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How Governors cheat the masses

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The opinions condemned the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which a governor claimed was signed with the Harvard University for arranging educational programmes for members of the Governors Forum of Nigeria.

The MOU, as revealed by the governor's media assistant, would enable Harvard handle the governors in batches and would teach them how best to govern the people. That sounded very ridiculous and funny. One then wonders why tax payers money should be used to further sponsor the educational pursuits of governors who are supposed to give scholarship to students in their state. What have these lectures got to do with good governance?

Did the American governors go through the same programme in Harvard or any of their universities? The masses should protest this venture in their respective states. It has nothing to do with good governance. The governors should be stopped from deceiving the governed who they have defrauded in so many ways.

Alhaji Musa Salem,
Plot 301 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Abuja

From: Musikilu Mojeed (musikilumojeed@yahoo.com)
To: aokauru@yahoo.com
Date: Friday, June 12, 2009 6:44:22 AM
Subject: Tribune on MoU

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For anyone who visited Uyo, the Akwa Ibom state capital, five years ago, a recent visit to the town would be an amazing experience, as he would be shocked by the transformation of the Federal roads leading to the town and the roads within the town which have turned it into an emerging major city.

From all the major roads approaching Uyo, which are Federal roads, that had been in deplorable state for over three decades, the Akwa Ibom state government has intervened to bring the roads into first class condition, akin to the roads found in Abuja .

The level of construction taking place around Uyo leads to the very fundamental question, who is funding these projects? That question is relevant in view of the deplorable condition of almost all federal roads across the nation. For the uninformed, it would seem that the Federal government is unduly favouring Akwa Ibom state in the distribution of quality Trunk A roads.

After spending a few days in Rivers State , members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Peer Review team had travelled from Port Harcourt , heading to Akwa Ibom state their next port of call. But the trip on that stretch of the federal road like all other Nigerian roads was tortuous. The team was exposed to the dangerous potholes and ditches that cover portions of the route. As expected, several man-hours were lost in the process. Officials of the Akwa Ibom state who were waiting at the Ibom Power Plant at Ikot Abasi spent hours expecting the team to no avail.

When the team finally arrived, the Special Adviser to the Akwa Ibom State Governor, Etido Inyang, Special Adviser to Akwa Ibom State Governor on Technical Matters, who received the team, regretted that members of the team had to suffer the stress of using the deplorable federal road.. He, however, informed that the road despite its bad condition was 100percent better than the condition that most Federal roads that ran within Akwa Ibom and had high economic value to the living standard of the people were before the government took a deliberate decision to change the situation.

He boasted thereafter that the team would be extremely pleased by what they would see when they approach Uyo and are conducted round the major federal roads in Akwa Ibom. His boast was taken as one of the usual politically motivated statements of politicians bent on promoting their governments even in the face of little or no performance.

The federal roads that the state fixed which are meant to link with Abia, Cross River and Rivers States include Cardinal Ekanem road, Nung-Udoe-Okoita road, Abak-Ikot

Ekpene road and Etim Ekpo-Urua Inyang-Iwukem road.

It was learnt that most of the roads had bitter history of neglect and economic stagnation attached to them. As a result of the fact that a couple of them were in sorry state for close to 35 years, nobody thought that they would be rehabilitated, let alone with the quality they have been constructed.

For instance, the Cardinal Ekanem road that leads to Abia State in front of a major Catholic Parish in the area remained in a terrible condition for years. The clerics in the church it was gathered had mounted pressure on successive administrations to intervene by fixing the road, so that the economy of the area will be revived and the people linked to others in the neighbouring states.

The Catholic Parish and residents of the lengthy economic road usually received one answer.. It is a federal road and there is nothing that the state government could do about it.

However, that excuse ended when the present administration in the state resolved that it was high time Akwa Ibom was opened to the rest of her neighbours, so that the tourism project of the administration is put on the front burner of the vision of the governor, Godswill Akpabio.

Akwa Ibom State Commissioner for Information, Aniekan Umanah told The Guardian that those who know the nature of the Cardinal Ekanem road before it was reconstructed by the state government find it difficult to believe that it was the same road..

He said: "There was a young four year old boy who lived on that road when it got bad. That boy is now a married man with two children and he is 39years now that the road has been completely reconstructed by the government to revive the economy of the area. You can appreciate the joy of a community that has been cut off from the rest of the world because of the ownership of the road. This government will not allow any road to negatively affect our economy. The days when roads whether state or federal impeded economic growth of Akwa Ibom state are over for good".

Umanah stated that beyond the reconstruction of major federal roads connecting key economic zones in the state, the administration has gone ahead to commence the construction of Itam overhead bridge network at the beginning of the town aimed at adding aesthetics to Uyo after the repair of the federal roads leading to it.

Etido Inyang, an engineer, who is also the adviser on technical matters to Governor Akpabio told the peer review team of the Nigeria Governors' Forum that what has made the present administration different from the past is that right from the beginning a vision of a state destined for prosperity was formed by the governor, who established a project monitoring mechanism aimed at driving the execution of the roads and bridges for the benefit of the people of the state.

