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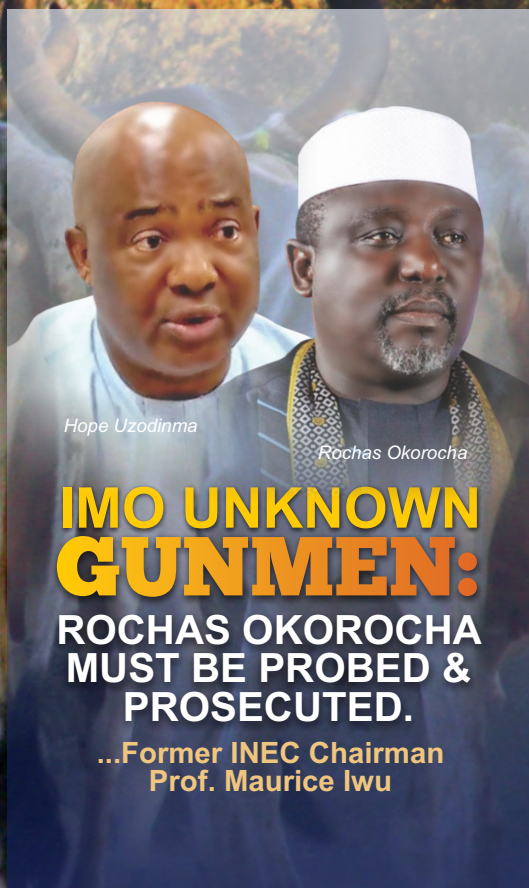
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Man of the year

FULANI HERDSMEN



Hope Uzodinma

Rochas Okorocha

**IMO UNKNOWN
GUNMEN:**
ROCHAS OKOROCHA
MUST BE PROBED &
PROSECUTED.

...Former INEC Chairman
Prof. Maurice Iwu



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Rochas Okorocha



Hope Uzodinma

IMO UNKNOWN GUNMEN: ROCHAS OKOROCHA MUST BE PROBED AND PROSECUTED

...FORMER INEC CHAIRMAN, PROF MAURICE IWU.

There has been accusations and counter accusations between the Governor of Imo state Hope Uzodinma and the camp of the former Governor Rochas Okorocha. Both camps have even accused the other of been behind the insecurity in the state especially as it relates to the issue of the unknown gun men which has always been blamed on the Independent Peoples of Biafra, (IPOB) an allegations they have consistently denied.

After the purported arrest of Okorocha's inlaw Uche Nwosu by the police in Owerri inside a church, Senator Okorocha had tasked security agencies to investigate if there was any connection between the police that arrested Uche Nwosu in the church and the unknown gunmen.

But the state government believe that the insecurity in the state or the so called Unknown gunmen are members of the Imo security Network owned by Rochas Okorocha and commanded by a member of the House of Representatives Kingsley Iju. It said Okorocha is bent of making the state under Hope Uzodinma ungovernable.

One of the leaders of the state and former chairman of the Independent National electoral commission (INEC) Professor Maurice Iwu told NEWSPLATFORM MAGAZINE that the crisis is not really between Rochas Okorocha and Hope

Uzodinma but between Rochas Okorocha and the state.

He said the people of the state are resisting efforts by Rochas to establish a family dynasty in the state. He said his plan was to make his inlaw Uche Nwosu governor of the state and after his tenure Okorocha's biological son will succeed him.

While being optimistic that the crisis would be resolved, Professor Iwu said peace would still return to the state but first all Rochas stole from the state must first be recovered and the man prosecuted.

The crisis or war has nothing to do with the development or progress of the state. It is a test of strength, muzzle or madness.

Both of them are loyal to the Northern Political elite or domination and are very willing to protect that interest.

It is also a reflection and an extension of the crisis in the core North between the Fulanis and the Kanuri.

Okorocha is loyal to the Fulanis especially in the North West. He had the contact with the Fulanis while living and doing business in Jos, the Plateau state capital. Infact as the then governor of Imo state his biggest investment outside Imo state is In Zamfara state. Okorocha is said to have one of the

biggest secondary schools and Estates in Zamfara state in, North West, Nigeria.

Hope Uzodinma on the other hand is fully under the control of the Kanuris especially the former governor of Borno state Ali Modu Sheriff who is also aspiring to be the next National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC). Ali Modu Sheriff had always wanted Hope Uzodinma to be governor of Imo state even when he was the National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Uzodinma is now the governor of the state on the platform of the APC with Ali Modu Sheriff using one of the most powerful Kanuri men in government former Chief of Staff to President Muhammadu Buhari, the late Abba Kyari also a Kanuri man.

As a governor Rochas Okorocha has had running battle with some leaders, elders and big wigs in the state.

He once said that the battle was between him and those he termed held the state and her people in Bondage before his emergence as the governor of the state in 2011, adding that his determination to free the state and the citizenry from the bondage attracted enemy to him.

The former governor spoke at a special church service to Mark Imo at 42 held at the Victory chapel, government House, Owerri on Sunday 4th February 2018.

He said 'Today am happy as I stand before you as governor of Imo state. This is an honour I can never take for granted. Before my advent, I have always nursed it in my mind that I would one day become the governor of this state. After my first attempt in 1999, I decided that the place is not meant for me. But on the other hand, I discovered that the state is in bondage and in the hands of the very few. That is the reason I decided to condescend from my Presidential ambition to come and rescue the state.'

He continued 'but my coming to rescue Imo state was not just the people alone and the state of affairs but the most important rescue was the mindset of the people, hence the team rescue mission.'

However one of the leaders of the state Professor Maurice Iwu said Rochas Okorocha is a reckless person.

Professor Iwu was also former Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) disclosed to NEWSPLATFORM in an interview to respond to the then face off between his group IMO Economic Development Initiative and the state government.

The Imo Economic Development Initiative during a courtesy visit to then governor Rochas Okorocha at the government house, Owerri in 2018, called for a rapid Economic Development of the state.

He said the IEDI is a private initiative set up to boost human capital development, wealth creation, and poverty alleviation in the state.



FULANI



Bandits have killed 10 people and abducted 33 women in seven villages in the Gusau Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

We learnt that other residents fled to Gusau town for safety, as there were no security agents in the villages to combat the bandits.

An indigene, Malam Shehu Kura, who

escaped to the Damba area in Gusau, told our correspondent that the bandits, who were on motorcycles, moved from village to village on Sunday, looting shops and houses.

He stressed that the hoodlums operated for many hours in the seven villages without the intervention of security agents.

Kura said, "They were in the area for many hours; they searched from house to house, looking for food items and other valuables."

HERDSMEN.

The witness said the bandits abducted 33 women and carried away a lot of food items.

“They abducted 10 women from Kura village, nine from Bayawuri, seven from Gana and another seven from Doma,” he added.

The resident also explained that 10 people were shot dead by the bandits when they tried to escape, while several others sustained injuries.

Kura explained that the people of the seven affected villages fled to Gusau town, adding that most of the victims were squatting in unfavourable conditions due to lack of accommodation.

He said, “Most of us sleep outside or in open places despite the harsh condition of the harmattan because we have no other alternative.”

He appealed to the authorities to come to their aid, lamenting that most of the victims were women and children.

The state Commissioner of Information, Alhaji Ibrahim Dosara, could not be reached for comments on the incident.

The commissioner, however, told the *BBC Hausa Service* that he was only aware of the attack on Geba village, adding that security agents had been drafted to the village. Punch

This was the situation in Nigeria in December 2021 as this feature was written. This is also the constant situation in the country in the last 12 months of 2021. It happens all over the country that even the Minister of Defence at one time in February called on Nigerians to defend

themselves.

The biggest issue in Nigeria today is the issue of Fulani herdsmen. You may wish to call them Fulani herdsmen, pastoralists, cattle rearers, bandits or even terrorists. They are mainly nomadic people who move from place to place in search of greener pastures for their cattle or cows. Over the years different governments in the country have one programme or the other on how to deal or accommodate these herdsmen.

Their relationships with their host communities has always been very bloody right from the first Republic. These groups of herdsmen do not normally want to operate within borders as they move across West African states in search of greener pastures for their cows.

During the first Republic in order to avoid clashes with farmers and host communities grazing routes were created for them from the Northern parts of the country to the South especially in the middle belt area of Nigeria. Apart from the fact that the Fulani controlled the North politically and administered the territory, cattle rearing also contributed to the economy of Northern Nigeria. Hides and skin gotten from cows was one of the major sources of revenue in the Region.

But with increased population of Nigeria, land became a scarce commodity. People now needed land for other purposes. These include farming, building of houses, industries, schools etc. besides lack of trust between the farmers and herdsmen continue to grow unabated. In the middle belt and Southern Nigeria most of the

farmers are Christians while the herdsmen are muslims.

Religious and ethnic bias began to come in addition the herdsmen begin to create colonies in the areas given to them for pastures. They create their own Emirates, build schools, mosques and were given representations in the states and National Assemblies, as we have in Jos North in Plateau state and many other states.

This has always led to frictions between what is later to be known as Indigenes and settlers. Suspensions begin to grow between Christians and Muslims as Christians accuse Muslims of using the herdsmen to spread Islam and Islamism in the country.

The clash between herdsmen and farmers gained prominence with the Administration of President Muhammadu Buhari as the President of Nigeria..

Initially the pastoralists or Fulani war with the farmers were limited to the middle belt areas especially states like Taraba, Benue, Plateau, Adamawa and Kaduna states but in the last six years it has spread to the North

West making life difficult especially for the people of Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states given them the name BANDITS or TERRORISTS. A new dimension added to the activities of these herdsmen or bandits is kidnapping for ransom.

They have also taken over Nassarawa and Niger states. In December 2021 towards the end of the year governor Abdullahi Ganduje alerted the world that bandits have taken over forests in Kano state.

They have also spread to the Southern parts of the country forcing Southern states governors for the first time come together to face the issue. The terrorists activities of the killer herdsmen led to governors of the Southern parts of Nigeria cutting across Religious, Tribal and Political parties to come together to ban open grazing in their states in 2021. Many states Houses of Assembly in the South have enacted a law banning open grazing. The governors have even gone ahead to warn that the next President of Nigeria to succeed President Muhammadu Buhari in 2023 MUST come from the South.

Tears as Fulani herdsmen sack Enugu villages, kill five many missing



Tears rain in Mgbuji autonomous community in Eha-Amufu, Isi-Uzo local government area of Enugu as Fulani herdsmen sacked five village farm settlements on Wednesday, killing five including children and women.

This came barely five days three members of the state Neighbourhood Watch were killed while pursuing Fulani kidnappers to rescue wife and 11-year-old daughter of Dr Eugene Edeoga, younger brother of the Enugu State Commissioner for Environment Hon Chijioke Edeoga that were abducted on January 1, 2022.

Our correspondent, who visited Mgbuji Community on Wednesday, report that people carrying their belongings were seen running down to the town from the trouble settlements. The community was in mourning mood while in some families people were crying.

At Chief Eric Ebe, one of the stakeholders' house over 50 women and children who reportedly escaped from the troubled farm settlements were seen clustered with their children and so in other houses in Mgbuji Uno.

