education therefore is to liberalize education, making quality education freely available to every citizen. Awo was right you know. (Jeremiah Obafemi Awolowo 1909-1987) the great Nigerian political sage, was right when as far back as 1952 he proposed free education for every child in the then Western region of Nigeria.

He was laughed to scorn by his political rivals. It won't work they mocked. How do you fund it; they queried? Standards will crash they feared. But being the focussed mind that he was, he sent the bill all the same, to the Western Region

House and by 1954 it was passed into law, for implementation in 1955. Yours truly was among the pioneer beneficiaries in 1955 when I started Primary school in Agodi, Ibadan. Well, you yourselves be the judge, by what measure standards have crashed, in that today, I am being conferred with the first Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry of the University of Benin.

Besides, I have had the privilege of competing and topping many of my peer groups all through my career and globally too. I reached the apex of my career when in 2004 I was appointed Vice-Chancellor of this great citadel. So I say to all in governance, let our nation fix our Education, and believe me, just within the space of a decade, we will witness all forms of violence promoters such as banditry, abductions, kidnappings, armed robberies, ritual killers, treasury looters, yahoo-yahoo gangs and their ilk, take flight from our shores.

The following 24 countries which have enacted laws on free education at all levels and to all citizens cannot all be wrong. ARG; AUST; BEL; BRAZ; CZECH REP; DEN; EGYPT; FIN; FRA; GER; GRE; ICE; KEN; LUX; MAL; MOR; NOR; PAN; SWI; SLO; SPA; SWE; TURK; URU.

It is mandatory for all citizens to have complete and unfettered access to free education. In a few of the countries the policy embraces non nationals as well. The Commonwealth under the aegis of the ACU enunciated the policy via the promulgation of the policy of “Access to All” at the Ministerial meeting of HMEs of Commonwealth Countries in Cape Town South Africa in 2006.

But short of the instrument to enforce it, they have allowed each Commonwealth country to revert to business as usual. It has remained just but a slogan.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Therefore in these my twilight years in academia, the legacy I wish to handover to all and sundry is encapsulated in these five statements:

- i)** Free Education at all tiers and levels is both feasible & realisable.
- ii)** Free Education at all levels can be funded.
- iii)** Stick to the UNESCO recommended appropriation for Education
- iv)** Stick to the Education tax laws.
- v)** Reform & Restructure Nigeria Education for 21st century global standards.



# How Buhari Saved NDDC From **Shutdown** – IMC



*The NDDC Executive Director Projects, Dr Cairo Ojougboh, (left) addressing the press as the Chairman of the Contract Verification Committee, at the Commission's headquarters in Port Harcourt. With him are the Director, Project Monitoring and Supervision, Dr. Emmanuel Audu- Ohwavorua, (middle) and the Director, Community and Rural Development, Mrs. Yingi Numbere.*

**P**resident Muhammadu Buhari saved the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, from being shut down due to over trading, bloated contracts and other sharp practices in the Commission.

Addressing a press conference at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt, the Acting Executive Director, Projects, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh said the Commission was sinking and would have been “killed and buried” but for the

intervention of Mr. President.

President Buhari had ordered a forensic audit of the Commission and appointed an interim management Committee (IMC), headed by Acting Managing Director, Gbene Dr. Joi Nunieh. Other members of the Committee are Barr Ibanga Etang, Acting Executive Director, Finance and Administration, and Dr. Cairo Ojuogboh, Acting Executive Director, Projects.

As part of measures to sanitise and reposition the Commission to fulfil its mandate, Dr. Ojuogboh

said the Acting Managing Director has inaugurated a Contract Verification Committee.

The inauguration of the Committee, Dr. Ojuogboh said is a prelude to the forensic audit ordered by President Buhari.

Dr. Ojuogboh, who is the Chairman of the Contract Verification Committee explained that the two-week exercise would cover all completed, as well as on-going projects and programmes of the Commission.

He observed that the NDDC was set up not only to offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic and environmental problems of the Niger Delta region by conceiving and implementing plans aimed at developing the infrastructure, human capacity building, but also complement the efforts of the various state governments and other developmental agencies in the region.

Ojuogboh said: "Whilst successive leadership of the NDDC may have done their best, today, the general conclusion of most stakeholders in the region is that the NDDC has not delivered on its mandate. At best, it has been a lack-lustre performance, with very little to show for the humongous resources that have accrued to it over the past 19 years. Stories of pervasive corruption, flagrant abuse of due process, abandoned projects, poor quality project delivery, etc. at the NDDC, have adorned our media space over the years.

"In an effort to stem this unfortunate tide, governors of the nine states of the region, a couple of months ago, visited President Muhammadu Buhari to not only lay bare their perception of the Commission since its inception, but to also as members of the Advisory Council of the NDDC, offer useful advice on the way forward to the President. The result of this historic visit is the ordering of a forensic audit of the activities of the NDDC from inception to date by the President."

Consequently, he said, the President on October 29, 2019 appointed the IMC to oversee the forensic audit of the NDDC, adding: "The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs in conjunction with the NDDC Interim Management Committee, in preparation for the commencement of the forensic audit, secured a Certificate-of-No-Objection from the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) for the lead consultant for the forensic audit, while that of the sub-consultants was being processed."

Ojuogboh affirmed: "The contract verification committee is, therefore, to lay a foundation for the forensic audit of the activities of the Commission from inception to date. To this end, all contractors, consultants (design and supervision), vendors, suppliers and NGOs or their certified representatives, who have business transactions with the Commission, are thus requested to report with three photocopies each of their letters of award, Contract Agreement, and Interim Payment

Certificate (where applicable), and also to present originals for assessment, evaluation and verification to the NDDC office where such business is located.

"They are also to present letters detailing a brief statement or summary of their claims/requests on their headed papers with verifiable addresses and certified true copies of their company registration documents.

The Chairman of the Verification Committee said that the exercise would among other things establish the true position of the emergency contract regime between 2016 and 2019 in the NDDC, observing that it was common knowledge that some of the awards were not only spurious but criminal, as available records showed that most of the awards were not backed by budget, bills of engineering measurement and drawings. "They were just open cheques for contractors and their collaborators to fill in at the nearest banks," he said.

Ojuogboh said: "In 2017, the NDDC awarded a total of 201 emergency contracts valued at N100,396,879,001.06; in 2018, a total 1,057 emergency contracts valued at N162,688,289,333.05 were awarded; and in just seven months of 2019, it awarded a total 1,921 emergency contracts valued at N1,070,249,631,757.70.

"We are talking about a total of over N1.3trillion in less than three years. The yearly budget of the NDDC is hardly above 400 billion and a situation where contracts that do not qualify for emergencies were fraudulently awarded to over one trillion naira valued in less than one year amounts to not only stealing from the pulpit but stealing the entire pulpit."

Ojuogboh assured that the verification exercise would expose those spurious contracts and advised contractors with fake or specious awards to stay away from the various documentation centres in their own interest.

He charged members of the Contract Verification Committee to discharge their duties diligently, honestly and professionally, urging them to note that the entire people of the Niger Delta and the Commission had placed heavy responsibilities on their shoulders.



# NDYC Hails Buhari On Plan To Grant Modular Refinery License To N'Delta Youths



A political pressure group, the Niger Delta Youth Coalition (NDYC), has thrown its weight behind the Federal Government on its plan to grant operational license to youths of Niger Delta involved in kpofire business.

National Coordinator of NDYC, Prince Emmanuel Ogba said that the plan by President Muhammadu Buhari, if properly implemented, would engender

so much benefits to the country .

" It would end the problem of economic sabotage posed by illegal refinery and also make petroleum products which are scarce at present to be abundant for the people.

"It will also reduce the environmental damage being done to the environment and the ecosystem among other numerous benefits", he said.

He however urged President Buhari not to limit the granting of Modula refinery license to the youths involved in kpofire business.

