

Niger State

Coordinates: 10°00′N 6°00′E﻿ / ﻿10°00′N 6°00′E﻿ / 10; 6

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Niger State is a state in the western part of Nigeria and the largest state in the country. The state capital is Minna, and other major cities are Bida, Kontagora, and Suleja. It was formed in 1976 when the then North-Western State was bifurcated into Niger State and Sokoto State.

The state is named for the River Niger. Two of Nigeria's major hydroelectric power stations, the Kainji Dam and the Shiroro Dam, are located in Niger State; also situated there is Kainji National Park, the largest National Park of Nigeria, which contains Kainji Lake.

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Government

Like the majority of Nigerian states, it is governed by a Governor and a House of Assembly. Under the administration of Mu'azu Aliyu Babangida on January 13, 2000, the state has adopted sharia law as the code of law, even though the population of the state has been historically evenly divided between Muslims and Christians.

Administrative subdivisions

Niger State is divided into 25 Local Government Areas

- Agaie
- Agwara
- Bida
- Borgu
- Bosso
- Chanchaga
- Edati
- Gbako
- Gurara
- Katcha
- Kontagora
- Lapai
- Lavun
- Magama
- Mariga
- Mashegu
- Mokwa
- Munya
- Paikoro
- Rafi
- Rijau
- Shiroro
- Suleja
- Tafa
- Wushishi

External links

- News on Niger State

Niger State

State nickname: The Power State

Location



Statistics

| | |
|---|--|
| Governor (List) | Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu (PDP) |
| Date Created | 3 February 1976 |
| Capital | Minna |
| Area | 76,363 km ² Ranked 1st |
| Population 1991 Census 2005 estimate | Ranked 18th 2,482,367 4,082,558 |
| GDP (PPP) -Total -Per Capita | 2007 (estimate) \$6.00 billion ^[1] \$1,480 ^[1] |
| ISO 3166-2 | NG-NI |

SSG — Gen Am CG

Indices (all) below av.

- Salary
- Teachers
- Health.

[]

- (minerals)
- mineral etc
- Tin + Columbite + 57 Min resources in the state
- All precious stone laws to go for analysis by they go out -

x Rescue let by executing project

- Stop bleeding from poor collections

[]

* International Mineral Museum
 * Min. Dept Co.

- Tax system - (consultants V expensive)
- Tourism

- x lost
- x security
- x energy ← water power -
- x Wind/Hydro } #25b
- ↳ wind consider
- x source of funding

- Coal → * Mining process documents from...
 ⇒ Asking for reparation.
 ⇒ To be done thro' the PPP
 (4,012 in the state)

Comment. for Mining (book)

- 1902 started
- Revive issue of mining

He added that the Assembly will not entertain any excuse from any agency that fails to perform up to expectation. Hon. Bello said the House has done its bit by ensuring the passage of the budget before the end of the outgoing year.

Relevant Links

West Africa

Nigeria

Business

Legal Affairs

A total of N73, 833,531,520:00 was approved as capital expenditure while N40, 656,218,804 was approved for recurrent expenditure.

Presenting the report of the House Committee on Finance and Appropriation in respect of the budget, Hon Farombi recommended that agencies of government be made to pursue effectively the revenue targets already set for them.

According to the House Committee on Appropriation, the increase in the Budget size occasioned by "the need to give some agencies the wherewithal to generate more revenue and take care of critical areas where the House believes that more fund is required."

It was also recommended that all agencies of government should guide against misapplication of funds and loss of revenue.

Benue State 2010 Budget proposals

CONSOLIDATING GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF BENUE STATE, RT. HON. GABRIEL TORWUA SUSWAM, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2010 APPROPRIATION BILL TO THE BENUE STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON TUESDAY DECEMBER 15, 2009

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members. The global economic meltdown is no longer a buzz word but reality. The experience of the last ten months has been a glaring testimony of this reality. The storm, indeed, has broken, and it has been more severe than anyone anticipated. Confronted with the prospect of an economic turndown, our administration braced itself and crafted inventive approaches to ensure continued and sustained development and administration of the state.

The economic situation in which we found ourselves in 2009 brought sizeable disruptions to our spending plans. In the first half of the 2009 fiscal year, we experienced low revenue receipts against our expectations. The unfortunate situation however, did not deter the resolve of our administration to provide the much needed development to the people of our dear state. We have continued to prudently manage the meager resources at our disposal and to deliver services to our people. We can say with confidence that within the context of the fiscal resources at our disposal we have recorded impressive performances in the implementation of the budget.

There were major challenges in the implementation of the 2009 budget. However, government was determined that despite the inadequate resources, we would continue to fund projects and programmes across the state. As a result of the measures we took, there was a significant improvement in the level of capital utilization in the 2009 budget.

We have continued to maintain the primary objectives of the programmes and policies that are outlined in our administration's development blueprint: Our Benue, Our future. Provision of infrastructure remains the backbone of our economy. While concentrating on infrastructure, we also continued to invest in human development to increase effectiveness and efficiency in our system. Several strategic real sector reforms were initiated to open up the economic space of our state so as to involve as many people as possible in development.

