

The

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EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY

NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM



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Onboarding **Tambuwal** as Fayemi bows out in style

**Nigeria's
Healthcare System
Pivots on PHC
- Dr. Abdulwahab**

**BEYOND CLIMATE CHANGE
STATES SUBMERGED IN FLOODS OF GRIEF**

**QUEENS COLLEGE ALUMNI PAY COURTESY
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PROF. ABBA GAMBO

The Floods Of 2022 And Possible Impact On National Food Security

According to the Longman dictionary of contemporary English (2022 edition), flood is defined as a situation in which an area of land becomes covered with water due to heavy rainfall; as a disastrous overflow of water from a river, lake, or other body of water due to excessive rainfall.

The NIMET forecast of floods in Nigeria was really above the expectation. The rains came, came, and continued coming and at the end 33 out of the 36 States of Nigeria were affected. The FCT was however relatively safe.

The human loss is estimated at above 500 livestock (not yet quantified), but NEMA gave the following figures as of 19th October 2022:

Victims – 1,411,051
Deaths – 500

Displaced – 790,254
Houses destroyed – 76,168
Farmlands (Hectares) – 70,566

From Kebbi, the river Niger overflowed at the Yauri axis, while in Sokoto, rivers Rima and Sokoto, together with Gorongo and Wurno dams all overflowed. Due to the excessive rainfall, (not seen in almost a decade at the NW OF Nigeria). The Bakolori Dam at Maradun in Zamfara State, and the Jibia dam in nearby Katsina State, all gushed out. The HadeJia – Jamaare

river that stretches from Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe and Borno States usually flows into the lake Chad. The building of houses along waterways, cultivation Of crops, roads and sometimes even public institutions all aggravated the following, as the saying goes, “water must find its way”.

The sheer volume of the water, and the velocity coupled with the winds could spare virtually nothing on its way. Deep rooted trees were uprooted, roofs of



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A New Normal

Tambuwal didn't aspire to be Chairman of NGF

The new normal is not exactly new to the Nigeria Governors' Forum. NGF had become used to working from home or anywhere else in the world even before the outbreak of the Corona Virus in 2020.

Virtual meetings were already domesticated in the NGF and sometimes were hybrid and according to the Director General of the Forum, Mr Asishana Bayo Okauru, the secretariat's staff were more effective when operating away from home.

So when a situation arose because the

NGF Chairman's term was coming to close, Governors had to invent a peaceful transition where there would be no rancour or bitterness in their succession battle. They needed "a new normal."

Governor Fayemi of Ekiti would leave but the next Chairman may have his own tenure cut short by some months and the transition circle would have once again been destabilized. So an amicable way had to be found and when the core group approached Tambuwal who was at the time the Vice Chairman and asked him to sit in until the end of the election year, he magnanimously succumbed. This is another new normal.

There are grave political implications associated with his ascension. He is in the opposition, and this would contravene the constitution of the Forum. But the maturity and sincerity with which the governors drive matters made the transition uneventful except for the differences of nomenclature that the new

arrangement had given birth to.

This means that the Governors' Forum has witnessed a remarkable experience in the cohesion that it badly needs to run Nigeria well, thanks to Dr Kayode Fayemi.

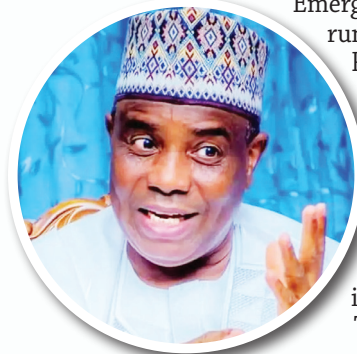
Barrister Aminu Waziri Tambuwal was born into the religious and aristocratic family of Wazirin Tambuwal on 10th January 1966.

He got admission into the prestigious Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto in 1984 for a Bachelor of Law Degree in Islamic and common law. He successfully completed his study in 1991. From the Faculty of Law of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Aminu Waziri Tambuwal proceeded to the Nigeria Law School, Lagos in 1992 where he successfully completed the one-year course and was called to the Nigerian Bar in the same year.

Aminu Waziri Tambuwal served Tambuwal and Kebbe at the House of Representatives. As third term and ranking member of the House, Tambuwal became unarguably one of the most experienced Members of the seventh Assembly. He was its Speaker.

Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal was elected governor of Sokoto State in 2015. Since assumption of office as the Governor, he left no stone unturned in his determination to diversify the State's economy away from the handouts resulting from the nation's share of oil to other more sustainable means of sustenance. His attention is in resuscitating agriculture, industries, small and medium scale enterprises and education, where his government declared a state of Emergency. As NGF chairman, Tambuwal has hit the ground running, receiving visitors from RMAFC and the Human Rights Commission all of which he firmly supports in their asks.

Meanwhile, Tambuwal's predecessor has moved up to occupy the position of the President of FORAF, spewing from a magnanimous arrangement among the governors where Dr Kayode Fayemi was allowed to keep the position which he got from Saidia in Morocco until the end of the election circle in Nigeria. He thus bows out in style. This is the NGF's new normal.



THE TEAM

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Niger Govt., UNICEF to vaccinate **one million children** against *Measles*

Niger State Primary Health Care Development Agency, in collaboration with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is set to vaccinate 1.1 million children against measles across the 25 local government areas of the state.

Mr Abari Musa, Social Behavioural Change Consultant with UNICEF, disclosed this at a one-day media orientation for the forthcoming measles immunisation campaign in Minna on Monday.

He disclosed that the vaccination would be divided into two phases with the first phase beginning from Oct. 31 to Nov. 7 while the second phase would commence from Nov. 8 to 15.

Musa said that children from 9 to 59 months would be vaccinated against measles, adding that those across the 275 wards of the state would benefit from the programme.

"Children under 5 years and those who are not vaccinated are at high risk of contracting measles," he said.

He added that immunisation teams would be

deployed to schools to vaccinate children while some teams would be at designated health facilities or at the district head and village head's palace.

He added that during the vaccination, there would also be routine immunisation on measles, COVID-19 and birth registration.

Musa said letters of notification would be sent to Churches and Mosques to inform them of the measles immunisation campaign for adequate participation of their members.

He, however, explained that the global measles elimination goal was to reduce measles to one case per one million population.

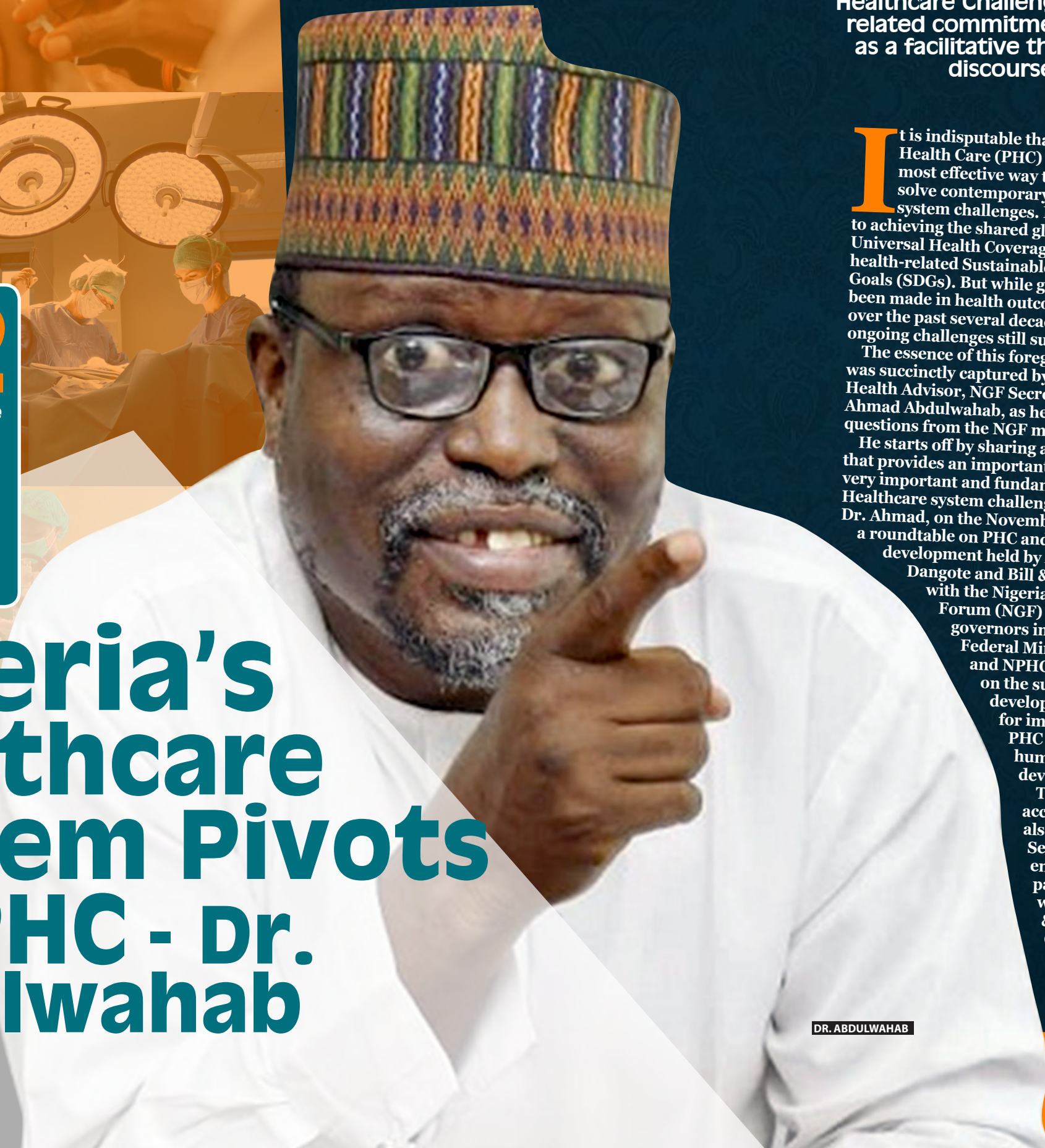
He added that it was essential to maintain high vaccination coverage to control vaccine preventable diseases in schools and communities.

Musa solicited the support of the media in helping to disseminate information to the general public, especially mothers, to ensure their under 5 years got vaccinated to prevent them from contracting measles.



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indicators we are going to assess each the 36 states to see how far they've performed relative to those indicators

Nigeria's Healthcare System Pivots on PHC - Dr. Abdulwahab



DR. ABDULWAHAB

The Senior Health Advisor, NGF Secretariat, **Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab** provides key insights into the Primary Healthcare system (PHC) and the Primary Healthcare Challenge, the Seattle Declaration that birthed related commitments and situates the Secretariat's role as a facilitative think-tank which shapes the agenda of discourse rather than an implementer

It is indisputable that the Primary Health Care (PHC) approach is the most effective way to sustainably solve contemporary health and health system challenges. It is foundational to achieving the shared global goals in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But while great strides have been made in health outcomes in Nigeria over the past several decades, many ongoing challenges still subsist.

The essence of this foregoing scenario was succinctly captured by the Senior Health Advisor, NGF Secretariat, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab, as he recently fielded questions from the NGF media team.

He starts off by sharing a background that provides an important context to the very important and fundamental Primary Healthcare system challenges. According to Dr. Ahmad, on the November 12 & 13, 2019, a roundtable on PHC and human capital development held by Alhaji Aliko Dangote and Bill & Melinda Gates with the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) which had ten governors in attendance, Federal Ministry of Health and NPHCDA reflected on the subnationals' development agenda for immunization, PHC and human capital development.

This roundtable, according to him, also mirrors NGF Secretariat's enduring partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates and Aliko Dangote Foundations. They sat

down and discussed PHC local challenges. At the end they made specific commitments. This was christened the Seattle Declaration which affirmed the resolve to facilitate strengthening of leadership and accountability for the PHC system at the subnational level as well as accelerate progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Back home from Seattle, Washington, Dr. Ahmad shares the next critical steps taken: "We now came home and said we have made commitments; how do we ensure we keep these. So the B&MGF, DF in collaboration with the NGF and the Ministry of Health, NPHCDA birthed the PHC Challenge.

"This is actually to help implement the commitments the governors made. It is also good to give credits to where it is due. The PHC Challenge is being funded by the B&MGF which is the catalyst. They came up with the idea of how do we make sure that this Seattle Commitments work. So I would say they are the catalyst. But we are all partners, we co-designed the challenge."

Dr. Ahmad explains that the PHC challenge is to help the implementation of the Seattle Commitments. His words: "What we did was to translate it into clear performance monitoring framework for all these commitments. So we have a performance monitoring framework. That framework will now be what is going to be used to score the states.

"So for the states we have 12 performance indicators. Using those 12 indicators we are going to assess each the 36 states to see how far they've performed relative to those indicators. And so based on those indicators every year we are going to identify the best performing state based on those indicators from each zone. And then they must improve.