Chief Ebe, who spoke to our correspondent described the invasion of his community as horrific and unwarranted.

He said that since January 1, 2022 no fewer than 10 persons have been killed in his community while so many were kidnapped for ransom.

Lamenting the level of carnage done in the community and gruesome murder of his kinsmen, Ebe said, "What is happening is that Fulani have taken over our place in our farm settlements like Akpufu, Ogbete, Ezeugwu-Omulelu and many other places that we have farm settlements.

"Fulani have taken over those places killing children, women and men. In short they kill anybody they see and destroy our crops. Everything we have cultivated last year they have destroyed all of them including our rice, yam, cassava farms, and not only that they will also come to our people's houses loot their belongings and set their houses ablaze. They even set fire on our rice farms.

"On Tuesday, January 4, 2022 they (Fulani) came and occupied a place we call Isigwe-omule and Ogbete in Mgbuji autonomous community. They started pursuing our people and destroying their houses and properties. When our local security men went to ask them what was the problem they attacked them and started shooting."

He added, "The AK-47 wielding Fulani herdsmen attacked the security men, killed some of our people and many are missing. We have found three corpses lying dead in the bush and nobody can even go and evacuate it. Those they shoot and didn't die are in hospitals.

"We are pleading to the Enugu State Government, all our representatives, the chairman of Isi-Uzo local government and everybody that is touched to at least help us by sending palliatives to now displaced residents who are refugees, camping in various homes.

"Already we have refugees in our community, people that were chased out from their houses from over five farm settlements that we have in the community and in those settlements less than 1,000 people are living there and now they have vacated their homes finding food now everywhere.

"In my own house you can see crowd of people that ran away finding place to sleep in my house, and I feeding them almost everyday. So we are pleading that Government should send palliatives to us and more people that are running away. The people in my house and are also like that in every other household in this village. In short if you go round you may be thinking that there is festival going on here, but no festival is going on, they are people running away from

Fulani herdsmen."

A community leader, Chief Moses Olinya, who took our correspondent to see some people that were killed in one of the settlements, lamented that for more than 24hrs security agencies were informed of the invasion and carnage done they were yet to see any government security personnel.

According to him, the suspected Fulani invaded the community around 10 a.m on Tuesday and were still shooting up till this morning.

"When the Fulani militia invaded the community they started with the looting our people's business and destroying their shops at the market square."

Collaborating Chief Ebe's narration, noted "while they were damaging our people's property, our security men were called and when they came those Fulani herdsmen opened fire on them and killed three of them. They were later repelled and around 7:30 they regrouped and came back, they shooting and destroying our houses and other properties till this morning."

"When they came we called both police, DSS and the military but regrettable as at 10am this morning more than 24hrs after we haven't seen any single government security. Now all our things and houses have been destroyed. This morning we saw some people they killed."

Some displaced women, who spoke to our correspondent, appealed to the government to come to their aid and stop Fulanis from invading their community and killing their husbands, women and children.

One of them, Mrs Christiana Ogbu said "they (Fulanis) have killed not one or two persons. They have killed 19 persons including four children and a pregnant woman in less than one week and reported anywhere. We have vacated our homes and now refugees in our community. We are appealing to the government to do something urgently to stop the carnage in our community."

When contacted on telephone, the State Police Public Relations Officer, Daniel Ndukwe, didn't pick his calls.

As at the time of filing this report he had not responded to a text message sent to him.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of Isi-Uzo local government area, Hon Jacob Abonyi, confirmed the invasion, describing the constant Fulani attack on Mgbuji community, killing children, pregnant women and elderly was unacceptable.

Abonyi said "when I got the information on Tuesday, immediately I contacted the police but the Divisional Police Officer's phone number was switched off and I immediately called the military. It is not quite long – about five days ago we were battling about kidnapping in same Mgbuji when the wife and daughter of Eugene Edeoga were kidnapped and they were just released on Monday.

"So, I called the military and we were ready this morning including the Neighbourhood Watch and Forest Guard. Unfortunately, the soldiers that were already at Ikem, said they got a call for another serious emergency from Uzo-Uwani and they decided to turn back and they haven't returned. That is the situation, but all our local security – Neighbourhood Watch and Forest Guards are doing everything to calm down the situation."

Lamenting the situation in Eha-Amufu, the chairman said "Constant attacking of that place, killing people and destroying their properties, farm crops randomly by Fulani herdsmen is unbearable and unacceptable. I call on the Federal Government to address this immediately before people resort to self-help.

"The State Government is doing its best everytime but the terrain of that place is making rescue ever difficult. You can't access the place with vehicle," he lamented.



AREWA GROUP SUPPORTS MASARI'S PLAN TO ARM ALL KATSINA RESIDENTS AGAINST BANDITS

A Northern group under the auspices of Arewa Defense League (ADL) has lent its weight behind Katsina Governor Aminu Masari's reported plan to support residents of the State to acquire weapons for self-defence against banditry.

This was contained in a media statement released Wednesday evening, endorsed by President of the Arewa Defense League, Murtala Abubakar.

"We welcome with optimism the statement by the Katsina State Governor, Hon. Aminu Bello Masari, to the effect that his government is going to assist communities acquire weapons to defend themselves against rural bandits and other criminal gangs", ADL said in the statement.

The group stated that the governor's action might have been motivated by the "apparent failures of our military and other law enforcement agencies to protect citizens against bandits and other dangerous criminal", adding that "it has created an atmosphere where heavenly armed bandits operate freely in the Northwest and parts of Niger State with impunity as they rape, plunder, maim and kills citizens with reckless abandon".

Recalling that "many leaders of thought, opinion moulders and associations" had called on communities to take up arms and defend themselves, noted however, that "some people expressed the fears that such calls, if heeded, could degenerate into anarchy".

”

The ADL, in the statement stressed however, that "the latest initiatives by Katsina State government to assist communities arm themselves, with some sort of official regulations will balance the use of terror by these criminals thereby, reducing the frequent attracts on communities."

Leisu



re Park,

Film Village For Inauguration Feb. 2022

The ongoing **Asaba Leisure Park** and the Film Village being constructed by the **Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa-led Administration** would be set for commissioning in February 2022.

The governor made the disclosure on Tuesday November 30th 2021, during the quarterly interaction with newsmen at Unity Hall, Government House, Asaba, the state capitol.

The governor said that the delivery timeline for the project was shifted from December, 2021 to February, 2022 because of fluctuations in exchange rate.

According to him, many of the equipment required for the Leisure Park and Film Village are coming from overseas, and fluctuations in foreign exchange rate have obviously delayed the delivery of the job.

He disclosed that his administration was still pushing hard on the contractor to ensure speedy completion of the job, and affirmed that there was a firm understanding that the contractor should be able to deliver the project by February, 2022.

The governor expressed appreciation to the media for being good partners to his administration, and said “we have continued to stay on course in our promises to Deltans.



"We wish that we would have moved a little faster than we are doing at the moment but unfortunately, our resources are dwindling more and more every day.

"However, we have continued to ensure that the projects we already have ongoing, would be delivered.

"One of the major projects is the Asaba Leisure Park and Film Village. Unfortunately, there is a shift on the date of delivery.

"It was supposed to be completed in December but it has been shifted to February, 2022. This is because of the fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Foreign Exchange rate.

"Many of the equipment required are coming from overseas. So, the fluctuations in the exchange rate have obviously delayed the delivery of the job," the governor said.

Apart from the "Prof. Chike Edozien State Secretariat Complex" inaugurated by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Okowa said that there were many other key projects being executed by his administration.

He said that work on sectors C1 and C2 of Asaba/Ughelli road dualisation was still on course, and pointed out that the contracting firm, CCECC Nigeria Ltd., had informed him that Asaba to Ogwashi-Uku stretch of the road would be delivered in April, 2022.

"From the latest report that I had from the contracting firm, CCECC Nigeria Ltd., the one running from Asaba to Ogwashi-Uku will be delivered by the end April 2022 in full (both lanes) while the other sector running from Ogwashi-Uku to Ossissa will be delivered at the later part of 2022 or early part of 2023.

"Work is still ongoing in sector A from Ughelli to Ozoro and I believe too that the contractor will finish that job in the early part of 2023," Okowa added.

He also said that work on the inter-change at Koka junction on the Asaba-Onitsha highway had started, and that the project was conceived to ease traffic in the area.

"Work on the inter-change began about a few weeks ago and we hope that at the completion of that inter-change that there will be a seamless flow of traffic especially as we are expecting the dualised road from Ogwashi to Asaba to, also, be completed in April, 2022.

"So, we are hoping that by the end of April, a lot of work would have been done at the inter-change. The inter-change will be delivered in 2022," the governor said.

He disclosed that work on the Kwale-Beneku Bridge, Ayakoromo Bridge and the bridge across Orherhe River was all ongoing at the moment.

On the three new universities in the state, Okowa said after the resource inspection of facilities at the universities by a team from the National Universities Commission (NUC), approval was given for the commencement of academic activities in the schools by the Commission.

"The information we have is that all the courses that are due to start at the University of Delta, Agbor and the University of Science and Technology, Ozoro have been accredited.

"But unfortunately, Denis Osadebe University, Asaba, has its Faculty of Arts not yet accredited because of a little setback. We are working on that now to ensure that it is accredited within the shortest time possible.

"We have stayed on course in other works. The Job and Wealth Creation Office has also empowered some of its graduands. The Girl-Child Entrepreneurship Skill Training has also enlisted about 900 young girls for training between the ages of 18 and 30.

"Other job creation programmes are taking place through the Ministry of Women Affairs. A little above 1,800 persons have had their businesses supported at the course of this period," he stated.

While saying that the technical education drive of the state government experienced some slow down, the governor, however, assured that the technical colleges in Asaba and Uvwie would take.

In the area of security, he said his administration was doing its best, adding that at the moment, efforts were being made to ensure that Operation Delta Hawk got its complimentary support from the various security outfits.

"It is our hope that by early next year, we would be able to extend Operation Delta Hawk to all the local government areas of the state," Okowa added.

Gov. Masari asked Katsina residents: Buy guns, **confront bandits**



Governor Aminu Masari of Katsina State has called on residents of the North-West state to “buy guns, arm yourselves and confront bandits because security officials alone cannot tackle insecurity in our state”.

Speaking during a media parley with journalists at the Muhammadu Buhari House in Katsina, Masari said the number of security personnel “is not enough to tackle the situation”.

“It’s Islamically allowed for one to defend himself against attack. One must rise to defend himself, his family and assets. If you die while trying to defend yourself, you’ll be considered a martyr. It’s surprising how a bandit would own a gun while a good man trying to defend himself and his family doesn’t have one,” the governor said.





NCDMB COMMISSIONS PE ENERGY'S CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

The Executive Secretary Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote has commissioned PE Energy's ultra-modern Centre of Excellence in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, which would provide services in Automation, Process & Systems Integration as well as Valve Assembly, Valve Actuation, Metering Systems, Pump and Compressor Solutions.

The facility would also offer services in Instrument Fitting Manufacturing and Service Lines, Training and Competence Assessment, in addition to assembling Early Production Facilities (EPF's) and Mobile Production Units (MOPU's) which are essential in the nation's aspiration to increase oil and gas production.