Our administration is also forging ahead with major financial management reforms which will lay emphasis on increasing non-FAAC revenue through the reform of the State Board for Internal Revenue, as well as increased revenue drive in the state. In addition, we have continued to cut cost and reduce areas of wastages while emphasizing greater efficiency in the public service through the prioritization of expenditure outlay by ministries, departments and agencies. Review of the Performance of the 2009 Budget.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, you approved a balanced budget of N63, 287,242,071 for the 2009 fiscal year. The Budget was made up of revenue projections of N63, 287,242,071 and an expenditure outlay of the same amount. The fiscal policy thrust in 2009, which we derived from our blueprint –Our Benue, Our Future- was targeted at improving the massive infrastructure gap in our dear state. In addition, the budget was tailored to effectively match scarce resources with the determination to transforming both urban and rural communities of the state. Consequently, the 2009 budget gave priority to investments in infrastructure for both rural and urban roads, renovation and rehabilitation of health and educational institutions, sanitation and environmental issues such as the beautification of Makurdi, the state capital. In addition to these investments

government embarked on the massive purchase of vital inputs for the agricultural sector, and such other sectors that directly impacted the lives of our citizens.

To ensure that these and other ancillary objectives were achieved, our administration embarked on prudent measures in the management of our resources. In doing so we made the following key assumptions which guided the implementation of the budget:
Expected decline in Federation Account receipts,
Projected minimal increase in internally generated revenue in the state,
Delivering on set priorities in policies and programmes of the state as contained in our development blue print document - Our Benue, Our Future.

In the philosophy of the administration's development blue print, the 2009 budget was a watershed in the sense that its sole objective was to bridge the infrastructure deficit in our state. More so, because it was deliberate and calculated. We have also, used the instrument of fiscal measures and policy to address structural and philosophical foundations of government. We are creating the enabling environment to actualize development programmes in the state. For the first time in the long time, our people can see a government starting meaningful development programmes across the spectrum of our state and ending them successfully.

Review of Operations of the State Government Account

The projected revenue receipts in 2009 were N63, 287,242,971.00. Statutory allocation receipts was projected at N27,500,000,000 while we anticipated N8,885,000,000 from Excess Crude. Other areas included N5,421,000,000 from Value Added Tax, N4,500,000,000 from Internally Generated Revenue, N1,500,000,000 from PAYE and N5,500,000,000 as proceeds from Loan and Financial facility.

However, only a total of N41,407,653,983 was receipted for the fiscal year 2009 from all revenue sources, representing 65 percent of total budgeted revenue sum. This means that we had a shortfall of N14, 350,488,216.86 or 23per cent of our projected revenue for 2009. The short fall arose because of dwindling resources to the State Treasury.

On the whole, we received a total sum of N19, 470,689,733 as Statutory transfers and N5, 451,611,100 as Value Added Tax. Other receipts include N1, 734,603,751 from internally generated revenue, and N5, 500,000,000.00 as Loan and Financial facility. We also realized the sum of N1, 056,616,035, as PAYE, and N965, 227,682 from Exchange Gains Allocation. From Excess Crude account the state realized the sum of N4, 271,591,268 while N4, 390,650,168 was realized from distribution from Domestic Excess Crude Proceeds for augmentation.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen this means that 70 per cent for the 2009 budget was implemented notwithstanding the difficult economic challenges. The overall objective of Our Benue, Our future, as we have always reiterated, is to ensure prudent and maximum utilization of public resources. Our objective in 2009, in the implementation for the budget, as clearly indicates was to use the scarce public resources for the greater benefit to the good people of Benue State.

Data in the office of the Account-General of the State and the Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance shows that internally generated revenue performed below expectation in 2009. Only N1, 734,603,751 was released. This sum represents only 4% of total received revenues. Indeed, the bulk of the N1, 734,603,751 was realized because of the improved performance in tax revenue collections by the Board of Internal Revenue. This more than offset the dismal performance of non-tax revenue collections through Ministries, Departments and Agencies including other Government institutions.

An examination of statutory allocation to the state indicates that a total sum of N19, 470,689,733.00, which represents 71 per cent of total expected receipt of N27, 500,000,000.00 in 2009 was realized. Two critical factors affected the performance of statutory allocation to the state in 2009. The first is the decline in Federation Allocation and, secondly, the use of excess receipts to augment the budgeted sum. What this meant was that the added benefit expected from excess crude account did not materialize.

A total sum of N9, 018,106,713.91 which accrued Excess crude account, Augmentation and Exchange Gains Allocation represent an increase of a little over a percentage point above the anticipated receipt of N8, 885,000,000. Mr. Speaker, to a large extent, the N9, 018,106,713.91 we received from these sources gave us an added fillip in our total revenue receipts as it was used to fund our capital projects. However, as useful as our Excess crude receipts were it, there is a pressing need to reconfigure current revenue mix.

