

...AN NGF MONTHLY PUBLICATION

NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

THE

EXECUTIVE

VOL.4 NO.60 MARCH 2024

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Commentary

Nigerian governors, individually and collectively under the auspices of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), have always demonstrated their commitment to the welfare of the nation's citizens.

So, even as they continue to strategise on the most effective ways to lighten the inflationary burden on the masses, especially in the light of Nigeria's present-day economic realities, they haven't relented in providing the necessary support whenever the need arises.

In this edition, we bring you one of such interventions as many governors rolled out different welfare packages aimed at providing succour to various Muslim communities as they faithfully observe the Holy month of Ramadan in March.

On the health pages, the cheering stories of the NGF expanding its Health Desk Resources for states and the promise of N25bn Healthcare Funds from the Federal Government make for an interesting read.

There are other interesting stories as well, including UNICEF seeking concerted efforts to address Universal Health Coverage challenges.

We also featured the governors' spouses and how they celebrated the International Women's Day, universally commemorated on March 8 of every year in the Gender Issues pages.

To mark the event, the Nigerian Governors' Spouses Forum (NGSF), led by its chairperson, H.E. Amb. (Prof.) Olufolake AbdulRazaq, hosted a series of activities in the states, under the theme, "Inspire Inclusion."

Other inspiring stories on the Governors' spouses from Lagos, Zamfara and Enugu, were not left out.

In News from The States, we share the efforts of the governors

as they tackle insecurity through non-kinetic approaches to complement the existing traditional approaches.

In Zamfara, Governor Dauda Lawal has signed an Executive Order prohibiting the sale of unlabelled bread, the packaging of bread in sacks, the sale of over 50 litres of petroleum, and the use of tinted glass; while the Akwa Ibom government, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, has commenced distributing farm inputs to public secondary schools in the state.

Responding to the cost-of-living crisis and food inflation being experienced in the country, Governor Abba Yusuf of Kano State also appealed to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to reopen the county's borders for importation of foodstuff to alleviate the suffering of the Nigerian masses.

There are other interesting stories from Kebbi, Katsina Abia, Niger, Kogi, and Rivers, where Governor Siminalayi Fubara has promised to make the state a medical tourism hub in Africa.

In from The Secretariat, hot topics such as illegal child adoption and state policing recently discussed at an NGF virtual meeting, were covered, with the NGF's Chairman and Kwara State governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRasaq, making it clear that governors would engage the relevant government agencies to tackle these situations.

The NGF also hosted the first Nigeria Public Private Partnership Network (NPPN) meeting of the year on March 21, 2024, and inaugurated the Technical Working Group (TWG) for its forthcoming International Conference on Girl Child Education in Nigeria.

The edition is capped with some very exciting photo stories from our events during the month under review.

Enjoy!

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GOVERNORS GO EXTRA MILE TO TOUCH LIVES

All over the world, food intervention programmes are deployed as a rapid response, short-term measures cater to people in need as a result of emergencies, conflicts, and sharp rises in the cost of living.

In recent months, the cost of living among Nigerians has been a source of concern for governments at all levels, especially at the state level where the fallout of the removal of fuel subsidy has impacted citizens many ways.

As the government continues to implement economic recovery and growth plans aimed at stimulating the economy, creating jobs, and reducing poverty, some state governors have also intervened by rolling out various food intervention

programmes to provide immediate assistance to the most vulnerable households in their states.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Food inflation rate in January 2024 was 35.41 per cent on a year-on-year basis, which was 11.10 per cent points higher compared to the rate recorded in January 2023 at 24.32 per cent.

This necessitated various intervention measures by various states to provide immediate succour to their citizens.

These measures became even more expedient during



the Month of Ramadan, considering the toll the mandatory fasting would usually take on the Muslim faithful among the citizens, especially the low-income earners and vulnerable.

In some states therefore, food banks were created to enable governors disseminate food through the public distribution systems while others gave out special bonuses during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

In Zamfara State, Governor Dauda Lawal approved the payment of a leave grant to the civil servants as Ramadan bonus. The state workers' leave grant, which was 10 per cent of their annual salary, was said to be a welfare package given to all civil servants to mitigate the country's current economic conditions.

According to a statement issued in Gusau by the governor's spokesperson, Sulaiman Bala Idris, the leave grant paid as a Ramadan Bonus was a welfare package given to all civil servants to mitigate the country's current economic conditions.

The statement had emphasised that Governor Lawal's administration had been worker-friendly.

He stated, "Upon assumption in office, Governor Lawal settled outstanding salaries owed by the previous government, paid the backlog of gratuities, and approved a 13th-month salary for the state's workers."

The Kano State Government on its part launched a high-powered committee for the 2024 Ramadan Feeding Programme (RFP), to assist poor Muslim faithful during

the fasting period. Following the inauguration of the committee, the state government had earmarked N1.19bn for Ramadan feeding. In addition, the governor donated food stuff worth millions of naira to the staff of the Government House as part of his Ramadan gesture to them.

Governor Yusuf's Spokesman, Sunusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, had in a statement noted that the foodstuff donated to the beneficiaries that ranged from GL1-GL 12 included a 50kg bag of Rice, a carton of Macaroni, ten mudus of millet, and the sum of N10,000 each.

Presenting the items, the governor had expressed gratitude to Allah for allowing him to make the gesture which is aimed at bringing success to his staff during the blessed month of Ramadan.

"Today is a special day not only for me but my staff at Government House because I have started fulfilling my electioneering campaign promises of improving welfare packages to civil servants" he explained.

The governor further disclosed that more goodies will be under way to the staffers especially when they hold firm their individual and collective responsibilities.

For the Niger State Government, it budgeted N976 million for Ramadan feeding in the eight emirate councils of the state. Also, assorted grains were procured and distributed to all 25 local government areas, emirate councils, religious leaders, security agencies, and political parties in the state.



6 The meeting, convened by the National Security Adviser, NSA, in Abuja, was aimed at strategising on combating the escalating security threats in the northern region

The state government even went further and declared week-long public holiday which according to the State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Binta Mamman, was to enable civil servants and political officeholders to participate in the distribution and monitoring of the palliatives and Ramadan feeding in their various local government areas.

In Katsina, the state government, in partnership with the 34 local governments, allocated over N10bn for the purchase of grains for distribution to vulnerable residents during Ramadan. Governor Dikko Radda said the state aimed to feed about 72,200 people each day of Ramadan, which, he said, translated to providing food assistance to approximately 2.1 million residents throughout the period. He also promised to subsidise the prices of maize, millet, and guinea corn to N20,000 per bag.

Governor Ahmed Aliyu of Sokoto State disclosed during the flag-off of

the distribution of grains to 18,400 orphans and the destitute across the state at the state Government House that the state government had earmarked N6.7bn for the feeding of poor and underprivileged persons in the state during the 30-day Ramadan fast. N1.2bn was allocated to 244 wards feeding centres while N797.9m was allocated to the existing 335 feeding centres across the state.

On its part, the Jigawa State Government had set aside N2.83 billion for a special Ramadan feeding programme intended to provide meals for poor and vulnerable persons in the state. The programme was implemented at 609 feeding centres, with a focus on providing three different food items to 182,700 poor and vulnerable people daily.

The Kebbi State Governor, Nasir Idris, spearheaded the distribution of over N12bn worth of assorted grains as Ramadan palliatives to residents of his state. From the Ramadan palliatives,

9,900 bags of rice and 9,500 bags of grains went to teachers, 4,000 bags of rice and 3,400 bags of grains went to the state's ministries, departments, and agencies while 1,000 bags of rice and 1,000 bags of grains went to Islamic scholars, among others.

In Yobe State, Governor Mai Mala Buni had approved the sum of N100m for the feeding of 16, 800 vulnerable and less privileged persons throughout the Ramadan period across the state. The government also expanded feeding centres from the initial 67 to 84 with each centre feeding at least 200 people daily.

These food and nutrition programmes aimed at preventing chronic food and nutrition during the Holy Month of Ramadan have gone a long way to show how far the governors could go to ensure the well-being of the citizens of their different states.



NGF HEALTH DESK EXPANDS RESOURCES FOR STATES

INTRODUCTION

Recognising the critical role of health in achieving the NGF's vision of promoting subnational governance and development, the NGF identified health as one of its priorities. The health desk of the NGF Secretariat, the leading go-to resource and learning hub for catalysing subnational health development has been responsible for coordinating all health-related interventions being championed by the NGF Secretariat.

In line with the health desk's commitment to keeping State

6 The health desk in partnership with NPHCDA and UNICEF, will sustain engagement and advocacy on the PHC Leadership Challenge to improve its visibility.

Governments regularly informed of health priorities for enhanced evidence-based decision-making, accountability, learning, and better health outcomes at the subnational level, the team planned and executed various activities in 2023 aimed at increasing investments in the health sector, improving coordination, improving peer learning, strengthening the capacity of state teams for sub-national health governance, supporting the transition process of Governors, increasing Governors' access to relevant data for prioritization, decision making and accountability amongst others.

Building upon the successes of 2023 and in line with NGF's strategic objectives, the health team has developed a list of activities that will be implemented in 2024 as follows:

EVIDENCE GENERATION

To ease the transition of the new administration in 2023, the NGF Secretariat through the health desk developed state-specific health profiles. These profiles provide

relevant information on key health areas and clear calls to action for governors.

To sustain the success with these profiles, the team will place priority on increasing governors' visibility and access to relevant data for prioritization, decision making and accountability. This will be achieved using the NGF meta dashboard, a web-based application that provides governors and their state teams with real-time access to the state of health in their states.

The team will continue working with health MDAs to prioritize health information systems strengthening thereby improving the availability and quality of health data.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

Recognizing the critical role of timely and accurate information in catalyzing action, the Secretariat will regularly update the State Governors on the state of health in their states using the state-specific health profiles that provide relevant information on key areas and clear calls to action and an annual report card which will enable them to assess their performance across critical health areas.

The health desk in partnership with NPHCDA and UNICEF, will sustain engagement and advocacy on the PHC Leadership Challenge to improve its visibility. The second round of the leadership challenge will be conducted, and best performing states will be awarded.

