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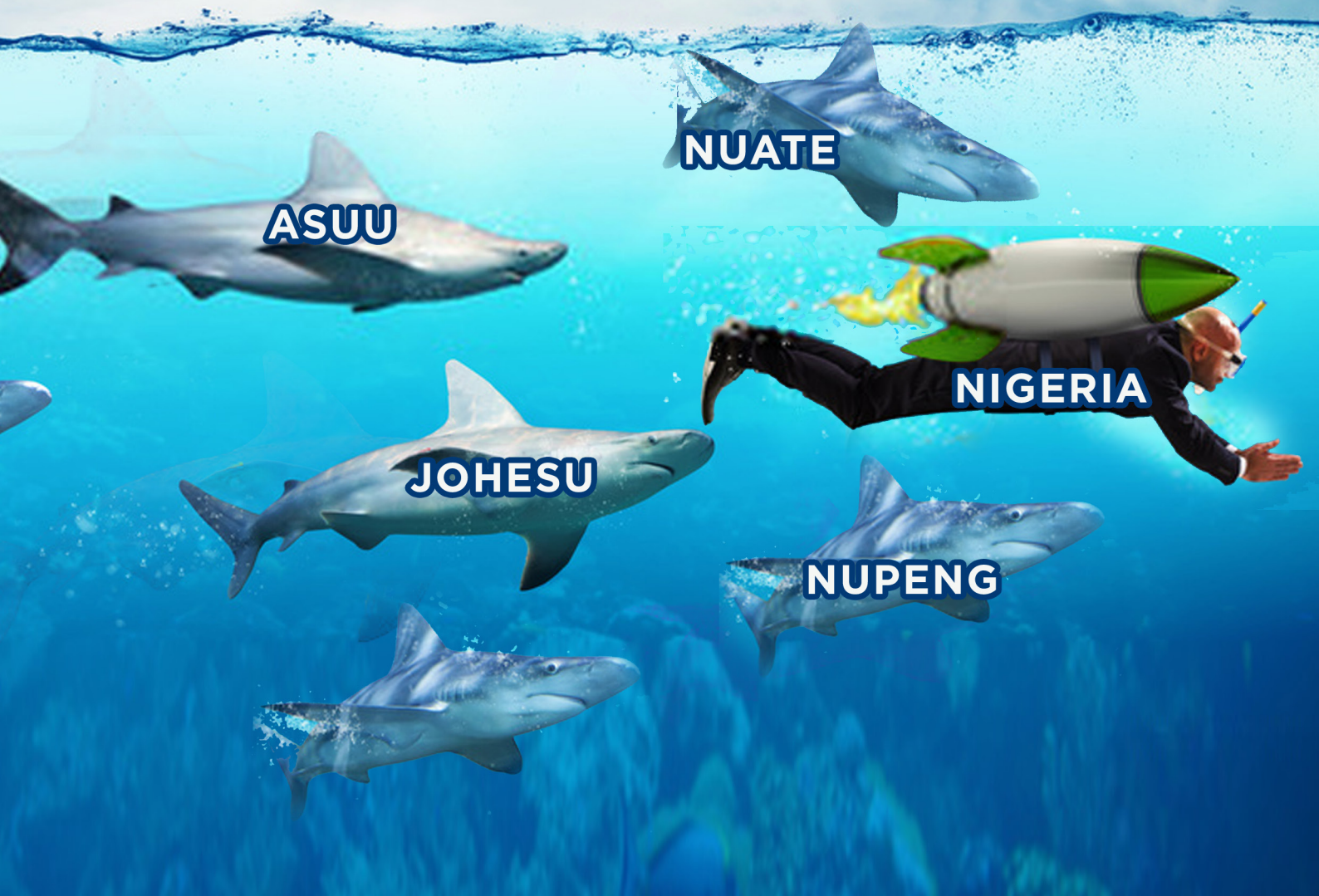
**NIGERIA'S PUBLIC SECTOR:  
WHEN WILL CHANGE COME?**

**THE UNHEALTHY HEALTH SECTOR**

**AN UNENDING ASUU STRIKE**

VOL. 7 20 - 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

# SEASON OF STRIKES AND PROTESTS



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## STORIES AROUND THE GLOBE

### NIGERIA

#### OKOROCHA, UZODIMMA FIGHT OVER OWNERSHIP OF NEW VARSITY

Rocha's Okorocha, former Imo State Governor and Hope Uzodimma, his successor, are in a brawl over the true founder of the University of Agriculture and Environmental Science, Umuagwo in Ohaji local government area of the State. Uzodimma in a statement by Oguwuike Nwachukwu, his media aide said, his boss founded the varsity located in Umuagwo.