All allocations, including IGR receipts, are paid into the state Consolidated Revenue Account which are, after approval and vetting processes, used to pay government obligations. Our administration has ensured strict adherence to both our mandate as contained in our development blue print document and fiscal management rules. Without being immodest, we have kept faith and conducted governance in the most civilized manner in order to promote integrity and as well as transparency.

Review of Recurrent Expenditure Performance

It would be recalled that the State House of Assembly approved the total sum of N25, 106,098,230 for Recurrent expenses. As at year end, the sum of N25, 087,958,785.43 was expended over the planned period. This represents 100 percent implementation of recurrent expenditure for the period under review.

A further analysis of the recurrent expenditure indicates that debt payments gulped a total sum of N6, 134,586,426.00 over and above the budgeted sum of N2, 852,503,770.00 for the year. Debt repayment in 2009 has mainly been on account of reduced principal maturities as a result of debt restructure and loan portfolio management of past contractual liabilities.

During the fiscal year 2009, the Office of the Head of Service in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, spearheaded reforms in the pension sector with the writing of a new policy on contributory pension scheme. However, a total sum of N1, 008,626,155.72 was used in meeting our pension obligations in the fiscal year 2009 while N180, 000,000 was utilized for payment of gratuity to our retiring civil servants. A total sum of N24, 000,000.00 was expended on the State's contribution to Local Government pensions.

A total of N4, 737,040,941.79 was expended on overheads to MDAs. In the course of the year, the administration had cut down on the releases of overheads to MDAs. This exercise was to ensure that we were able to meet up with more crucial commitments of government, particularly in the area of capital expenditure. It was also to ensure that we kept our expenditure within the limit of our resources.

In implementing this measure government was very careful not to compromise on the statutory responsibilities of MDAs, and ensuring that they deliver on their mandates.

Out of a total appropriation of N63, 287,242,071 the sum of N13, 003,705,261.92 billion was expended on personnel cost (salaries and wages) to staff on government payroll during fiscal year 2009. Total employee costs including wages, salaries and allowances were 31 percent of total actual spends.

Since the inception of our Administration, the management of both our payroll and pension commitments have faced several difficulties. However, in the fiscal year under review, the Ministry of Finance completed work on the electronic salary payment system for mainstream public service. There are plans to extend to other sectors of our public service as we perfect the new system.

It is clear from the reports that I have received that the electronic salary payment system has brought about both efficiency and savings. At the moment, our staff strength is about 20,452 as opposed to about 22,000 before the new system. In addition, the monthly wage bill of over N1.3 billion may actually be a little over a billion Naira. In spite of the teething technical problems, we witnessed greater efficiency and made savings in our public expenditure management.

Capital Expenditure Performance

The capital expenditure performance of the 2009 budget was not too satisfactory. This Honourable House approved a total sum of N38, 181,143,841 for capital projects and programmes in the 2009 budget. However, only N18, 497,786,278 representing 48 percent of budgeted sum was expended on capital development. What this means is that the sum of N19, 683,357,563 or 52 percent of budgeted sum was never realized due to revenue short falls. On the whole, capital expenditure represents 42 percent of total expenditure in 2009.

To some extent, the receipts that ameliorated this level of performance was the N2,596,245,773 from the excess crude account in 2009 and the receipt of N4,345,657,286 being distribution from the Domestic Excess Crude proceeds for augmentation in 2009. In addition, we received the sum of N842, 634,449 as Exchange Gains Allocation. These receipts totaling N7, 784,537,509 constituted some cushioning effect for the shortfall in resources for capital development.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the challenge we faced in 2009 was the unusual volatility in FAAC receipts and global economic meltdown. Our state, like other members of our federation has not been immuned from the consequences of the fiscal contraction and credit crunch occasioned by the global economic meltdown.

In the face of these challenges, our administration ensured that our scarce resources were directed towards financing productive investment to ensure high level of growth. Our administration, despite the difficulties occasioned by the shortfall in revenues for capital development, maintained the level of investment in infrastructure, scaled up interventions in agriculture and ensured the delivery of quality public service delivery to our people.

The performance rate of 70 percent attained in the 2009 budget is quite significant. More significant is the higher performance rate for development investment in our dear state. This positively reflects well on the functioning processes to ensure public funds are utilized most adequately. However, more effort has to be made to ensure that the quality

of this spending is sufficiently monitored. The administration's on-going efforts to strengthen and harmonize reporting and accountability processes will therefore be pertinent for fiscal year 2010 with support from development partners and donors.

Philosophy and Thrust of the 2010 Budget

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, may I, with a great sense of responsibility and duty present the estimates for fiscal year 2010, a budget seeking to consolidate on our Growth and Transformation as a strategic component of the political economy of the Nigerian Federation.

The 2010 Budget is the principal policy instrument to continue our solemn promises to the Benue people embedded in our administration's economic blue print Our Benue, Our Future. The 2010 budget is seeking to realize tangible and enduring realities in the area of infrastructural and human development. Our administration remains deeply committed to transforming the fortunes of our dear state, and by extension our people by implementing strategic development policies and programmes to sustain the achievements so far attained. The budget also opens up new vistas of opportunities for our people while propelling our state towards greater economic development.