In addition, the health desk will continue engagements with the eight Gavi MOU states to ensure their immunization coverage is improved upon and the number of zero dose children are reduced. Additionally, efforts will be directed towards ensuring a smooth introduction of the HPV vaccine (phase 2) while monitoring the states from phase

one, introduced last year, to ensure the maintenance of good routine coverage.

CAPACITY BUILDING

In line with the vision of the health desk to be the leading go-to resource and learning hub, the team in collaboration with the Nigeria Health Commissioners Forum will develop a handbook for Honourable Commissioners of Health. This handbook will strengthen their capacity to provide effective leadership, make evidence-based decisions, manage resources efficiently, prioritize public health outcomes, promote accountability and work towards achieving Universal Health Coverage.

The Secretariat through the health desk will further support states by providing targeted technical assistance. This includes supporting the states in the development and implementation of health policies and plans that are evidence based and aligned with national policies and global targets, equipping them to meet up with their responsibilities towards the Primary Healthcare



Leadership challenge, strengthening the functionality of the States' Task Force on Primary Health Care, and strengthening the capacity of the State Committees on Food and Nutrition in operationalizing the nutrition commitments of the Governors.

MONITORING EVALUATION AND LEARNING

The team will continue to facilitate experience sharing and peer learning through the documentation and dissemination of best practices in health across different states. Additionally, the team will contribute to the knowledge pool of the national and international health communities through the publication of articles.

CONCLUSION

The NGF Secretariat, through the health desk, will focus on building consensus on the attainment of key health priorities and draw strategic partnerships with MDAs, NGOs, International organisations, and the private sector, to achieve the vision of sub-national governance and development.

STATES TO RECEIVE N25BN HEALTHCARE FUNDS FROM FG

The Federal Government has approved the disbursement of N25 billion through the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) to bolster healthcare infrastructure in states.

Prof. Muhammed Pate, the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, made this known on Saturday in Abuja at the sixth meeting of the BHCPF Ministerial Oversight Committee.

Pate said that the funds were designated for direct facility financing and workforce incentives across states.

The minister said that the initiative was in line with President Bola Tinubu's agenda and commitment to improving healthcare outcomes for Nigerian women, children, and vulnerable populations.

He said that the disbursement would be facilitated through gateways including the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA).

"This substantial investment underscores our dedication to enhancing healthcare infrastructure and supporting our healthcare workforce.

"In addition to direct facility financing and workforce incentives, a portion of the funds will be allocated by the NHIA to provide financial protection for the poorest and most vulnerable populations, further ensuring equitable access to healthcare services," he added.

The minister announced the



"We are committed to ensuring that every Nigerian has access to good quality healthcare services.

"By bolstering resources at the state level and fostering stronger collaboration with the federal government, we aim to significantly improve the quality of healthcare services in the near future," he added.

He expressed optimism about the potential impact of these efforts. "With a focus on enhancing healthcare delivery nationwide, stakeholders anticipate tangible improvements in health services across the country," Filani said.

In his comment, Dr. Muyi Aina, the Executive Director, NPHCDA, announced series of initiatives aimed at ensuring accountability and enhancing service delivery.

Muyi emphasised the importance of transparency in expenditure and announced the establishment of a dedicated call line for whistleblowers to report any discrepancies or malpractices observed in the field.

He said that the government would leverage software technology to track expenditure at the facility level, and ensure funds allocated are utilised appropriately.

"Our goal is to ensure that every Nigerian has access to the basic services they need," he said.

Dr. Kelechi Ohiri, Director-General of NHIA, underscored the importance of ensuring financial access to healthcare for all Nigerians by reducing out-of-pocket payments for healthcare services.

establishment of a dedicated reporting mechanism for citizens to report any misuse or deviation from guidelines regarding the disbursement of the funds. "An email address and reporting line will be made available, enabling citizens to actively participate in monitoring fund implementation.

"We are committed to ensuring that healthcare resources are utilised effectively and transparently.

"Regular monitoring and oversight will be conducted to uphold the fiduciary integrity of healthcare systems, ensuring that Nigerians benefit from these resources," Pate said.

Dr. Oyebanji Filani, who spoke on behalf of Commissioners for Health and Human Services, pledged that all the states would prioritise the quality of care provided Nigerians even after leaving hospital.

Filani highlighted their plan to strengthen public health units and ensure frontline health workers and civil servants receive necessary support.



UNICEF SEEKS CONCERTED EFFORTS TO ADDRESS UHC CHALLENGES

The Nations Children's Fund 'UNICEF' has advocated for more concerted efforts by relevant stakeholders to address systemic challenges in attaining universal health coverage.

The minister announced the establishment of a dedicated reporting mechanism for citizens to report any misuse or deviation from guidelines regarding the disbursement of the funds.

UNICEF Health Specialist, Dr. Ijeoma Agbo, stated this at a two-day media dialogue, on Tuesday in Ibadan.

The media dialogue has as its theme "Changing the narrative on Child Mortality through Health Insurance".

The programme was organised by UNICEF in collaboration with the Oyo State Health Insurance Scheme (OYSHIA).

Agbo, who spoke on the topic "Access to Health Insurance as a Way to

Achieve Universal Health Coverage for All in Nigeria", said that health insurance brings financial protection by reducing the burden of out-of-pocket expenses by individuals and families.

The UNICEF health specialist, who



noted that health insurance facilitates equitable distribution of healthcare resources, said it also promotes equity by ensuring that quality healthcare services are accessible to all persons, irrespective of their socio-economic status or geographical location.

Agbo said that state governments must dedicate a percentage of their consolidated revenue to health insurance schemes to fund premiums for the poor.

The specialist said that the government should invest more in the primary health care system, an approach that would be affordable to all, and benefits packages that include the minimum basic essential health services.

"Health insurance enhances access to a wider range of healthcare services, including promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services.

"Individuals with health insurance are more likely to seek timely medical care, leading to early detection and treatment of illnesses.

"Achieving universal healthcare requires a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach, involving government agencies, healthcare

providers, civil society organizations, the private sector, communities and the media," she said.

Agbo also said that inadequate funding, limited awareness about health insurance and its benefits, and infrastructural gaps in health care, among others were some of the challenges of health insurance.

Earlier, UNICEF Communication Officer, Blessing Ejiofor, said that access to health insurance plays an important role in ensuring that children receive the timely health care they need to survive, thrive, and become whoever they wish to be in life.

Ejiofor enjoined journalists to be active advocates by using their various channels and organizations to draw the attention of everyone to the issue to bridge the gaps in health insurance coverage for vulnerable populations.

In his presentation, the Executive Secretary of OYSHIA, Dr. Olusola Akande, said the state government had declared its intention to enroll everyone into the scheme.

Akande said that the initiative was to ensure that all categories of people were brought together to have access

to the health insurance scheme basket.

The OYSHIA boss, who noted that health insurance was the best and only way to reach the vulnerable, urged residents to make use of the affordable health care insurance provided by the state government.

Akande, who noted that the human factor was endangering NHIS, said the state government was improving the integrity of its database.

He also said that the state government had committed more than N1 billion to the scheme in the state.

According to him, the premium package for health insurance is N13,500 and that is what the rich, and poor, including the vulnerable pay annually to enjoy the health service package.

Akande, while noting that the health insurance scheme is mandatory, said the state government is enforcing its compliance.

"What we are pursuing is to get as many people as possible on health insurance and leaving no one behind, including the poor, the rich, the rural and urban dwellers.

PROFILE

ASABE BALARABE



Asabe Balarabe currently serving as the Honourable Commissioner for Health in Sokoto State, Nigeria, boasts a distinguished career in healthcare, rooted deeply in her early years as a dedicated nurse and midwife. Born and educated in Sokoto, she completed her professional qualifications in midwifery and nursing between 1989 and 1992, marking the beginning of a committed journey in healthcare service.

Throughout her career, Balarabe specialised in perinatal and post-natal care, focusing on the critical needs of women and children within hospital settings. Her profound impact on

patient care and her leadership in nursing culminated in her retirement from civil service as a Chief Nursing Officer in 2021, a position that underscores her extensive experience and dedication to healthcare excellence.

Transitioning to a pivotal role in public health policy and administration, Balarabe now leads the Ministry of Health in Sokoto as the Honourable Commissioner. In this capacity, she leverages her comprehensive background in healthcare to oversee and implement significant health interventions, including those targeting the COVID-19 pandemic. Her involvement extends beyond

governmental duties; she is an active participant in various community development projects and a key member of numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations. Balarabe's commitment to fostering social and behavioural change is evident in her facilitation of training programs and workshops aimed at enhancing public health outcomes.

Asabe Balarabe's career is a testament to her unwavering dedication to improving health services and outcomes. Her leadership in Sokoto's health ministry continues to drive forward public health initiatives, making significant strides in enhancing the well-being of the state's residents.

PROFILE

BARRISTER JOLA AKINTOLA



Barrister Jola Akintola has built a distinguished career in both the legal and political spheres of Nigeria. His educational journey took him from L.A Primary School, Isedo, and Oke-Bode Secondary Grammar School to obtaining a Higher School Certificate from Ilesa Grammar School between 1988 and 1989. He then proceeded to Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U), Ile-Ife, where he earned a Bachelor of Laws Degree (LL. B Hons) in the 1995/96 academic session.

After completing his university studies, Akintola served in the mandatory NYSC programme in Adamawa State (1997/98) and was

later called to the Nigerian Bar in 1999. He honed his legal skills at Dosu Babatunde & Co, Ilesa, before establishing his own law firm, Jola Akintola & Co, in Ilesa in 2007.

Akintola's involvement with the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) as both secretary and chairman of the Ilesa branch showcases his dedication to the legal profession. His political engagement is evident in his significant roles within the People's Democratic Party (PDP), including Secretary and Chairman of the Caretaker Committee in Ilesa East Local Government, as well as the State Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee, marking his prominence

in Osun State's political scene.

His administrative skills were also demonstrated through his appointments in the Ilesa East Local Government Council, serving as Secretary and Chairman of the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA). His leadership of the Transport Committee, initiated by Governor Ademola Adeleke, underscores his impact in state governance.

Barrister Jola Akintola's career reflects a profound commitment to justice, governance, and community development, showcasing a trajectory of professional excellence and service.