Okorocha countered the claim by saying that the tertiary institution is his brainchild. He further said, he did not only get the approval and the license for the take-off of the university, but also appointed Peter Akanwa as the Vice-Chancellor.

Uzodimma however described Okorocha's as a blatant lie. And that if it were that he founded it, the feat would have received a wider publicity.

#### APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES: GROUP HEADS TO COURT OVER NON- APPOINTMENT OF A SOUTH-EASTERNER.

The Registered Trustee of the Social Justice and Civil Rights Awareness Initiative has raised a legal action at the Federal High Court sitting in Abuja

over the non-appointment of a South-easterner as judicial officer in the Federal Capital Territory High Court.

The group declared that the 'appointment of judges to the high court of Federal Capital Territory without the inclusion of at least one person from the whole of South East Nigeria is unlawful' and contravening the 1999 constitution.

The group is seeking the court to mandate President Buhari, the National Judicial Council, the Judicial Service Committee of the Federal Capital Territory, the Attorney General of the Federation, the Senate and the Federal Character Commission to discontinue the recruitment exercise of appointing new judges to the FCT High Court forthwith, until they comply strictly with the Federal Character Principles as enshrined in the 1999 constitution.

#### REMAINS OF MISSING UNDERGRADUATE FOUND IN HOSTEL

Festus Adedoyin Ewejobi, an undergraduate student of the Department of Business Administration, Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, who was recently declared missing, was found dead in his room at the private hostel at Eyinade area in Iree on Thursday.

The body was said to have been discovered due to the

odious smell that prompted the residents of the area to report to the Policemen who in the discharge of their duty, broke down the door and found the missing student dead and decomposing.

It was gathered that injuries inflicted on the body of the deceased, suggesting the he must have been stabbed to death. The Institution management however informed the parents of the deceased and sends his body home for burial.

#### SARAKI HAILS THE US GOVERNMENT FOR PLACING TRAVEL BAN ON SOME NIGERIAN POLITICIANS

The US Department of State on Monday slammed a visa ban on politicians and other individuals whose actions undermined Nigeria's democratic process during the November 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa governorship elections.

According to Sahara Reporters, Adams Oshiomhole, former Edo Governor and National leader of the All Progressive Congress APC, Yahaya Bello, Kogi State Governor, Abdullahi Ganduje, Kano State Governor were reportedly affected by the ban. However, the former Senate President, Bukola Saraki hailed the US government for the action taken. He further said 'I join millions

of Nigerians to commend the United Kingdom and other International parties for responding swiftly to protect Nigeria's democracy with visa restrictions and asset bans for electoral saboteurs.'

'The sanctions should go beyond politicians and include electoral officers, security officials and judicial officers who undermine our democracy by their actions during and after elections.' He said.

#### NSIP: BENEFICIARIES OF 'TRADER MONI' REFUSE TO REPAY LOANS

Hajia Bashira Abdulrazaq-Sanusi, Kwara State Focal person for the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) unveiled that beneficiaries of 'Trade Moni', one of the programmes of the Federal Government NSIP designed to reduce poverty in Nigeria are not ready to repay the loan.

She continued by saying, about 10,000 people benefitted from 'Trader Moni' programme in the state with over N1.3bn disbursed to them as the programme is designed to provide soft loans to boost small scale businesses in the markets. Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo flagged off the 'Trader Moni' sometime last year to support women with N10,000 as soft loans to be



paid back and then enjoy the next stage of N50,000.

She however said, following the termination of N-power programme by the Federal Government in July this year, Kwara State government replicated the youth empowerment programme in the state, codenamed K-power, in order to harness the beneficiaries for the labour market after exiting N-power.

### **CNPP, NLC, TUC READY TO SHUT DOWN NIGERIA OVER FUEL PRICE INCREASE**

The Conference of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) has organised a coalition of civil society groups, such as the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) to join the proposed Nationwide protest against the hike in petrol price and the electricity tariff.

Chief Willy Ezugwu, CNPP Secretary-General told the media that Nigerians have run out of patience with the President Buhari led government administration. The political party said that amidst the current hardship resulting from the pandemic, the Federal Government increased electricity tariff, increased the Value Added Tax (VAT) and the current petrol price, while every government in the world is subsidising, one sector or the other to better the lives of its citizens.