"So there is going to be a total of 13 awards. In each zone, you have the best performing and the most improved. I must stress here that that the whole thing





Nigeria's Healthcare System Pivots on PHC - Dr. Abdulwahab

ultimately is not about the price; it is about the health outcome. So we use it to improve the health outcome.”

On the issue states budgetary outlays to drive the PHC systems, the senior health advisor states, “There is no direct financial support. You are supposed to use your funds and commit it to areas where it’s going to make the most impact. So they channel funds to areas that will be impactful.

“So for the sub-nationals, they prioritise funding to areas they deem key. And different states have different supports. You have some states that GAVI is supporting, and some being supported by B&MGF, USAID, et cetera. You have different partners supporting different aspects of PHC. So you might say in a way those states have some advantage.”

To reinforce and reemphasise the critical importance of PHC, Dr. Ahmad explains that “PHC is the first contact of a patient to the health care system though there are some conditions that could need a patient to go to the tertiary medical level directly. But 80 per cent of health challenges can be managed by the PHC system. So a system that manages 80 per cent of the health challenges tells you that it’s a key, fundamental system. PHC is a cornerstone of our health care system in Nigeria.”

But

notwithstanding Dr. Ahmad’s rather glossy picture of PHC, why then was it that often many folks prefer to leapfrog the PHC and seek the attention of secondary and tertiary health care. He felt the related infrastructure decay may explain this.

His words: “This because of the dilapidation of the PHC; I mean the level of functionality of the PHC system. You don’t have the right kind of manpower in that system. If you lack the right manpower, people might naturally avoid that. But you don’t have to go and see a doctor for malaria.

“If you have a community PHC centre, this common condition can be determined with basic tests and treated. You don’t have to go see a doctor for this. Our attitudes may also influence this footing. It is not that all the PHCs are bad. Psychologically, if you take to a dilapidated PHC centre, I will reject it.

“But it is not that all the PHCs that are bad. We have probably about 40,000 facilities in Nigeria and about 30,000 of those are PHCs. Now, once the country starts buying into this, we want to ensure that each political ward in the country has a functional PHC. So, if you now have that functional PHC, you will not have to go to a General Hospital.”

On the role of the NGF Secretariat in the big picture, he clarified that the NGF is not a Ministry, Department or Agency (MDA) of government. Hear him: “The NGF is not a Ministry, Department or Agency (MDA). There are government institutions that have statutory responsibilities to do some of these interventions. So what we do as the NGF Secretariat is playing that role of facilitator and catalyst.

“We help to remove bottlenecks. We help to do advocacy. We help shape the agenda of the discourse. For instance, if you are implementing a programme and then there are some key information you need to access, we have that convening power and we use that to help you access that.”

“We are not implementers; we are facilitators. We are also what you call a think-tank. We sit down and look at the issues around what is happening in different sectors. We research into it and come up with a position and then subsequently advice our principals at the NGF and we shape the agenda.”



DR. ABDULWAHAB

Recognition for Faisal Shuaib, CEO of NPHCDA



Dr Faisal Shuaib, the ED/CEO of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) recently received an award for Outstanding Vaccination Programme at the Nigeria Excellence Awards in Public Service (NEAPS) on behalf of the NPHCDA.

Dr Shuaib oversees primary healthcare provision to Nigeria's more than 200 million people in his capacity as Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Nigeria's National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA). He was appointed in 2017 and led the final years of the polio eradication programme.

He said that "today's award is huge not just for me, it's massive for the agency and our partners because it is in recognition of our outstanding vaccination program that led to polio eradication, increased RI despite the pandemic and progressive increases in C-19 vaccination despite the challenges in our environment."

Dr Shuaib added that he appreciates his staff, partners, and healthcare workers, without whom the successes and achievements recorded at the NPHCDA wouldn't have been easy.

"I say thank you for your commitment. Together we can #TransformPHC."

Dr Shuaib further added that with the help of partners, they were able to successfully eradicate polio and together saved and protected the lives of future generations.

He said that NPHCDA has also pushed childhood immunisation up from 33% in 2017 to 70% within two years and continues to work to get this even higher.

He is proud of what his team has done, especially when he sees the real-life impact that this improvement is having on Nigerian families.

Dr Shuaib said that in 2014, as an Incident Manager, he coordinated a successful fight against Ebola and he saw first-hand how Nigerians can work together to defeat an epidemic and they made history.

Then, he coordinated a team of over 1,000 health workers and volunteers, establishing a comprehensive system that provided quality diagnostic, treatment,



care and follow-up of Ebola patients, their contacts, and their families. Nigeria suffered just 8 deaths from the virus, and on October 20, 2014, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Nigeria free of Ebola, thanks to what the New York Times called an "extraordinarily vigorous effort"

"We are at the forefront of getting people vaccinated against COVID-19 and it takes

the help of all to keep Nigerians safe from this threatful virus. We therefore all need to get our jabs because when you get your jabs, you are not only helping yourselves but you are helping to keep your family, friends and communities safe."

The vaccines are safe and effective. Millions of people around the world and Nigerians have safely taken it.

Other awards that Dr Shuaib received were the National Productivity Order of Merit (NPOM) Award by His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR for his tremendous contributions to Primary healthcare in Nigeria.

He holds a medical degree from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in Nigeria and a Doctor of Public Health from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, where he graduated with distinction.

**NMA
BRAIN
DRAIN:**



We're Losing Doctors Daily – Ogun, Plateau

Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Ogun chapter, on Monday, called on the state government to declare a state of emergency on the health sector to address the issue of brain drain among medical doctors.

NMA Chairman in the state, Dr Adekunle Ashimi, made the call at a news conference to flag off the 2022 Physicians' Week, with the theme: "Nigeria's Healthcare Delivery System and the 2023 Democratic Transition: A Time to Change the Narrative."

Ashimi expressed the regret the rate at which brain drain had hit the country's health sector, saying that no fewer than 10,296 doctors who obtained their degrees in Nigeria were currently practising in the United Kingdom.

According to him, Nigeria has the third highest number of foreign doctors working in U.K., after Pakistan and India.

This, he said, had made the country lose its human resources in geometric progression.

According to him, until government declares a state of emergency in the health sector, the trend may continue to linger.

"We call on our government to urgently declare emergency action in Nigeria's health sector for the sake of the citizens.

"As the situation gets worse, doctors, who stayed behind, are seriously overworked, as bureaucracy has made it difficult for heads of public hospitals to replace the doctors who had left.

"Therefore, those who are working now begin to see reasons to join the train and leave the country.

"The situation our health care is facing now means one doctor to 15,000 patients, which may be worse if the situation is not addressed," he said.

Ashimi also appealed to government to review the Consolidated Medical Salary Scheme, saying that there was the need for commensurate hazard allowance for health workers.

Meanwhile, the NMA in Plateau also cited poor emolument in the state as cause of many medical doctors leaving for employment with federal government health institutions.

Plateau NMA Chairman Bapiga'an Audu made the observation on Monday in Jos at a news conference to mark the 2022 Physicians Week entitled "Nigeria's Healthcare Delivery System and the 2023 Democratic Transition: A Time to Change the Narrative".

He called on the Plateau government to implement better remuneration for doctors working in the state-owned health sector to avoid an "internal brain drain".



Over 10,000 doctors left Nigeria for UK in the last 7 yrs – NMA

The Kaduna State Chapter of Nigerian Medical Association, NMA, yesterday said no fewer than 10,000 doctors left Nigeria for the United Kingdom, UK, for greener pastures in the last seven years, saying Doctors in Kaduna State are the least remunerated.

The NMA while celebrating its '2022 Physicians' Week' lamented continued brain drain in the medical profession in the last seven years, amidst deadly deceases in the country that required more medical doctors.

At a news briefing as part of activities to mark the 'Physicians' Week', the Chairman, Kaduna State NMA, Dr. Madaki Sheyin, said a Nigerian doctor is poorly paid, over worked, lacked necessary work tools and has become a target for kidnapers.

"Nigerian doctors have been rendered unimportant by successive governments for inadequate attention to the health sector.

The one week medical activities has the theme, "Nigeria's Healthcare Delivery System and The 2023 Democratic Transition: A Time To Change The Narrative", is in tandem with the most important upcoming event in Nigeria while the sub-themes', Mitigating The Impact Of Brain Drain On The Dwindling Human Resource For Health In Nigeria and Health Sector Reforms In The Face Of Emerging Public Health Threats', were chosen as continued reminder to our governments that things are falling apart in the health sector.

"The issue of progressive depletion of human resource for health cannot be over emphasized. With the recent article from an Online Newspaper of 9th October 2022 titled "200 Nigerian Doctors Move to UK in One Month", the fact that checks on the website of the General Medical Council, GMC, the body which licenses and maintains the official register of medical practitioners in the UK, showed that the GMC licensed at least 200 Nigerian-trained doctors between August 31, 2022, and September 30, 2022 was revealed.

"The statistics also showed that between January 1, 2022 and September 30, 2022, about 1,307 doctors trained in Nigeria were licensed in the UK as Nigeria continues to battle one of the worst situations of brain drain in its history. Overall, 10,296 doctors who obtained their degrees in Nigeria currently practice in the UK.

"Dispersion of the emigration data for Nigeria trained doctors to UK is as follows: 233 in 2015, 279 in 2016, 475 in 2017, 852 in 2018, 1,347 in 2019, 833 in 2020 in spite of COVID Pandemic and 932 in 2021 during recovery from COVID.

"The Kaduna Doctor is even worse hit by this poor welfare conditions, doctors in the State's employ as at today receive only 60 percent of the CONMESS salary scale, a far cry from what those in the Federal and other States are receiving. We call on our Governments to quickly declare emergency action in Nigeria's health sector for the sake of her citizens".

"This alongside insecurity is largely responsible for the high turnover of doctors in the state and mass exodus causing both internal and external brain drain".

The doctors therefore appealed to Kaduna state government to immediately implement the report of the Committee on Review of Medical Doctors and other health workers' salaries in Kaduna State and also domesticate the newly approved hazard allowance for doctors.



REPORT ON

Inauguration of Bayelsa State Task Force on Immunization

As part of providing organised leadership in all matters relating to Immunization be it routine or supplemental, a State Task Force on Immunization is a fundamental requirement. This Task Force is saddled with the salient responsibility of overseeing all facets of Immunization by providing access to financial, social mobilisation efforts and strategies and policy direction.

BUSINESS OF THE DAY

The State in the current administration was yet to inaugurate this task force until the epoch-making inauguration took place on Wednesday 20th July 2022 at the Executive Chambers, Government House, Yenagoa by His Excellency, the miracle governor, Senator Douye Diri.

The newly inaugurated STFI is headed by the miracle deputy governor of Bayelsa State, His excellency, Senator Lawrence Ewhrudjakpor with the State Immunization Officer, Mr Amos Godspower to serve as Secretary.

This Task Force is saddled with the salient responsibility of overseeing all facets of Immunization by providing access to financial, social mobilisation efforts and strategies and policy direction

Other members of the STFI inaugurated include but not limited to the following (find attached, extensive membership list of the STFI):-

1. The Chairman, Traditional Rulers Council
2. The Honourable Commissioner for Health
3. The Honourable Commissioner for Education
4. The Honourable Commissioner for Information
5. The Honourable Commissioner for Women Affairs
6. The House Committee Chairman on Health
7. The Executive Secretary of the BSPHCB
8. The Director, Disease Control and Immunization
9. The Director, Pharmaceutical services, SMOH
10. Leadership of the Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria
11. Leadership of the Pharmaceutical Council of Nigeria
12. WHO
13. UNICEF
14. Leadership of NURTW
15. The Police
16. The Army
17. The Directorate of State Services.

In his charge, the Executive Governor demanded that the STFI brings its wealth of experience as is evident in its membership to bear on the indices of the State as it relates to Immunization and other PHC services.

The Chairman of the STFI, his excellency Senator Lawrence Ewhrudjakpor in course of his acceptance speech promised not to fail the State in this new assignment while promising he will do all within his ability to rewrite the narrative in the Immunization and other PHC services space in the State.

Highlights of the inauguration include goodwill messages from partners and a presentation of souvenir by the State Coordinator of WHO Bayelsa to H.E.

A group photograph of the inaugurated members and the Governor crystallised proceedings of the inauguration.



ABIODUN: I've Paid N70bn Gratuities, Increased Arrears Payment to N600m

They all believed that governor Ganduje gives full support with the needed political will to make Kano greater on high pedestal in all areas of human endeavors, particularly healthcare delivery system

Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, says his administration has increased the quarterly payment to defray outstanding gratuities from N500m to N600m.

The governor, who noted that his administration would continue to prioritise the welfare of the people, especially the senior citizens, equally disclosed that over N70 billion had been released for the payment of gratuity arrears since he assumed office in 2019.

Abiodun made the disclosure

during the Town Hall meeting on the 2023-2025 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and 2023 Budget for Ogun East Senatorial District held in Ijebu-Ode on Monday.

He said the economy of Ogun State was on a sustainable path, noting that the state has been able to realise over N70 billion as Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) between January and September, 2022.