Speaking at The Executive Secretary commended PE Energy for contributing to the growth of the Nigerian Oil & Gas sector and Nigerian Content.

He hinted that the company's area of speciality in Automation, Process and System Integration is of special interest to the Board, especially as the oil and gas industry prepares itself to fully tap into the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

He stated that the industry is going into an era where massive adoption of technology and innovation will become the norm, adding that "from unmanned FPSO's to carbon



capture technologies to achieve net-zero emissions, from Big Data Analytics for seismic surveys to the use of Augmented Realities for Human Capacity Development, the Board is delighted that Nigerian industry players are keen to adopt and deploy these new innovations.”

Wabote described PE's Centre of Excellence as an excellent addition to top-notch facilities that showcases the success of Local Content in Nigeria and enhances the journey to the actualization of the 10-year strategic roadmap targeted to achieve 70 percent Nigerian Content in the Oil & Gas sector by the year 2027.

He also lauded PE Energy's partnership with global brands in the automation and instrumentation industry, adding that such partnerships will enhance the acquisition of skills by the employees of PE Energy Ltd.

He stated that “the quality of the facility guarantees that none of the international operating companies would have any doubt that if given an assignment to PE Energy, it would produce the same quality you will see outside Nigeria.”

While commending the international oil companies for their continuous support in the successful implementation of Nigerian Content, the Executive Secretary noted that PE

Energy's Centre of Excellence will lead to cost reduction and enhancement of the reliability and availability of oil companies' production facilities.

In his welcome address, the Managing Director of PE Energy Limited, Engr. Daere Akobo indicated that the facility is 100 percent local driven, from administration to technology, adding that the state-of-the-art facility spreads across an area of 10,820 sqm.

He noted that the multimillion-dollar investment had positioned the company as an automation process and system integration company in the service of critical process value chain in the Oil and Gas industry, offering innovative solutions for the exploration, extraction, processing, transportation, and distribution sectors.

Reeling out the company's capacities, the Managing Director informed that the firm had delivered projects across sub-Saharan Africa, including Kenya and Ghana and had also acquired a seismic detection technology and got approval from President Muhammadu Buhari to fly the northern basin of the country.

Akobo announced that the Centre of Excellence would consolidate the partnership between NCDMB and the Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO) and focus on material substitution, which entails research and development in the use of raw materials for the formulation of drilling and completion fluids and additives.

He added that Center of Excellence would provide linkage between the industry and academia and serve as a Competence Assessment Center and contribute towards the creation of highly competent manpower through hands-on training in collaboration with Original Equipment Manufacturers.

In his goodwill message, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Gabriel Tanimu underscored the Ministry's contributions to the promotion of Nigerian businesses and partnerships. He added that “once a business has the blessings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they achieve better results, rather than just going out to engage international partners on their own.”

He hinted that the Ministry promotes the Nigerian Content Policy and was canvasses for international companies to set up facilities in Nigeria and take advantage of the large market. He charged operators of the oil industry to patronise PE Energy to ensure return on investment and encourage other investors in the sector.

LET'S SAVE **NIGER DELTA** ENVIRONMENT, NDDC CHARGES STAKEHOLDERS



L-R Front row: The NDDC Director, Environmental Protection and Control, NDDC, Engr. Onuoha Obeka; the Special Assistant, Technical, Engr. Ubongabasi James; lead Consultant, Dr. Justin Akankali and a member of the Abia State House of Assembly, Dr Mike Ukoha, in a group photograph.

The Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, has called for collaboration among stakeholders to tackle the challenges of pollution and reverse the environmental degradation in the region.

The NDDC Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiang Akwa, made the call during the second meeting of the Niger Delta Environment Consultative Forum hosted by the Commission in Port Harcourt.

Akwa who was represented by his Special Assistant, Technical, Engr. Ubongabasi James, noted that environmental degradation was an issue that affects everyone irrespective of socio-economic status and called for a collaborative approach to proffering solutions to sustainable reversal of environmental degradation.

According to the NDDC Chief Executive Officer, the Commission would not relent in the quest to find solutions to the environmental challenges in the Niger Delta region.

He affirmed: "The Forum will serve as an avenue for the rejuvenation of our degraded environment and restoration of our ecosystems.

"This is yet another strategic milestone in the Commission's quest to bequeath an environment devoid of all manners of pollution and the restoration of our degraded ecosystem coming from oil exploration and exploitation activities in the Niger Delta region."

He posited that the NDDC had consistently sought for solutions to environmental degradation in the Niger Delta region. "We must strive harder after this forum to restore our environment for the sustainability of the Niger Delta region."

In his address, the NDDC Director, Environmental Protection and Control, NDDC, Engr. Onuoha Obeka stated that the Commission was aware of the United Nations Declaration of "A Decade of Ecosystem Restoration" and was working assiduously to

seek ways to halt environmental degradation and improve environmental health practices in the Niger Delta region.

He stated that recent research revealed that there was an increase in the level of heavy metals in the soil of the Niger Delta region. According to him "these metals are carcinogenic and therefore harmful to plant and animal life."

Obeka noted: "The effect of traces of these metals which are known to be carcinogens in our plant and animal protein cannot be overemphasized. It is with this understanding and in fulfilment of our mandate enshrined in the NDDC Act 2000, that we have thought it wise to seek your collaboration in finding solutions to the environment question of the Niger Delta region."

The Forum's Lead Consultant, Dr. Justin Akankali noted that the goal of the Forum was to find sustainable and long-term solutions to the challenges of environmental degradation and pollution in the Niger Delta region.

He said the meeting was a fallout of the decisions taken at the last World Environment Day and commended the NDDC for taking the initiative.



The Special Assistant, Technical, to the NDDC Interim Administrator, Engr. Ubongabasi James, exchanging views with the NDDC Director, Environmental Protection and Control, Engr. Onuoha Obeka, during the second meeting of the Niger Delta Environment Consultative Forum in Port Harcourt.



NCDMB SAYS ASSET OWNERSHIP KEY TO NIGERIAN CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Indigenous service companies in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry have been advised to invest in asset ownership because it is a major yardstick used by the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act to define Nigerian companies and confer advantages on them.

The Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote gave the advice in Port Harcourt, Rivers State while commissioning PIMO Services Ltd's new facilities and equipment.

He explained that the acquisition of important assets defined genuine Nigerian businesses who are not middlemen or commission agents but are positioned to offer top-notch services in-country.

He added that investment in assets also proves that Nigerian businesses are taking up the challenge to grow their outfits and contribute to in-country capacities and capabilities.

Assets commissioned by the Executive Secretary included Operational Bases I & II of PIMO Services and their newly acquired equipment, which included Hydro Hammer with the capacity of 200 kilo Joules, Internal Lifting Tools with the capacity of 250 tons, up to 42-inch diameter Conductors and Casing Running Tools, and many other state of the art tools to service the oil and gas industry.

He expressed delight that the acquisition of the modern tools and equipment afforded the company's engineers and technicians the opportunity to develop requisite skills and competence to handle various jobs thereby enhancing engineering capabilities within the country.

While commending the management of the company for

investing and contributing significantly to the growth of the Nigerian Oil and Gas sector, Wabote added that the investments also supported the Board's 10-year strategic roadmap aimed at increasing the level of Nigerian Content in the Oil and Gas sector to 70 percent by 2027.

He noted that PIMO Services was the second facility he was commissioning in Port Harcourt since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, describing it as signs that better days were gradually returning to the oil and gas industry.

He called on other oil and gas service providers to emulate PIMO Services in their focus and dedication, adding that growth of oil and gas facilities needs to be worked on steadily till full rewards are realized.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of PIMO Services, Mr. Pius Uwhubetiyi stated that some of the equipment and tools it acquired were the only ones in Nigeria. He noted that the company's investment in Hydro Hammer would save project promoters about 90 days that are normally spent importing and exporting the equipment for projects, while another major equipment saved Total Energies about US\$600,000 when it was deployed on Ikike Field Development Project.

He added that the company was working to become the first firm to produce casing accessories in Nigeria, adding that it had the capacity, competence, and character to deliver on areas of expertise.

PIMO Services Limited is a wholly owned Nigerian Company and it had developed skills in the provision of quality engineering services such as Mechanical, Civil & Structural, Electrical Installation/Maintenance, Fire and Gas Systems, and other services to the oil and gas industry.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

MINISTER REAFFIRMS
COMMITMENT TO **ZERO**
CARBON EMISSION
IN THE FCT



ECO Green BUS

For a cleaner FU

Powered by local Natural



Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Malam Muhammad Musa Bello has reaffirmed the commitment of the FCT Administration towards achieving zero carbon emission in the city by the year 2070

The Minister gave this assurance in Abuja shortly after inspecting the mass transit “Eco Green bus” being proposed for use in the FCT by a natural gas powered vehicle manufacturer, Austrian Technologies Nigeria Ltd.

The Minister who restated that Abuja was conceptualized to be a green city by at least 40 percent, said, the FCT Administration is committed to the

implementation of the pledge made by President Muhammadu Buhari at the COP26 meeting in Glasgow for Nigeria to achieve Net-Zero Carbon emission by 2070.

He also revealed that Abuja was part of a group of 6 nations from the northern and southern hemispheres committed to meeting the challenges of climate change and was also admitted as part of a research programme known as “Institute for Future cities” run by a university in the United Kingdom.

The Minister said “Abuja, being a new city, we have a lot of the fundamentals to be able to achieve zero carbon emission and that’s why they admitted us and then we are going to work towards seeing how we can eliminate and become carbon emission free before 2070”.



CEO, Austrian Technologies Nig. Ltd Johann Rieger showing the interior of the eco friendly mass transit bus his company is proposing for deployment on FCT roads to the FCT Minister, Malam Muhammad Musa Bello and the Permanent Secretary FCTA, Mr Olusade Adesola

Malam Bello then indicated the readiness of the FCTA to look closely at the proposal from Austrian Technologies Nigeria Ltd in a bid to see the possibilities for deployment.

Earlier while explaining the functionalities of the proposed eco friendly mass transit bus, the Chief Executive Officer, of Austrian Technologies Nigeria Limited, Mr. Johann Rieger said the buses were equipped with gas engines of higher emission standards (Euro 5) with no toxin, smog or smoke which guaranteed reduced noise and lower fuel costs and had the capacity to carry about 100 passengers in peak hours.

He added that the bus system also had other special features designed to reduce road fatalities, save fuel as

well as reduce the cost of maintenance.

Mr. Rieger also disclosed that his company plans to build a training school, using bus simulators that would allow drivers to be trained in a quiet classroom environment without burning fuel or blocking the roads while training.

The FCT Minister along with other staff of the FCTA took a tour of the bus, asking relevant technical and financial questions.

Present at the event were the FCT Permanent Secretary, Mr. Olusade Adesola, the MD Abuja Urban Mass Transport Company, Abdulrazak Oniyangi, Director Projects in the Hon Minister's Office, Saka Isiaka Ahmed, Directors from the Transportation Secretariat and other FCTA top functionaries.