A Dr. Ortese Marcellinus Yanmar has distinguished himself as a vanguard in the medical field and a leader committed to community development and healthcare improvement. As the Chief Physician to the Executive Governor of Benue State from 2007 to 2015 and the ongoing Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vision Hospital, Makurdi since 2005, Dr. Yanmar's career is marked by an unwavering dedication to enhancing health services and outcomes.

His academic journey began in the foundational classrooms of L.G.E.A Primary School Uikpam and progressed to Mount Saint Gabriel's Secondary School, Makurdi, laying the groundwork for his future in medicine. This educational path led him to prestigious medical qualifications and a deep commitment to public health and healthcare administration.

Throughout his career, Dr. Yanmar has exemplified leadership, beginning with early roles such as the Time Regulator at his primary school and advancing to significant positions including the Secretary General of the Makurdi Local Government Student Association and the Maiden President of the National Benue State Medical Students Association. His leadership extended into his professional life, where he served as the Secretary General of the Association of Resident Doctors at the Federal Medical Centre Branch, and later, as the President of the Mbabai Youth Association.

Dr. Yanmar's commitment to professional growth and contribution to the medical field is further demonstrated through his active participation in various national and international workshops and courses. These include notable events like the Workshop on Cancer by the Cancer Society of Nigeria, the Travel Health



workshop by the West African College of Physician, and the Commonwealth Business Forum in Perth-Australia, among others. Such engagements have not only broadened his expertise but also positioned him as a global healthcare professional.

The recognition of Dr. Yanmar's professional excellence and dedication to community service is evident through the numerous awards and honours he has received. These accolades celebrate his outstanding performance in the medical sector, his leadership in healthcare, and his unwavering support and contribution to community development.

His extensive travels to countries such as the United Kingdom, India, the United States of America, Bulgaria, Israel, Romania, France, South Korea, Germany, and Ghana have enriched his perspective, enabling him to incorporate global best practices into his work in Nigeria.

Dr. Ortese Marcellinus Yanmar stands as a beacon of professional excellence, leadership, and dedication to the improvement of healthcare services and community development. His contributions continue to impact lives, shaping a healthier future for communities in Benue State and beyond.



IWD 2024

FIRST LADIES LEADING THE CALL TO INSPIRE INCLUSION ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

IWD 2024

FIRST LADIES LEADING THE CALL TO INSPIRE INCLUSION ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



R-L: Taraba State First Lady, Mrs. Agyin Kefas; 3rd from the right, First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. (Mrs.) Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu; Chairperson of the Nigerian Governors' Spouses Forum and First Lady of Kwara State, Amb. (Prof.) Olufolake AbdulRazaq; Minister of Women Affairs, Mrs. Uju Kennedy-Ohaneye; and the First Lady of Oyo State, Engr. Tamunominini Makinde at the United Nations, New York during the 68th CSW recently.

"Imagine a gender-equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality. Collectively we can all #InspireInclusion. Celebrate women's achievements. Raise awareness about discrimination. Take action to drive gender parity. IWD belongs to everyone, everywhere. Inclusion means all IWD action is valid." – IWD website

The International Women's Day, observed on March 8, 2024, served as a poignant reminder of women's pivotal role in driving social, economic, and political advancement worldwide. This year's theme, "Inspire Inclusion", emphasises the urgent need to prioritise investment in women and girls to accelerate progress towards gender equality and inclusive development.

Women have long been the backbone of societies, contributing their talents, skills, and labour to every facet of life. From nurturing families and communities to leading businesses and advocating for change, women's contributions are indispensable to the functioning and prosperity of societies globally. Yet, despite their invaluable contributions, women continue to face systemic barriers and inequalities

that limit their full participation and potential.

Investing in women is not only a matter of moral imperative but also a strategic imperative for sustainable development and economic growth. When women are empowered, economies thrive, communities prosper, and societies become more resilient. By investing in women's education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and leadership development, we unlock their potential as agents of change and catalysts for progress.

It is acknowledged that education is one of the most powerful tools for empowering women and girls, enabling them to acquire knowledge, skills, and confidence to pursue

their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to society. Investing in girls' education yields multiple dividends, including improved health outcomes, increased economic opportunities, and greater social and political participation. By ensuring access to quality education for all girls, we lay the foundation for a more equitable and prosperous future for generations to come.

Economic empowerment is critical for advancing women's rights and fostering inclusive growth. Investing in women's entrepreneurship, access to finance, and participation in the labour market can unlock new sources of innovation, creativity, and productivity. Closing the gender gap in economic opportunities could contribute to global GDP and lift millions of women and their families out of poverty, creating a ripple effect of positive social and economic change.

Also, by investing in women's leadership development and promoting gender parity in political, corporate, and public institutions, we ensure that women's voices are heard, perspectives are valued, and policies are inclusive of diverse needs and experiences. When women have a seat at the table, they can advocate for policies that advance gender equality, social justice, and sustainable development.

During this year's commemoration, spouses of governors all over Nigeria used the opportunity to reach out to women in their states through their various support projects and other platforms.

The First Lady of Kwara State and chairperson of the Nigeria Governors' Spouses Forum, H.E. Prof. Olufolake Abdulrazaq addressed the public in commemoration of the special day and promised that throughout March, activities would be organised to showcase the contributions of women and draw attention to the challenges they face. She also

expressed her commitment towards working with partners proffering innovative solutions to inspire and help women and girls unleash their innate potential to become leaders, entrepreneurs, and agents of change for green resilient, and inclusive development. Being someone who has dedicated her life to inclusion and justice, Her Excellency once again drew attention to biases against women and girls and challenged stereotypes. She called on all stakeholders to forge a more collective and inclusive world where women and girls thrive.

The Nigeria Governors Spouses Forum (NGSF) under Prof. AbdulRazaq, had shared its commitment to continue to support initiatives that promote the economic empowerment of Nigerian women at an event organised on the sidelines of the 68th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women by partners including the World Bank, the NGF, NGSF and the Ministry of Women Affairs. She commended the Nigeria Governors' Forum, the Nigeria Governors' Spouses Forum, the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and other partners in this drive, adding that the outcome of the event would no doubt unlock the full economic potential of women and girls across Nigeria.

In Cross River State, the event was celebrated by the governor's wife, HE Rev. Eyoanwan Basey Otu, who called on all women to rise to the occasion and break barriers in line with this year's theme; "Inspire Inclusion".



L-R: First Lady of Oyo State, Engr. Tamunominini Makinde; First Lady of Ebonyi State, Mary-Maudline Uzoamaka Nwifuru and the First Lady of Abia State, Mrs. Priscilla Otti at the United Nations, New York, during the 68th CSW recently.

In a commendable display of leadership and compassion, Rev. Eyoanwan also launched an intervention in the ongoing money marriage saga in Becheve Ward, offering a glimmer of hope to affected families. The money marriage practice, prevalent in some communities, entails the exchange of money for brides, often leading to exploitation and abuse. Recognising the harmful impact of this tradition, Her Excellency, took swift action to address the issue by constituting a fact-finding committee on a mission to the affected communities. She also spearheaded initiatives to provide alternative livelihood opportunities for families traditionally involved in money marriage, empowering them to break free from cycles of poverty and dependency.

In Kebbi State, the first lady and Founder of Nasara Foundation, Hajia Zainab Nasare Nasir Idris, used the opportunity of the day to empower women at the grassroots and urged beneficiaries of such empowerment programme to engage in self-reliance ventures. She assured women in the state that more policies and programmes had been designed to cater to women and youth by the administration of her husband Dr. Nasir Idris.

At a press conference which she addressed to commemorate the day, Hajia Idris also appealed to civil society organizations in the state to join hands with her to curb gender-based violence (GBV).

The commemoration of IWD in Akwa Ibom was led by Her Excellency, Pastor Patience Umo Eno, with women from



Chairperson of the Nigerian Governors' Spouses Forum and First Lady of Kwara State, Amb. (Prof.) Olufolake AbdulRazaq; First Lady of Enugu State, Mrs. Nkechinyere Mbah and First Lady of Ebonyi State, Mary-Maudline Nwifuru, at the United Nations, New York during the 68th CSW recently.

The meeting, convened by the National Security Adviser, NSA, in Abuja, was aimed at strategising on combating the escalating security threats in the northern region

Her Excellency stated that the two-day cultural diversity exhibition was to revive and preserve the culture, ensuring that history is not forgotten. It also provided an opportunity and educational platform for the younger generation to learn about the diversity of the cultural state.

The wife of Abia State governor, Mrs. Priscilla Otti, who was in the US during the commemoration, was warmly welcomed by the Abia State Association of New York at a reception focused on 'Promoting Gender Equality Through Empowerment of All Women and Girls'. Prof. Mrs. Otuodichinma Christy Nwankpa, President of Umu-Okpu Ngwa Association, and Sir Ifeanyi Ajomiwe Nwakanma, President of the Abia State Association, New York, praised Her Excellency's gender-sensitive initiatives. They also acknowledged the administration's efforts in supporting persons with disabilities during highlighted Abia's rapid developmental changes.

In Katsina State, First Lady Hajiya Zulaihat Dikko Radda, in her message to mark the day noted the special day's echo through the corridors of power was not as a mere echo but as a symphony of strength and resilience. "In the symphony of our Katsina story, women now illuminate the path toward a brighter tomorrow," she said.

31 local government areas of the state participating in various events, including a food exhibition, cultural parade and presentations. Addressing the gathering, the first lady celebrated the resilience and commitment of Akwa Ibom women towards the well-being of their families and urged them to accelerate progress by breaking barriers, creating environments of value and respect, and challenging barbaric stereotypes.

In Borno State, the first lady, Dr. Falmata Zulum, commemorated the 2024 International Women's Day at the multipurpose hall of the Government House Maiduguri. In her speech, said emphasised the significance of the day and its ability to bring attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights,

and violence and abuse against women. As part of events to mark the day, the first lady empowered 3000 women from across the 27 local governments of Borno State with fifty thousand naira each, a bag of 25kg rice, a carton of pasta and cooking oil.

Hajiya Lami Fintiri, first lady of Adamawa State, alongside the Deputy Governor Prof. Kaletapwa George Farauta, flagged off the two-day cultural diversity display to commemorate the IWD in the state.

