

Customs Comptroller-General Portrait Of An Achiever

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Apapa: The Endangered Port City

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For long, there have been fears that a disaster of unimaginable proportion would one day befall Apapa, Nigeria's commercial nerve centre. The fears emanate from the presence of numerous tank farms that abound in the city; the unending traffic gridlock which gathers people together for possible massive destruction and lately terrorism which target the tank farms and the port facilities in order to touch off unprecedented destruction of lives and property. All these make Apapa an endangered city. Please read on.

Ports Surveillance 32-34

As the ports access roads in Apapa become a permanent parking lot for heavy-duty tankers and trucks, those who cannot find space now flow into adjoining streets and lanes to the discomfort of residents and other users, thus adding a new dimension to a very bad situation. Since the onset of heavy rains in June, Apapa residents have been lamenting the toll this development is taking on their individual businesses, comfort, environment and the national economy in general.

Spotlight 38-39

The governor of Abia State, Theodore Orji, recently announced plans to deliver a seaport to his people before leaving office in 2015. Coming less than ten months to the end of his tenure, maritime stakeholders have lampooned the proposed project as mere wishful thinking and a grand illusion.

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Having scaled the hurdle of the 2013 ultimatum on full compliance to the ISPS Code, Nigeria has achieved comfortable position as ports security is now a top priority.



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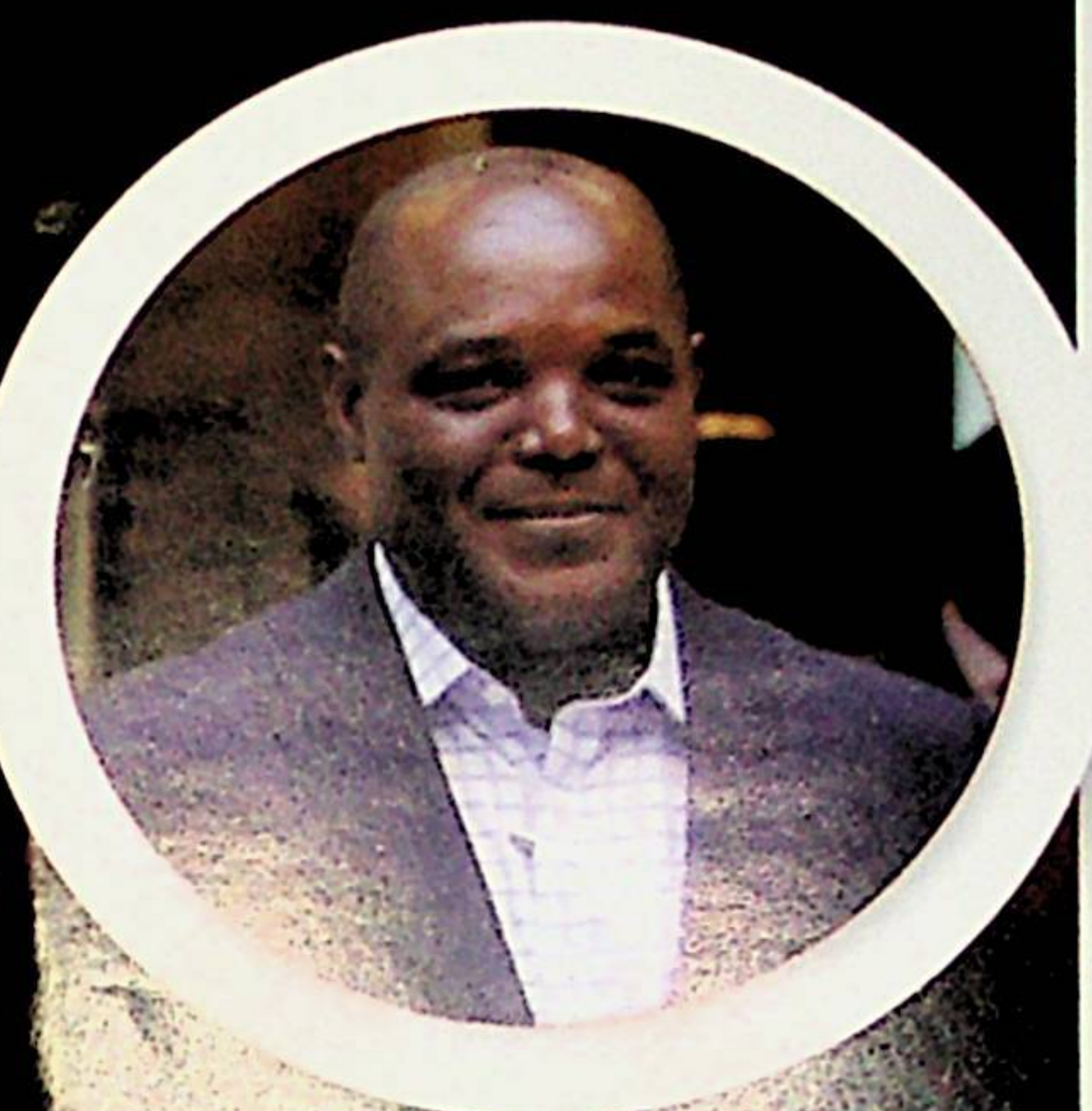
Ports Surveillance 22-29

The Nigerian Customs Service has, since inception, been headed by many Comptrollers-General. Each of them made their mark in their own ways and left remarkable footprints on the sands of time. However, one can safely say that, in comparative terms, none has done as much as Alhaji Abdullahi Dikko Inde, the present Comptroller-General, in actualizing the mandate of the Service as enshrined in the enabling statutes.

On assumption of office in 2009, Comptroller-General Dikko Inde put together a six-point agenda marshalling out specific objectives aimed at taking the service to the next level in line with modern international standards and best practices. This action-plan included trade facilitation, staff welfare, information and communication technology (ICT). Others were capacity-building and relationship with various stakeholders including the World Customs Organization (WCO). Taking the six-point agenda as a yardstick to measure the performance of Dikko, Business & Maritime West Africa in this edition sounded the opinion of selected customs area controllers on what they think about Dikko and his six-point agenda.

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The governor of Abia State, Theodore Orji, recently said he was going to build a seaport in Abia State. He promised to deliver the port before the expiration of his tenure next year. As 2015, another election year approaches, stakeholders are only amused, dismissing it all as a grand illusion.

The deplorable condition of the Lagos ports access roads and the activities of truck operators continue to be an issue as the problem has spilled into streets and residential areas. Adjoining communities are not spared. Apart from impaired economic activities, security of the areas affected is also being threatened.

Ten years after the inception of the ISPS Code, Nigeria's false start and corruption-ridden efforts at compliance, the country appears to be getting it right now with the US authorities, however, breathing down its neck.

The *usuals* are also packaged in this edition for your reading pleasure.

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The CVFF And The Culture Of Impunity

By Enyeribe Anyanwu

Society watchdogs will readily recall the heydays of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) with Nuhu Ribadu at the helm of affairs. That time, government officials and public office holders had begun to see corruption as something reprehensible and something to conceal. The mere mention of EFCC or Nuhu Ribadu used to

send shivers down the spine of any corrupt or intending corrupt public official or financial criminal.

Unarguably, the EFCC under Ribadu actually struck fear in the minds of those entrusted with public funds or those who engage in economic sabotage. The accusations of victimization and allegations of settling scores with the EFCC leveled at the government of former President Olusegun Obasanjo notwithstanding at least, the war against corruption was prosecuted with vigour. Of course, there had to be scapegoats for EFCC, even when all can be said to be corrupt.

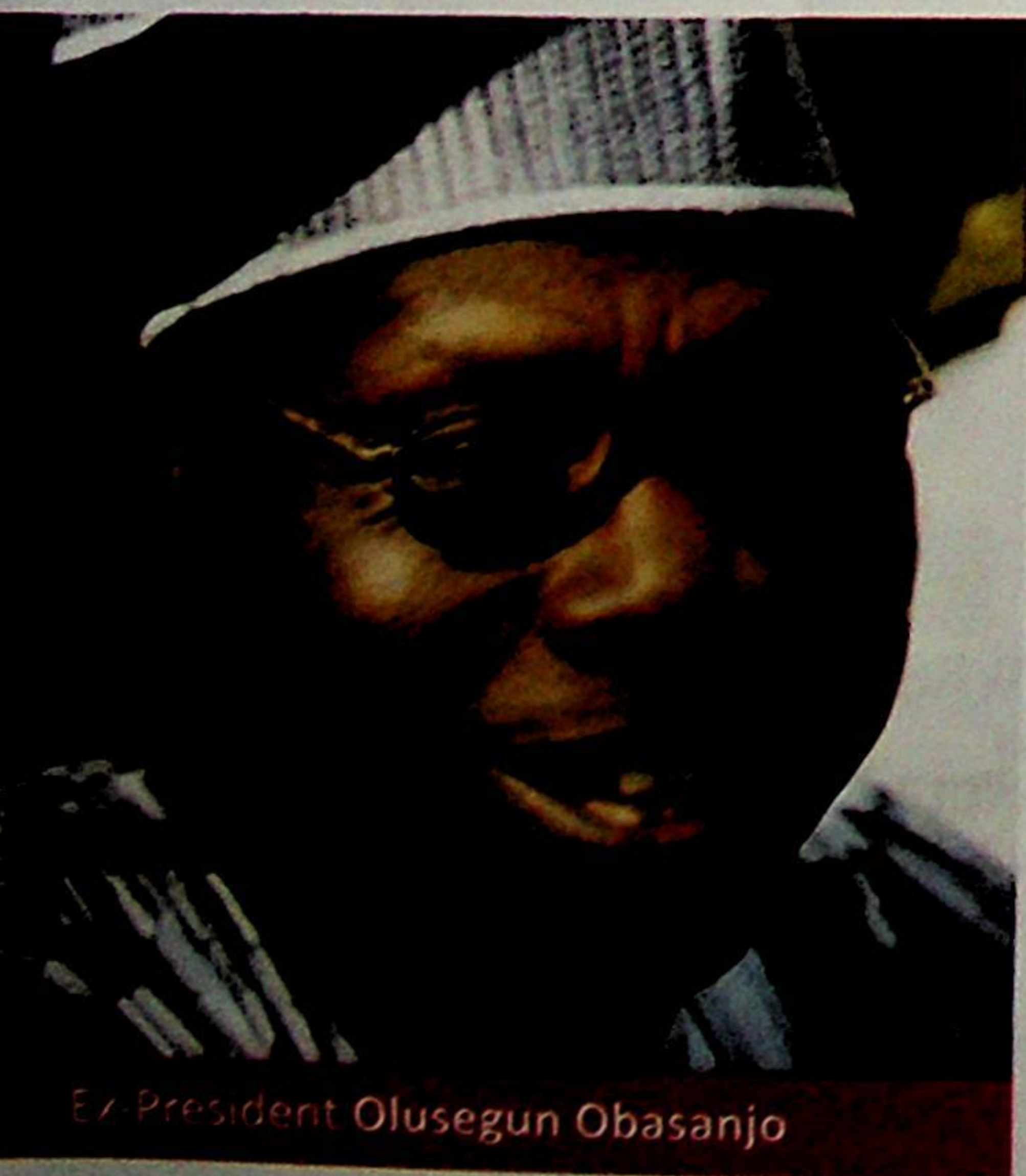
But all that has become history. Today if you shout EFCC at the corridors of power or before a criminal, what you will hear is, 'so what?' The name no longer means anything to anyone as the anti-corruption watchdog has been completely emasculated and compromised. These days, it can neither bark nor bite.

Thus, corrupt public officials can no longer be threatened with EFCC, the once emerging hope in the horizon for the restoration of sanity in the country's

pervading atmosphere of corruption. With the present administration, corruption has graduated with frightening degrees of impunity. The social and economic malaise is now parading brazenly, especially among those close to the President or those well-connected to the corridors of power.

This culture of impunity is playing out very well in NIMASA (the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency). A proof of this can be seen in the management of the Cabotage Vessels Financing Fund, a component of the failed Cabotage Act. For several years now, the intended beneficiaries of the Fund and industry watchers have been told over and over again that the disbursement would soon commence. Like children, they have been lulled to sleep with these words each time the agitation becomes high.

Meanwhile, the banks, the so-called Primary Lending Institutions appointed to disburse the Fund continue to reap where they did not sow with the active connivance of government officials in



Ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo

NIMASA and the Federal Ministry of Transport. In addition to collaborating with the banks, the NIMASA officials are now alleged to be dipping their hands into the funds collected under the CVFF with impunity. All the money collected no longer go into the Fund. For everyone else, as far as the CVFF is concerned, it has become a matter of the more you look, the less you see.

If the NIMASA management is not guilty of tampering with the CVFF, if they are not guilty of collaborating with the banks to hold down the disbursement of the fund for mutual benefits, why is it difficult to call the banks to order? Why is it difficult to retrieve the money that is not theirs from them? Who is benefitting from the continued stay of the money in the banks' vaults even when they have unashamedly breached the terms of agreement?

Under the agreement NIMASA entered into with the banks for the disbursement of the Fund, the banks, namely Skye, Sterling, Diamond and Fidelity Banks, were to play a complimentary role in the effort to develop the nation's shipping capacity. The granting of loan to a beneficiary was structured in such a way that NIMASA (CVFF) would provide 55 per cent of the amount applied for by the applicant company; the banks will contribute 35 per cent while the applicant company will make up the rest.

Today, after six years and with over \$300m in their vaults, the banks cannot fulfill their own side of the contract. They are reluctant to honour the agreement they entered into with their eyes wide open, yet NIMASA management is pretending to be helpless in the face of this brazen breach of contract. Analysts believe that the banks are reluctant to part with 35 per cent of the ship financing at the interest rate of

6.5 per cent. Used to double digit interest rate, they don't see the venture as viable. But who is to blame? Did they not know all this before jostling for appointment as PLIs? Evidently, all that the banks did was to agree to the terms, get the money in their kitty and tell stories later. After all, nothing will happen. Is this not Nigeria? What with when there are officials in NIMASA and the Federal Ministry of Transport who are ready to play ball.

Early this year, at the biggest gathering of Nigerian maritime operators in Lagos, a threat of protests and reprisals went out against the banks and NIMASA for withholding the disbursement of the fund while Nigerian ship owners are up to their eyes in debt and their companies dying one after the other. But up to now nothing has happened.

So saddened with the impunity with which NIMASA, the banks and transport ministry officials are sitting on the fund, a prominent indigenous player, Mr. Greg Ogbeifun did not mince words in telling them the home truth. He maintained that the CVFF does not belong to NIMASA or the government. There is no appropriation for it neither does it form part of NIMASA budget. It is the money being contributed by the shipping companies themselves with the 2 per cent compulsory collection. The money is solely meant to enhance the capacity of indigenous shipping operators and empower them to compete favourably with their foreign counterparts and eventually take control of the nation's cabotage trade.

Unfortunately, the fund is being seen as another largesse from government which should be used for political patronage or to dispense favour instead of being seen as a shipping development imperative.

This is why, if not for the opposition raised by industry operators, a consultant would have been foisted on NIMASA by government to administer the

Fund. This would have enabled politicians and unprincipled adventurers to access the Fund with phantom shipping companies.

Of considerable concern to maritime watchers is the level of confusion that has been introduced into the CVFF and its disbursement. At a particular time, NIMASA said six indigenous companies had been shortlisted to benefit from the fund following recommendations from the PLIs. This was countered in another forum by the Minister of Transport who said eight companies were recommended.

The latest now came a few months ago when, the Director General of NIMASA, Ziakede Akpobolekemi, said 14 indigenous companies had been shortlisted to benefit from the Fund and that disbursement would soon commence. The DG who was represented on that occasion by the Director of Cabotage, Mrs. Oruwa Etete, explained for the umpteenth time that the delay in the disbursement of the Fund was to ensure that the money did not get into wrong hands but would be given to those who would make judicious use of it.

As the stakeholders awaited the disbursement of the Fund, the confusion was further compounded when another explanation filtered out that disbursement would not commence again because the companies recommended were not those shortlisted by the PLIs. And so the delay continues.

At the moment, NIMASA's claim that 14 companies have been selected does not hold water as information has it that the applications are still undergoing screening by the Minister of Transport, Senator Idris Umar. One therefore wonders from where NIMASA got the 14 companies supposed to have been shortlisted as beneficiaries. Reading between the lines, one can easily see an embarrassing communication gap between the Federal Ministry of Transport and

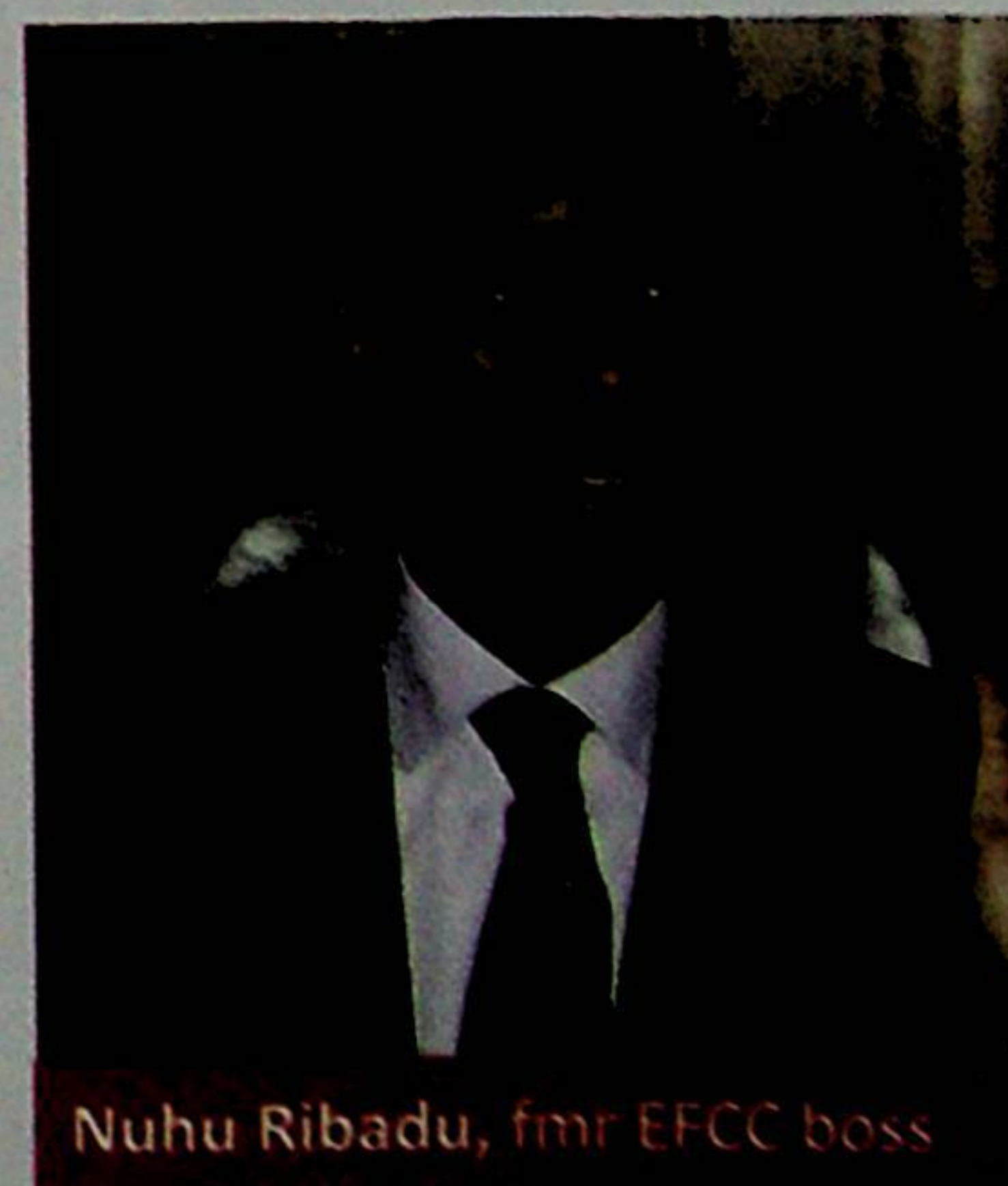


Sen. Idris, Transport Minister

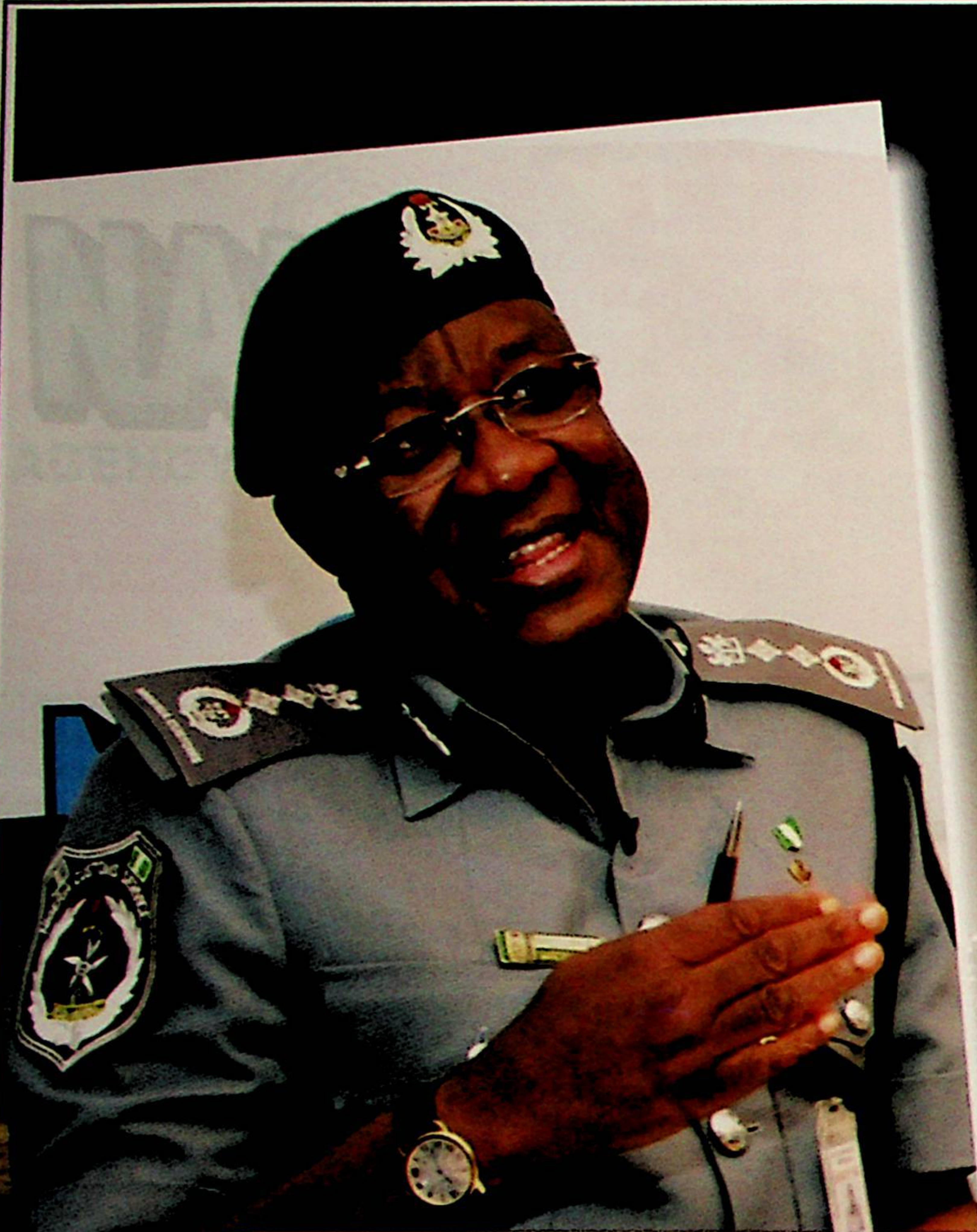
NIMASA. The resultant effect is the discordant tunes being sang by both at the detriment of the nation's shipping development.

It is high time, the CVFF was deployed for the purpose it was created. The total amount so far collected should be ascertained. NIMASA and the banks should be meant to account properly for all the money collected from the cabotage trade operators. They should not be allowed to play lords with the money that does not belong to them but which is collected from people to solve a pressing economic problem.

It's unfortunate that the NIMASA DG who has been explaining since he inherited the CVFF that he would delay the disbursement in order to ensure it does not go the way of its predecessor, the SASBF, is concluding his four-year tenure. He would leave office –and this is imminent - without the money not being disbursed to genuine indigenous shipping operators ●



Nuhu Ribadu, fmr EFCC boss



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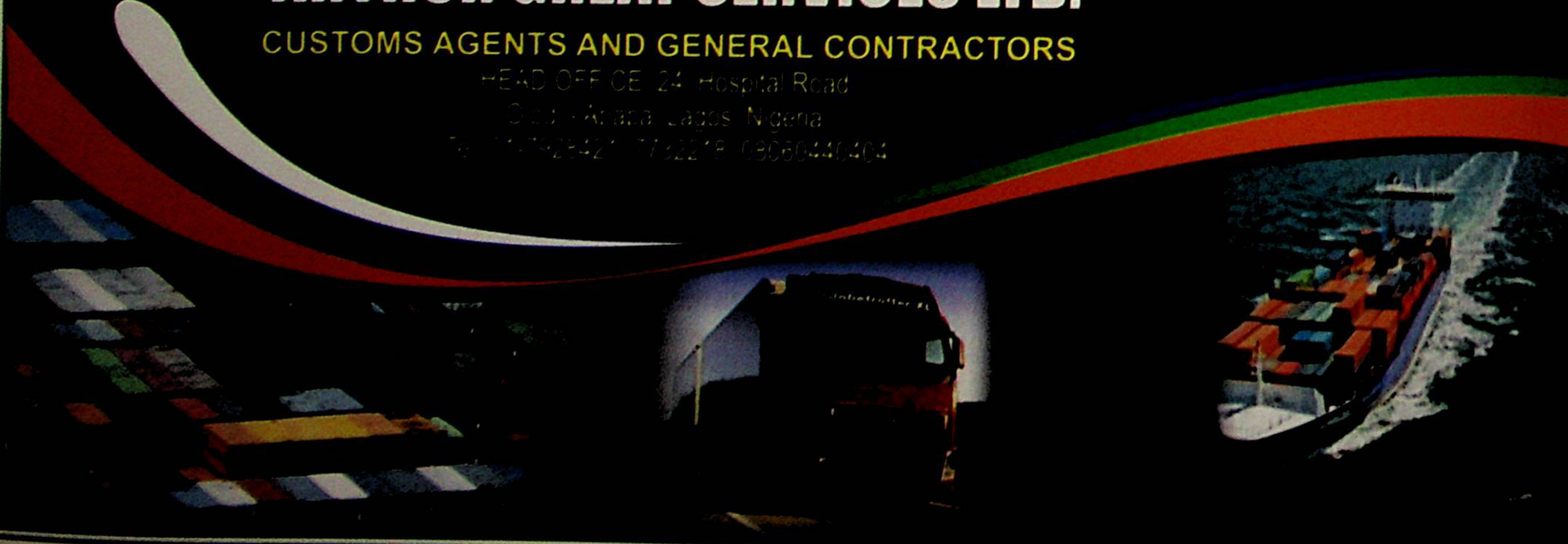
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Apapa: The Endangered Port City

For long, there have been fears that a disaster of unimaginable proportion would one day befall Apapa, Nigeria's commercial nerve centre. The fears emanate from the presence of numerous tank farms that abound in the city; the unending traffic gridlock which gathers people together for possible massive destruction and lately terrorism which target the tank farms and the port facilities in order to touch off unprecedented destruction of lives and property. All these make Apapa an endangered city. Please read on.

The port city of Apapa is under threat – threat from ubiquitous petrol tank farms, threat from terrorist attacks; threat from debilitating traffic gridlock. The city that makes Lagos megacity Nigeria's commercial capital is indeed sitting on a keg of gunpowder. The level of threat is such that if the warning signals are not addressed by concerned authorities or if only half measures are taken, the port city and environs will one day become a study in destruction of lives and property.