In framing the budget estimates for fiscal year 2010, we were guided by the following core principles:
establish budgetary provisions for the purpose of carrying out governmental functions and responsibilities;
define roles and responsibilities for each governmental institution by assigning expenditure payees to appropriated sums; and
Provide an overview of the State's economic and fiscal outlook for the fiscal year 2010 in the context of our administration's economic development objectives.

It was consequent upon these objectives that the Ministry of Finance had set in motion the process of formulating the 2010 Budget of the State while adhering to the following fiscal objectives:
a. to ensure continued payment of salaries and pension obligations,
b. To complete all on-going projects initiated by our administration.
c. To limit major new projects in the face of current economic difficulties.

The objectives of the 2010 budget already outlined formed the bases for the proposals from Ministries, Departments and Agencies. Government will in the fiscal year 2010 continue to harp on increased transparency, accountability and service delivery through the budget. Government will also ensure that we achieve the goals we have set. Priority will be given to the completion of the on-going projects. Therefore, rather than embark

on new projects, we have devoted most the resources in the 2010 budgets to complete existing on-going projects, and ensure full completion.

We have, however, listed for approval, a small number of new projects that should bring tangible results in service delivery in the state. These projects are well articulated, properly priced and taking into account our resource limitation.

The 2010 budget has also been carefully drawn up to address significant development of human capital through the education sub-sector and healthcare delivery. Our administration believes that we can create wealth, qualitative education and better future for our people by empowering them with the right and relevant tools.

There is no doubt in my mind that our dear state, in the last two years has experienced an awakening in terms of infrastructural development, both in our rural and urban areas. We have also seen continued and sustained government activity in key broad areas of health, education, agriculture, information, and public service capacity development. We are positioning our state on a new threshold as one to be reckoned with in the political economy of our Federation, while ensuring that our people realize their dreams, hopes and aspirations.

Key assumption of the 2010 Budget

To implement the state's budget successfully, some reasonable assumptions concerning critical factors that ensure realization of planned expenditure have been made. We have, also, taken into cognizance possible changes in external environment which could force changes in our ability to implement the 2010. Our key assumptions for the 2010 budget are as follows:

i. There will be no significant changes in monetary and fiscal policies during the period of fiscal year 2010, particularly by the Federal Government, that will adversely our planned expenditures,

ii. That statutory receipts, that is, Federation Account and Value Added Tax sharing formula would not be altered significantly from those of fiscal year 2009,

iii. *Statutory Receipts, that is, Federation Account and Value Added Tax will increase by about 12% during fiscal year 2010 principally because we expect favourable oil revenue and increased fiscal activities within the country,*

iv. *That expected internally General Revenue receipts in fiscal year 2010 will increase by about 40% of realized receipts in 2009 given current commitments received from all ministries, departments and agencies,*

v. *The redesign and set-up of a reliable accounting system that would provide adequate accounting information for the state and eliminating current weakness in our accounting system which would impact on efficiency and transparency,*

vi. *Continued effort to improve state revenue collection and blocking of loopholes in the process of revenue collection,*

vii. *Recurrent expenditure will increase by about 13% of 2009 figures in 2010 with material costs coming from fiscal implication of retirements of senior civil servants in 2010 as a result of attainment of mandatory age and years of service,*

viii. *Proceeds from the Benue State Infrastructure Development Bond issue will be received in the first quarter of fiscal year 2010,*

ix. *Generating economic growth and development through the pursuit of projects, infrastructure, and programmes that are extremely necessary,*

x. *That the political and economic climate of Nigeria will remain stable during the period of the fiscal year 2010.*

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, the budget I present to you today, like its predecessor, draw reference from our administration's development blueprint, Our Benue, Our Future. We have outlined projects and programmes with clear objectives of poverty eradication through efficient management of our resources.

Outlook for 2010 fiscal year

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, let me share with you our outlook for 2010 fiscal year. Our development expenditure during the period will require improved internally generated revenue with sustained FAAC receipts. More importantly, our efforts will be geared towards reducing cost overloads, ensuring that costs are incurred on only activities that are critical to our set objectives of poverty eradication, as well as improved wellbeing of the good people of our dear state. Through efficient management of our resources we shall limit our exposure to further economic downturn, while ensuring efficiency and accountability in financing approved expenditure to ensure growth and development.

The 2010 budget Expenditure

Expected aggregate revenue for 2010 is N80, 851,333,880. Of the sum we expect to realize the sum of N31, 700,000,000 from statutory allocation, and N6, 400,000,000 from Value Added Tax. Revenues from other receipts are expected to be N36, 149,999,170 with financing items and the State Bond accounting for N18, 650,000,000. And will all the efforts outlined for 2010, we expect to generate the sum of N6, 601,334,710 from internal revenue sources.