The governor attributed the upward increase in the state's IGR to the quality reforms initiated and implemented by his administration.

"We are happy to report to you that our state's economy is on a sustainable path; largely to our focus on quality reform initiatives introduced by our administration. These include among others our land reform – the Ogun State Land and Revenue Management System; Judicial reforms; tax reforms and all other public financial management reforms.

"We are excited that all these are yielding a very positive impact on our economy, this is self evident in the growth of our Internally Generated Revenue," Governor Abiodun said.

Abiodun, while bemoaning a recent interview granted by an indigene of the state where he claimed that the IGR of the state had declined compared to the previous administration in the state, said interviews on the situation in the state shouldn't be done with political colouration, but with facts.

He said: "A few days ago, I watched a clip that showed someone who can be best described as an Ogun State citizen in diaspora claiming that the IGR of this administration has declined compared to the previous administration.

"You know, people go on television and just speak because they think everything is political. Even if you are going to talk about politics, back it up with some facts.

"As at this month which is the tenth month of this year, we have been able to take in over N70b as IGR. You can do a projection that if we have done N70 billion in nine months, what are we likely to do by the end of the year?"

"Last year, for the first time in the history of Ogun State, we did an IGR of over N100 billion. So, why would anybody go on television and be saying things that are blatantly false for the sake of politics.

"This is your state, either you live with us or you are in the diaspora, please do everything to continue to promote the fortune of your state," Abiodun stated.

The governor noted that his administration would continue to entrench digital initiatives and focus on infrastructural development that will not only be economically viable, but also financially feasible, adding that the commitment of his administration towards infrastructure would not be undermined.

He added that his administration's commitment towards infrastructural development had resulted in the building over 80 major roads and 120 others, totalling 400 kilometers of roads either constructed, reconstructed, or rehabilitated.

Governor Abiodun further reiterated that no section of the state would be developed by his administration at the expense of another.



When the Governors Forum was founded in 1999, it gave strong notice that it was established on the principles of non partisanship to promote cooperation amongst executive governors and uphold the general good of the citizenry. Even so, there was cynicism in many quarters, and one unimpressed critic, described the organization as “a trade union for the aristocracy”. This was an error of judgement but at the time it did not sound so unreasonable. This is because Eminence and political success attract popular hostility and envy in Nigeria. There is also an inverted tyranny in Nigerian conversations which customarily presumes, even in the face of terrifying evidence to the contrary, that the big man in government is always wrong and impure. Watching the mighty fall has therefore become an enduring parlour game. Our politics is considered unworthy because rather than provide true service, it has instead served as the springboard of excessive self-help. At no level has criticism been harsher or more relentless than when it concerns our Governors. It is often suggested that even though our politics has been poorly managed, the heresies at the state level amongst our governors have been simply unbearable. But the truth is that this caricature has been frequently overdrawn. There is enough rascality to be passed round. But we however seem to ignore the mounds of idealism and instances of reordering that have been unfurled by these same Governors that we regularly rebuke or vilify. Now and again the lopsidedness of the Nigerian Federal experience comes under attack. What most people hanker after is a radical devolution of powers such as will make the Federal Union more sustainable. Because our governors have been so routinely slandered, we have been unable to acknowledge the very valuable amount of institutional change that the Governor’s forum is prosecuting in this direction. But before highlighting the devolution matter, it is important to recognize the outstanding efforts put up by the Governor’s Forum to fight the corona virus pandemic. The pandemic came in the disconcerting company of the oil price crash of 2020. As this was the main source of revenue, several Nigerian states were caught off balance, leaving the Governor’s Forum to provide support and guidance. Budget dislocation and huge price rises pushed the economy into recession. Many state governments under the impetus of the Forum took early response measures, imposing

Where Is The NIGERIAN GOVERNOR'S FORUM

By Dele Olowu

state level lockdowns and in some instances, even closing borders. Other states were forced under this imperative to embrace the preparedness and Response project CoPREP through which the federal government deployed world bank grants to the states and the federal capital territory. The Governor’s Forum appears to have released new energies, allowing our states to work more optimally even during periods of dire straits. The Governor’s Forum is an important institution and proclaims a large vision on behalf of all Nigerians. It is also very complex and beholden to politics. Indeed it is a derivative of politics. And yet surprisingly, only few organizations are better managed in the country today. Its Director General is the mild mannered and self effacing Asishana B. Okauru. He has provided proof that politics and astute governance can be stable mates. The Governor’s Forum is perhaps an unpublished example of what a United Nigeria can be. The entity as it stands today has Alhaji Aminu Tambuwal as Chairman and Governor Bagudu Of Kebbi state as Deputy. Both are from the north west and no hackles have been raised. The entity has had various chairmen over the years but among its most iconic is Dr Kayode Fayemi, the Ekiti state governor who has just yielded office as Forum head to Alhaji Tambuwal. Kayode Fayemi carries the reputation of a Democracy Warrior but his tenure as leader of the Forum may have earned him an added superlative as a promoter of regional integration and development through the deployment of sub-sovereign and sub-national governments. Fayemi’s last function was to host a sub-sovereign conference in collaboration with Afreximbank. Fayemi who is also President of FORAF has continued to push the sub-National agenda with fulsome enthusiasm. The Abuja conference which was personally attended by President Buhari was a huge success. The notion of regional integration through the agency of sub-nationals and sub-sovereigns is not entirely new. It exercised the imagination of some of our pioneer leaders. It also famously haunted the consciousness of Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah and in a less organized form was part of the political lexicon of late Muammar Gaddafi Of Libya. The transfer of power or devolution of functions has had an uneven reception in Nigeria. Buhari once remarked that those calling for restructuring are naive even though his party the APC set up a committee to examine the issue. However the favour which the promotion of development through the agency of sub-nationals now enjoys amongst Nigeria’s Governors, may perhaps be some indication that restructuring is upon us in a revised edition. The

idea of patronizing sub-sovereigns and sub-nationals is an attempt to redirect the traffic of development by avoiding, reducing or breaking the old hegemonies. This is where the Governor’s forum stands at the present time and Dr Fayemi is doubtless one of the major purveyors of the new policy trend. The theme of the conference hosted by the Forum and the Afriexim bank was “African Sub-Sovereign Governments Network- Championing Africa’s Development”. What the Forum has admirably set up is a platform for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area AFCFTA to encourage trade, investment and industrialization among African sub-sovereigns in order to promote regional integration. The Forum has also sought to remove non-tariff trade barriers in order to promote the free flow of goods and services. The whole idea is to create a new landscape in which trade investment and industrialization can be carried out freely and fluently not only within Nigeria but also at the continental level in Africa. President Buhari gave his imprimatur to the visions described by the Forum. Other states in attendance extolled the leadership provided by Nigeria. This certainly is an iconic project and when the cute magazine of the Governor’s Forum, the Executive Summary talked about “Raising the Game” certainly the magazine was not engaging in idle self adulation. The organization has had its table full and its subscribers are working full steam. Some say the Forum should also raise its voice. A measure of its success was that the conference was attended by 171 registered Governors, 48 Commissioners as well as Governor’s from African countries, 5 from Morocco, 3 from Cameroon, 4 from Niger, 2 from Madagascar, 2 from Mali 3 from Ethiopia 3 from the Comoros 2 from Egypt 1 from Ivory Coast and 1 from Kenya. The Nigerian Governor’s Forum is on the cusp of a historic trend, a radical reordering of the traffick of development and investment. If the project succeeds, areas long neglected, and centers of authority which may have felt left out, will be brought into the new orbit of patronage and support. A new dawn may be breaking.



Viewpoint

THE RISE OF GOVERNORS' TYRANNY; A REJOINDER

Erudite public commentator and veteran journalist, Dr Chidi Amuta, made what could easily pass for a public show of self-condemnation when he wrote the Rise of Tyrant Governors in his weekly column sometimes this month.

In that piece which lacked the core values of public commentary, Dr Amuta writes that the governor of Zamfara State, Mr. Bello Matawalle ordered the shutdown of a number of media houses in the state on account of their coverage of political activities in the state. The affected media houses include the Nigeria Television Authority, Gamji Television, Al-Umma Television and Pride FM Radio in Gusau, the state Capital. Their crime ostensibly is that they covered and reported the campaign rally of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the opposition to the governor's ruling All Progressive Congress (APC).

He also took a deeper swipe on Governor Bello Matawalle whom he said is not new to authoritarian flirtations and reckless pronouncements because according to Dr Amuta, Mutawalle had unilaterally announced that citizens of the state were free to acquire whatever arms they thought fit to secure themselves against the menace of bandits in the state. Which he argued was a contravention of a federal law granting citizens authority to bear arms, calling this declaration a flagrant violation of all existing laws and the constitution of the country.

Chidi Amuta moved from one state to another chastising governors for their declaration on public safety, in the absence of a strong commitment by the government that controls the security agencies of the country to guarantee the safety of lives and property. He took a swipe at Governor David Umahi and another swipe at Governor Hope Uzodinma and finally landed heavy verbal blows on Governor Nyesom Wike, all the while selectively avoiding the mention of a statement made the same week by a former Defence Minister and Chief of Army Staff, T Y Danjuma, encouraging the people of Taraba State to arm and defend themselves as the government of the day had failed in its duty to safeguard them. T Y Danjuma made the statement at the coronation of the Chief of Donga in Taraba State, with the Governor of the state present at the occasion.

So far, nobody has come out to accuse Dr Amuta of selective amnesia yet, but the fact remains that the call for the establishment of state police in the country is a

fact whose time is already here. Calling Governors tyrants does not vitiate the fact that state police as demanded by governors is imperative and people can only continue to argue against it at their own peril while hundreds of throes of bandits enjoy a free day raping, maiming, and killing innocent Nigerian citizens.

No one has the temerity to justify the closure of media houses in a democracy, so the action in itself must have been ill-advised, and the Government of Zamfara State had, even before Dr Amuta wrote his diatribe against selected governors apologised for the gaffe. It is simply a case of flogging a dead horse and very disappointingly, no breather was given to the state government for its courage in coming out to apologise for its mistake. The article, coming from a known patron of military dictatorship like Amuta presupposes that the criticism is borne out of sour grapes.

The thirty-six governors of this country have agitated for state police at every forum or public platform to help mitigate the wanton violence and insecurity that has become the order of the day in Nigeria. It is important to note that the so-called demand for the abolition of security votes in the country has paled into nothing because Governors have expended the money in supporting the federal police that ultimately takes no instructions from governors at critical times and allow the people to die in the hands of criminals who have had a field day patrolling all ungoverned spaces in the country.

That the Governors of Ondo and Benue were called out for setting up security outfits in their states is a parody like no other. Governors care about what happens to their people and respond accordingly as they deem fit. Any one who has seen the destruction of lives and property that greeted Owo town in Ondo State or the attempt on the life of the Governor of Benue State on his farm in Benue State some months ago while the federal police stood aside and looked would be simply engaging in a futile exercise that blows nobody any good in this country and not even veteran journalists can turn logic on its head no matter the motivation. The nation is currently inundated with security alerts by diplomatic missions and criminals are scampering to the nation's nooks and corners, don't the likes of Chidi Amuta see the need for state police to complement the efforts of the federal police in fishing the criminals out and stamping their nefarious activities out for good? Just saying!



NGF Interventions in Education

For a long time, the NGF has sought a distinctive foray into the education sector in Nigeria. Several interviews and many education experts had made attempts to cover the space, but to no avail. Groups like EduMarshall made frantic knocks on the door but the response was stone cold. Then Governor Fayemi became Chairman of the Forum and several sections, not just the education sector which fall within the NGF's core mandate areas were filled. Five months down the line, the sector seems to have found its bearing. And here is proof.

The Education Department under the Directorate of Research and Strategy began strategic engagement and interface with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the education sector at the federal and subnational levels of government on the 12th of May 2022.

The strategic workplan is to serve the mandate of providing states in Nigeria with education policy reform framework, domestication and implementation strategies through reviews and evaluation mechanism for educational development. The department is expected to perform policy analysis in the education sector through strategic interface with the federal and subnational levels of government in Nigeria. This will help to develop policy recommendations to address challenges in the education sector in the 36 states of the federation. The department was also tasked with the responsibility of engaging educational agencies, institutions and relevant stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of educational policies and programmes through collation, review

and interpretation of educational data for national and subnational benefits. These will be done by advancing evidence-based policies in the education sector for accelerated subnational educational development in alignment with NGF's policy priority or core-mandate areas. Between May and now, the Education Department has been able to interface with the Federal Ministry of Education (FME); State Ministries of Education (SME); Agencies in the Ministry of Education, Development Partners and Civil Society Groups on Education in Nigeria (CSOs).

The department is partnering and collaborating with these agencies to organize programmes, review key education policies and facilitate reforms in education for subnational benefits.

Already the activities of the last six months have started yielding fruit. The department has signed MOU with the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), and the Committee of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU) to support policy reforms and accelerate implementation in the areas of school safety, girl-child education, education financing, Peer Review Mechanism (PRM) among others.