### **CBN SUSPENDS BABA IJEBU, OTHER COMPANIES**

The Central Bank of Nigeria has suspended the bank accounts of 38 Nigerian companies. This order is was as a result of scarcity of dollars at the parallel market during the week, which has forced the Naira down to N465 against a United States dollar. The new order by the Apex bank comes months after the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission launched an investigation into the activities of Adebun Kessington, founder of Premier Lotto, popularly known as *Baba Ijebu* for alleged tax fraud of about N5bn revenue that should have been remitted to the Nigerian Government but was intently kept aside by the company.

Bello Hassan, CBN's Director of Banking Supervision, in a circular released on 4th September however said, 'Note that only the listed entities should be placed on PND (Post-No-Debit), all related accounts are excluded...'

### **FG WARNS HEALTH WORKERS**

The Federal Government has directed the various Unions in the health sector under the Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU) not to go ahead with the strike declared by JOHESU.

According to the statement made by Mr. Charles Akpan, Deputy Director, Press and Public Relations in the Ministry, going ahead with the action would be illegal as it is in clear breach of the International Labour Organisation Principles and Conventions on strike, and Sections 18 of the Trades Disputes Act, Cap T8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

The FG said that such actions would compound the challenges in health services across the country while the nation battles the COVID-19 emergency. For the FG, this highlights the grave illegality of the planned strike action.

This statement however urged the JOHESU leadership to have a rethink 'on this illegal strike by putting the welfare of their patients and Nigeria first.'

### **TRAVESTY OF JUSTICE: IRAN EXECUTES YOUNG WRESTLER DESPITE INTERNATIONAL APPEALS**

Navid Afkari, a 21-year-old national wrestling champion was sentenced to death over the murder of a security guard during a wave of Iran's Shia theocracy protest in 2018. He was accused of stabbing an employee of a water supply company in the Southern city of Shiraz.

Human Rights Organisation,

Amnesty International, however described Afkari's execution as a 'travesty of justice.'

His lawyer had said, contrary to Iranian news reports, there was no video of the moment of the Security Guard's killing. He added that the footage used as evidence in the case was taken an hour before the crime took place.

In a recording released by the group, Afkari says: 'If I am excited, I want you to know that an innocent person, even though he tried and fought with all his strength to be heard, was executed.'

### **EKITI SCHOOLS REOPEN AMID COVID-19**

Dr. Kayode Fayemi, Governor of Ekiti State has publicly announced September 21 for reopening of primary and secondary schools in the state. He made this announcement in a State-wide broadcast on Sunday as he also directed tertiary institutions to be opened to students from 2nd of October as long as they adhered to their Institution's governing council decision and have put measures in place to curtail the spread of the virus.

The Governor stressed that the authorities of the tertiary institutions are to liaise with the Ekiti COVID-19 Task Force for guidance on the appropriate measures and guidelines to be put in place before reopening.



## AFRICA

### UGANDA JAIL BREAK: 219 PRISONERS ESCAPE WITH GUNS AND AMMUNITIONS

Ugandan forces launched a manhunt to recapture over 200 prisoners who escaped jail in Karamoja, a remote, semi-arid north-eastern region of Uganda on Wednesday.

According to Brigadier Flavis Byekwaso, spokeswoman for the military, at least, three people- a soldier and two of by 219 escapees died in a gun battle while two inmates were rearrested.

She further said 'it's a made escape...these were hardcore criminals, and they included murderers, robbers and rapists.'

Before escaping, they broke into the prison armoury and stole 15 Ak-47 rifles, 20 magazines and other ammunitions.

It can be recalled that this was Uganda's third jailbreak since the outbreak of the corona virus, amid fears of contracting COVID-19 in cramped jails.

## THE REST OF THE WORLD

### INDONESIA: CORONAVIRUS RULE BREAKERS FORCED TO DIG GRAVES FOR COVID-19 VICTIMS

The lack of public vigilance, has made it a herculean task for Indonesian authorities to curb the spread of the virus, which till date, has infected close to 230,000 people in the country.

However, the rapid increase in cases in recent months, has forced the Indonesia's government to pass a law requiring people to wear masks in public, deterrents will attract bizarre punishments including forcing offenders to lie down in coffins, digging of graves sites, praying for COVID-19 victims at cemeteries and doing push ups.

The Deputy Head of Pasar Reno, Santoso district said 'The goal is to make people aware that COVID-19 is still present and dangerous.'