The event was organised by the Office of the First Lady in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.

The wife of the Ekiti State governor, Dr. Olayemu Oyebanji, celebrated the 2024 International Women's Day by reaching out to the women in the state with food items. The Director-General, Office of Community Communications, Ekiti State, Mrs. Mary Oso-Omosho, in a statement noted that though this year's celebration in the state was devoid of the customary display of grandeur and fun fair, due to the recent death of the state's APC chairman, Mr. Paul Omotosho, the governor's wife reached out to the women.

Her Excellency, Chief Mrs. Mary-Maudline Nwifuru of Ebonyi State used the opportunity of

the commemoration to praise the dexterity of women in the government of Ebonyi State. The first lady assured the governor of the unwavering commitment and dedication of the women in delivering on the policies and programmes of government. She noted that the women in the administration of her husband performed exceptionally well, signaling healthy competition with their male counterparts.

To celebrate the 2024 International Women's Day in Ebonyi State, His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru, Governor, Ebonyi State, donated One Million Naira (N1,000,000.00) to 130 women in

Ebonyi State, 10 women from each of the 13 Local Government Areas in the State.

Indeed, Nigerian governors' wives took advantage of the International Women's Day 2024, to heed the call to invest in women and accelerate progress towards a more equitable, inclusive, and prosperous world for all. Governments, businesses, civil society organisations, and individuals must therefore support the first ladies in order to prioritise gender equality in their policies, practices, and investments. By investing in women, we not only unlock their potential but also unlock the full potential of societies to thrive and prosper.

NIGER STATE

PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO PRIORITISE HEALTH – NIGER FIRST LADY

Present Administration Will Continue To prioritise Health – Niger First Lady

The Wife of Niger state Governor, Hajiya Fatima Mohammed Bago, has reaffirmed the commitment of the present administration in Niger State to the health sector.

Hajiya Bago stated this in her message at the official flag off ceremony of the National immunisation plus days, distribution of mama kits, ready to use therapeutic foods, the kitting of CHIPS agents and distribution of motorcycles to local government areas by the

Ministry for Primary Healthcare in Niger state.

In the message, signed by her Chief Press secretary, Hadiza Abdullahi Maikano, the first Lady noted that the interventions being launched are targeted towards the well-being of all in the state.

She lauded the progress and commitment of the Ministry of Primary Healthcare in addressing critical issues bedeviling the health sector, especially as it affects women and children.

According to her, the present

administration remains resolute in its determination to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity rate, by introducing interventions that will have direct impact and attract pregnant women to go for ante-natal and post-natal care.

She assured that her office would continue to partner with relevant bodies and stakeholders to roll out policies and programmes that will promote the welfare and well-being of women and children and enable them to participate actively in moving the society forward.



Hajiya Fatima Mohammed Bago



RHISS:

LAGOS FIRST LADY PRESENTS CASH, GIFTS TO ANOTHER SET OF BENEFICIARIES

The First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Claudiana Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu has presented cash tokens and gift items to new beneficiaries of the Renewed Hope Initiative Elderly Support Scheme (RHISS), emphasising that the government will continue to support senior citizens aimed at positively influencing their lives.

Dr. Sanwo-Olu affirmed this at the Lagos Edition of the Renewed Hope Initiative Elderly Support Scheme (RHISS) held at the Banquet Hall, Lagos House, Ikeja.

She revealed that the initiative championed by the First Lady of Nigeria, Senator Oluremi Tinubu (CON), is borne out of her steadfast

commitment to the well-being of elderly citizens, noting that this significant stride is in the government collective pursuit of a more inclusive and compassionate society.

Dr. Sanwo-Olu recalled that the RHISS initiative launched in December, last year, by Senator Oluremi Tinubu produced 250 beneficiaries from each of the 36 States of the federation, emphasising that the Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI) Lagos Edition being launched today is targeted at 80 beneficiaries in the first instance.

The First Lady opined that this gesture will further cushion the effect of the economic situation and alleviate the burdens of the beneficiaries during

this Ramadan period and Easter celebration.

She charged the senior citizens to prioritise their well-being and health, saying "To our senior citizens, I urge you to embrace life to the fullest, prioritise your health, nurture your minds, and strengthen your bonds with loved ones and with God. These are the keys to a rich and fulfilling life in your golden years".

The event was attended by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Social Development, Pharm. Toyin Oke-Osayintolu; Representative of the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Chief of Staff, Mr. Akinrinade Morakinyo and staff of the Office of the First Lady among others.

ZAMFARA FIRST LADY HONOURED WITH CHIEFTAINCY TITLE

The atmosphere in Zamfara was filled with excitement as the Emir of Kaura-Namoda, Sanusi Muhammad, bestowed a chieftaincy title, Gidon Garin Kauran Namoda, on the First Lady of the state, Hurriya Lawal recently.

According to the emir, the title was in recognition of her outstanding philanthropic endeavours.

Draped in a golden regal outfit, the

Lawal radiated joy and pride as she accepted the new title. The ceremony followed the distribution of food items to individuals in the Kaura-Namoda Local Government Area.

Lawal has been commended for her humanitarian efforts across different local government areas in Zamfara State, especially during Ramadan, where she engaged with Muslim women at the tafsir centre in Gusau, to provide essential welfare packages.

She also regularly participates in



Hurriya Lawal

women empowerment programmes, community outreach initiatives, and health education campaigns.

Her unwavering dedication to helping others has not only earned her accolades, it also serves as an inspiration for others to contribute to societal well-being.

ENUGU FIRST LADY ENGAGES YOUNG PEOPLE



The Enugu State First Lady, Her Excellency Mrs. Nkechinyere Mbah, has emphasised the need for self-love, resilience and self-belief among young people.

Mrs. Mbah spoke at a special event organised exclusively for secondary school students and adolescents across the state.

The event which blended entertainment with education was aimed at demystifying topics affecting young people and addressing crucial topics such as menstrual hygiene and drug abuse prevention.

It featured speakers from various

fields, including clergy, healthcare professionals, and representatives of the Nigerian Drug Laws Enforcement Agency, NDLEA.

The various speakers shared invaluable insights, empowering attendees with essential knowledge to navigate life's challenges.

The event was further enriched by the impressive talents of the students, who delivered captivating drama performances and soulful musical renditions, infusing the atmosphere with energy and excitement.

Participants were presented with tokens of appreciation, eliciting smiles

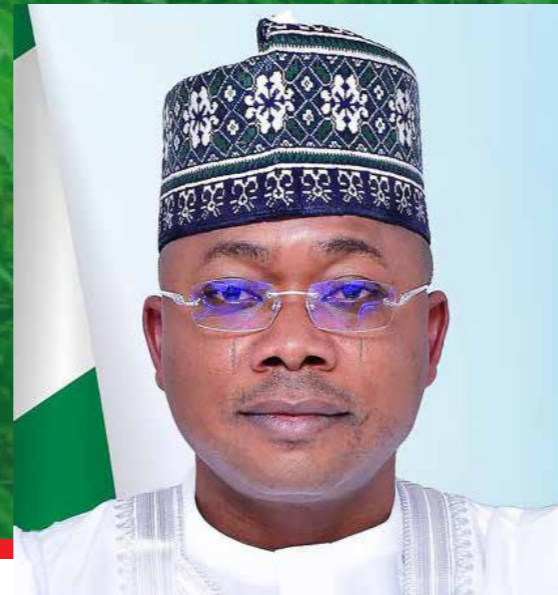
and reinforcing the commitment to nurture and uplift the younger generation.

The First Lady, who connected deeply with everyone present, also highlighted the potential within each student to become tomorrow's leaders.

Throughout the gathering, organisers prioritised personal engagement, laughing and listening closely to the students' stories and aspirations, thereby forging a stronger bond between them and the youth community.

KOGI GOES BIG ON CASSAVA PRODUCTION

...ALLOCATES 1,200 HECTARES OF LAND FOR FARMING AND PROCESSING



Governor Usman Ododo

production in the state.

llori said that there were several incentives from government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

Speaking at the occasion, State President of All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), Salihu Adobauji encouraged the cassava farmers to "weather the storm" of the economic hardships and produce food in the farming season.

In his acceptance speech, the new state CACOPMAN chairman, Ufana Hussein said cassava had the potential to industrialise Kogi and Nigeria as a whole.

"From cassava processing, we can have some industrial inputs such as starch, for both edible and non-edible grade, cooking gas, organic fertiliser, animal feeds from the peels, Garri, Fufu (wet and dry)," he said.

include translating the information into the three main languages in the state so people to understand the best practices and up-to-date information about climate change for them to do the right thing for the desired results.

"Our farmer-friendly Governor Usman Ododo, is very much interested in food production and security, which explains why his first engagement in office was on agriculture."

The commissioner also said the state government had concluded training of enumerators for a forthcoming biometric capturing of all farmers across the state for useful data.

He challenged the new leadership of the CACOPMAN to encourage members to key into government food production programmes for the attainment of food security in the state.

Earlier in his Speech, the CACOPMAN National President, Mr. Segun Ilori, had tasked the new executive council to live up to expectations in boosting cassava

The Kogi state government has mapped out 1, 200 hectares of land for cassava production.

The Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Timothy Ojoma, disclosed in Lokoja during the inauguration of the State Executive Council of the Cassava Cottage Processing Marketing Association (CACOPMAN) on Wednesday.

Ojoma said that the state government would provide 80 per cent of the work by bringing in tractors, improved stems, fertiliser, chemicals and clearing the land.

"We have already mapped out about 48 areas in the three senatorial districts of the state for this purpose.

"We are also providing extension services by engaging over 1,000 extension workers to ensure that our farmers have up to date information on the cassava.

"We are also intervening in rice and maize production," he said.

Hesaidthattheextension services would

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF CASHEW

By Professor Abba Gambo

CASHEW APPLE

Cashew (Anacardium occidentale) is a crop of afforestation and soil conservation belonging to the family Anacardiaceae and genus Anacardium. Cashew is a native of Brazil and finds maximum cultivation in North and Northeast regions of Brazil. It is now grown as a cash crop in some West African countries, including Ghana. According to International Nuts and Dried Fruits Council (INDFC) report, world cashew nut production currently stands at 3.8 million MT, and Ghana produces about 170,000 MT of raw nuts and 1,530,000 MT of cashew apples which currently are of low economic value and thus, a majority goes to waste.

NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION OF CASHEW APPLE

Cashew apple contains good amounts

of vitamin C, sugars (fructose and sucrose), fibers, flavonoids, carotenoids, total polyphenols, volatile components, flavanols, amino acids and minerals such as potassium.

The cashew apple is highly acidic with a pH value of 3.5–4.8 and contains about 85% moisture.

The fruit is rich in carbohydrates, mainly reducing sugars (glucose and fructose), that are readily absorbed by the body.

Cashew apple contains protein (0.5–1.09%) although in very minute quantities as established by Singh et al. On a dry matter basis, the cashew apple was found to contain 61.21% of dietary fibre, of which 13.25% are soluble and 47.96% are insoluble, with appreciable potassium, phosphorus, sodium, magnesium, calcium, copper, zinc, iron, and phenolic contents. The cashew fibre is being used as a fat replacer in burgers, in cereal-based extrudates and cookies to increase fibre content and nutritional value.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF CASHEW APPLE

The nutritious nature and high polyphenolic content have various implications for the use of the cashew apple in maintaining and promoting health. The significant amount of essential minerals found in cashew apples make them a good choice for maintaining strong immunity, promoting proper fluid balance, nerve transmission and muscle contraction, and also for the management of micronutrient deficiencies. The high mineral content can aid bones, cardiovascular health, and assist in metabolism, and bioactive pathways.

Due to its high caloric content and amount of reducing sugars, the cashew fruit is and can be used as an instant energy booster. A cohort study discovered that cashew apple juice enhanced fat oxidation and proposed that it might increase endurance during exercise. The high vitamin C content of the fresh juice promotes its usage in treating sore throat,

maintaining good gum/oral health, serving as cofactors for enzyme and bioactive compounds activity, and as an antioxidant.

PROCESSING AND VALUE-ADDITION OF CASHEW APPLE

Many processes and techniques have been developed to transform cashew apples into value-added products, such as unfermented cashew beverages like pulpy and clarified juice; fermented beverages like wine and ethanol; fruit powder used in the production of cookies, chocolates, bread spreads, and sponge cakes; and other products from cashew apple bagasse (cashew apple pomace powder in cookies, as fat replacers in burgers, and for increased fiber in cookies).

Juice concentrate, syrup, squash and ready-to-serve (RTS) drinks are some of the nutritious beverages that can be obtained from cashew apple juice by adding sugar, citric acid and other preservatives.8 Fruit blends have also been made from the cashew apple together with other fruits.83

Wines, ethanol, and probiotic beverages can be developed from the fermentation of the cashew apple juice with specific strains of microorganisms. Cashew wine, which has an alcohol content between 6% and 12%, also has a low cost of production. Other fermented products, such as vinegar and prebiotic beverages, have also been developed.

Dried cashew apple powder could be used in the development of value-added products such as cookies, bread spread, wheat-based confectionaries, chocolates, and sponge cakes. Cashew apple pomace powder can be used for the preparation of other products because it is rich in flavonoids, carotenoids, anthocyanin, dietary fiber, ascorbic acid, and reducing sugars.

Cashew can also be processed into products like jam and marmalades.

Studies have demonstrated that cashew apple jam is a good source of nutrients, phytochemicals, and energy.

CASHEW NUT

Cashew nuts or Kaju are technically not nuts but seeds. The scientific name of cashew nuts is Anacardium occidentale L., which belongs to the family Anacardiaceae. It is a popular ingredient in various Indian dishes and dairy alternatives like cream and cashew milk. They have a rich nutty flavour. Cashew nuts grow on evergreen trees, native to Brazil, which later expanded to South American countries. The Portuguese introduced cashew nuts in India and Africa in the 16th century. A single-seeded nut in a hard grey shell grows at the bottom of the cashew apple (a soft and juicy fruit). There are 33 varieties of cashew nuts identified, out of which only 26 varieties are marketed. The W-180 variety is known as the “king of cashews”. As for the nutritional composition, cashew nuts are rich in tocopherols, phytosterols, phenolic lipids and several bioactive compounds, all of which have several benefits on human health. Let us find more exciting facts about cashew nuts.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE IN SUMMARY

As stated earlier, the economic importance of Cashew can't be over-emphasised and in this vein, we would like to share some of the value that the cash and food crop brings to the country.

Let's dive right in;

EXPORT

Cashew nuts are one of Nigeria's major agricultural export products. The country is one of the largest cashew producers in Africa and the world with Ogbomoso being the highest contributor. The export of cashew nuts contributes significantly

to Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings.

EMPLOYMENT

Opportunities: The cashew industry generates substantial employment opportunities, involving operations such as cultivation, harvesting and processing.

AGRO-INDUSTRIALENTIAL

Nigeria has been working on developing its cashew processing industry to add value to cashew nuts locally. This not only creates job opportunities in the processing sector but also enhances the country's capacity to export processed cashew products, which have higher market value.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Cashew farming can contribute to rural development by providing infrastructure development and services in cashew-producing areas.

Cashew strengthened bilateral relations between Nigeria and other countries, notably India. India is a major importer of Nigerian cashew, leading to a strong relationship and India's growing involvement in Nigeria's cashew industry. This has also attracted other Indian industries, contributing significantly to Nigeria's economy.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Cashew trees in Nigeria help prevent soil erosion and desertification, which are critical environmental challenges in some regions. This can have broader ecological and economic benefits for local ecosystems and agriculture.

In conclusion, cashew production plays a significant role in the Nigeria's economy by generating export revenue, providing employment opportunities, improving rural livelihoods, enhancing bilateral relationship, and a lot more.



L-R (seated) Dr. M.J Abdulwaheed, representing Mandate Secretary, FCTDA Women Affairs Secretariat, Director General Nigeria Governors Forum, Asishana Okauru, Senator (Barr.) Stephen Odey ph.d. Chairman, Technical Working Group (TWG) for the NGF - Coscen International Conference on Girl Child Education, Dr. (Mrs) Bridget Ikegwuru, representing Hon.Minister of Education, Hajiya Amina Haruna, Director FME/National Project coordinator, AGILE Programme and other participants at the Inauguration of the TWG for the International Conference on Girl Child Education in Nigeria.

GAME-CHANGING GIRL CHILD CONFERENCE COMING

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) recently announced that it would host an International Conference on Girl Child Education in Abuja on October 10-11, 2024 to commemorate the International Day of the Girl Child.

The conference is aimed at promoting and advocating the right to education for the girl child in Nigeria. The event will also mark the launching of the Girl Child Education Volunteers' Advocates (GICEVA) initiative and the unveiling of the Face of the Girl Child Ambassadors among first-class

graduates of Nigerian universities from the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

During the event, the commissioners of Education in the 36 states and the FCT, would also sign a declaration to support and fund girl child education in Nigeria up to the Senior Secondary School level.

The declaration would be prepared by the Malala Fund, an organisation dedicated to advocating girls' right to education globally.

EDUCATION FACT

7.6 million

girls are out of school in Nigeria



Mr. Leo Ebenezer The Great, Head Education Desk NGF, speaking at the Inauguration of the Technical Working Group for the International Conference on Girl Child Education in Nigeria.

The NGF advocates increased education financing at both the federal and state levels with a 15-25 per cent increase in budgetary allocation to the education sector.

The Secretariat asked the Technical Working Group (TWG) and the media to support the advocacy by highlighting the benefits of investing in education, showcasing success stories, and fostering public support for increased funding.

The International Conference on Girl Child Education is expected to achieve increased advocacy through the establishment of GICEVA by mobilising more volunteers to participate in promoting education at the grassroots level, among other objectives.

It is also expected to boost government commitment to girl child education through the signing of the declaration by representatives from the states.

Other objectives include raising role models, inspiring girls to pursue academic excellence, strengthening the partnerships amongst government agencies, and reducing the rate of out-of-school children.

| | | |
|------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| SECONDARY | 50% | of girls are not attending school at the basic education level. |
| JUNIOR SECONDARY | 3.7 | million at the junior secondary level |
| PRIMARY | 3.9 | million at the primary level |



EMBRACING A LOW-CARBON FUTURE FOR NIGERIA: THE PARIS AGREEMENT

By June Ifebe

The latest data from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) indicates a concerning trend in global temperatures, with the average global Earth temperature surpassing 1.17°C in 2023, exceeding the critical threshold of 1.5°C above the pre-industrial era. Nigeria, like many other nations, is grappling with the impacts of climate change, which are exacerbated by its vulnerability to extreme weather events, deforestation, and inadequate infrastructure.



rural areas.

UNDERSTANDING LOW CARBON

In Nigeria, the concept of low carbon is crucial for mitigating the adverse effects of climate change, which disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. With over 70% of Nigeria's population engaged in agriculture, the sector is particularly susceptible to climate variability, including erratic rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and flooding. Adopting low-carbon agricultural practices, such as agroforestry and sustainable land management, can enhance climate resilience while promoting food security and livelihoods.

Additionally, Nigeria's energy sector is heavily reliant on fossil fuels, with oil and gas accounting for the majority of its electricity generation. However, the country is endowed with abundant renewable energy resources, including solar, wind, hydro, and biomass, which present viable alternatives for decarbonizing the energy mix. Transitioning to renewable energy sources not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions but also enhances energy access and affordability, particularly in

NIGERIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT

Nigeria's participation in the Paris Agreement underscores its commitment to addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development. The Climate Change Act, 2021, represents a significant milestone in Nigeria's climate policy framework, providing a legal framework for climate action and mainstreaming climate considerations into national development plans.

At the subnational level, states like Lagos, Kaduna, and Cross River have embarked on ambitious climate initiatives, including afforestation programs, renewable energy projects, and climate-resilient infrastructure development. These efforts reflect Nigeria's recognition of the interconnectedness between climate action and broader development objectives, such as poverty alleviation, economic diversification, and inclusive growth.

UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIMATE FINANCE

By aligning with the Paris Agreement,

Nigeria can access international climate finance mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and carbon markets, to support its transition to a low-carbon economy. Leveraging these financial resources can catalyze investment in renewable energy infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, and sustainable urban development, creating employment opportunities and driving economic growth.

THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS FORUM'S ROLE IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

The Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) plays a pivotal role in coordinating subnational climate action and advocating for policy coherence across states. Through its Climate Change Desk, NGF provides technical assistance, capacity-building support, and knowledge-sharing platforms to empower states in climate governance and planning.

CHARTING A GREENER FUTURE FOR Nigeria

In conclusion, Nigeria's embrace of the Paris Agreement represents a commitment to securing a sustainable and resilient future for its citizens. By prioritizing low-carbon development pathways, investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, Nigeria can navigate the challenges of climate change while seizing opportunities for inclusive and sustainable growth. As a nation rich in natural resources and human capital, Nigeria has the potential to emerge as a leader in the global transition to a low-carbon economy, setting an example for other developing countries to follow.



SECURITY CHALLENGE:

NORTHERN GOVERNORS READY TO CONSIDER NON-KINETIC APPROACH – INUWA YAHAYA

9 Governor Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State has lent his voice to the growing consensus among stakeholders on the need for improved coordination among security forces and government agencies in order to address a united front that addressing the complex security challenges plaguing the northern region's complex security challenges.

6 The meeting, convened by the National Security Adviser, NSA, in Abuja, was aimed at strategising on combating the escalating security threats in the northern region

Governor Yahaya, who is also the chairman of Northern States Governors' Forum spoke during a press briefing held after a high-level security meeting involving the 19 Northern Governors, Ministers of Defence, Police Affairs, and Interior, as well as the nation's security chiefs.

According to a press statement by the director-general of press affairs in Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, the



meeting, convened by the National Security Adviser, NSA, in Abuja, was aimed at strategising on combating the escalating security threats in the northern region.

He stated that the governor had reiterated the commitment of northern governors to work closely with security agencies in seeking enduring solutions, even as he expressed deep concern the region's security situation. He stressed the need for exploring alternative approaches to achieve better results in combatting security challenges.

"In view of the security situation across the North, we are increasingly concerned and recognize the necessity to deliberate, review, and consider alternative options to improve outcomes," Governor Inuwa stated.

The NSGF Chairman affirmed the readiness of northern governors to complement the kinetic approach advocated by the National Security Adviser with non-kinetic strategies.

He emphasised the importance



of combining both approaches to enhance the overall security situation in the country.

"We are open to the kinetic approach proposed by the NSA. Our deliberation with key stakeholders in the security sector has been productive. While acknowledging their commendable efforts, we recognize the need to adopt a different approach,

particularly by integrating non-kinetic methods," Inuwa added.

He emphasised the determination of northern governors to continue working closely with relevant stakeholders to explore innovative strategies and implement effective measures that will help restore peace and stability in the region and across Nigeria.

GOVERNOR LAWAL

SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER ON TINTED GLASS, UNLABELLED BREAD, ILLEGAL SALE OF PETROL

Governor Dauda Lawal has signed an Executive Order prohibiting the sale of unlabelled bread, the packaging of bread in sacks, the sale of over 50 liters of petroleum, and the use of tinted glass in Zamfara State.

Governor Lawal signed the Executive Order yesterday in his office at the Government House in Gusau.

A statement by the governor's spokesman, Sulaiman Bala Idris, said Executive Order No. 02 and Order No. 04 2024 address various concerns identified as contributing factors to the security challenges in the state.

He said the restriction order was issued due to recent attacks in some communities across the state.

"Following the recent spate of attacks on some communities across some local government areas of the State, particularly Zurmi, Shinkafi, Kaura Namoda, and Talata mafara, and the resurgence of activities of banditry, kidnapping in communities and some major federal highways in the state.

"Governor Lawal has signed Executive Order No. 02 2024, banning the sale of unlabelled and packaged bread in sacks and prohibiting some unwanted activities in the state.

"All bakery production companies and enterprises must label their bread with the full address and particulars of their production factory with immediate effect.



Governor Lawal

Governor Lawal has signed Executive Order No. 02 2024, banning the sale of unlabelled and packaged bread in sacks and prohibiting some unwanted activities in the state

"All petroleum filling stations in the state shall not sell more than fifty (50) litres of petrol to vehicles at a time. Petroleum product sales at filling stations are also restricted to from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

"Transportation and sale of bread is restricted within the capital of every local government: for Gusau, the restriction is limited to the following areas: Damba—Zaria Road; Gada Biyu—Sokoto Road; Command Guest House along Kaura Namoda Road; Gusau Garage—Dansadau Road."

Furthermore, Executive Order No. 04, 2024, has been signed by the governor to prohibit tinted glass by all vehicle owners in Zamfara.

"Vehicle owners are prohibited from covering their license plate numbers while driving.

"All vehicle owners must possess their vehicle particulars and ensure compliance with the provisions of the Zamfara State Road Traffic Law No. 2, 2015, or any other relevant laws."



FOOD SECURITY:

AKWA IBOM DISTRIBUTES FARM INPUTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Akwa Ibom Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, has commenced distributing farm inputs to public secondary schools in the state.

Speaking during the distribution, Dr Offiong Offor, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, tasked principals and teachers to nurture the students' practical skills in the area of agriculture.

Offor said that due to the importance of food in the functioning of the human body, the government at all levels placed more emphasis on agricultural production.

She commended the governor for

his huge investments in agricultural interventions and support to the farmers across the state, which was aimed at ensuring food sufficiency and security.

"The governor's advocacy for everyone to get involved in agriculture is borne out of the abundance of fertile land available in the state. We urge teachers to take advantage of the natural resources and get involved in farming," she said.

The commissioner urged the principals to bring back the Young Farmer's Club in secondary schools in order to rekindle students' interest in agriculture.

In her remarks, the Commissioner for Education, Mrs. Idongesit Etiebet,

thanked the governor for integrating agriculture into the curriculum and extending support to public secondary schools.

Etiebet pledged to establish a monitoring unit for the tracking of the progress of the inputs received in school farms.

Responding, the host Principal, Mr Ime Ekpo, expressed gratitude for the governor's efforts towards agricultural revolution.

Ekpo, who is the principal of Community Comprehensive Secondary School, Four Towns, Uyo, pledged the school's readiness to maximise the agricultural inputs provided to ensure food sufficiency in the state.



OPERATION NAZAFI:

GOVERNOR YUSUF LAUNCHES MODERN SWEEPING TRUCKS, RESTORES SWEEPING MOTORCYCLES

Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf of Kano State has introduced new state-of-the-art sweeping trucks and restored thirty sweeping motorcycles as part of the government's initiative, named "Operation Nazafa."

This was contained in a recent statement issued by the governor's spokesperson, Sunusi Bature Dawakin Tofa.

According to Tofa, Yusuf had during the ceremony pledged to settle the outstanding entitlements of casual and temporary workers affected during the previous administration's tenure at the Refuse Management and Sanitation Board.

The governor assured the affected

individuals that the present administration is dedicated to resolving their pending dues and directed the relevant authorities to furnish a comprehensive list for immediate action.

Applauding the commitment of Alhaji Ahmadu Haruna Zago, the managing director of the Refuse Management and Sanitation Board, Governor Yusuf reiterated the government's commitment to collaborating with individuals who are focused on serving the community.

In addressing the neglected vehicles acquired during the previous administration, Governor Yusuf

commended the innovative efforts of Alhaji Ahmadu Haruna Zago and local engineers in revitalizing the fleet using minimal resources, a departure from the previous approach of outsourcing repairs.

In his statement, Zago expressed gratitude for the governor's unwavering support towards the board, enabling them to refurbish sweeping trucks and tricycles for enhanced waste disposal efficiency under Operation Nazafa.

He emphasised the improved capabilities of the trucks, each now capable of performing the work equivalent to twenty individuals, significantly advancing Kano's cleanliness objectives.

FOOD SCARCITY:

KANO GOVERNOR APPEALS FOR REOPENING NIGERIAN BORDERS AMIDST SUFFERING

The Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abba Yusuf, has appealed to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to reopen the county's borders for importation of food stuff to alleviate the suffering of Nigerian masses.

The appeal was contained in a statement issued by the Governor's Spokesperson Sanusi Tofa shortly after receiving the Comptroller General of the Nigeria Customs Service, Alhaji Bashir Adewale Adeniyi at the Kano government house.

Governor Yusuf lamented the critical condition of hunger and starvation in the country which was caused by the rampant hike in the price of commodities in the country.

"We wish to appreciate the President's intervention on the ongoing national food initiative which he considers Kano as the host for the initiative to be launched believing that the programme will cushion the effects of food scarcity

if implemented"

According to the governor, another immediate intervention that can make food available and affordable to our teeming population is for the Federal Government to consider the reopening of the borders and allow free importation of commodities.

During the meeting with the Comptroller General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, in his office, Governor Yusuf emphasised on the prevalent hardships faced by the populace, particularly during the sacred month of Ramadan, underscoring the necessity of opening the borders to alleviate their distress.