One strategic area of collaboration and intervention of interest is the 'Safe School Initiative.' The Emergency



Coordination Centre (ECC) under the leadership of Dr (Mrs) Ayoade Alakija hosted a high-level summit on 'Safeguarding Our School' on August 4, 2022, in Abuja. The summit was part of the ECC's 'Creating A Safe Teaching and Learning Environment' (CASTLE) initiative in partnership with NGF and other development partners. The then Chairman of NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi gave the keynote address at the summit. It brainstormed on the report of an eight-month research in 13 states of the federation to identify challenges in school safety, towards a safe teaching and learning environment in Nigeria. The "CASTLE" programme received the backing of the NGF to be hosting annual high-level summits on school safety and girl child education.

Another key area of interest is the Out-of-School challenge in Nigeria. NGF through the Education Department is a member of the National Working Group (NWG) of the Accelerating Change for Children and Youths' Education through Systems Strengthening (ACCESS), a 4-year research partnership between the Inter-Agency Accelerated Working Group (AEWG), University of Auckland, New Zealand and Dubai Cares.

ACCESS aims to understand the extent to which non-formal and alternative education programmes, including accelerated education, is supported, and integrated, and how provision of such opportunities could be improved and strengthened through policy-level change. The ACCESS programme is for four (4) years (2021-2024).

Tellingly, it reviews gaps and opportunities for better institutionalization of the Accelerated Basic Education Programme (ABEP) to meet the needs



of Over-age Out-of-School Children and Youth (OOSY). The second phase (April 2022 to October 2024) provides opportunity for the NGF to contribute to achieving the action plan in partnership with implementing and development partners to accelerate the desired changes through policy reforms in the education sector for subnational educational development.

Similarly, the NGF through the Education Department was part of the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the development of a 10-Year Universal Basic Education (UBE) road map (2021-2030). A technical session was held in Lagos between August 28 to September 1, 2022, to address the Universal

Basic Education (UBE) Situation Analysis (SITAN), a rapid assessment procedure in respect to the 10-Year UBE Road map. SITAN was expected to be carried out to inform achievements, issues, challenges and gaps in the implementation of the UBE programme across the federation. This will be aligned with the Ministerial Strategic Plan (MSP) of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), and the Universal Basic Education Medium Term Strategic Plan (UBE-MTSP).

The highpoint of the education section's performance sheet is that the NGF is now ready to take a deep dive into the ocean of challenges in the sector towards ameliorating them. Plans are already on the way to host a high level education summit on girl

child education in November and a National Policy Dialogue on education financing in Nigeria is on hand in December, 2022 in which all stakeholders in education, home and abroad, are present.

Victory for the NGWF as it gets a new CEO

In what seems like a genuine victory for the work the governors' wives have been doing around the country to enable domestic tranquility as well as enhance the workability of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) VAPP Act, the Chief Judge of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Justice Hussein Baba Yusuf on Monday signed practice direction and guidelines on the trial of sexual and gender-based violence cases and ancillary procedure and that on the application for a protection order under the VAPP Act.

The signing of the practice directions and guidelines formed part of activities held to mark the commencement of the 2022-2023 legal year in FCT.

The CJ also appended his signature to the practice directions on small claims 2022.

Speaking before signing the instruments, Justice Baba Yusuf said they were carefully thought out practice directions to not only enable but also enhance the workability of the VAPP Act and other related statutes in the Territory.

According to him, in the last one year, there was an upsurge in cases filed in FCT courts as a result of the fast pace it had continued to develop as well as the influx of people into the Territory as a result of insecurity in parts of the country.

"In the last one year, we have witnessed an increase in the number of civil and criminal cases filed in the high court, the magistrate courts and the Customary Court of Appeal.

"This is understandably so, considering the fast pace at which the Federal Capital Territory has continued to develop and movement of people into the Federal Capital as a result of insecurity in some parts of the country," the CJ said.

According to him, with the exponential increase in the FCT population, the judiciary in the Territory had continued to strive with a view to responding to the need of making justice readily and easily accessible to justice seekers in the Federal Capital.

"As a judiciary saddled with the constitutional mandate to provide judicial and related services within the Federal Capital, we have continued (to) strive to respond to the need to make justice readily and easily accessible to justice-seekers in FCT," Baba Yusuf said.

He informed that in view of this development, there had been an improvement on structural facilities in order to give existing court environments a befitting facelift.

"We have also endeavoured to create additional judicial divisions in Jikwoyi and Garki Districts and built

additional courtrooms to boost the existing structures in the Gwagwalada, Kuje and Bwari Divisions," the CJ disclosed.

He informed as part of a vowed efforts aimed at promoting access to justice and speedy disposal of inexpensive, simple and small liquidated claims, the FCT court collaborated with the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) and constituted a steering committee to facilitate the establishment of small claims court in FCT magistracy system.

He further informed that the small claims courts would be manned by 15 designated magistrates, adding that the courts shall take off within the 2022-2023 legal year.

Justice Baba Yusuf said in order to eliminate affidavit racketeering by touts, he created the Commissioner for Oaths Department, which used to be a unit under the enforcement department, in December 2021.

The department, according to the CJ, had witnessed a huge turnaround with the introduction and launching of a system of digitalisation of affidavits, known as Affidavit

Registry Management Systems (ARMS), which placed all forms of affidavits in electronic format.

"The introduction of ARMS has made the process of obtaining affidavits in the court more seamless and time efficient; eliminating the incidence of touting that marred the manual issuance of affidavits.

"More significant is that the fidelity and authenticity of affidavits issues by this Court are now guaranteed," the CJ said.

He added that in an avowed drive to ensure speedy dispensation of justice in FCT, the judiciary had embarked on steady revamp of its statutes and rules.

Baba Yusuf informed that he had signed the new District Court Rules, while a prepared draft of the District/Magistrate Courts Act, which he described as "first of its kind in the FCT", had been sent to the National Assembly for legislative approval.

Also, The Chief Judge reminded legal practitioners, both the Bar and Bench that as the 2023 general elections draw closer, a lot of expectations are on the judiciary in view of pre and



PROFILE

...NGWF gets CEO

Mrs Hauwa Haliru, a highly motivated and hardworking individual with a strategic approach to working has emerged the CEO of the NGWF.

Hauwa is a lawyer with practical experience in litigation and commercial law and a corporate experience in Human Resources, project management, Governance and Gender Development. She has worked across a vast spectrum of social and economic sectors and is currently into Human Resources management with the Nigeria Governors' Forum as the Head of HR/Governance at the Secretariat.

Mrs Haliru's impressive educational background began with an LLB at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria and an MBA in HR Specialization at the same institution. She attended the Nigerian Law School, Bwari Campus in 2002-2003. She later pursued a PGD in Technology Law & Intellectual Property at the University of Liverpool in UK which she obtained in 2017.

Her past work experiences include a one-year National Youth Service spent as a Legal Research officer at the Debt Management Office (DMO), Abuja before she joined a continent wide conglomerate as an HR officer with Stratecon International Ltd, a Management Consultancy Firm.

After then, she moved to Evolve Revolve International Ltd, a Venture Capitalist Firm, as Head of Administration and Project Development where she was part of the team that secured a Mobile Money License for Teasy International Company Ltd as a start-up.

Mrs Haliru was also a Managing Partner at Soroya Law Office.

In her current role at the NGE, she networks and exchanges information with key public sector and private sector stakeholders such as International and Local Development Partners, Federal and State Governments and their Agencies and Parastatals, NGOs, CSOs and

other Private Sector actors.

At the NGE, she has attended relevant trainings, seminars and workshops that span across the diverse landscape of her professional career. Hauwa Haliru comes to the NGWF with a vast bouquet of experiences and an enthusiasm to build the NGWF to a level that would make the institution a value addition to the womenfolk and Nigerians at large. In July 2023, she would be moving on to this new role as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum Secretariat.

As the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum Secretariat NIGFWS, she will be responsible for the overall leadership and management of the NGWF's operational and administrative functions as she would be working under the guidance of the Forum and be responsible for defining the organization's strategic vision and remain accountable for its implementation and the results achieved.

Her other duties would include developing and maintaining strong relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders that are important collaborators in the Forum's mission and activities. In addition, she would be responsible for setting the tone for the Secretariat's internal and external interactions by exemplifying values of high ethical standards, integrity, and fairness.

Her first major assignment will be to develop, operationalize, lead, and monitor the implementation of the Forum's Strategic plan and ensure the effective implementation of new business models and instruments to deliver on the strategic objectives.



post election litigations.

"As we approach another general election year, it is expected that there will be heightened activities within the precincts of the Courts.

"It is, therefore, imperative for us as law practitioners (both the Bar and the Bench) to brace up for the challenges ahead.

"The Nigerian society looks unto us to continue to provide legal services that seek to stabilize the polity" Justice Baba Yusuf said.

"The Bar, as the bastion of the rule of law, must continue to recognize the leading and sensitive role it plays in nation building.

"As Ministers in the Temple of Justice and custodians of the law, lawyers must join hands with the Bench in ensuring the preservation of the sanctity of our laws, without which our nation cannot survive.

"The Bar must rise against any attempts from any quarters to subvert the rule of law. The Bar must continue to be the harbinger of the hope of a more egalitarian society" the FCT High Court Chief Judge stated.

He assured on behalf of Judiciary of the FCT, that they remain committed to meeting the expectations of modern-day administration of justice and the rule of law without fear or favour, ill will, affection, self-interest".

Meanwhile, the Chief Judge gave a breakdown

of the annual caseload records for the 2021/2022 legal year of the FCT High Court and Magistrate courts.

He said a total of 8,831 cases were brought forward from the previous legal year (2020/2021) in the High Court, while 7,049 new cases were assigned in the course of the legal year in the High Court.

While a total of 4,564 cases had been cumulatively dispensed with by the High Court, 11,316 cases are pending to be carried over into the 2022/2023 legal year in the High Court.

For the Magistrates' courts, Justice Baba Yusuf disclosed that 4,474 cases were brought forward to the new legal year in the Magistrate courts.

"10,941 new cases were assigned in the new legal year, while 9,988 have cumulatively been dispensed with the Magistrate court. A total of 5,427 cases are pending to be carried over into the new legal in the Magistrates' courts, the Chief Judge stated.

Justice Baba Yusuf said the opening of the legal year was significant for the Judiciary as well as the society, as it beams light and public attention on the administration of justice and the rule of law, and in particular the challenges they face.

"Of the three Arms of Government, it is only the Judiciary that is saddled with the task of safeguarding the Constitution that binds people together as a nation," he said.

"This is what we strive to achieve every year in terms of quick and qualitative justice delivery.

As a judiciary saddled with the constitutional mandate to provide judicial and related services within the Federal Capital, we have continued (to) strive to respond to the need to make justice readily and easily accessible to justice-seekers in FCT



2023

VOICES OF NIGERIAN WOMEN MUST BE HEARD LOUD, CLEAR

Wife of the Lagos State Governor, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu has been commended for the COWLSO initiative, which brought women from all over the country together for institutionalising the annual COWLSO conference as a platform for the development of women and their participation in governance and the economy.

According to the wife of the president Hajiya Aisha Buhari, the initiative of COWLSO is a clear pointer to the unique strength and character of the Lagos women.

She also commended Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State, and the South-West Governors for making it possible for women to have a voice, sense of belonging and participation in governance and the political process.

Nigeria's First Lady said the voice of women must be heard loud and clear in the 2023 political season.

Buhari said this while declaring open the 22nd National Women's Conference, organised by the Committee Of Wives Of Lagos State

We can only raise our voices by registering and collecting our voters' cards

Officials (COWLSO) in Lagos, with the theme: "Spring Forth, Stand Out".

She urged women to unite to elect leaders with a demonstrated commitment to a greater Nigeria.

The First Lady, who joined the conference virtually, urged women to get their Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) and mobilise for greater participation in governance and the economy.

According to her, the PVC remains the greatest avenue to political leadership in Nigeria, hence, the women must get theirs.

"The theme of this conference is a wake-up call to all women, especially in politics and governance.

Women need to unite and shine more, especially in this political dispensation.

"As women, we need to improve our worth and capacity to lead; we

should study and strategise to assure Nigeria and Nigerians that women have the capacity to participate in politics and elect our leaders for greater development.

"We can only raise our voices by registering and collecting our voters' cards. Our card is our voice to leadership in Nigeria. We must mobilise and strategise more for greater participation in governance and the economy.

"As mothers of the nation, let us unite to elect leaders with vision and mission and demonstrated commitment to a better Nigeria. I am convinced that the voice of the women will be heard loud and clear in the 2023 political season," she said.

"We can only raise our voices by registering and collecting our voters' cards. Our card is our voice to leadership in Nigeria. We must mobilise and strategise more for greater participation in governance and the economy.

"As mothers of the nation, let us unite to elect leaders with vision and mission and demonstrated commitment to a better Nigeria. I am convinced that the voice of the women will be heard loud and clear in the 2023 political season," she said.