He condemned the habit of rewarding only those involved in illegality in Niger Delta at the detriment of law abiding youths.

" When the amnesty came, the reward went only to the militants in the region.

" Now that Federal Government plans to grant Modula refinery license to youths, they are asking traditional rulers to compile names of those involved in kpofire business for consideration. Does it mean that for any youth to be considered for empowerment, he must be involved in criminality?", he queried.

He emphasized that criminality in the region can never end if criminal youths only are rewarded while Federal Government has nothing to offer to law abiding youths", he said, noting that it is a direct way of luring youths in the region to crime.



If the youths are granted license to operate modular refinery, it would create wealth and huge employment to the people.

# Nunieh Harps on Reshaping NDDC, Backs Plans for Microfinance Bank



*The Acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Gbene Dr. Joi Nunieh, (middle) flanked by, the President of NDDC Staff Cooperative, Mr. Franklin Essien (left) and the NDDC Director Finance and Supply, Mr. Anselem Agommuh, (right) during the sensitisation forum by the NDDC Staff Cooperative Investment and Credit Society Limited on the establishment of a Microfinance Bank at the Swiss Spirit Hotel, Port Harcourt.*



**T**he Acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Gbene Dr. Joi Nunieh, has pledged to work with the Presidency, the National Assembly and other key stakeholders to reshape and reposition the Commission to serve the interest of the region and the country.

Nunieh made the declaration during the sensitisation forum by the NDDC Staff Cooperative Investment and Credit Society



Limited on the establishment of a Microfinance Bank at the Swiss Spirit Hotel, Port Harcourt. She said: "I am so delighted to be a part of this important event that will clearly underline our collective resolve to reposition the NDDC to achieve its core mandate of facilitating the rapid, even and sustainable development of our region into an economically viable, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful part of the Nigerian Federation.

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer re-stated the resolve of the Interim Management Committee to join forces with key stakeholders to challenge powerful forces and systems that had held the Commission captive and subverted the core objectives for which the NDDC was established.

Nunieh stated that the management committee, under her guidance, held the leadership and members of the National Assembly in very high esteem, noting: "We have not and will never do anything to undermine their constitutional duties,"

She said that the floating of a Microfinance Bank was coming at the most auspicious time when hard decisions needed to be taken to reset the trajectory of the NDDC and avoid the backlash of history. According to her, the initiative would not only touch the lives of NDDC staff but would also expand the frontiers of opportunities for the people of the Niger Delta region.

Nunieh declared: "Now is the time for the good news and it begins right here as we collectively embrace the idea of pulling our resources together to build a platform that will make financial products and services accessible and affordable to individuals and businesses, regardless of personal net worth or business size.

"Microfinance is globally recognized as a key element of development that is not built on handouts and patronage. It is a vital force for unleashing the capacity of people especially in developing counties to find lasting solutions to the economic challenges. It engenders financial inclusion and removes the barriers that exclude many people from participating in the financial sector and using the services to improve their lives.

"As we continue working to increase financial inclusion and access to safe, affordable financial services through the establishment of the microfinance bank, we must be reminded of the

greater task of building an intervention agency that delivers quality services and infrastructure for our region and our people. The NDDC boss said that in line with the directive of President Muhammadu Buhari, the Interim Management Committee would supervise the audit of the activities of the Commission from its inception as well as reposition it to deliver on its mandate.

She stated: "The ongoing verification of contracts by the commission is a prelude to the forensic audit ordered by Mr. President and I want to assure that as soon as we conclude all the processes, the Commission will immediately commence payment to contractors based on availability of funds.

"However, we strongly advise contractors, consultants, vendors, suppliers or their certified representatives to proceed to the respective state offices depending on where their projects, programmes and or services were rendered to verify their financial claims."

Earlier in his address, the President of NDDC Staff Cooperative, Mr. Franklin Essien, said that the idea to float the microfinance bank resulted from the need to harness the vast but largely untapped economic potentials of the over 1,500 staff of the Commission and to provide financial inclusion for many small and medium scale businesses and most importantly, to capture the unbanked active poor in the region.

Essien explained: "The bank will be incorporated as a subsidiary of NDDC Staff Investment and Credit Society Limited with the name, NDDC Coop Microfinance Bank Limited. This implies that the Co-operative will always retain a controlling interest of a minimum of 60 per cent of the total share structure of the bank, while the balance will constitute minority interest equity holdings."

A representative of the Director, Financial Policy and Regulation Department of the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, Mr Mike Baba, commended the NDDC Staff Cooperative for embarking on the Microfinance Bank project, noting that the bank was a good platform for the empowerment of the people of the Niger Delta region.



# NCDMB-sponsored Modular Refinery To Begin Operations In **JULY 2020**



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

altersmith 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”.

He said that under his leadership, Nigeria content had grown from 26 per cent to 30 per cent in the past two years.

He said that the board would focus on gas





“

We shall also work to bring down the cost of crude oil production by between three and five per cent, Sylva said.

value chain, LPG cylinder production and offload plant projects.

He said that the establishment 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.

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 Alhaji 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. (NAN).



## **Farmer-herder crisis: Edo govt commits 1% of FAAC allocation for vigilantes, others**



## **Trump floors democrats, as Senate acquits him of all charges**

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he Edo State Government in collaboration with the local government has set aside one percent of the Federal Allocation to support vigilante and other security agents in its quest to find lasting solution to the crisis between farmers and herder in the state.

The state government also set up a technical committee to proffer lasting solutions to the clashes between farmers and herders in the state.

Governor Godwin Obaseki disclosed this in Benin at a stakeholders meeting attended by farmers, herders, traditional rulers and security agencies.

He said the one percent would be used to support payment of stipends to vigilante among others. He stressed the need for better information gathering for vigilante, noting that a team from the Inspector General of Police had been to Edo State in line with plans to commence community policing in the state. The committee members were given a 14-day ultimatum to look into the worrisome issue and identify possible ways of tackling it.

Speaking on behalf of Sarkin Fulani, Alhaji Saleh Badamosi, alleged that some traditional rulers are collecting money from herders to graze in their communities and problem arise when the herders are asked to leave the areas.

“

The governor should work closer with the traditional rulers. The cattle breeders pay the traditional rulers to graze in some communities, so when the farmers drive them away, they will not go.

A

ll the efforts by the Democrats to push for the removal of President Donald Trump, impeached by House of Representatives, came to naught as the US Senate cleared him of all charges, ending a long-drawn congressional battle bitterly divided the US. BBC reports that the Senate, run by the president's fellow Republicans, voted to acquit him 52-48 on charges of abuse of power and by 53-47 on obstruction of Congress.

Democrats charged Mr Trump in December with pressuring Ukraine to smear a potential White House rival.

In November, Mr Trump will be the first impeached president to go for election.

In its historic vote on Wednesday, the Senate decided not to remove Mr Trump from office on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, arising from his dealings with Ukraine. The Democratic-led House of Representatives approved the charges on 18 December.

The Trump campaign said in a statement: "President Trump has been totally vindicated and it's now time to get back to the business of the American people. "The do-nothing Democrats know they can't beat

him, so they had to impeach him."

Mitt Romney of Utah was the only Republican senator to vote to convict Mr Trump, on the first charge of abuse of power.

Mr Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, said earlier on the Senate floor that the president was "guilty of an appalling abuse of public trust".

Despite Democratic hopes, two other moderate Republicans, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, did not join Mr Romney in voting to convict the president.

Three centrist Democratic senators who Republicans had hoped would side with them instead voted to convict Mr Trump.

They were Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Doug Jones of Alabama.

A two-thirds majority vote was needed to remove Mr Trump, which was always going to be a long shot in a chamber controlled by his fellow Republicans.

America's 45th president would have had to turn over his office to Vice-President Mike Pence if convicted on either charge.