Worse still, Nigeria's two major seaports are seriously threatened as they would not be spared should any disaster triggered by the factors above befall Apapa.

The most recent warning signal came on Wednesday, June 25 2014, barely two months ago. Two explosions had rocked the commercial city. The first occurred near the gate of Folawiyo Tank Farm on Creek Road Apapa. It was

followed some minutes later with another explosion as a Toyota Sienna loaded with explosives and parked along Creek Road also not far from the gate of the tank farm blew up with a loud explosion. The Toyota Sienna car had been parked beside a fire-proof gas tanker. The hope was to trigger more explosions and more destruction, but fortunately, the tanker had emptied its content. The time was around 8.45pm and the usual traffic jam was not there.



President Goodluck Jonathan

The explosion left four people dead and destroyed properties. The destruction affected some nearby buildings, including Churchbell Building, Premier Logistics Building and Enterprise Bank.

Though government authorities including the police tried to conceal the unfortunate reality, the threat of terrorism in Apapa, the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria, has become a real and present danger. After the blast, the Lagos State government, the police and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), all said the blast was a gas fire incident. According to the Lagos State Police spokesman, Nguzi Bunde, the explosion was caused by a tanker conveying petrol.

"There is nothing whatsoever suggesting that it was a bomb explosion; it was a tanker loaded with fuel that burst into flames," she said.

But a few days later, Abubakar Shekau, leader of *Boko Haram*, the violent Islamist sect, claimed responsibility for the attack saying he ordered the strike and lampooned the Lagos State government for claiming it was not a bomb. According to a video he released through the French news agency, *AFP*, "A bomb went off in Lagos. I ordered (the bomber) who went and detonated it." Mr. Shekau had said. "You said it was a fire incident. Well, if you hide it from people you can't hide it from Allah," he further boasted.

Earlier the Lagos Commissioner of Police, Umar Manko, had also dismissed the explosion as mere industrial accident, claiming that the incident had nothing to do with *Boko Haram* activities. Mr. Manko asked Lagosians to carry on with their daily activities. He said as far as Lagos State was concerned there was nothing to fear as

regards *Boko Haram* attacks.

Lagosians, however, are not taken in by these denials and false sense of security. Not with the claim of *Boko Haram* and the apparent inability of the security agencies to halt the activities of the sect in the areas they have been hitting, even when they inform them of an imminent attack.

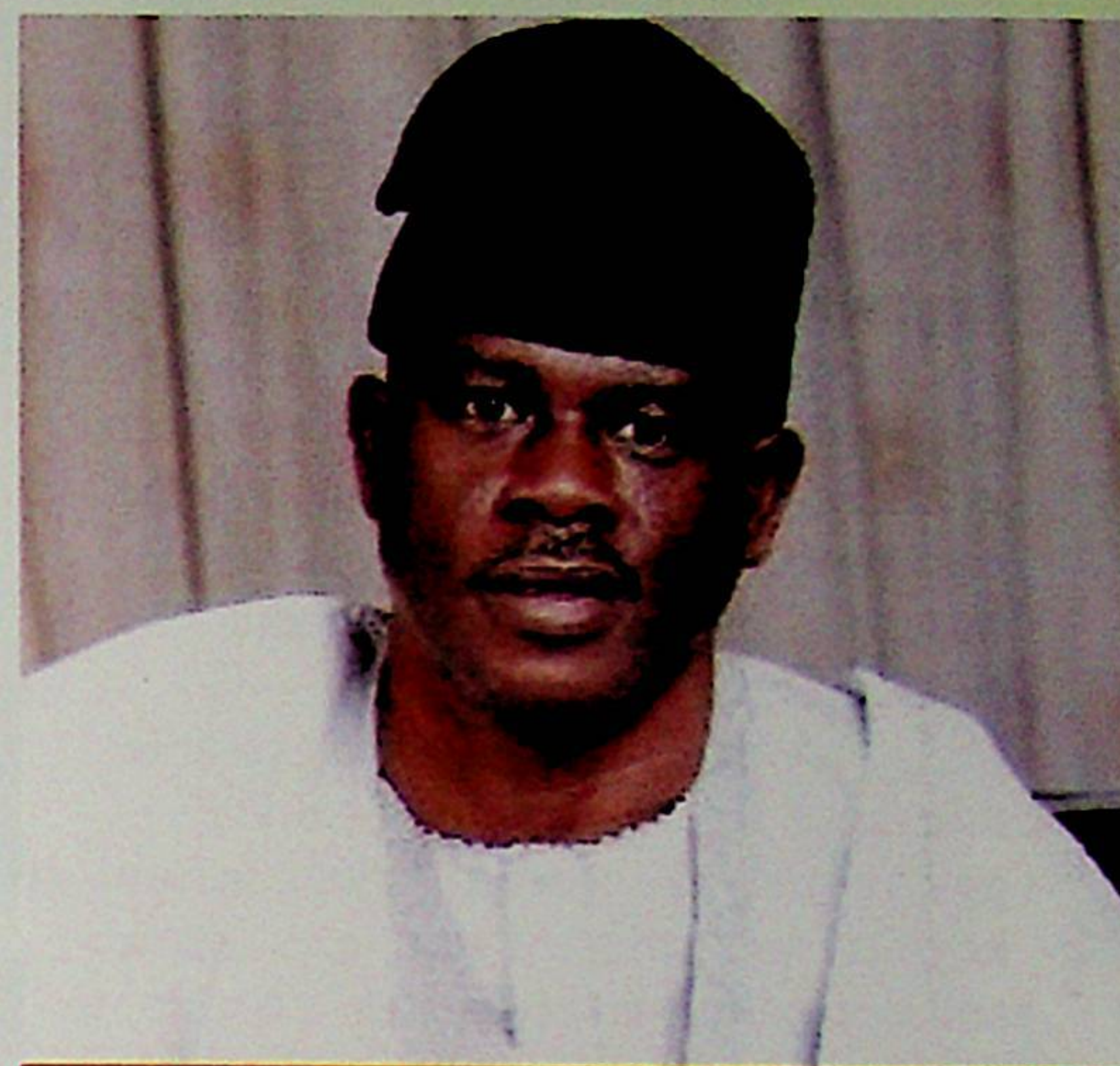
Furthermore, whether the explosion was caused by bomb or a gas fire is no longer an issue after a British bomb expert had confirmed that the incident was nothing but a bomb blast. According to *AFP*, after studying the photographs of the scene showing a destroyed car plus damage to surrounding vehicles, the British Army's former head of bomb disposal said the pictures left no doubt as to the cause.

"This was definitely an incident involving the use of high explosives," Bob Seddon,

an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran and a specialist in improvised explosive devices (IEDs), told *AFP* in an email exchange after reviewing the images.

"The type of blast effects and fragmentation pattern you would get from a gas explosion are quite different," the former Royal Logistics Corps colonel said, assessing that 25-50 kilos (55-110 pounds) of improvised high explosive were used.

Political and security consultants Control Risks, which has an office in Lagos, also said the Apapa blast was a bombing that killed at least four people. This was contained in a brief note it sent to its foreign business and government clients.



Musiliu Obanikoro, Minister of State, Defence

"Drawing on eyewitness sources, Control Risks assess that the incident was a militant attack rather than an industrial accident," the group's senior West Africa analyst, Roddy Barclay, had said.

With the threat of terrorism looming in Apapa, all



The Endangered Port City

that are needed is increased security alertness, pro-active and pre-emptive actions and strengthening of emergency responses instead of giving the citizens a false sense of security. The security operatives should swing into action to ensure that terrorism does not penetrate into Lagos, let alone take root as is the case now in Abuja, the federal capital instead of denying its unfortunate emergence on the scene.

However, it is reassuring to note that since June 25, the Lagos State government has ordered tighter security at key fuel and infrastructure installations, and beefed up state hospitals' capacity to deal with mass casualty emergencies. However, what the federal government and the various security agencies in the country are doing to stem the incursion of insurgency into Lagos is yet not known.

"Flat denials or no comment from the government are not uncommon in Nigeria, particularly involving Boko Haram, whose five-year insurgency has intensified in the northeast and seen almost daily attacks," said AFP in the report.

According to a US government official, Boko Haram has the "operational reach to get to Lagos." But he said the "The incident is likely to have been staged by a local Islamist network rather than being planned and coordinated by Boko Haram's core leadership in the northeast." He also said further attacks were "credible" probably on "soft targets".

THREAT FROM TANK FARMS

Even before the June 25 terrorist bombing, petroleum products tank farms had been a source of great danger to

Apapa and its environs. The tank farms had for years been seen as posing serious threat to lives and property in the port city. On many occasions, security experts have warned that Apapa and the seaports are sitting on a keg of gunpowder because of the proliferation of petroleum products tank farms around them.

Each near disaster has often provided a warning for a greater looming disaster but the authorities would merely mouth solutions to the imminent catastrophe and go home to sleep. For instance, in 2007, there was a fire incident at the same Folawiyo Petrol Tank farm. The incident occurred as a petrol tanker was loading fuel at the gantry. Though the fire was promptly controlled, it sparked fear and panic in the vicinity, serving as reminder that the inhabitants of Apapa are living with danger sitting on their laps.

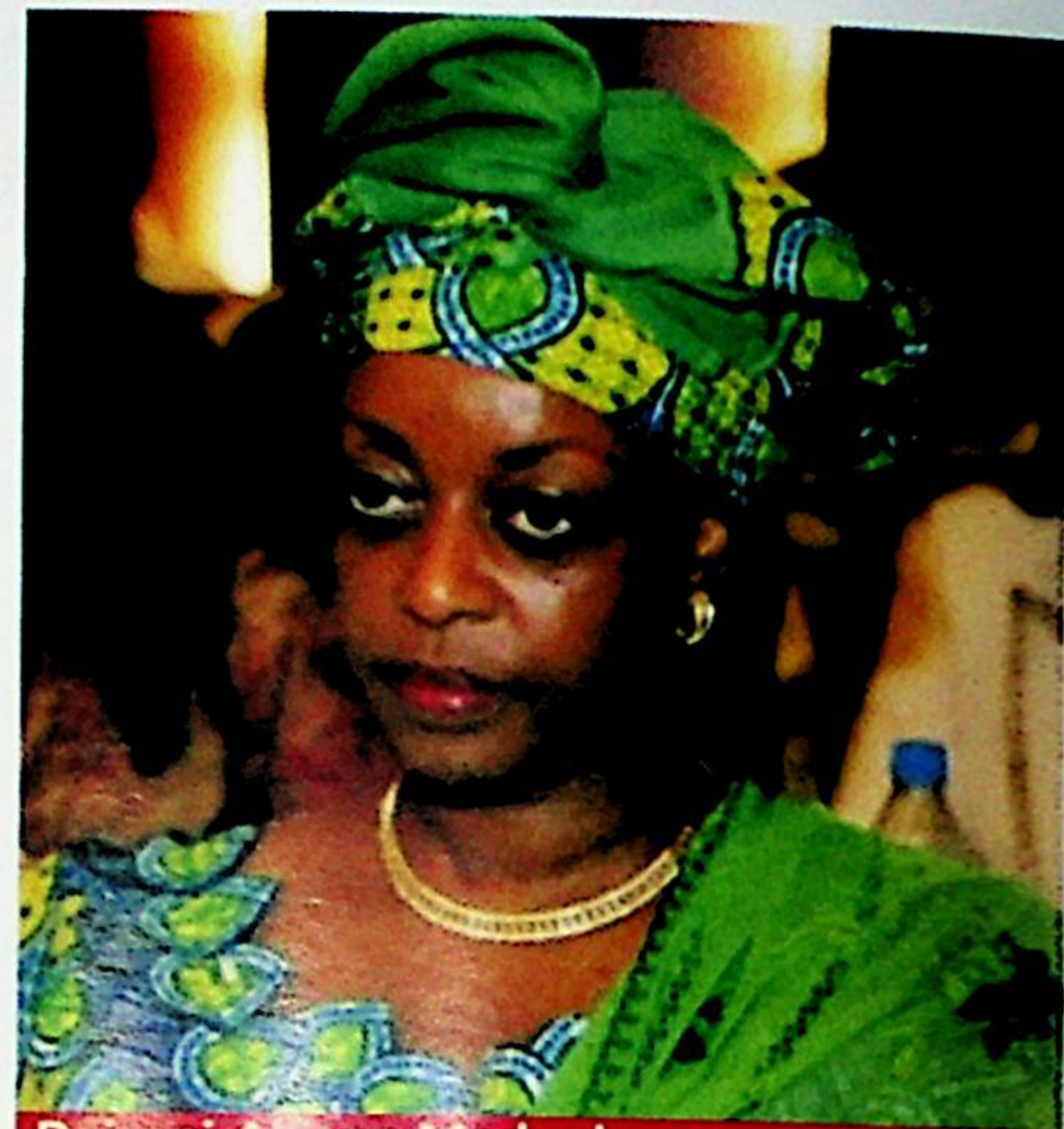
In January last year (2013), five persons were feared killed and scores injured when an oil barge discharging petrol at the MRS Oil and Gas tank farm jetty exploded within the Tin Can Island Port. Pandemonium seized the entire port city and environs as thick smoke from the inferno billowed into the sky. Business activities in and around the ports were brought to a halt when the barge exploded, shattering glass doors and windows of buildings around the vicinity and causing people within two kilometers radius to scamper for safety. Offices and business activities were closed for the day.

The administrative building of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ports and Cargo Complex, and a branch of First Bank not far from the explosion scene had their windows shattered and the buildings foundations badly shaken.

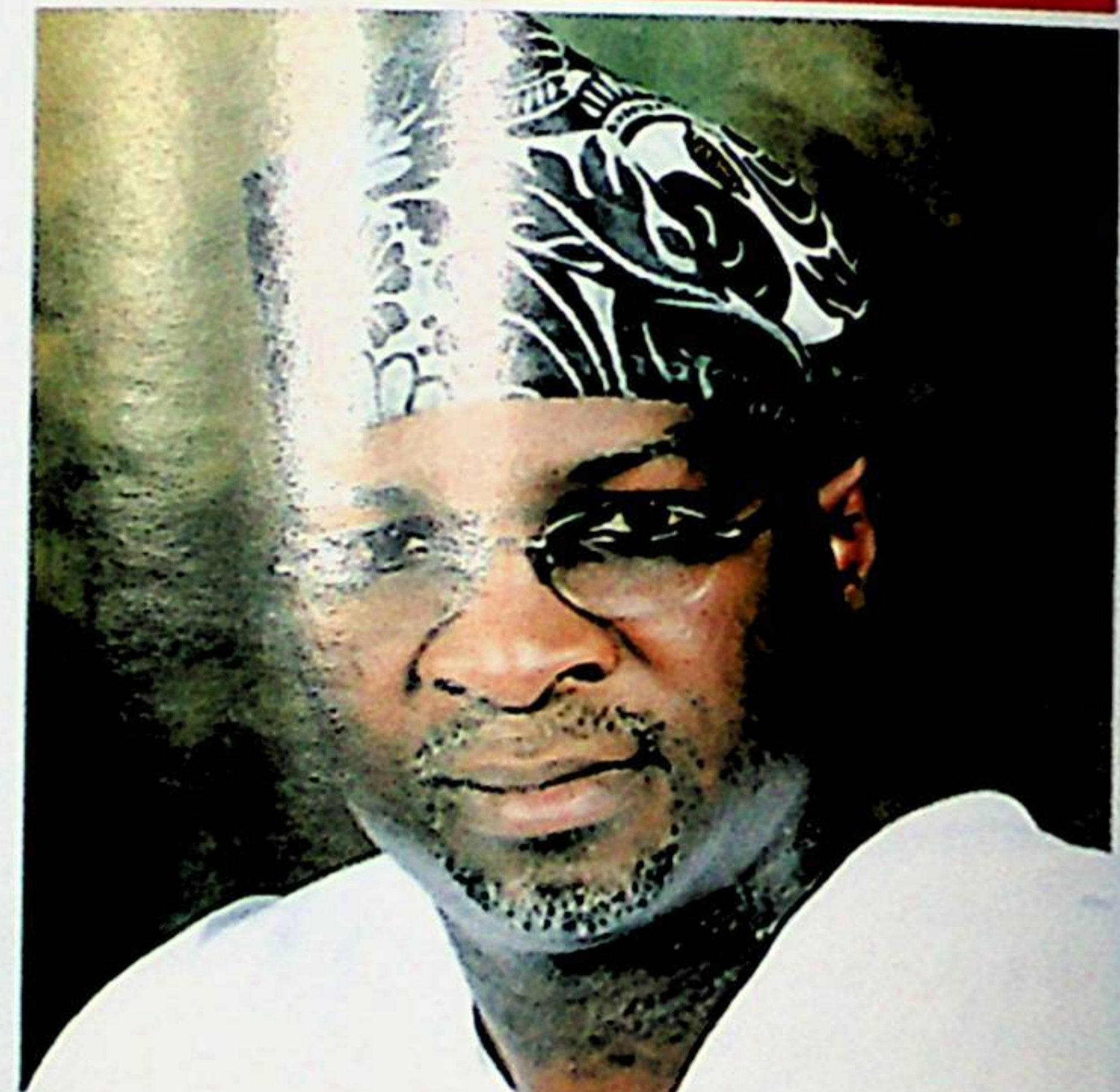
It was learnt that the incident occurred because the vessel offloading product, premium motor spirit (PMS), into MRS tank farm was improperly handled causing it to catch fire and later exploded after over 30 minutes of the conflagration.

Last year also, the loading gantry of Aiteo Energy's depot which is among the tens of tank farms lining the Ibru Jetty axis, was engulfed in an inferno, which resulted in the death of one person. The fire which erupted at about 12.30 am that fateful day was put out almost four hours later, following the intervention of the Lagos State Fire Service and the nearby Nigerian Independent Petroleum Company (NIPCO).

The oil marketing firm's loading bay, where petroleum products are loaded



Deizani-Alison Madueke,
Petroleum Minister



Gov Raji Fashola

into tankers was damaged in the fire incident, which came barely three weeks after the MRS Oil and Gas Limited's fire incident that consumed a barge at the company's main depot in Tin Can Island area of Lagos.

Several of such incidents were recorded last year at some depots in the same Apapa area, which houses virtually all the petroleum depots of major and independent oil marketers in Nigeria. This large concentration of oil tank farms in the area, results in unending traffic gridlocks, occasioned by long queues of petroleum tankers waiting to load petroleum products at the depots.

Besides, the high concentration of oil facilities in the area makes it prone to fire outbreaks and environmental pollutions. The fear of possible disaster of unprecedented proportion continues to haunt residents and business owners in



Rear Admiral Samuel Ilesanmi Alade,
FOC, Western Command

The Endangered Port City

Apapa and environs as most of the firms do not adhere to safety standards recommended by regulatory authorities

Saving the situation

Experts, stakeholders, industry watchers and residents have often clamoured for the relocation of the ubiquitous tank farms. They have also called for a stop of further construction of tank farms in the area.

Unfortunately, while the federal government says it would relocate the tank farms, more and more licenses are approved for new ones which spring up close to existing ones.

After the Folawiyo fire which caused about 50 per cent of its capacity in 2007, the federal government said it would decongest the Apapa petroleum depots in order to make the area less prone to fire outbreaks.

Then Energy Minister, Dr. Edmund Daukoru, while assessing the extent of damage caused by the fire incident, noted that the Apapa area was congested and that this posed a lot of insecurity to the area.

Said Daukoru, "The decongestion issue is already recognized by the federal government, and it has decided that no other developer will be allowed to construct tank farms in the area. The present situation is causing both



Folawiyo Tank Farm, Lagos

marine and land congestion and government is not happy with the situation."

Daukoru said henceforth, new depot developers would be allocated space at the Akodo Free Trade Zone in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State.

"A committee would be set up to look into the report of the situation in Apapa, then take a decision and pass it on to government for ratification," he said, adding that the options immediately available were to refuse the construction of new tank farms as well as the relocation of some of the existing depots.

He noted that these would result in the immediate development of import facilities in the Akodo Beach area, as well as operators gaining access to the deep-water facilities and free trade zone.

Unfortunately, more than seven years after, the situation has grown from bad to worse as new tank farms have joined existing ones and no depot has been relocated.

The Apapa area houses the petroleum depots of both the major marketers and independent depot operators,

The most recent warning signal came on Wednesday, June 25 2014, barely two months ago. Two explosions had rocked the commercial city. The first occurred near the gate of Folawiyo Tank Farm on Creek Road Apapa

distribution of fuel through the pipelines.

Recalcitrant Tank Farms

Worsening the fear of a major disaster in Apapa from tank farms is the inability of most of the tank farms to comply with the directives of the regulator. To prevent recurrent fire incidents, the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), regulator of oil and gas industry activities, issued a directive to oil marketing companies to put in place sufficient safety equipment of internationally approved standards and to make available at every installation of natural gas or petroleum products station, fire fighting and first aid equipment in accordance with good operating practice.

Getting the operators to comply with these relevant environmental policies in their various operating environment has been a major challenge confronting safety managers in the oil and gas industry. Inadequate firefighting equipment or lack of it has been the bane of efforts at handling fire emergencies in the industry.

According to a DPR

which in recent times have been assisting government with the storage of imported products and distribution of same to various parts of the country. This followed the vandalism of petroleum pipelines, which transported petroleum products to designated depots in the country. Up to now, nothing has been done to repair the pipelines and restore normal



Hon. Clever Ikisikpo, Chair, House Committee (Downstream)

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official, some of the depots in Nigeria do not meet the standards of ordinary filling station and also do not have a single firefighting truck to attend to emergencies. This has been confirmed by even the national assembly.

In 2010, the House of Representatives Committee on Downstream, chaired by Hon. Clever Ikisikpo, had during an inspection of depots and tank farms in Lagos, observed that most of the facilities were in deplorable condition and could not meet the standards for retail stations. The committee embarked on the tour, following a motion before the sixth assembly, that some tank farms and depots were wrongly situated, while others were not complying with recommended safety standards.

In the course of the oversight visit, the lawmakers also discovered that some of the facilities were situated either near residential areas, schools, military and police barracks or other sensitive areas not approved by relevant environmental laws and regulations.

At the end of the exercise, the committee resolved to recommend appropriate sanctions against the "ancient facilities" that posed health risks and those that were wrongly situated.

Ikisikpo said: "We will sit down and write our report based on what we saw. You can't even go into some of these ancient tank farms that we saw. We are even wondering what the Lagos State government is doing with its environmental laws, when you cannot even go into a tank farm. Those of us who are not from the riverine areas could not even go in for fear of getting drowned."

The committee later recommended that tank farms and depots situated near residential areas, schools, military and police formations and other sensitive areas, be relocated, arguing that since the federal government could relocate Nigeria's capital from Lagos to Abuja, there was no tank farm in the country that was beyond relocation.

"Any tank farm owner who thinks that we can't pull his tank farm from where it is, is deceiving himself, because if the federal government could relocate Nigeria's capital from Lagos to Abuja, there is no tank farm in the country that is

beyond relocation, if the need arises," Ikisikpo had told journalists after the facility tour.

But what happened to the committee and its recommendations four years after remains a matter of conjecture.

In 2011, officials of the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency shut down five tank farms located in the Kirikiri area over alleged violation of environmental laws. The tank farms - Bovas Petroleum Limited, Swift Oil Limited, Fagbems Petroleum Limited, Index Oil and Gas and Techno Oil Limited, were later reopened after their management signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), with the state

At the media chat marking the commencement of the operation, Rear Admiral Alade had said, "The Apapa gridlock has affected a lot of businesses and also created security problems in this particular area and we are most concerned giving the security situation in the country

government, where in parties agreed that a consultant would conduct a post-impact assessment of the area to ascertain the extent of environmental pollutions. But that is as far as the agency could go.

Recent calls for Relocation

Following the recent bomb blast near a tank farm and the total breakdown of traffic on the port access roads, the calls for the relocation of the tank farms have become more stringent. Many operators and experts have been suggesting permanent and short term solutions to the problem. During one of his visits to the troubled area recently, Lagos State governor, Babatunde Fashola cried out in frustration:

"Why are we transporting fuel by road, why can't we do it by rail? Now



Umar Tahir, Lagos Police Commissioner

make no mistake about it. There is a side of their business that we must listen to. We are the ones using the fuel and about 3,000 trucks load here every day and they have to come here. So this is the place we put fuel; why can't we pump fuel across the country, from Atlas Cove to Mosinmi and all of that. Why are those facilities not working; what has happened to them? Those are the questions that if we ask ourselves and if we tackle them, will provide a final and long term solution. So it is us really that are the problem and if we sit down and think about it and the agency of the federal government, managing the port, managing fuel should also get up and see what is happening.

"It is not enough to sit down and place adverts to say there is fuel at a pump price. What is the cost of taking that fuel to the people? What is the real purpose, why do I have fuel if it cannot take me to my office? So it is a really hard choice for government and the citizens, but I am sure we can do it," he said.

The Lagos State governor expressed disgust at the level of contribution of tankers and port-bound trucks to the pains Lagosians are going through in trying to transit through Apapa to other areas for their daily businesses.

Since the end of June when the rains became heavier in line with the Lagos climate, Apapa and environs have become a no-go area because of flooding which has worsened the deplorable state of the roads. Transiting through the port town to other areas in Lagos is now like passing through hell. The long-standing spectre of tankers

The Endangered Port City

and trucks occupying a greater part of the roads is now a child's play when compared with the current practice of total occupation, a development which has become so hopeless that people who do business in Apapa literally trek on a daily basis as no more space is left for them on the road.

However, owing to the public outcry and the repeated visits of Governor Fashola and his spirited efforts, some palliatives have been applied. But the clamour for long term measures continues with relocation of the tank farms as part of the ultimate solution.

In fact, the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) on July 9, 2014 issued an ultimatum calling for the relocation of the tank farms in a petition to the federal government. The union complained bitterly against the unending traffic gridlock on the Apapa/ Oshodi axis of the expressway which has practically shut down economic and other activities in the area and inflicted untold hardship to residents of the city and its environs.

"We observe with dismay that petrol tankers and trailers have permanently taken over the access roads to our sea ports, Apapa and Tin Can Island Ports in particular. The resultant gridlock caused by the indiscriminate parking of the petrol tankers and trailers that daily load petrol from the tank farms along the access roads to the sea ports have made movement of people and goods in and out of our sea ports and work places within the Apapa industrial/commercial area impossible," the union said in the petition signed by its scribe, Aham Ubani.

The maritime workers

union referred to deep pot-holes along the road, which are better described as gullies that have now turned death traps and have contributed in no small measure to the excruciating traffic gridlock on the road. The workers decried the utter neglect of the access roads which has not only compromised the efficiency and service delivery of the ports, but has also impacted negatively on the national economy.

The union said it had repeatedly called on government to relocate the tank farms along the Tin Can and Apapa Ports access roads for both safety of lives, properties and economic reasons. It expressed surprise that in spite of the assurances given that the tank farms would be relocated, till date, nothing has been done.

Consequently, the MWUN slammed a fourteen (14) day ultimatum within which "all the pot-holes along the port access roads must be fixed; all the tank farms built along the port access roads be relocated to another place where it would not inhibit free flow of traffic and all the

petrol tankers and trailers be removed from the port access roads."

However, this ultimatum was withdrawn as it was about to expire after the Navy had moved in to restore some sanity on the road and other port access roads.

THREAT FROM TRAFFIC GRIDLOCK

To say that the worsened traffic gridlock on the port access roads especially Trinity-Coconut-2nd Gate axis, is a threat to safety and security of lives and property is to say the obvious. Many road users have expressed such fears. However, the twin blasts at Creek Road, near the Folawiyo Tank Farm, accentuated the fear and brought the security threat posed by the traffic gridlock to the fore.