Buhari encouraged women and youth to observe the tenets of democracy by shying away from violence and criminal act.

She called for an end to harmful cultural practices, whereby women and girls are prevented from benefiting from their fathers' inheritance.

"We thank God for having some governors that are sensible and considerate, considering women to have a voice in the society. The eradication of such harmful cultural practices is worth emulating throughout Nigeria," the first lady said.



NGF Inaugurates New Secretariat Complex

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) inaugurated its mint-new secretariat complex on Thursday, September 29, 2022, in Abuja.

An elated Mr. Asishana Bayo Okauru, Director General of the NGF, gave the opening remarks at the occasion, stating it has been a wholesome journey and that the actualisation of the new building would have been impossible without the 36 state governors' unflinching support.

Over the years as an organisation, the NGF has grown in stature and prestige. We give thanks to and appreciate the role of the individual development partners who saw to the birth of the forum in 1999 and continued to support the forum and the secretariat to date," Mr. Okauru said.

He further extended his appreciation to development partners such as the National Democratic Institute, the Forum of Federations, the European Union, the Canadian High Commission, and a host of others and noted that, "We have now become the institution of choice for all development partners

in their bid to propagate their projects and achieve their targets in the country."

According to him, the NGF has facilitated the building of youthful governance skills at the sub-national level, especially through our work with ministries, departments, and agencies adding that "We have come a long way and we have no doubt that we will continue to build on present strengths and take the forum much higher."

On his part, the Chairman of the NGF, Dr. Kayode Fayemi (now succeeded by Governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State) thanked and recognized the efforts of his colleagues and predecessors in ensuring the

We have now become the institution of choice for all development partners in their bid to propagate their projects and achieve their targets in the country

completion of the edifice. His words: "I'm sure that by the time we tour the new conference room, you would agree that it's befitting of any circumstance and occasion that may arise in the future."

The secretariat currently accommodates several professionals, working across sectors, development programs, projects, and initiatives focused on advancing reforms, aimed at enhancing sub-national development goals in the country.

The facilities like the training room have benefitted at least 4000 of our state officials via training courses, peer learning events and reform dialogues conducted by the forum/secretariat, he revealed.

The Chairman further emphasized that the NGF is committed to changing the narrative and delivering better governance through far-reaching resolutions as it takes collectively as a forum

in the interest of our people.

"We will be holding our maiden meeting in the new secretariat complex where we will take clear positions on issues confronting the nation and our states with support from the federal government as we continue to work collaboratively with all tiers and arms of government," Dr. Fayemi said.

He concluded by stating that it is his expectation that his successor and many more after him would build on this legacy and ensure the Forum remains united and strong.

Many high dignitaries attended the formal inauguration of the new building. These included the past chairmen of the secretariat like Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, Arc. Obong Victor Bassey Attah, Chief Lucky Nosakhare Igbinedion, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi and Alhaji Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar.



African Sub-Sovereign Government Leaders Urged To Take Ownership Of The AfCFTA

The second edition of the African Sub-sovereign Governments Network (AfsNET) conference, held on 30 September 2022 in Abuja, Nigeria, unanimously called on African sub-nationals to play their full role in facilitating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Organised by African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) in collaboration with the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), the conference was presided over by His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and was attended by leaders and senior representatives of states, provinces, regions, governorates, investors and financial institutions from

across Africa. Countries represented included Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali and Niger.

While commending Afreximbank and NGF for “demonstrating innovative thinking by taking the AfCFTA to the grassroots”, H.E. President Muhammadu Buhari said the AfsNET initiative, “if properly harnessed, is a significant step for Africa to begin carving its own niche in the global value chain, from the constituent units up.”

“This complements broader programmes such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, which remains one of the most strategic pan African agenda to deliver inclusive and sustainable development,” he said, calling upon the leaders of African Sub-Sovereign Governments to accelerate their involvement in facilitating the implementation of the AfCFTA.

“I am firmly convinced that with the right collaborative action, we will

be able to record a much stronger pace of transformation. Through shared knowledge, innovation and creativity, we will be better able to cater for the needs of the African continent’s population of over 1.4 billion people,” he stated.

In the same vein, Professor Benedict Oramah, President and Chairman of the Board of Director of Afreximbank, emphasised the leading role that Sub-Sovereign Governments are expected to play through the African Sub-sovereign Governments Network.

“AfsNET is expected to fill an important void because it recognises that whereas trade and commercial policies are national, their implementation is usually sectoral and local. Involvement of regional and local governments will make it possible for the full benefits of the AfCFTA



Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State addressing the gathering



Dignitaries who attended the NGF-AFREXIMBANK Summit at the banquet hall of the Aso Rock Villa pose for a group photograph with President Muhammadu Buhari who gave the keynote address at the occasion

to be realized,” Prof. Oramah declared. He also reiterated Afreximbank’s commitment to the success of the AfCFTA, highlighting the substantial funds as well as the numerous programmes, projects and initiatives that the Bank is making available to facilitate the implementation of AfCFTA, and stating that “Afreximbank will support AfsNET through various other products and initiatives to facilitate intra-African trade, including financing, capacity building, export and investment promotion, linkages and partnerships, digital solutions, and policy advisory services. Sub-Sovereigns can also benefit from other initiatives that are

being implemented by Afreximbank such as industrial parks and special economic zones to promote industrial development and export development.”

H.E. John Olukayode Fayemi, Executive Governor, Ekiti State & Chairman, Nigeria Governors’ Forum, who kicked off the opening ceremony, explained in his welcoming remarks that “the African Continental Free Trade Agreement has provided us with an opportunity to deepen intra-African trade by promoting a liberalized market that permits freer flow of capital, goods, services and our people. It also encourages industrial development through diversification and regional value chain development.”

“Working closely with our own federal government in Nigeria, we are collaboratively initiating and implementing strategic policies to better provision Nigeria for the AfCFTA by strengthening our entire export value chain, eliminating barriers to the ease of doing business, enhancing infrastructure development, embracing anti-dumping and anti-discriminatory trade policies.”

Delivering the opening address, Honourable Adeniyi Adebayo, Nigerian Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment and Co-Chair National Action Committee on AfCFTA,

said that against the backdrop of the progress being made in the implementation of the AfCFTA, the second AfsNET conference was “a unique opportunity for us to take stock and reflect on how best to assist our citizens in realizing the full benefits of the AfCFTA.”

“The global environment today is characterized by high geopolitical and trade tensions, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the increasing wave of protectionism, and rising food and commodity prices. Consequently, international cooperation between governments and sub-sovereign governments is required across Africa and other developing countries to positively respond to these challenges, especially in terms of harnessing the opportunities that they create, while mitigating the associated risk of marginalization and increased inequalities both between and within countries,” added Hon. Adeniyi Adebayo.

The second AfsNET conference saw the adoption of an institutional and governance framework for the African Sub-Sovereign Governments Network which was launched by Afreximbank in 2021 at the inaugural conference held on the sidelines of the 2nd Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) held in Durban, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, with the mission of promoting peer learning, cooperation and collaboration among sub-sovereign governments.



Foreign delegation to 2nd African Sub-Sovereign Conference in pix with FORAF President, Dr. John Kavode Favemi

States Submerged in Floods of Grief

With about 450 out of the 774 local government areas of the nation devastated by unprecedented flooding and over 603 Nigerians killed with diverse assets destroyed foreshadowing food insecurity and bringing home the reality of climate change, the sub-nationals and federal government must upscale proactive, knowledge-based interventions to stem future tragedies

According to Vaclav Smil, Czech-Canadian scientist and policy analyst, "People shouldn't be living in certain places - on earthquake faults or on flood plains. But they do, and there are consequences." Smil, incidentally, an eminent Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Environment at the University of Manitoba, Canada, apparently knows his subject matter pretty well.

But differing with the nifty Canadian environmentalist, President Muhammadu Buhari last week put his finger on climate change as the key cause of why Nigeria was already experiencing flooding, desert encroachment and drought in various parts of the country.

Buhari shared this insight at an audience he granted the former United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, on the sidelines of the First World Bio Summit 2022 in Seoul, South Korea in a statement titled "Nigeria Facing Climate Change Challenges."

On his part, the astute former UN Chief who advocates Climate Change



remediation and chairs the Ban Ki-moon Foundation for Better Future sympathised with the President over the flooding.

But beyond Mr. President and Ban Ki-moon's buddy-buddy conversation around Climate Change, Smil's insight may have prodded the Lagos State Government to alert residents of the state, especially those residing on the flood plains of Ogun River, to relocate upland.

In a move comparable to shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted, the state government directed property owners and developers to desist from embarking on any form of physical development without adherence to processes and procedures outlined by it to provide habitable structures across the state.

Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tunji Bello, listed areas likely to be affected by flooding to include: Ketu, Alapere, Agric, Owode Onirin,

Ajgunle, Alagbole, Kara, Isheri Olowora, Araromi Otun Orisha community, Agiliti, Maidan, Mile 12, Odo Ogun, Owode Elede, Agboyi 1, Agboyi II, Agboyi III.

Beyond Lagos State, floods have hit many Nigerian states wreaking extreme devastation in the last two months with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) stating that about 2.5 million persons have so far been affected and over 603 persons killed by the flooding caused by torrential rainfall of late.

Houses and farmlands have been submerged in Bayelsa, Yobe, Borno, Taraba, Adamawa, Edo, Delta, Kogi, Niger, Plateau, Benue, Ebonyi, Anambra, Bauchi, Gombe, Kano, Jigawa, Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto, Imo, Abia States, and the Federal Capital Territory.

According to NEMA Director-General, Alhaji Mustapha Ahmed, the 2022 floods hit 450 of the 774 local government areas of the country and the FCT. His words: "The 2022 Annual

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Flood Outlook forecasted that 233 local government areas in 32 states and the FCT would be at sizeable risk. It stated also that 212 council areas in 35 states and the FCT were within moderately probable flood risks.

"Already, NEMA is inundated with reports of flood in more than 450 council areas in 36 states and the FCT and it is still counting, causing loss of lives, livelihoods, properties and infrastructures."

Mustapha Ahmed spoke at Awka, Anambra State, while addressing NEMA officials who brought relief materials to devastated communities in the state.

More than one-third of the land mass in Anambra State has been devastated by flood which has also taken 17 lives as at mid-October. The floods have also caused the collapse of infrastructure, public and private buildings and means of livelihoods of residents, the deputy governor, Dr. Onyekachi Ibezim, revealed while addressing NEMA in Awka. Ibezim said the "devastating flood" hit seven of the 21 Local Government Areas of the state.

In Delta State, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa called on the federal government, corporate

organisations and individuals to come to the aid of hapless victims of flood in his state. He made the call when he visited flood victims at Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps at Utagba-Ogbe Technical College, Kwale in Ndokwa West; Alaka Grammar School, Ozoro in Isoko North; St. Michael's College, Oleh and Isoko Central School, Oleh both in Isoko South Local Government Areas of the state.

A distraught Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, appealed to the federal government for assistance, saying the floods in the state were overwhelming and beyond what his government alone could handle. In Bayelsa the extreme flooding while attacking the living also unearthed the dead and buried.

The presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Mr. Peter Obi, raised concerns about the devastating flood on his verified Twitter handle and said it will have "deleterious" consequences on food production, as well as orchestrate higher food prices at a time the country is contending with rising food insecurity due to banditry and insurgency.

In a rather curious blame game, the federal government faulted the sub-nationals for not heeding early warnings issued by its agencies. Director-General of the Nigeria Hydrological Services (NIHSA), Clement Nze, blamed state governments for disregarding "adequate and timely warnings" and weather advisories issued by the various federal government agencies.

His words: "If our predictions were heeded by relevant sub-nationals, we will not have been where we are today. But I believe that following this year's flood disaster across the land, the consciousness of relevant actors especially sub-nationals will be awakened to do the needful once they receive all these advisories."

More, the Presidency also discredited trending theories that the release of water from the Lagdo Dam in Cameroon was responsible for the large-scale flooding in Nigeria. It also queried as inappropriate public attention on the federal government when in fact, the states and local

governments therein received the chunk of ecological funds set aside for disaster management.

Perhaps not totally buying the federal government's yarn, Governor Okowa of Delta State called on the federal authority to build new dams and desilt major rivers to check flooding, especially when neighbouring countries opened their dams. More specifically, Gov. Okowa urged the federal government to make efforts at desilting River Niger and River Benue to deepen the depths of the rivers to accommodate high volume of floodwater.

In a statement, the Presidency enjoined state governors to rise to the responsibilities of their office by responding to the needs of their citizens in the face of growing floods and other ecologically-related disasters. This footing was in response to the growing number of appeals from groups and individuals, including some of the affected state governments, for help.

According to the federal government, roughly N1trn, representing 2.2 per cent of the total budget for 2018, 2019 and 2023 was budgeted for ecological and disaster management. In 2018, 2.2 per cent of the estimated of N9.120 trillion budget, amounting to N198 billion was set aside for the Ecological Fund; in 2019, the 2.2 per cent amount of the budget of N132 billion was allocated for the Fund, while in 2023, 2.2 per cent of the N21 trillion budget indicated N462 billion allocation for Ecological Fund. However these claims from the central authority remain unverified.