CEO Austrian Technologies Nig. Ltd, Johann Rieger explaining some features of the eco-friendly mass transit bus his company is proposing for deployment on FCT roads to the FCT Minister.

OKOWA DRUMS SUPPORT FOR

ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta has called on the Federal Government and relevant stakeholders to give maximum support for the entertainment industry to thrive in Nigeria.

Okowa made the call at the Delta Talent Economic Summit with the theme “The Economy of Talent” at the Event Centre, Asaba.

He said that enormous talents abounded in the country and appealed to national and sub-national governments to support the entertainment industry to identify and market talents to realise their abundant potential.

He pledged continued support of his administration to entertainment and talent development to ensure that more talents were discovered in the state.

“Sitting here this afternoon, I can see that the Senior Special Assistant on Talent Development is taking us into a new era.

“I have been a part of the journey of discovering talents in Delta State, not because I was directly involved, but while I was in government, the kind of things we used to see is people being appointed into this aspect of development.



**1ST DELTA TALENT ECONOMIC
SUMMIT HELD IN ASABA**

“What you see is that these appointees organise shows and use those who are already made, but with Ogus Baba coming in, I can see a new trend.

“He has discovered that they are too many people out there who truly need some form of schooling.

“The lives of our youths matter a lot and if we cannot handle the challenges of our youths, we would not be able to create the enabling environment for government to succeed.

“When you are not able to build peace in a state, every other thing you are doing comes to nothing.

“So, I think that government needs to recognise the power in the entertainment industry. I know that as a government we have tried to have a strong relationship with the entertainment industry.

“States and Federal Government should try to realise the powers in the entertainment industry and the fact that it is able to take up a lot of our youths if we truly organise the space properly.

“And, when we try to do that, it should not be for

political gain, but for economic development tool and for the right reasons,” Okowa stated.

He commended the aide for his efforts, adding that “I must also thank our brothers and sisters who have believed in him. I know it’s not easy to get people like Ali Baba and his likes here.

“I believe they have found something in the direction Ogus Baba is taking and have decided to commit themselves to being part of the process to enable him achieve success in his office and more importantly, give back to the people.

“I am glad that our children and young ones are sitting down calmly and listening to people and I am truly very impressed with what I am seeing here today.

“We have so many talents in Delta State and Nigeria, but unfortunately, many of them don’t have the right conditions and opportunities to develop their talents, hence these talents die within them.

“I believe that this process we are going through will help to build the needed structures where we can make



Delta Governor, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa (7th right), his Deputy, Deacon Kingsley Otuaro (7th left), the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Talent Development, Mr. Akpobome Ogwude (6th right), Kanayo O. Kanayo (5th right), Atunyota Akpobome (Alibaba), (right), and other popular actors and comedians at the 1st Delta Talent Economic Summit held in Asaba on Wednesday



Governor Ifeanyi Okowa speaking when he received SWAN members



ourselves better.

“I can see a lot of students here; I believe that even as they listen and see on stage those persons they never thought they would see in real life, something would be fired up in them to succeed and be like us in the future.

“I truly want to thank God and those who have offered themselves to be participants at the summit. We know we cannot pay you, but we pray and hope that many successful Nigerians will offer themselves in raising the younger ones for our society to be better.”

The governor noted that citizens were in serious and challenging times, and that many of the things happening in the country were such that brought frustration even to the young ones.

He, however, stated that “what you see here today is a glimmer of hope that shows that there is a possibility to succeed if only you can work hard.

“If only you can truly focus your minds on great things, our youths will turn out to be the Ali Babas of the future.

“As a government, we will continue to give support to the SSA to ensure that he is able to reach out to more Deltans.

“I think that knowledge is the key and that's what we are acquiring here today; please take time to listen to the resource persons because even me as governor, I have learnt a lot from them today,” Okowa said.

Welcoming guests to the summit earlier, Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Talent Development, Akpobome Ogude, said he was the first to organise a talent hunt and successfully launched music stars into the entertainment industry in Nigeria.

He urged participants to pay attention to the resource persons who would speak on how the youths could create wealth from their talents.

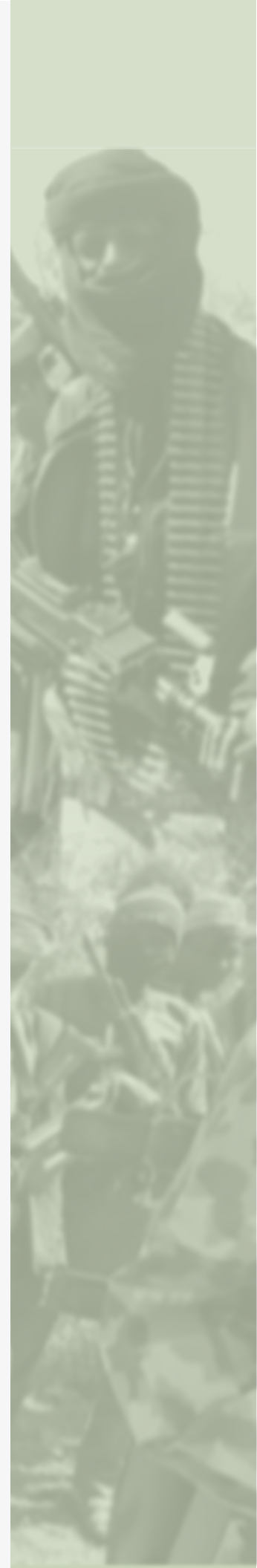
“Today, Delta youths from different local governments are here to witness the first-ever Talent Economic Development Summit in Africa

“A lot of talents are in the streets; a lot of people can do comedy or movie but a lot of them do not understand how to make money with their talents.

“That's why we are here today with experts to teach them how to make money from their talents.

“Delta is the first state to organise a talent search in the country and we have produced some of the best talents. However, having talent is not just enough you need to develop and market it,” Ogude stated.

The summit was attended by dignitaries, including Deputy Governor, Mr Kingsley Otuaro, renowned actor and lawyer, Kanayo O. Kanayo, Ace Comedian, Ali Baba, Ace Producer, Efe Omoregbe and entertainment lawyer, Zino Ugboma.



BANDITS **KILL** ANOTHER TRADITIONAL RULER IN ZAMFARA, KIDNAP 4 VILLAGERS

The Police Command in Zamfara has confirmed the killing of the District Head of Gada in Bungudu Local Government Area of the state, Alhaji Umaru Bawan-Allah and four others.

The command has also arrested some suspected bandits, rescued 10 kidnap victims and recovered some arms.

The Commissioner of police in the state, Ayuba Elkanah disclosed this at a press conference in Gusau on Wednesday.

Elkanah said, “today at about 0335hrs, armed bandits in large number, invaded Gada Village in Bungudu Local Government Area of the state where they killed the District Head of the area, Alhaji Umaru Bawan-Allah along with four other villagers and kidnapped some community members”.

“The police tactical operatives in collaboration with the Military and Vigilante responded promptly and engaged the assailants to a serious gun battle.

“The joint tactical teams were able to disperse the hoodlums and rescued 10 kidnapped victims including a one year

old baby.

“Normalcy has already been restored in the affected area and its environ with improved confidence building patrol by security forces,”.

According to him, on 28th Dec., 2021 at about 0500hrs, the Police Tactical Operatives deployed along Zurmi Local Government on confidence building patrol acted on intelligence that led to the arrest of a notorious bandit, popularly known as Maiyammata who hails from Mayasa village.

“The suspect who was arrested while trying to block the road and kidnap commuters at a village called Koliya was a former member of Bello Turji.


“He is now believed to be operating under another notorious bandit kingpin known as Kachalla Sani-Black who operates along Zurmi, Shinkafi and Birnin Magaji Local Government Areas.

“One AK-47 rifle, double magazines with three rounds of live ammunition and one Boxer motorcycle was recovered from him.

“He is currently undergoing discreet investigation aimed at arresting his partners in crime, before being charged to Court for prosecution,” Elkanah explained.



ROTIMI CHIBUIKE AMAECHI



OSITA CHIDOKA KNOCKS **ROTIMI CHIBUIKE** **AMAECHI** HARD ON WHAT JONATHAN HANDED OVER TO BUHARI IN HIS HANDING OVER NOTE.

Calls for Amaechi's brain check to know why a senior Government official will continue to sell the urban myth of "empty treasury" to Nigerians.

Chidoka said, "As a member of the Federal Executive Council that handed over to the current administration, I am disturbed that this urban myth of "empty treasury" is still the subject of conversation by a senior government member. "Also, I am confused about what the Honourable Minister means when he says,

"By the time we came in," as he was not appointed minister until six months after the May 29 Handover. Since he was not a minister on the handover date, it may be pertinent to present him with the facts again.

"On May 29, 2015, President Buhari inherited a foreign reserve of \$28.6 billion, according to official data still present on the website of the Central Bank of Nigeria, as well as \$5.6 billion Nigeria Liquified Natural Gas Limited dividends. Also, a 2015 budget of over 4 trillion Naira was handed over to the incoming administration by the outgoing Jonathan government.

“Furthermore, the Jonathan administration left a total of \$2.2 billion in the Excess Crude Account on May 29, 2015. (As verified by the Ministry of Finance both by the immediate past minister and the incumbent).“To further create context, I would like the Minister of Transport to note the country’s economic indices after 1849 days of President Jonathan’s Presidency from May 06 2010, the date he took over from President Umaru Yar’Adua to the Handover date of May 29, 2015.

“On May 29, 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari inherited an economy that, by the testimony of the World Investment Report, prepared by the Geneva-based United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), was the number one destination for foreign direct investment in Africa. In the five years of President Jonathan, Direct Foreign Investment stood at about 35.25 Billion Dollars. You can compare this to the 11.55 Billion Dollars Direct Foreign Investment received from 2016 to 2020.

“The Jonathan administration handed over a \$550 billion economy (largest in Africa and 26th globally) and a diversified economy. On May 29, 2015, President Jonathan left behind an economy with a stable currency, where the Naira exchanged for N199 to \$1, and Nigeria had a single-digit inflation rate. Today, after 2,406 days of the current administration, headline inflation rate hovers above 15 per cent.

“Under President Jonathan, the unemployment rate stood at 7.5 per cent (better than European Union) today. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, six and half years after Governor Amaechi’s government came in, unemployment is 33 per cent. “Before the government came in, Nigeria’s poverty rate was 32 per cent as of May 2015. We need not compare it against 71 per cent today after 78 months of President Buhari’s administration.

“Our External debt as of May 2015 stood at \$7.3 billion, the Gini coefficient (degree of inequality) was not different from China’s as of 2015. In 343 weeks and four days of the current administration, our external debt has ballooned to \$37.9 billion as of September 2021. It is important to point out that over 48 per cent are bilateral and commercial loans. With the facts above, I am sure that the Minister of Transport will rethink his fixation on the past and focus on the clear and present danger of an economy on the path to Argentina – sovereign debt default.

“In the face of declining revenues, available public data revealed that external debt servicing gulped \$1.82 billion between January and September 2021; this is 43.9 per cent higher than the \$1.27 billion spent in the corresponding period of 2020. “In the same period of January to September 2021, Domestic debt servicing rose to N1.74 trillion from N1.53 trillion recorded in the same period of 2020.