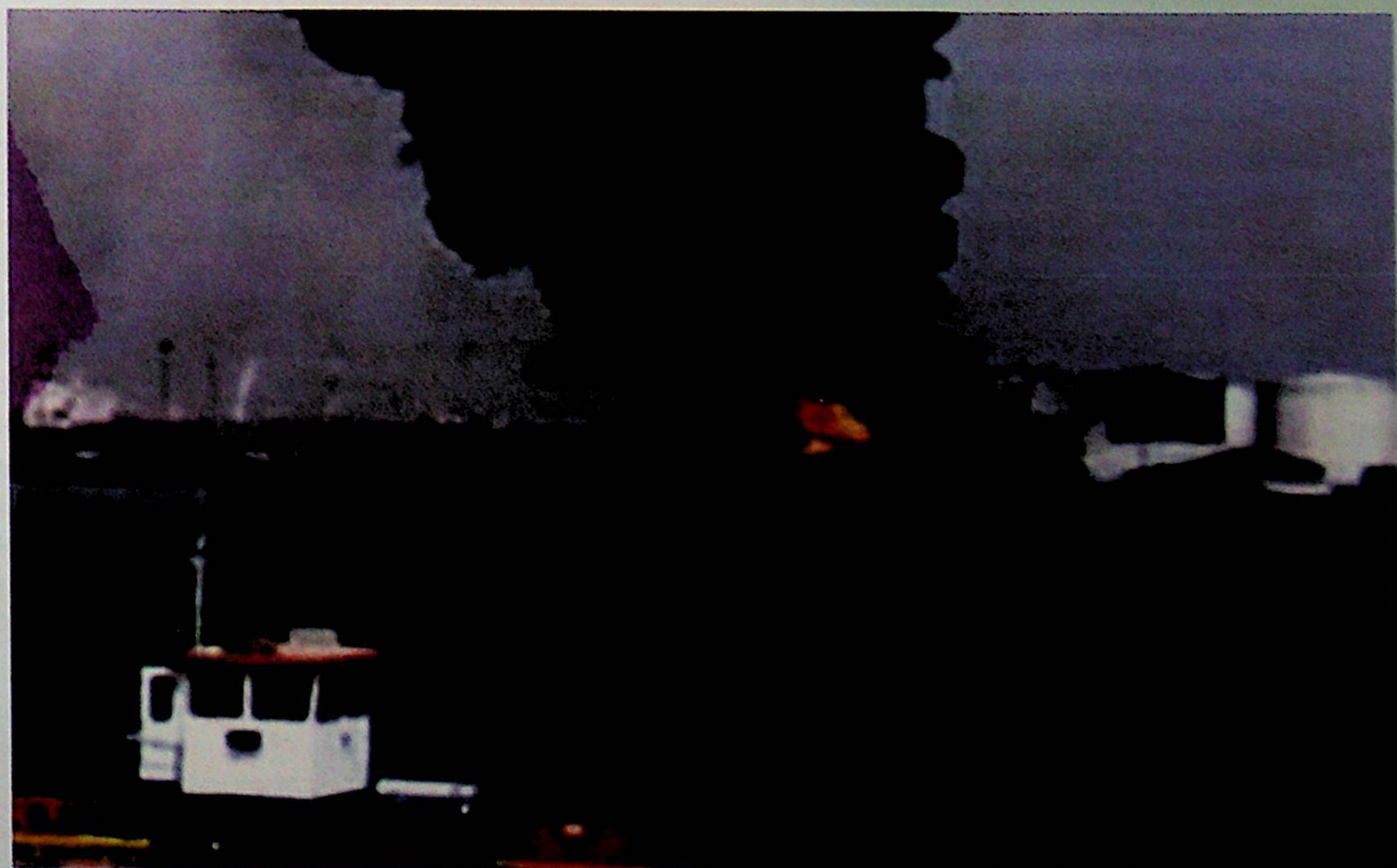
Jolted by the twin blasts that killed four people, the Nigerian Navy (NN) quickly moved into action to decongest the road to eliminate the security threat. A 24-hour daily operation to decongest the Apapa traffic was launched by

the Navy spearheaded by the Flag Officer Commanding Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Ilesanmi Alade.

In the light of the twin explosions, Rear Admiral Ilesanmi Alade, told the media at the commencement of the operation, code named, "operation Gbale" that heavy traffic gridlock was posing a serious security threat to Apapa and its environs. He said the Navy had to move in to restore some sanity to the road in order to ensure that people do not become "sitting ducks for acts of terror."

With "Operation Gbale," a Yoruba word for sweeping, Rear Admiral Alade said the Navy wanted to ensure that the traffic gridlock that had kept Apapa on lockdown for weeks was ameliorated and a lasting solution proffered.

Deploying the Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) Beecroft and Wey, led by Beecroft Commanding Officer, Commodore Ovenseri Uwadiae, to the flash points, the naval personnel soon set about wiping recalcitrant tanker drivers to



The Endangered Port City

shape. The operation extended down to Mile 2 area, Berger up to Tin-Can Island area, Ijora, Liverpool, Marine Beach and all the adjoining roads leading to Apapa.

Alade and his men were aided by the air wing of the NN which flew across Apapa and its environs to feed the ground personnel with aerial photographs and videos of the traffic situations in various areas. This helped the personnel in taking proactive decisions in decongesting the area.

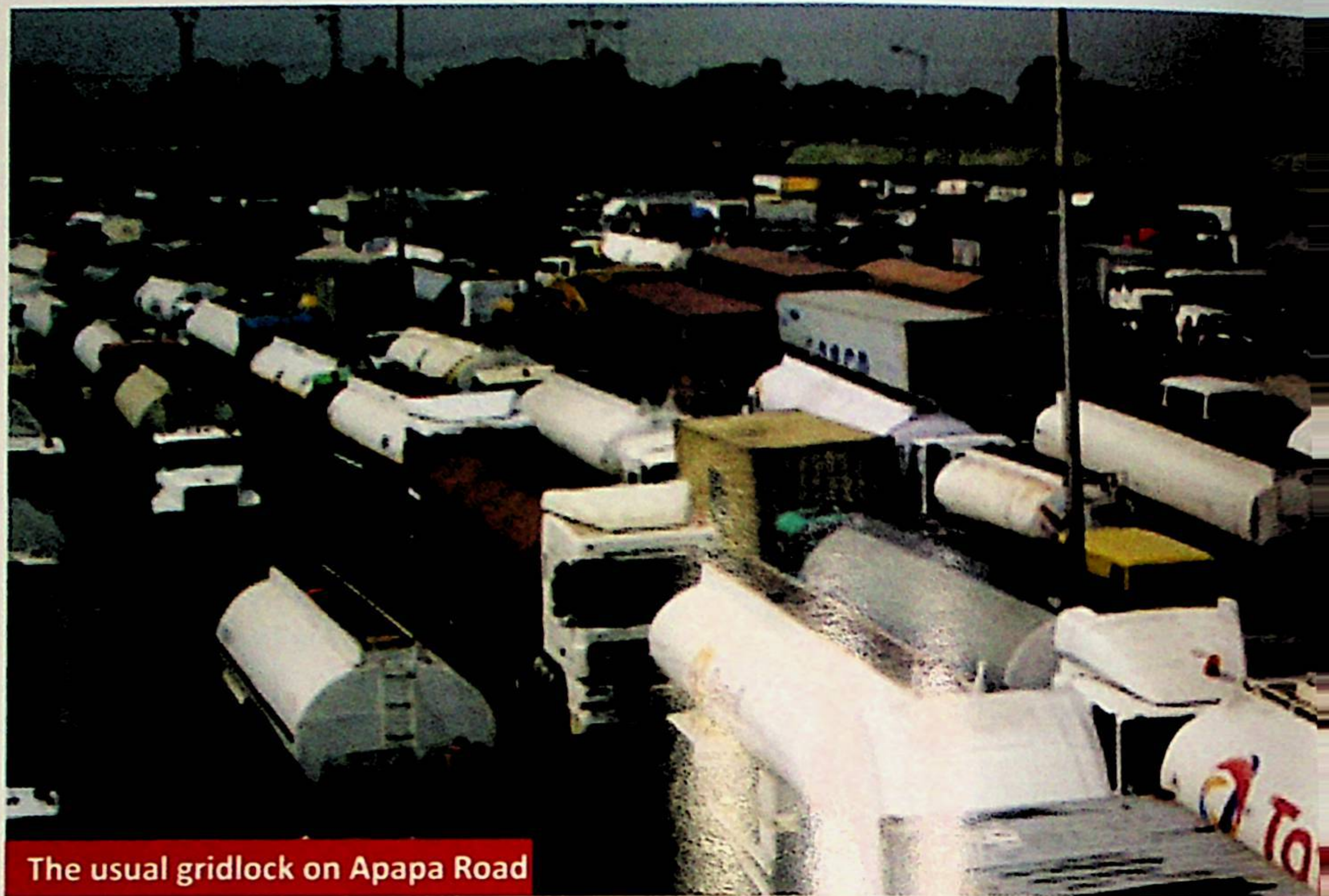
At the media chat marking the commencement of the operation, Rear Admiral Alade had said, "The Apapa gridlock has affected a lot of businesses and also created security problems in this particular area and we are most concerned giving the security situation in the country. It was considered a serious problem and that was why the Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Jibrin Usman, directed us to take necessary measures immediately to allow the free-flow of traffic and allow legitimate businesses to thrive.

"Before carrying out the operation, we contacted other security agencies and other stakeholders like the Lagos State Government, police, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and Lagos State Traffic Management Agency (LASTMA)," he said.

Notably, the Minister of State for Defence, Musiliu Obanikoro, also visited the area for on-the-spot assessment of the state of Apapa roads and its environs especially Creek Road, Coconut and Liverpool areas. The Minister commended the Navy for its operation and the palliatives it has applied on the road.

Obanikoro, who was received by the Flag Officer Commanding, Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Ilesanmi Alade, the Commanding Officer, NNS Beecroft and WEY, Commodore Oveneri Uwadiae and Commodore James Iliya, urged the state government to build a permanent holding bay for trucks and tankers as part of the permanent solution. Like previous federal government officials, he reiterated the federal government would relocate the tank farms away from Apapa.

"I am here majorly to familiarize myself with the activities of the Navy around the port area. I know for sometime



The usual gridlock on Apapa Road

now, we have been looking at the security implications of trailers and trucks to use the road as a park rather than for movement.

"Given the activities of Boko Haram and other elements within the society who would like to negatively take advantage of the chaotic situation around the port, so the Navy moved in to clear the area and I am happy with what I have seen so far.

"All these standing trucks have been moved and a passage has been created so that there will be a smooth vehicular passage in and around the port, thus eliminating the security implications of having trucks and containers just littering the entire streets.

"I have been briefed by the FOC that the entire area has been broken into eight and naval officers have been assigned and are still on the road to ensure free traffic and they have almost completely eliminated the congestion except for the issues we have with the roads, which is affecting movement.

"But as you can see, Julius Berger Construction firm is trying to bring some sort of relief. I have it on good authority that there is significant improvement and I commend the navy for bringing in other stakeholders to ensure that the situation is contained.

"Though there is significant socio-economic benefit of having traffic free movement in and out of the port, the

element that is key to us, which prompted the navy to swing into action is the security issue."

"So, the state government should join hands with NPA and other stakeholders in finding a lasting solution. Bear in mind that it is not the navy's duty to clear traffic and so, their effort towards ending the gridlock cannot be permanent."

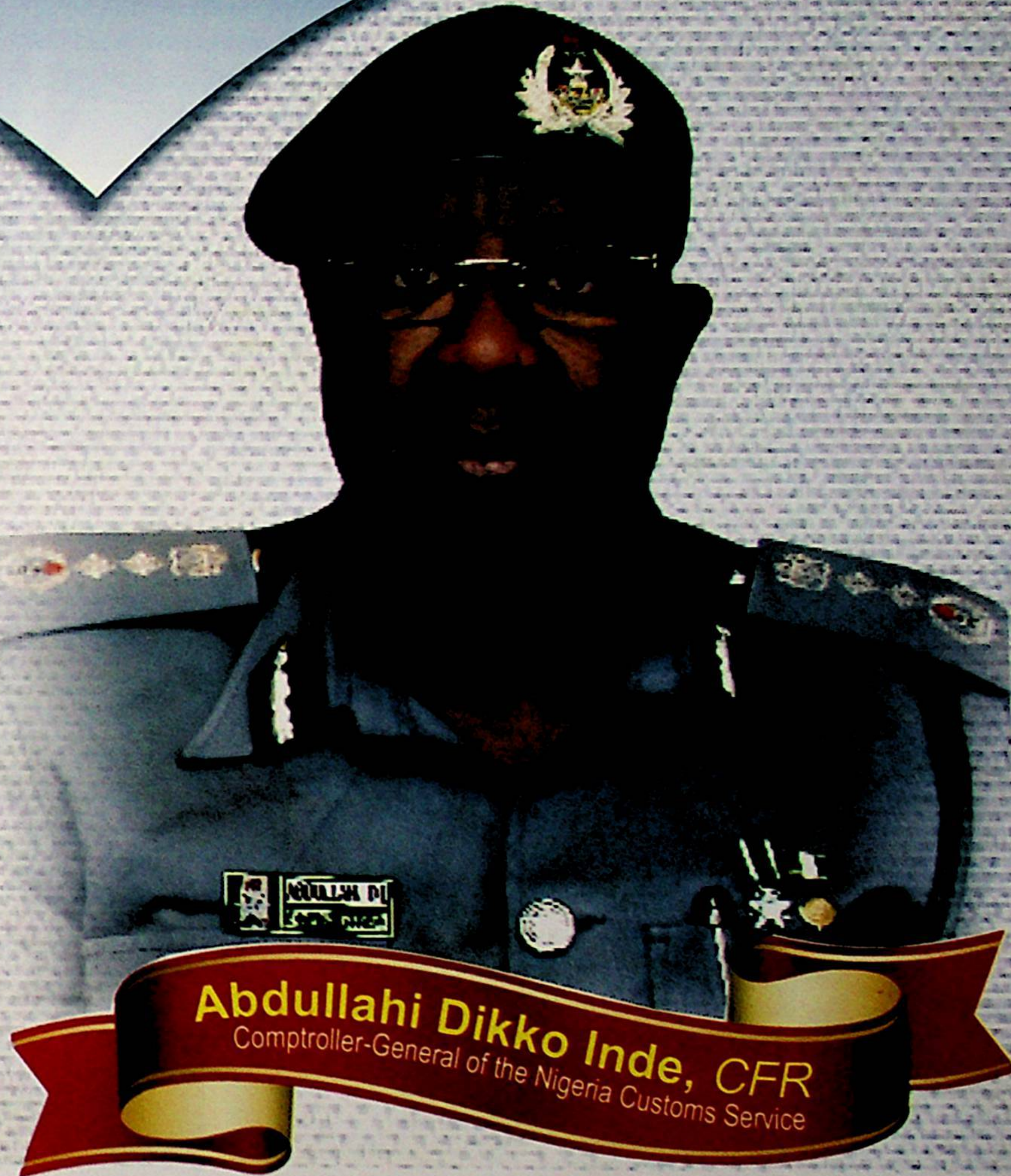
He also said the 500 truck capacity being constructed by the federal government at Tin Can Island would serve as transit holding bay, adding that efforts are on ground to speed up the rehabilitation of the roads to ensure free flow of traffic.

Obanikoro said that the move was still in the pipelines to relocate the tank farms because of the security implications. "There are plans and we are also working with all the stakeholders to ensure that the area is kept under check. It is not easy to close all these things overnight but what is important is to call for more vigilance on the part of the operators," he said.

"Let me assure that all the security agencies in this country are well aware and alert to what is at stake and everything humanly possible is being done to contain such misfortune."

But as a stakeholder observed, what is needed in the present situation is action, not words ●

F E L I C I T A T I O N S



As you mark 5 years in office as the
Comptroller-General of Nigeria Customs Service,
JONEX NIGERIA LIMITED wishes you many
more years of meritorious service
to your fatherland.

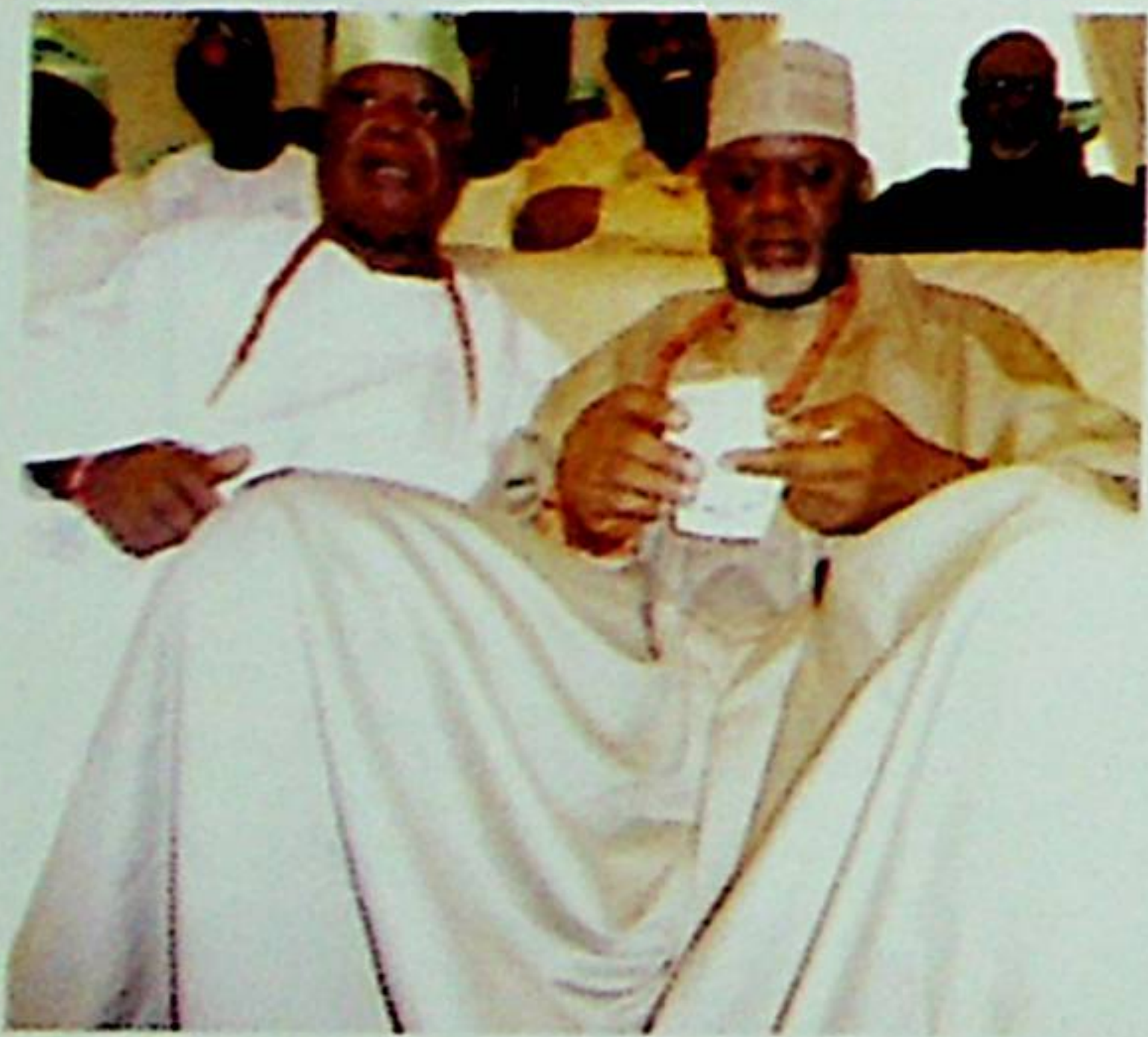


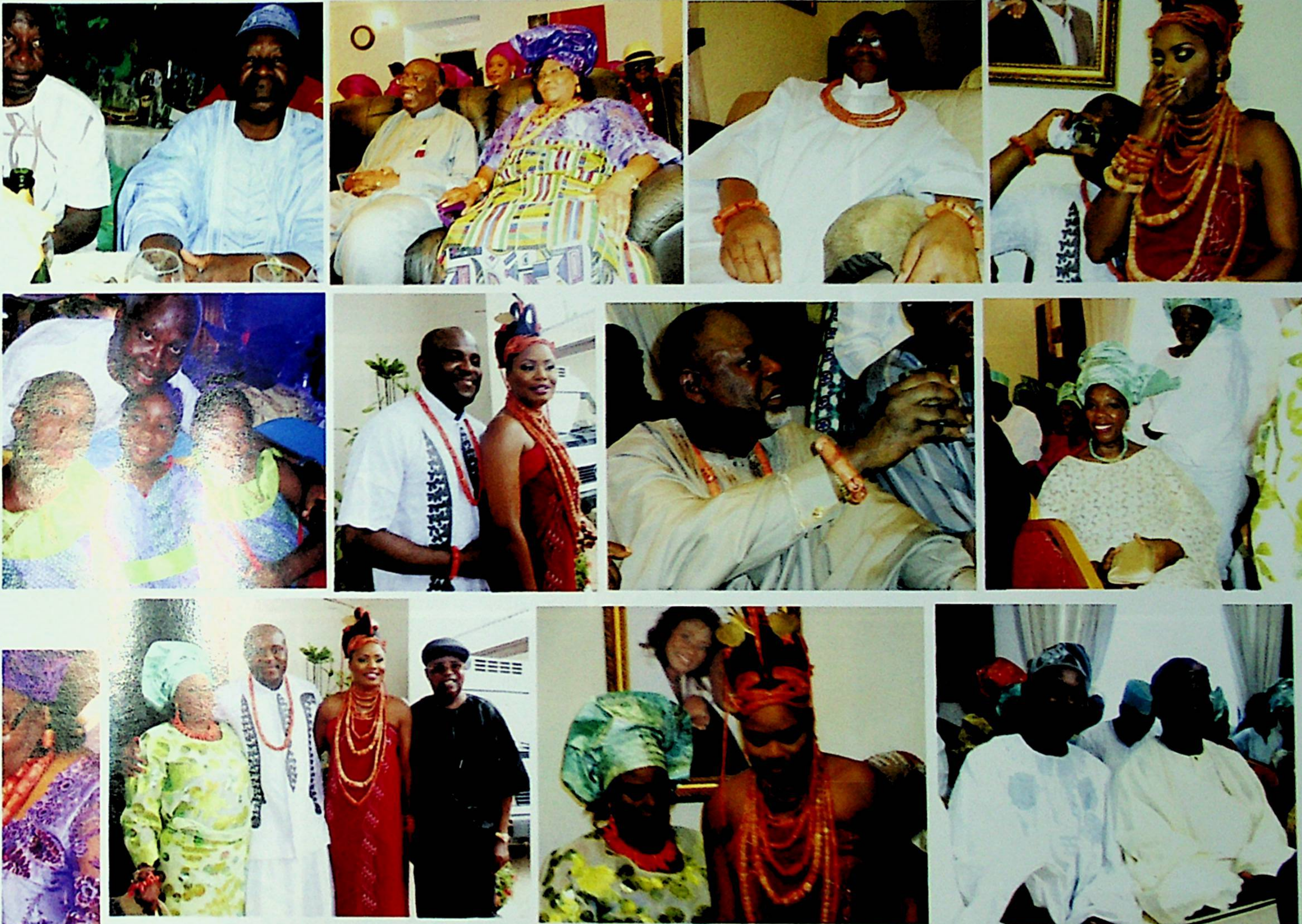
Head Office: 19 Census Close, off Babs Animashaun,
Surulere, Lagos
Branch Office: Seme Border

Signed:
Jonathan U. Okafor
Chairman/CEO

Engr. Greg Ogbeifun's Daughter Weds

The *crème de la crème* of Nigerian shipping converged in Benin, July 19, to honour one of their own, ENGR & REV (Mrs) GREG OGBEIFUN at the betrothal of their beautiful daughter, IRO BLESSING to Barr. BOMA Jnr, son of Barr. Boma Obuoforibo of Okrika, Rivers State.

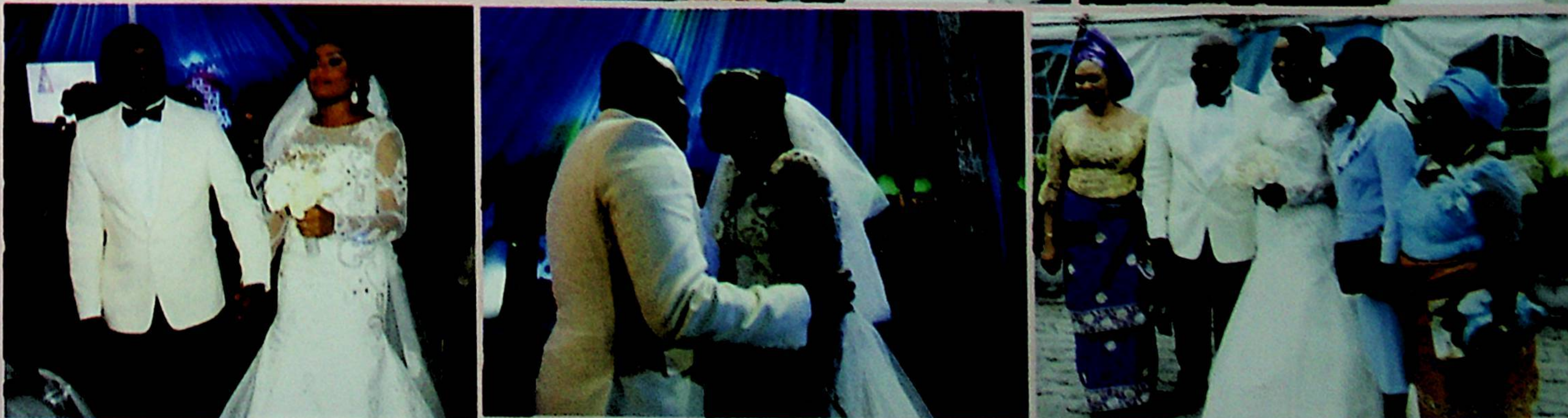
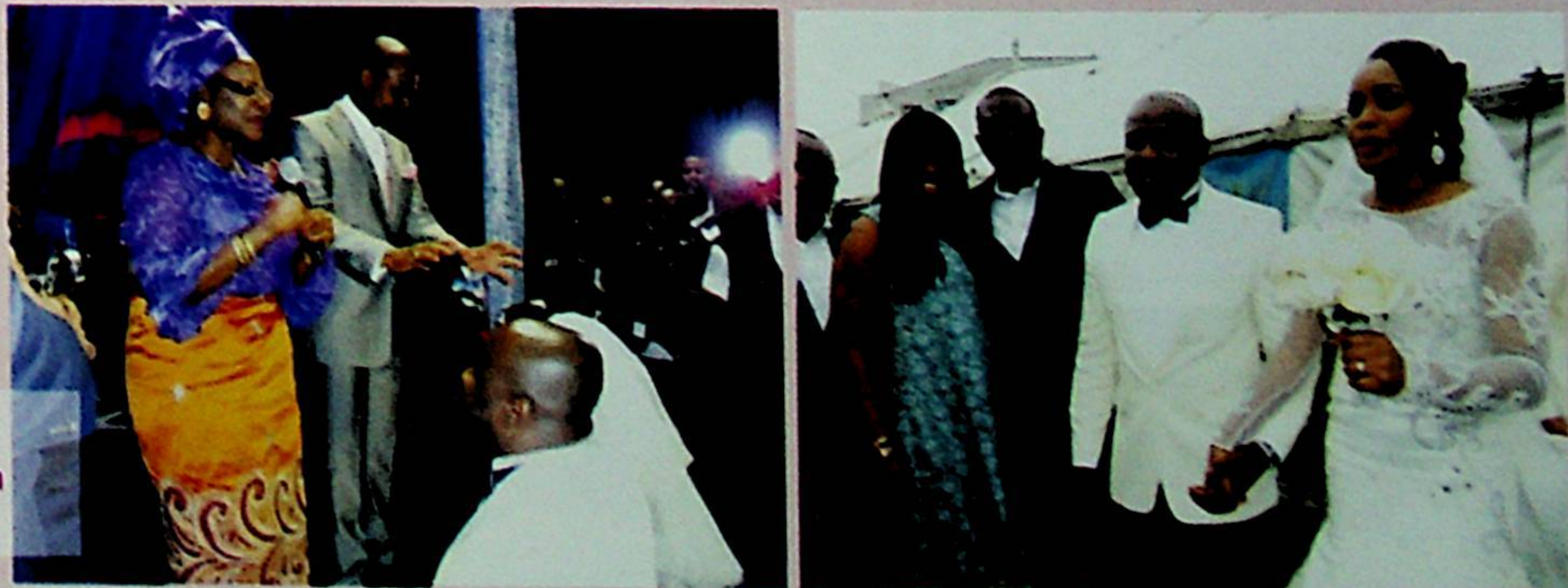