### OUTBREAK OF BACTERIAL DISEASE INFECTS THOUSANDS IN CHINA

Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, thousands of people in Northwest China have tested positive for 'brucellosis', a bacterial disease which was caused by a leak at the Zhongmu Lanzhou biological pharmaceutical factory, late July last year. its symptoms include headaches,

muscle pain, fever and fatigue. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), human to human transmission is rare. Instead, most people are infected by eating contaminated food or breathing in the bacteria.

The health commission have confirmed that about 3,245 people had contracted the disease. The disease is usually transmitted by contact with farm animals such as cows, goats and pigs.

Report says, while producing Brucella vaccines for animal use, the Zhongmu factory used expired disinfectants and sanitizers, which meant that not all bacteria were eradicated in the waste gas.

### DEADLY STORM CAUSES POWER OUTAGE, DOWNED TREES, KILLS 1 IN THE U.S

Hurricane Sally is the fourth hurricane to make landfall in the United States this year. It was a Category 2 storm on the coast of Alabama. Hurricane Sally has threatened the United States' South-East with heavy rains and misery after its floodwaters swallowed up homes, turned streets into rivers, downed power lines and uprooted trees. It has dumped thirty inches of rain on parts of Florida and Alabama and soaked the North and South Carolina.

The torrential rains and howling winds left more than 500,000 homes without power in Alabama and Florida.

Trent Johnson, a Police Lieutenant in Orange beach, Alabama unveiled that the storm is believed to have killed one person in Alabama. He said 'we had a body wash up, we believe it was hurricane-related, but we have no definite proof of that right now.'

Chuck Watson of Enki Research said that, the damage from Sally is expected to reach \$2bn to 3bn. And that estimate could rise if the heaviest rainfall happens over land. Enki Research tracks tropical storms and models the cost of their damage.

### AMERICAN MAN ARRESTED FOR CARRYING WOMAN'S REMAINS IN HIS LUGGAGE

Melvin Martin Jr., a 30-year-old American visiting relative in suburban Chicago has been arrested after a woman's remains were found in his bags.

Chief Terry White, Police Chief disclosed that he 'brought with him luggages-two, three bags. There were some early reports of a foul odour coming from the bags.' And while the man was at a public library, a relative opened one of the bags and found the body parts.

However, Martin was being charged as a fugitive fleeing prosecution, he faces an extradition hearing back to Kentucky.

### **PAKISTAN PM CALLS FOR CHEMICAL CASTRATION OF CONVICTED RAPIST**

Imran Khan, Pakistan's Prime Minister ordered for rapists and child molesters to be chemically castrated. He said this when he was being asked in an interview about a rape case that got national attention in Pakistan.

According to the First Information Report (FIR), a woman lodged a complaint in Lahore in the capital of Punjab in Pakistan, alleging that she had been gang-raped by two men after she ran out of fuel and her car broke down.

The Minister unveiled that he had discussed possible punishments for the alleged perpetrator, with Ministers in his Cabinet. He however suggested that rapists and child molesters would 'undergo chemical castration, or surgery be performed so they cannot do anything in future.'

### **BLACK ACTIVISTS ARRESTED FOR STEALING CONGOLESE STATUE FROM DUTCH MUSEUM**

A group of five French-speaking activists; two men and three women, have been arrested on Thursday

for stealing a Congolese Funeral Statue from the Afrika Museum in Nijmegen, Southwest of the capital, Amsterdam, while streaming their actions live on Facebook. According to Mwazulu Diyabsnza, a member of the activist group said in a speech that they were repatriating a religious statue which had been stolen by the 'Dutch, and Portuguese' from Africa, during times of colonisation and slavery, when evangelists were spreading the Christian faith.

The Facebook stream ended with police arresting one of the protesters, while the statue was returned to the museum.

### **BULGARIA: HEZBOLLAH TERRORISTS ON ISRAELI TOURISTS' ATTACK SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT**

A Bulgarian court judge, Adelina Ivanova, sentenced two Hezbollah terrorists, identified as Meliad Farah, 31, at the time of the attack, and Hassan El Hajj Hassan, 24, to life imprisonment, over a deadly 2012 bus bomb attack that killed five Israelis including a pregnant woman, their Bulgarian bus driver and the Franco-Lebanese who carried the explosives.

The two men linked with Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shiite Terror Group, were charged in mid-2016 as the bomber's accomplices and were put on

trial in absentia in January 2018 for manslaughter.

Ivan Geshev, Bulgarian's chief prosecutor, emphasized that Hezbollah was behind the attack 'in terms of logistics and financing.'

