



Mahmud Waziri:
Remembering
Nigeria's unsung
democracy hero



**They
started 2018
but wont
witness
2019...**



www.thinkersnewsng.com

Thinkers

ISSN: 2449 - 1691

...balanced news, fearless news

DECEMBER 2018

Vol. 3 No. 34

N2,000.00

\$6.00

£4.00



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Editorial Suite



The year 2018 was a challenging one for Nigeria and Nigerians. It's a record-breaking year for the country. The year recorded so many avoidable killings, political scheming and intrigues as well as defections.

It was not however all doom and gloom. The year also recorded a lot of achievements for the country's nationals in sports and entertainment, in Africa and beyond.

The last edition of your favourite magazine for this year has therefore served you an interesting package of the major events that shaped 2018 and how many of the events will also dictate things in 2019.

Few weeks to the commencement of another round of crucial elections, candidates across the parties are now on the campaign trail at all levels wooing voters. It is on the pages of this edition you will read the detailed coverage and indepth analysis of the chances of the contenders in most of the elections.

Also in this edition, you will get to read the touching but inspirational life stories as well as legacies of some of the icons who passed away this year.

This edition also contains interesting pages on sports, entertainment, crazy facts, quotable quotes, fashion and health tips, history and the profiles of your favourite celebrities who are celebrating their birthdays this month. Enjoy.

Abdurahman
ABDULRAHEEM
Editor-in-Chief/MD

'You can't close your shop and be chasing criminals', Obi criticizes FG's anti-corruption war

The vice-presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Peter Obi, has criticized the Federal Government for its approach to anti-corruption fight in the country.

Responding to a question at a debate organised by the Nigerian Elections Debate Group (NEDG) and the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (BON), he said corruption can be tackled aggressively while rebuilding the economy.

"You are not creating jobs, you are not doing the right thing, and you are just fighting corruption. You can't shut down your shop and be chasing criminals," Obi said.

He added, "In 2015,

unemployment and underemployment was 24%, today it's 40. In 2015, we were attracting N21 billion in foreign direct investments, we attracted only 12 last year.

"That means it's going low. Our GDP was 520 in 2015, and per capital was 2, 500, today it's under 1, 900. If you look at our stock market, it has lost over N2 trillion in one year."

The PDP vice-presidential candidate advised the government to focus more on improving the nation's economy.

He, however, warned that there might be a crisis in the country if the government fails to address the issue of unemployment, especially among the youths.



Osinbajo: If you allow criminals have field day, there will be nothing left in the shop

The vice-presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Professor Yemi Osinbajo responded swiftly to Obi during the debate.

According to him, the Muhammadu Buhari administration will not be able to achieve its goals if corruption is not eradicated.

He said, "If you allow criminals to steal all the inventories in the shop, there will be no shop. And what has happened in Nigeria in the past 16 years is what the World Bank told us that the major cause of our poverty is corruption."

"So, let me say that there is no way we can minimise what has happened. You can't minimise corruption. If you minimise it, we run the risk of completely... in fact, the argument is lost.

"We cannot do what we want to do unless we are able to minimise



corruption or eradicate it completely. This is what we are trying to do," Osinbajo added.

Subsidy regime fraught with corruption, says ANN vice presidential candidate

Khadijah Abdullahi-Iya, the Vice Presidential candidate of the Alliance For New Nigeria (ANN), has said that the operations of subsidy in Nigeria, is laden with corruption.

According to Khadijah, "Subsidy in Nigeria is fraught with corruption and if transparency is being applied to the excess money being gotten from the balance of the subsidy, it is going to tackle a lot of problems that have fraught the nation".

Addressing the question on subsidy at the NEDG/BON Vice-Presidential debate, Khadijah said that the ANN is big

on attacking the institutions to ensure that there is enough transparency and technological interventions are brought to ensure that every kind of corruption is tackled.

"What we want to do is to diversify the economy and stop the dependence on oil products, with that we will have little or no problems with subsidy".

Speaking on the major plans the ANN has for Nigeria if elected in 2019, Khadijah said will look into using the excess to restructure infrastructure.

I cant wait to debate Buhari, says Atiku

The presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, Atiku Abubakar, has said that he was keenly looking forward to next month's presidential debate, moments after watching the vice-presidential debate in Abuja.

Atiku expressed satisfaction with the showing of his running mate, Peter Obi, at the vice-presidential debate at Transcorp Hilton Hotels.

"I watched with pride as Peter Obi laid out our vision to get Nigeria working again," he said on Twitter, adding that he cannot "wait for the presidential debate."

Obi sparred with Vice President Yemi Osinbajo and three other running mates in the five-person debate, focused mainly on the economy for about two and a half hours.

Obi was widely praised for demonstrating a good grasp of statistics, and Osinbajo received commendations for his ability to focus on what his government had done as against what the PDP did in its 16 years in power from 1999 to 2015.

We can't expect people who destroyed our past to improve our future – YPP's Getso

The Vice-Presidential candidate of the Young Progressive Party (YPP), Umma Getso, has warned that it will be a mistake to expect those who have governed Nigeria before to solve its problems.

She said this during the NEDG/BON Vice-Presidential Debate, which was held at the Transcorp Hilton in Abuja.

"To be candid, YPP is a party that is here to bring a new thing," she said.

"It is a party that is founded with the new ideology to bring a new set of politicians because we cannot expect people who destroyed our past to come

and improve our future tomorrow."

According to her, her party will, among other things, focus on girl-child education if voted into power.

"I have a passion for the girl-child education and I spent the early part of my adulthood in the development of the common Nigerian," she said.

Getso who briefly introduced herself as the daughter of a former Senator from Bauchi State stated that her background had equipped her to serve people well.

She explained that her belief that Nigeria would get better prompted her

to join the race with YPP's presidential candidate, Professor Kingsley Moghalu.

While stressing that Nigerians were yearning for better leadership, Getso stated that the YPP was committed to creating that paradigm shift in leadership styles.

She added, "As a mother of three, I have been through the lowest level of Nigeria's standard of living and I know how Nigerians are suffering. I know that there is no substantial thing from 1999 till date that a typical Nigerian will show today."

Its time to end Boko Haram menace, Buhari tells sub-regional leaders



President Muhammadu Buhari has summoned another Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to intensify efforts on the need to end terrorism in the sub-region.

President Buhari stated that the meeting, which is a follow up to a similar one held in N'djamena, the Chadian capital in November, was convened for the adoption of a report of the LCBC security and defence committee on the Boko Haram insurgency.

At the meeting summoned by President Buhari in Abuja on Saturday, he said time has come for the evil of Boko Haram to be brought to a definitive end.

He expressed the hope that the Saturday's summit would take the right decisions in this regard.

"This is a fight to the finish. We must, and we will, by the grace of God, wipe out terrorism from our sub-region.

The president observed that their participation in the summit was a clear demonstration of the collective resolute commitment of the sub-region to the fight against the common enemy, Boko Haram, and the restoration of lasting peace and security to

the sub-region.

He said, "Your Excellencies would recall that during our Summit in N'Djamena, the need to overhaul our current strategy and concept of operations in the fight against the Boko Haram Terrorists took the centre stage of our discussions.

"This was necessitated by the resurgence of attacks, particularly on the military, and the abduction of civilians for ransom across our borders by Boko Haram with the support of international terrorists who have infiltrated our sub-region.

"Our meeting today will consider the report of the Committee we set up during our last Summit on the way forward."

President Buhari thanked the Committee for meeting the deadline assigned to it and expressed the hope that their recommendations will bring a new dynamism in the fight against Boko Haram and their international affiliates.

He noted that the Lake Chad region had suffered decades of neglect and poor infrastructural development, saying that the Boko Haram crisis in the last eight years had worsened its already bad situation.

"We must take cognizance of the fact that sustainable growth and development of the sub-region is dependent on the quick attainment of peace and stability in the area.

"We must put an end to the crisis in the sub-region to enable meaningful development for its people.

"We must remain resolute and committed in our collective efforts at attaining peace as well as eradicating terrorism and violent extremism from the sub-region," he added.

The time has come for the evil of Boko Haram to be brought to a definitive end. I am sure that this summit will take the right decisions in this regard.

"This is a fight to the finish. We must, and we will, by the grace of God, wipe out terrorism from our sub-region," he added.

The president maintained that while executing the war against the Boko Haram terrorists, "we must not be oblivious of the fact that military may not provide the desired results alone."

States to access \$750 million World Bank loan soon - FG

The federal government has said the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), will soon access the World Bank's \$750 million loan and grant.

The Minister of Finance, Zainab Ahmed, said this in Abuja.

Ahmed said this while addressing the 7th Community of Practice (CoP), made up of State Commissioners of Planning and Budgeting, with the theme, "Achieving Realism in State and Federal Budgets for Effective Service Delivery."

Ahmed, who founded CoP in September 2016, as the then Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, was optimistic that states would continue with their fiscal responsibility plan which would serve as a platform to access the loan and grant from the World Bank.

"During the course of these meetings, we had the benefit of hosting the World Bank and several other opportunities including the Governors' Forum.

"During the course of this exercise, the ministry of finance had to, on instruction from the President, provide bailouts to the states because at one point states were not able to pay salaries.

"Part of the conditions that was given for those bailouts was a fiscal responsibility plan which needed to be implemented for the states to continue to be qualified to access the funds that the Federal Government was giving.

"This plan was quite successful because as a result of that we saw improvements in the public financial management in a lot of states," Mrs Ahmed said in a statement by Paul Abechi, her Special Adviser on Media and Communications.

The minister said some of the improvements in the states were evident in the increase in the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) and the increase in the frequency of the preparation of financial statement which was not so before.

"This year, it was so good that the World Bank said this group had done well and therefore will give 750 million dollars in the form of concession loans and grant which will be available soon for the states to access.

2018: A turbulent, action- packed year

By Abdulrahman Abdulraheem

Though rapid, short and fast, the year 2018 is about the most eventful and action-packed for Nigeria and Nigerians in recent memory. Preceding the crucial election of year 2019, 2018 has been full of the usual political intrigues, cross-carpeting and throwing of tantrums back and forth. The year has witnessed about the highest number of avoidable deaths in the country's history with the middle belt and other parts of the country on fire for long periods. It was not all doom and gloom as the country's nationals did very well in sports and entertainment, winning international laurels and awards, most prominent of which was the 11th African Women Cup of Nations (AWCON) trophy won by the Super Falcons of Nigeria for the 9th time. The year had its share of corruption scandals, certificate forgeries, major gaffes by political actors among others. Here is a recap of the major events that dominated the headlines in Nigeria in the outgoing year:

Rivers of blood

The early sign that the year

was going to be a difficult one occurred in Omoku, headquarters of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers state in the midnight of December 31, 2017 which ushered in the New Year. Some cultists led by the notorious Johnson Igwediba, aka 'Don Waney' went on rampage and killed about 23 worshippers who were returning home from cross-over night church service. Many of the deceased were women and children. The federal government swung into action immediately in the wake of massive outrage and the culprits were apprehended and killed on January 7 in Imo state by men of the Nigerian Army.

Herdsmen, bandits kill for fun in Benue, Plateau, Zamfara, others

As the cultists opened the floodgates of massive killings in Rivers, suspected herdsmen launched a major offensive in parts of Logo and Guma local government areas of Benue state, leaving behind tales of sorrow, tears and blood. They reportedly slaughtered women and children in their sleep on the first day of the New Year and this spate of killings traced to the same group of people didn't end there. As the killings continue in

other parts of Benue with the governor accusing the Federal Government and security agencies of conspiring in silence to kill his people, the Miyetti Allah leaders who were also accused by the governor were moving from one media house to the other accusing the governor of provoking the killings with his stubborn implementation of the anti-open grazing law. Many Nigerians saw this as a way of justifying the killings as one of them named Garius Gololo was quoted by



Cover

the BBC that some of the killings were reprisals for the stealing of about 1000 cows by Benue locals. Many Nigerians expressed shock that even with the way the Miyetti Allah leaders were grandstanding and thumping their chests in media interviews as the killings went on, none of them was arrested. President Muhammadu Buhari did not only fail to visit the state, he also didn't send representatives to the mass burial held for the first set of victims. As the killings got worse in Benue with the massacre of some Catholic priests, spread into Taraba (where herdsmen were also victims), Zamfara (where so-called bandits killed for fun), Plateau, Nasarawa and others, the President still did not visit any of the troubled spots. Instead, in the midst of the blood flowing across the land, the President and several ruling party chieftains and governors went to Kano to make merry as the children of Kano and Oyo state governors were getting married. In the midst of an unprecedented outrage, the President eventually announced plan to visit the states experiencing killings. While he merely met stakeholders in Government Houses and avoided the real troubled spots and IDP camps, the President was criticized for (1) Absolving herdsmen of complicity in the killings and (2) Comparing the killings in the states, saying repeatedly that more people were killed in Taraba (where herdsmen also suffered losses) than in Benue (where farmers were reportedly the victims) and Zamfara (where bandits reigned supreme) put together. In Jos, he accused Benue leaders of making so much noise about the killings while commending Plateau leaders for not dramatizing their own experience. When the President got to Benue and was told the Inspector General of Police, Ibrahim Idris, did not stay in the state as instructed. The President expressed shock that the IGP could flagrantly flout his order... Nothing happened to the IGP

afterwards...

The killings which dominated headlines in the first quarter of the year however reduced drastically in the latter part of 2018 as the measures and deployments put in place by the Police and Military eventually yielded fruits.

Obasanjo tests his Phd on Buhari

Basking in the euphoria of his newly acquired Phd in Christian Theology, former President Olusegun Obasanjo in a major press statement on January 23 called out President Buhari, highlighted his

failings and urged him not to seek reelection. While he became the topic of discussion for weeks, Obasanjo fired more salvos on the President, telling a group of political office seekers who sought his blessings that it was against the ideals of his military training to "reinforce failure." Referring to the President, he called on Nigerians "not to reinforce failure", adding: "Let failure be failure, don't reinforce it."

Dapchi drama and Leah Sharibu

In a major show of strength reminiscent of the 2014 Chibok affair, the Boko Haram insurgents also stormed the Government Science and Technical College, Dapchi, Yobe state and went away with over 110 girls. In the midst of the outrage that greeted the sad development, President Buhari swung into action, visited the town and in a matter of weeks, some of the girls were returned safely after series of negotiations. They however failed to release a certain





Leah Sharibu who the terrorists claimed refused to change her religion from Christianity to Islam. Her situation has opened a new vista in the relationship between adherents of the two major religions in Nigeria as her parents, Christian groups pile pressure on the federal government to secure her release. She was yet to gain freedom at the time of typing this piece.

Key political players in NYSC certificate mess

Former Minister of Finance, Kemi Adeosun, must have started the year with high hopes that she would consolidate on her position... Little did she did know that she would leave the office unceremoniously due to her past indiscretion. She was on July 7 exposed by Premium Times reporter Abdulaziz Abdulaziz, for not only failing to participate in the mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) but also presenting a fake Exemption Certificate. She was actually not qualified to have an original Exemption Certificate because she graduated at 23, not 30. After several months of silence from her and the presidency in the hope that the issues would pass away, she however owned up to the crime and resigned on September 14. It later in the course of the year emerged that there were two other similar suspects in the corridors of power. The Presidential aide on Public Prosecutions, Okohi

Obono-Obla, was on June 5 also accused of forging his WAEC certificate as a Deputy Registrar in the Council, Femi Ola, told the House of Representatives adhoc panel, chaired by Ali Pategi (APC Kwara) that the certificate he is parading was 'altered and forged'. The WAEC official added that he used the same forged certificate to gain admission into the Law Faculty of the University of Jos. He has since gone to court to challenge the power of the House to probe his academic credentials. Many Nigerians however see the court case as a way of buying time in an otherwise straightforward matter. The Minister of Communications, Adebayo Shittu, was also discovered to have skipped youth service. When he was exposed on September 20, he claimed since he was elected a member of the House of Assembly immediately after his graduation, he meant he had done some kind of service and didn't need to do NYSC. The minister misread portion of the NYSC act that said people serving the military and para-military services were exempted from the youth service.

With his confession, many Nigerians expected him to resign or be sacked and prosecuted but he is still in office at the time of typing this piece. He was however stopped from contesting for the APC governorship ticket in Oyo state due to the NYSC issue. The PDP gubernatorial candidate in Kwara

state, Abdulrazak Atunwa, however in the course of the year proved that certificate scandal is not the exclusive preserve of the APC. He was also accused in an exclusive report by Premium Times to have skipped the NYSC and presented a forged certificate. Observers were therefore surprised that the PDP which had been in the forefront of Adeosun's matter, calling for her sack and prosecution, went ahead to present Atunwa to INEC as its candidate and did not substitute him till the window was shut.

Offa on fire

Armed robbery incidents are not new in Nigeria. They are as old as crime itself. But what the people of Offa saw on April 5 this year was something else. Dare-devil young men, about 30 of them armed to the teeth, stormed the city, robbed banks, other organizations and individuals of their cash and other possessions and slaughtered about 30 persons including policemen. After weeks of nationwide outrage, the police on May 22 arrested many of the culprits including the ringleaders, Michael Adikwu and Kunle Ogunleye. Days later, the controversy assumed a political dimension when Senate President, Bukola Saraki, who was in a long-drawn battle with IGP Idris, raised alarm that the police authorities had perfected plans to relocate the suspects to Abuja and implicate him and the Kwara state governor, Abdulfatah Ahmed, in the robbery. While the Police denied the allegation, what happened days later was exactly what Saraki said was going to happen. The police arrested some aides of Governor Ahmed, claiming that the suspects had said Saraki and the governor





gave them the weapons they used in robbing on that tragic day. One of the vehicles they recovered from them also allegedly had Saraki's name and posters. The Senate President vehemently denied the allegations, saying it was part of a proxy political war the police was fighting on behalf of the Presidency and APC leadership against perceived enemies of government. On November 22, one thing that happens to major criminal suspects in police cells for which Nigerians often suspect the police happened to Adikwu. He died. While Saraki smelt a rat, the Police authorities said the development did not exonerate the Senate President of complicity in the matter.

Buhari hits Nigerian youths below the belt

The President went to London for a Commonwealth Business Forum in April and in a question and answer session described Nigerian youths as largely illiterate, lazy and entitled. The reaction by Nigerians at home and in the Diaspora was swift and the condemnations lasted for weeks. The President was attacked and vilified by many Nigerians with many saying he was the laziest person to ever occupy a public office at any level in the country's history. Many Nigerians also wondered why he forgot to talk about the great Nigerian youths who are shaking the world in education, business, technology, sports etc and expose the huge business potentials in the country but was busy de-marketing his own country in a gathering of global business leaders who were

looking for the best places to put their money. While some of his supporters claimed he didn't use the word 'lazy,' others contended that the import of what he said was even more serious than lazy.

Atiku pushes for the Holy Grail

Former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar's Presidential ambition



dominated his activities in 2018 and this also made him the dominant political figure of the year, ahead of the crucial election year of 2019. Even though he started his subtle campaign since 2016, it was in 2018 that Atiku sent a strong signal to President Muhammadu Buhari that a second term for him is not automatic. He won the PDP Presidential Primary held in Port Harcourt on October 7, in a convincing manner. The famed 'Ebora Owu' earlier in the year called him out, saying God would not forgive him if he supported his (Atiku) Presidential

ambition. He however changed his mind on October 11 after Atiku won the party's ticket and in an elaborate ceremony witnessed by top politicians and religious leaders, he not only endorsed him, he also confirmed he had repented and would serve as the answer to all the problems that President Buhari has failed to solve. Atiku has since unveiled his plan to Get Nigeria Working Again and chosen former Anambra state governor, Peter Obi, as his running mate. The euphoria that greeted his victory in Port Harcourt means he won't be a pushover in the February 16, 2019 polls.

Buhari: Next level is the way

If Atiku must become President of this country in his lifetime, the man he has to contend with is Muhammadu Buhari, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria who is also seeking a second term in office. Despite all the criticisms he suffered in the course of the year, the President and his surrogates have insisted that he had done well and announced his decisions to test the popularity at the February 2019 polls. With the APC ticket in the bag, President Buhari is ready to battle Atiku for the soul of Nigeria in February, 2019.

Hooded security men storm National Assembly

Former Director-General of the Department of State Services (DSS), Lawal Daura had since 2015 displayed more interest in protecting the regime and the President seeming narrow interest rather than Nigerians. 2018 being a pre-election year was the year he decided to increase the gear of his onslaught against perceived opposition, it was also the year he met his Waterloo, in the absence of his boss who had indulged him and accommodated his excesses for three years. On August 7, Daura took his impunity to the peak when he dispatched some heavily-armed masked men to the entrance of the National Assembly complex, Abuja, allegedly to facilitate the impeachment of Senate President, Bukola Saraki, who had just joined the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). While the pictures and videos of the siege were online and in the midst of global outrage, Acting President Yemi Osinbajo did the unexpected, fired Daura, asked him to handover

Cover

to the most senior director of the Service and ordered his arrest. While Daura's face continued to appear in the media space, many pro-Buhari groups tried to change the narrative by claiming that he actually took orders from Saraki to block National Assembly gate in order to embarrass the Buhari-led Federal Government.

El Zakzaky: The protests, the killings, N3.5m, etal

The leader of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), Ibrahim El Zakazaky, also had more than his fair share of the headlines in the 2018 as the Federal Government continued to detain him despite repeated court orders for him to be released on bail, since his incarceration started in 2015. Throughout the year, his supporters kept storming Abuja to protest and demand his release. Each time they came to town in their hundreds marching the city's on the streets, they had confrontations with security agents which sometimes lead to death of some of their comrades. Aside the treason charges he has been facing in Federal High Court, Abuja, he was also arraigned in the High Court in Kaduna for murder.

Around the same period, his

supporters in intensified their protests in Abuja where they confronted soldiers, pelted them with stones and many of them got killed. The Amnesty International (AI), and some other local and international organizations called out the Nigerian government and accused it of abusing human rights and killing 'peaceful' protesters. The Minister of Information, Lai Mohammed added some comical angle to the El zakzaky controversy when in November, he told State House correspondents that the Federal Government was spending



a whopping 3.5 million naira to feed the Shitte leader.

Odun Adegkola, Omotola, Femi Adebayo, Falz shine at AMVCA

This 6th African Magic Viewers' Choice Awards (AMVCA) held in September 2018 in Lagos saw brilliant cross-over thespian, Odunlade Adegkola, with an award for the first time. He won the best actor in comedy. He was overwhelmed with joy that he had to prostrate in front of the crowd. Femi Adebayo, Folarin Falana (Falz), Tunde Kelani, Omotola Jalade Ekehinde and many other Nigerians also won awards on the night.

Fayemi bounces back

In 2014, Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti state lost his reelection bid to Peter Ayodele Fayose in all the 16 local government areas of the state. The bruise was so massive that no one thought he could stage a comeback to embarrass the same Fayose four years after. He did. Fayemi got his revenge, defeated Fayose's Protégé, Professor Kolapo Ishola, to win the July election. He was sworn-in on October 2015.

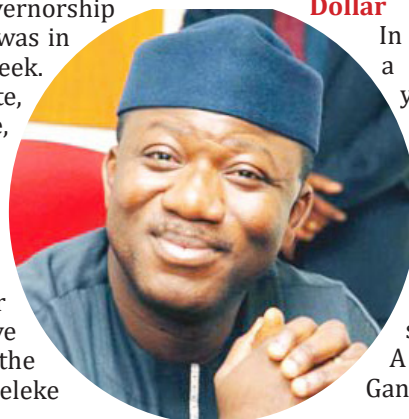
Adeleke: Not a dancing matter

The isolated governorship election in Osun state was in the news for over a week. While the PDP candidate, Ademola Adeleke, thought he had won the election having scored more votes than Gboyega Oyetola of the APC. The September election was however declared inconclusive because according to the returning officer, Adeleke

won with a narrow margin which was less than number of cancelled votes. The PDP claimed that the APC and INEC had conspired to cancel many of Adeleke's votes to pave way for the declaration of the results as inconclusive. While INEC was declaring the election inconclusive, they apparently forgot the recent precedent they set in the Kogi state House of Representatives bye-election where the APC candidate was declared winner even though he defeated the PDP candidate with 12,000 votes and the cancelled votes were 19,000. Even the supplementary election held days later, many of the supporters of the PDP were allegedly stopped from voting by suspected thugs of the APC and security agents. While APC insists they won the election fair and square, the PDP is in the tribunal, seeking that its candidate be declared winner.

Ganduje: Abdullahi Rolling Dollar

In the course of a tumultuous year in which Nigerians faced numerous problems like job losses, worsening poverty, insecurity and so on, Governor Abdullahi Ganduje of Kano





state provided the needed comic relief when he was caught pants down in several videos allegedly collecting a total of 5 million dollars as bribe from contractors. The videos that were released in series by the Publisher of Daily Nigerian Newspaper (online), Jafaar Jafaar, made the governor and the state the butt of jokes on the internet. Even though the government denied the content of the video and claimed that it was cloned, the governor got a court injunction which stopped the publisher from publishing more of the videos. The governor also got a court to stop the state lawmakers from probing the incident. Prior to that ruling, Ganduje failed to honour the lawmakers' invitation to defend himself, he rather chose one of his aides to represent him. While Premium Times which also published the videos claimed its in-house experts had vetted them and certified to be true, Jafaar also said both BBC and Amnesty International had done the check on the videos and authenticated them before he went to press. Since the videos hit the airwaves, pressure has been mounting on the APC and the anti-graft

agencies to do something about him. While EFCC boss, Ibrahim Magu, parried a question on him in a press conference, the ruling party that is supposed to be fighting corruption has instead of ostracizing him, given him a task to head the post-primaries reconciliation team for southeast. The media and civil society have also been implicated in the conspiracy of silence as he won two major awards after the scandal, one of them given to him by national newspaper. In fact, he was seen at Reverend Father Ejike Mbaka's Adoration Ministry in Enugu worshipping with a supposed pro-masses preacher. It is like everyone has moved on in the typical Nigerian way.

IGP Idris in the eye of the storm

The Inspector of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Idris, also had a very turbulent year as he has since 2015 been one of Nigeria's most controversial heads of Police in recent years. He was in the news for that back and forth with Senate President Bukola Saraki whose Senate summoned him and he declined to make himself available while sending representatives. Weeks later, Saraki raised alarm that the IGP was about to frame him

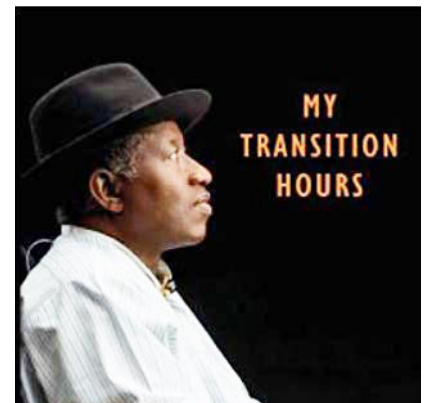


and link him with the Offa bank robbery where over 30 persons were killed. The Police later said some of the suspects accused Saraki of complicity in the robbery. In the midst of his war with Saraki, the IGP was in Kano to commission the Police intelligence service unit and was caught in a viral video where he struggled to read but kept on saying 'transmission, transmission, transmission, I mean transmission, cooperation to transmission.' He could not coordinate himself. Parts of the video which were really embarrassing were however said to have been doctored. The Police under his watch was commended for the gains made in internal security and reduction in avoidable deaths in the latter part of the year.

Jonathan's controversial 'Transition Hours'

The immediate-past Nigerian president, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, also had a memorable year. Being a leader of the PDP who has remained relevant since he left office in 2015, his houses in Abuja and Bayelsa became a Mecca of some sort to PDP Presidential aspirants who visited to seek his support for their ambition. Some of the aspirants were the same people who abandoned him in the PDP and worked to remove him from office in 2015 but he received them with open arms. He however reportedly supported Atiku who eventually won the October primary. On his 61st birthday marked on November 20, Dr Jonathan launched his controversial memoir, 'My Transition Hours', where he made a lot of claims and revelations about Boko Haram, Chibok girls, 2015 election and all that. The Presidency, Borno state governor and some other actors however came out to condemn the content of the book as outright lies.

House of Assembly crisis





everywhere

The year also witnessed a series of crises in the States Houses of Assembly. In some of the states, Speakers were impeached, others were sworn-in; some were done peacefully while some ended in an unending fracas. In some cases, attempts were made to illegally remove state governors. In some bizarre cases, minority factions made attempts to suspend or impeach their colleagues in the majority or even impeach governors. It happened in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Ondo and Anambra.