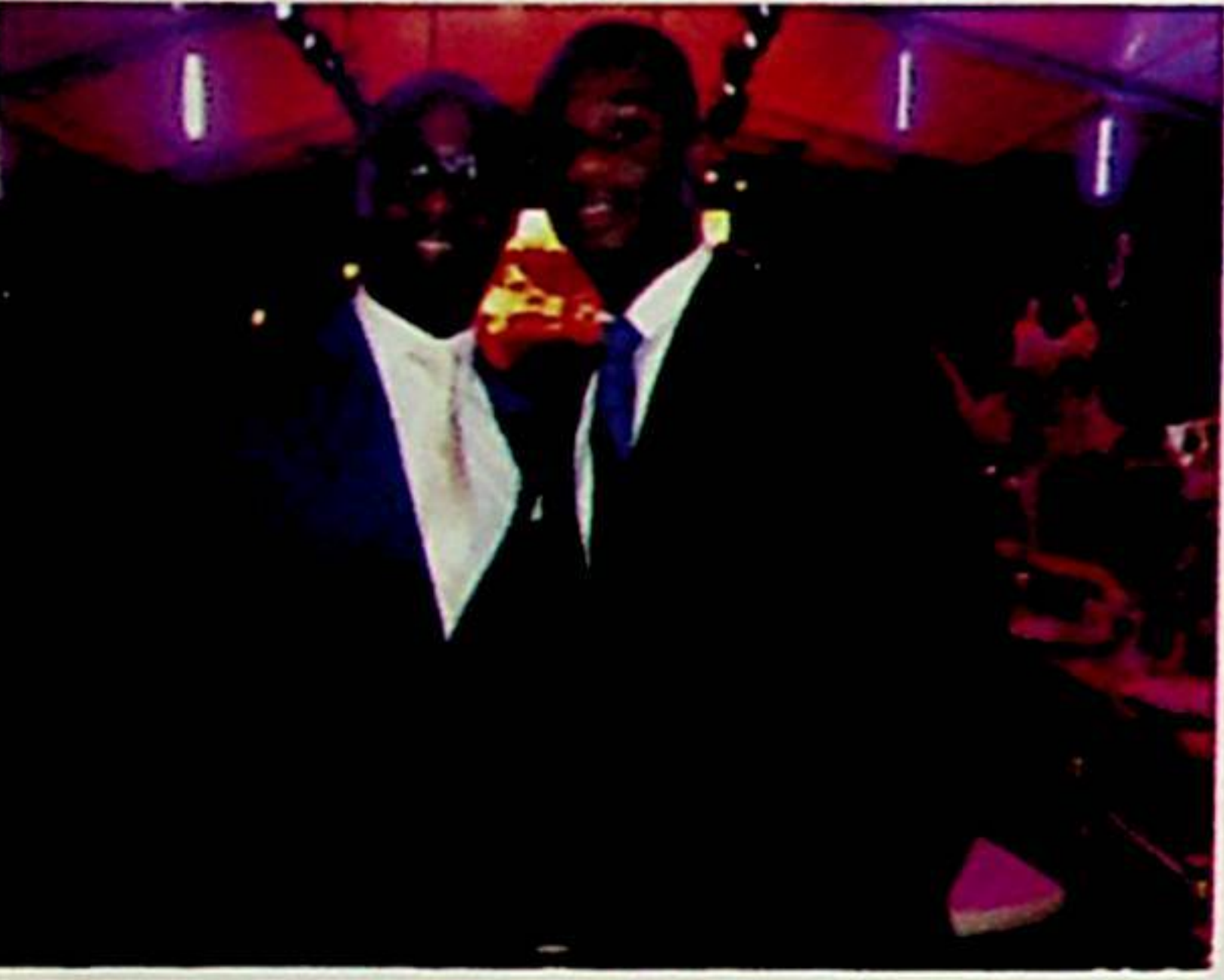
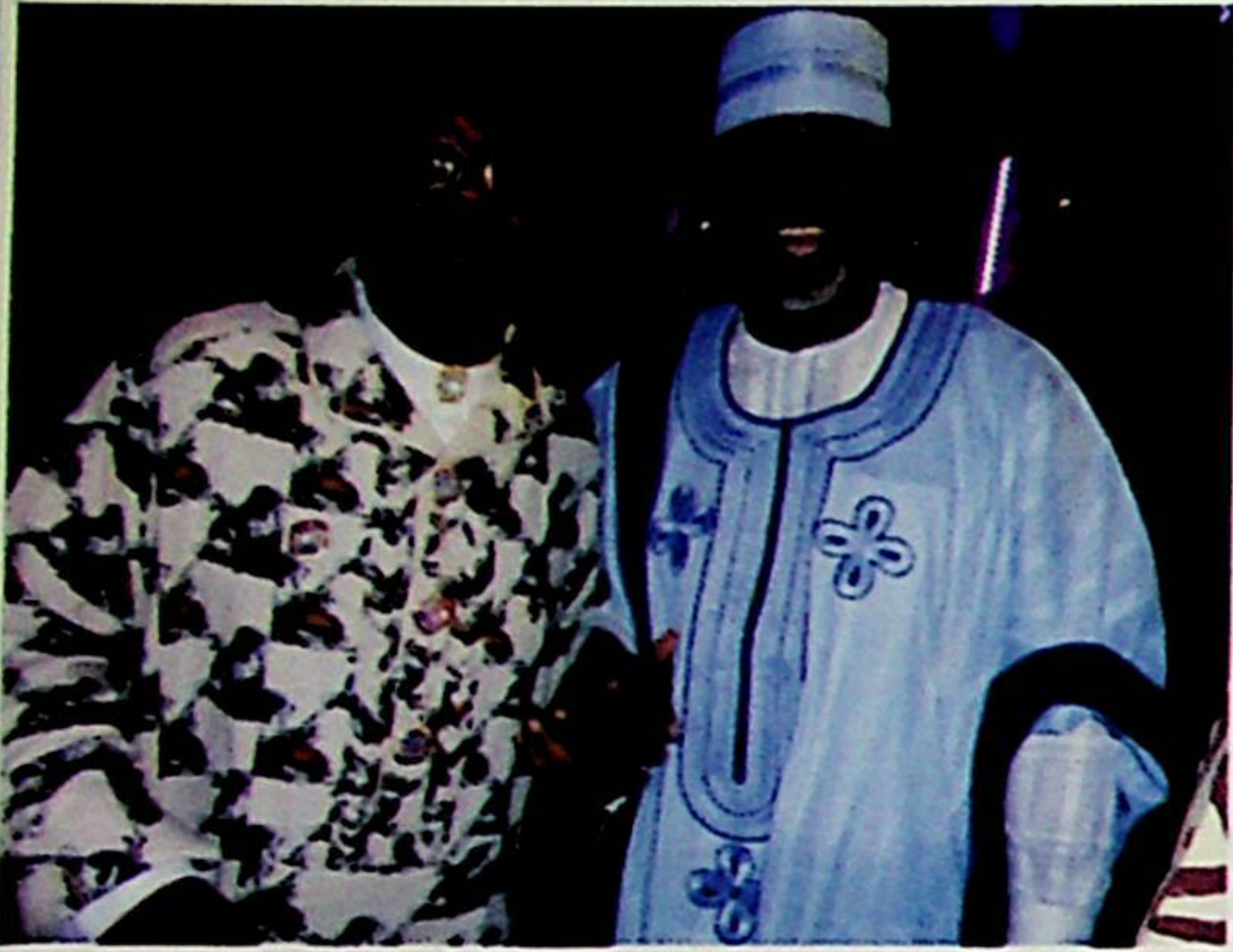


"They should continue to dwell on those things that attracted them to each other in the first place so that the love and friendship that started now will last and continue to surmount every challenge that the marriage may face".

The advice of Engr.Greg Ogbelfun, CEO, Starzs Group, Port Harcourt.

**Pix of the Church Wedding @ :
The King's Assembly, 1 Stadium Rd, Airforce Junction & Reception
at Aztech Arcum, Stadium Rd, Port Harcourt, July 26, 2014.**





PORTS

POKTS

SURVEILLANCE



Customs Comptroller-General: Portrait Of An Achiever

The Nigeria Customs Service has, since inception, been headed by many Comptrollers-General. Each of them made their marks in their own ways and left remarkable footprints on the sands of time. However, one can safely say that, in comparative terms, none has done as much as Alhaji Abdullahi Dikko Inde, the present Comptroller-General, in actualizing the mandate of the Service as enshrined in the enabling statutes.

On assumption of office in 2009, Comptroller-General Dikko Inde put together a six-point agenda marshalling out specific objectives aimed at taking the service to the next level in line with modern international standards and best practices. This action-plan included trade facilitation, staff welfare, information and communication technology (ICT). Others were capacity-building and relationship with various stakeholders including the World Customs Organization (WCO). With these as the guiding lights, Dikko has piloted the affairs of the Service to commendable heights.

Industry operators agree indeed that drastic changes have taken place in the Nigerian Customs Service. Even the government that had always wanted to hire external consultants to reform the Service cannot help applauding unprecedented positive changes that have taken place. From staff motivation, enhanced international image to ICT-complaint service that is in tune with international best practices, the Nigeria Customs Service is now a reference point. Taking the

six-point agenda as a yardstick to measure the performance of Dikko, **Business & Maritime West Africa** in this edition sounded the opinion of selected customs area controllers on what they think about Dikko and his six-point agenda. Excerpts:



CG Dikko Has Dealt Beautifully With His Six-Point Agenda

I do not know where to start from because it's a beautiful story all round. When we just came on-board, some persons said 'ah! that quiet man, that man is too kind, that man is this, that man is that. Will he be able to make any meaningful impact?' They said that man is too gentle to a fault. Those were people's assumptions and insinuation. But as time went on and he took grip of the service and started to unfold the inner strength in him, the vision, the mission and of course didn't take him time to bring out his six-point agenda on capacity building, ICT, coordination, integrity, coordinating with stakeholders and of course the staff welfare. And in all of these six points, he has handled all of them and dealt with them thoroughly and beautifully.

CAPACITY BUILDING

You will know that or you have seen. I'm saying that you have seen because there's nothing we are doing that you are not aware of – everything you have seen. You would have seen that since he came on-board, officers have been trained and re-trained both locally and internationally. Of course I'm one of the first persons that had to go outside the shores of this country to Canada for a training programme. It's been on like that. Some officers even went to Pittsburg. All over the world, he's been sending officers, some to go and understudy what other countries are doing. Last week (last week in July) I was in Netherlands for a week and I had interaction with the Dutch customs and also visited the world port centre in Rotterdam, the AP Moller terminals and even their headquarters in Hague and then also the APM terminals at Rotterdam and even the ultra-modern new terminal they re-claimed from the ocean that is automated;

everything, even bringing down the containers from the vessel, is all automated, loading into the trucks is all automated and other things they're exposed into.

LOCAL TRAINING

You would also see that the ultra-modern Staff College in Gwagwalada that the World Customs Organization (WCO) had designated a regional training centre and the officers that have been trained and re-trained and of course immediately it was opened, controllers were the first to take shots there and that has been going on. Last week our deputy controllers went there on ICT (Information and communication) training; also our assistant controllers. He keeps training and training, and so on. No amount of training is too much for officers and no amount that is used in training of officers is a waste. Once you train, our people get to know, they become better officers, they become well equipped and they know where to touch where not to touch; they know how to handle issues. The training cuts across the spectrum. So, officers at this time are far and much better trained than we were in the past.

Even after training, another good thing I've also seen is the ability to utilize those that have been trained for specific purposes. After training how to utilize these people that have been trained is also very key and he also made sure that people that are trained for specific assignments are also sent there. They are also not posted out of those places in a hurry. They are kept there for as long as possible. It's only in the event that maybe an officer defaults;



Compt. Charles Epowe Edike, CAC, Apapa Area 1 Command

that officer does not suit that table is when that such officer is removed from that posting.

Capacity building and capacity utilization has been taken very seriously and considered very key. He has done beautifully in that regard. I want to say that he has equipped officers much better than before. Both mentally, socially, officers have been much more equipped in terms of capacity building.

In the past, you hardly see controllers being sent out on training. But now you see area controllers sent out on training and re-training that will also impact on the controllers' performance. Also how a controller relates with his subordinates, how he also relates with members of the public, how it will also impact on his performance on revenue generation and collection. All of these efforts in my mind cannot be wasted because he has impacted positively on customs revenue and also on relationship with members of the public.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

You will also note that on the use of ICT, is in his time that customs has gone paperless. Anybody that wants to clear his consignment without having to meet a customs officer is possible. That is because, you can be in the comfort of your bedroom, even in your village or anywhere, once you have your phone (gadget) that can get you on the net, you can stay there and do whatever you want to do, lodge whatever paper you want to lodge. Once you are plain and transparent and the risk engine sets you on a green lane. That means you'll pay, tell the terminal operator 'I've paid. You carry your consignment and go because automatically you'll just come to the Customs Processing Centre (CPC), they'll stamp your papers for you and you go. That is if an agent wants to do that. You can only get there by being transparent. Just like you cannot go to heaven when you're filthy; you can only go to heaven when you're clean.

With the level of ICT the Nigeria customs has gone into, as an agent or importer you can also carry your goods straight forward - clean once

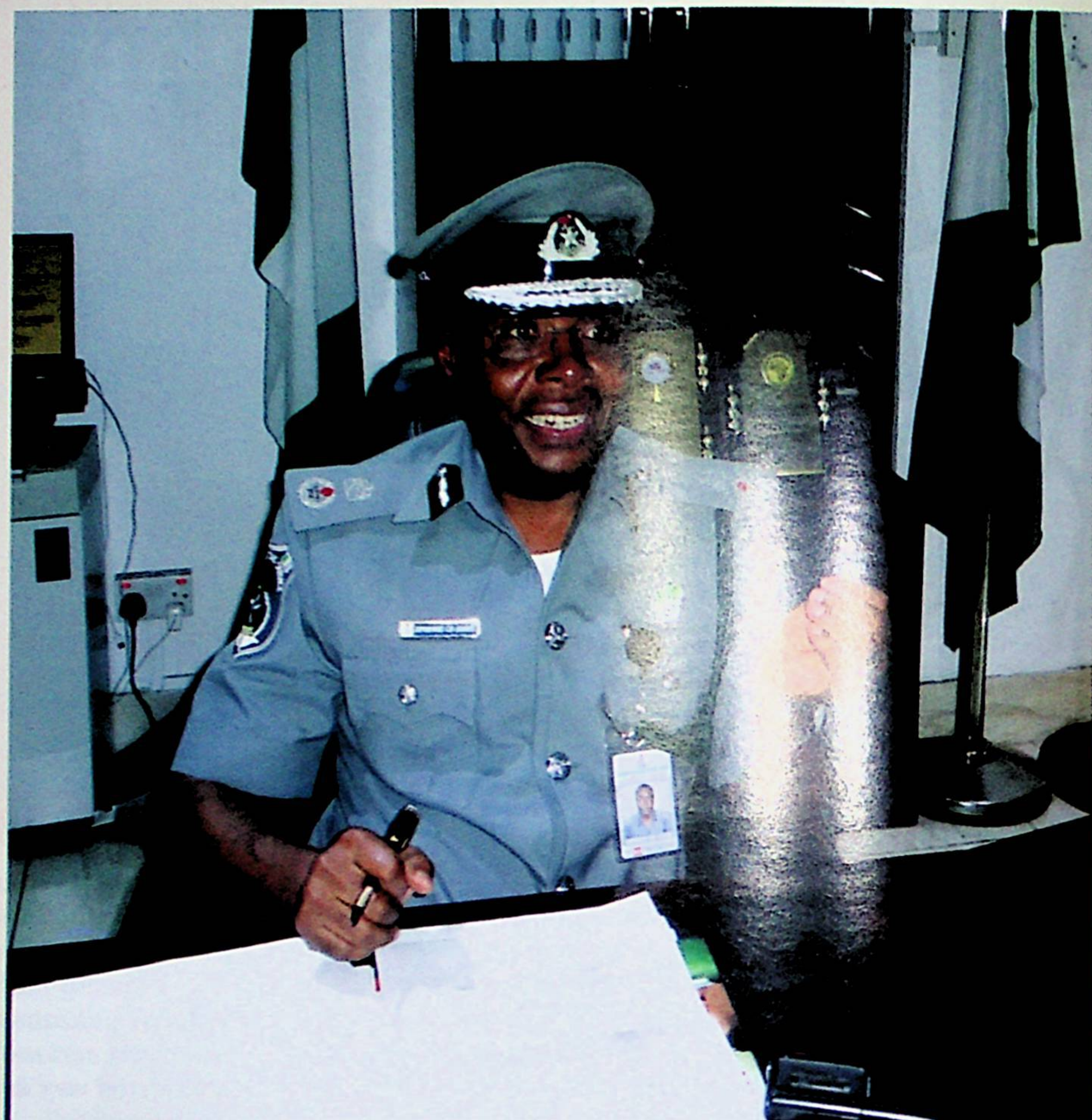
the system recognizes you as being clean. You pass all the parameters; you will also enjoy that which means that the issue of papers here and there is less.

Of course you know the single window that he introduced, which means an importer or agent doesn't need to be carrying his papers to go to NAFDAC, make another set go to SON, make another set go to NESREA. Once you submit your papers in one single portal, all of these agencies will access those papers from there and then do their work. You don't need to make the papers. Once you make it once, everybody goes to that portal and do whatever he wants to do.

Interestingly, also in the Dutch customs, they also operate single window system. The World Customs Organization - WCO - has endorsed NCS single window and is now recommending it to others to follow. Now, if we can blaze the trail of ICT even to the level of WCO, I think we should be proud and be happy that we are showing example to the world and we are leading and have become a light to other customs administrations all over the world.

I don't know if you can tell me, why are prophets not recognized or appreciated or praised in their home? Do you know? The people didn't recognize him or take advantage of what God had deposited inside him to give to humanity and so they short-changed themselves because they did not key in to be able to partake of those blessings that were inside of him. This is because we hear a lot of persons crying, shouting this and that. Meanwhile, other countries are coming here to come and see what we have done; to come and copy what has been done in the Nigeria Customs Service.

If the Chief of Army Staff, the Chief of Naval Staff, ministers of the federal republic of Nigeria are going to customs headquarters - to the Ruling Centre to see what is happening there or to see what had been done there and come out to tell the public, come out to tell the world what they saw there, then, why are people criticizing, crying wolf where there is no wolf? The area of ICT is not limited to only headquarters; the commands are also into the same line. Last month (July) you are aware that an ultra-modern ICT training centre was opened here in Apapa. The first group that took the first shot was the journalists. Right now we are also planning to train the customs clearing agents because if they know what they're doing, if we teach them, it becomes easier



for them and easier for us. That also means more revenue for government. So, in the area of the use of ICT, we've done very well.

THE TRADE HUB

There is also the Trade Hub where you can go and get into the portal and do whatever you want to do. You are informed, you can do your transaction there, and you can calculate your duty there. You can know items that are banned and those that are not banned. You can know items that need other government agencies' attention. They're all clearly stated there.

Of course the icing on the cake, the pre-arrival assessment report- PAAR- that has also made life a lot more easier both for importers, agents and us customs officers.

Of course, we agree that initially we had teething problems. Nobody is immune to teething problems while growing up. We shouldn't expect the NCS to be immune to teething problem. That does not mean that the system will not work or is not working. Of course, immediately we went across that state, certainly things changed. From then

our revenue profile changed. Apapa started hitting 28 to 29 billion a month; Tincan 26-27 billion; PTML, 10-12 billion; Lilypond recorded about 2.5 billion level and Airport about 2.5 billion level; KLT also about 2.5 billion level ; Onne in Port Harcourt and other commands in the eastern and northern zone. Certainly the PAAR regime has come to give succour to importers and agents and also impacted positively on government revenue. So in the area of ICT, it's been beautifully done; it's marvelous and we give God the glory for that.

CO-ORDINATION

Coordinating the customs, other government agencies and other international bodies, you will recall that the CGC has signed an MOU with so many other countries, for example, the US and also forged a very strong relationship with other government agencies, otherwise you'll not see the chief of army staff, the chief of naval staff, ministers of the federal republic of Nigeria going to the PAAR ruling centre. We have the FRSC relating with us in terms of vehicle registration so that vehicles that evade duty and are not registered are not

They say that a hungry man is an angry man. So also a hungry officer is an angry officer. He will not see anything good that his bosses are saying or doing. What concerns him is how to feed his stomach, how to bring food to the table for his children; how to pay his landlord, take care of his parents, the demands of his relations and friends, etc. With all these problems in the hands of the officer, certainly, it will be a lot easier to fall into temptation. Once an officer is not properly taken care of, whatever he sees outside will easily attract him.

ACCOMMODATION

Officers' accommodation both in Lagos and, PH, they're being built everyday including office accommodation too.

All these impact on the officer's ability to do his work beautifully well with a lot more confidence. The final analysis of all of these is that all of these impact on (1) government revenue (2) national security. If an officer does his job properly, he can afford to do proper examination where arms and ammunitions are hidden. Where dangerous chemicals are hidden, he can easily detect such. But a

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The CGC Is A Man Of Guts

I have always said it that our present CGC has treaded where angels feared and he has done what Napoleon couldn't do. He's a man of guts; he has courage, wisdom and a very articulate person. His achievements to me speak volumes of his performance in office. Are we talking about his six-point agenda? Are we talking about capacity building where officers have been trained locally and internationally? The training is all with the view to professionalize the service. Just like we have a very robust public relations unit, we have the ICT and various other departments where we have highly professional officers with good knowledge on the job.

WELFARE

In the area of welfare, he has provided state-of-the-art barracks and officers' accommodation. Enough logistics: air, land and sea. Then uniforms; officers carry their heads high these days. They are happy and proud to be identified with the service unlike the days when officers would put their uniforms in polythene bags and wouldn't want to be identified or associated as customs officers. But these days, officers can wear their uniforms from here to New York, to any part of the world. That goes a long way to prove that the bad toga of lack of care is now in the past.

ICT

Like we've never seen it before- I am quite old in the job. I have seen between 8 and 9 Comptrollers-General. His achievements put side by side speak volumes like I said earlier. In the ICT, almost every customs officer is ICT compliant. With all these training both locally and internationally, officers acquire the requisite knowledge to do their job and perform better.

COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Collaboration with stakeholders is fantastic. We now have the Customs Consultative Council (CCC). The service relationship with the general public is excellent. He is a very sensitive and listening leader who attaches importance to the service relationship with our stakeholders.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations now deal with interfacing with the public, being mindful and cautious of the public's perception of us and what we do. Our processes and procedures are more transparent now, nothing to hide about it. It's online. You have access to all the devices used in processing clearance of cargo at your own comfort.

If I am to score him, I'll score him excellent. It's an outstanding performance. What we pray for is that for any day it pleases God and the government to replace him, God brings somebody that can wear his shoes comfortably because if the person does not, it will be too big and open for lapses to be swept under the carpet. We pray for him every day; we love him. It's not just because he's our CGC but a big brother, a father, somebody who has empathy, compassion. At times he looks at situations and say 'no, this thing should look like this. We thank God for being part of his success story.

TRADE FACILITATION

On trade facilitation, it is timely to talk about the PAAR regime. The gospel of trade facilitation according to Alhaji Dikko Inde, the CGC of customs, has been that of compliance, compliance and compliance. If the trading public can be that compliant, I bet you, cargo can be moved out of the ports shorter than 48 hours, within a day or a matter of hours. But the problem lies with non-compliance.

Trade facilitation is a two-pronged issue. It does not take customs alone to facilitate trade. There are other players in the cargo clearance procedure. Now for customs, we can access, collect our duty and all these can be done within three to four hours. If an importer or his



Controller Z. A. Jibrin, CAC, Tincan Island Command

agent makes declaration correctly, pay his duty upfront (because it is self-assessment online) we pick it up; he comes to report his declaration. Terminal operators position their containers as at when due for customs examination and then within customs control room, we place our side of the operations in less than three hours. But where there is delay, because we are the lead agency, a lot of people don't understand how the port operates. They attribute it to customs' inefficiency or non-performance; they won't understand. If the terminal operator fails to position the container as at when due, they say it's customs.

With the advent of PAAR, if traders learn to comply, cargo can be cleared out of the port in a matter of hours. The speedy impact on PAAR on clearance of cargo cannot be overemphasized in the sense that as the name implies, if a compliant trader makes an honest declaration, finishes everything he/she is supposed to do before the arrival of the cargo, as soon as the cargo gets to the port, in a matter of hours he's taking the cargo. It's only when you make dishonest declarations that you now subject your cargo to delay. PAAR to a very large extent is a very laudable innovation.

In a nutshell, I stand to be controverted if I say I can come up with a reasoning that trade has never been so

Dikko Has Won Independence For Nigeria Customs

well facilitated in the history of the service like now. All that PAAR requires from the trading public is compliance and honest declaration. It goes a long way to equally accelerate the clearance of cargo out of the port.

PAAR has recorded a tremendous success. In the administration of PAAR, when we started just like every human endeavour, we had initial hiccups. But with time that fizzled. So what is there is that the first platform that came on-board at the takeover of DI from service providers' was shut down in March of this year. The first platform which we're now now on-board April. Since then, we are treating a minimum of 1500 PAAR per day and have been on the increase with little or no problems. We can compare PAAR with RAR, because PAAR has a lot of potentials of helping trade in the country which is very high.

TINCAN COMMAND & THE CGC'S SUCCESS STORY

Tincan Island command is a major player in the success story of the CGC because particularly since I assumed duty here, by the special grace of God, the revenue has been on the increase. It's been rolling in, in good volumes. What I met on ground here was about 18 to 19 billion. In my first month, I did 21 billion. It has been on the increase from 25 to 26 billion. Put together, I think conservatively, about 50% of the total revenue that comes to the service comes from Tin Can Island port. We are raking in billions of naira for government. We are great contributors to the success story of the administration of the CGC and we hope to do more because he has done much for us. We are so much indebted to him to perform optimally to justify his efforts ●

We want to look at the area of capacity building which is very vital because in the course of operation you need capacity to implement fiscal policies to be able to function. The capacity has improved. Of course there is a practical way to look at it.

The command and staff college was not there before; it was not in place before he came. This college came into existence during his tenure. The purpose of that college is to

done. Before he came in these things were not there, apart from other areas where officers are sent abroad too to improve capacity.

WELFARE:

If you want results from your workmen, you need to motivate them. There's an increase in salary, 100%, which was never the case before. We can look at that as a landmark which could be taken for granted. Here is a Comptroller-General that came in and was able to do

and Cotecna that were there all the years involved in customs operations. That process came to an end during his tenure and the customs service had full ownership of the process. All over the world, a customs administration that is not involved in whole destination inspection is not an independent customs administration. So, we were able to have an independent destination inspection to the point that the capacity to even raise a risk assessment document called PAAR, the Pre-Arrival Assessment Report is in place. PAAR is very successful unlike the other regime where the service providers were using the Risk Assessment Report (RAR) which was generated after the cargo have arrived the country. This one is a pre-arrival assessment report to support pre-arrival declarations to facilitate trade.

HOUSING

The area of welfare too can be looked at in terms of accommodation. Apart from increasing the salary, in terms of housing, the administration embarked on massive housing projects for staff in the various commands all over the country. In terms of transportation, it was enhanced particularly for officers working at the headquarters who are mostly junior officers who do not have their own cars. The buses are there to pick them, take them to their



Tajudeen Olarenwaju, CAC, MMIA Command

train manpower both local and international. The college is being used by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and customs administrations in other countries. Right now, I've just sent in a mail which is inviting officers to report there for training. So, the issue is not just mentioning the achievements but it's like an example of what he has

that.