# Counter Terrorism: US announces additional \$40m aid to Nigeria

**T**he United States has announced an additional 40-million-dollar (N14 billion) aid to Nigeria to address the humanitarian crisis arising from decades of the Boko Haram insurgency. The Secretary of State, Mr Mike Pompeo, who made the announcement in Washington DC, said this was in addition to nearly 350 million dollars (N122.5 billion) in

assistance provided by the U.S. last year. Pompeo spoke during a joint media briefing with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Geoffrey Onyeama, after the U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission (BNC) meeting hosted by the Department of State. "The foreign minister (Onyeama) and I also discussed the massive humanitarian crisis that the conflict with Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa and other religious and ethnic violence. "We know that these issues are hard. We know that they're complicated.



"But I strongly encouraged the Nigerian government to do more to protect its civilians, including religious communities and the humanitarian organisations seeking to assist them. "To aid in this effort, I'm pleased to announce today an additional 40 million dollars in humanitarian assistance to Nigeria, adding to the nearly 350 million dollars that we provided last year," he said. The BNC is a platform for the Nigerian and U.S. governments to expand cooperation and advance shared goals in the areas of trade and investment, development, good governance and security. Pompeo said the two-day meeting also featured discussions on security cooperation between both countries, especially Nigeria's "recent purchase" of 12 U.S.-made A-29 fighter planes worth 500 million dollars. The sale of the aircraft, according to him, is in support of President Muhammadu Buhari's vision of building "a security force with the best training and modern weaponry." He said the U.S. would "hold Nigeria to the pledge" of ensuring that the country's military operates with the highest standards of respect for human rights.

On his part, Onyeama described the security challenges facing the country as an existential threat, but was quick to note that they were being addressed with respect for human rights. "Of course, we are faced with other security issues within Nigeria, and we know that some of them cause disquiet amongst our partners and we are addressing a number of those. "And in addressing those internal challenges, and especially in the security area, we absolutely make it clear and strive to uphold human rights. "We have the greatest interest in protecting and respecting the human rights of our population and we do that," he said.

To aid in this effort, I'm  
pleased to announce  
today an additional  
40 million dollars in  
humanitarian assistance  
to Nigeria





*The Vice-Presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Mr. Peter Obi (left), with Gov. Seyi Makinde of Oyo state( right), during the Executive Retreat of Oyo State Government at Ibadan.*

# You are on the right track, Obi to Makinde

**T**he Vice-Presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Mr. Peter Obi has commended Gov. Seyi Makinde on his eight months of purposeful and focused leadership, urging him to keep it up. Obi was speaking recently during his keynote address at the retreat for members of the Oyo state Government in Ibadan on recently.

Obi who noted that Gov. Makinde has deployed his private sector experience in governance said he was happy that he was succeeding. "My interaction with the people really shows that you are on the right track", Obi said.

Obi who said he was happy that Governor Makinde was focusing on three key indices of measuring Human Development Indices - Education, Health and Economy, encouraged the EXCO to key into his vision. "I am happy the way things are going. Gov. Makinde is the driver of

the vehicle taking you all to the destination. Your duty is to cooperate with him so that the vehicle will safely reach the destination". Obi advised.

Emphasizing the importance of communication in governance, Obi charged the EXCO members to always tell the Governor the truth and to make sure bad news is promptly brought to his attention because such news needed attention and may make things worse if not brought to the Governor's attention.

The retreat witnessed interactive session, where Obi freely exchanged his experience with the EXCO members.

In his own speech, Gov. Makinde thanked Obi for coming. He said they were happy to have him as a leading light in Nigeria today. He said the urge to share experiences with him was borne out of his successful tenure as the Governor of Anambra State.



# PANIC AS LASSA F RETURNS TO NIGE

*... Lassa Fever Mobile Lab Stolen from Irruah*





# EVER RIA

hospital



## THE 2020 EXPERIENCE

In less than 29 days, the death toll from the outbreak of Lassa fever in Nigeria in the early part of 2020 has risen to 41. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in its weekly situation update for week, which captures January 20 to 26, revealed that the number of newly confirmed cases and deaths is gradually on the rise.

According to the Centre, between January 1 and 26, a total of 680 suspected cases were recorded, out of which 258 confirmed cases were reported with 41 deaths.

A breakdown of the report by the NCDC shows that between January 1 and 28, 19 states had been ravaged by the contagious disease. A further analysis of the report revealed that states like Ondo, Edo, Ebonyi, Enugu, Kano, Borno, Nasarawa, Kogi, Rivers, Abia, Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Delta, Taraba, Plateau, Bauchi, Osun and Ogun have been hit by the disease.

In two states of Taraba, Borno and Kano, five health workers were among the victims

## COMPARISONS

The lassa fever outbreak by this time last year recorded 42 deaths, while the 2020 experience has a record of 41 deaths.

However, a report published by reliefweb on November 24, 2019, which quoted the NCDC situation report for week 47, which captured November 18-24, 2019, said eight new confirmed cases were reported from Ondo and Edo states with no new death.

The report said from January 1 to November 24, 2019, a total of 4,681 suspected cases were reported from 23 states. Of these, it stated further that 785 were confirmed positive, 19 probable and 3877 negative (not a case).

“Since the onset of the 2019 outbreak, there have been 160 deaths in confirmed cases. Case fatality ratio in confirmed cases is 20.4% Twenty-three States of Edo, Ondo, Bauchi, Nasarawa, Ebonyi, Plateau, Taraba, Adamawa, Gombe,

Kaduna, Kwara, Benue, Rivers, Kogi, Enugu, Imo, Delta, Oyo, Kebbi, Cross River, Zamfara, Lagos and Abia recorded at least one confirmed case across 86 local government areas.

“93 per cent of all confirmed cases are from Edo (38%), Ondo (32%), Ebonyi (7%), Bauchi (7%), Taraba (5%), and Plateau (5%) states. Predominant age-group affected is 21-40 years. The male to female ratio for confirmed cases is 1:1.

“In the reporting week 47, no new health care worker was affected. A total of nineteen health care workers have been infected since the onset of the outbreak in 10 states – Edo (06), Ondo (04), Ebonyi (02), Enugu (01), Rivers (01), Bauchi (01), Benue (01), Delta (01), Plateau (01) and Kebbi (01) with two deaths in Enugu and Edo-states, “the report revealed.

A detailed comparison of the outbreak of Lassa fever in Nigeria in 2019 and 2020 shows that 23 states were affected in 2019, while 19 are being affected in January 2020.

## LASSA FEVER EPIDEMIC IN NIGERIA, DISTURBING SITUATION FROM THE INSTITUTE OF LASSA FEVER IN IRRUAH

According to information from the Federal Ministry of Health over 41 people have so far been diagnosed and tested positive to Lassa Fever in different parts of the country. This took me to the Institute for Lassa Fever Research and Control at the Irruah Specialist Hospital, Irruah, in Edo state and the information I got show that the country is not only at risk of the spread of Lassa Fever but is presently not prepared to checkmate its spread.

Infact many Nigerians might have died of Lassa Fever and these death were often mistaken for Typhoid or Malaria fever.

At the hospital I was made to understand that there are presently



only one lab working. There was supposed to be another mobile laboratory but was told that the Mobile lab has been taken to Sierra Leone since the outbreak of Ebola in that country. So there is currently no mobile lab in the country to go from state to state to meet the challenges which the epidemic has inflicted on the country.

It will be recalled that as parts of the efforts to tackle cases of Lassa fever in the country partnership was secured with some international organizations. These organizations and Institutions include the Harvard University USA, and the Bernhard Nocht Institute of Tropical Medicine, Hamburg, Germany. The Institute of Lassa fever Research and control was endowed with a BSL/ 3 Laboratory for the diagnosis of the disease which began operation in 2008 following the installation of the equipment donated by Harvard University and the Bernhard Nocht institute. These two institutions also assisted with the training of staff. With this development Irruah Specialist Hospital became the only public tertiary hospital in the country with the capacity for confirmation of the diagnosis of Lassa fever.