He said that the new monitoring system has put all contractors on their toes, without the cutting of corners, which he pointed out explains the timely completion of quality roads in record time in the state.

"In the state we also have developed a scheme operation zero pothole, which is aimed at ensuring that there is no pothole on the roads in Uyo and its environs. We have phone numbers whereby residents who notice potholes anywhere call and they are rectified. However, the roads we are building now are of the highest quality and they would not get bad in the next 25years," Inyang said.

For Akwa Ibom State Governor, Godswill Akpabio his administration resolved to intervene in the deplorable Federal roads in the state because the economy of the state was stagnated by the absence of access to the state.

Akpabio said that his administration after an assessment of the Federal roads in the state came to the conclusion that discriminating against Federal roads in the transformation of the state would be detrimental to the overall development that the state yearned for.

According to him: "We did not discriminate against Federal roads in the state because these roads in their extreme poor condition were affecting the economic development of our state. We were further convinced to intervene because these roads are in Akwa Ibom state and are being used by our people".

The governor told Nigeria Governors' Forum Peer Review Team that after more than 25years of the neglect of Federal roads in the state, his administration was left with no option than to open the state to the entire world through a modern road network.

He stated that due to the poor condition he found state and federal roads in Akwa Ibom state upon assumption of office, he had to set up a new pragmatic inter-ministerial project execution system to fast track development and escape the problems caused by incessant rainfall.

The Akwa Ibom State Governor expressed satisfaction that the new project execution scheme was able to achieve the desired objective of transforming the state and re-igniting the economy of the state after several projects were completed.

He added that the scheme also started 3000 projects in the inter-ministerial scheme, with 1000 projects fully completed.

“Our projects are succeeding because we have a computerised project monitoring scheme that makes it possible for us to know exactly the state of our projects, so as to monitor progress”, he said.

Akpabio, however expressed regrets that the Federal Government has embargoed such intervention in deplorable roads in states, pointing out that he is now handicapped in intervening in other major roads in the state that he had planned to put in proper shape.

Director General of Nigeria Governors’ Forum, Ashishana Okauru stated that he was impressed by the inter-ministerial team and the unique monitoring mechanism of Akwa Ibom state, which made it possible for the government to fix major federal roads leading to Uyo in record time.

He stated that the project-monitoring framework set up by the state government made it impossible for contractors to do shoddy jobs in the state, because they were evaluated via computerized system that leaves no room for fraud.

Okauru urged the Akwa Ibom state government to continue to improve the linkage between the state and the outside world, noting that such investments would drive other critical projects that the government has outlined to empower the people.

He said: “I commend the vision of the governor and his cabinet to intervene in the federal roads that lead to Uyo. Without this intervention, all the tourism investments in the state would not yield the desired dividends as people from other parts of the country because of lack of access”.

The success of the Akwa Ibom State Government in the fixing of Federal roads brings to the fore the ban by the Federal Ministry of Works on such speedy interventions on deplorable roads within their states in order to be reimbursed later. Several stakeholders, especially administrators at the state level believe that development in their respective states is hampered by the present condition of federal roads. If the Akwa Ibom success story is anything to go by, then the best time to rethink that Federal Ministry of Works policy is now.



NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

The Secretariat

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16th October, 2009

His Excellency,
The Executive Governor of Lagos State,
Government House,
Ikeja.

Your Excellency,

Courtesy Call/Familiarisation Tour

Please, recall the recent re-structuring of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat.

The new Management craves the indulgence of Your Excellency to visit your State. This would afford us the opportunity of getting to know your State and also acquainting the Secretariat with the programmes of the State with a view to developing a comprehensive framework for peer review mechanism.

Our visit would also afford the State an opportunity of showcasing its achievements as well as future developmental plans.

The visiting Team would comprise key personnel of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat and a Public Relations/Media group that would assist in the analysis and showcasing of your State's programmes and achievements.

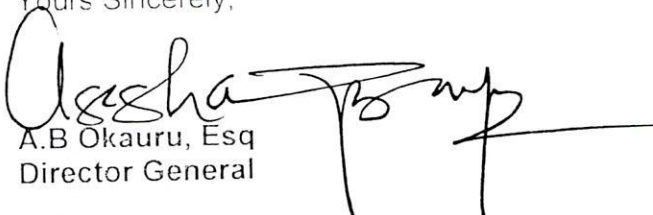
We intend to commence the Familiarisation Tour of the second phase of the **South West Zone** with a visit to **Lagos State** on **Monday, 7th – Friday, 11th of December, 2009**.

Please, find attached a prototype of a list of the site and places to be inspected (as provided by one of the State earlier visited).