The aggregate expenditure for 2010 is N89,498,666,039, comprising N17,846,154,855 for payment of salaries and wages, N16,309,431,180 for overhead including debt payment, pension and gratuity, and N55,343,080,004 for capital expenditure.

The aggregate expenditure represents a 29 per cent increase over the N63, 199,242,071 appropriated in 2009. More significantly is the fact that the capital budget of 2010 is higher than that of 2009 by N161, 936,163, or 31 per cent. The shift can be explained by the fact that the bulk of unfinished and unfunded projects of 2009 have been carried forward into the 2010 budget.

Key projects that will be funded in the 2010 budget include:

Agriculture and Natural Resources In 2010 a provision of N8, 729,984,160 is proposed for both recurrent and capital expenditure to address the challenges of the Agriculture sub-sector in our state. Our plan in 2010 is to procure large quantity of assorted brands of fertilizer which will be distributed to farmers at the ward and farm-gate levels. For this purpose, the sum of N3, 000,000,000 is proposed. In addition, the National FADAMA III Programme which effectively took off in the state with the payment of counterpart fund of the sum of N60 million in 2009 will be further strengthened in 2010. To ensure this and to continue to support and grow this laudable programme, our administration is proposing the sum of N84, 000,000 in 2010. In our attempt to effectively control animal disease in

the state, twenty seven (27) units of motorcycles and two (2) engine boats were purchased and given to Divisional Livestock Officers (DLOs) in 2009 to enhance their disease control activities. Government intends to pursue this programme and ensure full coverage for the state. The ministry will send a good proportion of its staff on seminars, workshops and conferences to build their capacities for effective service delivery to the people of Benue State. We shall in 2010 continue to strengthen the Hatchery Unit of the Fishery Department to meet the fingerling needs of the Benue state farmers.

To ensure that the College of Agriculture meets its institutional obligations, we have proposed the sum of N284, 000,000 for infrastructural development and the completion of all on-going projects. A total of N1, 000,000,000 has been provided for purchase of farming tractors, which government shall make available to our farmers in the course of the fiscal year. In addition to this the sum of N1, 000,000,000 is proposed for agricultural equipment and implements. In 2009 we began to explore and consequently train people in the area of swine production. Our administration sees economic potential for our people in this respect and is proposing the sum off N700, 000,000 to fully commence and establish a Swine project in the state in 2010.

Education

*A total sum of N12, 079,158,380 is proposed for both recurrent and capital expenditure for education in the state in 2010. Education continues to be an important sub-sector as articulated in our development blue print *Our Benue, Our Future*. Our plan is to continue to address the challenge posed by the less than satisfactory conditions of our educational system. The comprehensive renovation of existing infrastructure and construction of additional facilities at all levels of education in the state will continue. To this effect we have proposed a total sum of N1, 916,850,000 to ensure the completion of various infrastructure works in 2010. To ensure that our students get the financial support that they deserve, we have proposed the sum of N1, 000,000,000 as scholarship.*

The lingering problems of lack of befitting accommodation for the staff and students of Command Secondary School will be addressed in 2010. We have, therefore, proposed the sum of N150, 000,000 to ensure completion of the projects. Work on the development of our Colleges of Education at Katsina-Ala and Oju, Benue Polytechnic, Ugbokolo and College of Advance and Professional Studies, Makurdi will be intensified with a combined allocation of N550, 000,000. Government intends to arrest the encroachment on the Government College, Katsina-Ala grounds by fencing the entire college with the provision of N40, 000,000. In addition, we have proposed the sum of N500, 000,000 for rehabilitation and renovation of post primary schools in the state. Human capacity building is on top of the agenda of our administration. Towards this regards, we have proposed the sum of N200, 000,000 for the training of all teachers.

Health and Human Services

A total of N13, 044,719,049 is proposed for the Health sub-sector in 2010. Our administration has since its inception taken major steps to ameliorate the health condition of our people. In the 2010 fiscal year, we have planned expenditure in the following areas:-a. Renovation of old general hospitals at Aliade, Vandeikya, Oju, Katsina-Ala, Adikpo, Okpoga, Gbajimba, Gboko, Igumake and Otukpo with a provision of N1, 345,525,626.b. Intensification of implementation, expansion and strengthening of free MCH project across the state with the provision of the sum of N200, 000,000.c. Attract the intervention of MDGs fund. In this regard, our administration is determined to meet its Cash Contribution obligations to tap funds for the procurement of drugs in opportunistic infections in HIV, procurement of ARVs, and procurement of ACT combination with about N200,000,000d. Construction of 10 beds amenity ward in Gboko, Otukpo, and Katsina-Ala General hospitals. The sum of N150, 000,000 has been proposed for this purpose.e. Provision of N2, 759,525,278 for the completion of the Benue State University Teaching Hospital.

Our administration will in 2010 ensure the full take-off of the long awaited College of Health Sciences of the Benue State University. You will recall that the college started with the initial intake of students but due to lack of adequate training and clinical structures, these students were either transferred to other institutions or changed their courses all together. This disturbing development will be addressed with the take-off of the institution. Our dream of training and nurturing Medical Doctors to man our expanding health facilities will finally come true. The sum of N3, 460,919,885 is proposed for both recurrent and capital expenditure to ensure the full take-off of the college in 2010 and to ensure that it meets all accreditation requirement of the Nigerian Medical Council.