The Institute of Lassa Fever Research and Control as a centre of excellence for the Management and Control of Lassa Fever in the country to be a pre eminent Institute for the control of Lassa Fever as a centre of excellence in

Africa and a reference centre in the world.

#### **WHAT IS LASSA FEVER:**

Lassa fever is an acute febrile illness, with bleeding and death in severe cases, caused by Lassa virus. The disease was first described in the 1950's while the virus was identified in 1969. Lassa fever is endemic in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

There are a number of ways in which Lassa fever can be transmitted to humans.

The virus is shed in the urine and droppings of rats, *Mastomys natalensis*. The virus can therefore be transmitted through direct contacts, touching objects or eaten food contaminated with urine or droppings on excreta of these rats. As the rats often live in and around homes and scavenge on human food remain or poorly stored food, transmission of this sort is common.

Contacts with virus may also occur when a person inhales tiny particles or aerosols in the air contaminated with rodent excretions. Infections may also occur via direct contact when they are caught and prepared for food.

Lassa fever may also spread through person to person contact. This occurs when a person comes in contact with virus in the blood, tissue, secretion or excrements of an individual infected with Lassa virus. This can happen in rural and healthcare settings.



The virus may also spread in contaminated medical equipment in health care settings when materials such as needles, syringes and scalpel blades are reused.

Symptoms of Lassa fever occur after about 3-2 days after the patient comes into contact with the virus. They include fever, pain behind the sternum, sore throat, back pain, cough, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, facial swelling, protein in the urine and mucosal bleeding.

Experts say the central nervous system may also be involved with hearing loss, tremors, and signs of infection of the brain such as convulsions and coma.

The symptoms of Lassa fever can be confused with common illness, such as malaria, typhoid fever, septicemia and dysentery

Deafness is the most common complication of Lassa fever. It occurs in approximately one third of cases and is often permanent. Spontaneous abortion is another serious complication.

#### **DANGEROUS STATISTICS**

According to Prof George Akpede former Chief Medical Director of Irrua specialist teaching hospital in Irrua Edo state, Lassa fever have been suspected to be the cause of some deafness and high maternal mortality.

The death rate are particularly high for woman in the third trimester of pregnancy and for fetus, about 95 percent of which die in the uterus of infected pregnant mothers.

Irrua specialist teaching hospital is one of the designated centre for the treatment of Lassa fever in Nigeria. Others include the university of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital. Professor Akpede said that the upper level estimate of the at-risk population in Nigeria is about 51 million, annual number of illness is about 3 million and annual number of deaths about 58,330.

He said 15-20 percent of patients hospitalized for Lassa fever die from the illness." the death rate during epidemic is however far higher, ranging between 30-60 percent.

There had been an upsurge of the disease in Nigeria between December 2011 and January 2013. There had been 60 percent increase in suspected cases and 80 percent increase in confirmed cases.

There had been very serious and dangerous cases of Lassa fever in Nigeria. This is because it is often confused with typhoid fever or

malaria fever. Lassa fever is really an acute viral hemorrhage fever (VHF) and does not respond to anti malaria or anti biotic drugs.

The Edo state former commissioner of Health or Moses Momoh disclosed to me that there is really a Lassa fever epidemic in the state.

He said actually the disease which was seasonal and restricted to Edo central has now spread to all parts of Edo state and now occurs all year round. "It is no longer a seasonal disease"

The commissioner who was the chairman of the state Lassa fever awareness campaign disclosed that "if your treatment for malaria is not responding, then you should quickly go for Lassa fever treatment."

The commissioner said the source of Lassa fever virus include rats, infected food through excreta and urine,

Especially cereals, garri, groundnut, egusi, Ogbono, etc.

#### **WHAT WE ARE EXPECTED TO DO**

There is no immunization or vaccine against Lassa fever. But there is treatment.

We are expected to keep a good and healthy personal hygiene. Take care of our environment and clean our compound..

Some of these rats are not domestic rats. They are bush rats but come to our homes when there is bush burning.

There was no Lassa fever diagnostic facilities in Nigeria before, tests were taken to south Africa for confirmation. However such tests are now available in Nigeria. Diagnostic equipment such as polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) is now available at Irrua specialist teaching Hospital.

Professor Akpede said primary transmission of Lassa fever virus from rats to humans can be prevented by avoiding contact with the rats. This can be done by putting food in rat proof containers and keeping the home clean to discourage rats from entering.

When caring for patient, with Lassa fever, the transmissions of disease through person to person contact can be avoided by taking preventive precautions against contacts with the patients secretions. These precautions include wearing of protective clothing, such as masks, gloves, gowns and goggles. Adherence to infection control measures such as complete equipment sterilization and the isolation of infected patients to prevent them from contacts with unprotected persons until the disease has run its course.

# GANDUJE, SULTAN OF SOKOTO DISOWN 'OPERATION SHEGE KA FASA'



**K**ano State Governor, Abdullahi Ganduje has distanced himself from the newly floated Northern security network version codenamed 'Operation Shege Ka Fasa'.

Ganduje disclosed this recently while addressing State House Correspondents after leading a large number of Kano State eminent personalities on a courtesy visit on President Muhammadu Buhari at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

Ganduje disclosed that the Kano State Government had invested so much in security at various levels and it would be unnecessary to consider any other external arrangement.

He boasted the state's security architecture had turned Kano into a trap for criminals.

He said that the state provides conducive environment for the security agencies, adding that Command and Control Centre was established where security agencies communicate with one another.

Besides, the state has constructed army training Centre at Falgore, which he said is the biggest forest in the country, stressing that about N500 million had been committed to the project.

Similarly, the Sultan of Sokoto, Sa'ad Abubakar, has distanced himself and the Northern Traditional Rulers from the recently launched security outfit by the Coalition of Northern Groups





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He explained that the traditional rulers in the region were not consulted before the security outfit was inaugurated, stressing that the monarchs were not in support of the regional body. The Sultan faulted the unveiling of Operation Shege Ka Fasa following its inauguration by a Coalition of Northern Group on Wednesday. He made the remarks during the inauguration of the Northern Security Monitoring Committee in Kaduna State, north-west Nigeria. Kano State Governor, Abdullahi Ganduje has distanced himself from the newly floated Northern security network version codenamed 'Operation Shege Ka Fasa'. Ganduje disclosed this recently while addressing State House Correspondents after leading a large number of Kano State eminent personalities on a courtesy visit on President Muhammadu Buhari at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

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# BUHARI BOWED TO PRESSURE ...BACK IGBO PRESIDENCY.

By Vincent Egunyanga



**T**here are indications that the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) may have zoned its Presidential Candidate to the South East. This will come as a surprise considering the poor showing of the party in the Region in both the 2015 and 2019 Presidential elections. It is also a known fact that power rotation and zoning is not part of the party's manifestoes or programmes. But overriding National interest may have waved to make the party change its mind and support someone from the South East to take over from the current President Muhammadu Buhari in 2023. Many people who have thrown their support for the Presidency of Nigeria from the South East geo political zone like the former Head of State General Yakubu Gowon, Alhaji Tanko Yakassai among others have however cautioned leaders from the

South East that they have to win the support of other Political zones in the country to make their ambition realizable.

Former Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Professor Maurice Iwu has said the possibility of APC zoning its Presidential ticket to the South East is not impossible as he believe President Muhammadu Buhari may have endorsed the arrangement.

Professor Iwu whose brother is an APC chieftain from Imo state and current Secretary to the Imo state government under the current administration of Hope Uzodinma while not been emphatic said that the victory of APC in the Imo state governorship tussle at the Supreme Court may not be unconnected with the 2023 Igbo Presidency project.