The emerging consensus is that beyond climate change which is becoming very impactful globally and beginning to affect a lot of issues. The sea levels are rising and so also are water volumes of different river flood plains. Another issue that the federal government is apparently trying to gloss over is the dam in Cameroon which always causes major overflows in Nigeria's river systems.

So beyond the customary blame games, proactive, knowledge-based, transparent, accountable interventions are imperative. This should also include building holding dams, regular desilting of the nation's river systems so that they could hold larger volumes of water especially during rainy seasons.



Pathway To First Class Economic Development In Gombe



By Ismaila Uba Misilli

It is often said among men that 'money makes a man, but investment makes the successful man'. What Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya is currently doing in Gombe State, the Jewel in the Savannah, is akin to separating Gombe among mere States in Nigeria to the successful and prosperous one where both the local and the international businessmen look towards as their best investment destination.

Inuwa did this via the instrumentality of the first ever Gombe State Investment Summit which recently took place between

October 12 and 14, 2022 at the Gombe International Conference Centre.

The theme is no less expressive of the genuine intentions of the protagonists of the Summit. It is aptly coined.

The event which was graced with the presence of the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, left an indelible social and economic growth blueprint which is capable of catapulting the Jewel in the Savannah from the backyard of economic insignificance into a limelight of international business reckoning.

It was a well attended summit. The over

500 sitting capacity amphitheatre venue of the summit recorded a full attendance capacity through out the three days duration. Reputable corporate sponsors and captains of industry were fully represented.

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo heaped accolades on Inuwa Yahaya for his consistent foresight and his knack for scoring many firsts for Gombe State.

He said, "I salute Your Excellency's focus and your determination to improve the fortunes of Gombe State, especially by positioning it for investments from both foreign and local investors. "This inaugural Summit,

GoInvest, is consistent with Gombe State's mission to creating an enabling environment for sustainable prosperity, peace, cohesion and an all-inclusive development for the people of the State, as contained in the Development Agenda for Gombe State (DEVAGOM) 2021 - 2030.

"The Development Plan itself is perhaps one of the few by a subnational to articulate a detailed long-term vision and plan towards the transformation of the State. In addition, the State developed a full Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) covering the last two years 2020-2022. So, DEVAGOM 2021-2030, is both a



GoInvest in pix



visioning exercise and a concrete road map to the long-term growth and sustainable development of Gombe State.

"I am delighted that we are beginning to harvest the first fruits of the plan. One of those is the remarkable feat of attaining the first position in the Subnational Ease of Doing Business Baseline Survey Report of 2021. I am also informed that Gombe State was recently invited by the world-renowned Royal Institute of International Affairs, popularly known

as the Chatham House, to share its experience in implementing the State's health system reforms. These validations from different bodies, local and international could not have come by accident.

"They are a product of the strong leadership and commitment that have been demonstrated by Your Excellency and I think this became even clearer even as Governor-elect in 2019."

Osinbajo opined that his most poignant affirmation of the belief of Gombe State in the notion that government

They are a product of the strong leadership and commitment that have been demonstrated by Your Excellency and I think this became even clearer even as Governor-elect in 2019

must catalyse economic growth with both policy measures and brick and mortar, is the commencement in 2021 of the 1000-hectare Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park. The first phase of it is almost ready - over 369 hectares of that is ready.

This is to be a purpose-built fully resourced manufacturing and industrial processing hub, designed to accommodate 10 mega factories. The project is important for the value-added functions of the factories and accretion to both internal and national revenue and the jobs that it will create -10,000 direct and 100,000 indirect jobs.

The foreground for a successful economic growth has been established by Inuwa Yahaya and Vice President Yemi Osinbajo further validates the superlative accomplishments of Inuwa's administration.

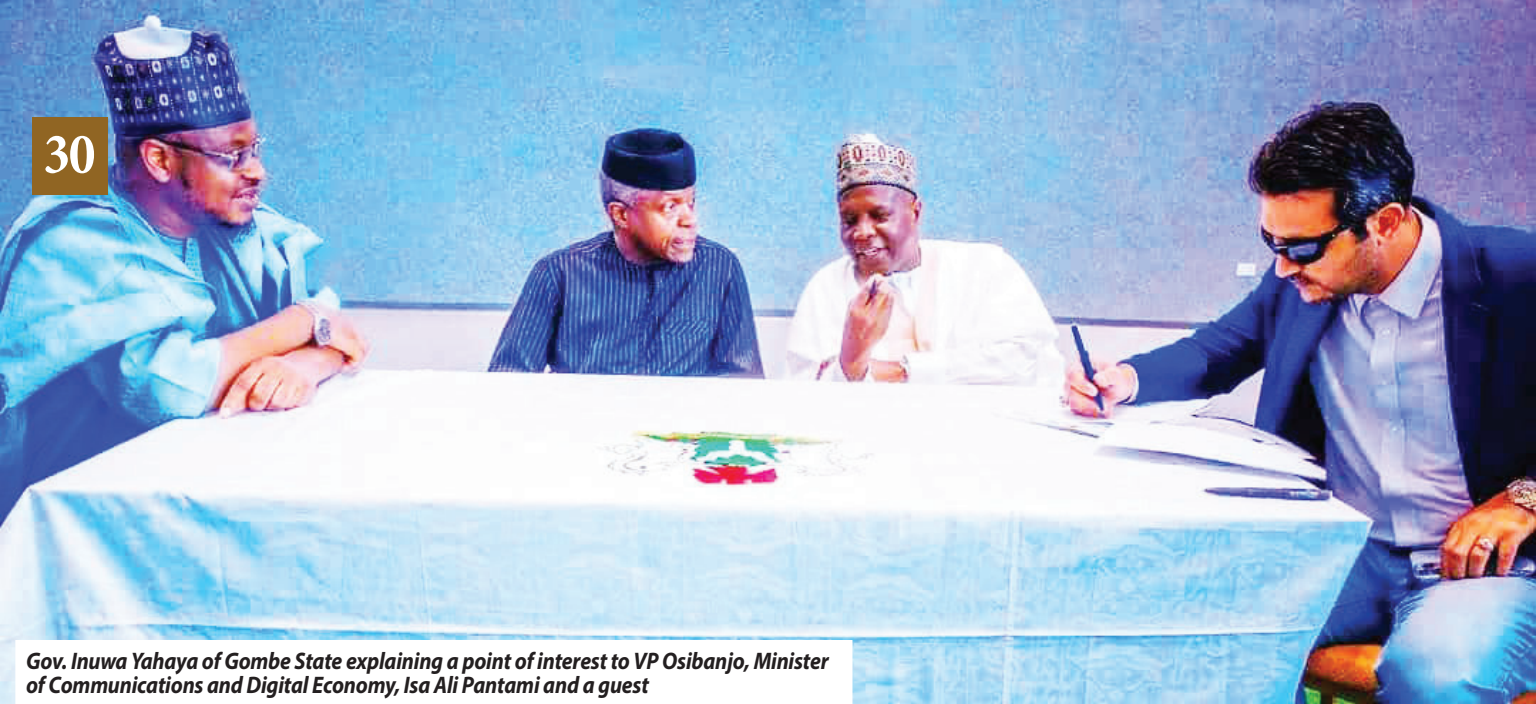
The Vice President is not done yet. He went further to enumerate why he thinks Gombe State is on a spectacular economic cruise.

He said, "I think it is fascinating that Governor Inuwa Yahaya has approached the development of the State by thinking like a Sovereign state as opposed to thinking as a subnational.

This explains why he took the trouble to draw up a 10-year development plan, an MTEF, and takes the issues of creating an enabling business environment seriously. And this is as it should be. Gombe could rank very easily as a Sovereign State; its GDP is almost three times the GDP of Gambia and it is almost at the same level as the GDP of Liberia.

"So, when you compare this State to actual Sovereign States, you will see clearly that the only way to plan the growth of this State is to plan it as you would plan the growth of a country. And I am very happy that Governor Inuwa Yahaya is doing that".

The very cerebral and amiable Vice President concluded by liking Gombe State to what the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari set out to do with



Gov. Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State explaining a point of interest to VP Osibanjo, Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Isa Ali Pantami and a guest

commensurate compliance by the constituent States of Nigeria.

"As a progressive government, we remain committed to policies and reform efforts that are geared towards economic diversification and improved productivity. We are proud of the giant strides that Gombe State has recorded so far, but more importantly, we are confident of the successful results of the programmes currently being implemented by the State Government and those that are underway in the areas of health, industrialization, and agriculture".

Now that the ice of economic development lethargy has been broken by the inimitable Inuwa Yahaya, what are the signposts of progress post GOINVEST 2022.

From the contributions of summit participants and the recommendations, Gombe State is certainly on an unrelentless progressive swing of economic success. This is because about a hundred of billion Naira is to be injected into the economy of the state as pioneer investment by companies who have signed Memoranda of Understanding with the government.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya says it all in his own words

as the visioner of the new economic architectural blueprint worthy of emulations by other state governments in Nigeria.

"I am satisfied with the responses from investors and the business community. Hundreds of investors have expressed interest to operate from the industrial park, and many more are willing. In the course of this summit, we will sign memoranda of understanding with some leading local and international brands to further demonstrate the success of our efforts" an elated Inuwa Yahaya said.

The overwhelming turnout of investors at the GOINVEST 2022 cannot be overlooked. The crop of investors pooled together further accentuates the caliber of Summit Gombe State was able to hold successfully.

Bank of Industry, Nigeria Security and Exchange Commission, Taj Bank, Access Bank, UBA, Polaris Bank, North East

This is the Gombe State we are building, one that will serve as a model to the rest of the country and a source of pride to our future generations

Development Commission, Nexim Bank, and many others provided the necessary impetus for a successful outing.

Signatures have been appended by various companies across the economic ecosystem of Nigeria indicating a readiness and confidence in doing business in Gombe state, with some of them truly and heavily committed to begin operations by early next year.

Inuwa Yahaya, the Dan Majen Gombe, declared proudly at the Summit that, "Gombe is open for business. It is the destination of choice for investment in the north-east subregion. Not even the more than a decade-old Boko Haram insurgency or the covid-19 pandemic and its attendant global economic meltdown could slow our march towards progress". The Governor said with finality that this is the leadership we promise. This is the Gombe State we are building, one that will serve as a model to the rest of the country and a source of pride to our future generations. Our march towards building a peaceful, prosperous and all-inclusive state must not be distracted.

The first ever Gombe State Investment Summit has come and gone. One thing stands out for the administration of Inuwa

Yahaya. It is not one that starts a project without accomplishing it. It is not a dress rehearsal government. Neither does it rank at all in the hall of white elephant regimes. Records of promises kept in the past are the attestation needed to expect a sporadic Industrialisation and economic development of the Jewel in the Savannah.

Welcome to Gombe, a land of new economic realities. This is a state with a fertile ground for all kind of investments.

Let me allow the words on marble left behind in Gombe by His Excellency Vice President Yemi Osinbajo to resonate deeply in the minds of my readers.

"The successes that we have seen here in Gombe are substantially on account of the effective collaboration of the private sector, the State Government and the Federal Government. Our Federation benefits our people when the States and Federal authorities alongside private actors think and work together."

"Let me again reemphasize the Federal Government's pledge to work with the Gombe State Government, to give you all the support that you need in order to ensure that your businesses and the business environment succeed".



EKITI ECONOMY

Oyebanji in crucial talks with FG agencies, development partners

➔ **NIRSAL, SMEDAN pledge support for SMEs, agriculture, others**



Determined to boost Ekiti State economy, the State Governor, Mr Biodun Oyebanji has commenced talks with agencies of the Federal Government and development partners in Abuja, FCT.

Oyebanji who on Tuesday met with top officials of NIRSAL MFB and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), said he was in Abuja to personally lead the talks with heads of the federal MDAs, international development agencies and some private sector players on areas of support and collaboration with the administration.

The support of the agencies, Oyebanji said would aid his administration's plan to boost economic prosperity of the people of the state.

In separate meetings with Managing Director/ CEO of NIRSAL MFB, Abubakar Abdulahi Kure and Director General/CEO of SMEDAN, Olawale Fasanya, the Ekiti State Governor said he was convinced that the state's fortune will improve through strategic partnership with agencies.

He said the state government would ensure conducive atmosphere for small and medium scale businesses to thrive, while also attracting big business concerns to invest in the state.

He added that the focus of his administration is how Ekiti people, known for their educational attainment, can deploy their knowledge to create wealth, adding that his administration would leave no stone unturned in seeking opportunities for its teeming youth population to get employed and to be able to set up businesses.

"I know if we are able to develop our SMEs, IGR will improve and life of the people will improve", Oyebanji said, urging the agencies for support for agriculture and cooperatives in the state.