The prosecution, however, affirmed that it had no clue about the convicts' whereabouts as they still sought on an Interpol red notice.

### **ISRAEL: COURT EXTRADITE WOMAN OVER CHILD SEX CASE**

An Israel court on Monday, 21 September, approved the repatriation of an Israel-born former teacher, Malker Leifer, in Australia, alleged of child sex abuse in 2014, making way for her to stand trial after six-year legal battle. Earlier this month, Israel's supreme court rejected an appeal by Leifer's attorney over a Jerusalem court ruling that she was mentally fit to stand trial, saying it was 'putting an end to the saga that has been drawn out for many years.'

However, critic, including Leifer's alleged victims in persons of Dassi Erlich, Nicole Meyer and Elly Sapper, have accused Israel authorities of dragging the case out for too long.

### **AUTHORITIES ARREST WOMAN SUSPECTED OF SENDING POISONED LETTER TO PRESIDENT TRUMP**

A woman (name withheld) suspected of sending a letter containing lethal poison ricin has been arrested on Sunday and taken into custody by US Customs and Border Protection Officers as she tried to get into US from Canada at a border crossing in New York State.

Ricin is said to be a deadly poison naturally found in castor beans and exposure to a quantity as small as a pinhead can kill an adult within 36 to 72 hours.

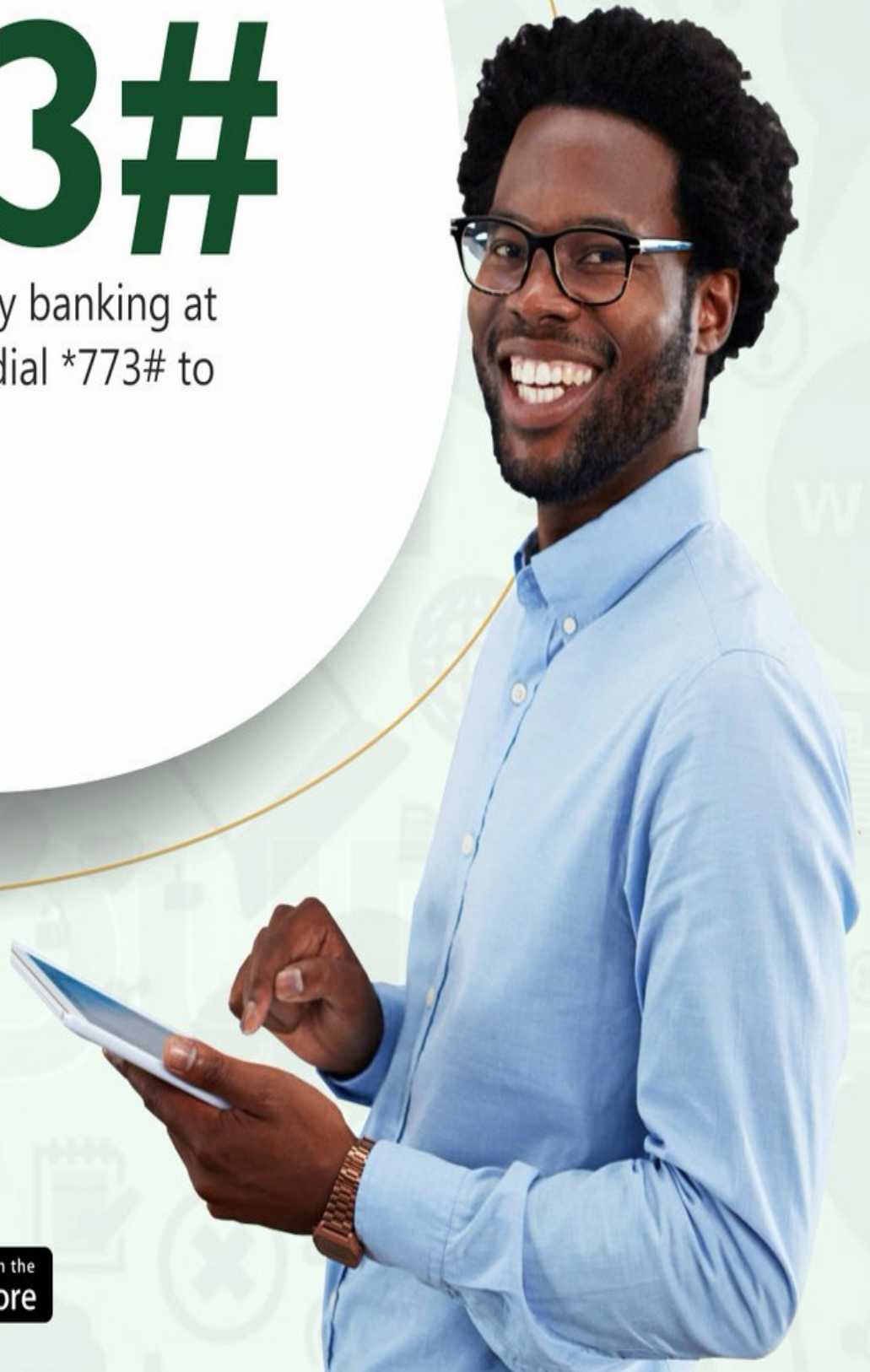
The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), unveiled that the letter was seized before getting to the White House, as all mail for the White House is screened at an office facility before reaching the White House.