The publisher of the Democrat Newspaper and Life Patron of the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigerian (NPAN), Malam Ismaila Isa Funtua, recently stated that the clamour by the South-east to produce Nigeria's president in 2023 may not see the light of day because the region had refused to play inclusive politics.

The top politician, who is also one of the most powerful politicians in Buhari's government who was guest on Arise Television's Show, agreed that the Igbo deserves to be president in Nigeria, but, "they should belong. They should join the party. They want to do things on their own and because they are Ibos, we should dash them the president? That was the reason I said is it turn by turn Nigeria Limited?"

When reminded of the age long alliance between the North and the East which seems to have broken down, he used the opportunity to explain how late Dr. Alex Ekwueme lost the chance to become Nigeria's President in 1999: "I know something about it, because late Ekwueme was my boss and we campaigned for him throughout this country. Nobody is going to hold your hand politically like a new born baby.

"With due respect to the Ibos, they fail to understand that when the South-west chose to remain on their own as opposition, they did not go near the power. To a large extent, the North in terms of religion and culture are closer to the South-west than to the South-east. When Ekwueme contested again; he was defeated in the contest for the nomination of the party by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. Why? His attitude had changed. I went to that constitutional conference with my boss and we wanted him to be leading us and be holding some caucus meetings in his house but he stepped back and did not want to have anything to do with the Northern or National caucus because he believed the 1983 coup was staged to prevent him from becoming president.

"Myself and the late Umar Shinkafi were the first Northerners to visit him after he had been released from prison and I explained to him, because I asked him a direct question, whether he had spoken with Shehu Shagari, and he said 'no' and I asked why, because he was thinking that Shagari enjoyed because he was kept in a house. Ekwueme should know that Shagari was in solitary confinement and kept incommunicado, while Ekwueme and others in Kirikiri Prison had lots of company and lots of conversation. When I was allowed to visit Shagari

during his house arrest, I wept at the condition I saw him.

"Since when has politics in Nigeria become turn by turn Nigeria Limited? I was the coordinator of the campaign of the NPN in 1983; I know Nigerian politics, you chose your candidate who will be able to bring votes to you to win election, not on regional basis, not on tribal basis. Is he going to be the president of the North, East, South-west, South-south or whatever? "If the Ibo wants to be president, then they must belong. If you don't belong, then you can't be the president. That is the issue and we have seen it with MKO Abiola of blessed memory. He went out of his way, he cultivated people."

Funtua said the media had been at the fore of promoting the idea that in 2023, an Igbo man must be president of Nigeria: "What part of the Nigerian constitution was it said? If you want your son or daughter to be president of Nigeria, then join a political party, bring the votes, then you can show your hand."

When reminded that the clamour for Igbo presidency was only reported by the media based on clamour by the people of the South-east, he said, "I'm not saying it was created by the media, but being promoted by the media."

Professor Iwu believed that Igbo has now joined the ruling APC and the South East will have at least 3 governors from APC before. They include Imo, Anambra, and Ebonyi states, infact Ebonyi state governor Dave Umahi has not hidden his intention to defect to the APC any moment from now. The party is however looking at the direction of Dave Umahi as the likely favoured candidate. Other candidates being considered include Minister of Science and Technology Dr Ogbonnaya Onu and the foreign Affairs Minister Mr Geoffrey Onyeama.

On the likely choice of David Umahi as President Muhammadu Buhari's choice for the Presidency if he succeeds in zoning it to the South East it was gathered that Ebonyi state has the highest number of Muslim population in the South East.



## Profile Of Dave Umahi

**D**avid Nweze Umahi (known popularly as Dave Umahi, born January 1, 1964) is a Nigerian politician who is serving as the current Governor of Ebonyi State, Nigeria

### Early Life and Education

Born January 1, 1964, Umahi is the son of Elder Joseph Umahi Nwaze and Margaret Umahi of Umunaga. Umahi received his secondary education from Ishiagu High School and the Government Secondary School of Afikpo before entering the Enugu State University of Science and Technology in 1982. He graduated in 1987 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering.

In 1990, he co-founded Norman Engineering and Construction Nig. Limited with Ombo Isokarari and served as its general manager until 1993. Until 2011, he served as chairman and CEO of Brass Engineering & Construction Nig. Ltd., Focus Investment Nig. Ltd., and Osborn La Palm Royal Resort Ltd.

### Politics

Umahi entered public service in 2007 as the acting chairman of the Ebonyi State chapter of

the People's Democratic Party. From 2009 to 2011, he served as state chairman of the party. During that term, he served a year on the governing board of the Federal Medical Centre in Asaba as its chairman.

In 2011, Umahi became deputy governor of Ebonyi State on a ticket with the-then Governor Martin Elechi. However, in 2014, Governor Elechi supported Onyebuchi Chukwu, Minister of Health, as his successor, which Umahi stated violated an understanding that he would take that role.

Umahi went ahead to defeat Chukwu in the primaries. The remainder of Elechi's term was chaotic, with arson hitting the House of Assembly in February 2015 and motions taken to impeach him later that month over alleged unconstitutional gross misconduct, misappropriation of funds and anti-party activities. Umahi was elected to the role of Governor on 12 April 2015 in an election that has been challenged by the Labour Party, All Progressives Congress and All Progressives Grand Alliance on the basis of "widespread irregularities, killings, and wanton destruction of property".

In October 2015, the legitimacy of the election was upheld by the Governorship Election Tribunal.

On the 16th day of March, 2019, David Umahi was re-elected as Governor in the Ebonyi state governorship election. He polled 393,343 votes to defeat APC's Sonny Ogbuoji who polled 81,703 votes.



# Profile Of Geoffrey Onyeama



**G**eoffrey Jideofor Kwusike Onyeama (born February 2, 1956) is Nigeria's Minister for Foreign Affairs. Onyeama was appointed Foreign Affairs Minister of Nigeria in November 2015 by President Muhammadu Buhari.

## Early life and education

Onyeama was born to the family of Nigerian jurist Charles Onyeama. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A) degree in Political Science from Columbia University, New York in 1977 and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A) degree in Law from St John's College, Cambridge in 1980.

He holds a Masters of Law (LL.M) from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1982 and a Masters of Arts (M.A) in Law from St John's College, Cambridge in 1984. Onyeama was admitted as a Barrister-

at-Law of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 1983 and was also called to the English Bar of the Grey's Inn in 1981.

## Career

Onyeama began his career as a Research Officer in the Nigerian Law Reform Commission Lagos from 1983 to 1984. He then worked as a lawyer with Mogboh and Associates in Enugu, Nigeria from 1984 to 1985. In 1985, he joined the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as an Assistant Programme Officer for Development Cooperation and External Relations, Bureau for Africa and Western Asia.

He rose through the ranks at the WIPO to become Deputy Director General for the Development Sector in 2009. In November 2015 he was appointed Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs by President Muhammadu Buhari

# Profile Of Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu



Governor of old Abia State. He was the first Chairman, Conference of Nigerian elected Governors. During his tenure as Governor, he emphasized the use of technology as an important instrument for national development by starting the processes for the establishment of a Technology Village, as well as introducing computers into selected public schools.

As Governor, he abolished the State of Origin Syndrome in Abia State and led the way in appointing non-indigenes of the State into top positions of responsibility in his Administration.

Using the Abia Dream as a philosophy to mobilize the people of the State to achieve excellence in all spheres of human endeavour, Dr Onu founded the Abia State Polytechnic at Aba. He also established the College of Technical Education in Arochukwu and attracted the Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture at Umudike, near Umuahia. In addition, Dr Onu established the Broadcasting Corporation of Abia State as well as the National Ambassador Newspapers, which then won several awards as the best State-owned Newspaper in Nigeria. In 1999, he emerged the first Presidential Flagbearer of the then All Peoples Party, APP, which was later known as the All Nigeria Peoples Party, ANPP. A true democrat and committed party loyalist, Dr Onu demonstrated rare political discipline and consistency, by remaining one of the very few founding leaders of the opposition ANPP who remained in the party since its inception in 1998 until it merged into a new political party in 2013.