Speaking at one of the meetings, the MD/CEO of NIRSAL MFB, Abubakar Abdulahi Kure said the financial institution would provide fund for the state to handle youth unemployment.

The NIRSAL MFB boss highlighted several schemes the state can access. He however urged the Governor to also ensure beneficiaries also meet their repayment obligation.

On his part, SMEDAN DG, Fasanya said the agency is ready to partner with Ekiti State. "Majority of the population are farmers and traders, artisan, so we have a lot to support."

Aside funding, SMEDAN according to Fasanya, can assist with sourcing of materials, business support services. He also revealed that the agency plans to have business information centres across the local government areas where people can access information on business development among others.

Responding Oyebanji said he was set to do everything possible to improve the economic condition of the state, stressing that an improvement in the economy would put an end to kidnapping and other criminal activities.

The Governor and his team had earlier on Monday evening held similar talks with two development agencies, DAI Global LLC and State2State Programme, who also pledged their support for some of the programmes being proposed by the administration.



Tambuwal

Plans Consolidated Packages' For Sokoto Principals, Teachers

Principals of secondary schools in Sokoto state will soon begin to enjoy an enhanced salary wrap reflecting the reality of their service delivery and Herculean task that they bear while discharging their duties.

Equally, in no distant future after this pledge has been redeemed, primary school teachers too will start harvesting amplified emoluments.

Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal of Sokoto state made the pledges while inaugurating a committee to advise the state government on remuneration of principals of public secondary schools.

Governor Tambuwal charged the 11-man committee headed by a former Head of Service in the state, Buhari Bello Kware, with the task of coming up with modalities for the implementation of this incentives.

According to him, the enhanced pay package of principals to an appreciable standard should be "commensurate to their responsibilities."

"We are beginning with the remunerations of principals of secondary schools as a first phase because we have a baseline data on them. A similar gesture will be extended to our primary schools because they are the critical foundation for all subsequent educational pursuits. We are considering the consolidation of the salaries of principals, who have reached the appropriate level," added the Governor.

Assuring the committee of government support, Tambuwal, said: "I have no doubt that the Chairman and members of the Committee are quite aware of the enormity of the responsibilities we have placed on your shoulders. Your appointment is in recognition of your experiences, dedication and selfless service to Sokoto State and to the nation as a whole."





Congratulations



Alhaji Garba Sambo, MON

The 36 Governors and the Nigeria Governors Forum Secretariat (NGFS) heartily rejoice with you on this awesome recognition and honour of the Member of the Order of the Niger, MON, bestowed on you by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR. This recognition is a testament to the contributions you made in the recoveries that enabled state governments to execute meaningful developmental initiatives between 2016 and this year, 2022.

Governors and the NGFS pray that Allah (SWT) grants you long life, prosperity and good health, to continue to help the society, the people that populate the subnational entities and humanity in general.

Indeed, this honour of MON does not only validate your work, but should inspire you to do even more for the country.

Once again, congratulations.



Human Rights Commission

Visits NGF



The Visitors and the visited

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) paid a courtesy visit to the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat (NGF) on October 22, 2022, led by the body's Executive Secretary, Mr. Anthony Okechukwu Ojukwu, SAN.

The vision of the Human Rights Commission is to be an institution entrenched with a culture of respect for human rights and promoting national values built on principles of democracy, accountability, and respect for the rule of law.

The Commission is committed to prompt response to allegations of human rights violations, advocacy, education, and interventions that encourage national values built on the principles of respect for human and people's rights.

The NHRC is mandated to deal with all matters relating to the promotion and protection of human rights as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other international and regional instruments on human rights to which Nigeria is a party.

They are also mandated to monitor and investigate all alleged cases of human rights violations in Nigeria and make ap-

propriate recommendations to the federal government for the prosecution and such other actions as it may deem expedient in each circumstance.

To assist victims of human rights violations and seek appropriate redress and remedies on their behalf.

At the meeting held at the secretariat, the Executive Secretary, Mr Anthony Okechukwu Ojukwu said the commission seeks to work closely with the Governors.

To strengthen partnerships and appreciate ways to use good offices to facilitate issues of financial autonomy.

"There is a need to expand the funding base of the commission. Human rights fund should be contributed to by all tiers of government," further stated that businesses need a conducive environment to run. That there should be contributions made from public and private companies.

Mr. Ojukwu said the government should not be left alone to fund human rights intervention.

The Executive Secretary of the Commission added that he believes the NGF Chairman, Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal would champion human rights in his state.

"The Commission knows you are a recipient of the National Human Rights Award and shall champion the award in your state as an Ambassador of the National Human Rights Commission in Ni-

geria. We wish you a successful tenure," said Mr. Ojukwu.

He further stated that the courtesy visit is to enable the forum to have a robust discussion on the human rights fund through Your Excellency.

The Chairman of the NGF, Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal said the National Human Rights Commission is appreciated in a democratic setting.

Human rights abuses were on an increase in Nigeria and by establishing the commission, the nation can have some reprieve.

"We must do things that will outlive us and that is for the common good of our people," said Governor Tambuwal.

The partnership is not just starting; the institution is here to support democratic governance in Nigeria.

The Chairman said we have a lot of roles to play and that we should respect the rights of our citizens and uphold those rights in the shrine of our constitution.

"We believe in developing our institution. Not just on paper but in terms of funding and non-interference. The secretariat is here, and we are ready to see how best we can assist in facilitation to engendering the law," he said.

The Chairman of NGF further stated the forum is willing to continue to collaborate and work with the National Human Rights Commission. That we must all support the development as leaders in our community.

"In the past, we knew what it used to be, and we need to do a lot more. It is key and very fundamental in as much as we want to sustain our democratic institution," he said.

We must do things that will outlive us and that is for the common good of our people



Flooding: Prices of food items sky rocket in Kaduna

Prices of food items have increased beyond the expectations of residents following predictions by the Emir of Zazzau, Ahmed Nuhu Bamali that hunger may surface in the north due to excessive floods this year.

The increase in prices of food in Sabon Tasha, Kawo and Central markets in Kaduna is due to the disruption in the supply chain occasioned by recent floods across Nigeria

Rhoda Moses, who sells dried cassava, beans, yam, and sweet potatoes at the central market in Kaduna said for five weeks now, she has not been able to receive supplies from farmers in Kogi, Delta, Ogun or Anambra due to the flooding.

"Most of my suppliers come from different states; Lokoja, Delta, Anambra, River, etc, but since flooding took over some states, I learnt their farm could no longer be assessed. Even those who want to sell, can not enter Kaduna, because flood took over Kogi road."

Musa Arungo another trader in Kawo market on Sunday told DAILY POST that apart from foodstuff, there would be a scarcity of meat, onion and pepper, because these essential commodities did not yield produce this year, due to flooding in the northern part of the country.

"I load trailers of pepper, onion, from Gombe to Kaduna, and sometimes, to other states. But this year, the reports I am getting now is that no single pepper in the farm this year." He said.

www.nggovernorsforum.org

Jigawa Govt Hires Foreign Experts To Tackle Flooding

The devastating effect of perennial flooding which killed over 135 people this year in the state, Jigawa State Government has engaged experts from Netherlands to help it in finding lasting solution to the problem.

Speaking during a power point presentation on various techniques that can be employed or adopted as a lasting solution to the problem, Governor Muhammad Badaru Abubakar of the state has charged the experts to work in collaboration with state technical team in assessing the situation.

Governor Badaru explained that, they hired the team of experts and professional consultants on flooding management aimed at bringing an end to the perennial disaster which claimed lives and properties every year in the state

"Please, we want you to come up with projects that are affordable and sustainable to the state," he added.

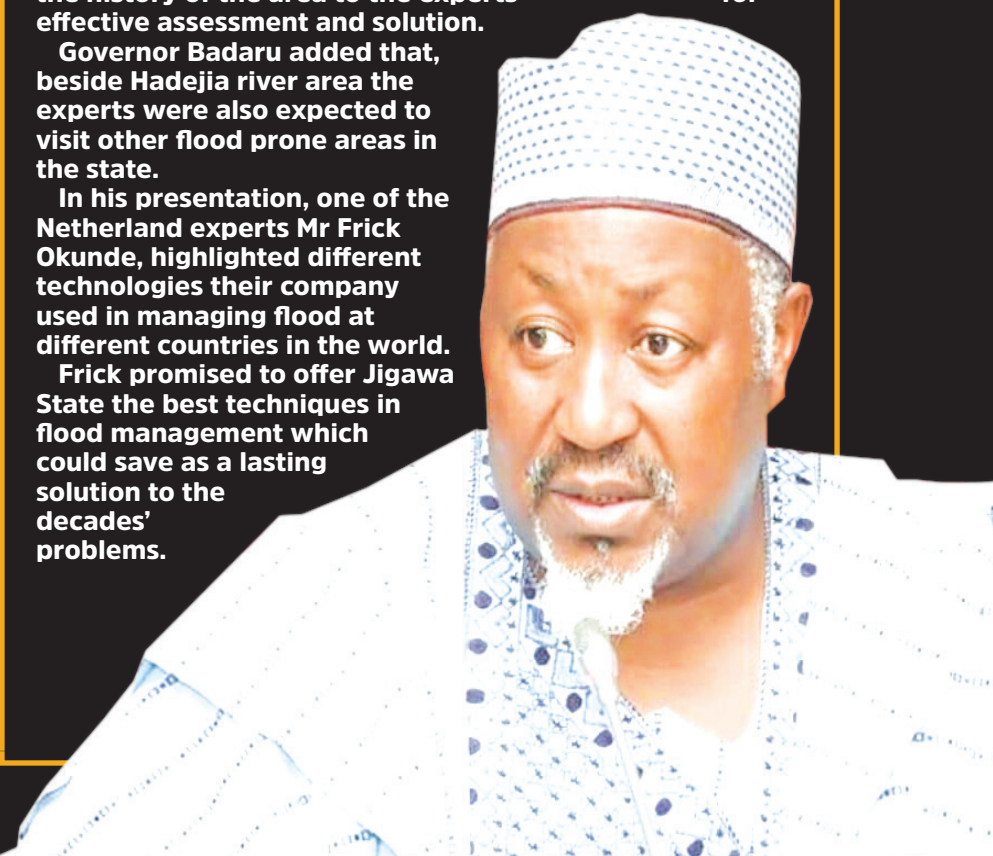
The governor told the team to also see how the flooding water could be harvested and used for irrigation to strengthen food security and eradicate poverty in the state.

He charged the state technical team to make sure they provide all the required information including the history of the area to the experts for effective assessment and solution.

Governor Badaru added that, beside Hadejia river area the experts were also expected to visit other flood prone areas in the state.

In his presentation, one of the Netherland experts Mr Frick Okunde, highlighted different technologies their company used in managing flood at different countries in the world.

Frick promised to offer Jigawa State the best techniques in flood management which could save as a lasting solution to the decades' problems.





Zulum orders for integration of vocational skills training in 3,226 Quranic schools

Borno State Governor, Babagana Zulum has ordered the integration of vocational skills in over 2,775 Quranic or Almajiri Tsangaya schools/centres widely known in the northern part of Nigeria as Almajiri schools and 451 Islamiyyah schools across the state.

Governor Zulum gave the order on Tuesday at the Government House when he received an update on the validation and registration of Tsangaya Schools across Borno State presented by the Governing Council of Arabic and Tsangaya Education Board.

He also noted that with the introduction of vocational education, numeracy and literacy skills, Borno State Government intend to streamline the informal and formal education system to qualify Tsangaya schools products to get admitted into colleges and universities.

Zulum, however, observed that the integration of vocational education will help to reduce the number of the out of school children and Almajiri's roaming the streets in all parts of the State.

Speaking earlier, the Chairman of the Arabic and Tsangaya Education Board, Khalifa Aliyu Ahmad Abulfatahi, while presenting the findings of the validation and registration of the Tsangaya schools, noted that the board conducted across the 27 local government areas of the state with exception of Kala-Balge, Guzamala and Abadam LGAs due to raining season and deplorable condition of the access roads linking the LGAs and their surrounding communities among others.

He said the board has so far registered 2,775 Tsangaya centres or Quranic schools with 12,309 teachers /tutors and 224,068 pupils. And out of the 224,068 pupils, 128,789 were day school learners while 97,279 were boarding school learners.

He added that the board has also identified 451 Islamiyyah schools operating in various locations across the state.

Katsina Govt to receive additional 2.25bn for World Bank BESDA project

Katsina State Government says it will receive World Bank's additional N2.25 billion support under the Better Education Service Delivery For All (BESDA) project.

Malam Aminu Badaru, the spokesperson, Katsina State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), disclosed this in a statement on Sunday in Katsina.

According to him, the Executive Chairman of SUBEB, Alhaji Lawal Buhari-Daura, said this at a 3-Day capacity building workshop for Education Management Information System (EMIS) and Statistician Officers.

He said that the workshop was organised by the World Bank Supported project BESDA, in collaboration with the Katsina SUBEB holding in Kano State.