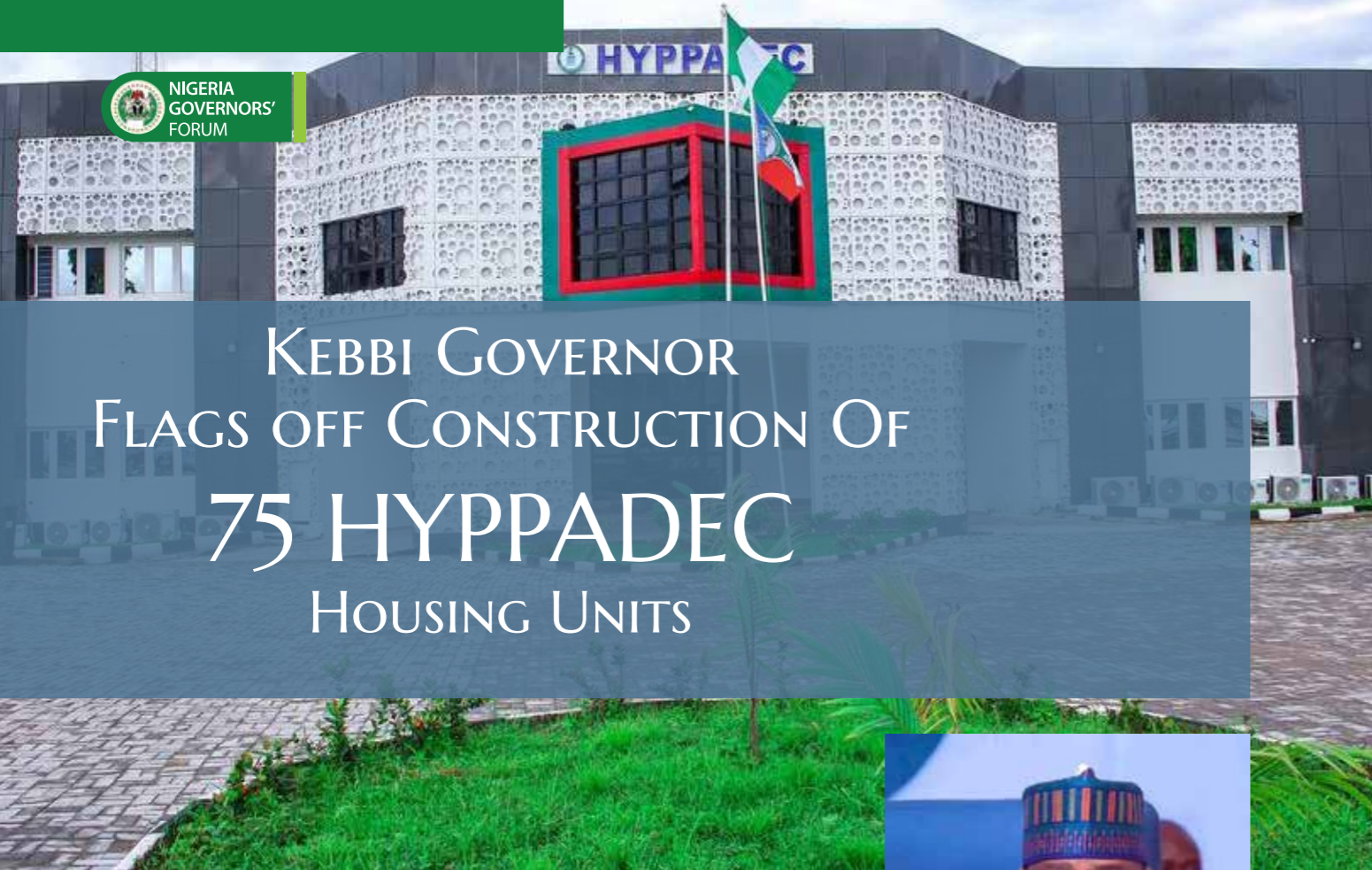
He also expressed satisfaction with the Customs Service's initiative to commence the distribution of food items to the citizens of Kano amidst the prevailing hardships and hunger experienced by many, urging the Customs Service to ensure that this benevolent act reaches those most affected.

Furthermore, the governor assured the Customs Service of his unwavering support in all aspects, particularly those that would yield positive outcomes for Kano and Nigeria at large.

In his remarks, Adeniyi reiterated the significance of fortifying the bond between the Nigeria Customs Service and the Kano community, emphasizing the Service's deeper commitment to collaboration and mutual understanding.

He pledged to implement policies aimed at refining business processes and fostering engagement with stakeholders.

While in Kano interacting with various stakeholders, CG Adeniyi also stated that the Service had made comprehensive arrangements to address the current challenges of food scarcity and hardship in Kano by distributing essential food items to the state's residents.



KEBBI GOVERNOR FLAGS OFF CONSTRUCTION OF 75 HYPPADEC HOUSING UNITS

The Kebbi State Governor, Dr. Nasir Idris Kauran Gwandu, has flagged-off the construction of 75 units of semi-detached two-bedroom flats at Bagudo Local Government Area.

The project is being constructed under HYPPADEC Resettlement Housing Scheme, according to a statement by the governor's Chief Press Secretary, Ahmed Idris.

Flagging-off the construction at Ganten Fadama in Bagudo local government, the governor expressed satisfaction for the gesture and assured his commitment to support HYPPADEC to achieve its set goals and objectives.

He assured the readiness of his government to support any indigenous contractor willing to aid his administration to bring development to the state.

The governor advised elites with political appointments to pay back to their respective communities through execution of projects that have direct bearing to the lives of the people.

He described the managing director of HYPPADEC as a good and responsible man, who always remembers his people wherever he found himself.

Earlier, the HYPPADEC MD, Alhaji Abubakar Sadiq-Yelwa, had commended Dr. Idris for bringing succour to the suffering of Kebbi people, in addition to fostering unity amongst them.

He explained that the housing units were meant to support the people of the state, especially those living in riverine areas.

Sadiq-Yelwa added that of the 75 houses, 30 would be constructed at Ganten Fadama in Bagudo local government, 25 at Tudun Faila in



Dr. Nasir Idris Kauran Gwandu

Shanga local government, while 20 in Suru local government area of the state.

"We have done a lot to the communities affected by floods and fire outbreaks. We have also trained many youths in different skills towards ameliorating the suffering of the people," he said.



GOVERNOR RADDA DISBURSES OVER N470 MILLION TO BANDITRY, COVID-19 VICTIMS

Katsina State Governor, Malam Dikko Radda, has announced the disbursement of over N470 million to victims of banditry and COVID-19 in the state.

The initiative, delivered in partnership with the International Donor Agency and R.H. Equipt, aims to alleviate the economic hardship caused by these crises, according to a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Ibrahim Mohammed.

During the flag-off ceremony held at the Kabir Aliyu Maska Hall on Monday, Governor Radda disclosed that 550 victims of armed banditry received N150,000 each, totaling N82.5 million, while 3,876 COVID-19 victims received N100,000 each, amounting to N387.6 million.

6 550 victims of armed banditry received N150,000 each, totaling N82.5 million

This brings the total disbursement to N470 million, excluding the cost of training provided to beneficiaries across Katsina's 34 Local Government Areas (LGAs).

Governor Radda explained that the programme was a fulfilment of a campaign promise he made during the January 2023 BBC Governorship debate, when he committed to empowering those affected by banditry and COVID-19, particularly

women and girls.

He commended the Katsina State Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development as well as the State's House of Assembly for their role in selecting and training the beneficiaries.

The Commissioner Ministry of Agriculture and livestock Development, Professor Ahmad Muhammad Bakori, thanked the governor and R.H. EQUIPT for the support given to the programme.

Professor Muhammad Yusuf Dandume, who represented R.H. EQUIPT, reaffirmed their commitment to collaborating with the Katsina State Government to make the programme successful.

9 Governor Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers has vowed to make the state, a first-choice medical tourism destination in Nigeria and Africa.

Fubara said this to journalists at the Government House in Port Harcourt, while speaking on his administration's modest achievements in the health sector since assumption of office.

He explained that to achieve this, his administration was seriously paying greater attention to improving healthcare infrastructure.

He vowed to improve the services available to the people, particularly at the primary level, and to bridge observed gaps between the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare services in the state.

Fubara emphasised that the ongoing reconstruction, rehabilitation and upgrade of all primary healthcare facilities across the state would be integrated with existing secondary and tertiary institutions. This, he said, was to deliver immediate but quality healthcare services to the people.

"The capacity of the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital (RSUTH) has been improved with the training of personnel, the establishment of critical units and provision of modern equipment to deliver sterling and expert services to patients. We are proud of our modest achievements in the health sector, particularly in the construction of primary healthcare centres.

"We are also supporting the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital to perform optimally. Do not also forget the contributory healthcare insurance law that we have started implementing. I assure you that we will complete all the ongoing healthcare infrastructure projects that we have around the state," he said.

Fubara also identified some challenges



FUBARA PROMISES TO MAKE RIVERS MEDICAL TOURISM HUB

that had frustrated smooth delivery of healthcare services in the state and promised to tackle them.

He said that some of the challenges are inadequate manpower, corruption, indiscipline and ineffective management.

"We will deal with all identified challenges and ensure that the healthcare system functions optimally to deliver affordable and efficient services to all residents of the state," he said.

The Rivers State Commissioner for Health, Dr Adaeze Oreh, said that under Gov. Fubara's leadership, the state had experienced formidable strides in building a rigorous and robust primary healthcare system.

Oreh noted that the current emphasis was on renovating and upgrading already existing primary healthcare facilities to enhance their functionality

to give the Rivers people access to affordable primary healthcare services.

She noted the update and approval of the implementation of the Rivers State Contributory Health Protection Programme, the state's health insurance scheme by Fubara.

Oreh further highlighted the importance of the ongoing employment of various categories of health workers in the Teaching Hospital and the Rivers State Hospitals Management Board as approved by the governor.

She said the application process was still open, with the online application portal inundated with applications from across the state and the Diaspora.

"People from Rivers who are currently working in the Diaspora are keen to return to contribute their quota to the Rivers health sector," Oreh said.



ABIA TO INTRODUCE CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SCHEME FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

The Abia Government has expressed its resolve to commence a Pension Contributory Scheme for civil servants.

The Commissioner for Information and Culture, Mr. Okey Kanu, made this known during a press briefing on the outcome of the State Executive Council Meeting at the Government House, Umuahia.

He said, "The state government has concluded plans to introduce a contributory pension scheme for Abia civil Servants. The plans for establishing the scheme have gone very far and very soon we would start the cutover to a contributory pension scheme."

Kanu expressed the readiness of the State Government to introduce

6 Ministry of Finance had set up a help desk to address issues arising from the pension arrears payment such as persons whose names were skipped, among others

measures that would make the payment of pensions seamless and give pensioners a sense of belonging.

He said that the government had given a directive for all pensioners to be paid on the 28th of every month just like the civil servants in the state.

Kanu added that the government had directed that going forward, pensioners would be paid their monthly pension in full, as against half of the amount that used to be the case in the past.

He said that the government recently paid pensioners their pension arrears and noted that the government was aware that some pensioners were not captured in the payment.

Kanu said that the Ministry of Finance had set up a help desk to address issues arising from the pension arrears payment such as persons whose names were skipped, among others.