Administration of Justice

A total sum N1, 546,013,240 is proposed for both recurrent and capital expenditure for administration of justice in the state in 2010. Government is not unmindful of the present dilapidated state of the structures in the Ministry of Justice. Government has already concluded plans for the total rehabilitation of the ministry. An allocation of N352, 000,000 has also been made in the 2010 budget to complete all the Area Chambers under construction including the fencing of the permanent site for Gboko Area Chambers. We have also made a provision of N100, 000,000 for the renovation of the premises of the Ministry of Justice in 2010.

The Citizen's Mediation Centre

Our administration attaches a lot of importance to the mediation centre which is an agency established to facilitate mediation, arbitration and conciliation without having a resort to litigation. The law establishing the centre, which was passed by this honourable house, has been gazetted and the centre is now fully operational. Government intends to provide all the necessary logistics for the centre to operate in such a manner that our international donor partners such as United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the Ford Foundation that have left the state will be persuaded to come back to the state.

Constitution of the Law Review Committee

The presentation of the Revised Edition of Laws of Benue State to the public last year by our administration received a lot of commendation from the public. It is, therefore, the desire of government to put in place a Law Review Committee that would update those laws from time to time. A bill for the law establishing the committee is already before his honourable house. Mr. Speaker, honourable members, I am pleased with the progress made on the bill before you, and I therefore wish to commend your efforts and diligence. Once the bill is passed, the committee will be made functional and will be fully mobilized to carry out its statutory mandate.

The Oogoro Law

Recently, the Benue State Government presented a bill on the prohibition of intake and or sale of Oogoro in the state, and this honourable house passed into law. The aim is to protect the lives of the people. Government will do all within its power to empower the law enforcement agencies to fully enforce the law. Government also intends to widely sensitize the public about the law so that they will appreciate government's concern for their wellbeing.

Information and Information Management

As political activities are expected to increase in 2010, it is important that we manage our information machinery appropriately. We have proposed the allocation of N 1, 585,898,300 for both recurrent and capital expenditure to the Ministry of Information and Culture. In addition, the ministry is being repositioned to enhance the discharge of its statutory responsibilities of disseminating government goals, objectives and programmes. The provision of the sum of N131, 119,890 has been made for the take-off of the Benue State Television (BNTV), while machines and sundry accessories and

consumables worth N106, 230,940 will be provided to The Voice Newspaper to enable its go daily and reactivate the vernacular papers of Angwe and Okela. The promotion of our culture is adequately given attention in this year's budget; consequently the sum of N76, 499,850 is budgeted for the State's cultural contingent's activities.

Land administration

A combined allocation of N2, 493,110,720 is proposed for both recurrent and capital expenditure to Ministry of Lands and Survey. As we reposition the ministry in 2010, it will principally be engaged in mapping of our major urban areas and towns. The ministry will continue to strengthen our urban renewal programme and help communities improve and redevelop areas that are physically deteriorated, unsafe, or poorly planned. The proposed project is to start the cycle of urban renewal in Benue State.

Rural Development and Cooperatives

The sum of N1, 808,225,240 has been proposed for projects under the Ministry of Rural Development and Cooperatives. For two years since this administration established this ministry, many of our people residing in rural areas have been provided with electricity. Our administration will continue in the coming year to extend this gesture with the provision of N1, 000,000,000 for rural electrification of villages and small towns. In addition to the electrification of villages, work on feeder roads in local governments will be executed with the proposed sum of N500, 000,000. Our administration also intends to complete and furnish the administrative block of the ministry in 2010, and ensure that staff occupy and utilize it.

Youth Development and Sports

This sub-sector has a provision of N1, 106,648,930 in the 2010 budget. Key to the activities of the ministry is the full completion of the NYSC Orientation Camp at Wannune. Our administration inherited the project, which was considered uncompletable. We have broken the jinx and I am pleased to inform you that the last batch of youth corps members used the camp and its facilities. Additional works on the site will be undertaken in 2010 with the provision of N340, 000,000 in the draft budget. In 2010, we intend to put finishing touches to the Aper Aku Stadium with a view to upgrading the facilities there to bring them to national and international standards. We also will replace the floodlight to allow for clear night events. We have, therefore, proposed the sum of N240, 613,490 in the budget to ensure the full replacement of the floodlights and modernization of the stadium. With the impressive performance of our athletes in the just concluded National Sports Festival KADA 2009, Government will

ensure an early preparation for the next sports festival so as to improve our standing on the medals table.