Gale of Defections

The year also witnessed what can be called a political tsunami involving the massive defections of big-time politicians across the country. Due to the disagreement in the APC, many senators, House of Representatives members, governors and other political office holders left the ruling party to the PDP and other smaller parties. Some also left the PDP to the APC and other parties too. Leading the pack was Senate President Atiku Abubakar, Speaker, Yakubu Dogara, Governors Samuel Ortom (Benue), Abdulfatah Ahmed (Kwara) and Aminu Tambuwal (Sokoto) who left the APC to the PDP. As a quick counter-attack, APC also lured Senator Godswill Akpabio into its fold and celebrated his 'uncommon defection' with fanfare. There were also a couple of defections arising from the two major party primaries. Former Minister of Women Affairs, Senator Aisha Jummai Alhassan, added some glamour when resigned left the APC for the United Progressives Party (UPP). Few days after her defection, she sent her supporters to the party headquarters in Jalingo to remove all materials (computers, furniture,

rugs, ACs, writing materials etc) in the office since she was the one who bought them for the party when the going was good.

Matele Massacre

2018 is the year in which the dreaded Boko Haram sect did all they could to rubbish the claim of the federal government that they had been technically defeated and decimated. They intensified killings abductions of women and the execution of aid workers. Even soldiers were not safe. Among the series of audacious attacks they launched on the Army, that one in Matele at the end of the November made headlines because according to international media reports, over 100 soldiers (though military authorities said 23) were killed when the terrorists attacked the Army Barracks and disguised as friendly forces and opened fire on the soldiers. Videos also emerged online showing some soldiers sending SOS messages to the outside world that they were not safe since the government allegedly gave them inferior weapons to fight. They accused the military authorities

of perpetrating corruption in the procurement of military hardware.

Davido, Tuface, Tiwa Savage, Falz others Shine at AFRIMA

One of Africa's greatest Hip Hop Stars, David Adeleke, aka Davido, capped an amazing year in November with the Artist of the Year award which he won at the AFRIMA awards. His compatriots, Innocent (Tuface), Tiwa Savage and Folarin Falana, aka Falz, also made the country proud by going home with some of the awards.

Falcons are African Champions for 9th time

By winning 8 out of the 10 African Womens Championship (AWCON), held as at 2016, the Nigerian Super Falcons had already made the trophy their birthright. They however cemented their place in the history books by defeating the Bayana Bayana of South Africa in the penalty shoot-out, in Accra, Ghana, 2018 to win the title for the 9th time.

Between Buhari and Jibrin

One of the bizarre things that made



Cover

2018 tick was the vile propaganda launched and sustained by some enemies of President Buhari that he had died in London in 2016 and had since been replaced by one Jibrin from Sudan, his look-alike. In their bid to convince themselves and also the gullible on social media, the promoters in their dreadful

the state with the vehicle of one General Idris Alkali who had been missing for sometime. The army quickly set up a search party which found the shallow grave where he was buried after he was allegedly slaughtered by the villagers. Some of the villagers also resisted the search of the pond apparently to

election as a divided house while it has also lost many of its leaders to opposition parties. Governors Rochas Okorocha (Imo), Abdulaziz Yari (Zamfara), Ibikunle Amosun (Ogun) and some other leaders who didn't have their ways in the last primaries have been vociferous in calling for Oshiomhole's head. The



propaganda led by IPOB founder, Nnamdi Kanu, often share pictures of the President showing differences in his hands, face and posture. They have also been sharing a so-called death certificate allegedly issued by the Queen of England, Elizabeth II. As the believers of this absurd tale continued to call the President Jibrin, serious-minded people continued to ignore the conversation with the belief that it is not worth the attention. Towards the end of the year, minister of information however spoke about it in an interview with senior journalists, saying it's a terrible rumour for anyone to believe. In far-away Poland, while attending a Climate Change conference, the President told a Nigerian who wanted him to address the rumour that he was alive and well, adding that he would soon celebrate his 76th birthday on December 17. Despite this response, people who have chosen to believe the story are not relenting.

General Alkali's bloody pond

Weeks after the time renewed killings took place in parts of Plateau state which lasted for days and which threatened the unity of the country due to the fact that the victims were largely Christians, a pond was found in

cover their tracks. Many of them have been arrested and are facing interrogation.

ASUU strikes again, 30,000 minimum wage, etal

The year 2018 also had its share of recurring industrial disputes. While the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) embarked on what has become an annual ritual over the same issues which have been there for decades, the Nigeria Labour Congress and its Trade Union Congress (TUC) bickered with federal and state governments over the 30,000 minimum wage approved by the Amal Pepple tripartite committee. As many of the governors said they said they couldn't pay, the NLC ordered workers not to vote any governor who is not committed to paying the minimum wage.

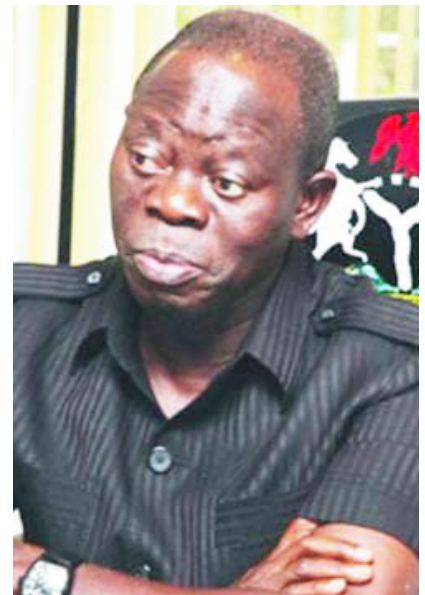
Oshiomhole: The Rebellion within

APC national chairman, Adams Oshiomhole, got to into office with high expectations. With his background in Labour and Edo state Government House, many thought he would be the one to unite the party which was drifting apart under John Odigie-Oyegun. Months into office, the party is however going into a major

chairman has also been accused of collecting bribes in millions of dollars from some of the aspirants, for which he was questioned by the DSS. He was also said to have exhibited double standards in the different states where the results of the primaries were disputed.

Osinbajo as 'Baba Loja'

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo is not just the intellectual power-house of the Buhari-led administration, he is as well the poster boy of the ruling party. He does most of the shuttles expected of his boss, keeps the house



Cover

intact in his absence and also displays all the mental and physical capacity as

it is coming few months to the 2019 election. The Vice President was

Church Auditorium

2018 was also the year of irony



well as erudition of a true, university professor, pastor and Senior Advocate of Nigeria. He was however heavily criticized in 2018 for moving from market to market across the country to share 10,000 naira to petty traders under the trader moni scheme meant to assist the poorest Nigerian get loans to sustain their businesses. While economists described the policy as tokenism as it is grossly inadequate to address the scourge of poverty, politicians in the PDP and other opposition parties described it as sophisticated vote buying since

first accused of seeking to buy votes when he launched the scheme in Osun state few days to the September gubernatorial election that the APC won in controversial circumstances.

Linda Ekeji gets burnt by her own fire

Celebrity blogger, Linda Ekeji, has lived the better part of her public life, preaching celibacy and abusing ladies who get pregnant outside wedlock and turn 'Baby Mamas.' Not many knew that while she was mocking single ladies dating married men in the day, she was for three years sleeping with a married man who never proposed to her, in the night. The lid was blown open by the news of her pregnancy in May and in September, she gave birth to a boy named Jayce in the United States. After three months of silence, she eventually confirmed that her 'Baby Daddy' was one socialite called Sholaye Jeremi who eventually dumped her after impregnating her. She was the butt of internet jokes and hilarious memes from May - when she was confirmed pregnant- to December - when she admitted her hypocrisy.

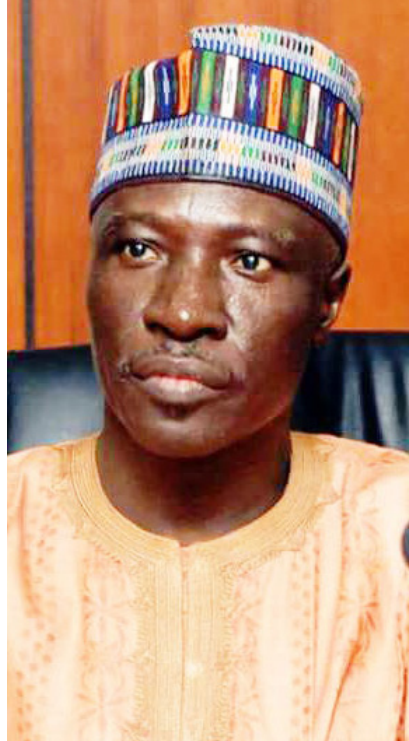
World's Poverty Capital, Highest Number of Out-Of-School Children, yet Largest

for Nigeria. It was the year the World Poverty Clock administered by the Brookings Institution revealed that Nigeria had overtaken India as the world's headquarters of poverty with 87 million people living in extreme poverty. It was also the year the number of out-of-school children in the country increased to an all-time high of 13.2 million. 2018 was also the year the co-founder of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates, said Nigeria was among the worst places on earth to give birth, with fast rising maternal and mortality rates. It was also the year Nigeria was rated as the third most terrorized nation on earth. 2018 was the year Nigeria was said to be about overtaking India as the world's headquarters of open defecation. Months after Gates criticized the Nigerian system for not building human capital but spending huge sums on erecting buildings, the country broke the internet with the story of the world's largest church auditorium emerging in Abuja. It was built by Pastor (Dr) Paul Enenche of the Dunamis International Gospel Centre (DIGC).





Cover



They started 2018 but wont witness 2019...

By **Bologi M. Maikudi**

The year 2018 is not just going, it is going with some of Nigeria's best across all areas of human endeavour. Some of these eminent Nigerians joined family and friends to clink wine glasses and told one another 'Happy New Year' on the first day of 2018 but won't be around to do same by the midnight of December 31, 2018. This is because they departed in the course of the year, leaving their friends and associates in mourning.

Hamman Tukur

Former chairman of the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), Engr Hamman Tukur, passed on in October drawing tributes from President Buhari and other Nigerians who appreciated his contribution to corporate governance and development fiscal policy in the country. He was the Rector of

Kaduna Polytechnic before his appointment as RMAFC boss by President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. He will be fondly remembered for his introduction of monetization policy and for standing up against impunity and reckless tendencies of top government officials. The Adamawa-born technocrat died at the age of 76.

Ali Wakil

Perhaps the most painful death in the political circles in 2018 was that of Senator Ali Wakil, who represented Bauchi South until his death in March. He suddenly passed on without any prior illness in his living room while his wife was preparing breakfast for him. He was 58.

Baba Sala

Moses Olaiya Adejumo, aka Bala Sala, the founder of comedy film in the country died on October 7 after many years of being bed-ridden. He remains one of the most hilarious

comedians in the history of the film industry. He also trained and mentored many of the future comedy film actors who came after him. Great productions like 'Mosebolatan', 'Ana Gomina', 'Obee Gbona', 'Agba Man' 'Orun Mooru' (a big budget film which was pirated and left him bankrupt for years) etc were credited to him. He was 82.

Ola Omonitan

Eleven days later, another Nollywood (Yoruba) veteran, Ola Omonitan, also known as 'Ajimajasan' or 'Baba no regret', died on October 18. He was 80. 'Ajimajasan' is one of the earliest Yoruba theatre artistes to popularise comedy. He had been admitted at the University College Hospital, Ibadan where it was discovered that he had been suffering from an enlarged heart, spinal cord problem and prostate cancer. He was based in Ibadan, Oyo State and his contemporaries in drama include Akin Olumegbon, Lere Paimo, Ojo Ladipo, Moses

Cover

Omilani and Jimoh Aliu. He was also one of the foremost Nigerian comedians to host a comedy series on television for one year. The productions include "Omo Araye Le", "Bata Wahala" and

"Ogun L'aye." The programmes ran for one hour each on the Nigerian Television Authority in 1981. The late actor would also be remembered for his lead role in the TV drama series, 'Omi

Okun' which is one of his post popular works till date.

Ras Kimono

Reggae legend, Oseloke Augustine Onwubuya, popularly



called Ras Kimono, also died on June 10 at the age of 60. The dreadlocked musician had few days earlier slumped at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, while waiting to board a flight to the United States. Kimono was immediately rushed to an unnamed hospital in Ikeja and then taken to another hospital on Lagos Island where he later died. He was a native of Onicha Olona in the Aniocha North Local Government Area of Delta State. His debut album 'Under

Pressure' led by the single "Rum-Bar Stylée", was a big hit in the Nigerian music scene in 1989 and into the 90s. Before he released his solo album, he was in a group called The Jastix along with Amos McRoy and Majek Fashek, another reggae icon. He also released other hit songs like 'We No Wan' (1989), 'What's Gwan' (1990), 'Rub A Dub' (1990) etc.

...His wife too

Even though she was full of life during the August burial

where their daughter (a chip off the old block) delivered some of Kimono's evergreen songs, showing no signs of weakness, his loving wife, Efemena Okedi, also died a month later. She couldn't just adjust to life in his absence.

Frederick Faseun

Veteran democracy activist and founder of Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Dr Frederick Faseun, also died in Lagos on December 1 at the age of 83. He would always be well

Cover

remembered for setting up an Acupuncture Unit at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), and setting up the Besthope Hospital and Acupuncture Centre, also in Lagos, a Centre that once earned a reputation as Africa's first for the Chinese medical practice. Dr. Fasehun formed a Yoruba-based organization to help actualize the mandate of Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola, freely given to him by Nigerians in the historic poll of June 12 1993. For his efforts, Dr. Fasehun was imprisoned for 19 months from December 1996 to June 1998 during the military rule of Sani Abacha, ending 18 days after his (Abacha's) death.

Tony Anenih

Former Minister of Works, and PDP's 'Mr Fix It,' Tony Anenih, also died on October 28. The announcement of his demise provoked an outpouring of tributes from party leaders from across the country especially those who had benefitted from his political scheming or witnessed his result-oriented cold calculations in his heydays. He

was later the chairman of the PDP's Board of Trustees (BoT) before retiring into private life.

Funke Adedoyin

The House of Representatives also had its share of tragic losses in 2018 as it lost delectable lawmaker from Irepodun in Kwara state, Funke Adedoyin, to cancer in September.

Buba Jibril

The Deputy Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, who represented Lokoja/Koto constituency of Kogi state in the House, Buba Jibril, also died in March at the age of 58. He was a third term lawmaker who was well loved by his people on account of his welfarist approach to governance especially his consistency in helping his constituents get white-collar federal government jobs.



Aisha Abimbola

Pretty Nollywood (Yoruba) actress, Aisha Abimbola, lost a battle to breast cancer in May 2018. She reportedly died in her base in Canada where she was also buried. The film industry was thrown into mourning as her fans, friends and family members could not come to terms with her death, at a relatively young age.

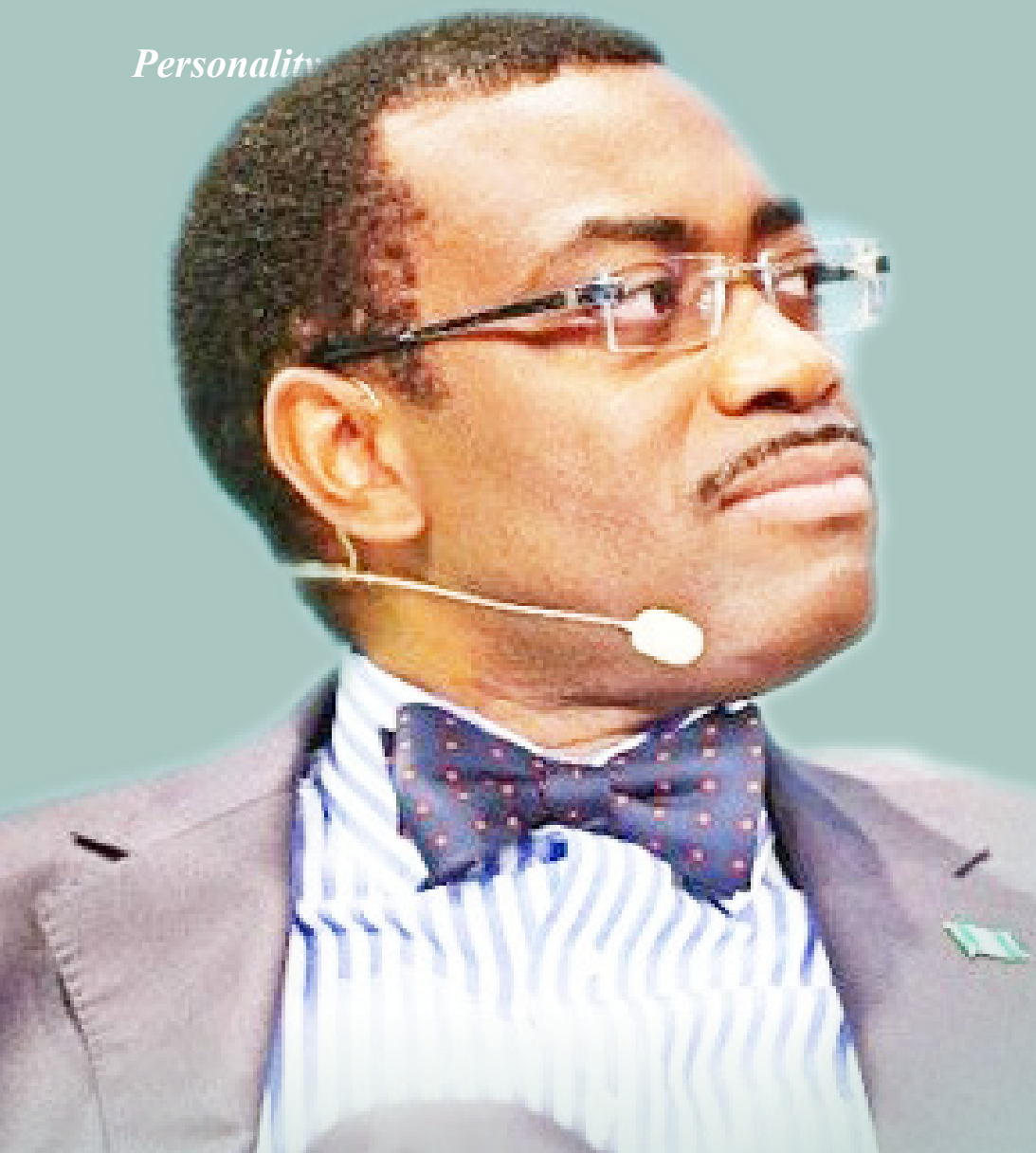
Ikeagu Oke

Celebrated poet and 2017 NLNG prize winner for poetry, Ikeagu Oke, also died in November, days after writing his own epitaph on Facebook.

Tosyn Bucknor

Famous On -Air Personality (OAP) and actress, Tosyn Bucknor, also died in November due to complications from sickle cell anemia. Her voice was popular on Inspiration FM everywhere in the country. She was also said to be a rights activist and actress who took part in the popular Africa Magic soap, Tinsel.





A well deserved honour to one of Nigeria's greatest exports

By Bologi M. Maikudi,
with agency reports

As Vice President of Policy and Partnerships for the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, he had made himself a natural choice to pick when the then President Goodluck Jonathan was looking for a world-class brain to reposition the agriculture sector.

When he was appointed

Minister of Agriculture in 2010, like his entire life trajectory from childhood suggested, he distinguished himself among the pack in the Federal Executive Council.

His passion revolves around agricultural innovation and food security, and he never failed to push through reforms which ended decades of corruption and racketeering in fertilizer distribution. He also made sure Nigeria became almost completely self-sufficient in food

production before leaving office in 2015.

As Nigeria's first President of the Africa Development Bank Group, Dr Akinwunmi Adesina, has been breaking new grounds and making the enormous responsibilities attached to the high office look so easy. Many awards and accolades from reputable global institutions have also been coming his way.

The latest honour is coming from the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee which selected him

Personality

as one of its 2019 laureates.

"As an agricultural economist, the committee regards Adesina as a leader in agricultural innovation for over 30 years.

He has contributed greatly to food security in Africa, aimed at improving the lives of millions currently living in poverty, throughout the African continent.

The Sunhak Committee acknowledges the former Nigerian minister's achievements in promoting good governance of Africa, which boosts Africa's capacity to feed itself and transform its total economies for generating wealth for millions of rural and poor African farmers," the committee said.

At the Cape Town International Convention Center, the Prize Committee announced that the 2019 Laureates for the Sunhak Peace Prize would be Waris Dirie, 53 year-old world-class supermodel and anti-FGM activist, and Adesina, the 58 year-old president of the AfDB Group.

Adesina in his 30-year career in agricultural economics brought great improvement to Africa's food security, contributing to Africa's dynamic growth. His leadership is building stepping-stones for Africa's dynamic growth.

"He pioneered major transformations in the agricultural field, including expanding rice production by introducing high yielding technologies, designing and implementing policies to support farmers' access to technologies at scale, increasing the availability of credit for millions of smallholder farmers, attracting private investments

f o r t h e

agricultural sector, rooting out the corrupt elements in the fertilizer industry, and assisting in establishment of major agricultural policies for Africa's green revolution," the committee noted.

The "Africa Fertilizer Summit," which he organized in 2006, was one of the largest high-level meetings in Africa's history that had a focus on solving Africa's food issues. During this Summit, Dr. Adesina was instrumental in developing the "Abuja Declaration on Fertilizer for the African Green Revolution," whereby the participants stated their commitment to the "eradication of hunger in Africa, by 2030."

Adesina worked with various banks and international NGOs in order to create an innovative financing system, providing loans to small farmers, providing a way for them to rise out of poverty. This move leveraged \$100 million in loans and provided opportunities for small farmers to increase their agricultural productivity, and their income.

Adesina AfDB Group now plays a central role in Africa's all-round development.

As an "economic commander" of Africa, he promotes the "High 5 Strategy" that include: light up and power Africa, feed Africa, industrialize Africa, integrate Africa and improve the quality of life for the people of Africa. As a result of his work, the lives of millions of people throughout Africa have been improved.

The Chairman of the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee, Il Sik Hong, stated that "the Sunhak Peace Prize was

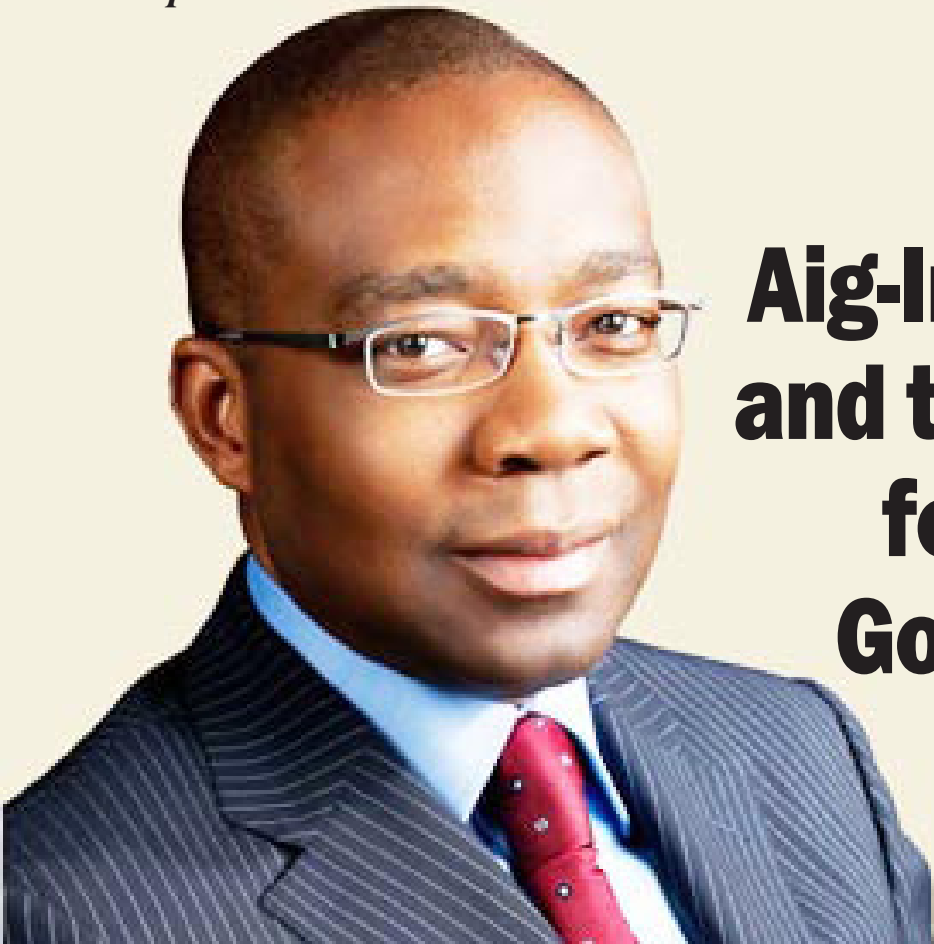
established based upon the vision of "One Family Under God."

The 2019 Sunhak Peace Prize gives special attention to peace and human development in Africa."

Hong added "in order for us to build an era of peace and coexistence in the 21st century, we want to encourage continuous development in Africa. Africa is a rising star and its growth will contribute global progress and development throughout the 21st century."

The Sunhak Peace Prize honours individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the peace and the welfare of the future generations. The Sunhak Peace Prize includes a cash prize totaling one million dollars. The 2019 Sunhak Peace Prize Award Ceremony will take place in February, 2019 in Seoul, Korea.





Aig-Imoukhuede and the Initiative for Public Governance

By
Reuben Abati

A week ago, I stumbled on an article titled “Africa and the burden of Leadership” (The Guardian, Nov. 7), written by Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, banker, investor and entrepreneur, former Managing Director of Access Bank Nigeria, our compatriot. The piece was actually excerpted from a speech he delivered at the graduation ceremony of government and public policy students at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, UK, in his capacity as founder of the Africa Initiative for Governance (AIG). The AIG was founded by him in 2014. The piece made me curious and I had to check out the Africa Initiative for Governance online. In this age of “google-it” or what others call the “white man’s oracle,” if you are in doubt about anything or you are looking for information, just consult the google-oracle. So I googled it to double-check some of the information already provided in the article before me.

Indeed in 2014, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede founded the Africa Initiative for Governance (AIG) as a not-for-profit, private sector-led Foundation to promote good governance and public sector

reform. Every year, since 2016, the AIG, in partnership with the Blavatnik School of Government has provided post-graduate scholarships for a Masters in Public Policy (MPP) programme at the University of Oxford. To date, persons selected from Nigeria and Ghana have benefitted from the programme. Five of them graduated in November 2018. They are expected to return to their home country and become change agents in their country’s public sectors. Five other AIG scholars enrolled for the MPP in September 2018.

Every year, the Foundation also awards the AIG Fellowship to an outstanding public official in Nigeria or Ghana. To date, Professor Attahiru Jega, former Chairman of Nigeria’s Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the immediate past Chief Justice of Ghana, Justice Georgina Wood have benefitted from the Fellowship. The AIG is involved in partnership with the Office of the Head of Service of the Federation (OHCSF) to give teeth to a 2017-2020 Federal Civil Service Transformation Strategy and Implementation Plan to ensure the transformation of the Nigerian civil service, and general public sector reform. As recently as October 2018, the Africa Initiative for Governance (AIG) sponsored and facilitated a session: “The Unfinished Business of Reforms” at the

24th Nigerian Economic Summit held at the Transcorp Hilton in Abuja, FCT. I further discovered that my friend and brother, Olusegun Adeniyi sits on the board of the AIG. I recall that he actually once wrote a piece on the initiative when it was first launched.

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede is a member of the emergent generation of Nigerian wealthy men and women, the 80s generation that made its money in the last two decades, from banking, finance, securities, real estate, oil and gas and just about anything that could be turned into money as the decades progressed. This rise of new money in Nigeria as different from “old money” (represented by the Odutola brothers, Dantata, Ibru, Ojukwu, da Rocha, Fernandez etc) also seems to have coincided with a rising consciousness about the need to give something back to society, that is philanthropy or social responsibility. There has been, in Nigeria, a re-definition of capitalism, in terms of a more benevolent construction, and the rich man as a responsible man of What has been seen, therefore, is the growth of institutions and initiatives devoted to the public good or ostensibly so, with too much money seeking to do much good. Alhaji Aliko Dangote, President of the Dangote Group, and one of the richest men in Africa, has the Dangote Foundation.