According to him, the whole idea is to ensure that the whole process is smooth and successful.



Governor Alhaji Abba Yusuf

WE'RE COMMITTED TO PROTECT LIVES, PROPERTY OF KANO PEOPLE – GOVERNOR YUSUF

The Kano State Governor, Alhaji Abba Yusuf, has expressed his resolute commitment to safeguarding the lives and property of the people within the state.

Governor Yusuf said this while hosting Kano's security leaders for an iftar gathering at the Government House in Kano.

This was contained in a statement issued by the governor's spokesperson, Sanusi Tofa, on Monday.

In the statement, the governor lauded the security agencies for their indispensable role in ensuring the security and welfare of the citizens, recognizing and valuing their contributions.

Governor Yusuf reiterated his administration's firm dedication to strengthening the security framework to effectively deliver the essential services expected by both the government and the people of Kano.

The governor lauded the security agencies for their indispensable role in ensuring the security and welfare of the citizens, recognizing and valuing their contributions.

He also revealed that his government had commenced the procurement of food supplies for distribution, with security personnel being among the beneficiaries of the initiative.

Additionally, he commended the Federal Government, specifically President Ahmed Bola Tinubu, for approving the allocation of food supplies to be distributed to the vulnerable populations throughout the state in the near future.

Seizing the opportunity, the governor encouraged the attendees to continue to implore Almighty Allah and offer prayers unceasingly for peace, stability, and prosperity in Kano State and across Nigeria during this sacred month of Ramadan.

Several security personnel, including Commissioner of Police Muhammad Hussaini Gumel, Brigadier General M.A Sadiq of the 3 Brigade of the Nigerian Army at Bukavu Barracks, and Commander J. K Adedeji of the Naval Logistics College, Dawakin Tofa, thanked the Kano State government for its support to the security agencies.

Kano Government, Media Trust Partner For Northwest Regional Conference On Security, Development

Kano State Government has agreed to partner with Media Trust Group (MTG) - publishers of the Daily Trust titles, Aminiya, Trust TV, Trust Radio, Digital Trust and Teen Trust on Northwest regional security conference and

other developmental strides.

The agreement was reached when the Chairman/Founder, Media Trust Group, Alhaji Kabiru Yusuf visited Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf of Kano State at the Government House on Tuesday.

In a statement issued by Sanusi Tofa, the spokesperson to the Governor said the chairman of Media Trust visited Kano to intimate the Governor on a plan to organise a security conference for the seven Northwestern states, strengthen the existing ties with the company among other issues.

While responding, Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf said he is in total agreement with Media Trust on finding actionable solutions to the insecurity bedeviling the region.

"This initiative is timely, we are ready to provide all the necessary logistics and moral support to ensure a hitch-free conference devoid of any politics, ethnic or religious sentiments," he said.

The Governor also said Kano is ready to host the conference considering its strategic location geographically and otherwise.

NIGER, AEDC PARTNER ON IMPROVED POWER SUPPLY

Niger state government has collaborated with the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) to deliver increased electricity supply to residents.

Speaking when he received a delegation from the AEDC at the Government House, in Minna, the state governor, Mohammed Bago, said that the collaboration was vital given the state's contributions to electricity generation and supply in Nigeria.

He described the electricity supply as vital, given the state government's plan to turn the state into an industrialization and processing zone.

The initiative, tagged "Light Up Niger 2024" would also address issues around metering in the state.

Bago added that the Niger state

government has domesticated the Electricity Act in the State and has also created the Niger State Electricity Regulatory Commission.

He further stated that the necessary paperwork for the Regulatory Commission will soon be completed so that the State can start generating and distributing its power.

On his part, the Chief Operating Officer of AEDC, Eng. Chijioko Okwukenye said that the project will improve and sustain the electricity supply to the state.

He further assured that the firm is willing to partner with the state government for the desired result.

Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) is one of the 11 power distribution companies that was successfully privatized and handed over to new investors on 1 November 2013.

AEDC has a franchise for the distribution and sale of electricity across an area of 133,000 km² in the Federal Capital Territory, Niger State, Kogi State, and Nassarawa State.

The company is organised into 9 Regions and 39 Area Offices across the aforementioned 4 states. The Company has maintained Customer Service Standards of Performance, in line with Internationally accepted standards (IEC 60050: Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electricity). It is for this reason that the Company continues to prioritise to the improvement of power supply and technical efficiency through investment in the network to improve service delivery.



ILLEGAL CHILD ADOPTION, STATE POLICING TOP NGF'S VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has vowed to address the concerns raised by the United States Embassy recently over reports of illegal international adoption rackets involving Nigerian children.

This was contained in a communique the Forum issued after its virtual meeting of March 20, 2024.

In the communique which was signed by the NGF's Chairman and Kwara State governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRasaq, the governors said that they would engage the relevant government agencies to tackle the situation.

They also stressed on the need for a change in the nation's security architecture, especially as it relates to state policing "as a critical amendment in the ongoing 1999 Constitutional Amendment proceedings."

According to AbdulRasaq, the Forum had also commiserated with Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori over the recent deadly communal clash between Okuama and Okolaba communities during which 17 military personnel were killed.

The meeting also deliberated on the progress members of the Forum had made in implementing various Ease of Business reforms, especially those under the World Bank supported State Action on Business Enabling Reforms (SABER), which include; land administration, Public Private Partnership (PPP), investment promotion frameworks, business-enabling infrastructure and regulatory environment.

The Forum chairman added that



Nigeria Governors' Forum in session

'Members were implored to leverage available support within the program in implementing related reforms to stimulate further economic growth.'

Other issues on the governors' agenda included the review of the progress

made by the Minimum Wage Committee, as well an update from the NGF Senior Health Advisor, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab, on the Health Sector Renewal Compact, the next round of the Primary Health Care (PHC) Leadership Challenge and the UNICEF Child Nutrition Fund.

SECRETARIAT STAFF ATTEND NIPR CONFERENCE

Two staff of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat recently attended a two-Day summit for national spokespersons, revolving around the theme titled "Change Narratives: Change Society"

The event was organised by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation.

The training bordered around topics such as; Managing Infodemic, Misinformation and Fake News, Global Trends in Managing Risks and Crisis Communications and Effective



Communication.

It had in attendance a former spokesperson for Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Ms. Angela Agoawike; a former spokesperson for the late President Umaru Musa Yar-adua, Mr. Olusesun Adeniyi; and a former NIPR President, Malam Muhktar Zubairu Sirajo, among many others.



Virtual meeting with NPPN

NGF HOSTS FIRST NPPN MEETING IN 2024

The Nigeria Governors' Forum had the first Nigeria Public Private Partnership Network (NPPN) meeting of the year on March 21, 2024.

The meeting which was held virtually, was themed; "The Decentralization of the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry and the Role of States in Rural Electrification".

The NGF Director-General, Asishana Okauru, who gave the opening remarks highlighted the gains of decentralisation in the industry, even as he enumerated the opportunities and challenges it also presents.

The closing remarks was given by NGF's Executive Director, Dr. Abdullateef Shittu. He noted that the partnership played a strategic role in addressing the longstanding challenge of energy access in rural communities.



ZIPLINE VISITS NGF SECRETARIAT

Zipline, a high-level logistics company that aims to bridge the gap between health facilities and reach to emergency medical supplies, hence enabling communities access to health care services more efficiently, has expressed its desire to partner with the NGF Health Desk to promote sustainable health care services across the 36 states.

It made this known during its recent courtesy visit to the NGF Secretariat, led by its representatives, Odiase Catherine and Edmund Dambo.

They stated that the logistics company specialised in on-demand drone delivery and had had a success story of 1.8m vaccines delivered to health centres during Covid19.



HELLO TRACTOR SEEKS COLLABORATION WITH NGF

Hello Tractor visited the Nigeria Governors' Forum recently.

The agro-tech company involved with providing tractors to farmers in order to encourage mechanised farming in Nigeria with a view to attract youth inclusiveness, said the purpose of its visit was to discuss avenues for collaboration with the NGF.

The team led by Country Managing Director, Nneka Enwonwu, appraised the secretariat of its ambition to engage states through the forum to address food insecurity and ensure economic growth, create employment opportunities, provide policy support, and promote sustainable development goals in Nigeria.



L-R Director-General Nigeria Governors' Forum, Asishana Okauru and Chairman, Technical Working Group (TWG) for the NGF-COSCEN International Conference on Girl Child Education in Nigeria, Senator Stephen Odey Ph.D. during the inauguration of the TWG in Abuja, recently.



The NGF Health Team with Directors of Planning, Research and Statistics, States Ministries of Health at a recent Two-Day Stakeholder Meeting (Northern Zones).



L-R, Director Legal Nigeria Governors' Forum, Barrister Chijioke Chukwu with Acting Deputy Mission Director, USAID during a courtesy visit by the USAID program office



L-R Director-General, Annual Investment Meeting(AIM) UAE, Mr. Walid Farghal and Executive Director, Research and Strategy, Nigeria Governors' Forum, Alhaji Shittu Abdulateef during a Courtesy visit to the NGF Secretariat recently.



The Nigeria Governors' Forum management team with the Chemonics team during their courtesy visit to The NGF secretariat



Fourth from the left, FCSU NG CARES, Obaje Abdul; Famen Ade (social protection specialists); World bank Consultant, Prof. Foluso Okunadina; Director General, Nigeria Governors' Forum, Asishana Okauru, TTL NGCares, Lisre Erasdo and others during a meeting at the NGF Secretariat in Abuja.



L-R Director General, Nigeria Governors' Forum, Asishana Okauru and Lisre Erasdo, TTL NGCares, World Bank during the meeting.



Assistant Director SDG Desk, NGF, Eghosa Omogui, and Acting Mission Deputy Director, USAID, Stephen Menard, during the courtesy visit.



L-R- Director General, Nigeria Governors' Forum, Asishana Okauru presenting secretariat souvenirs to the Senior Manager Chemonics, Layne Rogers during the Courtesy visit.



5th from the left; Assistant Director Eghosa Omogui, Director Legal, NGF, Chijioke Chukwu, Stephen Menard (Acting Deputy Mission Director) and Olawoye Olaniyi (Dev. Program Special) USAID, and other staff members of The Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat.





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