These issues should worry the Honourable Minister, coupled with unlocking the asphyxiating gridlock that Apapa port has created in the economy. “2,406 days after, a clear 557 days (One year five months) more than President Jonathan governed Nigeria; this administration’s economic policies and heightened insecurity have left the country comatose.



Minister Amaechi and the APC government should stop this perennial blame game and focus on redeeming its tattered image by signing the electoral bill passed by a legislature it controls.

FIRM GETS \$500M FUNDING FOR NIGERIAN YOUTH PROJECT



The Nigerian Youth Project (NYP), which aims to empower about 70 million youths in the provision of affordable homes, and mechanised agricultural businesses says it has received a boost from a foreign investor, HP Kapital to the tune of \$500 million.

Chairman, FHT Ventures Plc, the initiators of the project, Olubunmi Adewa-Faboro, while unveiling the new partners stated that the project will kick off with foundation laying ceremony on January 27, 2022.

Conceived by an indigenous company, FHT Ventures Plc, a real estate firm based in Abuja, Nigeria, over a year ago, floated the project, promoted along with overseas partners, seeking to bring investors from all over the world, to explore Nigerian potential and provision of mortgage based affordable homes, and agriculture using the country's 70 million

youths.

Apart from HP Kapital, Adewa-Faboro, said a partner has also joined from the Middle East in the name of Omene Group, adding that a local partner, Possibility Specialists Global Resources, had also been admitted to the project with FHT Ventures ceding 10 percent of its shares to new local partner.

Flanked by Prof. Mary Nwoye, a Consultant for the project, Mr. Egonu Abraham, the Lead of Possibility Specialists Global Resources, among other representatives, Adewa-Faboro disclosed that a comprehensive documentary is being put in place to further highlight the profiles and achievements of the all the partners.

"We are happy to announce to the whole world that we have made presentation to the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment and they are positive in encouraging this project.

"This partnership is unique in the sense that our overseas partners who are going us on this project will have the rest of mind that despite the security challenges in the country, they will be protected. And that the foreign direct investments they are bringing into this country will be such that they will be able to repatriate their profit without any hitch.

"The other thing that we have been able to do is to get the cooperation of a global finance company from the United States, called HP Kapital, HP Kapital is going to start us off with a foreign direct investments to the tune of \$500 million within the next six months. And we are starting the foundation laying ceremony of this project by January 27, 2022.

In his remarks, Abraham, the Lead of Possibility Specialists Global Resources, said his company was bringing 23 years experience to bear on the project.

FYT VENTURES PRESS

Tell us about your company, what you have done over the years, and what your major focus is presently.

HP Kapital is an international company headquartered in the UK with its prime focus on self-sustainable healthcare, housing, green energy projects globally.

We do commodity trading, agriculture, development funding, education and finance.

Commodity Trading:

We operate across the world and specialising in exports to Africa and the Middle East. Our principal customers are Trade & Commodity Finance teams for international banks who finance imports and exports of commodities in Africa and the Middle East.

We also work for corporates and trade houses involved in commodity flows. Normal deal sizes are in the \$1 – \$30 million range for one year revolving facilities. HP Kapital acts as a “Collateral Manager”, offering a range of services that are 'risk mitigate' for each transaction.

Self-sustainability:

We design **Self Sustainable Net Zero Smart Buildings** by incorporating zero emission renewable energy technology into them. This is also balanced with energy conservation technologies to reduce energy consumption and waste. In addition to our environmental focus in everything we do, we provide healthcare services especially in rural areas where it's needed the most by constructing our top of the range hospitals, medical universities, which will be affiliated with leading health organizations creating jobs and supporting local population in enhancing infrastructure and other services. Our current projects are spread across the United Kingdom, Europe, Africa and Asia.

HP Kapital has spent the past 7 years

researching and designing our own unique **Self-Sustainable Smart buildings** and **HP Kapital's Mobile Flying Factories**, which can construct 1,000,000 square metres of buildings per year or our 250 bed University Hospital with 2500 staff accommodation and 7500 student accommodation all off-grid within 12 months.

HP Kapital's Mobile Flying Factories, Employ 200 local people, who are trained by HPKapitals engineers to build our **Self Sustainable Net Zero Smart Buildings**.

Financing:

We at HP Kapital (www.hpkapital.com) have arranged funding of over 5 Billion US Dollars, including Airport, Housing, Hospitals, Waste to Energy, Geothermal, and Solar Power Farms.

We have been involved in the building and selling of over 10,000 housing units, in Europe, India, Turkey, UK and USA. We have Hospitals in Ghana. India will commence in first quarter of 2022 from initial sourcing, acquisitions, sales, valuations, investments, and development, all the facets in relation to residential and commercial units having been professionally undertaken.

Our design team consists of some of the most high profile names in the industry. Stellar figureheads in this team include those working with the London Fire Brigade and The Shard London (the tallest building in the UK and possible Europe). Additional work also encompasses mansions and hotels in The Bishop Avenue, Barbados, St Tropez Palace, and various sites in India. Our designers and architecture team have advised, designed, planned and carried to completion over 300 Hotels and Hospital projects worldwide.

The latter 6 hotels notably achieved a 7-star rating for one group. Our hospital projects

involve district, regional and teaching centres where our enviable clinical knowledge in healthcare has put in foundations for medical teaching as well as research and development units.

Our personnel, who encompass Accountants, Auditors, Architects, Bankers, Doctors, Hoteliers, Legal Experts, Chartered Surveyors, Project Managers and Quantity Surveyors, and our Partners enables us to bring our vision to life. This also allows us to provide our private and institutional clients an exemplary, unrivalled service befitting their status, allowing deals of significant net worth to be completed.

What are your activities in Africa?

We are in the process of Launching our own Bank in the 15 CFA countries during the First Quarter of 2022 and University hospital projects in the CFA countries as well as in Kenya, Malawi, Zimbabwe.

What are your activities in Nigeria in particular?

This is a great question, we are working with your esteemed Company FHT Ventures to deliver Self Sustainable Smart affordable housing across the whole of Nigeria, these will be NET ZERO as per COP26 agreement to achieve "ZERO CARBON FUEL USE" and Bauchi State to deliver a Self-Sustainable SMART HEALTH CITY including 250 Bed University Hospital, 2500 Residential units for staff, 7500 Student flats, a Convention centre with a 5 Star Hotel, all this will be NET ZERO and fully funded by HP Kapital.

Tell us more about your proposed housing project with FHT Ventures.

We want to help you and your team to drive the youth of not only Nigeria but the Whole of Africa out of poverty and as I said earlier **HP Kapital's Mobile Flying Factories**, Employ 200 local people, who are trained by HPKapitals engineers to build our **Self Sustainable Net Zero Smart Buildings**.

We hear that this project will be of long-term economic benefit to Nigerians especially in the area of job creation and technology transfer.

In addition to the ENVIRONMENTAL benefits to your society and local economy NIGERIA benefit from the following :

Direct Employment for 5,500 local citizens.

Indirect employment for approximately 3000 citizens via supply chain.

Income Tax generated from employment in region of \$16.5m.

World-class medical treatments for the local working-class population and those with corporate insurances.

Free treatment for 10% of total patients for those less privileged.

Medical tourism from various countries boosting local state economy in the region of \$2000.00 per foreign guest.

High-end medical education combining both Indian and British university collaboration including AYURVEDIC teaching for 7,500 students with a local spending of \$20m per year.

Regeneration of local area attracting multiple businesses due to our project.

Promotion and implementation of green energy sector within the state with positive impact on the environment.

Waste to energy by-products to help the community by on site bottling cooking gas for local consumption and on-site production and providing organic fertilizer to the farmers.

Health resort facility for local recuperation of patients and promoting well-being to the population. Activities and residential care will be provided for Elderly and for the disabled.

Who is your target market? How affordable will your housing units be?

Everyone from the Young To Old, poor or rich, Especially those who live abroad as they'll have good quality housing and clean environment to live in.

What do you make of the Nigerian government's creation of opportunities for investors like yourself to be part of the growth of the country's housing sector.(You can use the opportunity to commend the government and Nigerians in general)

I think it's a great Idea and more governments should do the same, this will help Nigeria to guild Africa out of poverty and away from relying on the West by becoming self sufficient.

How do you think Nigeria should best address the issue of reducing the huge housing deficit?

We all need to work together and create a eco system to empower our youth out of unemployment, by education and investing in them. **REMEMBER OUR YOUNG ARE OUR FUTURE.**



...Gov. Okowa

NIGERIA IN MESSY Financial situation

...Says state may not be able
to pay salaries.

Delta State Governor, Dr Ifeanyi Okowa, has expressed worry over the current economic and financial situation in Nigeria stressing that the economic situation is in a mess.

He noted that the stark reality about the dire situation in the country came to the fore recently when President Muhammadu Buhari presented the 2022 Budget to the National Assembly.

He said that the ripples of the economic downturn was hitting every level of government hard, noting that Delta State was at the moment struggling to pay monthly salary to its workers because of

dwindling financial resources vis-a-vis declining monthly allocation from the Federation Account.

The governor said that situation where the Federal Government was borrowing with reckless abandon and even using loans to fund recurrent budget, as is the case with the 2022 Budget of about N16 trillion presented to the National Assembly by Mr. President, was injurious to the nation's economy.

Okowa made the remarks during a parley with media practitioners at the Government House Asaba, stressing that the implications of the federal government's recurrent budget for the next fiscal year was very worrisome.

According to the governor, the

implication of the deficit budget of the federal government for the next fiscal year was that the Nigerian Government will not be able to execute a single capital project without resorting to foreign and local loans.

Whereas only about N5 trillion was allocated for capital projects in the federal government's 2022 budget estimates, the government will be borrowing to the tune of over N6.26 trillion to fund the budget, meaning the federal government would partly finance its recurrent expenditure with more than one trillion naira in the fiscal year.

He lamented that what could have amounted to gains to the country due to higher prices of crude oil in the international market

was being eroded by the importation of refined petroleum products into the country.

On the non-constitution of the board of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) as promised by President Buhari when he received the forensic audit report on the the Commission nearly three months ago, Governor Okowa said that it was unknown to law in Nigeria that the NDDC should operate without a duly constituted management board for over two years and still counting.

He, however, urged Mr President to rise to the occasion by doing the needful because the states of the South-South geo-political zone and others in the Niger Delta region were currently on the receiving end due to the non-constitution of the NDDC board by President Buhari, who has jurisdictional competence to so do.

He noted that the governors as leaders of the region had never hidden their feelings concerning the disturbing situation, stressing that the governors have consistently made their stand known unequivocally.

Okowa said, "It is very unfortunate where we are at the moment; it ought not be so because we have not had a proper board for over two years now, which is not right.

"Whatever situation we are operating is unknown to the laws of this country. But more importantly is that states are being deprived of the opportunity of having representatives at the board because with the board, you have the MD (Managing Director) and EDs (Executive Directors) and state representatives who are able to understand that the budget of the NDDC is being run the way it is supposed to run, with the funds for each state getting to them.