Jim Ovia, owner of Zenith Bank, has a Jim Ovia Foundation, and is founder of the Jim Hope Schools. Tony Elumelu, Chairman of the Union Bank for Africa (UBA) runs the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) which has been supporting and grooming entrepreneurs in 44 African countries. Of all these efforts that I know, the least publicized in my view is the Africa Initiative for Governance (AIG). Or to put it differently, in a country where a Foundation that distributes food to the poor, and another small one that gives out second hand clothes, are much better known, a Foundation like the AIG which focusses on reform, governance and policy deserves more aggressive publicity - not to promote ego, but to inspire a much broader debate about its goals and objectives.

The only significant thing I notice however is that the acronym of the Africa Initiative for Governance is AIG. The founder, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, is also more popularly known as Aig, a shortened form of his name. But greater publicity for the Foundation should expand access to the opportunities it offers. This is my point. How many persons in Nigeria or Ghana are aware of the scholarships and Fellowships on offer? Who knows that the Foundation exists? Aig-Imoukhuede may assume that the work of the Foundation will speak for it. These days, Foundations speak, and they should speak for themselves.

It remains for us to interrogate the foundations of the initiative, and some of the points raised in Aig-Imoukhuede's article. The original assumption is that the civil service is the engine-room of a country and that for a country to function effectively, attain a competitive edge and for democracy to work, there must be in place a development-oriented civil service in place. Aig-Imoukhuede obviously believes as shown in his piece "Africa and the burden of leadership", that the failure of African states is a function of the failure of the bureaucratic machinery in those countries, and that reform is required to reverse the trend, rediscover lost glory and reposition African countries for progress. There is a touch of nostalgia in this. Many Nigerians growing up in the 60s, 70s, and early 80s in Nigeria will remember a country that once worked. Chinua Achebe referred to this when he titled one of his books, "There was once a country". In that country referred to by Chinua Achebe, there may have been small corruption within the system, tongue and "tribe" may have differed, but Nigeria was a country that worked.

There was in place a state bureaucracy that provided opportunities and service

“

Countries like Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa, Mauritius, Botswana, and Kenya are ahead of Nigeria. Nigeria remains resistant to new thinking. Aig-Imoukhuede through the AIG, wants to intervene from within, through private sector injection, into the policy making process. His entry route is education

for the average citizen. We had in the country some of the best schools in the sub-region, if not in the entire continent. Scholars from around the world came to teach at the country's universities; there were foreign students in Nigeria as well. As a secondary school student, some of my teachers were from Pakistan, India and other parts of the Commonwealth. As an undergraduate, we had Faculty members from the United States, France, UK and Canada. Nigerian roads were fixed by a department called PWD, that is Public Works Department. In those days, teachers were special citizens because students and their parents celebrated them and appreciated their value. A school principal or a primary school headmaster or headmistress was definitely a member of the local elite. There was a Sanitary

and Hygiene Department at the Health Office. Today, Nigeria ranks second on the ignoble, global list of countries that are guilty of open defecation due to the absence of public latrines! There was regular power supply in those days. Nobody had any need for a generator. Today, every home is a power station. You have to generate your own water, your own electricity too. The situation is so bad that the Federal Government has had to declare a national emergency on water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

AIG believes that the narrative can be changed and that new thinking can produce a new Nigeria. Aig-Imoukhuede is convinced that public sector reforms focused on human capacity development and institutional capacity building can change our circumstances. The truth is that there have been many public service reforms in Nigeria as has been convincingly argued and rigorously analysed by Tunji Olaopa, our former Perm. Sec at the State House who in a few days will be delivering an inaugural lecture as a Professor at the Lead City University in Ibadan. (see for example: Tunji Olaopa, Managing Complex Reforms, Ibadan: Bookcraft, 2011, 315 pp). Nonetheless, in spite of all of those reforms, Nigeria remains classified as a "hesitant reformer". Countries like Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa, Mauritius, Botswana, and Kenya are ahead of Nigeria. Nigeria remains resistant to new thinking. Aig-Imoukhuede through the AIG, wants to intervene from within, through private sector injection, into the policy making process. His entry route is education. He believes that if the private sector can invest over time, in human capital, create a pool of public policy experts who have been schooled in some of the best institutions in the world, when such individuals are injected into the system, they can make a difference. He even intends to set up a public policy university in Nigeria where such new thinkers can be produced.

I get the point about human capacity investment. Many countries in the developing world have learnt to recruit into their bureaucracy only the best and the brightest available. In India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Pakistan, you must be really smart to be a civil servant. It is understood that what happens in terms of the management of the state determines everything else. In Nigeria, our civil service system has been overtaken by nepotism, lack of merit, incompetence and complete disregard for critical thinking. The same Nigerian civil service that once produced Super Permanent Secretaries (including Philip Asiodu, the

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late Allison Ayida and late Hayford Alile), now produces ethnic champions, looters, “area boys”, and closet politicians. Aig-Imokhuede believes that a carefully groomed and intellectually exposed new elite can create a revolution. He has taken the strategic step of involving beneficiaries from Ghana and other African countries.

I assure Aig-Imokhuede that he may end up having more success stories from Ghana and elsewhere in Africa. But that does not mean he must give up on his own country. He made his money here and he has an obligation to contribute to the re-making of the country of his birth. The path he has chosen is much better than donating money to politicians who do not understand policy or the developmental process that will produce a better society. It is a much wiser way of spending his money than acquiring additional wives or side chicks, living large like an octopus, dressing like a coxcomb, or becoming an embarrassing face of capitalism. My worry is this: when the new bureaucratic elite that he is helping to create through first world education return to Nigeria or Ghana, how do they fit in, into the rot in Nigeria especially? How do they fit into the prevalent culture of anti-intellectualism? A Masters in Public Policy (MPP) from Oxford is great but is Nigeria’s civil service today, ready for Oxonian intellect and competence? What is the guarantee that some of AIG’s products will not end up elsewhere in other countries where they may be better valued? Aig-Imokhuede wants to create 21st century technocrats for a 19th century system in Nigeria. Will elite public policy education also prepare his beneficiaries for the primordial constraints of the Nigerian public sector?

Let me simplify that. In Oxford, and I believe in the elite school that Aig-Imokhuede wants to build, they will teach things like planning, processes, innovation, creativity, efficiency and outcomes as parts of the bureaucratic engine. How will the AIG agents when they return to Nigeria respond to their other colleagues who in the first place are holding strategic positions because of Federal Character and whose secondary school certificates cannot be traced and who have never been to anywhere close to Oxford? How will they relate with the horde of civil servants who will leave the office before noon every Friday and will not return? How will they deal with a system where records are not kept and nobody wants to keep any record because of an established “Guardian syndrome” - the this-is-how-we-have-always-done-it mentality that has always made new thinking impossible in the Nigerian civil service? The plan is to train AIG Fellows



to think modern, post-modern even, but what should they do with that other colleague who during the weekend had been shown wearing a masquerade attire and prancing about with a primitive sword in his hands, and paraded as the chieftain of a 9th century society?

I am not knocking AIG’s emphasis on human capacity development and institution building. I am trying to problematize what they propose by saying that there is a whole lot more beyond the development of a new skills-set, and a new generation of thinkers. Nigeria failed first at the level of values, culture and ideals before its public service followed suit and failed. The entire country itself needs to be re-built before the input of private institutions like AIG can be better felt. We need a different kind of leadership: a leadership that values ideas and the capacity of human beings to make a difference, and a governance system that is driven by ideas and a competitive

spirit.

Nigeria cannot afford to continue drifting. It is the reason many of our capitalists are beginning to jump into the fray to see what they can do from the private sector-end to reduce the spread of institutionally generated madness. It is probably in their enlightened self-interest to be seen to be actively creating new currents within the country, and an enabling environment for capital to thrive, but we should hold Aig and others at the higher end of the spectrum: their love for country. The founders of AIG and similar others have proven one point: that leadership is a collective responsibility and more so, between the public and private sectors. In doing so, they all hold up a candle to future generations and offer hope that some day, this country will reach the turning point of progress. AIG doesn’t want Nigeria and the rest of Africa left on the tarmac. That’s fine. Nigeria needs to board a flight to a higher destination...

'Buhari's major principles on On Climate Change'



By Garba Shehu

This year's annual conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is currently taking place in Katowice, Poland. It opened on December 2nd and will run until the 14th.

There are about 22,000 delegates from 200 countries at the conference, including President Muhammadu Buhari who joined other world leaders for the high-level meeting on December 2 and 3.

As an aside, the choice of Katowice by the Polish hosts of the conference is a deliberate one, aimed at bringing home the lessons of the devastation caused by climate to the global environment.

Katowice is the coal mining and steel making stronghold of the country.

Coal powers 80 per cent of Poland's electricity, on account of which Katowice is the 36th of Europe's 50 most polluted cities.

Smog, manifesting air pollution can get so bad that it would sometimes be difficult to breathe.

It's perhaps on account to avoid the air that many delegations chose to stay in Kraków, a distance of 80.4 km (some one hour-drive) from Katowice, for their residency while attending the conference.

Beyond this, there is everything positive to say about infrastructure in both cities, much of it put in place during the communist era, attesting to claims that in some ways, communism did work for the people.

Tagged "COP24" in UN parlance, this meeting had the objective of drawing up final rules and guidelines for the implementation of the Paris Agreement

on Climate Change. When it is agreed to, it will enable the Agreement to be put into practice all around the world.

The Paris Agreement was adopted in December 2015. The global action plan set out in Paris is to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature rise to 1.5°C.

The agreement came into effect on 4th November 2016, and has since been signed by nearly 200 countries including Nigeria.

Signatories also include the United States, Australia and Argentina, three countries that are now reversing their acceptance of the terms of the agreement.

In the specific case of Donald Trump's America, he doesn't even believe that global warming has a connection with

Environment

carbon emissions, a sin visited on the world by rich, industrial nations led by America.

This year's climate conference came at a time of growing concern about the deteriorating global climate situation. It has been determined that in carbon dioxide levels, the year 2017 was the highest they have been in 3-5 million years.

According to the National Agency for Space Administration, NASA, 2017 was the second-hottest year globally since 1880; the Arctic was warming twice as fast as anywhere else on earth in 2017 and sea levels are rising at the fastest recorded rate in 2,000 years.

As enunciated by President Buhari in his speech at Katowice, the consequences of this are seen in the rising global temperatures, erratic rainfall, sand storms, desertification, floods, cold waves, low agricultural yields and drying up of water bodies. "It is no surprise that the effects are felt more on the vulnerable communities that lack the capacity and technology to properly address such challenges," he said.

In that speech, President Buhari made it clear that we in Africa contributed little, if any to the climate change menace but were suffering its consequences.

He graphically cited the case of the Lake Chad, down from 25,000 square kilometres to 2,500 sq. km, ten per cent only of its established size and with that, jeopardizing the livelihoods of 40 million inhabitants of the basin found in

Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

The consequences of these on the ecosystems are extreme poverty, the displacement of people, and support for banditry and terrorism.

In calling for international support to recharge Lake Chad with waters from the Congo Basin in Central Africa, President Buhari made clear that Nigeria remains committed to saving the Lake from possible extinction.

In search for solutions, he revealed that an International Conference held earlier in February this year in Abuja has helped in creating additional awareness globally on the serious environmental and security challenges facing the Lake Chad region.

Furthermore, he said, "A consensus was reached at the said Conference to the effect that an inter basin water transfer from the Congo Basin remains the most sustainable option available to resuscitate and safeguard this precious water body that was once the 6th largest fresh water Lake in the world."

The President also did his duty of projecting Nigeria as a responsible nation-state, playing by international rules, taking upon herself the ambitious "Nationally Determined Contributions" targeted to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions up to 20 per cent by 2030 and, given international support, by 45 per cent in 20 years.

It is clear that the Nigerian leader has cast himself in the role of an activist and global environmental champion to the admiration of many including Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General.

His support for the Paris Agreement is unmistakable, partly on account of his view of it as a vehicle for the remission of past ills visited on the environment that led to the consequences of climate change imposed on Nigeria and other African countries.

He sees the risks to our farmers who are involved in frequent deadly attacks against each other with herders; he is concerned about rising oceans that threaten our communities along the thousands of kilometres of coastline; he knows first-hand, the damage from the desert encroachment, forcing millions of our citizens into climate migration.

His determination to make a difference is driven by a strong sense of mission, to do something about the dangers now or confront a bigger calamity in the years to come.

He has an interesting narrative from the Magazine, National Geographic he read about 40 years back, in which a report was made of a research by a UK scholar around 1925 warning as at that time that Lake Chad needed an infusion of waters from the Congo Basin or else it would dry up.

Because nothing was done to forestall this, Lake Chad is today 10 per cent of its original size and, receding even more.

For him, therefore, the adoption "of a strong Paris work programme, with clear provisions on all key issues including transparency, finance, mitigation and adaptation," is a key priority as it is for the European Union and other countries.



Environment

When it comes to the assumption of responsibility for the work that needs to be done and who pays for it, President Buhari as do many other activist-leaders, hold the view that since the developed countries have been the major polluters over the years, and they are not in any way denying that, they should assume a greater role in fighting global warming.

One of these ways includes the Green Climate Fund established by the Paris Agreement into which they would make an annual payment of USD 100 billion to help lift up the less developed countries suffering the consequences of climate change. President Buhari said African countries must draw from this fund for the restoration efforts to make the needed impact.

For us in Nigeria however, the President made it clear that we are not resting on our oars, waiting for manna to fall from heaven, but rather promoting technologies and practices such as sustainable land management, climate resilient agriculture, water efficiency and clean energy.

"We have also developed insurance-based initiatives to deal with losses and damage, as well as adaptation to internally acceptable practices," he told the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice.

Some of the specifics in this regard include: the determined efforts to end gas flaring in the Niger Delta, ahead of the stated schedule; provision of solar power up to 13,000 megawatts; efficient energy through mass transit and reduction of cars and the improvement of the electricity grid system.

The President also mentioned the successful take-off in the Nigerian Stock Exchange of the green climate bonds to help us fund renewable energy and reduce carbon emissions.

The Nigerian Government, President Buhari also announced, has specifically developed Sectoral Implementation Plans (SIPs) in five priority sectors namely: Oil and Gas; Agriculture and Land Use; Transport; Industry; Energy and Power.

These steps as choreographed by President Buhari, had the effect of presenting Nigeria as a nation acting responsibly within the global community. If every country would do their part in a responsible way as we are doing, the world would have been saved, in 2017 alone, of disasters triggered by weather and climate-related hazards to the cost of US\$320 billion.

The UN says these economic losses will increase and will have a bigger impact on the lives and livelihoods of

“

We have also developed insurance-based initiatives to deal with losses and damage, as well as adaptation to internally acceptable practices,” he told the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice

the poorest and most vulnerable, and that by the year 2030, climate impacts could push an additional 100 million people into poverty.

The statistics also show that by 2050, as many as 143 million people could become climate migrants in just three regions (Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America), with individuals, families and even whole communities forced to seek more viable and less vulnerable places to live.

Beyond his very engaging participation in the conference, the President used his presence in Poland to advance the country's international relations by holding separate bilateral meetings with the President and Prime Minister of Poland, both of whom

talked about their investment plans for Nigeria; the President of Austria who expressed a strong support for the recharging of Lake Chad; the Prime Minister of the Netherlands with whom the Nigerian leader discussed matters of investment, the reform of our livestock and farm agriculture; and the President of Switzerland whose country had done so much, and is expected to do more in helping us to secure the release of the remaining Chibok girls and other hostages seized by Boko Haram.

As he did in every country he visited, President Buhari met the Nigerian community who asked so many questions including the one on his alleged cloning, a question he considered laughable and dismissed as incredible.

When, at the end of the interaction they asked him, "What do you want us as Nigerian citizens to do for you?" The President answered to a thunderous ovation: "Vote for me!"

In a mark of international statesmanship, President Buhari ended his engagements in Poland with a visit to Auschwitz, described as the largest concentration camp established by the Nazi regime in pursuit of the "Final Solution."

One million, three hundred thousand (1.3m) people, 90 per cent of them Jews were exterminated mostly in gas chambers by the Nazi occupiers during World War II.

His visit has been marked as a gesture to the global and domestic audiences.

In solemnity, President Buhari entered some of the detention camps, the execution wall and walked through the remaining gas chamber still standing in the camps.

He laid a wreath in honour of the dead and signed the condolence register in which he wrote, quoting Shakespeare that the "evil that men do lives after them..."

Auschwitz-Birkenau had a sobering effect on President Buhari as well as members of his delegation that included the Governors of Enugu, Kogi and Niger States

The visit showed the essential Buhari to the world: Kind, gracious and considerate, a leader who at every given opportunity pledges commitment to complete freedom of faith, but one who ironically, is questioned in his motives by people he dismissed as "illiterates and ignorant."

Garba Shehu is the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity

To win the war on terror, we need opportunities and jobs



By Atiku Abubakar

In order to defeat terror, Nigeria needs a well-thought-out anti-terror plan and one thing that must be central to that plan is the buy-in of the people because terror can only thrive where there is local support. Take that local support structure away and the terror architecture will collapse like a pack of cards.

Terrorists are themselves

human beings. Terror groups depend on recruiting from the local communities to replenish their ranks or they cannot grow. The members of Boko Haram are not spirits and while there definitely is some foreign influence, the overwhelming number of their leadership and followers are members of the local population.

Central to our plans for defeating terror therefore must be to find out why young

men in those communities are aggrieved enough to be alienated from Nigeria and attracted to the radical philosophy of Boko Haram and ISWAP. When we find out, we must prevent this alienation from occurring.

The key to answering this question is to look at the economy of Nigeria and how that economy is distributed.

Within Nigeria, the heartland of the terror insurgency is the Northeast, with Borno and Yobe



states being the hardest hit. Surely, it cannot be a coincidence that the Northeast is also the most economically backward part of Nigeria with Borno and Yobe states worst affected.

Recently, someone called Nigerian youths “lazy”. Rightly, there was an uproar over that indecorous slandering of a whole generation, but that type of mentality exposes the mindset that has led to the alienating of huge swathes of our youth,

especially in the Northeast.

When Nigerian youths feel that they are not valued as equal members of society that should have equal access to opportunity, they begin to take matters into their own hands.

When the leadership of a nation fail to provide positive avenues for the youth to assert their intelligence positively, then the youth will find negative uses to express their innate intelligences.

Lack of access to education is linked to poverty and poverty is undoubtedly an incubator for crime, terrorism or militancy.

On November 22, 2016, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) revealed that a whopping 70% of children in Kebbi state are not in school. They also revealed that they do not have reliable figures for states such as Borno and Yobe, but the numbers may well be more. Even likely so.

In 2016, my running mate, former Governor Peter Obi, gave an Independence Day speech at The Platform event organised by Covenant Christian Centre in Lagos. It was an unforgettable Independence Day event which, according to Google analytics, was the most searched item in Nigeria on that day, besting even the President’s own speech.

Why was that speech so attractive to Nigerians? It is because Mr. Obi gave a detailed breakdown of the reality of governance in Nigeria today, which is one of a wasteful squandering of the riches that should have gone into the development of our youth.

And he is not alone in noticing this. Youth everywhere and especially in the Northeast are seeing this. The Nigerian government and the Nigerian elite are not offering them a way out of this dilemma. However, anti social groups, like Boko Haram and ISWAP, are exploiting their dissatisfaction with society and are offering our youth a utopian ideal which is in reality a dystopia.

These youth read about highly connected government officials who pilfer N200 million that was meant for Internally Displaced Persons, without so

much as a slap on the wrists, they hear about suspected mega thieves who are returned by government, reinstated into the civil service, given promotions and armed guards and treated like royalty.

These events only deepen their alienation from society and affirm the twisted messages of groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP.

To defeat terrorism therefore, we need to arm our military and motivate them with good working conditions and terms of services, especially for the lower ranks who face the greatest risks and are the least paid. We need to demonstrate that when you fight for Nigeria, Nigeria will fight for you, but even more importantly, we must show that when you die in the services of Nigeria, your name and your survivors will be celebrated by the society that you died for.

We must also help our military win the hearts and minds of the people of the Northeast by empowering them to open soup kitchens where they give food to the hungry. We must encourage them to set up field hospitals where they treat the local population free of charge. Even something as giving each soldier a pocketful of sweets to handout to little children on the streets will help the military win the love and affection of the local population and turn their allegiance to our armed forces.

Boko Haram: A General’s Frustrations

That is one part of the plan. The other part of the plan, which is even more important, is that we must starve Boko Haram and ISWAP of their recruiting tool by quickly and effectively restructuring Nigeria so that we have a society that allows for inclusiveness and social justice.

A very good first step is to go back in time to find out why an initially peaceful movement became violent. It all started with the extra judicial murder of their charismatic preacher and founder Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf.

In fact, the current leader of ISWAP, is Mohammed Yusuf’s son, Abu Musab al-Barnawi. It is clear that that act of extra judicially killing Mohammed

Security

Yusuf is one of the grudges that these groups have against the Nigerian state.

We must deprive Boko Haram of the means of claiming injustice as the rationale behind its insurgency by trying all those behind Mohammed Yusuf's extra judicial murder.

As Theodore Parker said "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice".

Just as we are satisfying this moral debt, as a nation, we must ensure that there is a fairer redistribution of the wealth of Nigeria amongst all Nigerians. Our budgeting system must be upended and we must have the political will to start spending more on capital expenditures than on recurrent expenditures.

We must curb waste in government by eliminating security votes and those wasteful spendings highlighted by Governor Peter Obi which include, but are not limited to, eliminating huge and expensive convoys, overseas medical treatment at public expense, reducing unnecessary travel and building people instead of building edifices.

We must learn from countries like Rwanda that has stabilised its society by statutorily reserving 30% of all legislative seats for women. As the late Kofi Annan said in 2006, "there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, or to reduce infant and maternal mortality".

When you empower a woman, you empower a family, a village, a community and eventually, a nation.

In our case, we can go further by reserving at least 35% of all legislative and executive positions for not just women, but also for our youth, at all levels of government, federal, states and local governments. We must convert our youths from onlookers to stakeholders.

They must see that it is easier for them to influence the direction of Nigeria by going into government or business than by going into crime or terrorism.

But above all, we must massively invest in education by building capacity, which must



not just be limited to establishing more schools, but by training teachers. In a situation where we do not even have enough teachers, it is a mistake to sack the few that we have because they fail adhoc examinations. Instead, we must build their capacity to teach via training and continuous development.

It is impossible to have 70% of the children of a state outside the formal school system without having destabilising crime and terrorism such as we are currently having in Nigeria. And it will be a mistake to fight only the symptoms without fighting the cause.

We must accept the wisdom that a provision of equal opportunity and social justice is the panacea to almost all of the ills of society.

By reversing our budgeting ratio from 7-3 in favour of recurrent to 7-3 in favour of capital expenditure, we will create an atmosphere for jobs.

If we are building and rebuilding infrastructure, there will be jobs for our youth. They will have increased purchasing power, which will itself lead

to further jobs flowing from the goods and services they patronise. They will keep their monies in banks, which will result in more liquidity with which the banks can then provide loans to more small and medium scale enterprises. The snowball effect is almost limitless.

Again, let me state that we have to make these changes to rescue our nation from the brink. Only last week, the World Bank revealed that in recent years, Nigeria "has underinvested in human capital and remains very low compared to others."

If we do not address these negative indices, we will continue to totter, while nations that sufficiently invest in their youth make advances that we can only dream of.

These are the only ways we can decisively defeat terror, otherwise anarchy awaits us.

Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, GCON, a former Vice President of Nigeria and the Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), writes from Abuja.

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Mahmud Waziri: Remember Nigeria's unsung democracy

"There are different types of leaders. While some are thrown up by the challenges of crisis and war, there are other leaders who lead not only in quiet times but also in quiet ways. Generally, however, biographers are often interested in the flamboyant demagogue than in the quiet and meticulous builder mainly because of man's inherent penchant for the dramatic. But on the whole, nothing great can be achieved without great men; and it is great issues that instigate controversies and call forth great men to handle them."



By Ahmed Musdafa Waziri

The above philosophical outpouring aptly captures the essence, life and times of one of Nigeria's greatest statesmen and yet one of the most remarkably forgotten heroes of our democracy... A man who at the risk of his personal life and safety, fought against oppressors and spoke against tyrants, stood for Nigeria and insisted on what is right and just and what is best in the sight of God and man, not what is politically expedient... One of the re-inventors of modern Nigeria who sacrificed personal liberty for the common good and who left his aristocratic and comfortable background to advance the cause of the talakawa consistently till he breathed his last.

The above opening quote by renowned author, Viktor Kalu (who wrote one of his biographies), also fittingly describes and explains the reasons this hero has since his death remained largely unsung and virtually uncelebrated. The society we live in prefers the ones who make the loudest noise however empty to the legends who do the greatest work however impactful. We won't however allow history writers to get away with this intellectual scam and historic fraud of not celebrating those who toiled day and night, in the sun and rain, spent their personal resources and paid the price for the peace, democracy and freedom that Nigeria enjoys today.

The destiny and future of kingdoms, empires and countries have in the history of mankind being shaped by the extraordinary efforts, visionary interventions and unprecedented words and actions of certain leaders and individuals (in crucial positions of authority...). History is replete with the stories of men of valour who took the bull by the horns and took very brave decisions that are meant to restore order and peace in their respective societies. Some of these rare patriots are often celebrated with memorial days dedicated to them, public holidays, statutes, streets and monuments named after them while some of them simply end up as unsung heroes.

Senator Mahmud Waziri however belongs to the last category (of unsung heroes). He was arguably the most vibrant, cerebral and clear-headed lawmaker in the Second Republic. A great thinker and philosopher-king in the mould of Classical Greek philosopher, Plato,

Remembering democracy hero

He represented Adamawa district of the Old Gongola state in the Senate between 1979 and 1983.

While his peers and future generations of pretenders who call themselves leaders join politics in search of bread and butter, Waziri, after recording huge successes in public service and business came out of his comfort zone to join politics in search of a platform and opportunity to make impact, make revolutionary changes in the periscope of leaders and mentality of followers as well as advocate for better lives for the Talakawa.

A politician with class, a business magnate with deep pocket, an educationist, journalist and management consultant; a part-time musician, poet and writer who exude the command of words and erudition of a Nobel Laureate, the multi-talented Mahmud Waziri would have been just as successful if he had chosen the arts, literature or entertainment as a major career.

One of the world's greatest story teller and dramatist, Williams Shakespeare, wrote in his famous Twelfth Night that, "some are born great, some achieve greatness, while some have greatness thrust upon them". Mahmud Waziri, a man of deep conviction, sound principles and stubborn disposition towards issues of governance and politics, was born great on December 13, 1936, in Yola the present-day capital of Adamawa state. His father was Mallum Hamman, the third Waziri of Adamawa who reigned between 1923 and 1963.

He began and completed both his primary and secondary education in the old Adamawa province where he attended the Yola elementary school (1944-1948) and the Yola Middle School (1948-1953). At the age of 16, the young intellectual proceeded to the Institute of Administration, Zaria where he studied between 1953 and 1954. To advance his worldview and expand his horizon, the young Waziri competed with the best brains in the world at the Northwestern Polytechnic, London between 1958 and 1961. He also studied at the Watertool University in Ontario, Canada.

In between his studies, he had worked as a third class clerk at the Premier's office in Kaduna between 1953 and 1956. That was where he learnt the virtues of simplicity, selflessness, religious devotion and patriotism which later influenced the kind of politics he would play in the future.

In 1968, he married former Miss Hauwa Malabu, the daughter of Bello Malabu who was Nigeria's first Ambassador to Cameroun and Madawaki Adamawa. They had three equally successful children together.

He rose through the ranks in the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) between 1956 and 1973. He was a management cadet, administrative officer, London representative, dock superintendent, deputy chief establishment officer, chief establishment officer and controller of personnel. He was

deputy general manager (1973-1974) and later first indigenous General Manager and Chief Executive Officer (1974-1976) of the Nigerian sugar company, Bacita, the premier sugar company in the country.

There are only few Nigerians who achieved anything close to Waziri in the private sector. He was the founder, managing director (1976) and executive chairman (1985) of the Nigerbas Shipping Line Limited. He was listed as a Director, Societe Generale bank (1989), member, Institute of Transport, London (1961), Director Borini Pronto Company (1972-1979), chairman, Central Water Company, (1973-1974), member, Nigerian Institute of Management and British Institute of Management.

It was not a surprise therefore that Waziri joined the murky waters of Nigerian politics as a self-made millionaire. That was exactly why his politics was strictly people-based.

Waziri, being a man of conviction who followed his instincts and not the bandwagon, joined the Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP) in the 70s instead of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) that most northern top shots were joining. With 53,586 votes, he defeated Ali Baba of the NPN (46,032 votes), Maman Dakisiri of UPN (15,687 votes) and I. Yakubu of PRP (4,960 votes) in the 1979 Adamawa district senatorial election. He had served as a member of the Constituent Assembly in 1977 where the 1979 constitution was drafted.