THE AREA OF DESTINATION INSPECTION:

This is talking about professionalism and ownership of border transactions into Nigeria. We experienced what we call full destination inspection during his tenure whereby the service providers - including SGS, Globalscan

Independence For Nigeria Customs

offices and take them back after work to the barracks. That helps a lot to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Those are just the few achievements I can just mention here.

THE 6-POINT AGENDA

On the CGC's 6-Points Agenda, he has achieved a lot because all the points I mentioned earlier key into that agenda. You know, when you talk about transportation, you talk about capacity building where we had the command's administration, the Command and Staff College, Gwagwalada, welfare represented in a 100% increase in salary. We can talk about trade facilitation, you can see that when you have increase in revenue - because by the time he came in there was more money going into the federation account- you can link up with trade facilitation because when you facilitate trade, business transactions are encouraged more across the borders.

INTERACTION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Also interaction with stakeholders, you can see they get closer by the relationship between the customs service and various stakeholders including the press, the freight forwarders, importers, etc. Such relationships were enhanced as part of the key into the agenda. It has been a success generally.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION FOR THE NCS:

That specific effort is extraordinary; extraordinary in the sense that it never happened before. The ones that we mentioned looked domestic but never happened. They are commendable. The international aspect of it is so extraordinary. We need to look at the impact when it comes generally. There was an agreement with the WCO (the World Customs Organization) on trade facilitation and integrity in the service. Those agreements were not domesticated. You could remember that Mr President was there. Not many members of customs administration

are able to draw their president to that place. That was an extraordinary step which further brought confidence to Nigeria, which is domesticating the Kyoto agreements on trade facilitation, integrity of officers, etc.

Then going further to participate in an international forum which discusses business and investment in Nigeria and a whole lot of things. That is another step that is extraordinary because it's not just in the papers that people have been reading about Nigeria having the courage to play this role. The Comptroller-General of Customs side by side with the trade, industry and investment minister were there to tell the public. It can be taken for granted that they were there but we know that these people do not just attend such events unless concerted efforts are made to convince them. That further encouraged the international investors on the seriousness of Nigeria on the issue of investment.

Those two events internationalized operations of the NCS. If we look at the background, the customs administration is an international organization. Any administration that does not get involved in international activities loses her value.

So, for the first time, the NCS is internationalized and that has brought us another status of being a customs administration recognized globally. Also to go further, we have the WCO regional platform. It is the first time too that we have a CGC serve as the deputy chair, because each region around the world has a vice chair.

The chair is the WCO secretary-general who is based at the WCO headquarters in Brussels. At each region, we have the vice chair who is the comptroller-general of a customs administration of a country in that area.

In west and central Africa, this is the first time we'll have a Nigerian, the CGC of NCS being the vice chair holding that. There was an election and he's holding that again. That shows the confidence. That also helps to internationalize and enhance the



image of Nigeria. Going further is the relationship with the US customs, where we had an MoU with the US customs which has also led to regular training where officers of the NCS are sent to the US at the cost of the US government.

Considering the busy schedule of the CG for him to be able to divide his time for domestic issues, his strength, ability and capacity is commendable.

MY COMMAND'S ROLE IN THE SUCCESS STORY:

One of the things we're doing now is interacting with responsible press that we can exchange ideas with to highlight what we've been doing. The medium of information to the public is the press. For us to meet with the reliable press is one of ways to show that we are serious. Of course it's also to impress it on officers to sustain whatever gains we have made in the command and move forward to now take up at the command level those agenda that have been achieved at the federal level. Various controllers change from time to time. The point is that another controller can decide that 'within the period I'm going to stay here, I'm going to look at those achievements done at the federal level and at the command level': what can I do? Such period too is like a kind of re-commitment to those roles that made

The CGC Has Enthroned International Best Practices

Dr Abdullahi Dikko Inde's administration can best be described as very innovative and eventful culminating in the institutionalization of international best practices in the Nigeria Customs Service. Specifically, I want to rate his achievements as very high because never in the history of the NCS have we witnessed such great achievements.

Let me say without fear of contradiction that he has been able to achieve all the items on his agenda which he unfolded on assumption of office in 2009.

CAPACITY BUILDING

He has an ability to maximize the potential of the service through capacity building by establishing the Department of Human Resource Development which we now refer to as HRD. So far, thousands of officers and men of the service have been trained and retrained both domestically and internationally. I am one of the beneficiaries of the overseas training. I went on a leadership training in Canada in 2011.

WELFARE OF STAFF

The service has witnessed moral rebirth for discipline and integrity which is in consonance with the government's transformation agenda. This has brought about high sense of responsibility and self-confidence among the officers and men of the service.

The welfare of all customs officers has been enhanced through various packages which he has introduced. If we talk about the salary, it has gone up. We talk about logistics, we have enough vehicles that go round the commands, the uniforms and accoutrements are available. We have medicals in area commands and headquarters, insurance, co-operative, among others. These are things which he has actually succeeded in doing.

ICT

The consolidation on the e-customs has gone beyond the initial goal to include the following: the PAAR, Nigeria Trade Hub, e-payment, e-SGD, e-manifest and so on. Everything has gone electronic.

RELATIONSHIP WITH STAKEHOLDERS

His administration has also ensured improvement in customs collaboration and partnering with stakeholders and international organizations. This is one of the parts of his six point agenda, to ensure that NCS partners with international organizations and stakeholders in order to achieve the goals of the

enhance transparency in the importation of vehicles, increased the revenue that we collect in these vehicles and more so, it has enhanced the security of the nation because what you do now is very transparent and clear for everybody to see.

The foregoing and other achievements of the service have been brought to the attention of the general public through well-co-ordinated public relations activities to foster mutual understanding. We now have a robust PRO department which gets in contact with other bodies that partner with NCS.



Mr. Willy Egbudin, CAC, Seme Border Command

service. This is one of the things he's doing successfully. These include the organizing Nigeria Customs Licensed Agents. From time to time, we train them and partner with them. The World Customs Organisation: you should all remember that the WCO has been coming here and they even rated the NCS command and staff college as one of the best institutions that have been established in Africa, ECOWAS. Also the summit of Director General of Customs of proximate countries to Nigeria which has been done recently. That one has formulated into the introduction of transit vehicle policy which has helped to

CONTRIBUTIONS BY SEME COMMAND

The Seme Border command is basically an enforcement area. Even though we also collect revenue for the service, our core mandate is to ensure that smuggling is suppressed and intruders are detected as well. All these are embedded in this area command's task being one of the busiest land borders in West Africa as a whole.

My command's role in the successes achieved by the CGC includes the suppression of smuggling to the barest minimum. As the busiest border in West Africa, seizures of

artefacts, elephant tusks, smuggled vehicles, rice and vegetable oil among others have been made by the command which is in consonance with the CGC's drive for the NCS.

By this unique position as a gateway to the West African sub region, Seme area command has been in the vanguard of trade facilitation which, in return, boosts the command's revenue collection.

Most recently, the Vehicle Import Transport Regime which was spearheaded by the CGC was introduced whereby Directors General of Customs of proximate countries were invited to Nigeria sometime in March. With this policy, all vehicles coming from abroad are handed to the NCS in our border command. This has afforded us the opportunity of examining these vehicles, collecting the due revenue for it and also to ensure small and light arms are not in those vehicles. By the time you do examination, you'll be able to ensure what you allow in is something that is not unwholesome. That is one of the things that have actually helped the command. This has helped to improve the revenue of the service which is in consonance with what the CGC's agenda stipulates, which is to increase the revenue of the federal government.

ISSUE OF LEGACY

Our amiable CGC, Dr. Abdullahi Dikko Inde, would be remembered as the CGC who came, worked and transformed the service for good. He has taken the service from analogue to digital, from the old state to the present state. When he leaves, everybody would remember that this is the customs that has been transformed in all facets. We are proud to have such a person and we just pray that when he is going, there should be somebody to take over from him that will continue with the good work which he has done •

U.A.Turaki: Profiling An Anti-smuggling Guru

The man, Turaki, came into the FOU well prepared having done his beat in every area of the command he was deployed. He can be said to be part of the system in the last twenty years. What had stood against his being made an area controller for long, perhaps, might be his intermediate rank of an Assistant Comptroller. Otherwise, he has acquired more know-how than those wearing long and bogus ranks of full Comptroller even without meriting it.

The opportunity, however, came calling few months after the customs board elevated him as one of the numerous officers promoted recently. And the man who can easily know the worth of his men one by one and their capability announced his headship of FOU. In the last three weeks, more seizures have rolled in - a pointer that disillusionment has now given way for all hands to be on deck. Yes, the credit of every success goes to the Area Controller but he just cannot be the foot soldier on the field.

He can only initiate strategies to conquer smugglers with good watertight intelligence, closeness to the officers and the ability to be flexible to the views of subordinates. This the new man possesses in good measure.

A chief of protocol in any agency or department is the number one image-maker; he facilitates so many good relationships within and outside his organization. The ability to mix freely becomes ingrained in you, becoming part and parcel of your disposition. Above all, humility will take over such person through and through.

That is the lot of the new man on the saddle, soft-spoken gentleman whose sterling

qualities were discovered by Major-General S. O. G. Anjo, former Sole Administrator of the customs; and nurtured by subsequent Comptrollers-General of the service. If you chat with Turaki Usman Adamu, you will be marveled at his expansive and in-depth knowledge of the service.

He exhibits the confidence that anti-smuggling operations will be prosecuted with renewed vigour, trusting God that with his men who are dedicated, they cannot afford to fail. According to him, "we have been so encouraged by the C-G with the provision of adequate logistics, and we in turn, will reciprocate and we owe him and Nigerians hard work to rid the zone of uncustomed goods".

Ruling out check points in Lagos, he deposed that the Unit's roving operations will be strengthened with intelligence as its priority.

Turaki said the war on anti-smuggling is now fully based on intelligence, as the world is moving away from manual to digital operations. Having been a staff officer for almost three years, his closeness to all staff is a big plus that will ginger maximum output and reduce leakages in the unit's activities.

After his enlistment in 1988, the acting controller has gone round the commands namely, Katsina, Cross-River, Edo and the Customs headquarters where he came to limelight. He also served in the customs Intelligence Unit in Lagos before being appointed Personal Assistant to DCG A.K. Haliru then in charge of COSER and later moved to Tariff and Trade where he continued in that capacity.

Turaki, according to records, has served in almost all the departments in the Customs Headquarters. In 2009, he was posted to office of Assistant



DC U. A. Turaki, CAC, FOU, Ikeja showing part of the seized fabrics

Comptroller General, (Headquarters) where he became Controller, Headquarters, becoming a signatory to all auction papers. In September 2011, he was posted to the FOU zone 'A' as the Staff Officer- General.

According to FOU's image-maker Uche Ejiesieme, Deputy Compt. Turaki came into the FOU "when discipline was at its lowest ebb. Subsequently, he deployed his wealth of experience to tackle the issue of indiscipline and was able to join hands with the then Controller to reposition the unit to the path of excellence.

To his credit, the new CAC is exposed having travelled widely to almost all parts of the world for various courses, seminars and conferences. DSC Ejiesieme also described him as a quintessential and result-oriented officer who is a great asset to the Customs service. Full of decorum and courtesy, Turaki was born 50 years ago in Gombe Local Government of Gombe State. He loves traveling, reading and sports. Highly educated, he flashes a Bachelor of Science Degree, B.Sc, in Political Science from the University of Abuja.

REMARKABLE SEIZURES BETWEEN RECORDED BETWEEN 15TH JULY AND AUGUST, 2014.

At a recent interaction with the press since assuming office last July, Turaki reeled out achievements recorded under him between July 15 and August 15. Smugglers, he said, took advantage of the last Moslem holidays to move two flat bed trucks carrying 1,200 bags of 50 kg foreign rice with DPV of N10, 200,000.00 into the country via the land borders. The product was ingeniously covered with tarpaulin coated with cement dust ostensibly to divert attention from customs operatives. On the general seizures made so far, Turaki said: "I am pleased to announce that the Unit recorded a total of 336 different seizures of assorted offending goods valued at N107, 513,308.00 with a payable duty of N42, 937,110.00 with a duty paid value of N150, 450,418.00 between 13th July to 9th August, 2014. 19 suspects were apprehended in respect of the seizures. Comparatively speaking, this report shows over 65% positive difference when compared with the report of corresponding period in 2013."

On 9th July, a patrol team led by A/C Ejibunu Kehinde comprising other officers from the Unit intercepted one articulated truck suspected to be carrying over 2,000 cartons of smuggled foreign poultry products along the Lagos/Abeokuta expressway valued at N9,000,000.00 with a payable duty of N1,800,000.00 and a duty paid value of N10,800,000.00. Similarly, on Monday July 21, the Oyo axis patrol team led by CSC Osaje H.E., comprising other officers, while on routine patrol along Basi/Iseyin road, intercepted two trucks laden with 1,737 bags of 50kg parboiled rice smuggled through unapproved routes with a DPV of N11,099,948.00.

On 14th August, following a tip-off, the Lagos River Patrol Team led by AC Adamu Abdullahi Mohammed, comprising SA Abdullahi Mohamed and other officers, executed 2 trucks of jumbo bales of suspected textile materials from a warehouse situated in Oshodi to the government warehouse for further investigation.

Between the months of January to 14th August 2014, the total amount of revenue realized from ports and border stations as a result of intervention stood at N89, 337,981.00, accounting for N28, 128,514.00 being 6,195% comparative analysis increase from that of August 2013. A breakdown of the seizures is as follows:

1. FOREIGN PARBOILED RICE: 64 different seizures totaling 5,722 bags of 50 kg parboiled rice valued at N28,610,000.00 with a payable duty of N21,009,000.00 and duty paid value of N49,619,000.00.
2. FOREIGN FROZEN POULTRY PRODUCTS: 28 different seizures totaling 5,975 cartons of smuggled foreign poultry products valued at N26, 887,500.00 with a payable duty of N5, 377,500.00 and a duty paid value of N32, 265,000.00
3. VEHICLES: 43 different seizures of

111 units valued at N40, 750,000.00 with a payable duty of N14, 262,500.00 and duty paid value of N55, 012,500.00.

4. GENERAL GOODS: 201 different seizures of general merchandise valued at N11, 265,808.00 with a payable duty of N2, 288,110.00 and duty paid value of N13, 553,918.00.

Others include used and new textile materials, wine, various soap, used shoes, tomatoes, spaghetti, insecticides, etc. The FOU has identified some flashpoints and mounted aggressive patrol activities to ensure that all flanks are blocked.

“We will continue to strategize particularly now that we have almost entered into the last quarter of the year. We will harness our competences at this time to deal very decisively with the issue of smuggling, bearing in mind its adverse effect on the economy,” Turaki assured ●

FOU, ZONE C. OWERRI

Illegal Importation: 47 Smugglers In Customs Net

Forty-seven (47) suspects have been arrested by the Federal Operations Unit (FOU) Zone 'C', Owerri of the Nigeria Customs Service in connection with illegal importation of sundry items ranging from 1,617 bags of 50kg and 982 bags of 25kg of assorted types of parboiled rice, 21 vehicles, pairs of shoes, 150 cartons of vegetable oil concealed in trucks with dutiable goods and empty gas cylinders, as well as 130 bales of second-hand clothing and 1,314 cartons of imported frozen chicken.

The Area Controller of the Unit, Dimka Victor David disclosed this while displaying the items to newsmen within the premises of Enugu/Ebonyi/Anambra Command in Enugu. He said that aside the forty-seven (47) suspects apprehended, seventeen (17) have been charged to court and four (4) of them jailed.

Dimka who put the Duty Paid Value (DPV) of the seizures at one hundred and twenty-three million, fifty-nine thousand and six hundred naira

(#123,059,600.00), emphasized that smugglers have continued to devise means to remain upbeat in their illicit business and assured that his men being better trained, equipped, mobilized and motivated more than ever before will continue to place an eagle eye on them to neutralize their antics.

Saddened that smugglers have stuck firm to their nefarious activities despite obvious knowledge of the consequences if arrested, the FOU Zone 'C' Area Controller reiterated “since smugglers have learnt to fly without perching, the reformed Nigeria Customs Service officers have learnt to shoot without missing.”

Dimka warned individuals still engrossed in the act of smuggling to desist forthwith, stressing that once arrested, the full weight of the law will be brought to bear on them for their unpatriotic action.

“There is no hiding place for smugglers in Zone C because we will continue to monitor them, follow them, challenge them and get them arrested”,

he said.

He commended the Comptroller-general of Customs, Abdullahi Inde Dikko, CFR and his management for their sustained assistance to officers and men of the service stating that this has continued to strengthen the performance of the unit.

Dimka also extended his warm gratitude to the stakeholders of NCS who have been complying with import procedures and appealed to members of the public with useful information about smugglers, their collaboration and sponsors to make them available for necessary actions in the interest of the nation's economy ●



Dimka Victor David, CAC, FOU Zone C, Owerri.

Who Saves Lagos Ports Access Roads?

As the ports access roads in Apapa become a permanent parking lot for heavy-duty tankers and trucks, those who cannot find space now flow into adjoining streets and lanes to the discomfort of residents and other users, thus adding a new dimension to a very bad situation. Since the onset of heavy rains in June, Apapa residents have been lamenting the toll this development is taking on their individual businesses, comfort, environment and the national economy in general. IZUCHUKWU OZOEMENA revisits a long-standing issue.



Traffic gridlock on the Apapa-Oshodi expressway

Since the onset of heavy rains in the year, movement on the ports access roads in Apapa has finally grounded owing to the worsened condition of the access routes and the attendant traffic gridlock. This has impacted negatively on individual businesses and the national economy.

Heavy-duty trucks and tankers permanently occupying the Apapa- Oshodi expressway now venture into obscure streets and lanes in the vicinity of Apapa in a bid to access the ports. People's worry is rising to high heavens! Curiously, with all her might and constitutionally-guaranteed rights over the ownership and maintenance of the roads, the federal government still appears impervious to cries for a permanent solution.

On his part, Governor Fashola has personally intervened a couple of times in a determined effort to sort out the traffic menace that has prevented virtually everybody from accessing the ports in Apapa and Tin Can Island ports. However, his effort remains a flash in the pan as whatever panacea he has adopted has remained, at best, a palliative.

According to industry watchers, combating the perennial traffic gridlock on the ports access routes is beyond the ability of any state government. It requires what is referred to in Nigerian parlance as 'federal might'. As long as the federal government

looks the other way or takes half-hearted measures while the critical infrastructure rots irretrievably, the masses will never cease to cry out.

Recently, Governor Fashola cried out in frustration: "Why are we transporting fuel by road, why can't we do it by rail? Now make no mistake about it. There is a side of their business that we must listen to. We are the ones using the fuel and about 3,000 trucks load here every day and they have to come here. So this is the place we put fuel; why can't we pump fuel across the country, from Atlas Cove to Mosinmi and all of that. Why are those facilities not working; what has happened to them? Those are the questions that if we ask ourselves and if we tackle them, will provide a final and long term solution. So it is us really that are the problem and if we sit down and think about it and the agency of the federal government, managing the port, managing fuel should also get up and see what is happening.

"It is not enough to sit down and place adverts to say there is fuel at a pump price. What is the cost of taking that fuel to the people? What is the real purpose, why do I have fuel if it cannot take me to my office? So it is a really hard choice for government and the citizens, but I am sure we can do it," he said.

The Lagos State Governor was

expressing disgust at the level of contribution of tankers and port-bound trucks to the pains Lagosians go through in trying to transit through Apapa to other areas for their daily businesses.

Since the end of June when the rains became heavier in line with the normal geography of Lagos, Apapa and environs have become a no-go area, transiting through the port town to other areas in Lagos has been hellish. The long-standing spectre of tankers and trucks occupying a greater part of the roads is now a child's play when compared with the current practice of total occupation, a development which has become so hopeless that people who do business in Apapa literally trek on a daily basis as no more space is left for them on the road. The scenario is so choking that a popular daily recently screamed a headline referring the entire stretch from Apapa to Rainbow bus stop as 'The road Jonathan, Fashola neglected'.

Early in July, Governor Fashola was at the Mile 2 end where he inspected the traffic gridlock constituting a menace at the Under-Bridge section of the Lagos – Badagry Expressway now undergoing expansion. For weeks since the rains came down heavily, that loop has remained completely overrun by heavy flood which, in a normal setting, should have found a place in the gutters made by Julius Berger, the contractor

handling the road expansion project. Excavations from the gutters reveal that people willfully throw all manner of rubbish into the gutters, thus largely contributing to blockage which makes flood take over the road instead of draining into the lagoon at Maza Maza.

Fashola was also at Creek Road in Apapa where he extracted a commitment from fuel tanker operators to ease traffic on the roads leading to Apapa within one week. Before now, the traffic menace emanating from the Mile 2 and Creek Road stretches had been the greatest contributor to the lingering gridlock which for some years, has negatively affected movement in and out of the ports in Apapa and Tin Can Island. From the Ijora axis, the story is the same as unending traffic remains the order of the day.

For some time, the Ijora route was less crowded but with the Apapa-Oshodi expressway being completely taken over by trucks and tankers, other motorists have no choice than to plunge into this route.

Beside the presence of these trucks, the deplorable condition of the road itself especially from Apapa to Coconut area remains a major issue. Public transporters who normally pass through the Tin Can stretch to Mile 2 up to Oshodi now use the Ijora end to exit Apapa. This, commuters say, is the main reason the hitherto less busy route now experiences unending traffic jam. In fact, for lack of packing space, the tankers and trucks have also converted it into what observers now refer to as a parking lot.

At Creek Road, Fashola said he had interacted with the operators and that they promised to organize the parking of their tankers in a way that traffic could move on the road. He said that if they complied voluntarily, there would be no need to use force to effect compliance. "It is when people don't comply voluntarily that you need enforcement. When people

comply voluntarily, there will be no need for enforcement", the governor said. He explained that government's intention to use the big stick if there is no voluntary compliance is to make the tanker operators realize the amount of pain they are causing residents and other businesses in the area by their operations.

"What we intend to achieve here is to make the tanker operators here, National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) and their affiliates to understand that their business operation is inflicting pain on residents of Apapa and once they understand that, it is important then to see what kind of empathy that they bring to the business."

The governor said the operators had agreed that they would make some changes within one week. As if to allow them the benefit of doubt, he added: "It is easier for me when a man says 'I am willing to change my ways that is hurting people.' If that change is not forthcoming, he said, "we know what to do on behalf of tax-payers and on behalf of the people who we represent."

While expressing the determination of the government to ensure that other businesses survive in Apapa, Fashola promised that owners of the oil companies that have tank farms in Apapa would visit the area as a group "to see for themselves how they make profit and the cost of that profit on ordinary citizens."

"I think once they see this I am sure we will begin to see some organization and some empathy."

In 2012, the federal and Lagos State governments jointly put in place an interventionist measure which kept the ports access roads clear of obstruction for some weeks. For some reasons, however, this reprieve was short-lived as the joint committee that ought to have sustained enforcement chickened out; security operatives assigned to ensure that tanker and trailer drivers did the needful quickly became toll collectors out to

make quick personal money, thus, making the return to status quo a matter of time.

Governor Fashola has continued to blame the federal authorities for failing to come out with concrete steps to solve the traffic gridlock on roads whose ownership and maintenance squarely fall within her jurisdiction. Fashola easily recalls the huge revenue the two ports in Lagos realize monthly for the federal government and wonders why issues hindering movement in and out of the ports cannot be sorted out permanently. He reiterated this in Lagos recently when the Senate Committee on Privatization led by the chairman, Gbenga Obadara, came calling.

Investigations recently confirmed by a retired naval officer and prominent ship surveyor show that to decongest the ports in Lagos, a number of options are available for the federal government. According to him, the water level at Igbokoda waterfront in Ondo State can be so deep that it can accommodate a port where all petroleum-laden tankers destined for Apapa can berth and discharge products to cater for trucks and tankers from different parts of the north, the east and beyond. The Ikorodu Lighter Terminal can also be developed into a special port from where tankers destined for Lagos and the entire west pick products.

Apapa and Tin Can Island ports will be left to serve other mercantile purposes. As an added measure, all tank farms lined up in Apapa deserve to be relocated to facilitate a reconstruction of ports access roads built over 50 years ago without taking into account the possibility of the volume of traffic now in place.

APAPA RESIDENTS COMPLAIN

Residents of Apapa community under the aegis of Apapa Government Reserved Area Residents Association (AGRA) have lashed out at the federal government over the neglect of dilapidating public infrastructure in the area.

According to AGRA General Manager, Paul Odey, the state of roads and other public infrastructures in the port city has become "very alarming". Odey said several lives and huge financial resources are lost daily as a result of bad roads and the activities of tank farm operators in Apapa.

"Apart from lives lost consistently, the financial implication is alarming too and you can't breathe fresh air anymore. Over 500 businesses around Creek Road, for instance, are collapsing one after the other, because of the activities of tankers which have taken over the roads, as a result of two major tank farms, the



Governor Fashola's inspection team on Creek Road

Who Saves Lagos

Falawiyo Energy and Lister Oil and Gas”.

He regretted that should there be an emergency in Apapa, rescue effort will be impossible due to the blockade around Creek and Liverpool roads.

“It will be a total disaster, fire fighters can't get through, medical evacuation will be impossible. It is so curious why the Federal Government should grant licenses to operate tank farms in residential areas like Creek and Liverpool roads. These people should be removed”, he said.

The Apapa-Oshodi expressway which is a major link to the airport and the seaports as well as the ever-busy Wharf road have been in terrible conditions in almost a decade without any concrete move by government to repair them.

Similarly, people living in the satellite areas of Ajegunle, Orile, Amukoko and Boundary have raised the alarm that the traffic gridlock on the Apapa-Oshodi expressway is having a

very negative effect on them. Trucks and other vehicles that cannot be accommodated on the ports access roads now veer into their narrow streets all in the effort to reach the ports. They regret that the presence of these trucks and tankers in their neighbourhood is worsening environmental problems created by the people's penchant to block available drains with refuse.

Besides, it has increased the presence of strange faces in

their midst who claim to be drivers and motor boys. They lament the security implications of this development especially in a country where acts of terrorism is gradually spreading to all parts like a cancer.

AMATO BLAMES PORTS CONCESSION

On her own part, the Association of Maritime Truck Owners (AMATO) the umbrella body of owners and operators of trucks which lift containers to and from the ports, has never ceased to blame the federal government for the gridlock plaguing the port access roads. According to them, the federal government concessioned the ports to private terminal operators, empowering them to acquire spaces hitherto used as parking lots in the port area. Since there is

no alternative provision for them, they say, the only option is to line up on the expressway.

According to AMATO President, Chief Remi Ogungbemi, until the authorities take concrete steps to redress this anomaly, it will be difficult for the trucks to keep off the port access routes since by the nature of their business, the trucks must park nearby to enable them come in and load or offload cargo as the case may be.

Following the January 7, 2014 petroleum tanker fire incident in the Berger Suya area of Apapa which claimed 18 lives and properties worth millions of naira, the Senior Staff Association of Communications, Transport and Corporations of the Nigerian Ports Authority called on the federal government to urgently relocate the numerous petroleum tank farms to safer areas to safeguard lives and properties should any fire incident occur.

MWUN HANDS ULTIMATUM

In a July 9, 2014 petition to the federal government, the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, MWUN, took the federal government to task on the incessant gridlock on Oshodi/Apapa expressway which has practically shut all economic and other activities on the Oshodi/Apapa axis besides inflicting untold hardship on residents and those whose businesses are located in the environs. “We observe with dismay that petrol tankers and trailers have permanently taken over the access roads to our sea

ports; Apapa and Tin Can Island Ports in particular. The resultant gridlock caused by the indiscriminate parking of the petrol tankers and trailers that daily load petrol from the tank farms along the access roads to the sea ports have made movement of people and goods in and out of our sea ports and work places within the Apapa industrial/commercial area impossible,” Aham Ubani, MWUN scribe said. The petition referred to deep pot holes along the road, which are better described as gullies, that have now turned death traps and is another contributory factor to the unprecedented gridlock that daily occurs on the roads.