Water and Environment

Infrastructure development in the water sub-sector is a critical aspect of the programmes of our administration. We have proposed the sum of N7, 909,334,447, which covers both recurrent and capital expenditure. Our administration is determined to provide portable water to the good people of our state. We have, therefore, in the proposed budget kept our promise to execute on-going water projects. Work on Greater Makurdi Water project is progressing as planned and those at Otukpo and Katsina-Ala, and the Rural and Sanitation Projects are also receiving the desired attention. Proposed expenditure in this sub-sector include Greater Makurdi Water Works N2,352,234,127, rehabilitation of existing water works and construction in Otobi-Otukpo Water Works N1,792,709,417, construction of the Katsina-Ala water works N939,023,481, construction of Water Supply Scheme at Anyiin N190,359,851, Construction of Water Supply Scheme at Otukpa N275,331,853, water supply and sanitation projects N603,398,781, channelization of Lobi stream re-enforcement and concrete drainage N116,324,059, and ecological projects N480,000,000.

Women Affairs and Social Development

The broad objective of the Ministry is to build a gender equitable society where the needs of men and women, boys and girls are adequately and equitably catered for. We have proposed the allocation of N257, 098,380 for both recurrent and capital expenditure for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. Our administration's efforts in the coming fiscal year in this sub-sector include the renovation and furnishing of IBB Square and the completion of divisional social welfare offices in Otukpo and Aliade. In addition, we are proposing to develop a cancer center in the state to help women in the early detection of ailment. Therefore, the sum of N78, 000,000 has been proposed for the Benue State Cancer Center.

Works and Housing

We are resolute in our drive to stimulate economic growth by providing road infrastructure in the state. The focus of the Ministry of Works in 2010 is to ensure completion of most of the roads that we have started at the inception of our administration. We have, therefore proposed a total sum of N13, 319,685,965 for infrastructure development under the Ministry.

Our administration continues to take as a matter of priority the infrastructural development of the State. As a result, we have proposed the following road projects in the fiscal year 2010: Ugbokpo-Oweto Road N165,984,750; Asphalt Overlay of Makurdi township roads phase I,II, and III N50,000,000; construction of Bays Garden-Agbile road N47,300,000; construction of Adikpo street extension N12,690,000; construction of 248.256km of rural highways N482,700,000; construction of 92km of rural roads N350,000,000; surfacing and rehabilitation of Makurdi, Gboko, Otukpo and Katsina-Ala township roads N529,000,000; construction of river Ukyaver bridge and a box culvert N15,372,000; further works on Abwa-Lessel road N12,584,000; construction of Anyiin-Ugba-Amaafu-Abaji road N1,000,000,000; construction of Orokam-Uwukpa-Utonkon road N1,000,000,000; construction of Eke-Elengbecho-Ugbokolo-Otukpa-Orokam road N600,000,000; construction of Jato-Aka-Kashimbila road N150,000,000; dualization of New House of Assembly Village access road N100,000,000; construction of Lafia junction-Uni-Agric road N100,000,000; construction of 72 Air Borne Battalion access road N50,000,000; Adikpo-Ikyogen-Jato-Aka road N600,000,000; construction of Ge-Ikyobo-Agbeede-Amua-Anshagba road N500,000,000; construction of Zaki-Biam-Afia-Gbeji road N1,000,000,000; construction of Vandeikya-Koti-Yough-Adikpo road N500,000,000; construction of Otukpo-Utonkon-Igumale road N600,000,000; construction of Makurdi Inner Ring Roads Dual Carriage Way N500,000,000; construction of Abu-King Shuluwa road N80,000,000; construction of Oju-Obussa-Utonkon road N500,000,000; construction of Taraku-Naka-Agagbe road N500,000,000; construction of Abuku-Ortese-Jingir-Tyogbenda Wombo N400,000,000; construction of Igbor-Ikpa-Annune road N500,000,000; maintenance of rural and township roads- resealing of potholes, maintenance of culverts and bridges washouts N100,000,000; surfacing and construction of new township roads in Makurdi, Gboko, Otukpo, Katsina-Ala, Zaki-Biam, Adikpo, Vandeikya, Lessel, Aliade, Okpoga, Otukpa, Oju, Igumale, Naka, Ugbokpo, Ihugh, Jato-Aka and Ugbokpo N150,000,000; solar street lights in Makurdi N50,000,000; solar street lights installation in Otukpo and Gboko N650,000,000.

*E-Payment of Salaries and Wages*In September, Government introduced the electronic payment system in all the ministries, departments and agencies. Although, we have experienced some challenges, they are not such that will require us to reverse it. As I noted earlier on, we have seen significant gains with the introduction of the E-salary payment system.

We are working closely with commercial banks in the state who are partners in perfecting the system. Government is convinced that the E-salary payment system is a veritable means of transparent process of managing our state funds. We have begun the process of extending to the State Pension System, the State Universal Basic Education Board, the State Teaching Service Board and the Local Government councils. We are hopeful that before the end of 2010, we would have completed the process, which would

also include the creation of an electronic database of staff on the government payroll and state pensioners.