The spokeswoman from the FBI Washington field office confirmed the arrest and assured that investigation remains ongoing.

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## NIGERIA'S PUBLIC SECTOR WHEN WILL CHANGE COME?

*Abiodun Bello  
Femi Morgan*

The potentialities of Nigeria continue to remain uncontested in the comity of nations. Even when its labour force is perceived to struggle back at home, many countries have enjoyed and continued to enjoy positive impacts from the collective input of Nigerians in the diaspora. Many countries in the Western hemisphere have recorded outstanding boosts in their medical sector, without leaving out Nigerians making global impacts in the fields of Engineering, university Teaching and Research, Politics, and Nursing, to reference just few.

In the last few years, however, Nigeria seems to have become the subject of growing political debates, many of which do not give the West African giant any chance of pulling through its internal challenges as may relate to the workforce across the different sectors. Some of the many commentaries on the country have reflected positions that reflect opinions from the West which often focus attention on the nation's poor chances of surviving as a political state.

While many of these concerns as expressed by citizens and social critics may be nothing short of legitimate, it is also true that most Nigerians who express these fears have watched many countries with huge potentials suddenly slip into states of economic emergencies. While classic examples abound in this regard, Azerbaijan passes as one country which, in the course of its post-Soviet independence, has battled unforeseen circumstances especially brought home by the 'Dutch disease' which badly hit its economic fortune on account of its badly managed oil boom. Like Azerbaijan, Nigeria has toed the path of the 'resource curse'.

According to economic experts, the resource curse theory gives focus to the trends of negative effects which the obvious abundance of natural resources has on the different sectors of a country's life, including political, economic and social sectors. Expounding this more deeply, Ilkin Gasimov notes that nations with resource abundance often tend to develop less than the resource-deficit ones. Sadly, this challenge affects the political



life of countries by decreasing institutional quality and increasing corruption. In the words of Gasimov, 'Decreasing number of school enrolments and hospitals, low wages in education and health sectors are signs of resource curse problem in social life.'

With these expert views in mind, observers of goings-on in Nigeria over the past decade must have a fair idea that the West African giant has successfully chauffeured itself down to a precipice of irredeemably lost opportunities. If this is anything to go by, the nation must find more grounds to redeem itself rather than allow its economic strengths, human potentials and national image to get buckled in the face of labour crises that, in the final analysis, are not peculiar to its internal workings, and which it has the capacities to surmount.

As a matter of fact, Nigeria as a nascent independent country had had the good fortune to manage its civil service structure and increase it proportional to its resource capacity. The popular S. O. Adebayo and Jerome Oputa Udoji Commissions of the famed 'Adebayo' and 'Udoji' Awards of the 1970s remain some of the abiding references to the Nigerian golden age, when the economic prosperity of the country had duly reflected in the thriving of its growing population. With few days into the nation's sixtieth Independence anniversary, the Nigerian landscape is dotted with spates of protests and labour strikes that appear targeted at the jugular of government. In a latest development, the Nigeria Labour Congress has issued a two-week ultimatum to the Federal Government to reverse the recent hike in petroleum price and electricity tariffs, two mortar-and-brick increments that greeted the citizens in the wake of September. Meanwhile, while the recent increase in electricity tariff and the prices of petroleum products continues to attract undesirable feedbacks from the Nigerian public, the series of industrial actions by sections of the health sector, such as emanating from resident doctors and the joint health service unions, have not helped matters. There have been tiers of anti-government protests in few states of the federation in recent times. Some of these anti-government remonstrations have been greeted with forceful dispersal of protesters by enforcement agencies, a development that has propensities to put government in bad light in the public eye.