MWUN observed with dismay the utter neglect of the access roads which has not only compromised the efficiency and service delivery of the ports due to the huge



Sen. Idris Umar, Transport Minister

loss of man hours incurred daily on the roads, but has no doubt impacted negatively on the national economy. The union said it had repeatedly called on government to relocate the tank farms along the Tin Can and Apapa Ports access roads for better safety of lives, properties and economic reasons. It expressed surprise that in spite of the assurances given that the tank farms would be relocated, till date, nothing has been done.

Consequently, the MWUN slammed a fourteen (14) day ultimatum within which, according to the petition, “all the pot-holes along the port access roads must be fixed; all the tank farms built along the port access roads be relocated to another place where it would not inhibit free flow of traffic and all the petrol tankers and trailers be removed from the port access roads.”

Shortly before Governor Fashola's recent inspection of the traffic gridlock in Apapa area, he had written two separate memos to the presidency to get the federal government pay attention to the poor state of the roads. The memo identified the issue of hindered access to Apapa Ports and the state of disrepair of connecting roads posing big challenges. It also proposed remedies for action by agencies and organs of the federal government, to ensure an enduring relief to the citizens. No concrete action was taken.

Mid-July, the federal government represented by Prof Sylvester Monye, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Monitoring and Implementation, petroleum tanker drivers, truck owners and other stakeholders reached an agreement to move all tankers, trucks and other articulated vehicles out of the Apapa area within 24 hours to pave way for the repair of the bad spots on the road. For some reasons, industry watchers seem unexcited as this may not be a lasting cure to a malignant tumour ●

For some time, the Ijora route was less crowded but with the Apapa-Oshodi expressway being completely taken over by trucks and tankers, other motorists have no choice than to plunge into this route

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The British Prime Minister, Mr. David Cameron on 18th July 2014 in London presented an Award of Excellence to Chief Joseph Ikechukwu Ukeji, Chairman/ CEO of J.I Ejison International Ltd, the sole distributor of Pure Heaven Wine and Bullet Energy Drink in Nigeria and Cameroun. The event was organized by Sun Mark, United Kingdom Ltd, the UK's associates of Chief Ukeji



The Prime Minister, David Cameron presenting the Award of Excellence to Chief Ukeji. Looking in admiration is Mr Rami Ranger, Chairman, Sun Mark Group, United Kingdom

Chief Ukeji displaying the plaque of Award of Excellence



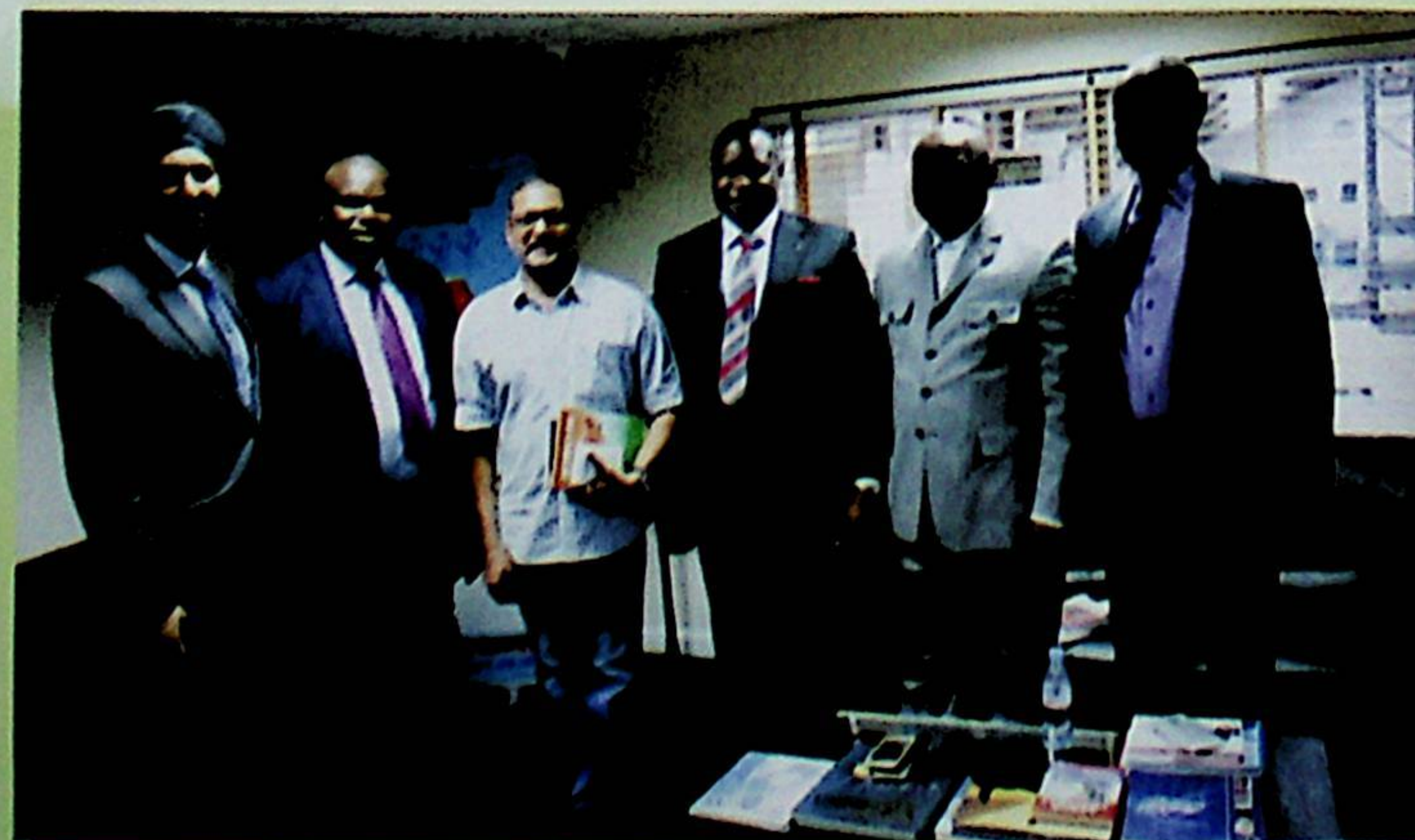
Mr Joe in handshake with David Cameron. Looking is Mr Okey Ibeke (3rd right), Chief Donatus Obelle, CEO Don Climax Agency (4th right) and Chief Ukeji



Mr Okey Ibeke, The Publisher, *Business and Maritime West Africa* with a cross section of invitees.



Cross section of invitees



Ukeji and friends with some managers of Sun Mark Ltd.



Mr Rami Ranger and Chief Ukeji admiring the plaque of Award of Excellence



Chief Ukeji, Okey Ibeke and other invitees



The plaque of Award of Excellence



Chief Ukeji surrounded by top management of Sun Mark (UK) Ltd and Nigerian friends



Chief Ukeji sharing a joke with the Prime Minister

Abia Sea Port: A Governor's Grand Illusion

The governor of Abia State, Theodore Orji, recently announced plans to deliver a seaport to his people before leaving office in 2015. Coming less than ten months to the end of his tenure, maritime stakeholders have lampooned the proposed project as mere wishful thinking and a grand illusion. IZUCHUKWU OZOEMENA reports.

The Abia State government has made public her plans to join the league of states that are establishing sea ports. Apart from Lagos State which houses the ports of Apapa and Tin Can Island, a few other littoral States own ports already. These are the Warri, Sapele, Burutu and Koko ports in Delta, Calabar port in Cross River and the eastern port located in Port



The Ibaka waterfront

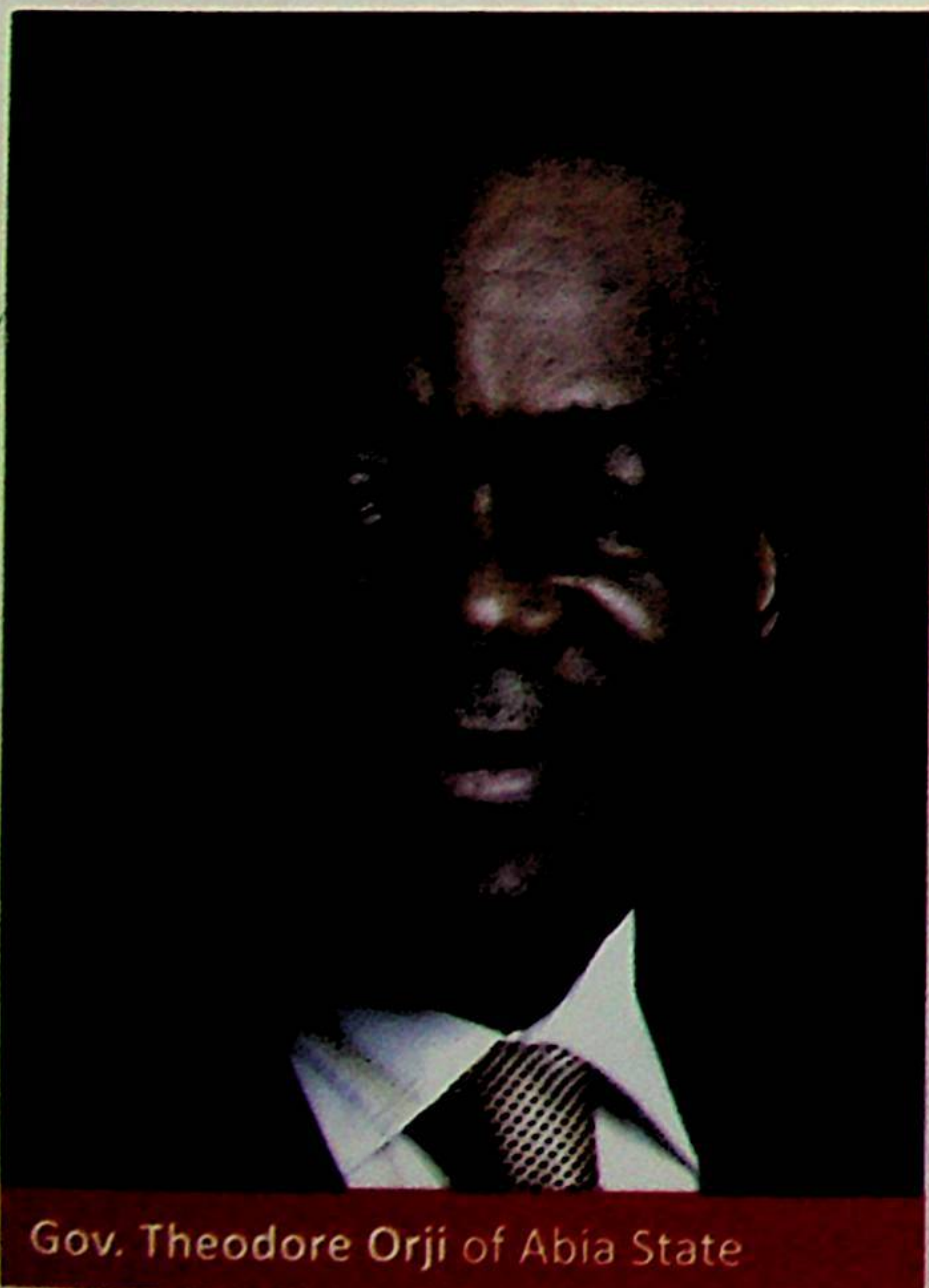
Harcourt. There are also plans to cite deep sea ports in Lekki and Badagry (in Lagos) and Ibaka in Akwa Ibom State. Efforts are also being made by Ogun and Ondo states in collaboration with the federal government and some private investors to develop the Olokola deep-sea port.

As stated earlier in the year by the Transport Minister, Senator Idris Umar, consultancy services contract for the establishment of a port at Ogidiqben, near Escravos, designed as part of a Gas Industrial Park with a Free Zone status expected to be the hub for the gas revolution initiative of the federal government is awaiting federal executive council consideration and approval. The federal government is already putting in place a number of river ports to take advantage of the recently-dredged River Niger channel for the movement of goods and services inland. These are located in Onitsha (Anambra), Oguta (Imo), Baro and Lokoja in Niger and Kogi States respectively. Of these, the Onitsha river port

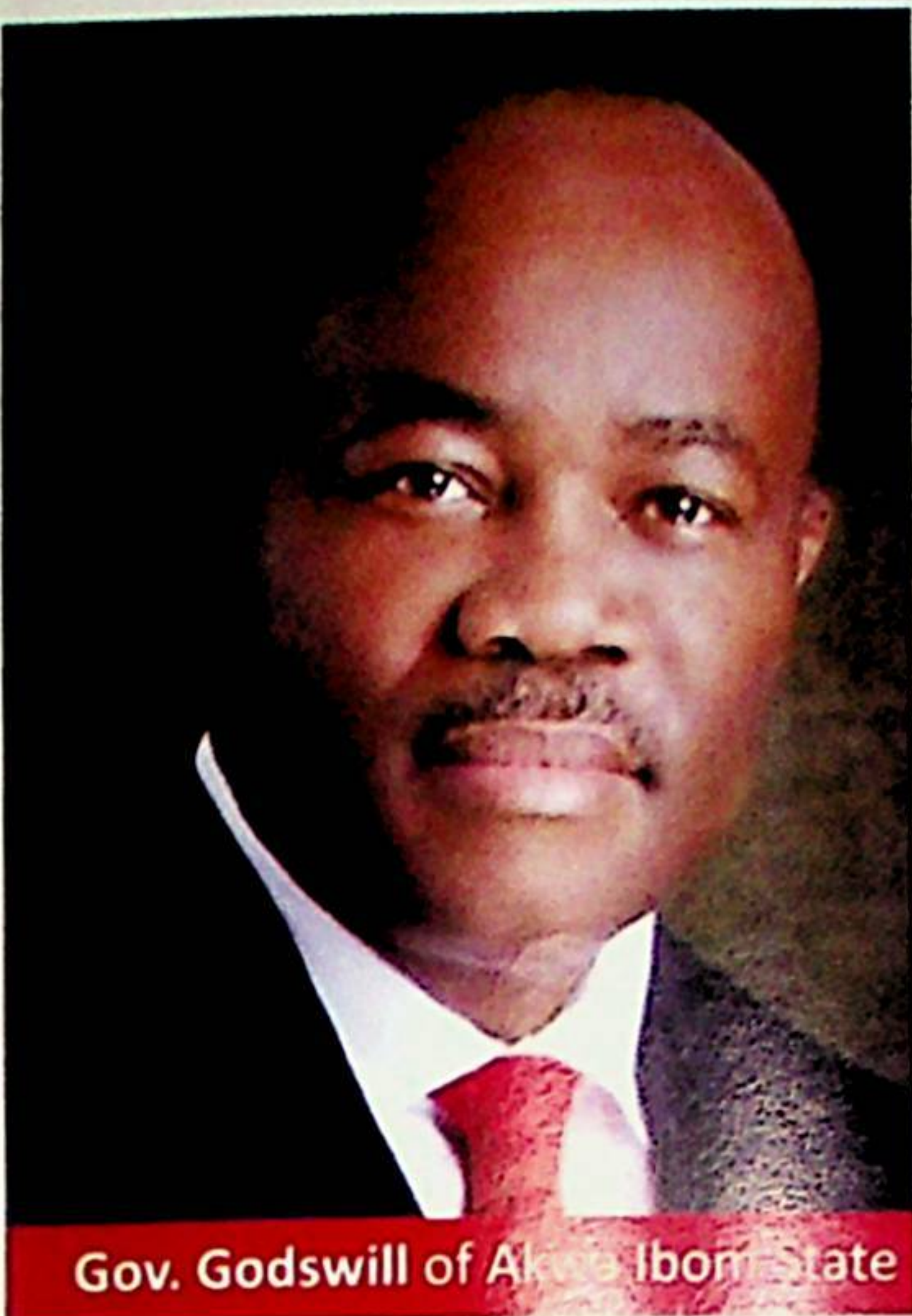
has been completed and commissioned awaiting concessioning to private terminal operators.

The proposed Abia sea port to be sited at Obuaku in Ukwa West Local Government Area of the state is expected to boost commerce in the entire South East region, the state government has said. According to the state's Information Commissioner, Eze Chikamayo, the sea port project is borne out of Gov. Theodore Orji's determination to bequeath meaningful projects to the people.

Chikamayo explained that the nearness of Obuaku to the Atlantic Ocean informed the choice of the town for the project, which, he explained, will be the second seaport in the South East geopolitical zone after Onitsha. Right in Obuaku, there is a confluence point where the Imo River and the Blue River meet. The Obuaku confluence passes through Ikot Abasi in Akwa Ibom State. The commissioner said the proposed Abia sea port when completed would tremendously boost economic activities in the state.



Gov. Theodore Orji of Abia State



Gov. Godswill of Akwa Ibom State

NEW SEA PORT: THE AKWA IBOM EXPERIENCE

In 2011, high level consultations commenced between the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and the Akwa Ibom State government on the acquisition of a 5,138 hectares of land for the development of a deep-sea port in Ibaka, a riverine community of the State. As stated by the then managing director of the NPA, Engr Omar Suleiman, "we in NPA will partner with you to ensure the success of this laudable project. We believe our support for this project is not only for the state but for the country as a whole. I believe this is a Nigerian project for all Nigerians and should therefore be supported by all Nigerians". Since then, Governor Godswill of Akwa Ibom State has never relented in expressing his conviction that the Ibaka deep sea port would be delivered in 2015 shortly before he winds up his 8- year tenure in office. "It will also be of advantage to countries bordering Nigeria along the coastline. Akwa Ibom State has the largest and longest coastline in the country and we are glad that your company (the NPA) is interested in making use of these numerous advantages," he said.

As if to underline his determination not to be discouraged by cynics, he insisted recently that the Ibaka experiment is a future project that will help to decongest existing ports in Nigeria and also make Nigeria an attractive

destination for shippers. "It will become a major trans-shipment destination because of the depth of the water." Akpabio dropped the hint when the Managing Director of China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC), Mr. Shi Hong Bing, led the management team of the firm to present an architectural design of the project to him in Abuja. According to Mr Bing, "the first phase of the project is estimated to cost about \$3 billion. So, we need more investors to partner CCECC and Akwa Ibom State government to make the project a reality".

But as at October 2013 when *BMWA* visited Ibaka in Akwa Ibom State on a fact-finding mission, there was nothing on ground to suggest that the project had taken off not to talk about being completed and delivered in 2015, just a matter of months hence. Recent reports show that as at June 2014, there is no construction site. The only access road from Oron to Ibaka still remains as dilapidated as it was in 2013 and is so narrow that it may not be useful if heavy equipments and materials needed for such a gigantic project are to be moved to site. The Oron jetty located on the precincts of the Maritime Academy of Nigeria planned as a transit point for heavy-duty machinery and allied materials destined for the project in Ibaka is still shallow and may not admit the type of vessels expected to lift the inputs unless it is dredged. As experts say, dredging it to specifications cannot take anything less than a year and half.

But despite what appears an obvious air of uncertainty hanging over the Ibaka deep sea project with regard to meeting the expected date of delivery, Akwa Ibom State government remains optimistic that it will deliver as promised. This was confirmed in Lagos last November by the State's information and communications commissioner, Prince Godwin Ntuk Udeh at the National Council on Transportation meeting. He said the sea port project is a major concern for the government and people of Akwa Ibom State. "We

will continue to partner with the federal government to achieve the objective", he assured. He explained that the sea port would open windows of business opportunities in the Gulf of Guinea. "The port will serve all countries in the Gulf of Guinea and it will also lessen the burden of our ports in Lagos."

As Governor Orji leaves office in May, 2015, what are the chances of actualizing his ambition of Abia sea port before leaving office or taking it to a point where whoever succeeds him will have no choice than to complete it? For some Abia indigenes who volunteered views from Umuahia, it is a mixed bag. While some see the project as one sure way of taking the State's economy to the next level if it is possible, others perceive it as one of those white elephant projects which Nigerian politicians use to hoodwink the people so as to catch their votes. Gov Orji, who is angling to go to the Senate after serving out his term needs what to tell the people to get their support, Chinedu Ogbunka from Ukwa West said. However, Chief Joseph Kanu from Umuahia South was full of praises for the governor for ever thinking in the line of a project which he said would develop the State further.

"Do you know that while Rivers State sits 40 nautical miles away from the Atlantic Ocean, Obuaku is only 25 nautical miles to the Atlantic Ocean?," he asked. He said that to some people, the talk about a sea port in Abia state may sound unrealistic but, it is not far- fetched. "Even if it does not get realized by the Theodore

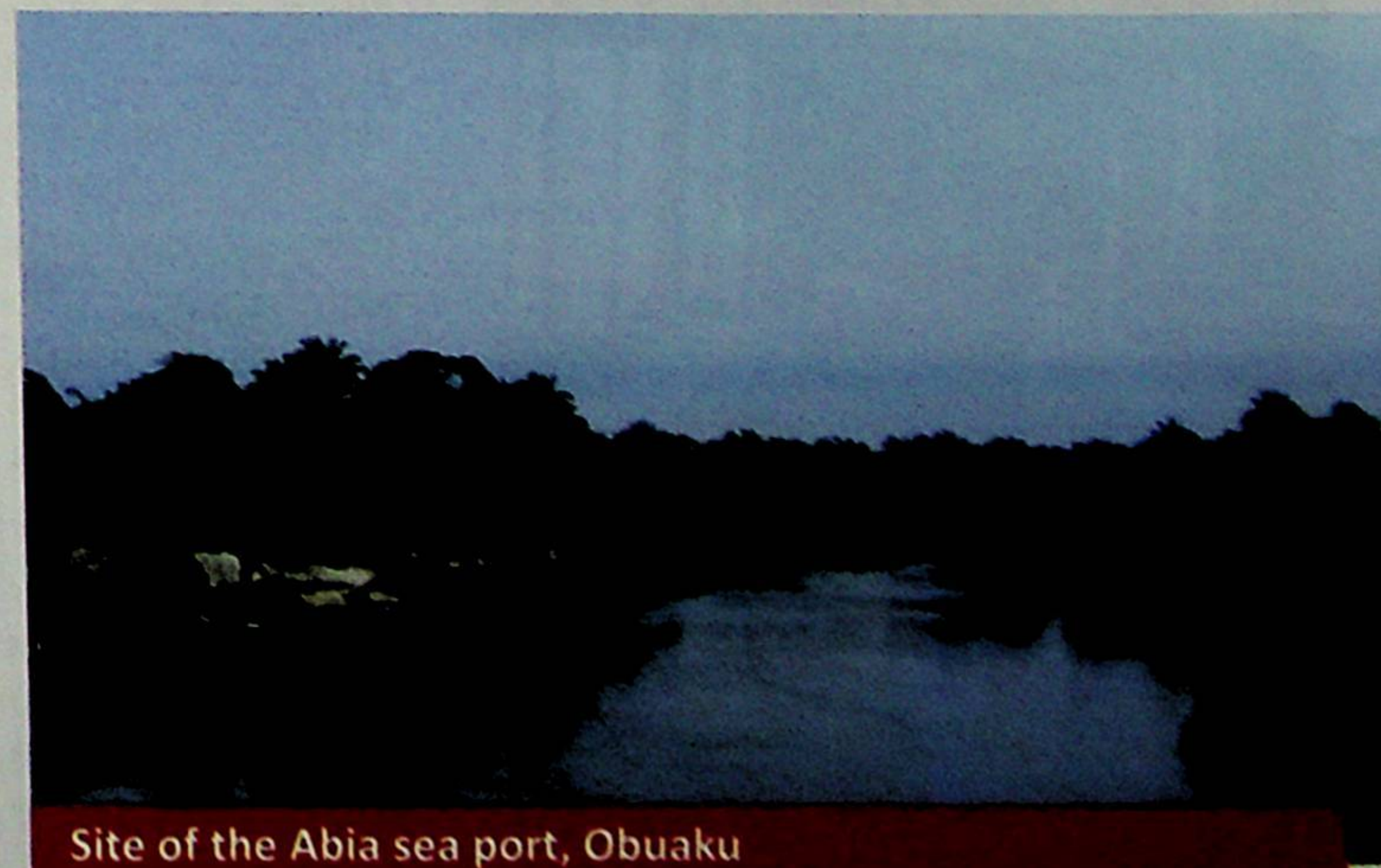


Sen. Idris, Transport Minister

Orji administration, this legacy project will come to fruition in no distant time". To Ijeoma Mmuoh, a resident of the commercial city of Aba, however, T.A. Orji should leave the seaport project alone. "Common road maintenance he could not do; no basic amenities and infrastructure. Now he wants to fly without crawling."

Similarly, Oju Onuoha, another indigene of Aba says the entire idea is laughable. According to him, "we've enough sea ports here and there in Aba. Every street has its own (referring to permanently flooded streets begging for reconstruction). Please we don't need more."

While mixed reactions trail the Abia sea port project, the onus of proving his cynics right before leaving office in 2015 squarely lies with Governor Theodore Orji ●



Site of the Abia sea port, Obuaku

NISA Shops For New Leadership

By Izuchukwu Ozoemena

An election guideline to which all members are expected to adhere for an election planned for November has been put in place by the Nigerian Shipping Association, NISA. The association is also reaching out to other ship-owners who are not presently in her fold. Already, the association has drawn out a list of all registered shipping companies who have been approached to join NISA. According to a reliable insider, "We got a number of responses to our expression-of-interest form. From this, we held a ship-owners' cocktail in Lagos. These are part of our efforts to drive membership; to reach out and tell everybody that 'you can be part of it'".

The election guideline stipulates all the offices available for contest. These are positions of the president, first vice president, second vice president, general secretary and assistant general secretary. Others are treasurer, financial secretary, welfare officer and zonal coordinators in Warri, Calabar, Lagos and Port Harcourt. Certain posts are exclusively reserved for ship owners only. "In our membership", revealed the source, "there are members and

associate members. 'Member' refers to ship-owning companies while 'associate' describes brokers, bankers, insurance companies and others who provide services of various kinds to the ship owners. As stipulated in the election guidelines, an associate member can contest for any post other than the offices of president, first and second vice president, general secretary and assistant general secretary.

Members are also required to clear a backlog of all outstanding dues over the years up to a minimum of 10% to qualify to vote or be voted for in the election."

It has been revealed also that the present NISA leadership under Chief Isaac Jolapamo has not anointed any successor as is being rumoured as the rebranded association is offering a democratic platform for all qualified members who are interested to serve to come on board.