"That has not been so for quite some time; and, that is why we have always complained and our fears have been made known. We were told by the presidency that as soon as the forensic report was submitted that the board would be constituted.

"Unfortunately the report has been submitted for some months now, we are still awaiting the constitution of the board. I think that no matter what is going on, there is a law and there is need for us to obey the law, there is the need for the FG to do what is right because beyond the law, the provisions in the law ensure that there is equity such that no state is shortchanged. "At the moment we don't have information as to when the board would be constituted, we will continue to make our voices

heard. We hope that Mr. President would soon constitute the board because he is the only one that can do that."

Nevertheless, Okowa disclosed that approximately N20 billion committed by his administration to the building, equipping and furnishing of the central secretariat, the Professor Chike Edozien Secretariat inaugurated by Vice-President Yemi Osinbanjo on Monday, was fully financed by the Delta State Government.

He assured that the plan for repayment of loans for the completion of the secretariat project was carefully worked out such that no debt would be left behind for his successor in respect of the project as the loans repayment would be completed in 2022.

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ANAMBRA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT A GLANCE





FG Boosts Maritime security as Buhari commissions Nigerian ship, 6 others, 111 Boats





The Federal Government has moved to enhance maritime security as President Muhammadu Buhari commissions a ship, produced locally and named NNS Oji by the Navy engineers, six newly imported ships, 111 boats including an helicopter to strengthen the capacity of the Navy to protect the Nigerian waters and the Gulf of Guinea..

NNS Oji, is the third of its series to be indigenously built at the Naval Dockyard Limited after NNS Adoni and NNS Karaduwa were built in 2016., while the newly acquired ships, include NNS Lana, Kano, Ikenne, Aba, Sokoto and Osun,

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony/induction of the Nigerian Navy Ships and keel laying for the construction of Boat-IV and Boat-V, at the Naval dockyard, in Lagos yesterday, Buhari, congratulated the Navy under the watch of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, for maintaining a steady course in its drive for local content development.

He charged all the naval personnel to maintain professionalism and ensure good use of the newly built and acquired vessels, adding that the new inductions to the naval fleet would boost their capability in securing Nigeria's maritime domain.

Buhari stated that arrests of those involved in illegalities on the country's waterways had yielded results, noting that some pirates, illegal bunkering syndicates, pipeline vandals and other miscreants have been convicted this year.

The President said he was delighted to note that one of the ships to be commissioned, NNS OJI; which is a Seaward Defence Boat, is the third of its series to be locally built at the Naval Dockyard Limited, Lagos, solely by our Navy engineers.

He said given Nigeria's present high dependence on oil and gas revenues, the Navy is undeniably a major contributor to the economic well-being of the country, adding that such successes were made possible through the enforcement of the Federal Government's anti-piracy law on Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act 2019..

"We should note that we are in a critical period where our country is faced with a serious decline in our revenue and the security

challenges we are facing,” he said.

“The present realities, therefore, call for prudent resource management, innovativeness, accountability and careful maintenance.

“I wish to reiterate that despite these challenges, our administration is very determined to ensure that the Navy is well supported to achieve its statutory responsibilities.

“Let me assure you that the Government will continue to support the ideals of the Nigerian Navy in the performance of its constitutional duties. God bless the Nigerian Navy, God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Onward Together.”, according to him.

While commending the efforts of the navy in their fight against maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea, Buhari added that he believed the ships would bolster the service in securing Nigeria's maritime environment.

The Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Awwal Zubairu Gambo, said the commissioning of NNS OJI and others was a manifestation of the Federal Government's commitment to maintaining a well-equipped navy that Nigerians would be proud of.

He stated that NNS Lana, a hydrographic ship received from its maiden voyage from France to Nigeria on 17 May 21, would be involved in the hydrographic survey of the nation's territorial waters towards ensuring safety of navigation within her waterways while SDB III, Inshore Patrol Crafts (IPC) and Fast Patrol Boats (FPB) which includes NNS ABA, NNS KANO, NNS IKENNE, NNS SOKOTO and NNS OSUN will be deployed for surveillance and patrol duties within the nation's waters.

PIUS ANYIM PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Former President of the Senate, Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, has intensified efforts towards becoming the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party in the forthcoming 2023 general election.

Anyim has reportedly taken his campaigns to ex-Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, and former military presidents, General Ibrahim Babangida, and Abdulsalami Abubakar.

The former Senate President also had meetings with the former Minister of Defence, General Theophilus Danjuma, Chief Arthur Eze, and Chief Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu who also blessed and endorsed his presidential ambition.

He equally met some influential Northern Emirs like the Emir of Lafia, who also blessed and endorsed his presidential aspiration.

Following his consultations, Anyim received kind assurances as he was urged to soldier on in his “aspiration to clinch the presidential candidate of the PDP”.

It was gathered that the former Presidents and Emirs expressed satisfaction that there are few credible aspirants from the South-East in the presidential race.

According to them, the next presidential candidate of the PDP should come from the South, particularly the Southeast geopolitical zone of the country.

Meanwhile, some Northern Civil Society groups under the umbrella of Arewa Concerned Civil Society Organisations of Nigeria, have endorsed the presidential ambition of Anyim.

The spokesman for the group, Abdulsalam Kazeem, in a statement issued on Monday, said the next President should come from the South-East, maintaining that Anyim remains the best candidate for the job.

The statement read in part, “We realised that only two regions out of the six geo-political regions have not occupied either President or vice-President seat since 1999 till date, which is unfair and against any democratic standard worldwide.

“For instance; between 1999 to 2007, it was South-West and North-East, and between 2007 to 2015 it was between North-East, South-South, and North-West while between 2015 till date it is between North-West and South-West!

“The South-East for instance is part and parcel of the Nigerian project from day one till date; and, they should be treated fairly just like other zones of the country.

“They too deserve to get what others have gotten because they have paid their dues in terms of contributions and consolidation of Nigeria.”

He added that power rotation will stop the feelings of marginalisation, and agitations for cessation, not only in the South-East but also from other regions.

OSINBAJO INAUGURATES NEW DELTA SECRETARIAT, SAYS OKOWA'S INSPIRATIONAL LEADER



The Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, said the new state-of-the-art Central Secretariat Complex built by Governor Ifeanyi Okowa in Asaba was one of the governor's legacies of inspirational and visionary leadership in Delta State.

The newly-buily Delta State Secretariat Complex in Asaba

Osinbajo said this on Monday in Asaba while inaugurating the secretariat complex named after the Asagba of Asaba and Nigeria's oldest professor, Obi Prof. Chike Edozien.

He said that the civil service building of any country or state was one of the major monuments, not just in the seat of power but also the splendour and the authority of the government.

He commended Governor Okowa for providing Deltans with such a historical building and monument, and said that the secretariat would provide the state's workforce with a functional building and environment that would bring out the best in them.

Osinbajo said that the Asagba of Asaba deserved the honour for having led the community in the last 30 years on the throne of his forefathers.

"Thank you, Your Excellency, Governor Okowa for doing me the honour of sharing this historic occasion with you, the government and the people of Delta state.

"This is historic indeed because the seat of the civil service of any government, anywhere in the world, is usually one of the major monuments, enshrining not just the power but also the splendour of the authority of government.

"This imposing complex clearly meets these

requirements. In due course, such buildings become historical monuments.

"The civil service and the people of Delta are today being presented with a state-of-the-art, functional and befitting secretariat complex after so many years. This in itself is worthy of great celebration," he said.

He also stated that the other thing was that Delta "is at the same time immortalising the name of one of Delta State's and indeed, Nigeria's great and illustrious sons, His Royal Majesty, Professor Chike Edozien, the Asagba of Asaba.

"Professor Edozien is unarguably Nigeria's oldest living professor in any discipline and an internationally-renowned Professor of Medicine. But more importantly, he is an outstanding bridge-builder and patriot, as your Excellency confirmed.

"His Majesty has played and continues to play an important role as a symbol of unity in this state, and during his 30 years reign, the town of Asaba has changed dramatically.

"His traditional leadership has ensured that the growth and increasing diversity of Asaba has proceeded without tension and antagonism amongst the people who live in the city.

"Your Excellency, I believe that in naming this building after His Royal Majesty, you are not just celebrating a highly respected and deserving son of Delta, but also signaling the sort of excellence in public service that we wish to see incubated within this building.

"More importantly, you are also saying to a generation that is not even old enough to be employed in the civil service today that integrity, diligence and service to community and country still pay.

"It is my hope that this place will like the eminent personage after whom it is named, and be a symbol of distinction and unity."

Osinbajo commended Okowa for his dexterity in recognising the role of the civil service in building the edifice in spite of dwindling revenue receipts.

He remarked that the governor deserved commendation for giving the public servants in the state such magnificent edifice as secretariat "because in spite of dwindling revenue receipts and severe resource constraints across all levels of government in our country, you have been able to provide the funding for this project.

"Your recognition of the critical role of the public sector is notable because optimal public service delivery requires an efficient public service which will require a work space that is well equipped, conducive and inspirational.

"Public servants require an environment that brings out the best in them and this secretariat complex will provide such environment.

"I congratulate you once again my dear brother, Governor Okowa, for the successful completion of this very important project which is yet another demonstration of what you have shown over the years that with visionary leadership, state governments can do incredible things and this notably will be one of your most worthwhile legacies."

In his address earlier, Governor Okowa commended the Vice President for coming to celebrate the landmark event with Deltans, and said that the vice president had aptly demonstrated that he was a true statesman and uncommon leader by always responding whenever the state called on him.

"The Government and good people of Delta State appreciate you today and always; we value your friendship, partnership, and genuine interest in the progress of our state.

"I stand here today feeling very proud of this legacy project. Indeed, I am filled with a great sense of joy, satisfaction, fulfilment, and triumph. It was an arduous journey from the time construction commenced on November 27, 2017, to this momentous occasion.

"As you would expect, constructing an edifice like this would task the ingenuity, resources and patience of any government in the times we live in.

"It was quite demanding and exacting, and there were times we were tempted to throw up our hands in despair, and even questioned the wisdom for embarking on a project of this magnitude.

"The turbulence that has plagued the economy since 2017 was worsened with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, causing major financial disruptions during the construction process.

"However, we persevered and weathered the storm, fully persuaded of the huge benefits accruable to the state once the structure was completed," he said.

Okowa added that with the completion of the complex, the state would save hundreds of millions of naira spent annually in renting offices while the coordination and synergy among MDAs would be enhanced, leading to higher morale, better time management, efficiency and greater productivity.

"This sprawling office complex occupies a total floor space of 45, 000 square metres and designed around five clusters with multiple floors, each cluster around a courtyard.

"This concept allows plenty of natural light

and ventilation into the offices. All the 27 ministries and their commissioners and permanent secretaries will be housed here, with the entire secretariat interconnected through a system of voice and data networks.

“There are nine seminar/conference rooms, a training room, clinic, creche, banking hall and three restaurants in the building, while the car park has the capacity to accommodate up to 1,000 cars. Electricity supply to the secretariat as with other government buildings is powered by the 8.5 Megawatts Asaba Independent Power Plant.