In September 2010, he was elected the National Chairman of the party. In 2010, as National Chairman of the defunct ANPP, he initiated discussions with the leadership of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria {ACN} on how all the major opposition political parties could work together to effect change in the politics of the country. Later he also initiated meetings with the National Chairmen of all major opposition political parties. All these efforts and many others finally resulted in the merger of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Congress for Progressive Change, (CPC), and groups from the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), and the Democratic Peoples Party (DPP). Hence on July 31, 2013, the All Progressives Congress (APC), came into existence. Dr Onu and other party leaders willingly gave up their positions as INEC withdrew the registration of ACN, ANPP and CPC. On November 26, 2013, the new PDP, broke away from the ruling political party and joined the APC. This helped make the APC, the largest opposition political party in the history of the country.

**D**r. Ogbonnaya Onu was born on 1st December 1951, to the family of His Royal Highness, Late Eze David Aba Onu, Eze Adu of Uburu in Ohaozara Local Government Area of Ebonyi State in Nigeria. He obtained grade one with distinction in his West African School Certificate examination at Izzi High School, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State. Dr Onu also obtained distinctions in Physics and Chemistry at the Higher School Certificate examination at the College of Immaculate Conception, CIC, Enugu, graduating as the best overall student.

By 1976, he graduated with a first-class honours degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of Lagos. He later obtained his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Chemical Engineering (without passing through a Masters degree) at the reputable University of California, Berkeley, California, USA, in 1980, where he did extensive work on coal liquefaction and production of synthetic fuels under mild conditions.

He showed that it was possible under relatively mild conditions to produce synthetic fuels comparable with crude oil. While in the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Onu was the President of the African Students Union; Member, Graduate Assembly of the University of California at Berkeley and also President of the Nigerian Association of Northern California, Inc. Back home, he served as President General of his alma-mater, Izzi High School, Abakaliki, Old Boys Association. On coming back from overseas, he taught at a seminary and at the University of Port Harcourt as the pioneer Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering. As a pioneer staff in the Faculty of Engineering and the first Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, he helped nurture the department from scratch to a position of repute. As a member of the Governing Council of the University, he worked with others to provide leadership in its search for excellence. Dr Onu is a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers, Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers and Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Engineering. In 1991, Dr Onu was elected the first





## NNPC, US agency sign \$1.16m Grant for new Abuja Power Plant

**T**he Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) have signed a \$1.16 million grant as part funding for the NNPC-Abuja Independent Power Project (IPP) modelled to generate 1,350 megawatts of electricity to alleviate the power challenge in the country.

The signing between the NNPC, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency and General Electric took place Tuesday morning at the ongoing Nigeria International Petroleum Summit (NIPS) in Abuja.

The Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Mallam Mele Kyari, said that the plan by the corporation to build the 1,350mw power plant in Abuja was part of the national strategy to

monetize the abundant natural gas resources in the country.

The USDTA grant will complement the ongoing feed project in order to make the Abuja IPP initiative more bankable for strategic investors' participation.

The Abuja 1,350mw Independent Power Plant (IPP), project would leverage on the existing huge natural gas resources from the NNPC upstream and the proposed AKK gas pipeline.

The project would sit on a 54.7 hectares of land in Dukpa in Gwagwalada Area Council of the FCT.

NNPC has begun Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the proposed plant to be located in Gwagwalada, Abuja.

# BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF EDO

...AS GOV OBASEKI PROBE OSHIOMHOLE'S TENURE.

Governor Godwin Obaseki of Edo state has expressed the confidence that he would secure the ticket of the APC for a second term in office despite reportedly facing opposition from his party's national chairman, Adams Oshiomhole. The Edo state governor spoke about his second term ambition when hosting ward leaders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Oredo local government area of Edo state,

Obaseki called on APC leaders in Oredo to join him as he continues to fight godfatherism in the state. He said that his pact with Edo residents is to

defend their interests and dethrone godfatherism, which threatens to deprive them of their democratic rights.

He accused the APC national chairman of trying to become a godfather in Edo state. "The last time an incumbent ran for governorship in our party in the state, it was a consensus. It will happen again; we will all agree on consensus," he said. "Whether direct or indirect primary, you, the people, will vote. Our plan is on the election, not the primaries," Obaseki stated. This is the situation in Edo state chapter of the

## Obaseki probes Oshiomhole, Constitutes commission of inquiry on Edo specialist hospital's contracts



The Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has ordered the probe of contracts for the construction of the Edo Specialist Hospital and supply of hospital equipment.

The state government consequently constituted a Commission of Inquiry to conduct a detailed inquiry from conceptualization, design, construction and equipping of the hospital among others

A statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government, Osarodion Ogie, said the terms of reference of the commission includes. "To conduct a detailed inquiry into the processes leading to the conceptualization, design, construction and equipping of the Benin Specialist/Central Hospital Extension (originally designated as the Accident and Emergency Unit).

He added that they are to determine if same were in breach of the Edo State Procurement Law and other extant Laws and procedures in that regard."

Others, according to him, are, "To inquire into the process of tendering for, award, execution and payment for all contracts arising from and/or

connected with the Benin Specialist/Central Hospital Extension and to determine if such payments (s) were made in compliance with extant laws."

The commission is also charged "To verify the details and dates of construction carried out on the project and equipment supplied on the Hospital project and to determine if same were in line with the contract stipulations and timelines.

According to him, they are to "Identify any losses and/or damages incurred or suffered by the Edo State Government and to further identify all persons responsible for such losses or damages.

Ogie noted that the commission will "Make appropriate recommendations for such disciplinary civil or criminal sanctions to be meted out against any persons found to be responsible for such losses or damages.

The commission is to be chaired by Hon. Justice J.U. Oyomire (rtd), with Prof. Emmanuel E. Obaseki-Ebor, Mrs. Elizabeth Uwaifo, Enemaku Hilary Igemoh Esq., as members while Mr. Anthony Izevbekhale, is to serve as the commission's secretary.



All Progressives Congress (APC) as the governor of the state Godwin Obaseki lock horn with the former governor of the state Adams Oshiomhole who is also the National Chairman of the APC.

As the election of the next governor of the state get closer it is still unclear if the governor and his predecessor in office will resolve their differences before the election.

The differences between the two has polarized the party in the state creating two factions with each of them claiming to be the authentic faction.

Comrade Adams Oshiomhole had accused the Edo state governor of abandoning the party on whose platform he rode to become the governor, Godwin Obaseki on the other hand had also accused his former boss of trying to play a godfather role, a role he said the former governor fought against when he was the governor. He has also said he is not ready to use the state resources to pay for party loyalties.

According to one of the Media team to Oshiomhole's camp Ben Ogbemudia National Chairman of the party has narrowed down his choice of the next governor of the state to Orhiorwhon local government Area. Leaving only three candidates to fight for the tickets. These includes former deputy governor of the state Dr Pius Odubu, former Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate in the 2019 governorship election Pastor Ize Iyamu, and Dr Chris Oigiamwonyi. This is seen as a ploy to scheme out Gen Charles Airhiavbere who is from Oredo Local government Area.

This has not gone down well with majority of the party members in the state who prefer Gen Charles Airhaivbere who is from Oredo Local government Area of the state.

## APC campaigning for PDP in Edo, says Orbih



**T**he Chairman of the Edo State Chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party, Mr Dan Orbih, said the All Progressives Congress was campaigning for the PDP in the state through its abysmal performance in government.

He said the PDP was ready to take the state from the APC.

Orbih, who was addressing members of the PDP after receiving an honorary award at the Afemai declaration of the PDP Edo North Senatorial District, said the party had done well in the face of intimidation.