On the floor of the senate, he spoke with clarity, spoke truth to power, challenged the NPN-led executive and held everyone spellbound with his vision and passion for a united, better Nigeria. He declined to seek a second term in the Senate having foreseen a disastrous end of the republic which he warned the political class of.

During the military interregnum, he continued his private businesses, philanthropy, and the advocacy for good governance and return to democracy. A cross-national bridge builder who never played the typical narrow politics of identity of the conservative north, he was with MKO Abiola through and through and played a major role in his victory in the historic June 12, 1993 election. Even when some of Abiola's tribesmen abandoned the struggle and joined Abacha on the dining table, Waziri remained with pro-democracy activists, called out the maximum dictator repeatedly and made life difficult for the murderous junta, at the risk of his life.

It was in the dying days of military rule that Waziri actually proved himself as a goal-getting political schemer, a man of strong convictions who believed in justice and the need to keep the country together. As protem chairman of the All Peoples Party (APP), he did all he could to make sure a Yoruba man from southwest emerged president to compensate the people of that zone over the Abiola matter and preserve the unity of the nation. Since the PDP was going to give its ticket to former Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo, Waziri started by edging out the northern aspirants from the race. He saw that a southerner, Dr Ogbonaya Onu, emerged Presidential candidate of APP at the Kaduna convention. He also defied internal rebellion to strike a major deal with the Alliance for Democracy (AD) who had former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Olu Falae, as its Presidential candidate. He used his experience as a business deal maker to make sure the alliance adopted APP as the

name while choosing Falae as the Presidential candidate. At the end of the day, the Presidency was a context between two Yoruba men and even though his candidate, Falae, did not win, justice was duly served and after all the post-June 12 agitation that shook the nation to its foundation, peace descended on Nigeria and it has endured up till today.

If Waziri had succumbed to the blackmail, name calling and attacks by some of the party bigwigs, a northerner with the APP ticket would have defeated Obasanjo at the general election and the agitation by the southwest over the June 12 injustice could have led Nigeria to another Rwandan-style genocide or another civil war... And therein lies Waziri's heroism.

As a great dancer and a brilliant actor who knew exactly when to quit the stage at the peak of the ovation, he stepped down as chairman of the APP in June 1999. He took his passion for service to the corridors of the Executive when he helped President Olusegun Obasanjo to stabilize the polity in his capacity as Special Adviser on Inter-Party Relations.

The life story of Mahmud Waziri is a testament to the time-tested aphorism that charity begins at home. He did not start his philanthropy and advocacy for good governance from Adamawa state or from the floor of the Senate in Lagos. He started from his own very large extended family. Waziri took it upon himself to sponsor the education of several of his nieces and nephews and other extended relatives. It was after he successfully put his family on the path of education and progress that he launched himself into national reckoning and he also made a remarkable success out of it.

It is however a shame that despite Waziri's heroism and contribution to democracy, peace and stability of the nation, he has up till this moment not being honoured or immortalized in any way by the federal government since he transited to the great beyond on the 18th of September, 2010... Not even a street in Abuja named after him!

This is a clarion call on the federal government to do the needful and give honour to whom it is due so that the members of the Waziri family will be gratified that the nation honours their patriarch for his sacrifices. Honouring national icons and legends like Mahmud Waziri has a way of encouraging the younger ones to do even more for their country with the belief that Nigeria is indeed worth dying for.

Waziri loved Nigeria to a fault and he never stopped urging the political class to put the country first. The fact that the country is still tottering today is because his caution to politicians conveyed in countless speeches, articles and books, has largely gone unheeded. Below is one of his immortal admonitions which is still relevant today:

"There can be no progress without peace or freedom without democracy. A national rebirth will never come about until those who lead the country admit failure and seek redemption. What is needed of the political class are courage and reorientation rooted in reason because if we appraise our journey to the present state with reason, we will be able to summon courage to break once and for all the monotony of these dreary times"

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Look closely at the table. President Muhammadu Buhari exchanging pleasantries with Governors Henry Seriake Dickson (Bayelsa), Udom Emmanuel (Akwa Ibom), Ifeanyi Okowa (Delta), and Nyesom Wike (Rivers) before a recent meeting at the State House, Abuja. As seen on the table, the President and his guests enjoyed reading copies of your darling Thinkers Magazine before and after the meeting.

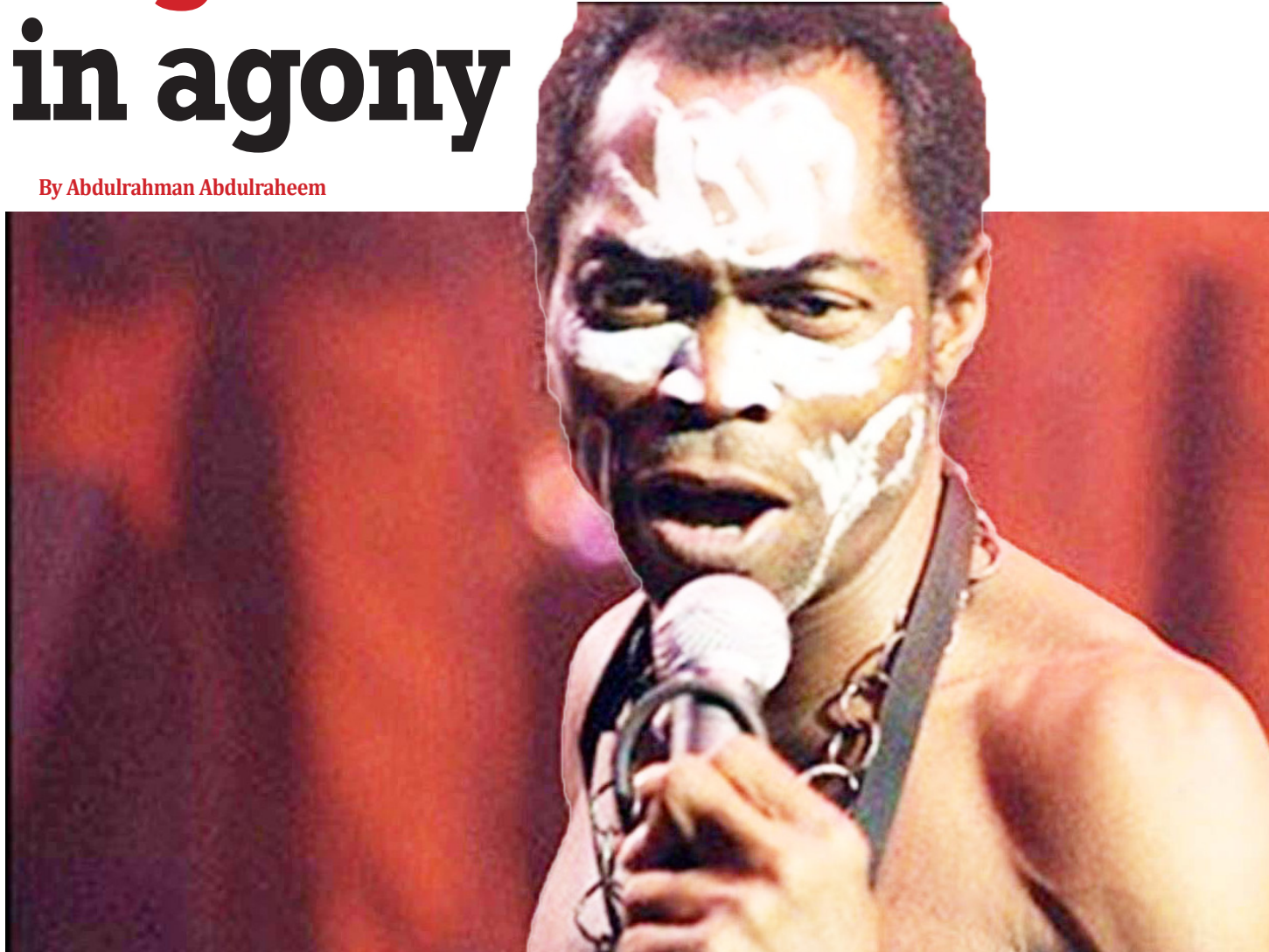


Thinkers Magazine is what everyone is reading. Don't be left out. Ask the nearest vendor for a copy of our latest edition.

Poem of the month

Nigeria: Godliness in agony

By Abdulrahman Abdulraheem



Largest church auditorium in the world
13.2 million out-of-school-children
Yes, the highest in the world
World's poverty capital
87 million extremely poor
World's number one medical tourist
World's highest rate of Infant mortality, maternal mortality
Worst place on earth to give birth
Life Expectancy Ratio at all-time low.
No world-class university

The clerics don't condemn Boko Haram.
They refuse to campaign for girl-child education.
Yet rise in unison to condemn the film village
Poor nitwits join to kill their own chance of liberation
In a jungle where the riba collector pays their Sadaaki
Indolence and laziness institutionalized

The Shariah industry is really doing well

Politicians deploy Sharia to win elections.
They allow the schools and productive industries to die
They invest in religion and use it to enslave gullible folks
Shariah law is everywhere
Churches and mosques are everywhere too
Yet Nigeria is nowhere
Tithes and offerings build magnificent places of worship
Yet the people become poorer

The Afro beat founder was right
Nigeria was not designed to make it
Nigeria cannot even make it.
He saw this dark future we are in now decades ago
'Pastors house na im dey clean pass'
'My people dey stay for poor surroundings'
'Pastor's dress na im dey fine pass'
'He hard for my people for them to buy soap'

Leterary Corner

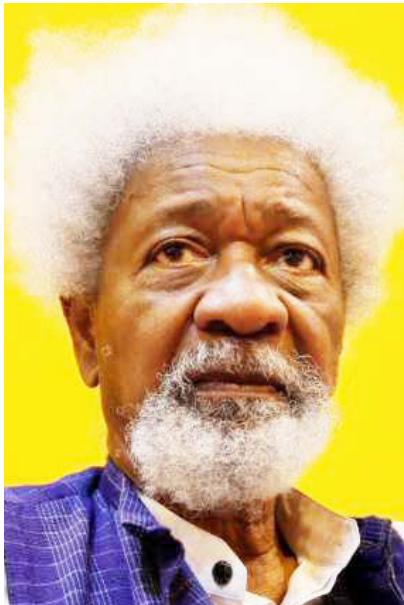
'Why I dey laugh, man no fit cry'
In a village recently, the only
school was growing weeds
Churches were growing in size
and congregation.
The grandson of Sanusi
screamed on top of his voice
A liberal occupying the seat of
conservatives
'Let us build less mosques and
more schools'

They went for his jugular and
blackmailed him into silence.
To the bearded Nobel Laureate,
ours is a wasted generation.
With the way we are
manufacturing offspring
And giving them plates to beg on
the streets...

Turning schools to places of
religious fundamentalism
Instead of institutes of learning
science and technology
The next generation may become
a cataclysmic disaster
A keg of gunpowder waiting to
explode.

The explosion has gotten to the
land of the El Kanemi
The hamlets are empty, farms
deserted

While the IDP centres are
overflowing with tears of misery
Hunters in green are now being
hunted by hunters in black

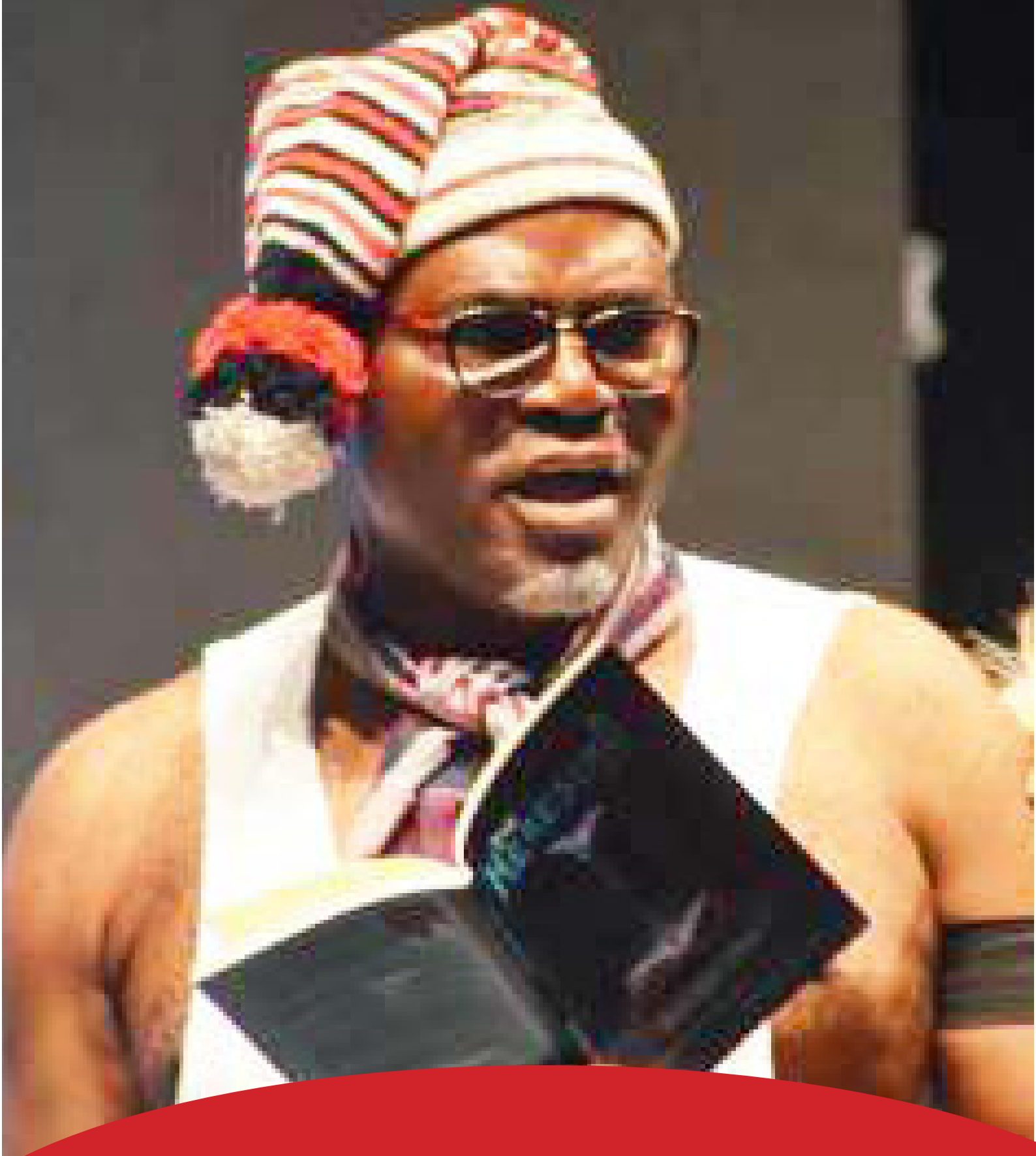


The eruption may reach the
middle and further South.
Silly religious crises have killed
our own Steve Jobs
Our own Bill Gates, Mark
Zuckerberg gone with Shariah
violence
Asian Tigers teaching kids
Abacus and Artificial Intelligence
Advanced mathematics and



computer wizardry
African minions bickering over
superiority in faith
Shutting schools because some
adults
Insist minors must wear Hijab to
school
Or there won't be peace
Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!
If no be craze, wetin be dis?





Ikeogu Oke: The exceptional poet who wrote own epitaph

One of Nigeria's greatest poets in recent years, Ike Okeagu, passed on recently at the age of 51.

He was a charming personality who had made so many friends in the literacy circles, media and civil society and among the Nigerian youths generally. The tributes, which came in form of poems and other literary outputs were emotional and showed the special place he occupied in the hearts of those who matter to him.

Ikeagu put in over 30 years into poetry but the crowning glory of his career occurred in 2017 when he won the NLNG prize for Literature with cash reward of \$100,000.

His last Facebook post was on November 7 was a quatrain, which he composed on his sick bed at the National Hospital, Abuja.

It read:

Strange Taste?
A butterfly
Drinking urine
On a toilet floor
Of the National Hospital

With the above pregnant lines, he captured the decay in the health sector.

When the quatrain went viral, no one knew he was about joining his ancestors.

In September 2018, he had also written what looked like his own epitaph on Facebook. It went thus:

"My Epitaph.

Here lies a man who loved virtue and art... And gave to both his fortunes and his heart. Ikeagu Oke (1967 -)."

Defending the reason why he wrote an epitaph, he said, "People don't write epitaphs to prevent the living from expressing their opinions of them posthumously. As you may know, such opinions would be subjective and some harsh ones may even be inspired by spite or the cowardly wish to settle scores with someone silenced by the grave and so unable to defend themselves."

He was modest, a poet, an idealist, who respected and loved his Igbo roots.

"Poetry is not an art for people in search of quick material success," he once said.

Oke's poetic excellence came to limelight in recent years and not many will forget his performance poetry through which he promoted the Igbo culture and heritage.

Born on May 23, 1967 in Jos, Plateau State, Oke's parents hailed from Abia State. He worked as a journalist at NEXT Newspaper (now rested) as well as at The Daily Times.

He studied literature at the University of Calabar, and was also an alumni of the University of Ibadan and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

In May, during the silver jubilee celebration of the Calabar International Conference on African Literature and the English Language (ICALEL), the Department of English of the University of Calabar had given him a Merit Award.

Oke's former colleague on the standards desk at NEXT Newspapers, Gbemiga Ogunleye, called him a perfectionist noting that: "He spent too much time cleaning out copies than our production time would allow. Each time I raised my voice to complain, he would disarm me with his smile and a genuine apology. For him, any story that passed through him must be completely error-free."

Oke's collection, 'The Heresiad', published by Kraft Books, was described by the 2017 NLNG Prize judges as a book that "probes metaphorically the inner workings of societies and those who shape them."

There was also something unique about the novel as he would later reveal in the interview.

He started writing the poem in 1989 and it took him 27 years to write it; from 1989 when he started the composition to 2016 when he wrote the last lines that he put in the poem.

His works have also been published in international journals, anthologies and other publications worldwide.

Oke performed his poems at various fora in Nigeria, South Africa and the U.S., including as a special performance poet guest of Brown University in 2014.

He was a socially conscious poet and a political analyst.

With "An Anthem against Hate," one of his recent poems, the literary icon said he hoped to mobilise support against the plague of hate-inspired utterances threatening the survival of our country.

Indeed, he once noted, "I believe Nigeria can be fixed as a united country, and to the satisfaction of all its citizens, if all its people patriotically commit to genuine nation building."

The Tributes

Friends and colleagues of the celebrated poet have continued to pay him glowing tributes. The beautiful but touching words squandered on him could qualify for another NLNG Prize. They were poems on their own.

Nicholas Ibekwe

The last time I spoke to Mr Ikeagu was about three months ago. He was writing a poem and wanted to use some Yoruba words.

He didn't speak Yoruba.

He called so I could tell him the Yoruba word of Palm frond and some other terms I can't remember now.

I remembered how happy I was when he won the NLNG Literature prize for his poetry. I was screaming so

loud that I lost my voice. When I called him, he was joyous, of course. But he still spoke in his characteristic style - carefully choosing every word like he was reciting a poem.

I call him Poet Laureate, he simply called me Nikor (he is perhaps the only person outside my family and childhood friends that consistently called me that). There were memories. I am shocked beyond words.

And I don't know how to handle grief. It is not something one learns. It is not something to be learned.

Dear Poet Laureate, I learned you wrote your epitaph a couple of months ago. I am glad you looked death in the eye and scolded it with your best weapon - poetry.

Rest well, my Poet Laureate. You will be greatly missed.

Onyi Franklin Nwagbara

You called me about a week ago we spoke about a lot of things not known that we will be speaking for the last time. Our friendship started when we crossed paths at the American University of Nigeria, Yola. Nigeria has lost a literary icon, and I don't use this word "Icon" loosely. Your works epitomized the struggle for the emancipation of the African minds. My friend and brother may your soul rest in the bosom of God "Chukwu Abiama" our creator. You will be greatly missed.

Rudolf Okonkwo

We met for the first time a year ago, at The Nigerian Satire Festival in Abuja. We were placed on the same table with Charlie Boy and other towering characters on the Nigerian literary and entertainment scenes. When we started talking, it was as if we had known each other for years.

At the festival, he read from his award-winning book of poetry. He had only two extra copies of the book with him. He signed one to me and the other one to Charlie Boy, while the rest of the people on our table angling for a copy were left disappointed.

Since I came back, I have had his book on my nightstand. Every now and then, I open it and chew on a verse or two. One day, I was raving about it to a visitor. Like other visitors before him, he asked to see it. I have not seen the book ever since.

I am still dreaming of how Irokopost Books will help bring Ikeagu Oke's works to readers across the world when I heard this morning that the poet has dropped his pen.

I am devastated.

Saintlevinus Nwabughio

Oh, not again! Where is Ikeagu Oke? Can't believe my ears? Nelly, tell me it is not. Ikeagu and I met during the obsequies of Prof. Chinualumogu Achebe at Hilton, Abuja; at the gathering

Leterary Corner

of literary gods. We have been friends since then. I have closely followed his strides in arts and humanities, the awards...And now this? My God! Rest in Peace, bro. We cant ask the 'why' question. You left some imprints. You lived well.

Ijeoma Ndure

Ikeogu Oke DEAD??? Where do I even start? At the department of English/Literary Studies, University of Calabar, we struck a deep friendship. Apart from playing chess regularly with him in the hostel, Ikeogu was deeply intellectual and prolific. He would always say to me, Prof, please read these poems and share your thoughts. It was in 1995 that he gave me the manuscript of his "The Heresiad" to read and make an input. And last year, "The Heresiad" won The NLNG Prize for Literature. He invited me, and I was there. How he could just die like this is still a puzzle to me. Did he know???? Because on September 16, he wrote and published his Epitaph.

Betty Abah

Tearful Ode to Our Poet Laureate

Just last year, Ikeogu Oke won the NLNG Nigeria Prize for Literature, riding on the wings of his poetic endeavor. It was the crowning of his literary career. He was officially the nation's 'Poet Laureate of the Year' since the Prize, worth \$100, 000, remains the biggest on the Nigerian literary scene and perhaps one of the biggest on the continent. A poetic genius had been announced to the world.

Yet long before then, some of us had known Ikeogu's creative genius. At the University of Calabar, where he had his undergraduate education, Ikeogu was beyond doubt the most prolific and most colourful poet of our time at the English and Literary Studies (ELS) department, around 1995-1998, and definitely, one of the very brightest of students. He was a senior many of us held in awe. A restless and unforgettable soul, he was the one who saw and created poetry from everything—a casual conversation, a fleeting encounter, the physical attributes of a classmate of mine with whom he fell in love—just about everything—and never forgetting his trademark musical rhyming at each verse's end. When he contested for the presidency of our department's English and Literary Students Association (ELSA) around 1997, his campaign slogan of 'Okey is Okay' and general campaign candour stood him out even if he didn't eventually win. True, Ikeogu was never one to shy away from controversies, yet he never lost his characteristically calm humaneness. Who can forget his warm, handful handshakes and charming smiles?

In recent years, Ikeogu's poetic ingenuity became more visible and more alluring to the outside world with the additional feathers of performance

poetry that he brought into his practice and through which he promoted the Igbo culture (Ohafia in particular) on local and international platforms while also creatively breathing life into his thoughts on universal themes, his trademark animal skin accessory, wrapper, traditional cap and other paraphernalia to boot.

And just when the wider world began to turn to appreciate his unique gift, he was gone!

I owe Ikeogu an eternal debt of gratitude. He alongside other seniors including Anayochukwu Agbo, Fidelis Okoroegbe (Fidel Castrol), Mekis Chukwuemeka (Teacher Mekes), Abiye Opuamah, Joy Esuku and a few others helped nurture my literary talent from when I made a naïve entry into the vibrant ELS, UNICAL aged 21 in late 1995. From encouraging talks on the department's noisy corridors to having my handwritten poems published on the literary press boards to being published in the departmental magazine, "The Quill", they helped fan my literary embers.

Ever so amiable and so down-to-earth, Ikeogu, with my ELS classmate, now eminent Abuja journalist, Emmanuel Ogbeche and 'ELS junior', and then UNDP staff, Judith Abraham-Ephraim alongside former TELL Magazine colleague, Bob Etemiku were my cheerleaders at my public book reading at the Abuja Writers Society in 2012 courtesy of Emman Shehu and facilitated by my publisher, Richard Mammah. Ikeogu brought me a copy of his poetry collection, "The Heresiad" (which was to later win the NLNG Prize, with the spectacular musical notes at the end). In August last year, after he read my interview in The Daily Trust, he made a cutting and couriered it to me with an autographed copy of his reprinted award-winning book, complete with a warm, handwritten note, in his beautiful, meticulous fashion. Always so thoughtful!

Just this May, the ELS department in UNICAL duly recognized Ikeogu with a merit award during the silver jubilee anniversary celebration of the famous Calabar International Conference on African Literature and the English Language (ICALEL). I was similarly awarded but missed the conference and a last chance of a warm hug and banter with the charismatic poet laureate.

The sudden demise of Abia State-born Ikeogu at only 51 is one that is so very hard to accept. How, how do we lose such huge talent, such personification of intense, accumulated knowledge, such a profound national asset? Did the Nigerian system as usual fail him? Could he still have been here, making more inspiring poetry and attaining more creative milestones were our healthcare in a better state? What actually went wrong? Why Ikeogu and why now?

A gem is gone. Our land, our universe is verily diminished.

Good night, dear Ikeogu. And I am still hoping this is a dream. Alas, a very bad dream.

Felix Abrahams Obi

Ikeogu Oke goes home...with the bards!

This evening I heard about the death of one of Nigeria's most accomplished contemporary poets, and Winner of NLNG Prize for Poetry.

He usually tagged me in his Facebook posts which often are his poetic engagements of key issues in Nigeria. For a while I observed he's not been tagging me on posts and I never quite called to check on him overtime.

I never knew he was ill...until now that he's gone.

I pause to ask, what will it take check on a family member, friend, colleague or acquaintance?

Rest on Ikeogu. May the bards and troubadours of yore welcome with heavenly verses hooked on ancient words that are ever true!

Mba Okereke

Salutes

Maybe The Angels also love poems

Her essay

I know The Almighty God is Creative Laurels

Promotion comes with sweet sweat Goals

To run and finish the race fastest

Ikeogu, we planned on a motivational exhibition!... Poetry, Dance ,Drama, Painting, all Prof Kalu Uka, Ticha Akuma, Emenike Ogwo, Chief Paulson Kalu, Nnanna Uma, Chidi Okereke, Samset, The Young Artists, DJ, Nollywood....all ! The Civic Center, biggest in Ohafia will be venue!! Ready December!!!

Do the gods read poetry.

Do they not see the sagacity of your pen

Do they not see the smiles and ecstasy

Do they not see your pen daily speaking on the many ills of society

And the young wife and kids, siblings

The gods, oh the gods

Maybe we will understand

But not yet.

Ikeogu's other published works:

When I was Born (2002), Fourth Dimension Publishing Company, Nigeria.

Salute Without Guns (2009), Manila Publishers Company, Nigeria.

In the Wings of Waiting (2012), Manila Publishing company, Nigeria.

Children's Literature

The Lion and the Monkey (2014), Manila Publishers Company, Nigeria.

The Tortoise and the Princess (2015), Manila Publishers Company, Nigeria.

Health benefits of flax



By Falmata Zanna

The flaxseed is beneficial in preventing and treating many diseases and it also helps in the diet. Its most important ingredient is the fluid that is released in contact with water, but all of its properties are best experienced when using ground. It is a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamins and trace elements (calcium, potassium, phosphorus, zinc, manganese, selenium) and it also contains phytoestrogens – many hormones whose chemical structure is similar to that of the estrogen. Its thin shell is indigestible, and it is rich in cellulose fibers. The healing properties of the flaxseed are known since antiquity and recommended in the treatment and prevention of various diseases – very helpful in reducing cholesterol and prevention of cardiovascular diseases. Omega-3 fatty acids favorably affect the

lowering of the blood pressure, and it contains alpha-linolenic acid, which reduces the risk of heart attack and cancer.

The flaxseed reduces the level of glucose in the blood

It is very useful in stabilizing blood sugar and if you are a person who suffer from diabetes, the flaxseed is the best choice.

Its action against inflammation helps with arthritis and eases the symptoms, but it is also a natural laxative. The flaxseed swells in the intestines and it discharges mucus, which regulates digestion in a noninvasive way. This same feature alleviates symptoms caused by the occurrence of hemorrhoids. Due to the high level of mucus it helps with dry unproductive cough – facilitates expectoration and reduces cough; it is also recommended to be used in a combination with mallow for this particular purpose. Because of the phytoestrogens and oligo elements,

it is recommended for women who are in menopause – a great alternative to estrogen therapy and acts preventively to osteoporosis.