Please, accept Your Excellency, assurances of our highest consideration.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,


A.B Okauru, Esq
Director General

ANAMBRA STATE
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY,
JEROME UDOJI SECRETARIAT COMPLEX, P. M. B. 5098, AWKA

Serial No.	Natural Resources Base	Area of Occurrence	Estimated Reserve/ Production	Industrial Use	State of Local Exploitation/ Production/Industrial Use
1.0	MINERALS				
1.1	Clay & Kaolin	Ozubulu Area Ukpo, Aguleri, Ihemposi, Enugu-Agidi, Okija, Omor, Umuchu, Umunze	50 MT	Rubber Indications, Pharmaceuticals, (Catalyst Chemicals) Building Materials (tiles, roof sheets, Pipes etc), Ceramic Wares (crookery insulators), Paints and Varnishes (as fillers) Drilling mud, Iron Steel foundries, Adhesives Plastics, Rubber Manufacturing, Industrial Pesticides.	Minimally Exploited Not yet Exploited
1.2	Pyrite	Onitsha & Nsugbe Area	N. A	Used to obtain iron and sulphur	Not yet Exploited
1.3	Natural Gas/Petroleum	Aguleri, Ogbaru, Anam, Aguleri-Otuocho area	Large	Fuel, Diesel, Gasoline, Kerosene, Aviation Fuel and series of Chemicals such as Transformer Oil, Petrochemicals Wax, Plastics Burner Fuel Oils.	Some reserves are being exploited but ample opportunities still exist for other interested investors

Serial No.	Natural Resources Base	Area of Occurrence	Estimated Reserve/ Production	Industrial Uses	State of Local Exploitation/ Production/Industrial Use
1.4	Sandstone (SO ₂)	Nando; Ukpor; Obosi; Onitsha Otuocha; Oyi; Agulu-Nanka	Millions of parents & tonnes	For the production of trans non-transparent glasses after good beneficiation	Yet to be exploited
1.5	Ironstone	Nnewi, Umuchu, Abor-Aguleri, Ogbunike, Owerre-Ezukala	Millions of tonnes	All iron products	Agreement has been signed between ANSG and NAU for research together with Coal and Bentonite.
1.6	Lignite	Nnewi, Oba and Umunya, Onitsha Areas	15m MT	Tar, Pitched Wax, Fuel, Pharmaceuticals, Industrial Chemicals, Agricultural Chemicals, Paints and Varnishes	Yet to be exploited
1.7	Coal	Owerre-Ezukala	N.A.	-do-	-do-
1.8	Bentonite	Agu-Awka, Nando Ikem Ifite; Umunze Umuchu, Anaku.	Commercial Quantity	Used extensively in drilling.	Agreement has been signed between ANSG and NAU for research together with Coal and Bentonite.

Serial No.	Natural Resources Base	Area of Occurrence	Estimated Reserve/ Production	Industrial Uses	State of Local Exploitation/ Production/Industrial Use
2.0	AGRO-BASED		60,000MT		
2.1	Maize	State-wide	60,000MT	Glucose; Alcohol; Flour; Acetone; Starch; Livestock Feed, Salad Oil; Cooking Oil; Corn flakes	Significant, but not exhaustive
2.2	Rice	Aguleri, Adani, Ufuma, Anam, Ogbaru	14,000 MT	Rice for human consumption; Alcohol beverages; Rice pudding manufacture; Rice bran; Rice sugar for pharmaceutical; Particle boards;	Insignificant
2.3	Pigeon pea (fio-fio)	State-wide	N.A.	Baby-weaning Food	Insignificant
2.4	Yam Bean (Odudu)	State-wide	N.A.	Protein supplement in livestock; Poultry Feeds;	Neglected
2.5	Yam	State-wide	774,000MT	Yam flour and flakes	Insignificant
2.6	Cassava	State-wide	330,000MT	Starch; Glue; Glucose; Livestock Feed; Food; Chips; Flour; Alcohol; Pharmaceuticals; Breweries;	Appreciable

Serial No.	Natural Resources Base	Area of Occurrence	Estimated Reserve/ Production	Industrial Uses	State of Local Exploitation/ Production/Industrial Use
2.7	Potato (Sweet)	State-wide but Insignificant	N.A	Livestock feed; Syrup, Starch and Pharmaceuticals	Neglected, but has potential
2.8	Melon	State-wide	In large Quantity	Vegetable protein and oil; Melon cake; food; oil	Nil
2.9	Kola	State-wide but Insignificant	N. A.	Use in pharmaceutical as stimulants; tonics and diuretics; carbonated beverages concentrates.	Nil
2.10	Castor oil	N. A.	N. A.	Paints; Varnishes and other protective coatings, Lubricants and greases, Hydraulic Fluids, Soaps, Printing Ink, etc. Cosmetics and Polishers. The cake is used as Fertilizer.	Nil
2.11	Oil Palm	State-wide	N.A Wild 10m, Agri: 1.8m (trees)	Palm Oil, Palm Kernel Oil and PK Cake, Manufacture of Margarines and Compound Cooking Fats, Soap Cosmetics Crayon and Candle Acids, Glycerine, Vinegar, Livestock Feed, Alcohol Production, etc	Significant