He said, "The task in our hand is simple, the APC leaders are the ones campaigning for the PDP. The APC is an expired drug and we must put them aside. So, let us take this message to our wards that in unity, we will take over Edo State.

"We have done so well against intimidation, let me also say that you have done very well in Edo North but please don't relent. We have the governorship election coming up very soon."



# Oshiomhole Behind Every Electoral Tension In Edo State Since 2009 ...Historical Background.

BY VINCENT EGUNYANGA

**I**t all began with the indication of comrade Adams Oshiomhole vying for the governorship position in the state which has more or less regarded as Chief Tony Anenih's chiefdom, Expectedly, Anenih a winner at all cost defeated the former Labour leader who contested on the platform of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) by ensuring that his estranged former godson Professor Oseheimen Osunbor emerged winner in the poll.

However the victory did not last long as Professor Osunbor, who believed he won the election because of the backing of the former President and his then In Law Chief Olusegun Obasanjo decided that it was time to build his own political empire rather than

remain in the shadow of Tony Anenih.

Chief Anenih felt slighted by Osunbor's action and vowed to deal with him. This Olusegun Obasanjo tenure as the President of Nigeria had ended and he had handed over to his successor the Late Shehu YarAdua. Anenih ensured that Osunbor lost at the tribunals, this he did by withdrawing Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) witnesses from appearing at the tribunals. Then President YarAdua who had earlier complained that his own election did not meet International acceptable standard, decided to use Edo state to convince the nation that he was prepared to change the nation's electoral fortune for the better.

Adams Oshiomhole would not have been the governor of Edo state without the support and backing of the PDP government at the Federal



Government level. So the support and backing which some PDP leaders in the state and their governors is giving to the APC governor Godwin Obaseki is not new. Oshiomhole was also a beneficiary. The cordial relationship between governor Oshiomhole and Chief Tony Anenih went all as the governor even nominated some PDP members into his cabinet. CHIEF Anenih was said to have described Oshiomhole as his godson at a public function, he spoke glowingly of the governor and went on to say that the governor meant well for the people and that he should be given the support to succeed. In response, Oshiomhole referred to Anenih as his father and asserted that he would continue to accord him the respect as 'a leader' irrespective of the fact that they are not in the same political party.

However the cordial relationship between Governor Oshiomhole and Chief Tony Anenih did not last long. The friendship broke down during the 2010 AKOKO EDO RERUN ELECTIONS into the state House of Assembly. The rerun election into the Akoko Edo constituency 1, was ordered by the court of Appeal when it ruled that the PDP Candidate in the state House of Assembly, Anselem Agbabi was not duly elected.

In the rerun election the ACN candidate Kabiru Adjoto defeated the PDP candidate. That was when the war started. It was not the defeat of the PDP candidate that caused the friction between Anenih and Oshiomhole but the manner of the defeat.

Before the election, there was an understanding between Anenih and Oshiomhole to allow for a free and fair and violent free election, Anenih respected the terms of the elections, he told his PDP supporters and members to simply go and cast their votes and leave the rest for him. He warned against any violence, he was sure the PDP was popular in the area and would win the election, after all that was the constituency of the party leader in the then House of Representatives Hon Tunde Akogun and Senator representing Edo North

in the Senate Senator Isa Braimoh. Unfortunately Oshiomhole's camp had former PDP members who were formerly in the House of Representatives but lost their re election bid. They include former deputy governor of the state Dr Pius Odubu, former Agric commissioner Tunde Lakoju, and the Information commissioner Abdul Oroh. The wounds inflicted on them by their supposed loss at the PDP primaries was still fresh on their minds. To them it was pay back time. It was after the Akoko Edo rerun election that Chief Anenih realized that he had to tackle Oshiomhole headlong. He realized Oshiomhole may be small in stature, but not small in political sagacity, so the battle line was drawn.

Anenih fired the first salvo in a village in Edo Central known as Ewohinmi. A former ACN governorship aspirant for Edo State, Clement Imasuangbon, declared for the PDP, Chief Anenih who was present at the occasion lambasted governor Oshiomhole over what he termed governor's failure to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the people. He said Oshiomhole does not know the difference between being a governor and a labour leader. Governance according to him is not about making fabulous speeches and getting applause from students. He said AC means Air-condition without Compressor.

There was another occasion in Benin, Edo state capital where PDP had a rally. Chief Anenih said PDP must dislodge the AC in the next election in Edo state, he said Oshiomhole must be defeated for the PDP to return to the government House. He said this was going to be possible because of what he termed Oshiomhole's failure in office.

Governor Oshiomhole could no longer take the insult from someone he once referred to as a Leader and decided to fight back. An opportunity came when about six chairman of the PDP controlled local government areas declared for the Action Congress. While receiving them into the party Oshiomhole said 'it was time to retire the godfather'. He said

any father who does not realize that his children will one day grow up is not fit to be called a father. He vowed to retire Anenih from politics.

Another crisis erupted again in the rerun elections in Etsako Central constituency into the Edo State House of Assembly which took place in January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010. The election was between PDP candidate Chris Umugbai and the AC candidate Johnson Ughuma both from Fulgar village in Etsako West local government area of the state.

Prior to the election both the PDP and the AC accused each other of perfecting rigging plans and importing dangerous weapons into the locality. The PDP accused AC of trying to use thugs to cause trouble during the election while the AC accused PDP of plotting to use soldiers to rig the elections.

Because of the seriousness of the allegations, the Federal Government decided to withdraw soldiers from the Joint Security Task Force code named OPERATION THUNDERSTORM in the state. The state government cried foul and accused the then Defence Minister Major General Godwin Abbe an indigen of the state of abuse of office.

Then there was some sponsored demonstrations in the state. The demonstrators were mainly from the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN), Trade Union Congress (TUC), ETC.

Oshiomhole took the opportunity of the protest to attack Anenih again. He said 'Nigeria has remained underdeveloped because of a few individuals who put their personal interest above state security'. He said 'the cabal has made Nigeria irrelevant in the International Community.

Throughout the period that Oshiomhole was the governor of Edo state his relationship with the state House of Assembly was never cordial, especially those of the opposition the PDP. HE WILL BATTLE THEM, refused to pay their salaries until hunger will make them dump the PDP for APC.



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

*... Gen Airhivbere*

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

Airhivbere, 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 Airhivbere 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.”

Airhivbere, 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.

“

# 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 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 had 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 Swali 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."

# 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 30 per cent in the past two years.

He said that the board would focus on gas value chain, LPG cylinder production and offload plant 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



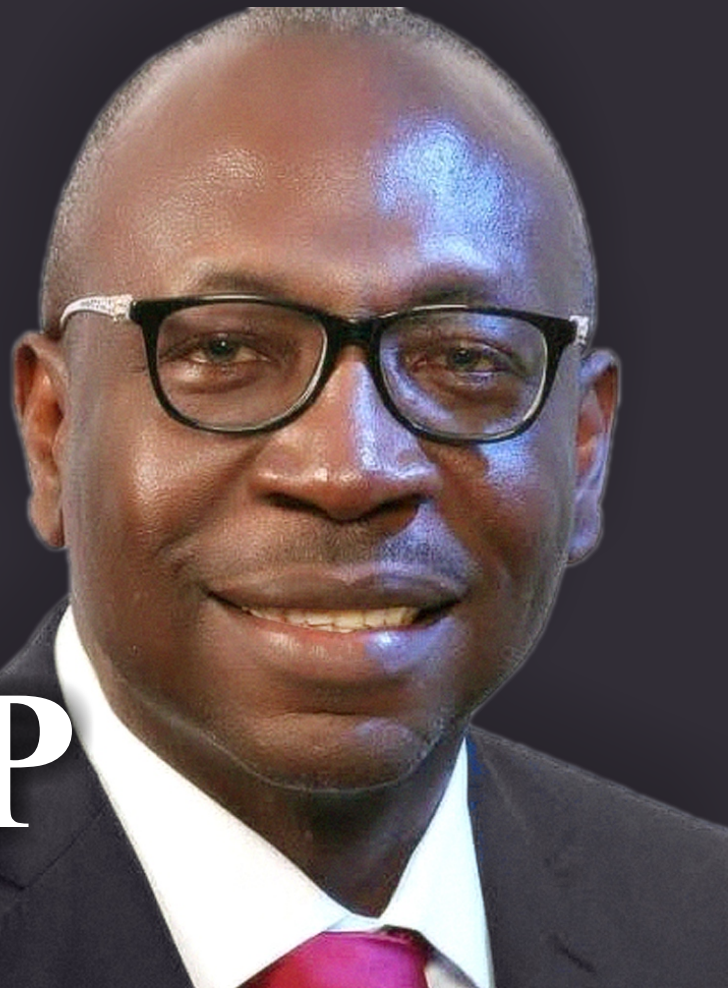
Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Malam Mele Kyari, said the corporation had supported all efforts to ensure local content in the oil industry.