Preventively and as a means for additional support in the treatment of breast cancer, the flaxseed is recommended due to lignite which has an antioxidant and anticancer effect. The flaxseed is good in the prevention of prostate cancer and colon, stomach ulcer and gastritis. Due to the high level of mucus, it has a healing effect in all aspects of the digestive system. It binds toxins – salts of heavy metals from the intestine and thus it discharges them from the body and has an important role in detoxification. The regenerative capacity of the flaxseed shows its properties on the skin and you can use it for eczema, psoriasis and acne. The eating of flaxseed has a positive effect on the mental state, thus reducing the risk of depression and helps with memory and learning. Due

Flaxseed



to the high amount of dietary fibers, the flaxseed is a good addition to any reductive diet that gives support to the diet and weight loss. You can use the flaxseeds whole, minced, as a tea or in the form of cold-pressed oil. Here are some ways to prepare flaxseed for various needs: For better digestion (constipation, hemorrhoids), you need to cover two teaspoons of flaxseed with 230 ml boiling water. Stir it, and let it for about an hour. During that time, the flaxseed mucus is discharged and it's mixed with water, so you get a dense iced tea. This fluid should be put in a cup and you should drink it in the morning on an empty stomach.

Used in the prevention of heart disease and stroke

Drink two tablespoons grind flaxseed with a lot of water. Instead of ground seeds, you can take a tablespoon of flaxseed oil.

In the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis, you should use a mixture of honey, flaxseeds, sunflower seeds,

pumpkin, and nuts. You need to mix equal amounts (one tablespoon) of the grind seeds and nuts with 500 grams of honey. Take one teaspoon of this mixture every morning.

Dry cough

To treat a dry cough, the recipe is as follow: Mix equal amounts of flaxseed and black mallow. Take two tablespoons of this mixture and pour them with 2 deciliters of boiling water. Leave it and then strain. Drink this tea in small quantities throughout the day.

Skin diseases

In the treatment of skin diseases, use a mixture of flax oil and sesame oil in equal amounts. Then add 10 drops of rosemary oil. Put this mixture on the problematic parts of the skin (eczema, psoriasis). It is also quite effective in the treatment of seborrhea. For this purpose, you should rub the oil gently in the scalp. This mixture of oils is also great for dry and sensitive hair.



Increase fertility naturally: Tips for conception

By Falmata Zanna

Trying to have a baby is an emotional time for any couple, full of ups and downs.

One minute you and your spouse may be excited and exhilarated, while the next minute you might feel frightened or disappointed.

If you're having trouble with fertility, you may feel very confused, scared and lost. Though there are many fertility drugs and all kinds of procedures out there, if you're reading this you're probably looking how to increase fertility naturally.

The truth is, there are many simple steps that you can try to increase fertility naturally—no invasive procedures, pills or other medical intervention necessary.

The critical steps to take:

1. Eat a real food diet

We've come a long way in this area; it's becoming common knowledge that processed foods are not good for us. Many people are aware of the importance of eating a balanced, nutrient rich, whole food diet.

As a rule of thumb, adopt the diet of your great, great grandmother. (Liver, anyone?) This is important for the functioning of your body systems, your overall health, and will certainly boost your fertility and reproductive health. I have a friend who had a hard time getting pregnant. She finally decided to ditch all of the junk and processed foods from her diet (and her husband too!) and she became pregnant quickly.

If you need help getting your family on a real food diet, I recommend the meal planning service Real Plans.

You also want to look at avoiding any latent

food allergies such as gluten or dairy. Symptoms of intolerance like raspy voice, skin irritations, bowel changes like loose stools or constipation, headaches, wheezing, or other immune reactions. Some mamas do well going grain-free or Paleo while they TTC. It is also a lesser known fact that low-fat dairy in your diet can increase your risk of ovulatory infertility. So be sure to eat full fat foods, especially dairy if you tolerate it, getting plenty of good nutrients from butter, cream, avocados, nuts/seeds, coconut oil, and other good fats to increase fertility.

2. Reduce stress

Stress is a huge issue for most people these days. We live in a busy, fast-paced world. Most of us are frazzled and feel stretched too thin. This tends to be especially true of women. But stress is not good for our minds, bodies, or spirits and can wreak havoc on our health. Stress is particularly deadly when it comes to fertility... it's literally killing your odds because a stressed woman is not nature's idea of a hospitable environment for a baby. Be sure to implement stress-reducing strategies in your life regularly.

If you are feeling worried, nervous or anxious about not getting pregnant, remind yourself that you are creating a stress response in your body that could be defeating your own efforts. As much as you can, enjoy the process of making a baby, and get excited about the prospect of pregnancy instead of worrying about the possibility of it not happening. You can seek out support groups or work with a counselor too.

By reducing your stress levels, you'll naturally increase fertility.

3. Track your cycles

Your menstrual cycle is one of your best barometers for gynecological health. If you wish

to have a baby, then first things first, you need to become more vigilant about your schedule... or lack thereof.

First start by marking down the date of your last period. Then start tracking your morning basal body temperature with a special thermometer. (I like this one because it takes its time to register temperature, which is vital as some read too quickly and give you a false number.) You'll want to do this every day and put your thermometer on your bedside table. Take your temperature first thing upon awakening, before you get out of bed, go to the bathroom or move around as this will give you an inaccurate reading.

Track when you have cervical mucus and when your temperature increases, as these are signs of ovulation. You will also want to chart how long you bleed each month and if you have any cramps, headaches, or other PMS symptoms.

A consistent, monthly period, without too much pain or discomfort, is a sign of good reproductive health. If you don't have a regular period, you'll want to get a complete hormone panel test done (saliva is best) to determine your hormonal health. You can then work with a holistic doctor and fix any imbalances, and as a result, boost fertility.

Keep in mind, that it may take up to a year to get balanced so stick with it. Stay tuned for other ideas on how to regulate your cycle and increase fertility naturally below.

4. Have sex at peak fertility

Have sex when you think you are ovulating! This is why charting your cycle is so necessary.

As a general rule, women typically ovulate 14 days before their next period, and sperm can last a few days in the uterus. Therefore, having sex a few times around that day is usually the simplest



7. Darkness at night

Have you ever heard of Lunaception? In brief, it's a practice to balance hormones (and boost fertility as a result) by controlling the light in your bedroom.

This may sound odd or even silly but there is common sense behind it. Thousands and thousands of years ago, women usually slept closer to the outdoors. Sleeping in total darkness was the norm with the only natural light being the rhythm of the moon.

As a result, women used to be in sync with the moon cycles and ovulate at the full moon.

Now, with electricity and artificial light, this doesn't happen and as a result, our hormonal cycles get confused and out of whack. In modern times, we can recreate this natural cycle by controlling the light we're exposed in the evening and when we sleep.

To implement Lunaception, sleep in total darkness except for the few nights right around the full moon. On those nights, try sleeping with just a little bit of light, whether that's the natural moonlight or a night light.

There is actually some science behind Lunaception. Too much light at night can inhibit the production of melatonin, our "master" hormone. The hypothalamus gland is covered with melatonin receptors and some say our ovaries are too. The hypothalamus regulates our body's overall homeostasis, including blood pressure, body temperature, and most importantly for fertility, our endocrine or hormonal system. So, if the hypothalamus doesn't receive enough melatonin, it won't be able to support our hormonal system well.

Clinical research backs this up. Researchers have found that sleeping in the absence of light can:

- Strengthen mucus readings during ovulation
 - Correct too long or too short cycles, bringing them back to 27-31 days long
 - Reduce PMS symptoms
 - Normalize FSH levels
 - Increase progesterone levels
 - Reduce spotting throughout cycle
 - Help an ovulatory women ovulate!
 - Sustain pregnancies for women with history of miscarriages
- Some simple tips to reduce light at night include:
- Turn off electronics at least 1 hour (two is preferable) before bedtime.
 - Turn off bright overhead lights and use only a few lamps for evening light.

- You can also wear these special glasses, which can help to boost your melatonin production. Reducing your bright light exposure at night and sleeping in darkness can increase your odds to get pregnant.

8. Monitor thyroid function

Healthy thyroid function is very important to fertility. If you are either hyperthyroid or hypothyroid, you most likely will see hormonal imbalances, including fertility issues and potentially increased miscarriages.

A simple, natural way to check your thyroid at home is taking your morning basal body temperature. You should be doing this anyway to track your monthly cycle.

An ideal morning temperature is about 97.8 to 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. If it is consistently lower, that could be a sign of hypothyroidism, while a temperature that is consistently higher may be a sign of hyperthyroidism.

Avoiding certain foods like soy (not good for thyroid and overall fertility!) and eating enough healthy carbohydrates (think root vegetables and soaked/sprouted grains) are supportive of our thyroid.

It would be best to get a full thyroid panel if you suspect a thyroid imbalance and work with a holistic doctor to support its function.

There are many natural thyroid glandular products that can help, as well as key nutrients, to help you repair and rebuild your thyroid health. I know from experience that having optimal thyroid levels can increase fertility!

9. Strengthen your progesterone levels

The hormone progesterone is HUGE. It not only can increase fertility but help you sustain a pregnancy. It's literally what "pro - gests" the baby in utero. Because of this, some doctors will prescribe for women (either newly pregnant or trying to conceive) progesterone pills, shots, or vaginal suppositories if there's been a history of miscarriages.

Of course, it's best to get a full hormonal panel done to determine if you're low in progesterone, which can often create estrogen dominance. Some symptoms could possibly include:

- Mood swings
- Cold hands and feet
- Water retention
- Allergies
- Dry eyes
- Fatigue
- Foggy thinking

If you find that you are estrogen dominant then you will need to find ways to boost your progesterone levels. Do this through eating a whole food diet, with adequate fiber intake as this helps the body to absorb and excrete excess estrogen. (This one in particular seems especially effective and even for male fertility!) The fiber found in carrots is particularly effective in reducing excess estrogen.

You also want to reduce or eliminate caffeine, sugar, alcohol, excessive meat and other drugs which can throw off our hormonal balance and decrease our odds of conception. And be sure to eat plenty of good carbohydrates like sweet potatoes, fruits, and gluten-free grains to keep your thyroid and adrenals healthy.

Finally, one small study showed that Vitamin C is especially effective for women with luteal phase defect and low progesterone levels, increasing them as much as 77%! While I hesitated to include this study since it's so small, I can speak to experience on the effectiveness of vitamin C. After I had Paloma, my cycles were more erratic and my luteal phase was shorter. I started supplementing with 1 teaspoon of this natural, food-based vitamin C powder and my

way to ensure that you are giving the egg every chance to get fertilized.

Most midwives will say days 11-18 are your most fertile, so have fun during this time. Again, refer back to your cycle charts to find the best times to have sex for you.

If you're still having trouble, invest in Ovulation Test Kits to determine exactly when you do ovulate (or double ovulate) or if you don't at all, which will need addressing to increase fertility.

5. Take cod liver oil

Studies have shown that cod liver oil's omega-3 fatty acids not only boost fertility but will support proper development of your baby after conception. Take it daily while trying to get pregnant and, also, once you are pregnant.

The Weston A. Price Foundation recommends taking enough cod liver oil to equate to ~20,000 IU of Vitamin A daily. To be conservative, I took half of this amount and had great pregnancies.

Worried about Vitamin A toxicity? Studies only link birth defects with the synthetic forms of Vitamin A. Of course, when taking any supplement, it's best to talk to your doctor, midwife or healthcare practitioner.

6. Avoid lubricants

Evidence suggests that many commercial lubricants may be toxic to sperm and interfere with its passing into the uterus. It is best not to use lubricant while trying to get pregnant. However, if you are just unable to have intercourse without a little bit of moisture, use saliva or coconut oil. Some mamas swear by Pre-Seed. I'm not a huge fan as it contains parabens.

Health

periods returned to normal within a month!

10. Special fertility foods & herbs

There are special plants that may increase fertility. Red raspberry leaf tea is known as a uterine tonic and can help balance your hormones and encourage gynecological health. Some mamas also love this tea for hormonal balance. If you are trying to get pregnant then a healthy uterus is, of course, very important. I found drinking red raspberry leaf tea in my second and third trimesters helped immensely with my easy (and short) second birth. It is generally not recommended in the first trimester of pregnancy as it can cause mild cramping.

For women with estrogen dominance or low libido (which does affect your fertility ;), you can include gelatinized maca root in your daily diet. Although I could only find human studies involving men, there was one with female mice which showed clinically that maca can boost fertility.

Anecdotal, for thousands of years, maca has been used by Peruvians to increase energy, stamina, strength, virility, and reproductive health. Maca root is high in alkaloids that are supposed to support our endocrine system, including reproductive, adrenal and thyroid function. Maca root seems to also be helpful for women with low progesterone levels or estrogen dominance. It can also be helpful to increase male fertility. It's best to use the gelatinized, yellow form of maca as this is the one that's been used in studies. It's also easier to digest and assimilate. Once you become pregnant, you should stop consuming maca.

Another helpful food in natural fertility is Vitex or Chasteberry. Vitex has been shown to improve fertility, particularly for women with a short luteal phase (the post-ovulation period). That's because Vitex increases luteinizing hormone (LH) production (which can boost progesterone production) while inhibiting the release of follicle stimulating hormone (FSH), which is tied to estrogen. It can also reduce high levels of prolactin, which can interfere with conception. Vitex is also supposed to support the entire endocrine system and balance the whole system. Once you become pregnant, you should stop taking Vitex.

Finally, for women, Evening Primrose oil may increase cervical mucus, which can help to "trap" the sperm and move it along to the egg. The standard dosage is 500mg with each meal for a total of 1,500 milligrams per day during the first two weeks of cycle only. EPO can stimulate uterine contractions, which is disruptive when egg may be implanting.

For male fertility, oysters are an excellent food since they contain the highest source of zinc on the planet. This important fertility mineral boosts testosterone and sperm production. In animal studies, Royal Jelly also significantly increases testosterone levels, sperm count and mobility.

Vitamin C has also been known to help improve sperm quality and male fertility, perhaps because it reduces oxidative stress. A good dose is 500-750 mg of a natural food source.

And while there is little or no science to back this up, some believe that foods that resemble body parts are therapeutic. So, for example, avocado for the uterus, pomegranate for the ovaries, and figs or clams for the testicles. Interesting to note, it takes about 9 months for an avocado to grow from seed to full ripeness, similar to a baby in utero.

11. Try seed cycling

Some women have had great success balancing their hormones with Seed Cycling. While there isn't a ton of science to confirm this

strategy, there are success stories online and it is certainly worth a shot! Seeds are delicious and packed with nutrition and fiber so you'll be getting benefits regardless. The idea is that certain seeds support us during different times of our menstrual cycle.

From day one of our menses till ovulation, we want to support our estrogen production. (Even women with estrogen dominance can benefit from this practice since it's all about balance and timing.) To do so, consume 1 tablespoon each of fresh, organic flax and pumpkin seeds. Invest in a good grinder to fully masticate the seeds for easier absorption. I like to put the seed pulp in my morning smoothie and I'm then done for the day. You can also put in salads but not in soups or other heated foods/beverages as this will denature some of the beneficial properties.

Once we ovulate, we want to focus on building our progesterone so consume 1 tablespoon each of sesame and sunflower seeds. Again, be sure to grind well, particularly your sesame seeds, since they are so tiny.

Once you get your period, shift to estrogen support again. You'll want to do this routine for at least 3 months to see if it's helping to balance your hormones. The great thing about tracking your monthly cycle is that you'll have the evidence in black and white to see if it helps to increase your odds to get pregnant.

One other note, if you don't have periods, start with a new moon and do your estrogen support till there's a full moon. Then do the progesterone seeds. Change back to estrogen seeds with the next new moon.

12. Mayan abdominal massage

This is a simple, noninvasive massage technique which can shift the internal reproductive organs.

If you have a tipped or prolapsed uterus you may have many symptoms, including infertility, and this massage can help to ease the symptoms. It also brings energy, blood flow, and nutrients to our uterus which may be stagnant and resistant to implantation.

If you find a good masseuse, she will teach you how to do the massage on yourself so you can practice 5-10 minutes each day.

13. Consider a vaginal steam

Vaginal steaming sounds weird but it's an ancient practice in Eastern medicine and is meant to encourage blood flow, relax pelvic muscles, dilate blood vessels, which can boost fertility.

There are spas that offer this service but you can also try it at home by squatting over a pot or bowl of steaming herbal water.

14. Acupuncture

A few of my friends saw an Acupuncturist while trying to conceive and get pregnant, and shortly thereafter they became pregnant. This was after many trials of IVF had failed.

Acupuncture is part of Traditional Chinese Medicine and involves putting tiny, relatively painless needles into specific meridian points on the body that correlate with specific organs and body systems. By stimulating these trigger points, the body normally responds with increased blood circulation and energy, which over time can help balance various health issues, including infertility.

If you're leery of needles, you can try Acupressure, which is simply applying pressure to these points instead of needles.

15. Exercise

Exercise benefits our bodies in so many ways, including hormonally. Regular workouts keep us in better shape and reduce overall body fat levels and/or obesity, which is tied to PCOS, infertility and other hormonal issues.

You don't have to get fancy or hardcore... a daily walk and some light weights can do the trick.

Exercise can also help with emotional balance and helps to reduce stress levels.

Make it a part of your daily routine and you can even get a pedometer to track your daily steps for further encouragement.

In studies, people who walked 10,000 steps daily for one year were able to maintain healthy blood pressure levels, reduce and keep off excess weight and decrease their BMI. They also reduced significant risk factors for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.



BOVICAMPO 18

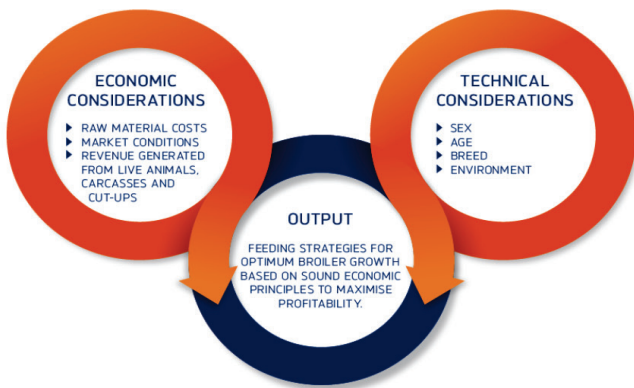


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In 'Transition Hours', Jonathan writes back

"There was no bitterness in him after he left power. He did not look back. He did not look down. Instead he looked up and after looking up, he looked forward and went on pressing ahead. That forward movement has resulted in this work of statecraft and statesmanship of which I am privileged to write the foreword. Though there are many themes in this book, My Transition Hours, the theme that most excites me is the one on youth and the next generation"

– John Dramani Mahama, President, Republic of Ghana, 2012–2017.

By Reuben Abati

Those are some of the words with which former Ghanaian President John Mahama introduces the long-awaited and much-anticipated book by President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. President Mahama is President Jonathan's close friend. In a way they both share a similar destiny. Their bosses died and they both went on to become President. They also both won election as President and later lost their re-election bids. But they are perhaps more united by the shared affinities between Nigeria and Ghana. President Mahama is eminently well-qualified to write the even-handed, thoughtful foreword to President Jonathan's first book, out of office.

Jonathan is Nigeria's first President from the South South, first Ph.D holder in Nigeria to become President, first

Nigerian President to rise through the ranks from the position of Deputy Governor to Acting Governor; Governor; first Gubernatorial candidate nominee to become Vice President, Acting President and eventually President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. No other Nigerian, dead or alive, has gone through such trajectory, or rite of passage. President Jonathan was Acting President 2010-2011, following the death of his principal, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, in circumstances that threw the country into a quandary and raised issues about Nigeria's geo-politics and the matters of ethnicity and geography, indeed more importantly the right of minorities to also "rule" Nigeria, and if and when they are allowed to do so, whether or not they will be treated fairly.

I have enjoyed the privilege of reading President Jonathan's first memoir out of office, which will be publicly presented

today in the nation's capital, Abuja, and I can report that it is a book about how Nigeria and vested interests treated him badly. He is the villain in the book: badly treated by entrenched interest groups, treacherous party members, a propaganda and hate-driven opposition and a badly constructed political ecosystem. The book is titled "My Transition Hours."

In 2011, after much ethnic uproar and conscientious objection by progressive forces, Jonathan won Nigeria's Presidential elections and remained Nigeria's President till 2015. He lost the 2015 Presidential election, according to the country's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) but despite his prompt concession to General Muhammadu Buhari, the candidate of the opposition party, the All Progressives Congress, Jonathan has suffered badly under his successor's watch. He has been maligned,

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persecuted, harassed, intimidated, humiliated and insulted. His wife has been abused, maligned, criminally tagged and many of his associates have been labelled crooks and thieves. In 2015, in the lead up to the general elections, Jonathan announced that his “ambition was not worth the blood of any Nigerian.” He signed a document to respect the outcome of the process. He kept his word. His successors have rewarded him with odium and abuse. They have done their best to discredit and destroy him.

In this book, “My Transition Hours”, President Jonathan fights back. His public persona is that he is a meek, gentle personality who lacks the guts to fight. Indeed, after the 2015 elections, everyone deserted him. The Aso Rock Villa became ghost town. Nobody picked our calls again. Giants in the corporate sector who used to beg for access to President Jonathan were reportedly now on the Buhari side. Only the Attorney General of the Federation, the security chiefs and a few others came around. The President was left with just his main body, that is – his innermost circle of aides.

We felt hurt by the fact that many of the persons who benefitted from President Jonathan had jumped ship and were now sucking up to the other side. We saw some of the people who called President Jonathan their brother and friend, on the Buhari side less than 24 hours after the election was decided. They were laughing and grinning! It was a painful moment for us. That was the real “Transition Hours” and that was when President Jonathan started threatening that he will write a book on his “Transition Hours”. He chose the title of the book at that very point. He wanted to tell his own story. I am intrigued that he has refused to change the title, but I recall how tough those transition moments were for us. On our return trip to Otuoke, we were treated shabbily by the newcomers. We had to struggle to be recognized. We were treated like regular passengers! The people who took over from President Jonathan were determined to humiliate him. It got much worse later.

In this book, President Jonathan tries to fight back and set the records straight. I am glad he is doing this. I once went to him and asked that we should put a team together to protect his legacy. His response was that “God will fight for us, after God it is government, these people will crush us because they don’t know God, but let us rely on God.” Some people, who thought we should



help our boss, ignored this advice tried to put a team together. They ended up in underground cells, and got labelled as thieves! Others fled into exile. It is good to see President Jonathan himself, more than three years later, speaking up. The man that comes through in these pages is the real Jonathan. and that is perhaps the big point: a Jonathan that is confident, strong, clear-headed and assertive, who does not take nonsense and who is very clear in his mind about leadership options. If he had won a second term, Nigerians would have seen a different Jonathan. He worked hard to hold the country together and to prevent mischief from over-running the country. He makes his case in this book as he addresses some of the strong issues that came up during his tenure.

It is not standard practice for a President to justify himself and his tenure. It is also not standard practice for a President to be discredited by his successor. President Jonathan has every reason to write this book. He has chosen the right moment to go public: his successor’s most vulnerable moment. What he does majorly is to tell Nigerians that most of the things said about him

were fake news. He insists that he did not abuse power as Nigeria’s President. He argues that every negative thing that has been said about him is an attempt to give him a bad name in order to hang him. He argues that “real strength is power under control”. He adds: “This book is not my biography, as that will come later. This book reveals how I used power as shield in the service to our nation and God.” Jonathan’s argument is that power should never be abused.

The book is defensive and reactive on the vexed issues of fuel subsidy, Boko Haram, “stealing is not corruption,” governance and so on. President Jonathan takes on the major criticisms of his administration. He doesn’t quite provide hard facts but he talks back. The key issues that the book addresses are noteworthy. This is a book that every Nigerian should pay attention to. In this book, a former President of Nigeria is saying that he was badly treated and he became a villain, because he came from a minority part of the country. He states that “people (are) working against our interest”. In this book, a former President of the country tells us that the idea of “one Nigeria” does not exist

Perspective

because we are a divided country. My boss insists: that “there is no patriotism in Nigerian politics”.

He refuses to pull punches. Nobody is spared. In Chapter 3 titled “Politics and Patriotism: The Fuel Subsidy Dilemma”, he argues that “politics in Nigeria and some other African nations is conducted like primitive war”. His major reference is the battle over fuel subsidy in 2012. He argues that the protests over the fuel subsidy proposals were “politically motivated.” Donald Duke should read this chapter. There are some references to him here. Chapter Four is titled “The Chibok School Girls Affair.” The Governor of Borno state needs to read this chapter. He is accused of seizing an “opportunity to politicize an unfortunate incident”. The APC also allegedly indulged in “psychological programming”, making President Jonathan look like a “villain”. President Jonathan rejects the labels. He pointedly accuses the Barack Obama administration in the United States of working against his administration and he provides evidence to back his claims. He accuses President Obama thus: “For some strange reason, the Obama administration had tactically penciled Nigeria and my administration down for failure”.

Hadiza Bala Usman, now in charge of Nigerian Ports Authority, should also read Chapter Four of this book. President Jonathan is convinced that the Chibok girls matter is an act of grand conspiracy, because whereas he took every necessary step, the Governor of Borno State had a different agenda. In Chapter Five, he deals with the question of stealing and corruption. He provides an explanation on that particular matter. The irony is that many of the initiatives now being adopted by the Buhari administration— Treasury Single Account, IPPIS and the BVN were all Jonathan’s initiatives. Jonathan discloses that his government did better on the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. Chapter Six is focused on “Power Struggle in Nigeria”. Here, President Jonathan talks about he “strayed into power” and the attack of he majorities on the minorities. In Chapter 7, he offers an account of his “Presidential election campaign”.

He goes further to describe what happened during the 2015 presidential election and how he personally took the decision to save Nigeria from a descent into imminent chaos. Too many persons have tried to write the story of that significant moment in Nigerian history. I am glad that President Jonathan has now given his own account to correct

the many lies that may have been told. He records the responses from the international community. It is a rich and detailed account. In this book, President Jonathan puts on the table his credentials as an international statesman and the goodwill he enjoyed among his peers before and after the election of 2015.

To be fair to him, making Nigeria look good in the international community was one of his major achievements. But President Barack Obama of the United States did not help him, and he refers to this more than once in this book. In Chapter Ten, President Jonathan talks about what he and his team did with the 2014 National Political Conference and his personal commitment to the peace and stability

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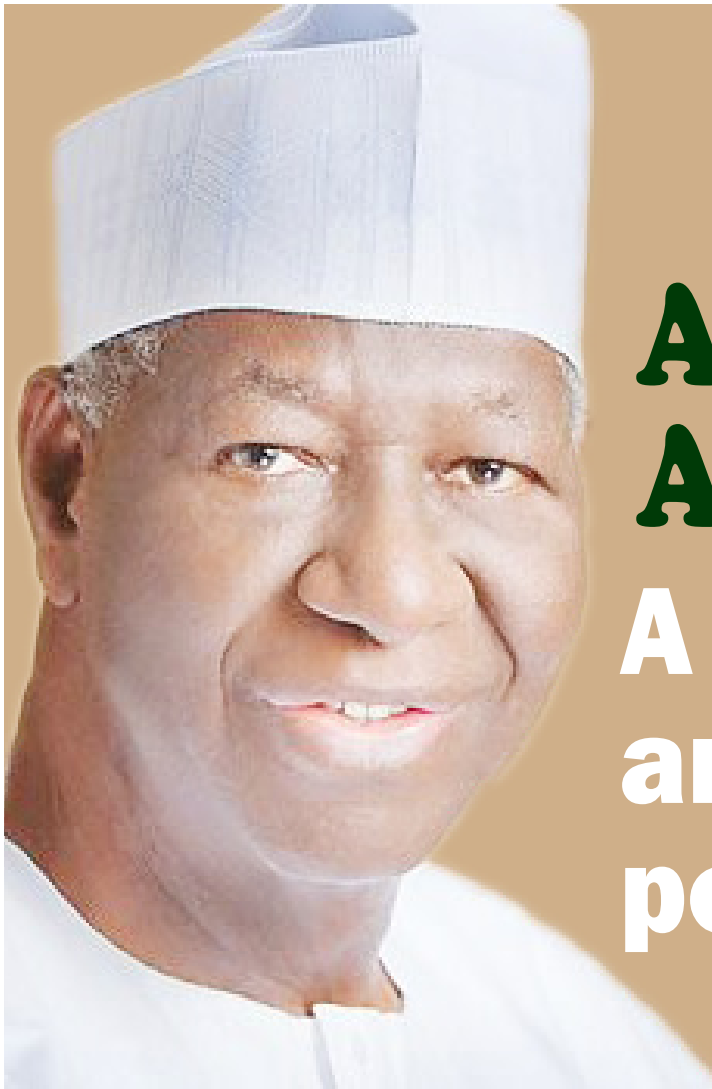
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of Nigeria. Needless to remind us that the Buhari administration upon assuming office threw away the report of that conference. In Chapters 11 to 13, President Jonathan takes on other interesting subjects including the youth bulge, private sector reform and the African Renaissance.