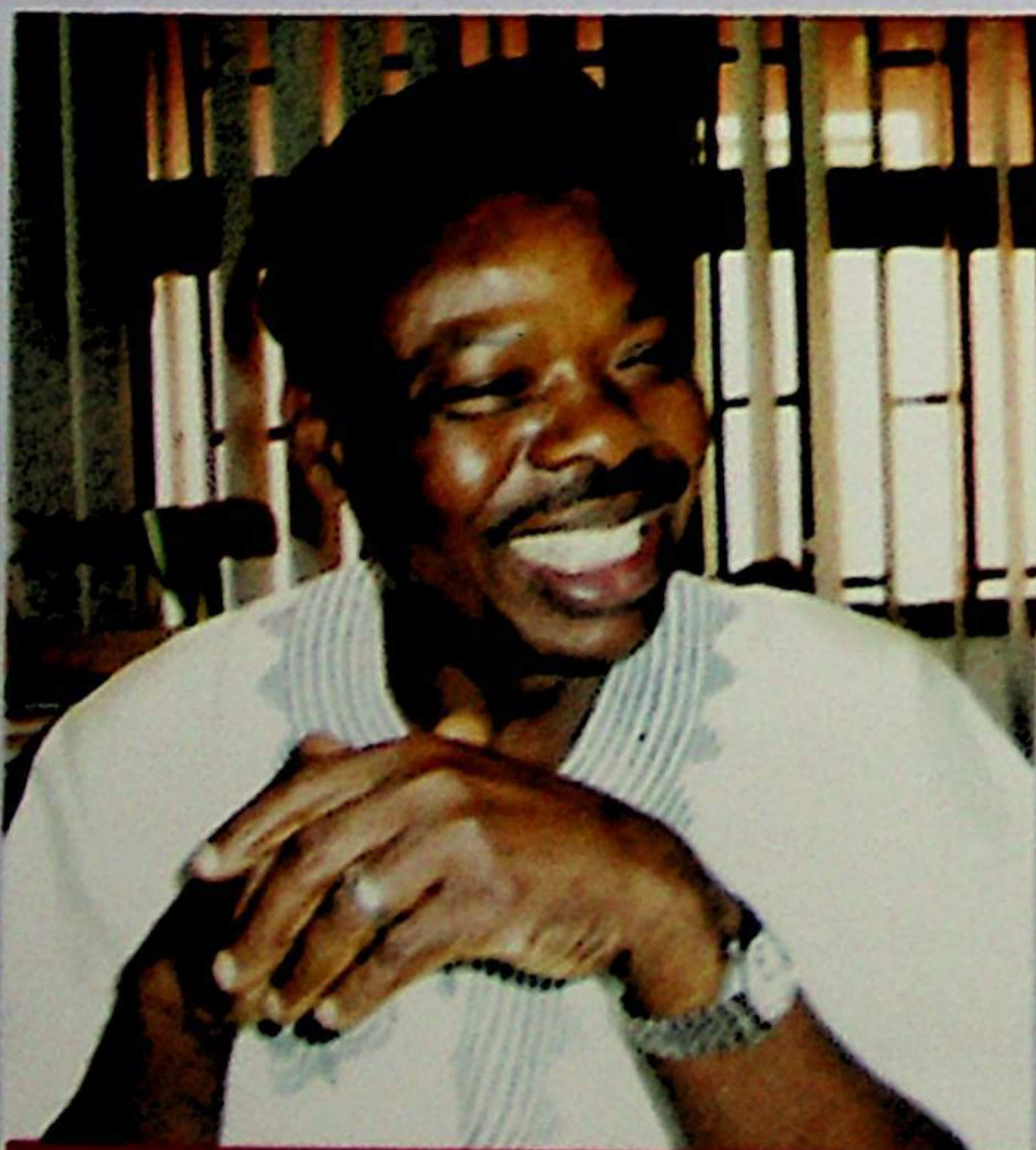
According to reliable sources, Jolapamo wants the association to be democratized. As someone who loves the industry, someone who has shown commitment, strength and courage to move the association of indigenous shippers from the scratch to where it is today, he would rather let someone who can make sacrifices in order to make a difference to the benefit of all to lead NISA. "I'm not aware of him anointing any particular candidate for the election", said the source.

The election timetable starts with financial regularization, which means members have till up to the end of July to clear all outstanding dues owed the association. By the end of August, members willing to contest for posts are expected to have purchased forms and submitted. By mid-September, a debate and manifesto presentation is conducted during which all contestants will publicly unveil their plans and programmes that will take the

association to the next level. This will guide the people to make choices. By the last week in September, the election takes place by the process of open-secret ballot. By November 11, a new NISA leadership which can be re-elected for a second term as per the guidelines will be inaugurated.

One thing which foreign operators in the shipping sector have taken advantage of so far is NISA members' inability to come together and speak with one strong voice. Unfortunately, industry watchers say, this has negatively impacted on the association's efforts to convince the federal government to disburse the over-accumulated Cabotage Vessel Finance Fund to members. That NISA wants to stop at all costs. The association wants everyone to bury existing differences, synergize and come together to form a strong and solid association. If this is achieved, those who do not want the CVFF implemented will have a strong opposition to face. By this election and rebranding being planned, those who have been complaining that ISAN or NISA is a one-man show will see the difference. We believe that more genuine Nigerians who are truly in shipping will come on-board and join hands to realize the set goals of the association. The association will surely be the better for it.

In 2003, the Indigenous Ship-owners Association of Nigeria, (ISAN), the umbrella industry association of Nigerians who are owners of vessels of 500GRT and above, was conceived by the trio of Capt Emmanuel Iheanacho, Chief Isaac Jolapamo and Capt Niyi Labinjo on the heels of the promulgation of the Cabotage Act 2003 designed by the government "to restrict the use of foreign vessels in domestic coastal trade; to promote the development of indigenous tonnage and to establish a Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund and for related matters". According to the founding fathers, it was convened for the purpose of promoting and regulating the business of indigenous



Chief Isaac Jolapamo



Capt Emmanuel Iheanacho



Capt Niyi Labinjo

group, ISAN should be democratized and made all-inclusive to accommodate other ship-owning companies who do not identify with the association. It is felt that if all come together to synergize, it will be the best for the collective interest of all. This led to recent calls from some quarters that rebranding is inevitable.

There are also vocal suggestions that the prefix 'indigenous' is a bit limiting; it brings about restriction. Some even say that one cannot be indigenous in his own country because this connotes that recognition is given to another group of people operating within the same sub-sector. So, after a careful analysis of the situation, the association came to a decision to rebrand, first by effecting a change in her name. Thus, the name transformed to the Nigerian Ship-owners Association, NISA.

Findings show that presently, NISA does not offer foreign ship-owners automatic membership. But there is a proviso that if a foreigner can give away 60% of his equity as stipulated in the Merchant Shipping Act and the Cabotage law to Nigerians, with concrete evidence in this regard, it automatically qualifies. This caveat is necessary because industry watchers say there have been cases of abuse of this waiver by foreigners in collusion with Nigerians.

In order to meet the quest for democratization, the ISAN constitution was reviewed. After this process, to make it well accepted, the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, was appointed the government agency to serve as umpire for an election being proposed towards the end of 2014. ●

ship-ownership and management, in addition to creating employment opportunities for Nigerian seafarers.

The founding fathers wanted an association to advance and protect the collective interest of the ship owners; a body to provide a platform for them to meet, present common positions on how best they can benefit from the cabotage in the wake of foreign incursion into the industry within Nigeria's territorial waters.

Since formation in 2003, the association has grown and, expectedly, become saddled with many challenges. For instance, stakeholders have become factionalized along ideological lines. There is the faction that believes that the association is not democratized enough; that it should not be run by the same group of people who have called the shots since inception. According to the

NIWA Unveils Roadmap To Stakeholders

The Managing Director, National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Hajia Inna Maryam Ciroma has pledged to provide all "necessary infrastructures" that would be required, to make navigation in Nigeria's waterways absolutely "effective and efficient". She made the statement at Eko Hotel in Lagos while addressing stakeholders and intellectuals who gathered for a brainstorming session meant to evolve a roadmap for repositioning and improving activities on the inland waterways.

Pointing out that it was not enough to dredge the River Niger from Warri in Delta State to Baro in Niger State covering a distance of about 572 kilometres, she assured that NIWA would now ensure that sanity and global best practices also reigned, so as to ensure that the 100 metres-wide channels with a minimum depth of 2.5 metres can also be put to best productive use all year round.

"The Authority with its regulatory responsibilities has the big challenge of enthroning global best practices in the inland waterways sub sector. It also has the responsibility of maintaining the more than 10,000 kilometres of waterways out of which only 3,000 kilometres are navigable.

"For the dredged River Niger to be put in proper and effective use, the Federal Government also approved the rehabilitation of the abandoned Onitsha River Port which is being put up for concessioning by Messrs Green Strators of India, under the supervision of



NIWA MD, Hajia Ciroma

ICRC.

"Furthermore, new River ports would be developed at Baro in Niger State, Oguta in Imo State, and Lokoja in Kogi State; and other jetties are being constructed in different parts of the country with the objective of ensuring maximum utilization of the dredged River Niger", the NIWA boss observed further, enjoining participants to focus closely on the theme of the conference which was: "Modernizing Inland Water Infrastructure and Vessels for safe and sustainable inland Waterways Transportation in Nigeria".

In his contribution, the Minister of Transport, Senator Idris Umar who represented President Goodluck Jonathan stressed that Government was determined to entrench enduring security in the country's waters, adding that it was for this reason that the channel of Benue River would soon be opened up, with the award of relevant contracts.

The brainstorming session was however, almost marred by the late arrival of Senator Idris Umar, who arrived the venue at 12.53 pm, by which time some guests were beginning to leave, to officially and formally declare open an event scheduled for 9.am. ●



Ocean-going vessel, *Maersk Cardiff*

ISPS Code Compliance In Nigeria: 10 Years After

Having scaled the hurdle of the 2013 ultimatum on full compliance to the ISPS Code, Nigeria has achieved comfortable position as ports security is now a top priority. GLORIA EHIAGHE traces what it took Nigeria to attain this level.

Over the years, acts of insecurity, lack of safety consciousness and threats of terrorism have pervaded the global maritime landscape. Dishonesty and fraud-like tendencies which have bedeviled activities in the maritime industry have complicated perceived threats of insecurity in the ports.

On September 11, 2001, the world witnessed the bombing of the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York by terrorists, resulting in the death of over 3,000 persons. Following this incident, ideas were canvassed and fears expressed that if the air can be so vulnerable to terrorist attack, engaging the ports and other maritime facilities on land would be a simple job. It therefore became necessary to tinker with the 1974-1988 convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) to create

awareness to maritime nations on the need to put in place certain measures that would shield maritime facilities such as ports from terrorist attacks. Thus came into being the International Ships and Ports Facility Security (ISPS) Code to which every port is to comply with in order to ensure safety of international trade, persons transiting the ports and other critical facilities. The ISPS Code outlined preventive measures against the likelihood of terrorist attacks on ships and ports facilities worldwide. The ISPS Code came into force in 2004.

Objectives of the ISPS Code are to:

- establish an international framework involving co-operation between contracting governments, government agencies, local administrations and the shipping and port industries to detect/assess security threats and take preventive measures against security incidents affecting ships or port facilities used in international trade
- to establish the respective roles and responsibilities of all these parties concerned, at the national and international level, for ensuring maritime security

- to ensure the early and efficient collation and exchange of security-related information
- to provide a methodology for security assessments so as to have in place plans and procedures to react to changing security levels
- to ensure confidence that adequate and proportionate maritime security measures are in place.

The objectives are to be achieved by the designation of appropriate security officers/personnel on each ship, in each port facility and in each shipping company to prepare and to put into effect the security plans that will be approved for each ship and port facility.

The Code does not specify specific measures that each port and ship must take to ensure the safety of her facilities against terrorism because of the many different types and sizes of these facilities. Instead it outlines "a standardized, consistent framework for evaluating risk, enabling governments to offset changes in threat with changes in vulnerability for ships and port facilities."

For ships, the framework includes

requirements for ship security plans, security officers, company security officers and certain onboard equipment. For port facilities, the requirements include port facility security plans, port facility security officers and security equipment.

In addition, the requirements for ships and for port facilities include monitoring and controlling access, monitoring the activities of people and cargo and ensuring that security communications are readily available. Since 2004 when the ISPS Code came into operation, Nigeria has made unsatisfactory efforts to comply with the security code.

Upon being appointed the Designated Authority (DA) for the implementation of the ISPS Code in Nigeria, the Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) officially stated that the effective implementation of the code in Nigerian ports would involve a continuous year-to-year exercise with committees mandated to periodically inspect Port Facilities (PF) in order to ensure that required standards are achieved and maintained. NIMASA has focused not only on PF listed in the United States Coast Guard (USCG) report but on the generality of PFs in the nation's maritime domain which were placed on the watch over a period of time.

In May 2013, the USCG visited Nigeria and conducted an assessment of the security level of her ports. Issues of non-compliance to the ISPS Code were noted following which a 90-day ultimatum was slammed on Nigeria to upgrade or face negative consequences. The USCG team was expected back in the country in September to determine Nigeria's compliance with the deadline.

In the last days of August 2013, Patrick Akpobolokemi, Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), the government's Designated Authority (DA) for the

enforcement of the ISPS Code in Nigeria, briefed newsmen in Lagos on efforts of the agency to beat the deadline.

He hinted that tremendous successes had been recorded in making Nigerian port facilities ISPS Code compliant.

Following the ultimatum, he said, port facilities in Nigeria started to fully comply with the requirements. Akpobolokemi said that NIMASA had commissioned an audit of Nigeria's coastal maritime assets to establish the number, location and nature of operations of all port facilities and jetties in the country. The audit was expected to facilitate the effective execution of NIMASA's brief as the DA for Nigeria's implementation of the ISPS Code.

The "audit will help the DA capture and catalogue all port/berthing facilities as well as verify their ISPS Code compliance status, NIMASA DG revealed."

"The DA has just recently concluded Verification Inspection Exercises (VIE) on all shore-based PFs (port facilities) in the country. The report of this VIE will form the basis for re-certification of these PFs in line with ISPS code requirements. PFs deemed non-compliant will not be recertified and in extreme cases, attract added punitive action," the NIMASA boss warned.

He explained that one of the problems that had plagued port facilities, jetties and terminals was the lack of understanding of the ISPS Code, its relevance and application.

Akpobolokemi said: "To address this, policies and measures are being put in place to ensure more training and capacity building among not just security personnel but all personnel in the maritime sector as everybody has a role to play in the ISPS theatre. Security companies that provide guard force personnel to companies operating in the maritime domain will now be required to provide ISPS training for their personnel seeing that they are functionally the primary custodians of the ISPS protocol. These security companies as well

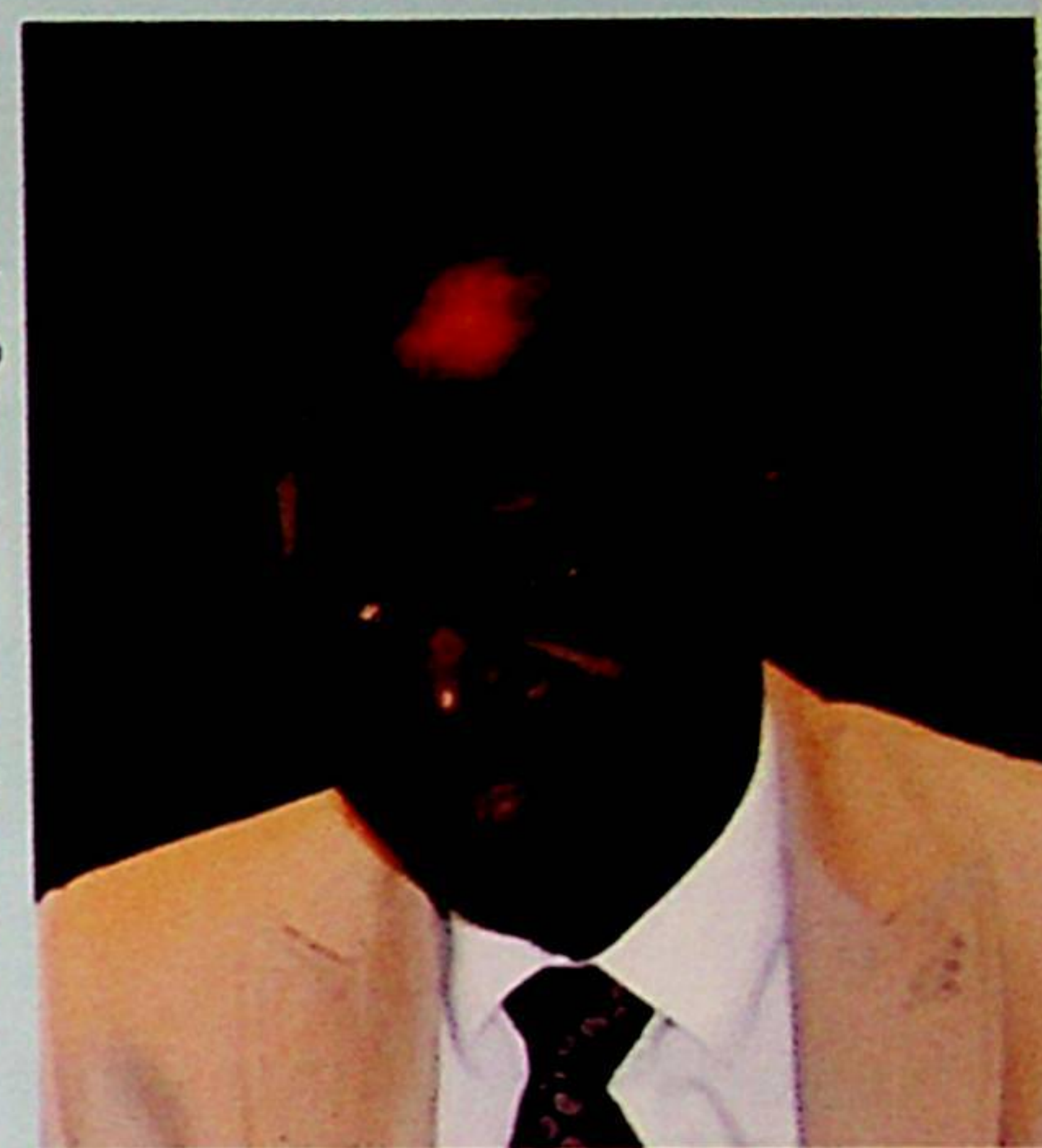
as vendors and infrastructure service providers in the maritime sector are undergoing registration with the DA in order to ensure better regulation and to streamline their activities in the maritime security arena.

"In accordance with the ISPS Code, it is the responsibility of the DA to set or change security levels for PFs in its domain. The DA will continue to work closely with the Office of the National Security Adviser and other security agencies in determining operating security levels based on the evaluation of risks and trends as well as intelligence in the various Maritime Security Zones (MSZ). The DA is working on a strategy that will see her develop capacity to gather intelligence independently and thus contribute to the nation's intelligence gathering effort as is the case in many other countries. Furthermore, as the nation's maritime security regulatory body, it is key that the DA be up-to-date with trends and events in both the domestic and international maritime turf. The DA is considering cost-effective ways of ensuring that it builds its domain awareness capabilities."

The NIMASA boss said that critical success factor to the implementation programme will be the capacity and the will to enforce the mandate by a regime of incentives and sanctions, pointing out that in the past, "compliance was a huge issue as the previous DA lacked capacity to strictly enforce its mandate having lacked constitutional powers to do so."

He posited that with NIMASA duly-established by law and possessing enforcement powers, the DA hopes to leverage this in ensuring stakeholders and particularly the port facilities owners/operators remain compliant.

"Considering that the ISPS (Code) is purely a security-related protocol, and given that activities bordering on maritime security are in fact matters of national security, the DA will not go into further details of its implementation strategy,"



Akpobolokemi, NIMASA DG

Akpobolokemi said.

Shortly before the expiration of the ultimatum, however, the US Coast Guard team to Nigeria visited NIMASA. At a meeting with members of the ISPS Code Implementation Committee in Nigeria, the leader, Mr. Tivo Romero, commended the designated authority (DA) for ISPS Code implementation in Nigeria.

Romero said having assessed six port facilities in the country during their two-week visit, the team noticed tremendous improvement and commended NIMASA for the outreach to facility operators. His words: "I must commend the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency for its efforts so far. However, the US Coast Guard will provide required technical assistance to ensure that infrastructural and legal instruments needed for effective implementation of the ISPS Code in Nigeria are put in place. I urge you all to see this project as a voyage which we have all embarked on, that must be concluded."

Romero dismissed media reports that claimed that the US Government would embargo vessels from visiting Nigerian ports, even as he noted that the US is fully behind Nigeria as a strong business partner that requires desired partnership, a reason for which both countries would always continue to work together and to ensure adequate security in the maritime sector.

Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 & Arbitration Clauses In Maritime Agreements

INTRODUCTION

NIGERIA'S ENDOWMENTS & MARITIME DISPUTES

Nigeria has the largest economy in the West and Central African sub-region. She generates more than 70% of the sea-borne trade in the sub-region. Maritime disputes are a natural consequence of such a dominant position. Since shipping involves huge financial outlay, maritime contracts such as bills of lading, charter parties, memorandum of agreement for the sale of ships, etc, usually have arbitration clauses empowering parties to settle their disputes by arbitration in different jurisdictions around the world.

The question has arisen several times in our courts whether such arbitration clauses oust the jurisdiction of the Federal High Court which has exclusive original jurisdiction over maritime matters in Nigeria and whether agreements containing such clauses are null and void, having regard to Section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act, 1991.

THE SEE-SAW

There have been some

conflicting decisions. Some courts have held that arbitration clauses such as those found in maritime agreements oust the jurisdiction of the Nigerian courts and so such clauses are null and void by virtue of s.20 AJA 1991. Other decisions have held the contrary view. So where are we?

What does Section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 actually say?

Section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 provides that:

"Any agreement by any person or party to any cause, matter or action which seeks to oust the jurisdiction of the court shall be null and void, if it relates to any admiralty matter falling under this Act, and if -

- (a) the place of performance, execution, delivery, act or default is or takes place in Nigeria or
- (b) any of the parties resides or has resided in Nigeria, or
- (c) the payment under the agreement [impliedly or express] is made or is to be made in Nigeria
- (d) In any admiralty action or in case of a maritime lien, the plaintiff submits to the jurisdiction of the court and makes a declaration to that effect or the rem is within Nigerian jurisdiction ;or
- (e) It is a case in which the Federal Government or the Government of a State of the Federation is involved and the government or State submits to the jurisdiction of the court or

derived from, brought into or received in Nigeria in respect of any matter under the admiralty jurisdiction of the court; or

- (g) Under any constitution or the time being in force, to which Nigeria is a party, the national court of a contracting state, is either mandated or has discretion to assume jurisdiction; or

(h) In the opinion of the court, the cause or matter or action should be adjudicated upon in Nigeria."

THE LOCUS CLASSICUS

The locus classicus on whether or not maritime arbitration clauses oust jurisdiction of the Federal High court and whether such clauses are in contravention of section 20 AJA is found in the dictum of Uwaifo JCA as he then was in MV LUPEX V NIGERIAN OVERSEAS CHARTERING & SHIPPING LTD NOCS LTD [1993-1995] 5NSC182, where the learned judge thought that section 20 AJA 1991 was badly drafted and that it was in fact walking on its head!

Although the interpretation of section 20 AJA 1991 was not the main issue, the observations of the learned Uwaifo JCA [as he then was] is important to this discourse.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the contention that in admiralty matters any agreement by the parties to settle their dispute by arbitration, locally or abroad is null and void under section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991.

At page 200, Uwaifo JCA [as he then was], in rejecting the contention that in admiralty matters any agreement by the parties to

the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991, the learned judge declared unequivocally;

"It is argued from the above [quoting section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 by learned counsel for the Respondent] that an arbitration clause which gives the parties to it in any admiralty matter, the first choice of going to arbitration [in Nigeria or elsewhere] instead of the Nigerian courts is null and void under any of the subsections. I do not think I can accept that. What that section provides for is really nothing new. I think it is part of the Common Law that an agreement which seeks to oust the jurisdiction of the court against public policy and will not be enforced. If an arbitration agreement seeks to do that in any matter where there is a justiceable cause, it is unenforceable".

But arbitration agreements as they often do, which merely make a resort to arbitration as a first choice to settle differences arising from an agreement, do not seek to oust the jurisdiction of the court.

It has not been shown that the arbitration agreement in question in this case seeks to oust the jurisdiction of the court. My view is that the arbitration agreement was freely entered into by the parties. No attempt by the court ought to be made to disparage it in a proceeding of this nature. If an arbitration agreement seeks to oust the jurisdiction of the Nigerian courts, it will be unenforceable and the subsections of section 20 of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 will be irrelevant. If such agreement does not seek to oust the jurisdiction of the court, although there is a case for stay of proceedings of an

me then that the court will be entitled to consider the circumstances similar to those envisaged by the subsections of section 20.

It is clear that section 20 is walking on its head. In my view, it was wrongly thought out and badly drafted. It is an inappropriate provision of the law whose meaning cannot be contemplated as I have tried to point out

This was in 1994.

THE DETOUR.

In 2003, the Court of Appeal sitting in Lagos had an opportunity to deal squarely with the interpretation of section 20 AJA 1991 and its effect of arbitration clauses in maritime agreements in the case of MV Panormos Bay v Olam Nigeria Plc [2003-2008] 10 NSC18.

THE FACTS

The facts were that the Respondent as Plaintiff sued the Appellant as Defendant at the Federal High Court Lagos for damages for loss of its consignment of rice carried on the Defendant's vessel *MV Panormos Bay*. Before taking any steps in the proceedings, the Defendant brought an application for stay of proceedings because the bill of lading had an arbitration clause stipulating London, England as the place of settlement of all disputes arising out of that bill of lading. The Federal High Court refused the application and the Defendant appealed to the Court of Appeal.

THE ARBITRATION CLAUSE IN THE BILL OF LADING

Clause 7 in the relevant bill of lading stated that: "Any dispute arising under this bill of lading shall be referred to Arbitration in London. The unamended centrecon arbitration clause

ISSUES FOR DETERMINATION

At the Court of Appeal, the question was whether the bill of lading containing the above arbitration clause came within the purport and intendment of section 20 AJA 1991 and whether section 20 AJA 1991 being a later legislation, had not impliedly modified sections 2 and 4 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act as regards agreements for foreign jurisdiction in admiralty matters as contained in Clause 7 in the bills of lading, thereby limiting enforceable arbitration agreements in admiralty matters to those having Nigeria as its forum.

For the avoidance of doubt sections 2 and 4 of the



Mrs Edodo-Emore

Arbitration and Conciliation Act provide that:

Continues next edition

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Importance Of Seaports To The National Economy

By Eto Gabriel Maero

Ports are the meeting point of land and sea transport. Enormous quantities of cargo move through ports and the speed and efficiency of this transfer is vital for the economies of the countries concerned and for profitability of marine transport.

They are critical nodes in international transport chain that link vessels with land-based modes (by ensuring seaside and land connection).

Seaports play a very crucial role not only in the economic development of a coastal state, but also in the promotion and sustenance of global trade and commerce. They represent the most critical economic infrastructure for trade facilitation. Over 90% of international cargo moves through the ports of the world. This perhaps explains why the port has been variously described as an economic gateway (NIMASA, 2007).

To illustrate the importance of seaport, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia (1981-2003) said:

"No matter how information technology advances, the world trade cannot be materialized without ports. This is exactly why every country needs to develop much more advanced and efficient ports for its prosperity"

Ports play a vital role in the development of a nation, more so that they are increasingly being integrated into the productive frontier as critical node within a multimodal transport system. When properly developed and maintained, they promote the flow of waterborne commerce and contribute to economic development.

Seaports exist to facilitate the transfer of cargo between littoral and inland locations; to allow goods to flow in and out of the country as quickly and efficiently as possible. As seaborne trade grows, so the role of seaports must assume even greater importance.

Besides facilitating cargo movement, ports are also used as cargo consolidation and distribution centres, export-oriented industrial centres (free trade zones) and customs inspection and checking centres. A port can rightly be described as an economic infrastructure hosting a complex array of interrelated activities



that support trade and commerce. Industrialized and developing countries have come to realize the advantages derivable from locating commercial activities and industries in the immediate vicinity of ports in order to process imports and upgrade export. This implies that port relevance in national development has become so important that we cannot take port administration and management for granted. This was the rationale for the privatization of Nigerian ports in 2006.

Port Administration

The administration of a port, its form and structure, is an obvious key to most problems of organization. Also, the technical development of the port depends, in the first instance, on the foresight and sound judgment of the administrators. A port with a vigorous, enlightened and initiative-driven administration usually prospers even under unfavourable geographic conditions while others stifled by bureaucracy (e.g. multiple government agencies in the cargo examination) and maze of unrealistic regulations and policies imposed by government cannot. For instance, government's recent imposition of 110 per cent Customs duty on rice and the new 70 per cent import tariff on cars has led to vessels and cargo diversion to neighbouring countries. This, in addition to

other factors, has rubbished some of the advantages that would have flowed from port concession in Nigeria.

The role of ports and port authorities, and the way in which they position themselves in the new business environment in the future, must be determined within a paradigm of ports as elements in value-driven chain systems, not simply as places with particular, if complex, functions.

To enhance seaports as value-driven chain systems, state-owned port authorities operating their own port facilities is no longer the norm. Increasingly, port authorities are hiring private companies to operate and manage their facilities to reduce costs and increase productivity. This reform strategy is to deregulate, decentralize and privatize the sector and organize competition within it.