Represented by Chief Operating Officer Corporate, Services Alhaji 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.



# “Why I Left PDP ...Pastor Ize Iyamu



**P**eoples Democratic Party (PDP) former governorship candidate Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu recently led former Edo State House of Assembly Speaker Bright Omokhodion, former Deputy Speaker Festus Ebea and former state chairman of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria Tony Omoaghe to defect to the All Progressives Congress (APC) Others were Mrs. Tawa Idubor, Chief Blessing Agbomhere, Etinosa Ogbeiwi, Emmanuel 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), Emmanuel Momoh (Edo North) and Idubor (Edo South).

Giving reasons for leaving the PDP, Omokhodion 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

Omokhodion 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. Omokhodion 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 using 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 above to achieve these goals.

“People might call us names, but many understand why we have to do what we did. We have done 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.”





# ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS (EDO STATE)

## PRESS CONFERENCE BY CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS IN EDO STATE ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS

Gentlemen of the Press!

Let me on behalf of my brothers and colleagues seated before you congratulate you all and to thank God for ushering all of us into this New Year.

This is significant for every Edolite in a number of ways, chief of which is that the Governorship election for our state will hold later in the year.

Before you this afternoon are de facto and bonafide leaders and critical stakeholders in the All Progressives Congress, Edo State. Individually and collectively we have committed our lives to the service of our great state and nation in different capacities in the past and are therefore very concerned about the developments in the state under the current administration.

We therefore consider it imperative for us to leave our comfort zones to add our voices to the solutions that will restore peace and unity among Edo People once again.

Since the middle of 2018, the ruling party – the APC, which is our party has been embroiled in needless crisis arising from the deliberate alienation of party leaders and members from the Government the party worked hard to install in 2016 through the wishes of Edo People.

Of particular concern to us is the inability of the state House of Assembly members of our state elected on the platform of our party to perform the responsibility of lawmaking for which they were elected since June 2019. This is unprecedented and does not represent the progressive character of the Edo People.

We have also observed with great trepidation the orgy of politically motivated violence across the State targeted at members of our great party who dared to hold opposing views from Government. This is unacceptable in a democratic setting. Needless to bog you down with the litany of attacks on the person and office of the National Chairman of our party and the onslaught against prominent Edo sons and daughters perceived as threats to the second term ambition of the Edo State Governor.

As stakeholders we have made both individual and collective efforts at restoring sanity to the polity but it appears that as we inch closer to the elections, the apprehension in the land is on the increase. We therefore commend our traditional institution in Edo State who took various steps to promote peace and unity in our state.

We also commend Mr. President and the National Working Committee under the leadership of Comrade Adams Oshiomhole for the various peace initiatives they have instituted but which have surprisingly been rejected by the Governor of Edo State who has even gone ahead to institute court actions to stop these peace initiatives.

At this point, we wish to place on record that Edo State and its people remain one of the most politically sophisticated, enlightened and pragmatic in the Federation and we cannot sit back and allow our State slide into abyss.

We the APC aspirants for Edo State 2020 gubernatorial election in consultation with other critical stakeholders state unequivocally that we wholeheartedly welcome the urgent intervention of the newly constituted Senator Ahmed Lawan's reconciliation Committee for the party. Indeed, we are prepared with our memoranda for presentation to the committee and we urge every genuine stakeholder of the party to cooperate with the committee. We collectively desire a party that is stable, virile and viable for us to realize our individual and collective aspirations so as to provide effective, efficient and productive leadership for our dear state. We also believe and quite rightly too, that the attempt to close the political space and shut the doors against potential contestants for the office of the Governor of Edo State by the incumbent governor is antithetical to the established norms of democracy. We must all be allowed to subject ourselves to the democratic process without let or hindrance.

We maintain our unalloyed support and confidence in the leadership of our party in Edo State headed by Col. Dr. David Imuse (Rtd) and at the National level under Comrade Adams Oshiomhole. We thank President Muhammadu Buhari and other national leaders of the party for their insistence on party supremacy. The successes that have been recorded by the party across the country particularly the recent inclusion of Bayelsa and Imo States into the comity of APC States must serve as impetus for us to retain Edo State with firmer grip in the 2020 gubernatorial election.

We urge all our party members and supporters across the state to remain committed to the party while we collectively endeavour to navigate our party through the avoidable crisis and restore the hope of Edo people in an APC government that will once again provide an all inclusive governance and rapid economic development for which it was known in the early days of the party's administration of the State under Comrade Adams Oshiomhole.

On our part, we are committed to ensuring full compliance with the party directives as we go into the elections and urge our brother Governor Obaseki that in a multi-party democracy, everyone no matter how highly placed must be subject to party laws and rules. Therein lies the respect, order and decency in the interrelationship between government and the people.

God bless Nigeria!  
God bless Edo State!!  
God bless the All Progressives Congress (APC)!!!

We thank you All.

### ***We Are:***

- Rt. Hon. Dr. Pius E. Odubu  
(Former Deputy Governor)
- Maj. Gen. Charles Airhivbere(Rtd)  
(Former Governorship Candidate)
- Engr. Christopher Ogiemwonyi  
(Former Minister of State, Works)
- Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu  
(Former Secretary to Edo State Government & Governorship Candidate)



EDO 2020

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# INTERVENTION COUNCIL FOR WOMEN IN AFRICA (ICWA)

*Working the Gender Challenges in Africa*

**CSW64**  
Commission on the Status of Women



**BEIJING+25: REALIZING GENDER  
EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT  
OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS**  
9-20 March 2020

**Date:** Monday  
March 9, 2020  
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**Commission on Status of Women 64 Session Side Event**



**THEME:**  
"25 YEARS OF BEIJING  
DECLARATION AND PLATFORM  
FOR ACTION AND FUTURE  
OF WORLD WOMEN".

## Who We Are

### KEY SPEAKERS



**May I. Nwoye, Ph.D.**  
Professor & Author,  
IBB University Nigeria



**Michelle Husemann Burke**  
Adjunct Professor,  
Wilmington University, USA



**Bea Baylor**  
High Performance Coach  
& Author, USA



**Dr. Ada Juni Okika**  
UN Representative  
& Coordinator, USA

Intervention Centre for Women in Africa (ICWA) is a non-governmental organization committed to the promotion of women's social and economic welfare. ICWA has implemented many advocacy and women empowerment projects, especially focusing on women's livelihoods and gender rights and equality issues. ICWA has collaborated with various women organizations and adolescent girls to implement various programs in Nigeria.

Since 2005, ICWA has collaborated with CPED in the execution of twelve different projects.

### DISCUSSANTS



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UN Representative &  
US Director of Journalists &  
Writers Foundation (JWF)



**Mrs Sukena Toure**  
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President & Founder



**Dr. Vincent H. Bulus**

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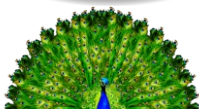
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