This must be a book close to his heart. He uses it to settle scores and to explain the main issues of his era as President. I consider this a must read for all Nigerians and students of the Nigerian process. President Jonathan offers a personal portrait of his own politics, career and achievements. I may have read the book through the prism of a man who was his staff and who was involved, but I can tell that this is a honest and forthright reportage of what transpired. President Jonathan gave to Nigeria his very best. He was conscious of his humble beginnings and he wanted to make a statement. He was a poor man’s son who made it to the highest level in Nigeria. He was an embodiment of the Nigerian dream.

But Nigerian politics is vicious and dirty. You will find a sense of that in this book. He projects himself as a “victim”, but he probably does not tell the full story, which is okay. It means he can tell more stories. There are persons who will read this book and throw tantrums, but may such persons, like Nasir el-Rufai and the Governor of Borno state and all the deceitful associates who fooled the President during the 2015 elections, for reasons of religion and ethnicity, be reminded that this is all told a very kind book. President Jonathan playing the statesman has refused to tell it all. He has held back much more than he has given away. Some of us who were part of his “Main Body” may have now been unwittingly empowered to tell more stories.

I know that my boss is excited by this book. He wants to be remembered for the right reasons and not for the fake news that his opponents reported about his Presidency. President Goodluck Jonathan was President at a unique moment in Nigerian history. His emergence and experience both mark a special moment in Nigerian history. I urge you to read this book, his first one, on what he encountered as Nigeria’s President, before, during and after. Despite the travails of his post-office experience, Goodluck Jonathan, his legacy and value, will survive beyond his “transition hours”. He will, beyond everything else, find a good place in Nigerian history.



Anthony Anenih:

A personal and political portrait

By Reuben Abati

Anthony Anenih, the political leader, chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party who has died aged 85, was one of the most important figures in the story of Nigeria's return to civilian rule, and a founding father and a major influence in the party that ruled the country for an unbroken stretch of 16 years. I knew him and was privileged to know him, even more closely, when I assumed office as President Goodluck Jonathan's official spokesperson and media/publicity adviser.

For four years, we worked together and met regularly. We lived in the same neighbourhood in Asokoro, so it was very easy to pop into the Chairman's house on my way to work, or on my return journey. His doors were always open, but even more so because he took a very keen interest in the government and the Presidency and it was not before long that I became an errand boy between him and the President. He referred to President Jonathan as his son, even if he did not make a public song and dance out of that. He told me many stories about

how the PDP emerged and the journey of President Jonathan to the Presidency of Nigeria.

"This my son, I love him. I want the best for him, but he doesn't always listen to me", he often told me. He would now give long stories about how certain persons that should never have been given positions emerged as President Jonathan's lieutenants. It was not in my place to respond to that. He also often talked about some other pieces of advice that he gave the President. "Can you tell him, I want to see him tomorrow?" Despite his larger than life image, Papa Anenih was a very humble man in the face of authority. Perhaps because of his police background, he understood protocol, hierarchy and authority. He always asked for permission to see the President which was never denied. The President also visited him regularly at home. That was the extent of his influence. But it was not just the President that went to his house to pay homage. Whenever I visited, there was always a long queue of persons who had come to see him. He had the ears of the President. He was the Chairman of the PDP Board of Trustees. He also had the

advantage of age, and a reputation that preceded him. He was a power broker, and a Godfather, not just nationally, but also in his native Edo State and the entire South South where he had fought many political battles.

Anenih first came into public consciousness through the old Bendel state chapter of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in 1981. President Shehu Shagari who was seeking a second term in office had gone to visit the former military Governor of the Midwestern State, Samuel Ogbemudia, to solicit for support. Ogbemudia agreed only on the condition that Anthony Anenih, his friend, a former policeman who was then Chairman of Yakon Group of Companies would be anointed as the Chairman of the party's branch in Bendel state. The following day, Chief Tayo Akpata who was the Chairman of the NPN in the defunct Bendel State was removed. Akpata's exit marked the beginning of the Anenih phenomenon and legend.

In 1983, President Shehu Shagari won the second term election in Bendel state and nationally. Anenih was considered the architect of the victory, at least in

Tribute

Bendel State. He would show up later in the Ibrahim Babangida government as an equally influential political leader. He helped Babangida to fix a few things. In 1992, Anenih further became the leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In 1993, the SDP with M.K.O. Abiola as Presidential flagbearer won the June 12, 1993 Presidential election. That election was annulled. Anenih again re-emerged in 1998 as a deputy campaign co-ordinator for the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Campaign Organization. Obasanjo won the election and emerged as President. Given Anenih's unbroken record of success as a superintendent of electoral issues, he became known as "Mr Fix It" – the man who could fix any political problem. In 2002, he led President Olusegun Obasanjo's re-election campaign for the 2003 election.

Anenih came into solid prominence during the President Obasanjo years. He was a power broker in Obasanjo's government. His name may not have been known outside Nigeria, but at home, he represented the true and complete incarnation of the politician as a man of action. There were many malicious legends about him, though: they said he "chopped" the money meant for the construction and rehabilitation of Nigerian roads in his capacity as Obasanjo's Minister of Works, but no one could point to any evidence of criminal conviction. They said he was a political fixer, Mafia-like, so they called him "Mr. Fix-it, but no one could doubt that he was a strong man of influence whose word carried weight. He was a co-fighter in the struggle to establish a democratic order in Nigeria after many years of military misconduct. He was a back-bone to the front-liners. He fixed, so says the legend, whatever needed to be fixed, and he delivered, particularly for President Olusegun Obasanjo: the soldier and the policeman locked in an instructive esprit de corps.

He and President Obasanjo with whom he fought many battles were different in temperament and they eventually clashed, but it is good to recall that whenever they worked together, they complemented each other. Anenih was originally a policeman. Not too many Nigerians like policemen. Anenih retired as a Commissioner of Police, but he probably did more for the police out of office to the extent that his example helped to dispel the pervasive impression that the Nigeria Police is a community of bumbler. He was a solid public figure

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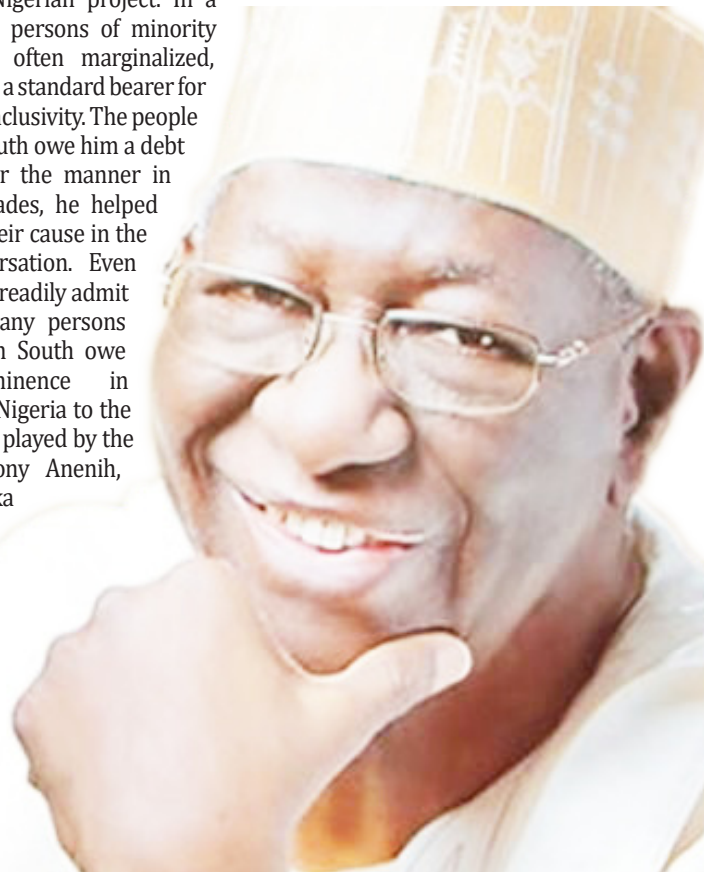
This my son, I love him. I want the best for him, but he doesn't always listen to me", he often told me. He would now give long stories about how certain persons that should never have been given positions emerged as President Jonathan's lieutenants

with a strong voice. He had friends everywhere, not because of the positions that he occupied but because of his belief in the Nigerian project. In a country where persons of minority extraction are often marginalized, Anenih became a standard bearer for the politics of inclusivity. The people of the South South owe him a debt of gratitude for the manner in which for decades, he helped to centralize their cause in the Nigerian conversation. Even if they may not readily admit it anymore, many persons from the South South owe their pre-eminence in contemporary Nigeria to the pathfinder role played by the likes of Anthony Anenih, after Adaka Boro, after

Anthony Enahoro, after Ken Saro Wiwa etc.. Anenih's exit may well create a deep and lasting vacuum, but we can not yet make a final affirmation on the extent and impact of that.

As a private person, Pa Anenih was caring, kind and attentive. I want to explain what I mean by this. There are persons who claim that he was a tough husband and that he had issues in that area. I don't know about that. Whatever happened in the late statesman's other room, should not be the focus of our assessment of his place in the larger picture of Nigeria. He is survived by wives and children – they should deal with their private issues, after the passage of their patriarch. My own private experience is that he was a very kind and generous man. He was a gentleman who, in his later years, was most willing to assist every one who crossed his path. He was blunt though. He helped those he thought were deserving of his time and attention.

I recall that he had his own contacts within the Nigerian media, and he always insisted that I should attend meetings of that group because he wanted to use it to assist President Goodluck Jonathan. The first time I attended the meeting some of our colleagues were full of complaints. Papa Anenih waded in. He smoothened the cracks. He re-assured our "very powerful" colleagues. We met now and then thereafter. The most



Tribute

difficult job in the Nigerian government is the management of the media. I was lucky to have had the support, advice and guidance of the likes of Papa Anenih. The progress we made may not have been well appreciated throughout our tenure, but apparently, the Jonathan administration is beginning to look better than good, years after. I want to thank Papa Anenih for the leadership, the contributions and the support that he offered and from which our office benefitted.

I will like to say, however, that the last part of Papa Anenih's life was perhaps, the moment of his decline. The younger members of the party went to his house to pay homage, but they thought his ideas were dated in the age of technology. This was the case despite the fact that he followed them everywhere at 80 plus and he spoke at every rally. He was strong. He was present-minded. He was energetic. Long before the 2015 elections, he prepared a media campaign strategy document which he asked me to give to the President, and he asked that he would await an opportunity for further discussions. The biggest challenge old men face is that they end up being looked at as dinosaurs. Nonetheless, Anenih attended rallies and helped to mobilize the grassroots. He offered his ideas. I don't think he got the appreciation that he deserved in his twilight moments. Even his own state Governor undermined him, playing across all fields, trying to grab the space.

Anenih was even accused at a point of anti-party activities in the matter of Imo state. In his own state, Edo State, also, Adams Oshiomhole as Governor and his agents dismissed him and accused him of irrelevance. His harsh critics were wrong then as they are now. For the avoidance of doubt, I am not here to open a can of worms, but to pay tribute and respect the memory of the dead. Anenih's death on the eve of the 2019 elections is a major loss for the Peoples Democratic Party, for Edo state and for progressive Nigerian politics. We commiserate with the people of Edo State on the passage of their illustrious son, Anthony Akhakhon Anenih, who rose beyond his local beginnings to become a man of nationalistic influence and a Nigerian statesman. When he was around, he made a difference which is what every human being of worth should seek to do. He is now in a place where neither malice nor mischief can reach him. Anenih, the man and the legend has departed. Those who speak ill of him should worry more about the end of their own journey. They should also remember that he left a book behind. He told his own story. So, I say this: Let the living deal with



their many debts and agonies. Anthony Anenih played his part... And now: "Holy Father, in Thy mercy/Hear our anxious prayer/Keep our loved ones, now far absent/'Neath Thy care.../So mote it be." Travel well, sir.

THE SPIRIT OF THE JEWS IN SQUIRREL HILL

What was assaulted in Squirrel view, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States on Saturday, October 27, was not just the 11 persons that died and the six injured, or strictly the Jewish community in the United States. It was an assault on the entire humanity itself. It was terrible. It was horrendous. It stands condemned by all right-thinking members of the human community. We note for record purposes, that the children of YHWH have been victims of hate, terrorism and intimidation all through history, but a gun-man, Robert Bowers, 46, walking into a synagogue on Sabbath day, wielding guns and hate in his heart and gunning down innocent persons and injuring others is the height of the terrorism and intolerance that a chosen race has suffered over time. The people of YWWH could be terrorized and slaughtered but

it is written in human memory that they will forever live. But even that is no lasting consolation. The world must be made safe for all – regardless of race, ethnicity, colour or gender.

The latest case of hate crime in the United States further raises questions about gun control – the need to take a second look at the spread of guns in the United States and the readiness with which agents of hate pull out those guns to commit evil at all levels. But it also draws attention to power relations; those who feel oppressed are bound to rebel against their imaginary oppressors, and they may choose wrong targets as victims of their depression. In Robert Bowers mind, that is the assailant's mind, is the assumption that Jews, wherever they may be, no matter their circumstances, are oppressors. The hate in his heart takes us back to Egypt, the Crusades, the Granada massacre to the Holocaust. He is

a memorialist, a recorder of hate, with deep-seated evil in his heart. President Donald Trump has called for the death penalty, but even death may not erase or cancel the memory of hate in the minds of others like him. A world in which a group, any group at all – national or local, is made to feel like targets reminds us of the vulnerability of all humanity.

Jews, after more than two millennia, from Egyptian captivity to the Babylonian threat, to Hitler, came to regard the United States and Israel as their places of refuge, away from centuries of persecution. But now, not even the United States is safe anymore. Not even Israel is safe. The world in which we live, needs a re-set, a rethink beyond primordial ghosts and binary thoughts that threaten human relations at all levels. The man of the skullcap must be able to live with the white supremacist and the community of persons with dark sins, and the Arabs and everyone else, to respect the values of difference, diversity and inclusivity. This is the lesson of the shootings in Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh, over the weekend – the need for a world without racism.



Frederick Isiotan Fasehun (1935 – 2018)

By Kayode Ajulo

The name of Dr. Frederick Fasehun would often spring up shades of thoughts and of course, various definitions. That's because he's a Nigerian whose figure and fingers laid enduring foundations and

legacies; Legacies so profound and robust that they have markedly shaped or reshaped the nation's standing.

All through his illustrious life, he carried with him the courage that defines a hero. He is a legend who made indelible marks on the sand of time and whose time on this side would reverberate

long after him.

Pa Fasehun, who founded the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), is a first-rate Nigerian whose training and moulding were superlative by any rating. He studied science at Blackburn College and went further in his education at Aberdeen University College of Medicine. He also attended the Liverpool Postgraduate School after which he had a Fellowship at the Royal College of Surgeons. Dr. Fasehun studied acupuncture in China under a joint World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Development Scholarship Program.

He would always be well remembered for setting up an Acupuncture Unit at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), and setting up the Besthope Hospital and Acupuncture Centre, also in Lagos, a Centre that once earned a reputation as Africa's first for the Chinese medical practice.

Dr. Fasehun would later form a Yoruba-based organization to help actualize the mandate of Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola, freely given to him by Nigerians in the historic poll of June 12 1993. For his efforts, Dr. Fasehun was imprisoned for 19 months from December 1996 to June 1998 during the military rule of Sani Abacha, ending 18 days after Abacha's death.

He left his comfort zone as a wealthy medical doctor to join other pro-democratic groups to walk against the military and force a return to civil rule.

He touched lives, profoundly. He touched mine in robust ways too. I met this distinguished Nigerian in the course of my duty as a lawyer, and I was privileged to handle some briefs for him many years ago, particularly when he was charged with



treason and detained by the Obasanjo-led federal government alongside some OPC chieftains which included the present Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yoruba land, Abiodun Ganiyu Adams. He shaped my view on certain beliefs, particularly championing the cause of collective good, and other great ideas.

The story of my agitation for civil rights, particularly my career would not be complete without a mention of his name and other patriots. To the glory of God, handling a brief for him and the Aare Ona kakanfo well over a decade ago significantly shaped the mileage of my career as Rights Activist and legal practitioner, and those moments remain for me very special and dear.

Smart, dogged and grounded, Baba made outstanding contributions to the progress of the nation in many capacities, particularly the Yoruba race and Nigeria at large. The passing away of Pa Fasehun remains a major blow for obvious reasons. He stood for his race, making the Yoruba nation stronger and more respected across the country.

Dear Papa Faseun, your legacy is outstanding and you will forever be in our minds. Nigeria will never forget you. We all will miss you greatly. Adieu.

Dr Kayode Ajulo, a lawyer, chairman, Board of Trustees of Egalitarian Mission for Africa, former national secretary of the Labour Party, writes from Abuja.



The rise of religion and failure of education, industry and almost everything

By Okenyi Kenechi

I have never seen a dilapidated church. I have seen hundreds of dilapidated schools.

In my home town, the schools are rotting away while church buildings are growing bigger. No industries, just churches.

I once told someone that if the churches in Port Harcourt were to be transformed into industries, unemployment will vanish within one year and crime will be brought to a screeching halt. He agreed.

Truth is, if a politician asks a certain village what they will prefer to be built for them, chances that they will chose a church will be higher.

Doubt me? Gitto in a bid to show appreciation to former president Goodluck Jonathan, asked him to choose one thing they will build for his village people and he chose a church. I don't know if there are world class hospitals in Otuoke or standard schools but he chose a church.

I also know that the former governor, DSP Alameiseiya, died on the way while being ferried to the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH) when he had a heart attack. In the whole of Bayelsa, no hospital could handle emergency situations.

In Abonnema on Wednesday, a young man shot by soldiers attached to the area died on the way to UPTH.

Follow East-West road to Bayelsa and Warri. If you happen to have an accident on that road stretch, the nearest hospital is UPTH and chances of survival are narrow. The road is bad. But there are hundreds of churches along that road yet kidnapping and rape, killings etc occur on a daily basis.

From Port to Aba, you only find casket companies along the road. If you have an accident, you will be ferried to those casket companies for swift burial. Yet churches litter everywhere. What are we even talking about?

Buhari runs to mosques on Friday and run straight to London hospital on Saturday. Are we normal?

Ike Ekweremadu, the Deputy president of the Senate invited Presidents, ministers, Senators etc to the opening of an Anglican Church he built for his village people. Schools there are in tatters.

Vita Abah, former PDP chairman in Enugu built a gigantic Church in his village. Community secondary school



Ede Oballa is nothing but an eyesore. His children are abroad.

In the North, a governor once used 600 million naira to hire prayer warriors and imams to pray against Boko Haram attacks. The same state had disease outbreaks that led to multiple deaths.

In the same North, Governors spend millions on recitation of religious texts while the schools are dying. They also spend millions on emirs and imams. One reportedly bought a 600 million naira house for the Sultan of Sokoto in Abuja earlier this year. He is among those saying that he can't pay 30k minimum wage. Imagine the nonsense!

This is in a country where teachers are paid peanuts. The governors have one thing in common: all their children are schooling abroad while they make sure yours go to church every day.

Go to your village and see if the biggest buildings there are not religious houses. How does a nation develop without the education of the citizens? Education is empowerment. It opens doors. An educated mind is a liberated mind. A religious mind is a shackled mind. Or didn't you read of the attack inside Nigeria Law School because someone felt someone abused Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)? In Sokoto, I saw it firsthand.

The truth is: if I become the president of this country one day, I will ban religious activities in the schools. No religious houses will be found in university campuses. I schooled in University of



Port Harcourt and I know how students' church activities distract academic activities.

In this same country, government pays hugely for people to go Mecca and Medina to stone devil and to Jerusalem to talk to the Wall. How much development has that brought us? How has that reduced religious tension in the country? Only an unwise person will not see how our government is dashing money to other countries through these journeys. The government has no business funding it but this is Nigeria.

This is the same country that has never met the UNESCO prescribed 26 percent annual budget for education.

You see! I am not against anyone fighting for the church but how the church has benefited the country should be a topic for rigorous academic exercise.

A nation that cannot educate its citizens is a rogue country. A nation that pays more attention to religion instead of all round education of her citizens is a rogue and mediocre nation.

If you want to truly understand the politicization of religion in Nigeria, watch how they never utter a word against misrule in Nigeria. If they talk, politicians will stop donating money to them or you think it is your 5000 tithe that built the world's largest church auditorium in Nigeria?

Nigerians are opening churches while Chinese, Lebanese etc run our economy.



Enenche's largest church auditorium: A doctor's misplaced priority

By Asaju Tunde

It's usually not my business to poke my nose into Dr. Paul Enenche's matters. For one, I am not a member of his church or his fan. He doesn't need me and I doubt if I need him. God is sufficient for us all.

So let me congratulate the doctor-turned-pastor of the largest church auditorium in the world for accomplishing a great feat by all standards. While his teachers in medical school would be wondering how they missed it, because he could have built an ultra-modern hospital, he is probably happy that he is winning souls for Christ. He is right.

Every time a member of his congregation dies at childbirth, they go to heaven. Every time one dies for not being able to shoulder the responsibilities of living, he wins a soul. Every time one dies in an accident for not having access to the best medical facility, Dr. Enenche has won a soul for Christ.

Now, lofty as these avoidable

deaths could be, heaven is supposedly roaring in praise of another saint joining its never-ending choir. Unfortunately, Jesus would not be happy. How do I know? Thank you, now indulge me a little.

He healed several sick people while he was here on earth because they had no access to medicine. Indeed he said 'those who are well do not need physicians, only those who are sick' signifying that he recognized the role of medicine even 2,000 years ago. That's why I think Jesus would have been happier if Dr. Enenche had built an ultra-modern hospital, dusted his medical books and finds time twice or three times a week for voluntary work.

I am telling you that if he built the hospital in the heart of Idomaland, it would benefit his kit and kin. It would have attracted the sick from Okeagi to Owerri, Kano to Kaura-Namoda.

You see, Christianity was brought to our land by altruistic missionaries. But if you observe, they hardly built big edifices, except diocesan headquarters.

They tasked the people to do their own building. But they built schools and in those schools most students paid nothing. They paved roads, those roads were plied by everybody. They built clinics, without those clinics some of us would have continued our superstitious Abiku/Ogbanje journey several times.

It is several hundreds of years since the last of those missionaries have died. Unfortunately, the need for such altruism is still immanent. The schools they vacated are now eyesores everywhere you see them. The roads they paved are either the way they left them or worse. As for access to healthcare, a core component of their ministration, our people need medicines as much as they need medical personnel now than they did 300 years ago. The population has doubled.

Jesus had a very terrible weakness that no disciple captured as much as than Matthew. His favourite phrase was 'he had compassion on them and healed them.' Although Jesus

Viewpoint

worshipped at Synagogues, he never built one. Infact, when one bloke wanted to join his ministry, he told him that foxes have holes but the son of man has no place to lay his head. Jesus was building people, not auditorium.

This is why I think Dr. Enenche missed his calling. Building an auditorium is good. It enlarges the landscape of the city where it is built. I am a regular visitor at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, Canada. It was built in 1940 for a sitting audience of 2,000 and a standing room for 10,000 people. The first time I attended a service there, a Muslim friend invited me. We were a handful of about 20 at that service.

While in Paris, I visited several of such Cathedrals, some built in towns that have lost half of its initial population due to rural-urban drift. I was a frequent parishioner of the St. John's Cathedral in

Clerkenwell, London as a student there. It was started in the 1600s. Without its international student population, we wouldn't count twenty-five members. Indeed, while service is going on, 'unbelievers' used to stand at the stairs drinking beer.

I have not written this to show how privileged I am to have travelled, I have written to show one thing - Jesus said that not one block shall be left over another at his second coming. Frankly, the children of unbuilt believers would render cathedrals big for nothing, a mere architectural masterpiece at best. If Dr. Enenche had built a 10,000 bed hospital in Idomaland, his name would have been written in gold. Now his bragging right, like that of his perhaps more business-savvy mentor, David Oyedepo would be having built the then-

largest church in the world.

I am hoping to make heaven so that I can see who gets more stars on their crowns, the one who built the largest auditorium or the one who sowed into the lives of 100,000 people. If I wasn't such a piece of spiritual shit, I'd have guessed who. Jesus again said 'then they would say in your name we have done this and done that (paraphrasing) but I would say to them, depart from me you workers of iniquity, for I know you not.

I am happy to see the auditorium grace the Abuja landscape. I am praying that no locust sowed any seed into its completion. I am hoping that no tax defaulter paid their tithes in that church. I am hoping that no member of the ruining class attends service there having denied our people the very basic essentials of living. I know that new generation churches no longer accept corpses into their halls; they claim that the church is a church of the living and not the dead. So, I know that no young corpse would be prayed on in that auditorium who ought to have survived if they had had money to pay hospital bills.

I do not berate Dr. Enenche for his decision. I do not refuse to do so because I am afraid that he would rain fire, death and sickness on me as I do not believe that any mortal has that kind of power. I am just trying to say to a young priest of my generation that it is not too late to use

his

medical training to benefit people within and outside his locality. I know a few doctors whose works of charity speak, convict and converts more than the tithes and offerings they give. I am hoping that somebody who is Dr. Enenche's friend would share this as a reminder that his work

on the human soul is not over.

His members would still be falling under the anointing of sweet words of inspiration today. When they walk out of their church auditorium, the elements that makes Nigerians so religious but unspiritual would still be haunting them. They'll need his bottle of olive oil as talisman and his recommended dosage of psalms as phylactery against the things that the missionaries conquered at home before having the peace of mind to venture to other lands with the gospel.

I am hoping that someone investing in a similar venture would pause and ask the Holy Spirit - Lord, where would you have me invest my talent to best serve humanity? I have read the scriptures and every time you looked at the multitude, it says you were moved with passion and you reached out to touch, to heal, to resurrect and to send away in peace.

May God's peace be on all his creation. Amen.

Asaju Tunde is a journalist, blogger and Public Relations expert.



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US presidential elections:

Why a Democrat is now favourite to win in 2020

The results of the US midterm elections are now largely in and they came as a shock to many seasoned forecasters.

This wasn't the kind of shock that occurred in 2016, when the EU referendum tipped to Brexit and the US presidential election to Donald Trump. Nor the type that followed the 2015 and 2017 UK general elections, which produced a widely unexpected Conservative majority and a hung parliament respectively.

On those occasions, the polls, pundits and prediction markets got it, for the most part, very wrong, and confidence in political forecasting took a major hit. The shock on this occasion was of a different sort – surprise related to just how right most of the forecasts were.

Take the FiveThirtyEight political forecasting methodology, most closely associated with Nate Silver, famed for the success of his 2008 and 2012 US presidential election forecasts.

In 2016, even that trusted methodology failed to predict Trump's narrow triumph in some of the key swing states. This was reflected widely across other forecasting methodologies, too, causing a crisis of confidence in political forecasting. And things only got worse when much academic modelling of the 2017 UK general election was even further off target than it had been in 2015.

How did it go so right?

So what happened in the 2018 US midterm elections? This time, the FiveThirtyEight "Lite"

forecast, based solely on local and national polls weighted by past performance, predicted that the Democrats would pick up a net 38 seats in the House of Representatives. The "Classic" forecast, which also includes fundraising, past voting and historical trends, predicted that they would pick up a net 39 seats. They needed 23 to take control.

With almost all results now declared, it seems that those forecasts are pretty near spot on the projected tally of a net gain of 40 seats by the Democrats. In the Senate, meanwhile, the Republicans were forecast to hold the Senate by 52 seats to 48. The final count is likely to be 53-47. There is also an argument that the small error in the Senate forecast can be accounted for by poor ballot design in Florida,

Foreign

which disadvantaged the Democrat in a very close race.

Some analysts currently advocate looking at the turnout of “early voters”, broken down by party affiliation, who cast their ballot before polling day. They argue this can be used as an alternative or supplementary forecasting methodology. This year, a prominent advocate of this methodology went with the Republican Senate candidate in Arizona, while FiveThirtyEight chose the Democrat. The Democrat won. Despite this, the jury is still out over whether “early vote” analysis can add any value.