As many similar situations and developments continue to unfold in the Aviation, Education and other sectors, it remains doubtful that the Nigerian state has learnt

any lessons from the ill-fate that befell many oil-rich countries like itself. While the Nigerian Labour Congress is planning to make good its threat of a nationwide strike if government fails to reverse the new increments, there is a critical sense of the need to help both the government and its citizens appreciate the enormity of the national exigency before them.

With the prognosis showing that the future of oil tends towards uncertainties as the industrial value of crude oil, petroleum and its derivatives may not be in high demand in the next generation, many countries have since begun the process of diversifying their economies in participation and proactive preparation for a more competitive world economy and global political order. As countries of the world are shaping up into this new frame of thought, Nigeria apparently remains held in the doldrums of economic and political lethargy. She is failing to come to terms with the reality of the mileage it had lost especially the opportunities available to her to reinvent herself and bolster her national strength, with a view to becoming an active player in the new world that other nations presently race for.

Nigeria's failings in this and many respects perhaps are inextricably linked with the failures of successive governments and political leaders to creatively and critically work out feasible frameworks that harmonise the country's revenue and recurrent spending with the size of its civil- and public-service structure. The Nigerian civil and public services have continued to maintain an overblown personnel base. This has the huge implication of sinking the nation's resources often without any accountability system to gauge government's spending. Often, the Nigerian government finds itself in a series of shameful controversies over the actual size of its civil service.

Few years ago, the Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) had debunked an ascribed civil service figure of 1.2 million as overstated, insisting that 'available records on the entire public service put the right figure at about 870,000 strong.' Observed trends have always revealed the reluctance of the Budget Office of the Federation (BOF) and the Federal Ministry of Finance in making available records to show the true size of the Nigerian public workers database. While the sacrosanct figures for the nation's civil service have continued to remain, at best, an adumbration to the curious members of the civil society, one thing is certain:

the Nigerian state has bitten more than it can chew of the pie of public service enrolment. This singular factor is already largely accountable for the sinking state of public workers' welfare and the implications of this for the general workings of the nation's economy, vis-a-vis labour satisfaction, inflation and price systems.

In their 2013 paper titled 'Civil Service and Cost of Governance in Nigeria,' Okechukwu Innocent Eme and Andrew Ogbochie are quick to point out the admission by former president, Olusegun Obasanjo, in his June 5, 2003 speech to the National Assembly, that government in Nigeria is incrementally sunk by overbearing factors which include non-performance or gross under-performance of the Local Governments; the high cost of governments and near prohibitive costs of electioneering campaigns to individual political contestants in Nigeria; and continual fragmentation of Local Government Councils including impractical division of towns and cities into unworkable mini-Local Governments.

Since the stark reality of a white-elephant labour and civil service in Nigeria can no longer be denied nor renounced by the people and their government, the question must be asked of the likely reason why it seems to have been almost impossible for government to carry out any meaningful reforms particularly targeted at restructuring and downsizing its civil and public services. The possible response to this point of enquiry is not by any means hidden. The government has often maintained its conviction that such reforms will most likely be greeted with negative reactions and agitations from workers, especially as long as this move is bound to affect the vested interests of the various Labour Unions and their discrete leaderships. While it is common knowledge from the antecedents of unionists that leaders of labour unions often use the different labour platforms to enrich themselves, the government is also culpable of contributing to these problems through its compensatory culture of giving civil service and public service appointments to friends, children of friends and other political allies.

These unwarranted practices surely contribute to increasing the already high chances of bloating to costs of governance and government spending through the employment of individuals who often make little or no contributions to public administration and the productivity of government. Certainly, while members

of the various unions are seen to make genuine demands of their government as is currently the case, Labour leaders often go the contrary way of compromising the demands from their memberships by reaching alternative and back-door bargains with any current government. In turn, government has found a formula for making good its own position by creating new factions out of existing labour unions, as in the fashion of the United Labour Congress, carved out of the pre-existing Nigeria's Labour Congress (NLC), and the Congress of University Academics (CONUA), a factional offshoot of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

While all the recurring issues appertaining to labour in Nigeria may have been existing for up to thirty years, the seeming absence of a decisive solution to the problems does not speak to the inability of government to engage the professional knowledge and expertise of those who can make the right intervention in line with global best practices. The persistent problems only summons the failure of government to be sincere in its intra-governmental workings and ambivalent dealings with the labour force. As typical of the Nigerian political climate, in the face of grim and pressing issues of public concerns and national emergency, a current government often thinks first of the next election and the need to keep the sanctity of political affiliations and allegiance, rather than tackle the problems headlong with the best intellectual and human resources available to it.