"Sequel to the report of the independent Verification Agency Submitted to the BESDA National Coordinating support team, Katsina remains eligible for additional funds for the project.

"The Funds will be used to focus on increase in access to Basic Education across the state." Badaru quoted the SUBEB chairman as saying.

He, therefore, called on the participants to remain steadfast and attentive so as to accurately use the knowledge acquired in their respective areas.

According to Badaru, the Director Planning Research and Statistics of SUBEB, Alhaji Lwal Kofar-Sauri, revealed that 73 EMIS and statistician officers were drawn from the 34 Local Government Areas (LGAs) and SUBEB for the training.

He added that the director noted that the BESDA result area three had already provided laptops and tablets to the EMIS and statisticians for the conduct of accurate data collections and analysis.

The Director also hinted that BESDA project had also provided tablets for digital attendance and annual schools census across primary schools in the state.





Gov. Ikpeazu at UN, Participates in Nigeria/UNDP/EU Event

Governor Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia State participated in a high level event organized on the margins of the recent 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, US.

Organized by the Nigeria government, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and EU, the event was of Nigeria's commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development through the implementation of the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF).

Ikpeazu joined President Muhammadu Buhari, Governor Zulum of Borno State, Federal Ministers for Finance and Labor, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals and other top dignitaries at high level event.

Nigeria has successfully designed its Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) with the oversight and overall guidance of INFF Steering Committee and ethical guidance of key stakeholders in the Nigeria INFF Core Working Group.

The event's high point was the formal launch of the Report showcasing Nigeria's progress in the INFF process as a policy tool for strengthening financing for development.

Ikpeazu was accompanied to the event by a US-based Abian and former President of the Abia State National Association of North America, Dr. Chris Ike. The event held at the Millennium Hilton, One United Nations Plaza, New York, USA.



Ikpeazu

www.nggovernorsforum.org


CG Musa

... Welcomes New GOC 82 Div, Enugu, Pledges Cooperation

Governor Okezie Ikpeazu recently received in audience, the new General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army Enugu, Major General Umar Musa

Major General Musa took over from Major General Taoreed Lagbaja who is now the GOC, 1 Mechanized Division, Kaduna.

Abia is one of the states under the military jurisdiction of the 82 Division, Enugu and the GOCs work closely with the governors of the states on security related issues.

Upon assumption of office, the new GOC pays courtesy visits on the governors of the states that are within the coverage of the Division as part of their familiarization tours of the Division.

Ikpeazu welcomed the new GOC and assured him of the usual cooperation of the government and People of Abia State in the discharge of his current assignment.

The governor informed him that Abia was substantially safe except for a few places especially around Umunneochi and Ohafia LGAs where there are pockets of security breaches and violent crimes, and urged him to rise to the challenge of battling the challenge of kidnapping in those areas.

The new GOC was accompanied by the Commander of the 14 Brigade, Ohafia, Brigadier General Adegoke Adetuyi and other senior officers while the Honorable Commissioner for Homeland Security, Hon Sopuruchi Bekee was present at the event.

Ikpeazu Congratulates Abia Commissioner of Police On Her Elevation

Governor Okezie Ikpeazu has described the recent promotion of the Commissioner of Police, Abia State, CP Janet Agbede to the rank of Assistant Inspector General of Police as a clear vindication of the stability, peace and security in Abia State.

Governor Ikpeazu is happy that the hardwork, tenacity and solid contributions of the new AIG in sustaining the peace in the State have been recognized and rewarded by the Police High Command.

According to the Governor, "AIG Janet Agbede has been a key figure in the security strategy of my administration. She is a first grade professional Police Officer and her elevation is no surprise to key watchers of the Security situation in Abia State. She is also a powerful example and inspiration to young girls who seek to excel in their chosen careers".



Agbede



houses blown away, at times a whole community (as in Jigawa State) completely swept away human beings, livestock and of course farmlands, majority awaiting harvest, were all submerged.

Beyelsa State is perhaps the most affected, due to the naturally lowlands and creeks under the Mangrove swamp agroecological vegetational zone. About 300 communities were ravaged and 700,000 people displaced. All in IDP camps now.

The Governor has already made request for assistance from both internal and external sources. The United States of America has donated \$1 million to assist Nigeria in tackling the menace.

Rivers State is facing the same scenario, the Governor has already approved one billion naira to cushion the effects of the floods. Akwa Ibom, Delta, Cross Rivers, Edo, and Ondo States are all badly affected with massive loss of human lives, livestock, houses, and farmlands.

In Niger State, at least 33 passengers including women and children drowned when a passenger boat capsized in the River Kaduna part of Niger State. In Nasarawa State, the massive rice farm of OLAM, was completely submerged.

In Anambra State, a boat carrying about 85 passengers capsized in Ogbaru local government area killing 76 people. Most roads in many Southern States are now "rivers" as canoes and boats are used freely on such roads.

In Beyelsa State capital, Otueko, the home of the former president, Dr Goodluck Jonathan was completely submerged. In Rivers, the home of our Education Advisor, Dr Leo the great, was also affected. Presently, his family are in a hotel. Both Ahoada East and Ahoada West LGAs were completely submerged.

While we mourn the death, sympathise with the victims, we

Most farmers are taken away from their farms, in most cases the wet season irrigation farming for rice, wheat, maize and vegetables will now be a mirage



pray, may such disasters be averted in the future.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FOOD SECURITY

With the present rate of inflation at 20.73% (a record high) during a harvest season, when food prices drop because of surpluses, the scenario seems scary.

- Most farmers are taken away from their farms, in most cases the wet season irrigation farming for rice, wheat, maize and vegetables will now be a mirage.
- The wasted away farms, estimated at approximately 100,000 hectares, means lost food at a very large magnitude.
- In the livestock sector, the number of animals lost will further aggregate the prices of meat, 1kg of beef that goes for N1,500.00 some few months back is already N3,000.00, same for the prices of animal derivatives.
- The flood has destroyed roads and bridges linking farming populations from the market. So many agricultural products, those harvested, will also perish adding further to the massive post-harvest losses in the country.
- The livelihood of the more than one million people (mostly farmers, now in IDP camps) will surely affect the national food security.
- Agroprocessing industries are slowing production, already, due to lack of raw materials.
- The flood led to a serious gridlock at Lokoja, agricultural goods moving from the South to the North got spoiled due to the about one-week delay at Lokoja, same for goods from the North to South, livestock inclusive.
- The above scenario also aggravated the fuel delivery system. Presently, in Abuja, a litre goes for N500.00.

This will further trickle down to the prices of agricultural goods and services.

WAY FORWARD

There is an urgent need to release grains in strategic reserves across the States, happily, Mr President has ordered for the release of 12,000mt of grains to ameliorate the situation.

Palliatives are also needed in food and non-food items, with special emphasis on baby foods.

Cholera has been reported in few IDP camps, medication is paramount.

Agriculturally, flooding is of very great advantage, massive movement of debris, adding substantially to the nutrient content of soils, through massive dumping of organic materials, which decompose into organic manure.

There are "post flood crops" that can be procured and given to farmers to plant, as the flood is receding. Such early maturing crops can grow and be harvested, which includes Irish potatoes, Sweet potatoes, Cowpea, Maize, and Sorghum. There is also a very special short maturing water resistant hybrid variety of cassava suckers at IITA, Ibadan.

There is also the need for counselling on post traumatic shock by the relevant authorities.

Finally, the NGF needs to bridge the gap between the Federal and the sub-nationals as per advocacy and sensitization of National reports, like the NIMET 2022 Seasonal Rainfall Prediction (SRP) and other important National policies and documents.



There were handshakes all around as the Former President of the Senate of Nigeria, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki went around to meet the alumni of Queen's College Lagos Old Girls' Association at his residence in Maitama, Abuja.

The Queen's College Lagos Old Girls' Association were led by their President, Mrs. Ifueko Omoigui-Okauru who stated some of the plans the ladies have for their college.

Mrs. Okauru said they aim to do a massive fundraiser for the school and launch an endowment fundraising gala on the 15th of October in Lagos, adding that their focus is on the areas of power, water, security, and infrastructure in helping to support their school.

"We aim to fund projects that can be done by the school by providing funding on an on-going basis," said Mrs. Okauru.

After, the President of Queens College invited Dr. Saraki to the fundraising gala event on Saturday. She stated it would be wonderful if Dr. Saraki can pick any project that would be useful for the school.

"His Excellency has always provided support to the Queens College Lagos Old Girls' Association, especially as the Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum as he has aided in the infrastructure of the forum."

Dr. Saraki said that no matter what Queens College is involved in, he would always lend his support.

His words: "I would want to support and see how to provide aid in the endowment fund. Though I, unfortunately, would not be able to attend, I would send a representative with a goodwill message."

Dr. Saraki further stated the management should be led by people who are competent and that to continue to advance the school, it must go beyond raising money but the focus should be on how to improve the calibre of the people involved. "My fear would be that years down the line, we are in the same place," he said.

Mrs. Salamatu Suleiman, a member of the association said the association appreciates the friendship that he has held with the organisation.

"We should work with the government and key stakeholders so the legacies are not lost."



Queens College Alumni Pay Courtesy Visit to Bukola Saraki

She further stated that Dr. Saraki made a valid point about governance and the necessity to manage the funds well.

The President, Ifueko Omoigui-Okauru said they intend to have a way to manage the funds and select investment advisors, adding that, "His Excellency, Bukola Saraki stated that the overall goal is that they would support not only Queens College, but work would be done across all boards."

In attendance from the alumni association were Ifueko Okauru, the President, Salamatu Suleiman, a member, Mairo Usman, the Abuja President, Dr Funmi Umunna, the Assistant of Social Welfare sector, Dr Akoh-Ali Victoria, Treasurer, Clare Ohunayo, the Secretary, Umar Nafisa, a member from the 2003 set, Fatima Nere Ahmed, the Legal Advisor, Elizabeth K. Dare, the Assistant Secretary, Jenness Herma, the Social Secretary and

Ginika Ezeoke, the Assistant Secretary.

In attendance from the NGF was the DG, Asishana Okauru, Mr. Shittu Abdulateef, the ED of Strategy, Mr Abubakar Jibia, the ED of Finance, Barrister Chijioko Chukwu, the Head of Legal, Prof. Abba Gambo, the Head of Agriculture, Juliet Chima, the Technical Assistant, Hauwa Haliru Hassan, the Head of HR/Governance, Dr Oteri, the Immunization Advisor, Hajiya Fatima Usman, the Head of Peace and Legislative Union, Mr Abdulrazaque Bello-Barkindo, the Director of Media and Public Affairs and Favour Mokuolu, the Research Officer.

About Queens College

It could be recalled that the birth of Queen's College, the first government-owned secondary school for girls in Nigeria, was established through the effort of the New Era Ladies Club. The

Club, a coterie of enlightened women, argued that the government's intervention in the provision of secondary education for boys must be replicated with girls. Their cause was what today's feminist would term "discrimination in favour of the girl child." The ladies' club gave practical vent to its belief, raising funds and forcing the hands of the colonial administration to establish a full-term high school for girls.

Queen's College has provided education for girls in Nigeria – creating equal gender opportunities for them in professional fields. Girls are given the opportunity to pursue courses in the Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Law, Architecture, the Arts, etc.

Queen's College has grown to a population of 3000 students, and a staff strength of well over 300 full-time teachers.



Congratulations

OUR WORTHY AWARDEES



HIS EXCELLENCY,
JOHN OLUKAYODE FAYEMI, **CON**
GOVERNOR EKITI STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
ABUBAKAR ATIKU BAGUDU, **CON**
GOVERNOR KEBBI STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
DAVID NWEZE UMAHI, **CON**
GOVERNOR EBONYI STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
IFEANYI UGWUANYI, **CON**
GOVERNOR ENUGU STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
SIMON LALONG, **CON**
GOVERNOR PLATEAU STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
BEN AYADE, **CON**
GOVERNOR CROSS RIVER STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
DARIUS DICKSON ISHAKU, **CON**
GOVERNOR TARABA STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
NASIR AHMAD EL-RUFAI, **CON**
GOVERNOR KADUNA STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
ROTIMI AKEREDOLU, **CON**
GOVERNOR ONDO STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
MAI MALA BUNI, **CON**
GOVERNOR YOBE STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
BABAGANA UMARA ZULUM, **CON**
GOVERNOR BORNO STATE



HIS EXCELLENCY,
IFEANYI OKOWA, **CON**
GOVERNOR DELTA STATE

Your Excellencies,
The Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat (NGFS) and the rest of your brother governors as you all fondly call one another, heartily rejoice with you at this hour when your works individually and collectively make it expedient for recognition and honour by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR.
This recognition as Commanders of the Order of the

Niger (CON) is a testament to your contributions to the betterment of your states and the unity of our beloved country. You all have brought meaningful progress to your states and have as a team served the nation initiatives that advance the course of humanity. The NGFS prays that Allah (SWT) grants you all long life, prosperity and good health, to continue to help the society and humanity in general.

Once again, congratulations, Your Excellencies.