“As already announced by my humble self, this building is named 'Professor Chike Edozien Secretariat'. Perhaps unknown to many, Professor Edozien, the Asagba of Asaba, is a notable scholar in the field of medicine.

“It is in recognition of his accomplishments in the medical profession and his disposition to peace-building and peaceful coexistence among the different ethnic nationalities of the state that we decided to name this secretariat in his honour,” he said

He commended the major contractor, North China Construction Nigeria Limited, the consultant architects and project managers, the supervising ministry, sub-contractors, suppliers and site workers for their focus and diligence while the project lasted.

“This project tasked their intellect and resourcefulness, and they certainly impressed with their discipline, creativity and never-say-die attitude.

“It is my earnest expectation that ministry staff will be motivated to put in their best while striving to keep this facility in excellent condition always.

“The narrative of poor maintenance culture that has bedeviled the civil service must give way to a sense-of-ownership, complemented by decency and responsibility.

“This is imperative for the integrity of the civil service establishment and the progress of the state and I expect the chief accounting officers of the various ministries to institute strict measures to encourage, enhance and enforce the culture of maintenance,” Okowa stated.

Welcoming guests earlier, Commissioner for Special Projects, Chief Henry Sakpra, said the project was conceptualised in 2016 by the Okowa-led administration to provide conducive working environment for the state's public service.

He said actual work commenced in November, 2017 following completion of contract documentation by the state government and the contracting firm.



The ceremony was witnessed by the Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, Deputy Governor of Delta, Mr Kingsley Otuario, his Edo counterpart, Comrade Phillip Shaibu, Minority Leader of House of Representatives, Chief Ndudi Elumelu and Senator James Manager.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE AND UNITY IN NIGERIA'S DELICATE AND COMPLEX DEMOCRACY

BY PROF. MAY IFEOMA NWOYE

**GLOBAL DIPLOMAT & EMINENT PEACE AMBASSADOR
BEING A KEYNOTE ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE
COMMONWEALTH DISABILITY INNOVATION HUB/NIGERIA'S
UNITY CONFERENCE ON THEME: A PEOPLE UNITED AND
FUTURE ASSURED AT MERIT HOUSE MAITAMA, ABUJA**



Looking at the atmosphere in Nigeria today, you will agree With me that there is a valid reason for apprehension, about the future of the country.

people are shouting at the same time, with strong opinion and vehemence! As the days go by, the noises are getting louder and more frightening.

Everybody is blaming the next person. No one is doing the listening, and no one is accepting responsibility for any wrongdoing. Yet there are so many crucial things left unsaid! There is tension in the land!

The fires of frustration and discord are burning in every geopolitical zone. The rising tide of discontent seems to be threatening public safety but is not enough for anyone to pin the blame on others. It is a collective responsibility.

Some of these actions are challenging the moral fibre and ethical values of individual citizens and indeed relate to our collective psyche.

It further suggests that we all have duties and responsibilities as citizens.

The strength of our character doesn't come from violence and destruction.

It comes from respecting one another, hearing every voice, harnessing every talent, realizing that as people of Nigeria, we are richer is diversity, and greater together than we are as single individuals.

Peace and harmony are jointly possessed and enjoyed and by all mankind and therefore everyone has responsibility towards their sustainability. I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth

living, the kind that enables humanity to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children and subsequent generations.

It is useful to note that the peace we seek in Nigeria, today, resides in our hearts as human beings. It will further find a brilliant expression when we look beyond tribal sentiments, religious persuasion or political affiliation, and simply celebrate the beauty of soul of every NIGERIAN. We are strongest when we are able to see and appreciate the inherent dignity in every citizen.

Without that, our country will certainly not progress!

It is also instructive to recall, that Nigeria, in its strongest moment in history has acted as a big brother to the rest of African countries. It was that compelling need for unity in Africa, and of spreading the ideals that make for peace, saw Nigeria, defending powerless African nations, supporting, promoting and protecting their human rights, that earned her with the title 'GIANT OF AFRICA'. But today, you find some young Nigerians fleeing to even the smallest and weakest countries around us in search of peace and progress, sometimes being insulted and humiliated, simply because our house is not in order.

Nigeria is a rich country in many fronts, not just in natural resources or religion and spirituality, but also in cultural and linguistic diversity. As a result, maintaining the nation's cohesiveness is important. It will provide an opportunity to re-affirm the inherent strength and resilience of our nation, to withstand the actual and potential threats to the unity and security of our country. The concept of unity in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious and cultural nation, projects an image of inclusiveness and partnership, equity and fairness to the diverse groups, by recognizing them all as part of the larger social fabric.

There is strength in UNITY and that calls for proper national integration. That is, awareness of a common identity among citizens of the country; this means that although we belong to different religions and speak different languages, we recognize the fact that we are all one. This is a feeling of oneness and brotherhood in a country where diversity is the main ethos.

Unfortunately we have channeled our diversity to a negative purpose. Today, the many languages spoken in different parts of the country have negatively been employed to forge a sort of ethnic patriotism- That is

Ethnocentrism

In group dynamics, the common philosophy is that, people who belong to the same group often have positive attributions of themselves as members of the set and address themselves as 'we', and less considerate evaluations of other group. Members who do not share similar traits as their group 'strangers' 'visitors' and in extreme cases 'foreigners' which tends to threaten the unity of the country.

The division of the country into different states and regions has caused a great change in the feeling of

the people. Mutual jealousies and rivalries among the people of different regions grown up so much that groups want to achieve the progress and development of their regions only.

Our greatness ought to flow from the wealth of our diversity and not to become a source of disintegration.

Religion also is found as one of the major factors that hinder national integration and unity. National Integration is a psychological process of developing a common feeling of unity, harmony and cohesion in the hearts of people, of oneness and loyalty toward the country. For Nigeria as a nation, unity and peace which rests on the foundation of equity and justice, are the building blocks that can bring stability, and focus necessary for achieving greater economic and social development.

Without unity, without equity and justice, peace may permanently elude this nation and will in time, deteriorate. Peace and unity are not separate purposes but rather have complementary objectives.

Peace is derived from harmony and unity, and that further depends on trust and respectful relationships within and among groups. Put simply, peace and unity are intertwined; no unity, no peace.

Nigeria as a nation is truly endowed by Almighty God himself. He gave us all the resources to shape our destiny –BUT

COLLECTIVELY, WE HAVE VERY DONE BADLY

In Nigeria today, there is too much aggression and hate. There is too little trust and common ground. It is almost getting impossible to have the conversations we need to fix what is already broken.

Despite being the giant of Africa, and despite being the hub of natural resources, larger population of our people are impoverished, due to greed of some people, too much economic inequalities, and that also undermines the foundation of our unity and peace.

Sustainable Peace requires

- Inclusiveness and partnership,
- Respect for human person and above all
- Equity and justice.

When any of these is lacking, conflict develops.

CONFLICT IS A BALANCING OF POWERS

Among interests groups (Economic/Politics/social Control,

It is a mutual adjustment of what people want, can get, and are want to pursue. Conflict behaviour, portends hostile actions, and then violence, if it persists for too long, what follows is violence and sometimes outright war. The perpetrators most often know when and how these hostilities will start, but sadly, no one ever predicts how it will end. It is destruction all the way.

Whether in

- Somalia or South Sudan
- Syria,
- Ukraine,
- Yemen
- Afghanistan,
- Colombia,
- Iraq, Libya,
- Mali, Myanmar, Pakistan- and many other countries where political indiscretion and crime-related instability prevail.

Those war-torn countries present a constant reminder of the need to focus efforts on peace building. It is often said that people do not appreciate the value of what they have until they lose it. What legacy is there for the coming generation? Sustainability of peace is an in-generational justice.

NO ONE IS RULING OUT CONFLICT AS A PART OF EXISTENCE

But it is always better to settle serious matters in the courts than on the streets.

Conflict, is an integral part of co-existence just like bad weather, is bound to happen every once in a while. War and conflict have been with mankind since the beginning of civilizations. Dealing with conflict graciously can be challenging however, but knowing the best way to handle it will lessen the general stress and anxiety. This is why many nations invest a lot to maintain peace and order in their society.

My thesis here is that whenever conflict occurs, let us always leave room for conversation, and resolve misunderstanding before they escalate.

The question is: How do we get back the peace that held sway in the days of our forefathers and their fathers before them. The unity and progress our frontline Nationalists fought for and handed down to those after them.

THE ROLE OF PROPAGANDA, MISINFORMATION AND FAKE NEWS AS A SOURCE OF DISUNITY AND UNREST

This is part of the darkest hours in our history, when many Nigerians have found some comfort in pouring out their frustration and anger against one another. Some are calling for division, some are calling for unity, some are proposing building barriers among us, yet some others are simply full-time confusionists! People are spreading false information intentionally to cause harm. The emergence of online reports stand has created a serious challenge to professional journalism as well as the people. News are now bought and sold and the resultant effect is social disorder.

FALSE INFORMATION IS DESIGNED

- To manipulate people's perceptions of reality.
- To influence politics, promote themselves while vilifying others they consider enemies.
- A method to stir up and intensify social conflict.
- Fallacious stories are used intentionally to mislead readers and cause mistrust among Nigerians of all classes.
- In some cases this mistrust results in unprovoked, protest over imaginary events, or violence.

These actions inadvertently tear apart the fabrics of Nigeria's unity, turning neighbor against neighbor. It covers every sector- individuals, organizations, and governments.

None of these phenomena is new; except that they have taken on new dimension and significance in recent times with the widespread availability of sophisticated forms of communication technology. The sharing of text messages, images, videos, online, for example, allows information to go viral within hours of release. There is fear mongering everywhere.

There are also the fifth columnists of Nigerian economy and communication invaders. They rely heavily on information circulated online for their knowledge of the world and how they perceive reality. All these actions and reactions are what are making PEACE impossible at the present time.

Propaganda, misinformation and fake news have the potential

- To polarise public opinion,
- To promote violent extremism and hate speech and, ultimately,
- To undermine unity and reduce trust in the democratic processes.

Let me make something clear here, under democratic dispensation, government of the people by the people and for the people presupposes that it is participatory. People want to be informed on matters affecting them and when they do not get the authentic information they require, they manufacture one!

States should therefore take measures to promote media and digital literacy, by covering these topics as part of the regular school curriculum and by engaging with civil society and other stakeholders to raise awareness about this issue. Providing training for teachers and teachers on media and information literacy will do a lot of good.

ANONYMOUS GROUP

We also need to address the structural constraints of

one anonymous group, a large, un-educated and poorly educated Nigerian population without any social capital to get workplace skills, work experience, and job placement.-Readymade agents of destabilization!! This anonymous group are usually used for blackmail, assassinate, and disrupt election, to inflict wound to our neighbors and many other vices. Most frightening, is that they have no known address. This group are fast increasing in number owing to general economic downturn and unemployment.

CONFLICT AND HUMAN SUFFERING

Poverty and unemployment are some of the main drivers of conflict and instability. Not just in Nigeria but the world over. Unemployment and rising cost of living are causing hardship, producing hunger and frustration.

