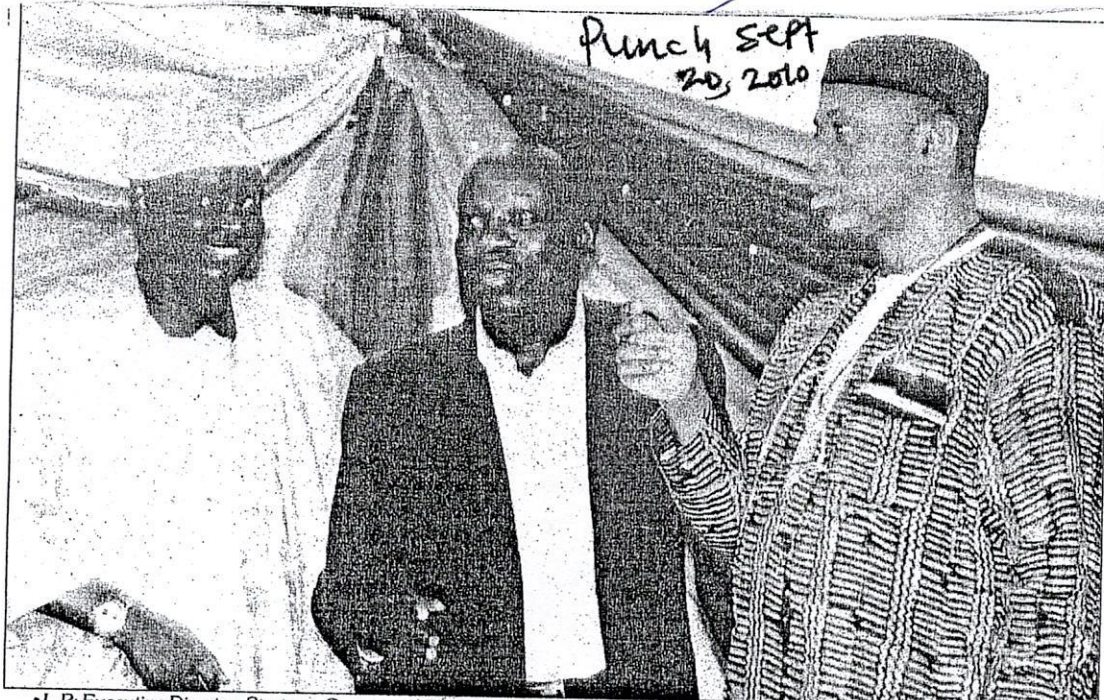


Ondo

Punch Sept
20, 2010



•L-R: Executive Director, Strategy, Governors' Forum Peer Review Team, Mr. Abdulateef Shittu; Director-General, Mr. Asishana Okaura; and Ondo State Governor Olusegun Mimiko, during the fact-finding visit of the Governors' Forum Team to ongoing projects in the state, in Akure...on Friday.

Ondo denies abandoning Agagu-initiated projects

From **Simon Nwakaudu**, Makurdi

FROM the Secretary to the Ondo State Government (SSG), Dr. Aderotimi Adelola, comes denial of the claims by the former governor, Dr. Olusegun Agagu, that all projects initiated by the immediate past administration have been abandoned by the gov-

ernment of Governor Olusegun Mimiko.

Addressing the peer review team of the Nigeria Governors' Forum led by director general, Asishana Okauru, the Ondo SSG said even though the Mimiko administration resolved to continue with all the projects

to avoid waste of funds invested in them, they were all overvalued.

He stated that the past administration in the state failed to follow due process in effecting payment for the several contracts awarded, claiming that the Agagu administration paid contractors 50 per cent mobilisation fees, while most of the contractors executed only 10 per cent of the said contracts.

Quoted Sept 17 2010

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THE
NEWS

**Ondo blames
FG for
underutilisation of
mineral deposit**

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THE Ondo State Government has blamed the underutilisation of its bitumen deposit on Federal Government's slow response to its request to explore the mineral deposit, the *News Agency of Nigeria* reports.

The Permanent Secretary in the state Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Chris Kolawole, made the allegation on Thursday in Akure at an interactive session with the peer review team of the Nigeria Governors' Forum.

The team was in the state in continuation of its peer review and project inspection exercise which it began 17 months ago.

Kolawole told the team that although the state had a large deposit of bitumen which was discovered about 100 years ago, it had not been able to exploit it because it was under the exclusive list.

He noted with regret that as a result of the unfortunate development, the mineral deposit had been laying waste instead of being exploited for the state's economic benefits.

Kolawole noted that the Irele-Agbabu bitumen project, which was started some years ago, was also abandoned midway by the Federal Government.

He said the site, reputed to be the second largest bitumen site in the world with 42 billion barrels deposit, was capable of enhancing foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria.

Kolawole urged the Federal Government to revisit the site to ascertain the problem facing the project.

Oni assures Ondo residents on promotion of values, culture

Ondo State government has reassured indigenes and residents of the state that it would continue to promote educational values and workers' welfare.

Ousegun Mimiko gave the assurance on Wednesday when the Peer Review Team of the Nigeria's Governor's Forum (NGF) Secretariat paid him a courtesy visit in Akure, the state capital.

The team was in the state in continuation of its peer review exercise aimed at inspecting and monitoring government development projects and their impact as well as expenditure.

The exercise was initiated by the 36 states serving governors and the National Economic Council (NEC) in 2009.

It is to encourage healthy competition among governors with a view to evolving equal development across the country. The governor, represented by his deputy, Ali Alanusi, told the team that the state government was also determined to promoting culture and tourism in the state.

According to him, it is also making efforts to take development to the people at the grass roots, adding that a people-oriented programme had

been initiated in all sectors of the economy to impact positively on the people.

Mimiko disclosed that part of such efforts was the development of modern neighbourhood markets across the state and road construction to link up communities. He also noted that the mother and child hospital project, which was now becoming a reference point, was also part of the efforts by government to ensure provision of democratic dividends to all.

The governor commended the peer review initiative and observed that the exercise would enhance participatory governance and development among the federating states.

Earlier, Asishana Okauru, NGF director-general and leader of the team, told Mimiko that the visit of the peer review exercise was not to rate states.

According to him, it is to identify unique best practices in all sectors of the economy.

Okauru assured that the identified best practices would be made available to states where they were lacking for replication, stressing that the exercise was also to identify challenges states were facing in budgeting and accessing fund from donor agencies with a view to proffering solutions to such challenges.

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2010

Group hails Mimiko

THE Director-General of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, Mr Asishana Okauru, at the weekend in Akure, the Ondo State capital, praised Governor Olusegun Mimiko for what he described as "the unprecedented developmental projects embarked upon by the governor within the 18 months of his administration in the state".

He urged other states to emulate the governor in their health and community development programmes.

Okauru, who is also the Team Leader of the Peer Review Team of the Governors' Forum, which was in Ondo State to assess governance as directed by the National Economic Council (NEC), urged other states to replicate the state's "Abiye" (Safe Motherhood) health programme, which offers free health services to expectant mothers and children.

Okauru, who addressed reporters yesterday in Akure before the team departed for Abuja, said he was satisfied with the equipment in the hospitals.

He said: "We possibly have the most functional hospital in Africa in this state, and we are excited at the level of work going on there and the free medical services being given to mothers and children. It is not only innovative but also a wonderful hospital which has no peer anywhere in Africa."