There has also been research into the forecasting efficiency of betting/prediction markets compared to polls. This tends to show that the markets have the edge over polls in key respects, although they can themselves be influenced by and overreact to new poll results.

There are a number of theories to explain what went wrong with much of the forecasting prior to the Trump and Brexit votes. But looking at the bigger picture, which stretches back to the US presidential election of 1868 (in which Republican Ulysses S Grant defeated Democrat Horatio Seymour), forecasts based on markets (with one notable exception, in 1948) have proved remarkably accurate, as have other forecasting methodologies. To this extent, the accurate forecasting of the 2018 midterms is a return to the norm.

And the next president is ...

But what do the results mean for politics in the US more generally? The bottom line is that there was a considerable swing to the Democrats across most of the country, especially among women and in the suburbs, such that the Republican advantage of almost 1% in the House popular vote in 2016 was turned into a Democrat advantage of about 8% this time. If reproduced in a

Senators Kamala Harris (the overall favourite), Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand and Cory Booker. Outside the Senate, the frontrunners are former vice-president, Joe Biden, and the recent (unsuccessful) candidate for the Texas Senate, Beto O'Rourke.

Whoever prevails is most likely to face sitting president, Donald Trump, who is close to even money to face impeachment during his



presidential election, it would be enough to provide a handsome victory for the candidate of the Democratic Party.

The size of this swing, and the demographics underpinning it, were identified with a good deal of accuracy by the main forecasting methodologies. This success has clearly restored some confidence in them, and they will now be used to look forward to 2020. Useful current forecasts for the 2020 election include PredictIt, OddsChecker, Betfair and PredictWise.

Taken together, they indicate that the Democratic candidate for the presidency will most likely come from a field including

current term of office. If Trump isn't the Republican nominee, the vice-president, Mike Pence, and former UN ambassador Nikki Haley are attracting the most support in the markets. The Democrats are currently about 57% to 43% favourites over the Republicans to win the presidency.

With the midterms over, our faith in political forecasting, at least in the US, has been somewhat restored. The focus now turns to 2020 – and whether they'll accurately predict the next leader of the free world, or be left floundering by the unpredictable forces of a new world politics.



Ogbono soup

By Ene Abdul

Ogbono or draw soup, is a popular Nigerian soup made from the seeds of wild African bush mango. Because its slimy nature makes it easy to swallow, it is one of the first soups given to kids when trying to introduce them to soup.

Step by step preparation of ogbono soup

Ingredients

Ogbono (wild African bush mango seeds)
Assorted meat and fish (including stock fish)
Palm oil
Ugwu (pumpkin leaves)
Crayfish

Onions
Seasoning cubes
Pepper
Salt to taste

Method of preparation

Grind Ogbono till smooth
Wash, season and cook the assorted meat, stock fish and dry fish with onions till tender
Slice the vegetables, grind pepper and set aside
Heat up palm oil in a dry pot till hot and add minced onions
Put off heat and add Ogbono powder
Stir until powder dissolves into a smooth

mixture

Add meat stock and allow to boil for 10 minutes. Stir again

Add the cooked dry fish, stock fish, assorted meat, seasoning cubes, pepper and ground crayfish

Mix, and allow to simmer for 10 minutes

Then add sliced pumpkin leaf and allow to simmer for 2 minutes

And your Ogbono soup is ready

Serve with pounded yam, eba or fufu.

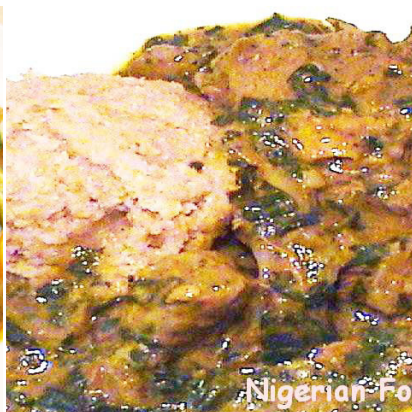
Mama's Kitchen

African bush mango seed

Research on African mango shows that the fruit is packed with plenty health benefits especially ones that is effective for weight loss. According to the reports, the antioxidants in the fruit helps with regulating cholesterol, reducing the chances of diabetes and obesity and regulates gastro intestinal activities.

The fresh seeds of African mango contains 18 amino acids and a good number of nutrients mostly vitamins and minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium, phosphorus and iron.

Its fibre content on the other hand, helps to improve the bowel function and aids



'Why women need regular sex'



A psychiatrist, Maymunah Kadiri, has advised women to have regular sex with their spouses in order to prevent depression and gain happiness.

Mrs Kadiri, the medical director of Pinnacle Medical Services, gave the advice in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos.

Pinnacle is a health and wellness centre for psychological, behavioral, and mental health related issues.

According to her, sex is not just to nourish a woman's body, but it is also beneficial to her mental health.

"As women, there is need for us to make our spouses our best friends if we want to be mentally healthy," she said.

"Studies have shown that women who have more active sex and in long term relationships were less likely to be depressed than women who went without sex.

"So, more sex is important and essential. It is a remedy to curing women from having persistent headache.

"Low sexual drive, which leads to depression, should be looked into. A woman can be depressed when that sexual drive that she used to have is no more there.

"Frequent active sex can play good roles toward women's sense of well being and quality of life," she said.

She explained that sex was not just for procreation and to have children, adding that it could create bonding, good companionship and sound sleep.

Mrs Kadiri, popularly called 'celebrity shrink', urged women dealing with depression to frequently indulge in sex, while boosting their self-esteem.

She also advised women who are over-weight to also involve in active sex, saying doing so will boost endorphins which are happy hormones.

"The happy hormones will make them lose some calories as well as sleep better.

"Orgasms trigger the release of endorphins which are happy hormones secreted by the brain that act as effective painkillers," she said.

She added that sex was not only beneficial to the men, but especially to women because it was capable of freeing them from stress. (NAN)



Quotable Quotes

"If you embark on digging a hole for your enemy, you better make it shallow because you might end up in the hole yourself."

- Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan
(1957-Date)

"The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts."

- Bertrand Russel
(1872-1970)

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."

- Albert Einstein
(1879-1955)

"Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michaelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein."

- H. Jackson Brown
(1940-Date)

"History will be kind to me for I intend to write it."

- Sir Winston Churchill

(1874-1965)

Did you know?

The immediate-past Nigerian President, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, is the country's first leader from the South South, first Ph.D holder in Nigeria to become President, first Nigerian President to rise through the ranks from the position of Deputy Governor to Acting Governor, Governor, first Gubernatorial candidate nominee to become Vice President, Acting President and eventually President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. No other Nigerian, dead or alive, has gone through such trajectory, or rite of passage.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

December 1, 1955 - The birth of the modern American civil rights movement occurred as Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back section of a municipal bus. Her arrest resulted in a year-long boycott of the city bus system by African Americans and led to legal actions ending racial segregation on municipal buses throughout the South.



December 1, 1988 - Benazir Bhutto was nominated to become prime minister of Pakistan, the first woman to govern a Muslim nation.

December 1, 1989 - Mikhail Gorbachev became the first Soviet Russian leader to visit the Vatican and meet the Pope, thus ending 72 years of strict atheist policy in Communist Russia.



December 1, 1994 - The head of the U.N. Commission on Rwanda estimated 500,000 deaths had resulted from genocide.

December 2, 1804 - Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of France by Pope Pius VII in Paris.

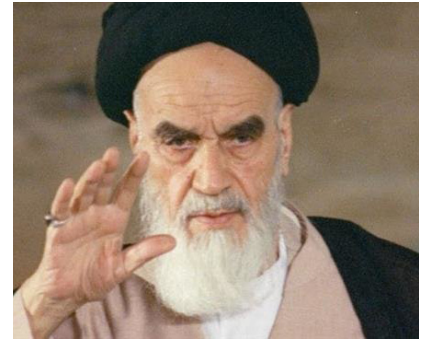
December 2, 1823 - President James Monroe introduced his "Monroe Doctrine" during his annual message to the Congress, prohibiting any further colonization of the American continents by European powers, stating, "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety..."

December 2, 1942 - Physicists led by Enrico Fermi carried out the world's first successful nuclear chain reaction at the University of Chicago.



December 2, 1971 - The United Arab Emirates was formed, consisting of seven Arab kingdoms on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula including the former Trucial states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qaiwain and Fujairah. Ras al-Khaimah became a member in 1972. The area has some of the world's largest reserves of petroleum and natural gas.

December 2, 1979 - Electors in Iran voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new constitution granting absolute power to Ayatollah Khomeini.



December 2, 1982 - The first permanent artificial heart was implanted in 61-year-old Barney C. Clark by Dr. William De Vries at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City. Clark, who was near death at the time of the operation, survived 112 days after the implantation.

December 3, 1993 - Britain's Princess Diana announced she was stepping out of the public spotlight, desiring more privacy amid unyielding attention from the tabloid press and 'paparazzi.'



December 4, 1791 - The Observer, now the oldest Sunday newspaper in the world, was first published in Britain.

December 5, 1492 - Haiti was discovered by Christopher Columbus.

December 5, 1955 - In Alabama, the Montgomery bus boycott began in response to the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat on a municipal bus to a white man. Organized by the African American community, the boycott lasted until December 20, 1956, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling integrated the public transportation system.

December 6, 1492 - The island of Hispaniola was discovered by Christopher Columbus. Today the island is divided between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

December 6, 1865 - The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified abolishing slavery, stating, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, save as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

December 7, 43 B.C. - Cicero (Marcus Tullius) died. He was a writer, statesman, and was considered ancient Rome's greatest orator.



December 8, 1941 - A day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States and Britain declared war on Japan.

December 8, 1991 - The USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) ceased to exist, as the leaders of Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine signed an agreement creating the Commonwealth of Independent States. The remaining republics of the former USSR, with the exception of Georgia, joined the new Commonwealth.

December 9, 1992 - Buckingham Palace announced the separation of Prince Charles and Princess of Wales, Dianna.

December 10, 1948 - The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

December 10, 1950 - Dr. Ralph Bunche became the first African American man awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, for his efforts in mediation between Israel and nearby Arab states the previous year.



December 11, 1936 - King Edward VIII abdicated the throne of England to marry "the woman I love," a twice-divorced American named Wallis Warfield Simpson. They were married in France on June 3, 1937, and then lived in Paris.

December 11, 1941 - A major turning point in World War II occurred as Japan's Axis partners, Italy and Germany, both declared war on the United States. The U.S. Congress immediately declared war on them. President Roosevelt then made the defeat of Hitler the top priority, devoting nearly 90 percent of U.S. military resources to the war in Europe.

December 12, 1870 - Joseph Hayne Rainey of Georgetown, South Carolina, became the first African American to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. He filled a seat which had been declared vacant by the House and served until 1879.

December 12, 1998 - The House Judiciary Committee approved a fourth and final article of impeachment against President Bill Clinton, charging him with making false statements in his answers to written questions from Congress.



December 13, 1991 - North and South Korea signed a treaty of reconciliation and nonaggression which also formally ended the Korean War, although actual fighting had ceased in 1953.

December 14, 1918 - British women voted for the first time in a general election and were allowed to run for office.

December 15, 1989 - The dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet ended in Chile. Pinochet had come to power in 1973 after a military overthrow of the democratically elected government.

December 15, 1993 - The GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) Treaty was approved by delegations from 117 countries. The treaty was designed to reduce international tariffs, eliminate trade quotas, and protect intellectual property.

December 15, 1995 - European Union leaders announced their new currency would be known as the Euro.

December 16, 1969 - The British House of Commons voted 343-185 to abolish the death penalty in England.

December 17, 1538 - Pope Paul III excommunicated King Henry VIII after he had declared himself supreme head of the Church in England.



December 17, 1903 - After three years of experimentation, Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved the first powered, controlled airplane flights. They made four flights near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, the longest lasting about a minute.

December 18, 1956 - Japan was admitted to the United Nations.

December 19, 1732 - Benjamin Franklin first published Poor Richard's Almanac containing weather predictions, humor, proverbs and epigrams, eventually selling nearly 10,000 copies per year.

December 19, 1998 - The House of Representatives impeached President Bill Clinton, approving two out of four Articles of Impeachment, charging Clinton with lying under oath to a federal grand jury and obstructing justice.

December 20, 1989 - The U.S. invaded Panama attempting to capture Manuel Noriega on charges of narcotics trafficking. Operation Just Cause occurred seven months after Noriega had declared unfavorable election results in his country to be null and void. The invasion toppled

Life

the Noriega government and resulted in the installation of Guillermo Endara as president. Noriega temporarily eluded capture, but surrendered a few weeks later to U.S. troops. He was then tried, convicted, and imprisoned in the U.S.

December 21, 1846 - Anesthesia was used for the first time in Britain during an operation at University College Hospital in London performed by Robert Liston who amputated the leg of a servant.

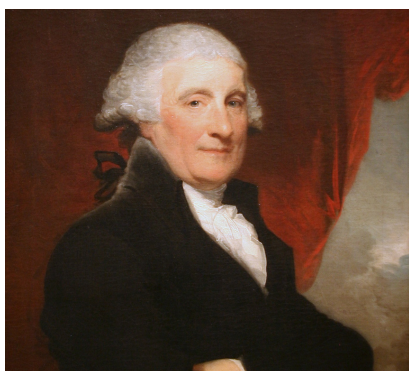


December 21, 1972 - East and West Germany established diplomatic ties, ending nearly two decades of Cold War hostility and paving the way for international recognition of East Germany.

December 21, 1993 - The KGB (Soviet Secret Police) organization was abolished by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

December 23, 1947 - The transistor was invented at Bell Laboratories by John Bardeen, Walter Brattain and William Shockley, who shared the Nobel Prize for their invention which sparked a worldwide revolution in electronics.

December 23, 1948 - Hideki Tojo was hanged for war crimes. He had been Japanese prime minister from 1941-44. Following Japan's defeat in World War II, he was arrested as a war criminal, tried by a military tribunal and sentenced to death. He was hanged along with six other Japanese wartime military leaders at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo, with the sentence carried out by the U.S. 8th Army.



December 23, 1987 - Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager set a new world record of 216 hours of continuous flight around the world without refueling. Their aircraft Voyager traveled 24,986 miles at a speed of about 115 miles per hour.

December 24, 1942 - The first surface-to-surface guided missile, later known as the V-1 Flying Bomb, was launched by German rocket engineer Wernher von Braun. Called "Buzz Bombs" for the loud buzzing sound of their motor, they were used by Nazi Germany against Britain beginning in September 1944.

December 25th - Christmas Day, commemorating the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Although the exact date of his birth is not known, it has been celebrated on December 25th by the Western (Roman Catholic) Church since 336 A.D. and many other countries across the globe have joined.

December 25, 1066 - William the Conqueror was crowned King of England after he had invaded England from France, defeated and killed King Harold at the Battle of Hastings, then marched on London.

December 25, 1868 - President Andrew Johnson granted general amnesty to all those involved in the Civil War.



December 26th - Boxing Day in the United Kingdom and many other countries, a day of gift giving when boxes of food, clothing and other gifts are traditionally given to employees, tradespeople and other service providers.

December 26, 2004 - An estimated 230,000 persons were killed and 1.5 million left homeless when a magnitude 9.3 earthquake on the seafloor of the Indian Ocean set off a series of giant tsunami waves that smashed into the shorelines of a dozen countries including Indonesia,

Sri Lanka, Thailand, India and Somalia.

December 27, 1831 - Charles Darwin set out from Plymouth, England, aboard the ship HMS Beagle on his five-year global scientific expedition. Darwin collected fossils and studied plants and animals, gradually beginning to doubt that many diverse species of living things had sprung into existence at one moment (creationism). In 1859, he published *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

December 27, 1945 - The International Monetary Fund was established in Washington, D.C.

December 27, 1996 - A genocide trial began concerning the killing of an estimated 800,000 Tutsis in Rwanda. In 1994, a bloody civil war had broken out between the two main ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi. After the Hutu army seized power it had waged a campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against the Tutsi population.

December 28, 1832 - John C. Calhoun became the first American ever to resign the office of vice president. He served under Presidents John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson and resigned after a series of political disagreements with President Jackson. He went on to become a U.S. Senator from South Carolina.

December 28, 1947 - Victor Emmanuel III, the last King of Italy, died while in exile in Alexandria, Egypt. He had become king upon the assassination of his father in 1900. Following World War I, he named Benito Mussolini to form a cabinet and then failed to prevent Mussolini's Fascists from seizing power. In 1946, he abdicated and went into exile.

December 29, 1170 - Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered by four knights acting on orders from England's King Henry II.

December 30, 1993 - Israel and the Vatican signed an agreement on mutual recognition, seeking to end 2,000 years of unfriendly Christian-Jewish relations

December 31st - New Year's Eve, the final evening of the Gregorian calendar year, traditionally a night for merry-making to welcome in the new year.

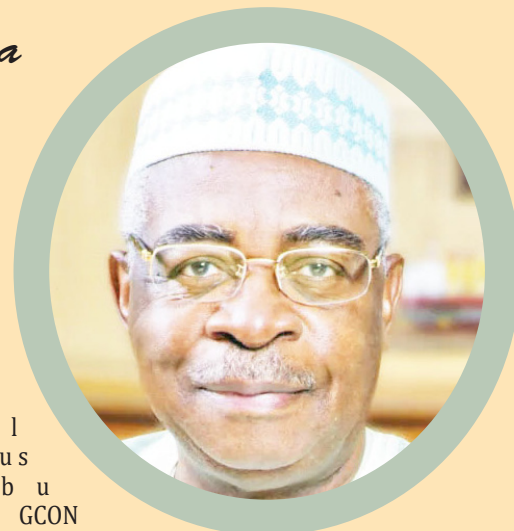
Birthdays This Month



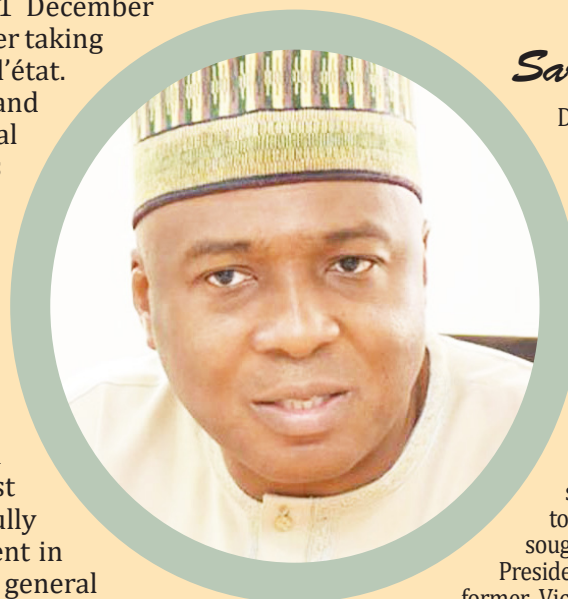
Buhari

Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, is the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Minister of Petroleum Resources. He retired as a Major General from the Nigerian Army and was Head of State of Nigeria from 31 December 1983 to 27 August 1985, after taking power in a military coup d'état. He held several command and staff as well as political positions in the course of his illustrious military career. He was at different times Military administrator of northeast states and also of Borno. He was at different times chairman of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, Minister of Petroleum and chairman, Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF). He unsuccessfully ran for the office of President in the 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections but won in 2015 and became the first opposition candidate to beat a sitting president (President Goodluck Jonathan) in the country's history. He celebrates his 76th birthday on December 17.

Danjuma



General Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma GCON FSS psc (Rtd.) is one of Nigeria's most accomplished soldiers. He is also a politician and multi billionaire businessman. He was the Chief of Army Staff from July 1975 to October 1979. He was also Minister of Defence under former Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo. Danjuma is the chairman of South Atlantic Petroleum (SAPETRO). Danjuma, who was born in Takum, in present-day Taraba state, left Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria to join the Nigerian Army in 1960 and rose through the ranks to the pinnacle of his military career. He was actively involved in the counter coup of July 1966 and the Nigerian civil war which lasted from 1967 to 1970. He turns 80 on December 9.



Saraki

Dr Abubakar Bukola Saraki is one of Nigeria's most accomplished politicians of this generation. A two term Senator and presently Senate President, Saraki was also a two term governor of Kwara state as well as former Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum. He replaced his younger sister, Gbemisola Saraki, in the Senate. Their father, Dr Abubakar Olusola Saraki, was Second Republic Senate Leader and godfather of Kwara politics till his death. He had also served as a Special Adviser on Budget to ex President Olusegun Obasanjo. He sought the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Presidential ticket recently which he lost to former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar. He attended King's College, Lagos, from 1973 to 1978, and Cheltenham College, Cheltenham, London from 1979 to 1981 for his High School Certificate. He then studied at the London Hospital Medical College of the University of London from 1982 to 1987, when he obtained his M.B.B.S (London). He turns 56 on December 19.

Life



Ikedieze

Chinedu Ikedieze, MFR, is one of the most successful comic actors in Nigeria. He is best known for playing alongside Osita Iheme in most movies after their breakthrough in the movie 'Aki na Ukwu' and more recently featuring as 'Efe' in the African Magic Series called 'The Johnsons'. In 2007, Ikedieze received the Lifetime Achievement Medal at the African Movie Academy Awards. The Bende, Abia state born thespian turns 41 on December 12.



Darego

Agbani Darego, OON (born Ibiagbanidokibubo Asenite Darego,) is a super model, best known as the first Black African Miss World. She was hugely celebrated in Nigeria when she made the country proud by winning the Miss World Title in November 2001. She had been crowned Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria earlier in that year. She hails from Abonema in Rivers state. Due to her busy work schedule, Darego left the University of Port Harcourt, but after moving to New York where she was signed to Next Model Management and Ford Models she enrolled at New York University where she studied Psychology, graduating in May 2012. Darego has judged numerous pageants, and fashion and modelling competitions including Miss World 2014, Miss England 2002, Mr. Scotland 2002, and Elite Model Look Nigeria 2012 and 2014. She turns 36 on December 22.

Amokachi

Daniel Owefin Amokachi, aka 'The Bull' is one of the most accomplished men in the history of Nigerian sports. He played for the Super Eagles as a forward and won the Cup of the Nations in 1994, Tunisia and the Olympic Gold Medal in Atlanta, 1996. Amokachi was also a prominent figure in the golden generation of the Super Eagles that impressed in the World Cup in 1994. He has worked as a TV pundit and also on the technical bench after retirement. Amokachi was born in Kaduna, though is of the Idoma ethnic stock in Benue state. He started his career with Ranchers Bees from where he earned a dream move to Everton in England. He also played for Club Brugge in Belgium and Beşiktaş in Turkey before initially finishing his career in the United States with Major League Soccer club Colorado Rapids. He returned to Nigeria in 2005 to briefly play for Nasarawa United, who he went on to manage before moving on to Enyimba. He has in recent years quit coaching and fully focused on punditry. The Bull turns 46 on December 30.



Onazi

Ogenyi Eddy Onazi is a Nigerian international who plays as a holding midfielder for Turkish club Trabzonspor. He broke on to the scene during the 2009 U- 17 World Cup hosted by Nigeria in which the country lost in the final to Switzerland. He won the Cup of Nations for Nigeria in South Africa, 2013 and participated in the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and 2018. He turns 26 on Christmas Day, December 25.





Ajunwa

Chioma Ajunwa is arguably Nigeria's most successful athlete, who won Olympic Gold Medal in the Long Jump event at Atlanta, 1996 with a jump length of 7.12 meters (on her first attempt) during the final. A police officer, who initially played football for the Nigerian women's team but then made a transition into athletics, Ajunwa performed as a track and field athlete and specialised in 100m, 200m and long jump, eventually competing at the African Championships in 1989 and the All Africa Games. Ajunwa turns 48 on Christmas Day, December 25.

Onu

Dr Ogbonaya Onu is presently the Minister of Science and Technology. He was the first Executive Governor of Abia State, Nigeria from February 1992 to December 1993 and former National Chairman of the defunct All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). 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, 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. He clocks 67 on the 1st of December.



Ogunkoya

Falilat Ogunkoya is a former track and field queen. She has won a number of national championships, including a gold medal in 1996 in the 400 metres, gold in the 200 metres and 400 m in 1998, and gold again in 1999 and 2001 in the 400 metres. At the 1987 All Africa Games in Kenya, she won the silver medal in the 200 metres. In 1995 at the Zimbabwe Games, she won the silver in the 400 metres, and at the 1999 Games in South Africa she won a gold medal in the 400 m. At the 1996 Summer Olympics she won a bronze medal in the 400 m, behind Marie-José Pérec of France and Cathy Freeman of Australia, in a personal best and African record of 49.10, which is currently the twelfth fastest of all time. She turns 50 on the 5th of December.





Amuneke

Emmanuel Amuneke is an ex-international who played as a left winger. He was the coach of the U-17 side which won a 5th World Cup for the nation in Chile in 2015. He represented Nigeria at the 1994 World Cup and won the Cup of Nations in Tunisia, same year where he scored twice in the final against Zambia. Amuneke was voted African footballer of the year in that year. He also scored in the final of the Atlanta 96 Olympic soccer event where the Dream Team defeated Argentina. In his early career, Amuneke won the domestic league titles in Nigeria and Egypt, while playing for Julius Berger F.C. and Zamalek SC respectively. He also played club football with Barcelona and for different clubs in Portugal. He turns 48 on Christmas Day, December 25.

Moses

Victor Moses is a former Nigerian professional footballer who plays right back for Chelsea. Born in Nigeria but raised in Britain, Moses has played club football for a couple of Premier League clubs- Stoke City, Crystal Palace and Liverpool. He played for England at various junior levels but chose to feature for Nigeria at senior level. He was one of the stars of the Cup of the Nations in South Africa in 2013 which the Super Eagles won for the third time. He also featured in the 2014 and 2018 World Cups before he retired. Moses turns 28 on the 12th of December.



Ikhana

Kadiri Ikhana is an international and one of the most successful local coaches in the history of Nigerian football. Playing with the Nigerian Army, Ikhana was discovered by club Bendel Insurance and signed them in 1977. Ikhana was a member of the Green Eagle squad that won the 1980 African Cup of Nations and represented Nigeria at the 1980 Summer Olympic Games. After retiring from playing, he became the first coach of Maiduguri's El-Kanemi Warriors in 1986. He is also a former coach of BCC Lions, Kwara United F.C., Sunshine Stars F.C., Sharks F.C. and Enyimba F.C., leading the latter to a CAF Champions League title. He also led Kano Pillars to their first ever league title. It concluded his third stint with the squad, as he was their coach for their first premier league season in 1991 and saved them from relegation in 1998. On 1 August 2008, he was rehired to be the coach of Sharks F.C. In the summer of 2008, he became the father-in-law of footballer Yakubu Aiyegbeni. He is also the father-in-law of former Super Eagles player, Patrick Ovie. Ikhana turns 67 on the last day of the year, December 31.



Oruma

Wilson Oruma is an ex-international. He was the skipper and the tournament top goalscorer when Nigeria won the 1993 FIFA U-17 World Championships in Japan. He was part of the team that participated in the 1998 FIFA World Cup. He also was part of the squad that won the Olympic gold medal in 1996 and also a member of the Nigerian squad at the 2002 and 2006 Africa Cup of Nations, finishing both competitions at third place. Oruma played most of his club football in France, Turkey, Greece and Switzerland. He turns 46 on December 30.



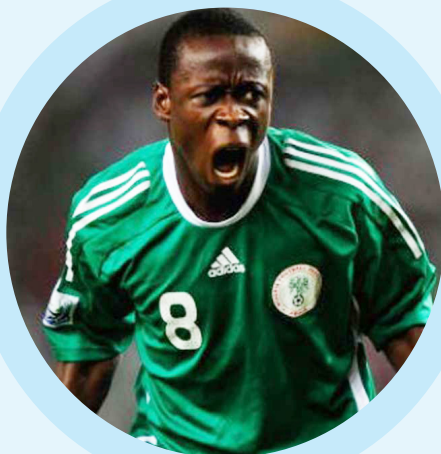


Mutiu

Mutiu Adegboye is a Nigerian retired footballer who played mostly as an attacking midfielder. Nicknamed “The Headmaster”, due to his consistency in scoring aerial balls, he played most of his career in Spain – amassing La Liga totals of 175 games and 22 goals over the course of seven seasons – and represented his country in three World Cups. Adegboye was a member of the Nigerian team that played in the 1989 FIFA World Youth Championship. Adegboye went on to amass 48 international caps, with six goals, for the senior national team. He made his debut against Togo in August 1990, but his breakthrough at international level came during the 1992 Africa Cup of Nations, and he helped his

Okoro

Stanley Okoro is an ex-international who featured prominently at the U- 17 side in the 2008 edition of the World Cup hosted by Nigeria and which the country lost in the final to Switzerland. He is left footed sharp shooter. Okoro has also played for the Super Eagles on a number of occasions. He turns 26 on December 8.