There are two types of port privatization - outright transfer of ownership (purchase) or contracting out the management of the ports to the private sector for a period of time (concession). Either way, management of the ports will be handed over to private operators. Although NPA has since 1969 owned and operated the port system in Nigeria, elements of private participation in the port industry existed in many forms, e.g. the Container Terminal Company (CTC) for many years managed and operated the Container Terminal Port

before it reverted to NPA.

In a bid to encourage further growth, promote efficiency and explore opportunities across the West African sub region, the government had to concession the major ports to private operators, thereby adopting the landlord model of port administration.

The Port Concession

Nigerian ports constitute the mainframe of the maritime sector of the nation's economy, and a number of them have been responsible for the growth of certain cities and large commercial centres in Nigeria, and consequently national development. However, prior to concession, NPA was unable to perform the statutory functions it was established to carry out efficiently. This led to the port reform programmes which culminated in the privatization of the ports, with the aim of increasing efficiency and improving service delivery.

The old order in Nigerian ports which included turnaround time for ships was too long and usually culminated in weeks, sometimes months, depending on the cargo being loaded or discharged. Cargo-handling plants and equipment owned by the NPA were few and mostly unserviceable, leading to shipping companies hiring these machines from private sector sources even after paying NPA. Dwell time for goods in ports was prolonged due to poor port management. As a result, overtime cargo filled the most active seaports leading to port congestion; labour for ship work was held in the vice-grip of wharf overlords who controlled dockworker unions and supplied less than the manpower paid for. This fraud which became accepted by the maritime community lasted for years and was usually perpetrated to extract maximum revenue from helpless and hapless ship

owners and their agents without a care of how this impacted on the Nigerian economy and the already-dented reputation of Nigerian seaports. Nigerian seaports were, as a result of the compounded problems, rated as one of the costliest seaports in the world.

And what is more, many port premises and quay aprons had fallen to disuse and failed road sections inside the ports made movement of goods within port grounds cumbersome and very slow. Following the seaport congestion, complaints of untraceable or missing cargoes were being regularly lodged against the NPA all to no avail and security inside Nigerian seaports was compromised by the relentless trespass of multitudes of all shades of persons into the seaports. As a result, miscreants called wharf rats easily gained access into ports and pilfered goods in storage or vehicle parts. In fact, security within port grounds was at the mercy of criminals who had perfected their trade with the aid of insiders.

Pre-concessioned seaports in Nigeria had the harrowing experience of frequent breakdown of plants and equipment due to lack of spare parts and equipment replacement. Prior to concession regime, the presence of numerous government agencies constituted a serious menace to port business. The Nigerian ports became extremely unattractive to shippers due to excessive handling costs and inefficient maritime transport services. Tariffs were relatively high, with multiplicity of charges by numerous agencies, undue long turnaround time, inadequate maintenance of existing facilities, obsolete plants and equipment, decline in the quality of services leading to severe congestion and environmental degradation.

Insecurity of cargo at the ports, wharf rat and other associated bodies were a big challenge; adding to overall

chaos, inefficiency and cost of doing business in Nigeria. Strangling activities of stevedoring companies, excessive labour force (NPA employed over 13,000 staff), plethora of government agencies in the ports, corruption, excessive charges resulted in high operating costs said to be highest in the sub region.

The foregoing was the picture of Nigerian seaports before the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) made history on Monday 3rd April, 2006 when it finally handed over its terminals to private operators, who are expected to run them for a lease period, ranging from 10 to 25 years.

Government's desire to change the negative image of Nigerian ports from being notorious for inefficiency, long turn-around time for vessels (14 – 28 days), high port cost (including receipted and unreceipted fees), high cost of clearing goods worsened by multiple government agencies in the ports, informed the port reform programme, which culminated in the concession of the ports.

The privatization of Nigerian ports was done against the backdrop of their abysmal performance. The government opted for concession as a privatization option.

Prior to their concession to private operators in 2005 and 2006, the Nigerian ports were characterized by high degree of centralization with attendant inefficiencies.

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) controlled and performed virtually all ports services. The system was grossly inefficient and cumbersome. All these were detrimental to efficient port services because it led to excessive costs for shipping line and consignees preferred to patronize other ports in neighbouring countries rather than Nigerian ports even though the final destination of these goods was Nigeria. This

provided the basis for the transformation through reform.

Owing to the inefficiency of the services rendered by the seaport as well as lack of modern infrastructures and excess bureaucracy, the government adopted the restructuring and reform of the port as the best option towards the attainment of a virile private sector – led port market/economy. It was part of government policy to increase the involvement of the private sector financing and operation of port services.

The Federal Government of Nigeria thus initiated a comprehensive reform of the Nigerian ports with the concession of the ports terminals to private operators.

However, eight years after the concession exercise, port users still have one complaint or the other with respect to cargo clearance in Nigerian ports. Many Nigerians importers prefer doing business at Port Autonome de Cotonou, Benin Republic, rather than Nigerian ports. Their reasons include cumbersome documentation process, inadequate infrastructural facilities and superstructure which affect the efficiency of cargo clearance and consequently ship turn-around.

The complex procedures for documentation during clearance and compliance often put shippers at a disadvantage due to the intractable challenge of abysmally poor level of trade facilitation.

The claim that Cotonou handles some 350,000 second-hand vehicles imported from Europe into Nigeria every year attests to the fact that our clearing procedure is still encumbered with unnecessary bottlenecks – both technically and administratively.

Continues next edition

Eto Gabriel Maero is a visiting lecturer at the Certified Institute of Shipping, Lagos.

Kenya Launches Lamu Port Construction With \$480m Deal

... As Mombasa Port Traffic Rises 13% 2014 H1

The day after ordering that vast tracts of "stolen" land be repossessed, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta Friday launched a construction deal for the first berths in a proposed multi-billion dollar port, according to agency reports.

The planned \$24 billion (18 billion euro) Lamu Port project, due to be finished by 2030, is intended to serve much of east Africa, with oil pipelines to South Sudan and railways to Ethiopia and Uganda from the Indian Ocean coast.

But the area has been hit by a recent wave of deadly attacks, largely claimed by Somalia's Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabaab militants but which Kenyatta has blamed on "local political networks".

On Thursday, Kenyatta said that the massacres had been fuelled by companies seizing land covering a vast coastal zone nearly the size of Luxembourg "under dubious and corrupt circumstances".

The land, stretching over 2,000 square kilometres (800 square miles) was taken by 22 companies between 2011 and 2012, he said, ordering it to be repossessed.

"This criminal conspiracy has dispossessed individuals and families living in this region of their land and opportunities for improving their well being," Kenyatta said.

He added: "It has also helped fuel the current insecurity being experienced in the region, and frustrated our efforts in building cohesion in the country."

On Friday, the President said that he had approved a \$480 million deal with a Chinese company for the first phase of construction of three of the 32 berths planned for the flagship project.

"The signing of this contract... is a major milestone," Kenyatta said in a statement, claiming it would make Kenya the "most attractive transport and logistics hub" in the region.

The project, known as LAPSSSET — the Lamu Port South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor — includes not only a giant seaport to complement Kenya's hugely overstretched main port in Mombasa, but also a railway, airport and

refinery project.

Kenyatta said that Kenya has set aside 4.45 billion shillings (50 million dollars, 38 million euros) "to immediately commence" building by state-run China Communication Construction Company.

Officials said that construction at the port — which has seen little activity since it was formally launched in a ceremony in March 2012 — would begin as soon as September.

The port alone is projected to cost \$3 billion.

Under the plans, the port will be able to handle some 24 million tonnes of cargo a year from giant container ships, as well as provide infrastructure to support oil discoveries made in Kenya's arid north.

"Our country must develop the additional transport and infrastructure capacity to harness the immense mineral wealth that our country is now discovering," Kenyatta added.

The port zone is close by the tourist island of Lamu, which is listed by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Once popular with high-paying visitors and Hollywood celebrities, Lamu is now off limits according to most travel warnings issued by Western nations.

Despite Kenyatta's insistence that local groups carried out the attacks, Somalia's Islamists say that killings were further retaliation for Kenya's military presence in their country.

Last September, militants killed at least 67 people in an attack on Nairobi's Westgate mall in which were killed.

Over 100 people have also died in the Lamu area attacks.

Meanwhile, container traffic through Kenya's biggest port, the Mombasa Port, grew by 12.8 per cent in the first six months of the year after new cargo handling infrastructure was built to shorten the turnaround time for ships.

The Indian Ocean Port of Mombasa, the biggest in East Africa and the region's trade gateway, handles fuel and consumer goods imports as well as exports of tea and

coffee from landlocked neighbours such as Uganda and South Sudan.

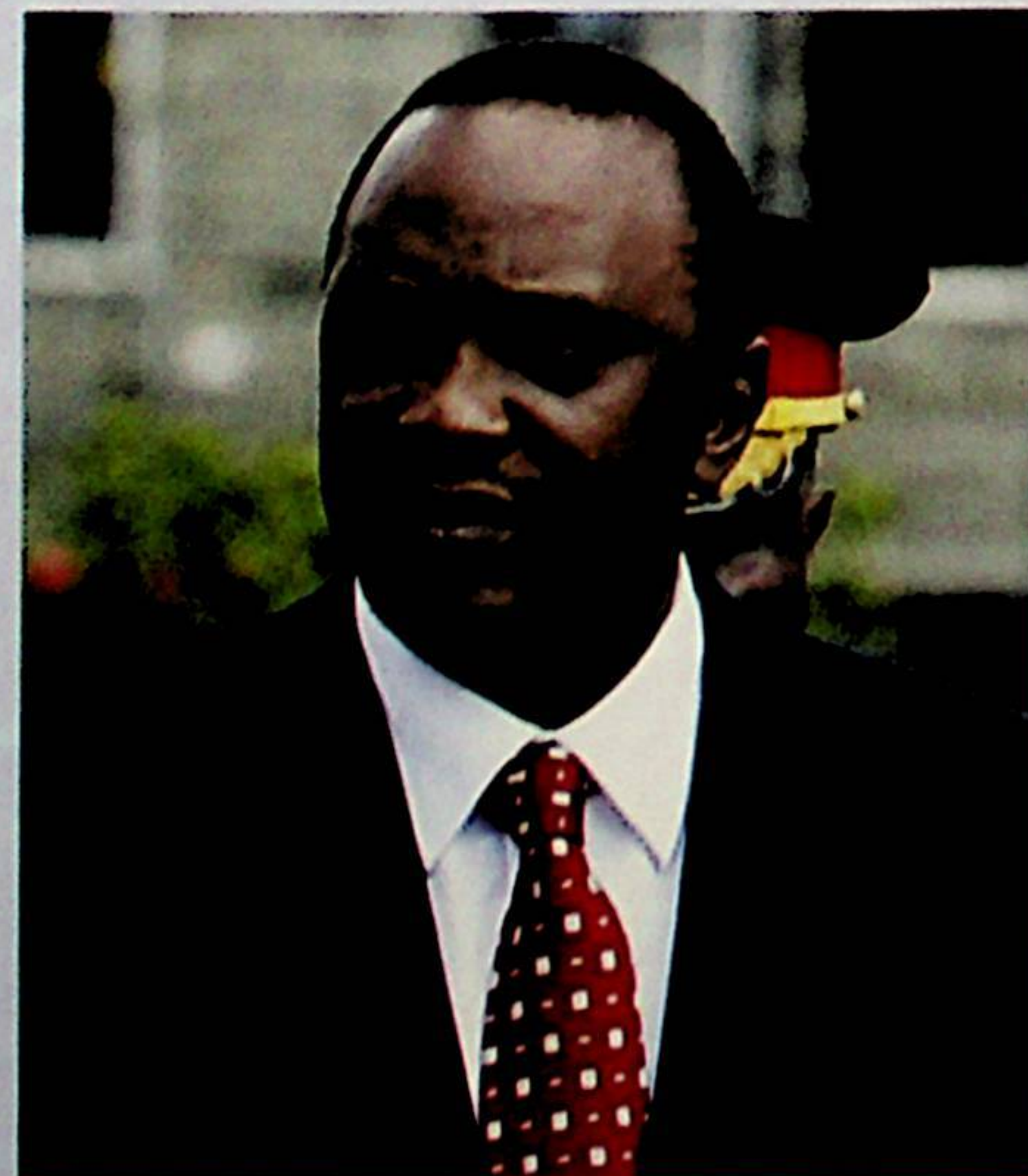
The port's Managing Director, Gichiri Ndua, said in a statement on Wednesday the total cargo at the port rose by 12.8 per cent to 11.9 million tonnes from 10.5 million tonnes in the period January to June last year.

During the comparable period this year, container traffic increased by 11.5 per cent to 463,920 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) from 415,548 TEUs.

The port is seen as a measure for economic activity in east Africa as it handles imports for Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, and exports of tea and coffee from the region.

The volume of goods destined for neighbouring countries also increased, rising by 9.6 per cent to 3.53 million tonnes after the opening of a new berth at the port in August last year, with Uganda and Rwanda bringing in more imports.

Kenya is building a \$300 million second container terminal at Mombasa to handle increased trade within the region, driven by a sharp growth in construction, vast infrastructure development and an emerging middle class. ●



President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya

Mombasa Port Records Increased Cargo Handling In First Quarter

Kenya Ports Authority recorded a nine per cent increase in the volume of cargo handled in the first quarter of this year. According to managing director Gichiri Ndua, the authority handled 5.56 million tonnes in the first three months of this year compared to 5.1 million tonnes during the same period last year. The volume is estimated to have further increase as the authority targets to increase container cargo at the port to 1.6 million twenty tonne equivalent units (TEUs), from the current 900,000 TEUs in the next five years.

The average time cargo remains in a transit storage area awaiting shipment (dwell time), has also reduced from 5.8 days in 2013 to 3.8 this year.

"This is a significant improvement of two days," said Ndua in the KPA release on performance in the first quarter in 2014.

Average turnaround time per ship has also reduced to

3.2 days against 3.3 days in last year's first four months.

Vessels carrying motor vehicles have maintained the lowest average port time of one day since last year, according to the authority.

Ndua attributed the growth to the expansion programmes which include dredging of the Kilindini channel and construction of berth 19 which was commissioned in August last year.

The move saw the first widest ever container vessel - *Maersk Cairo*, with a capacity of 4350 TEUs dock at the port in February.

"I am glad to report that the ongoing port capacity expansion programme is firmly on track with a number of initiatives in the pipeline which will be used to enhance operations," said Ndua.

Cargo handled at the port is expected to reach 28.5 million tonnes annually from the current 22 million with an annual growth rate of 7.5 per cent •



Some of the cranes and containers at the Kenya Port Authority

Germany's New Permanent Representative To IMO



His Excellency Dr. Peter Ammon, recently-appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Court of St. James's, and Permanent Representative of Germany to IMO, has presented his credentials to Secretary-General Sekimizu.

ISPS Code Workshop Held In Singapore



Tracy Peverett of IMO Maritime Security joined co-hosts Singapore Ministry of Transport and Singapore Maritime Port Authority at a special event from 12-15 August in Singapore to recognize the tenth anniversary of the ISPS Code, which came into force 1 July 2004. An opening event with senior officials kicked off the four-day ISPS Code self-assessment and audit training workshop from 12-15 August, the aim of which was to train government officials from the designated authority and port facility security personnel on self assessment and audit techniques for port facilities. The workshop, jointly organized by IMO and the Asia Pacific Economic Community, included a practical exercise at a port facility, which was facilitated by Keppel Shipyard.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Alhaji Abdullahi Dikko Inde, CFR
Comptroller-General,
Nigeria Customs Service

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GHANA



Quantum, Golar Sign Deal For Ghana LNG Terminal

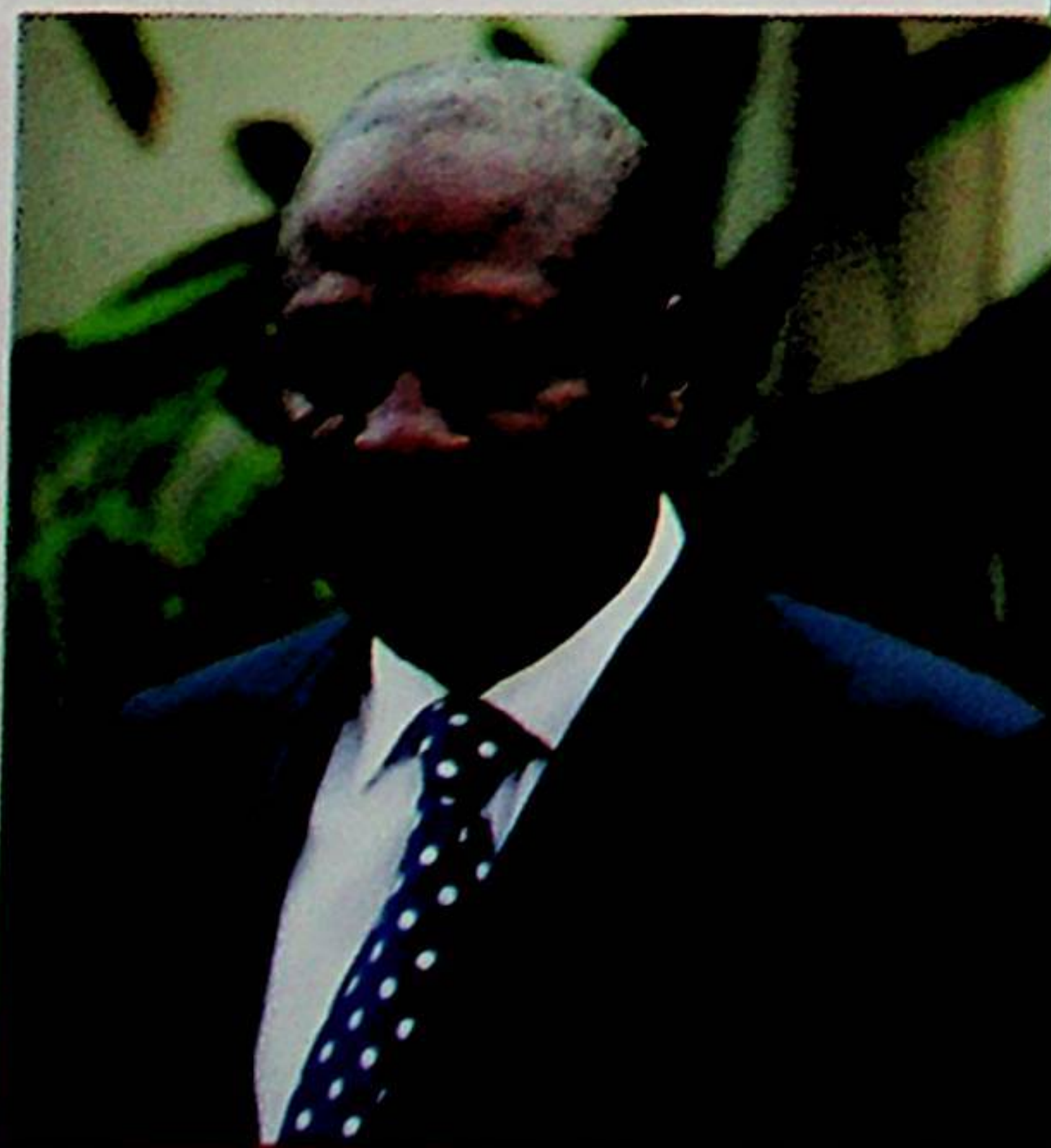
The Ghanaian subsidiary of Quantum Pacific, the industrial investment group owned by Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer, has signed a deal with Golar LNG to build a \$500-million liquefied natural gas import terminal. The facility, to be situated offshore from the eastern port city of Tema, will provide gas directly to the state-run Volta River Authority (VRA) by mid-2016 to boost power generation, Don Ackah, chief executive of Quantum Power Ghana Gas told Reuters late on Saturday.

West Africa's Ghana is grappling with a power crisis caused by the frequent breakdown of ageing equipment and shortage of funds to purchase light crude oil for thermal generation. The World Bank says the situation could worsen unless authorities overhaul the sector to attract new investors. Ackah said President John Mahama, who has instructed his economic team to provide cheaper alternatives to light oil for power generation, endorsed the Tema LNG project. The VRA says it spends around \$20 million every fortnight on crude oil purchases, draining the coffers of a country already struggling to cope with a mounting budget deficit. "A lot of work has already been done with payments committed to parts of the Tema LNG project. We are now aiming to complete all government approvals and secure gas supply and sales agreements for a final investment decision in the last quarter of this year," Ackah

said. Under the deal, Bermuda-headquartered Golar LNG will provide an offshore floating storage and regasification unit. Talks are also underway with French oil services firm Technip to construct subsea and onshore pipeline networks to deliver gas to Tema, he said.

The floating unit, currently being constructed by Samsung Heavy Industries in South Korea, will have the capacity to deliver at least 250 million cubic feet of LNG per day, or 1.75 million tonnes annually, Ackah said. He said Quantum Power Ghana was in talks with global oil firms, including BP, for the supply of natural gas.

In addition, the Ghanaian government said it planned a state-to-state supply arrangement with Qatar for LNG to be delivered to the terminal. "The government is only playing a facilitating role to get gas at a cheaper cost for consumers," Ackah added. Ackah said the offshore production unit is expected to arrive in Ghana under a lease agreement by January 2016, adding that all subseas construction should be completed by December next year •



President John Mahama of Ghana



The Paris MoU statistics confirm that Liberia had the best detention rate during the last three years of those registries with more than 100,000 gt of shipping under their flag.

committed to keeping its fleet of ships the second largest in the world, operating efficiently and on schedule. Moreover, it is encouraging to see the Liberian proactive approach to safety and

Paris MOU Puts Liberian Registry On Top

Liberia has been confirmed as the best-performing major ship registry worldwide over the last three years in the latest statistics from the Paris Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Port State Control.

Liberia's detention rate was 2.03 per cent, based on 82 detentions arising from 4,046 inspections.

This positions it ahead of the Marshall Islands, which had a detention rate of 2.50 per cent based on 63 detentions of 2,521 vessels inspected.

Panama was in third place, with a detention rate of 4.89 per cent, resulting from 305 detentions out of 6,238 inspections.

Liberia also recently received its QUALSHIP (Quality Shipping for the 21st Century) certification for 2014 from the United States Coast Guard.

Scott Bergeron, CEO of the Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry (LISCR), the US-based manager of the Liberian Registry, said: "Liberia is

regulatory compliance continues to receive independent endorsement in the form of its presence on the White Lists of all Port State Control Memorandums of Understanding worldwide, its confirmation of QUALSHIP certification, and its excellent detention record"



President Ellen Sirleaf

Ebola Scare Threatens West African Ports Business

Shipping trades in Nigeria may suffer a huge setback as the latest outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa rages. Various international organizations have issued advice on the disease, fuelling fears that the situation may force multinational shipping lines to suspend services to the region.

The international shipping community has placed ship owners, masters and crews on red alert while transiting three West African nations of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The three nations have recorded huge fatalities on account of the deadly Ebola virus that has so far killed hundreds of its victims.

Major multinational shipping lines calling at seaports

Leone, two of the worst hit countries. British Airways and ASky which brought the infected Liberian Patrick Sawyer into Nigeria, have already announced temporary suspension of flights into the two countries.

Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mallam Habib Abdullahi said as major gateway to the nation's economy, Nigerian seaports are vulnerable to the deadly Ebola Virus. But he said in Lagos last week that NPA has taken steps to ensure that infected persons do not come into the country through the seaports.

He said guidelines have been issued to the organisation's employees and port users on the risks posed by Ebola. According

Immigration Service, Quarantine Services, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) are among the few Agencies of government that board ships calling at Nigerian ports.

But some operatives of these agencies are scared stiff about their being 'first contact' with ship's crew upon arrival at the port. Specifically, they complain of lack of awareness for port users and also lack of protection for them (operatives).

Some expressed worry that while the airports where Immigration, Customs and other officers are given protective gears before interacting with in-bound and out-bound passengers on international flights, the seaports are just beginning to start to imbibe such precautions due to poor response capability of the authorities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also declared the outbreak a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern' (PHEIC), with implications for trade and travel.

Under the conditions of the PHEIC, temporary recommendations to reduce the international spread of Ebola require that, with immediate effect, states affected should conduct exit screening of all persons at international airports, seaports and major land crossings, for unexplained febrile illness consistent with potential Ebola infection.

Last week, the World Health Organization launched a \$100 million joint response plan to bring the current Ebola outbreak under control, although fears persist that the outbreak is moving faster than efforts to control it.

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC), and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has already issued joint advice to members on Ebola.

The groups issued strong recommendations to all vessels calling at countries affected by the recent outbreak. The advice includes ensuring crew are

aware of the risk of ebola and the ways it can be transferred, adhering to ISPS requirements to safeguard against unauthorised personnel boarding the vessel, giving careful consideration before granting shore leave in affected countries, avoiding making crew transfers in affected countries and monitoring crew for symptoms after departing affected areas.

"Everyone is deeply concerned for those suffering from the Ebola epidemic and supportive of a coordinated world response to help them. We particularly applaud all those medical staff who are risking their lives to help. In the meantime we want to make sure that those in the world shipping industry play our part in ensuring the safety of crews visiting the affected countries, and minimising the risk of the virus spreading further," said a spokesperson for the three organizations.

Meanwhile, the Port Health Services and other security agencies last week carried out a campaign to sensitize the border communities at the Seme Area command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), on the menace of the deadly virus.

Ebola virus disease is one of the world's most virulent diseases, with a case fatality rate as high as 90 percent. The infection is transmitted by direct contact with the blood, body fluids and tissues of infected animals or people.

The EVD is often characterized by the sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat, and followed by vomiting diarrhea, rashes, impaired kidney and liver function. In some cases, there is both internal and external bleeding ●



in West Africa have suspended shore leave as well as crew change in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Nigeria. As 'red alert' has been issued by three global shipping bodies namely: International Chamber of Shipping, International Maritime Employers' Council, and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) on ships calling at ports in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, it means that the same applies to Nigeria.

Sources close to multinational shipping companies said shipping lines have been following the situation for some time and have sent out advisory to vessels calling at West African ports since March, and have subsequently sent out several updates - to crews and land-based personnel - outlining additional health measures as per the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations.

In aviation sector, some airlines have already suspended flights to Liberia and Sierra

to a statement signed by the Assistant General Manager, Public Affairs of the organisation, Mr. Musa Iliya, Abdullahi cautioned port operators, especially first line contact officers against negligence when dealing with foreigners and vulnerable groups.

"We have begun enlightenment campaign at all ports and terminals about the origin, symptoms and mode of transmission of the virus. They are also being taught how to identify people at high risk, diagnose, contain and prevent infection," he said.

Abdullahi added that the measures were in line with the information from the World Health Organisation. He expressed sympathy for those who had contacted the Ebola virus in the course of duty but noted that the NPA would leave no stone unturned to make sure that port facilities are Ebola virus-free.

Officers of the Nigerian



Mallam Habib Abdullahi, NPA MD

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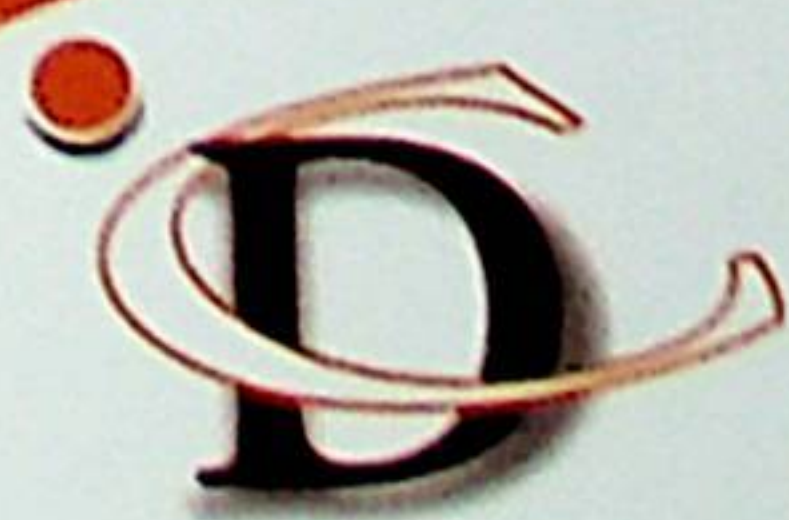
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