Millennium Development Goals

As we closed the 2009 fiscal year, our administration secured the MDGs Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS). The total approval of the scheme is N1, 801,246,295 for the implementation of six projects across the state. The Federal Government's grant contribution to be released is N900, 623,148, while the state's counterpart contribution is N900, 623,148. The conditional grant scheme is an innovative mechanism which seeks genuine collaboration with our state, to ensure that resources are channeled to pro-poor projects in key MDGs related areas. The critical areas of intervention in 2010 are drilling of hand pump boreholes at N340, 326,000 and drilling of solar powered motorized boreholes at N832, 235,200. Other areas include; construction of mini dam water scheme at N 445,912,695, procurement of drugs for opportunistic infections in HIV/AIDS at N81,387,800 and procurement of anti-retroviral drugs to the tune of N143,520,000.

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF II 2009-2012)

Since the inception of our administration in 2007, we have stepped up strategies to reconnect the State with international development agencies. I am happy to state that our collective efforts yielded results such as in the on-going partnership with the United Nations Systems in Nigeria under the United Nations Development Assistant Framework. In 2010, our state is expected to benefit from a total support of \$8,028,000. We have, as our counterpart contribution, provided the sum of \$4,014,000 that is N602, 100,000, which is 50 per cent of the United Nations' contribution.

This partnership is focused on four thematic areas of governance and accountability that supports transparent, equitable and effective use of resources. The second area is productivity and employment for wealth creation with a bias towards the poor and with the aim of contributing towards the growth of small scale private sector in our state. The third area involves social service delivery to invest in the State's human capital and contribution towards a democratic dividend that reaches the poor even as it boosts current and future potential for equitable growth. The fourth and final area is in the reduction of the risk of crisis and conflict whilst assisting with crisis prevention, management and mitigation in the state.

A whole corridor of opportunity is opened by this engagement to strengthen and stimulate quality service delivery as captured in our development blue print Our Benue,

Our Future. I can also formally announce that a formal Memorandum of Understanding is expected before the end of this fiscal year.

General Administration

A combined sum of N6, 882,079,408 has been proposed to the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the State and the office of the Head of Service as part of general administration. A substantial part of this totaling N145, 800,000 is proposed for manpower development and training. We have also provided the sum of N3, 003,595,000 for the purpose of the administration of pension in the State. Our administration intends to be more aggressive in the payment of the pension obligations to our senior citizens. A number of measures are in the pipeline that will address current teething problems of pension administration.

Our administration will not only place priority on matters affecting the workforce but also go the whole hog to ensure that basic welfare facilities are provided. We will keep a close and healthy liaison with the State Chapters of Labour Unions, and ensure that we maintain good communication and understanding with them.

Fiscal Risks Management in 2010

The 2010 budget has its own risk, which we have categorized as critical. It is important that the risks are properly noted and therefore, addressed to avoid failure in the smooth implementation of the budget. The primary category of risk is the reduction or non-performance, in the course of the year, of receipts from Federation account, particularly if the national economy unexpectedly contracts. This will directly affect our expected revenue and consequently our ability to fully implement our proposed budget.

We also have a major concern with the cost of pension payment particularly gratuity given that we expect a rise in retirement rates in 2010. It is, therefore, important that we as a government do not continually grow our wage bill in 2010 to ensure full implementation of our proposed budget. It is also important that we avert the tendency of virement from capital expenditure as this could bring about crowding out effect on non-capital expenditure. In addition, the problem as associated with this practice could lead to the crystallization of such contingent liabilities as additional contractor arrears and costs of off budget services.

I have given express directives to the Ministry of Finance to ensure that only critical and priority projects are funded in 2010, particularly those projects that are nearing

completion. However, the biggest measure against these risks is ensuring fiscal responsibility in our spending, particularly. I can assure you Mr. Speaker; Members of this Honourable House that I intend to keep a close watch on spending to ensure that we put public resources in the right and reproductive places.

We must continue to strengthen our financial management processes, and ensure that the system works and is used to improve efficiency and productivity. We must use the system to safeguard public funds and ensure that our monies are deployed to good and efficient use.

Our efforts since the inauguration of our administration two and a half years ago has been geared towards prudent fiscal policies, and increased support to key weak areas of public financial management. We must create a new governance process that seeks to provide public good to our people in a collaborative manner. Our efforts, as we earnestly pilot the affairs of our beloved state, must be transparent and geared towards achieving clearly set objectives.

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, my good people of Benue State, the expenditure profile I have presented before you outline our plan for fiscal year 2010. And I must add that it is a critical year, one that must begin to yield dividends to our people for putting their trust in us. Let me assure you that what I have presented here today has been carefully prioritized in line with our economic development blue print, Our Benue, Our Future and we intend to fully implement it when this august House gives us the permission and support.

Finally, as I lay before you the 2010 budget proposal of the Benue State Government for your consideration and appropriation, I wish to call on the Honourable House to give it the best attention and expeditious passage into law. I am also aware that as you consider the details of the estimates you will require our collaboration and joint effort to bring its final contents to reality.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, I wish to conclude by wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you.

IMO BUDGETS N120B FOR 2010, INTENSIFIES IGR DRIVE