Diezani

Diezani K. Alison-Madueke is the first female President of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), elected at the 166th OPEC Ordinary meeting in Vienna on 27 November 2014. She was Nigeria’s minister of transportation on 26 July 2007. She was moved to Mines and Steel Development in 2008, and in April 2010 was appointed Minister of Petroleum Resources. She was probably the most powerful member of ex President Goodluck Jonathan’s cabinet and she had her fair share of controversies. Since



Akpabio

Godswill Obot Akpabio is a famous politician, lawmaker, former two-term governor of Akwa Ibom state and immediate-past Minority Leader in the Senate. He was trained as a lawyer in the University of Calabar where he was once Speaker of the Students Parliament. He worked in the telecommunications sector and rose to the top of his career before venturing into politics. He was Commissioner in different beats at different times in Akwa Ibom state, one of which was Petroleum and Natural Resources. Akpabio hails from a prominent family. His grandfather, Okuku Udo Akpabio, was the 1st Warrant Chief in Ikot Ekpene province. His uncle, Dr. I. U. Akpabio, was the Minister of Education/Internal Affairs in the then Eastern Nigeria. Justice Nsima Akpabio, his cousin, was a senator in the Second Nigerian Republic. Akpabio popularized his slogan of “uncommon transformation” as governor. The flamboyant and charismatic senator, who recently defected to the All Progressives Congress (APC) turns 56 on the 19th of December.





Ajimobi

Abiola Adeyemi Ajimobi is a former Senator and present Governor of Oyo state. He was formerly the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the National Oil and Chemical Marketing Company, a subsidiary of Shell Petroleum, Nigeria. He left the oil sector in 2002 after 26 years, and was elected in 2003 as a Senator of the Republic of Nigeria representing Oyo South which marked the beginning of his political career. His was a political family. His grandfather was Sobaloju of Ibadan Land (a chief in the royal court of Ibadan). His uncle, Hon. N.A. Ajimobi was minister of works and transport in the Western Region. His father, Pa Ajimobi, was also an Honourable member of the House of Assembly in the Old Western region. He studied Business Administration and Finance at the State University New York, in Buffalo, New York graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree. His MBA was in Operations Research and Marketing with a concentration in Finance at the Governor's State University, Park Forest, Illinois. Ajimobi turns 69 on the 16th of December.

Babayaro

Emmanuel Hyacinth Babayaro is an ex-international goalkeeper, best known for being the older brother of former Chelsea and Newcastle United player, Celestine Babayaro. Emmanuel was a central midfielder before converting into a goalkeeper. He was also part of Nigeria's gold medal winning team at the 1996 Olympics, a side in which Celestine also appeared. He celebrates his 42nd birthday on Boxing Day, December 26.



Oyakhilome

Christian Oyakhilome is one of the most famous televangelists in the country. Known popularly as "Pastor Chris", he is the founding president of Believers' LoveWorld Incorporated, also known as "Christ Embassy", a Bible-based Christian ministry headquartered in Lagos, Nigeria. His ministry runs several arms including the Healing School, Rhapsody of Realities (likely the most translated book in the whole world, 660 translations), and an NGO called the Innercity Missions for Children as well as three Christian television channels: LoveWorld TV, LoveWorld SAT and LoveWorld Plus. Oyakhilome's television programs feature his faith healings, miracles and large meetings which his ministry organises around the world, with gatherings of over 2.5 million people in a single night's event. He turns 57 on the 7th of December.

Anosike

Peter Ikechukwu Anosike is also an ex-international. Anosike played club football for various clubs in Nigeria, Belgium, Australia and in Singapore. Anosike was a member of the successful Nigerian U-17 squad that won the 1993 FIFA World Championship in Japan. He turns 42 on Christmas Eve, December 24.



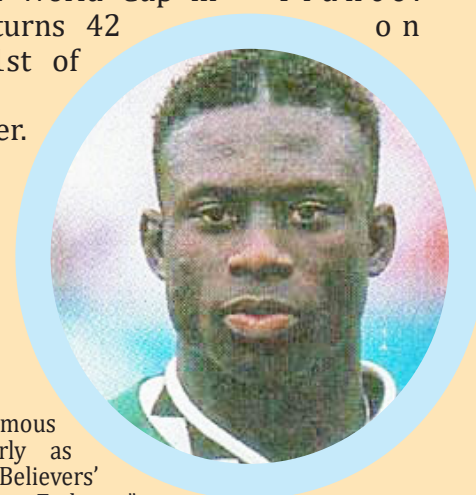
Agali'

Victor Okechukwu Agali is another ex-international who last played club football for Jiangsu Sainty. He also played club football for different clubs in Germany, Turkey, Greece, France and China. Agali has played for Nigeria at a number of occasions, including the 2000 Summer Olympics. He was known for his height and goal scoring heroics especially with the head. He turns 40 on the 29th of December.

Oparaki

Mobi Oparaki is also an ex-international who last played club football for Enyimba FC of Abba. In Europe, he played most of his professional game in Belgium. Oparaku played 6 matches at 1993 FIFA U-17 World Championship and won the trophy. For Nigeria national football team, he was a participant at the 1996 Olympic Games, where Nigeria won the gold medal and at the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France. He turns 42 on the 1st of

December.





Uba

Emmanuel Nnamdi Uba is a famous politician and lawmaker. He presently represents Anambra South in the Senate. He once served ex President Olusegun Obasanjo as Special Assistant on Special Duties and Domestic Matters. He studied at California State University and then Buxton University, gaining a PhD in Biosciences in 1996. He turns 60 on the 14th of December.

Akanji

Murphy Akanji is a professional footballer who most recently played for Sliema Wanderers in the Maltese Football League, where he played as a goalkeeper. He is an international goalkeeper and has represented Nigeria at the African Nations Cup. The Lagos born goaltender turns 38 on December 1.



Solomon

Ganiyu Olanrewaju Solomon was elected Senator for the Lagos West in 2007. His father, Alhaji Rafiu Ishola Solomon, was politically influential as a contemporary of the first civilian governor of Lagos State, Alhaji Lateef Jakande. Solomon attended Oke-Ona Grammar School, Abeokuta, Ogun State. He obtained a B.Sc in Political Science from the University of Lagos, and went into a private IT services business. Later he went into the property business, before entering politics during the regime of General Sani Abacha. He was once chairman of Mushin Local Government Area of Lagos. He clocks 59 on December 19.



Christopher

Justice Longs Christopher is an ex-international. Christopher has played for several clubs in Nigeria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Sweden, Russia and Denmark. After the end of the 2006/2007 season, he announced his retirement from football. On 21 October 2012, he announced his comeback and signed for Nasarawa United. He was a participant at the 2002 FIFA World Cup. He turns 37 on Christmas Eve, December 24.



Ahmed

Abdulfatah Ahmed is a banker, public servant, former Commissioner for Finance and Economic Development in Kwara state and present governor of the state. He attended Government College Funtua, Katsina State (1973-1978) and the School of Basic Studies of Kwara State College of Technology (now Kwara State Polytechnic), Ilorin (1978-1980). He went on to the University of Ilorin where he earned a BSc in Chemistry (1986) and a Master of Business Administration (MBA, 1992). He worked as a lecturer at the Federal College of Arts and Science, Sokoto, and later as a banker with Guaranty Trust Bank and Societe General Bank before joining politics. He turns 55 on the 29th of December.



Life



Shofoluwe

Yisa Shofoluwe is an ex-international who played as a full back. He won 40 caps and scored 1 goal for the country, and was the regular left back between 1983 and 1988, playing at the 1984 and 1988 African Nations Cups. He was nicknamed the "Minister of Defence" for his timely tackles and strong defensive performances. After the 1988 season he left his club Abiola Babes to play in Belgium. He clocks 51 on December 28.



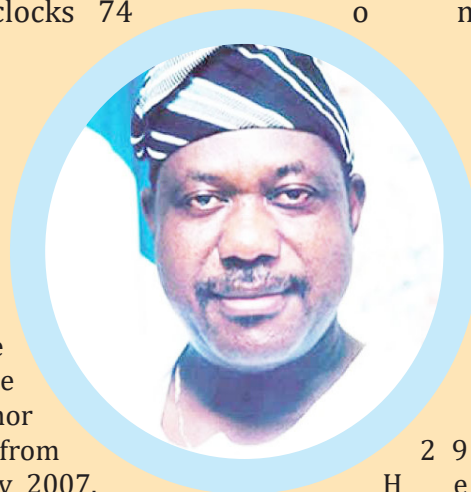
Olurin

Adetunji Idowu Ishola Olurin is a retired one-star general in the Nigerian Army who was a former military Governor of Oyo State and Field Commander of ECOMOG Peacekeeping Force in Liberia from 1992 to 1993 during the First Liberian Civil War. Olurin retired from service in 1993 and he is a member of People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria. He was administrator of Ekiti State from October 8, 2006 until April 27, 2007. He was educated at Egbado College (now Yewa College), and attended the Technical College, Ibadan (now Ibadan Polytechnic) in 1966. He became a trainee at the Times Press in Apapa, Lagos. In 1967 he entered the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna, where he obtained his NDA Certificate of Education. He attended many professional courses during his military career. He is a graduate of the School of Infantry, Quetta, Pakistan, the Command and Staff College, Jaji, Kaduna and the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos. He clocks 74 on December 3.

Akume

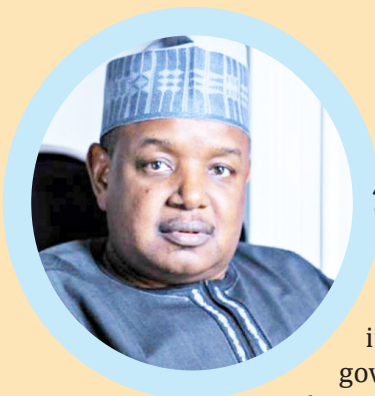
George Akume is senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He was the Minority Leader of the Senate from June 2011 to June 2015. He was also the Governor of Benue State from May 1999 to 29 May 2007.

He was the first Executive Governor of Benue State to have completed two terms in office. Akume obtained a Bachelor's degree In Sociology and a Master's Degree In Labour Relations From the University of Ibadan. He became a career civil servant who rose to the apex of the professional career ladder as a permanent secretary. He clocks 65 on the 27th of December.



Umar

Audu Idris Umar was a Senator from Gombe Central under the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). He was also Minister of Transport under President Jonathan. He obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Law, and became a Barrister At Law. He was appointed State Counsel to the Ministry Of Justice, Bauchi. He was also a two term member of the House of Representatives. He clocks 59 on December 28.



Bagudu

Abubakar Atiku Bagudu is a former Senator who represented Kebbi Central in the National Assembly and present governor of the state. He obtained a BSc (Economics), Msc (Economics) and M.A. (International Affairs). He clocks 57 on Boxing Day, December 26.

Davido, Tuface, T shine at 2018 A



By **Bologi M. Maikudi**

One of Nigeria's greatest Hip Hop artistes, David Adeleke, aka Davido, ended the year 2018 the way he started it by winning the All Africa Music Awards trophy for artist of the year with his album, FIA.

He also won the award for best male artiste in West Africa.

Other Nigerian superstars like Tiwa Savage, Innocent (Tuface) Idibia and Folarin Falana, aka Falz, also won awards and made the country proud on the night.

Musicians from across the continent were at the Accra International Conference Centre in Ghana's capital on Saturday 24th of November 2018.

Betty G from Ethiopia took home album of the year, while

best African DJ went to Afrotronix, who has roots in Chad.

Nigerian rapper Falz took home the award for best African rapper after courting controversy this year when he released "This is Nigeria", where he used lady dancers wearing Hijab.

"Akwaaba", an infectious collaboration between GuiltyBeatz, Mr. Eazi, Patapaa and Pappy Kojo won song of the year and best African collaboration.

Nigeria's 2Baba won the award for best African pop, Ghana's Stonebwoy for best reggae, and South Africa's Sibusiso Mashiloane for best jazz.

Kuami Eugene, a Ghanaian crooner, was named the "most promising" artist in Africa.

Tiwa Savage won the award for West Africa's best female artiste.

The night of honours did not belong solely to the active artistes. There were also honours for Governor Akinwunmi Ambode of Lagos state and two veterans, South African Yvonne Chaka Chaka and Ghana's Teddy Ossei, the leader of the Osadebe group, created in 1969.

Chaka Chaka, dubbed Princess of Africa, won the 5th Afrima legendary award. She has had a career spanning over 30 years with several hit albums.

Ambode was awarded a special recognition for his contributions towards the growth and development of the Arts and Tourism sector of Lagos state, most importantly the role Lagos state played as official host of AFRIMA in its last 4 years from 2014 – 2017.

Tiwa Savage, Falz AFRIMA awards



- Bebe Cool / Uganda / Freedom

Best Female Artiste in Northern Africa

- Lyna Mahyem ft Medi Meyz / Algeria / Bye Bye Best Male Artiste in Northern Africa

- Hamza El Fadly / Morocco / Ya Mraya

Best Female Artiste in Southern Africa

- Shekhinah / South Africa / Please Mr

Best Male Artiste in Southern Africa

- Nasty C / South Africa / Jungle

Best Female Artiste in Western Africa

- Tiwa Savage / Nigeria / Ma Lo Ft. Wizkid & Spellz

Best Male Artiste in Western Africa

- Davido / Nigeria / Fia

BEST AFRICAN DJ

- Afrotronix / Chad / OyO
- Master KG / South Africa / Skeleton Move Ft. Zanda Zakuza

BEST AFRICAN DUO, GROUP OR BAND

- Toofan / Togo / Money
- M.ANIFEST FT KING PROMISE / Ghana / ME NE WOA

BEST AFRICAN RAPPER OR LYRICIST

- Falz / Nigeria / La Fête
- Maryam Saleh, Maurice Louca, Tamer Abu Ghazaleh / Egypt / Ekaa Maksour
- Irene Namatovu / Uganda / Nsambila Nyuma Nga Janzi

BEST FEMALE ARTISTE IN AFRICAN INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC

- Sandra Nankoma / Uganda / Kaddugala

BEST MALE ARTISTE IN AFRICAN INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC

- Sarkodie / Ghana / Glory Ft. Yung

MOST PROMISING ARTISTE IN AFRICA

- Kuami Eugene / Ghana / Confusion

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

- Fresh VDM / Togo / Fia

REVELATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

- Betty G / Ethiopia / Ere Manew

SONG OF THE YEAR

- GuiltyBeatz, Mr. Eazi, Patapaa & Pappy Kojo / Akwaaba / Ghana

SONG WRITER OF THE YEAR

- Shekhinah Donell, Amon Taulo Chibiya II / South Africa / Different Ft. Mariechan

AFRICAN FANS' FAVOURITE

- Nedy Music / Tanzania / One and Only Ft. Ruby

5TH AFRIMA WINNERS

CONTINENTAL CATEGORY

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- Betty G / Ethiopia / Wegegta

ARTISTE OF THE YEAR

- Davido / Nigeria / FIA BEST AFRICAN VIDEO
- Sesan / Gringo (Shatta Wale) / Nigeria

BEST AFRICAN ACT IN DIASPORA

- Hazel Mak / Malawi / Jaiva Ft. Roberto & Tay Grin

BEST AFRICAN COLLABORATION

- GuiltyBeatz, Mr. Eazi, Patapaa & Pappy Kojo / Ghana-Nigeria / Akwaaba
- Kidi / Ghana / Odo Remix Ft. Mayorkun & Davido

Teddy Osei who was helped to the stage in a wheelchair was overwhelmed by the honour. He had suffered a mild stroke.

The award night, which had in attendance music stars, dignitaries, and music lovers across the continent, seeks to celebrate and reward African talents who have done well in the year.

All the winners:

REGIONAL CATEGORY

- Best Female Artiste in Central Africa
- Daphne / Cameroon / Jusqu'à La Gare Best Male Artiste in Central Africa
- Fally Ipupa / DRC / Mannequin Ft Kebab & Naz Best Female Artiste in Eastern Africa
- Betty G / Ethiopia / Mengedegna Best Male Artiste in Eastern Africa



Celebrities mourn as ‘voice of Lagos’ is cut short in her prime

By Victor Akoji

The cycle of life is divided into three major parts. The first part is a time when a child comes to the world and announced his or her presence. The second phase is the time, space and opportunities one has to explore the world and make impact. The last phase is that time when someone has to quit the world and leave behind a legacy of good deeds or tales of misdeeds.

Arguably the ‘prettiest’ voice on radio in the last decade in Nigeria, Tosyn Bucknor, did excellently well and distinguished herself in all three cycles. She came to the world in extraordinary circumstances as a Sickle Cell victim but survived against all odds. She carved a niche for herself in the broadcast media with her unique voice and engaging thoughts and now that she succumbed after a brave 37-year-old-battle with death, eulogies are pouring in for her from all corners of the country.

Tosin was a brilliant journalist with a superb personality. People who met her described her as a friendly, accessible, unassuming person as well as a ‘helper’ of many.

Tosyn was born 37 years ago in a taxi while her mum was on her way to visit a friend. She attended Fountain Nursery and Primary School, Queens’ College, Lagos and the University of Lagos where she studied Law.

She observed her National Youth Service in Port Harcourt, where she taught Literature-In-English and English Language at Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls’ School.

After a decade of dazzling her listeners on radio, her death on Monday night of November 19, 2018 as a result of sickle cell complications, came like a rude shock.

Her sister, Funke Bucknor- Obru, broke the news and the whole nation was in shock.

“My darling sister and ‘besto,’ Tosyn passed away last night due to complications from sickle cell,” she wrote on Instagram.

Tosyn was found unconscious by her husband, a French national, Aurélien Boyer, when he returned home from work on Monday night.

The couple wedded on November 15, 2015 at the Landmark Events Centre, Oniru, Lagos.

Her early morning shows aired on

two local radio stations earned her a strong following among Nigerian youths and also the nick name, ‘Voice of Lagos’. Her petite frame was hidden by a great ability for storytelling, broadcasting and entertainment in general.

She was vocal about her health condition and founded the ‘These Genes Project’ in 2007 to raise awareness about sickle cell.

Her career spanned a decade and saw her attain great heights as an alternative music singer and a media personality.

A chip off the old block, her father, Segun Bucknor, who died in 2017, was a respected Nigerian musician and journalist who was active during the 1960s and 1970s. He was a pianist and guitarist specialising in genres ranging from soul music to pop music and to funk.

Tosyn’s legacy is deeply embedded in the media and entertainment circles where she had cut for herself a notable figure.

Tosyn wanted to be an actress, singer and writer before she stumbled into radio.

She started out her journey on the

Entertainment

radio as a Youth Corp member at Cool FM where she hosted the Fun Hour Show on Saturdays. Her full strength as an On-Air Personality manifested when she joined comedian, Tee-A, on Eko FM before joining Top Radio.

She moved to Inspiration FM in February 2018 where she hosted the lunch hour show until her death.

She was also a singer and songwriter and had an album to her credit – ‘Pop, Rock, Soul and Jara’. As a recording artist and singer-songwriter, she worked with artists like Skales, Rooftop MCs and Eva, as well as producers like Sess, Tintin, Coldflames, Dj Klem, Knighthouse, Micworx and Cobhams.

Although she is popularly known for her time on radio, she plays the role of “Osa” on the popular MNET soap opera, Tinsel. She contributed a verse to the voter’s awareness song organised by ‘1 Thumb’.

She was also an event host for several events and involved herself in advocacy and goodwill programmes.

Tosyn also ran ONE MIC NAIJA with two partners. One Mic Naija is a concert dedicated to getting new and established acts on the same stage. A two-time The Future Awards Africa (TFAA) nominee, she is a recipient of the Nigerian Broadcasters Awards: ‘Most Popular Radio Presenter.’

Since her painful demise was announced, the tributes have been pouring in torrents. The People’s Democratic Party Governorship Candidate in Lagos, Jimi Agbaje, said, “I just received a sad news of the passage of Tosyn Bucknor due to complication of sickle cell. Tosyn fought a good fight.”

Singer, Johnny Drille, wrote, “I won’t be where I am today but for Tosyn Bucknor. I am eternally grateful for the time she was with us. Pray for her family to find comfort this dark time.”

Funke Akindele wrote, “Sad! Rest in peace Tosyn Bucknor. You were such a pleasant and happy lady.”

Actor and Singer, Banky Wellington, described Tosyn as one of his favourite persons on earth.

“Yes it was true. I really loved her. She was so full of life and incredible positive energy. I believe she is resting in a better place, but I am hurting because I wasn’t ready to say goodbye.”

“This world needs more people like her. Today I am completely heartbroken that I lost one of my favourite people, I will miss her forever,” he said.

Singer Ksolo wrote, “Tosyn Bucknor dead? God!!! This is not the right news for me. “May God Almighty grant all her loved ones fortitude to bear this loss. RIP to an angel and Area Mama.”

Comedian, Seyi Law, wrote, “I am not sure your energy was comparable. You were one of the kindest persons I



have ever seen. You were too adorable. You were the life of the party, a voice that gave beauty to our radio. You were one of the best human beings I have ever known. Tosin Bucknor, I celebrate your impact and what you stood for.

“Heaven has yet again robbed us of an angel. May your soul find peace and be beautiful in the bosom of our Lord. Rest on and well, my dearest sister.”

Media Personality, Toke Makinwa, wrote, “You said we shouldn’t question you but Lord why? My heart is broken and I don’t even know where to begin from. The death of Tosyn cannot be

true, someone wake me up.”

Innocent Idibia, popularly called Tuface of 2Baba, wrote, “Oh no, your kindness was so rare. Pure, beautiful heart. RIP Tosyn. I know you are in a better place for sure.”

Tiwa Savage stated that she couldn’t believe that she was even saying RIP to the late radio personality. She described the news of her death as heartbreaking, writing, “Can’t believe I’m saying RIP, this is so heartbreaking. Life seems surreal nowadays.”

Peter Okoye wrote, “My dear Tosyn, Rest in peace. We will surely miss you, still can’t believe.”



'Planet Zlatan' - Ibrahimovic on Pogba, life in LA and his 'ugly' feet

Other footballers - other people - wouldn't be able to get away with such a self-aggrandising habit, but Zlatan can because, well, he's Zlatan. The Swedish striker's CV includes many of Europe's biggest clubs - Ajax, Juventus, Barcelona, both Milan sides, Paris St-Germain and Manchester United. He has scored goals in spectacular number and nature, and has spoken just as explosively and freely wherever he has been.

He has won 25 major club trophies during his career, is his country's all-time record goalscorer and has an individual honours list on Wikipedia that is 43 entries long.

The latest of these solo gongs come from his debut season in Major League Soccer (MLS), where his typically superb displays for LA Galaxy earned him a place in the league's best XI and the newcomer of the year award. He also claimed the goal of the season for a truly stunning 40-yard strike. On his debut. In the LA derby. To level the score at 3-3. Just to ensure everyone was paying attention, he then scored the game's winner in the 91st minute.

"In the beginning it was not about scoring goals, it was about who had the best skills, the best technique and I brought that with me wherever I went. A certain point came when it was: 'Listen, this is high level, you need to perform, you are a striker, you need to give us goals and if you don't score I don't need you,'" he said, speaking at the launch of his book 'I am Football'.

"That changed when I came to Juventus. Everything was new for me. I was like, 'Wow, big club, big players, big coach, big history'.

"From the first day after training I heard [then coach] Fabio Capello scream 'Ibra!' and he just pointed. He had taken guys from the academy and youth team and I trained with them. They gave crosses and I scored.

"Every day for 30 minutes, sometimes I just wanted to go home because I was tired and did not want to shoot any more - I didn't want to see the goal or the goalkeeper. I would just hear 'Ibra!' and I knew what it was. I was shooting, just shooting, good shots, bad shots.

"In the end I became a machine, in front of goal, score a goal, especially in Italy as a striker it is the most difficult position because they are so tactically good.

"I remember a game against Paolo Maldini and Alessandro Nesta [AC Milan] - you only get a half chance and behind them you have Dida, a world-class goalkeeper, but I had that luck that I had Gianluigi Buffon as a training partner and in front of him was Lilian Thuram and Fabio Cannavaro. If you ever got past them you had pain and then you had to get past Buffon, so I had a good environment to score goals and the goals would come as long as you trained."

On moving to England

"When I went to England I was talking to different players that I knew well and trusted that would give me an honest opinion. From all of them everyone said 'do not do it', they said it would not be good for my career because you put your whole career on one season. If you do not do a good season people will say the rest of the things you did before were useless because you didn't make it in England, but that triggered me and that's the challenge I wanted.

"I went against everyone and said that's what I wanted to do. They thought I was too old, I was 35 and I made the

In the space of one sentence during his interview with BBC Sport, Zlatan Ibrahimovic refers to himself in the third person three times.

Premier League look old. It took me three months to convince everyone who I was. That was the challenge and I never turn down a challenge."

On Paul Pogba and the Premier League

"I miss all of them. I had a fantastic time at United. Wazza [Wayne Rooney], Michael Carrick, then the young guys that wanted to show the world who they are by playing football and they had a lot of hunger to show. I had a good time because I got to know everyone, I was the mature guy with all these guys who were not mature.

"Paul Pogba, I had never played with him before and I didn't know him as a person. We have the same management and when I got to know him I got to find a fantastic person and a fantastic footballer, but someone who needs to be guided.

"He is a professional guy that works every game and never misses training or a game. Those are all the things that people do not see, you only get judged by what you can see on television or the 90 minutes in the stadium, that's where you have to perform.

"When you click with someone it just clicks. The connection on the field was amazing, we helped each other very well, I needed him and he needed me. The first year at United we had a fantastic year.

"They made me feel like Benjamin Button. I was getting younger and younger, then unfortunately I got my injury.

"The Premier League should be happy I did not come 10 years ago because it would've been a different story. You see all my numbers [of goals] and all of these numbers would've been in the Premier League. I came to the right club in United. It was the club and the shirt that I was supposed to shine in and I did it."

On injury

"When it happened I did not understand what I was going through, I had never had a serious injury. I was like Superman, I was unbreakable and no-one could break me, only Zlatan could injure Zlatan.

"I said, 'This is not the way I want to stop playing football. The way I walked in is the way I will walk out, not by limping or someone saying it's over.' This was a new challenge for me and I said I would come back when I was ready and I would play exactly as I did before. When I cannot do that I will not continue in football because I'm not here for charity.

"After my injury, when I was selected, I said to Jose

Mourinho, 'I do not want to disappoint you or my teammates. You had a Zlatan before the injury and you had one after the injury and I cannot give you the Zlatan that you are used to, that's why I will not give you this Zlatan because I'm not ready'.

"My second year at United, I was not feeling ready, I was feeling different, it was like I was starting at zero and I had to teach my knee how to play football again. After a while my confidence grew, I needed a new environment to feel that I was comfortable."

"We [Ibrahimovic and his wife] had talked about it and she said one day I would like to see how it is to live in LA, that was one of the many factors when I chose LA. LA did not choose me, I chose LA.

"They are happy to be here, there's less stress, if I can be negative the time difference is too big because of all my family from Sweden and I only have a short time to connect with them."

On arriving in LA, Ibrahimovic took out a full-page advert in the LA Times which read, "Dear Los Angeles. You're welcome."

"I felt I was giving them something they did not have before and I gave myself as a present to them. They did understand what I was and all the things I said would happen. It took 10 minutes to present myself in a way I did in my first game at the Galaxy and they understood what I had given them."

On his feet

"My wife does not allow me to have pictures of myself. She says, 'There is already enough talk of you and I don't want to see you on the walls, it is enough that I see you in real life'.

"There is one of my feet on the wall. That is what has given us what we have, it is a reminder for the family, not for me, of what we have. That is what has created the whole situation, the whole buzz around me - the two feet.

"I play this beautiful sport with my feet. Even if it is ugly toes, we don't care - we put it on the wall just as a reminder, we have food to eat thanks to those feet so you should kiss those feet every day - no, I'm joking. Every footballer's toes and feet around the world are ugly - there is no beautiful out there."

On Planet Zlatan

"I came from my own planet, with something that no one has seen. I'm a guy from this area that they think is the

mic LA et

ghetto. They saw me differently, they did not make me feel welcome, they did not make me feel like everyone else, but I came with something else and now they follow that. I came from my own planet - Planet Zlatan."

Culled: BBC



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