Incidentally it is the competition over access to these resources and power is usually at the heart of most conflicts and disunity. In all these uncertainties, the impact weighs heavily on the POOR, and the outcome manifests in hunger.

Consequently, it becomes obvious that the interconnected nature of today's conflicts, calling for a comprehensive approach.

From social perspective, peace could be conceptualized as a state of equilibrium.

Such equilibrium becomes elusive in the presence of crises and violence./ Extreme poverty/hunger

- Politicians are struggling for power and supremacy at the expense of human and environmental casualties?
- Suffering and anger arising from poverty, unemployment and exploitation tend to trigger restiveness.

There is violence at the slightest provocation.

POVERTY

Sufferings and poverty always to cause social & economic instability. A hungry man is an angry man they say. A very hungry man does not discuss peace or unity, his only ambition is to be united with FOOD.

The pursuit of peace should therefore start by mitigating the current human suffering.

The future of society and of the peace we seek will depend to a high degree, on the political and economic development of inclusive society, Peace is the cornerstone of every nation's development.

- It comes along with unity, positive thinking.
- Collaboration for the common good of all.
- Helps citizens to decide on a set of united values that they will live by and nurture for the next generation.

POVERTY in Nigeria should be the concern of everyone.

Efforts for peace and unity should include:

- Alleviating poverty and hunger
- Improvement in areas of health
- Education
- Tackle the issue of unemployment
- Promoting good living conditions for all citizens' people.

Peace is a pre-requisite for development as a whole because it creates an enabling environment for the **fundamentals of a society's progress:**

- Human capital development,
- Infrastructure development,
- Flourishing markets, and so on

POSITIVE PEACE WILL GUARANTEE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ONLY THEN THAT THE FUTURE WILL BE ASSURED

Since the last decade, the world has been seized with apprehension about the fate of future generation considering the level unemployment, dwindling resources, climate change, environmental degradation, water pollution and destruction of aquatic lives. Even the youths of our generation have gone out of control. They believe that this generation has failed them. In their state of anger they do not trust anyone. They neither understand morals nor respect ethics. Many of them are desperate. For them, the future is so bleak. There is therefore, a legitimate reason for their anxiety.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS FUSED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF THE GROWING YOUTHFUL POPULATION AND PRESERVING RESOURCES FOR THEIR BENEFIT.

In fact, progressive economy and peace are intimately linked. It is the youths that represent the future. To guarantee the future we must join the rest of the world and key into the preservation of our planet, we must address the action that climate change demands. We have to tap the power of science to save those resources that are Scarce. The United Nations Sustainable Development goals hinges on the (5 Ps) of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. The concern here has to do with economic justice. That is, taking into account the imperatives of meeting the economic and social needs of the present times and save some for those of the future generations. That presupposes that we must pursue stable economic growth. None of these will be actualized in a state of conflict and disunity.

I WONT STOP BLAMING BUHARI FOR THE KILLINGS IN THE NORTH - KUKAH

President Muhammadu Buhari, remains a culprit in the current orgy of killings sweeping across states in the northern parts of Nigeria, to the extent of his inability to stop it, in the calculation of the Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, Matthew Kukah.

Again taking to the pulpit to denounce the President on the issue, Kukah, who has drawn a lot of attacks from the Presidency and other Buhari supporters over his acerbic attacks in the past, seems undaunted over his convictions that Abuja, could have done more to end the carnage.

He regretted, in his Christmas Message sermons “a catalogue of unprecedented cruelty has been unleashed on innocent citizens,” saying the region could soon become *Arewanistan* in view of the persistent killings.

Hear him: “In their sleep, on their farmlands, in their markets, or even on the highway, innocent citizens have been mowed down and turned into burnt offerings to gods of evil,” an angry Kukah said in his Christmas message entitled ‘A nation still in search of truth and vindication’.

“Communities have been turned into gulags of misery, death, pain and perfidy. We must move quickly before Arewa, our beloved Arewa, descends into Arewanistan.

“At about this time last year when I raised the alarm about the perilous state of affairs in northern Nigeria, all kinds of accusations were levelled against me, especially by my northern brethren.

“When the Catholic Bishops protested openly against the killings of our people in March 2020, we were accused of acting against government with religious motives being imputed to our noble intentions. Now, we are fully in the grip of evil. Today, a feeling of vindication only saddens me as I have watched the north break into a cacophony of quarrelsome blame games over our tragic situation.

“Tales and promises about planned rescues have since deteriorated into mere whispers. Nothing expresses the powerlessness of the families like the silence of state at the federal level. Today, after over seven years, our over one hundred Chibok Girls are still marooned in the ocean of uncertainty.

“Over three years after, Leah Sharibu is still unaccounted for. Students of the Federal Government College, Yauri, and children from Islamiyya School, Katsina are still in captivity. This does not include hundreds of other children whose captures were less dramatic.

“We also have lost count of hundreds of individuals and families who have been kidnapped and live below the radar of publicity. We have before us a government totally oblivious to the cherished values of the sacredness of life.

“The silence of the federal government only feeds the ugly beast of complicity in the deeds of these evil people who have suspended the future of entire generations of our children.

“Every day, we hear of failure of intelligence, yet, those experts who provide intelligence claim that they have always done their duty diligently and efficiently.

“Does the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria not believe that he owes parents and citizens answers as to where our children are and when they are coming home?

“Does the President of Nigeria not owe us an explanation and answers as to when the abductions, kidnappings, brutality, senseless, and endless massacres of our citizens will end? When will our refugees from Cameroon, Chad or Niger return home? We need urgent answers to these questions.

“While I commend the efforts of our security men and women, I call on the President, in collaboration with the governors who are doing their best to preserve and protect their people to develop a more honest, open and robust strategy for ending the humiliation of our people and restoring social order to our people. We have borne enough humiliation as communities and a country.”

Paying tribute to several northern Christians who, he said, had either been killed or kidnapped for their faith, he added: “When Michael Nnadi, our teenage Seminarian from Sokoto Diocese, stared down the nozzle of the guns of terrorists and called them to repentance, he knew he was signing his signature with the blood of martyrdom.

“When Mrs. Bolanle Ataga, a Kaduna-based housewife of a medical doctor, defied the evil hands of the head of her captors who sought to violate her honour in exchange for freedom, she knew she was signing her signature with the blood of martyrdom.

“When Lawan Andimi, leader of the Christian community in Michika, Adamawa State stretched out his neck and was slaughtered by his abductors because of his faith, he knew that his blood would flow into the ocean of those martyrs who have gone before him.

“When our dear Leah Sharibu raised her voice against the advice of her young Muslim friends who loved her dearly and wanted her to deny being a Christian, she, like Jesus, acted in defiance but she knew what awaits her in a new Jerusalem, the capital of martyrdom.

“Their heroic witnesses re-echo the defiance of the Apostles who said: We must obey God rather than men. When the politicians embark on outright favouritism or nepotism, we must not be carried away by the belief that our religion is being favoured.

“Religious leaders must stand together and condemn lack of fairness to any group because the powerful and the powerless all need to be saved.”

On the polity, especially the Electoral Amendment Bill which President Buhari recently declined to sign into law, Kukah asked the National Assembly to “quickly take notice of the observations made by the President on the issues of Direct or Indirect Primaries and return the Bill to the President for assent.

“I believe that the President's heart is still in the right place and we should focus on the serious issues. The youths must seize the moment by coming out to register and be ready to vote. Endsars protests and the aftermath should be a mere punctuation mark in the sentences and chapters of our struggle for a better society.

“There is a lot to live for in this country. There is a lot for our Youth to dream about. The spirit of Christmas should be seen as a spirit of renewal. Be courageous, because we shall turn the corner together.”

2023 PRESIDENCY BEGINS AS NGIGE CONFIRMS APC LEADERS AGREED ON POWER SHIFT TO SOUTH AFTER BUHARI



Ahead of 2023 elections, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Senator Chris Ngige has expressed strong support for the emergence of a President of Southern extraction.

Ngige said this was in line with the rotation and zoning convention guiding the composition of government at various levels in Nigeria.

The minister stated that there was an understanding among the political class that the Presidency would go to the South after the tenure of President Muhammadu Buhari.

Ngige, who is a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), argued that zoning and rotation of power created stability, unity, equity and progress of the country.

According to him, rotation engendered confidence and patriotism and ensured that no one ethnic group or section of the country, dominated the other.

The former Anambra State Governor described those saying no such convention existed as not saying the truth.

He particularly berated the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for hibernating and waiting for APC to choose a Southern presidential candidate, so they can pick theirs from the North in clear breach of the rotation convention and even against the rotation principle enshrined in the PDP constitution.

“Their top apparatchik thinks they are smart. They want to play a fast one. They are waiting for APC to say South. Their calculation is that when that happens, they will go North. Number one, that will be an act of bad faith because it will mean that they have taken the people in the

South-South and South-East that have all along supported PDP 90 per cent in all the elections, for a ride.

“The PDP will be shocked the way the South-East, the South-South and other minorities, in fact, Nigerians as a whole will revolt.

“So, if they are waiting for our great party the APC to choose a Southern candidate so they can quickly turn and present a Northern candidate at a point the dominant mood in the country is for power to shift to the South, then, they are deceiving themselves. Nigerians will shock them.”

Answering questions from journalists at his country home in Alor, Idemili South LGA of Anambra State, Ngige insisted that an unwritten agreement exists among politicians and political parties that rotation of offices should take place and in the case of PDP, written down in its constitution.

According to him, though the issue of the rotation of the prime offices in the land is not expressly written in the constitution of APC, it is by implications contained in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended).

“We formed the APC and I am still alive. I was then a Senator. We started the discussion even before I went to Senate in 2011. We started the discussion for the formation of APC between ACN and CPC. After the election, ANPP joined us. Then, I now brought APGA with Okorocha. Today, some people falsify issues to say that Okorocha brought APC to the South-East. It is not true. I and Ogbonnaya Onu were the fathers of APC in the South-East. I specifically brought in Okorocha, Annie Okonkwo and Osita Izunaso. They are the three leading people we brought into the formation committee.

“After formation, we set up a 32-man Interim Management Committee, serving like working committee members. We were drawn from ACN as senior partners with six governors, ANPP had three governors, CPC one governor, APGA one governor and then, DPP with one Senator and some House of Representatives members.

“I was the secretary at our first convention and I took all the minutes. We had an agreement that our flag-bearer would come from the North and after North, it would go down to the South. So, those who are talking today were not there when this agreement was made. But was it written down and signed by politicians from both sides? No. But we had minutes of the meeting. They are there. It was agreed that there would be a movement between North and South.

“As we were doing the convention and filling in offices, we narrowed down our candidates to about two or three. But, among the candidates, General Buhari was topping. All of us from the ACN caucus had agreed that he was our candidate. CPC had agreed that he would be their candidate. ANPP was split into two. So, when we went to the presidential convention, he emerged with a wide margin. That is the truth of the matter.

“So, we expect that our national chairman this time around will come from the North and our Presidential candidate will come from the South and it is left for the Southerners to decide the zone it will go among South-East, South-South and South-West but for equity and moral ground, the South-East being the only yet to produce the President since 1999 should be given the chanc



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