Nigeria has so much to learn from the nature and history of many unsuccessful, and in some cases abortive, states around the globe. Whether government succeeds or not remains a matter not only for time to reveal, but for the state and its populace to determine by examining their history with issues of similar imports, and taking appropriate lessons that lie therein. In all, Nigeria must not shy away from the potentials that lie within its hard-earned and well-deserved nationhood. It must decisively foster the belief in the great aptitude of millions of its citizens to make creative and intellectual interventions to solve the seeming impossible labour problems in their home country as they are seen to do elsewhere on the globe.



# THE UNHEALTHY HEALTH SECTOR

## NIGERIAN HEALTH WORKERS IN THE SWELTERING SUN

*Abiodun Bello*

The Nigerian health sector is strategic and significant to the nation on two critical grounds. On the one hand, it represents the pulse of the labour force in terms of how healthy an average worker could be, based on the medical and healthcare available to him or her. On the other hand, the health sector itself represents a section of the Nigerian work force notable for providing health and medical services to millions of the country's populations. Being so entwined, it becomes possible to infer that the health of the health sector translates as the health of the labour force, while the strength of the workforce in the health sector invariably translates as health for the entire nation's population, including its labour.

There is no misgiving that the arrival of colonial powers in Nigeria, as with many African countries, had translated into a superimposition of Eurocentric

structures on the pre-existing ones which the native peoples and their ancestors had employed for eons. This also meant that 'modern' principles and practices would replace the primordial African healthcare philosophy and healthcare practitioners in the new colonial and post-colonial times would learn to imbibe not only the principles and ethics of medical practice, but also those of labour-employer relations mostly established by contract. For instance, every worker in the Nigeria labour market is expected to be familiar with the provisions of the Nigerian Labour Law, in addition to labour expectations and binding obligations in the particular sector of employment.

The Scimago Institution Ranking currently puts the ranking of the UCH at 78th in overall percentile of world hospitals in the ranking; 55th in the research percentile; 91st in the innovation percentile, and 74th



in the societal percentile. This is a grim picture for a medical institution that once ranked high and indeed among the first four best hospitals in the world, playing host to royals from countries in Europe and the Middle East. Since the 1990s, given the spate of economic and political crises owing to perceivable lack of direction by government, there have been slow and steady declines in the capacity of the Nigerian health sector to deliver on its professional and social expectations.

Surely, these sad trends in the Nigerian health services sector are symptoms of a national catastrophe. A public health crisis is often understood as a challenging condition or state of affairs which puts the health sector of any country in a difficult place, often with the potential to paralyse and cripple its efficiency. The World Health Organisation describes a 'crisis' as any 'situation that is perceived as difficult. Its greatest value is that it implies the possibility of an insidious process that cannot be defined in time, and that even spatially can recognise different layers/levels of intensity. A crisis may not be evident, and it demands analysis to be recognised. Conceptually, it can cover both preparedness and response'. This may well be true for a patient in crisis as it is for a nation that has watched its healthcare services sink into troubled waters.

According to a 2017 study by Davies Adeloje and others, titled 'Health Workforce and Governance: The Crisis in Nigeria' by the Human Resource for Health, a biomedical platform, there is a close relationship between the health workforce and governance. As an institutional mechanism or an 'administrative umbrella of the health system primarily concerned with policymaker- or government-led ... rule-making functions targeted at achieving national health policy objectives for effective delivery of health services and attainment of universal health coverage,' the health governance structure in Nigeria has remained detached from this function for some time. For instance, the report profiles the series of industrial actions by the Nigerian health workforce between 2006 and 2010.

Between 2010 and 2016, the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) had consistently staged protests and called strike actions to largely protest over the actions of chief medical directors (CMDs), namely irregular and non-payment of salaries for several months. The association also remonstrated against other conditions such as poor welfare which

informed its demand for renovation of call rooms and better-quality call meals; the non-payment of teaching allowances and update courses and shortage of doctors in the hospitals, as interns and residents completing training were not replaced on time. Specifically, in 2011, 2013 and 2016, the association had downed tools to call for teaching allowance and skipping as well as an upgrade of doctors to the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) platform; a full implementation of adjusted Consolidated Medical Salary Structure (CONMESS) across the board. The striking doctors also made request for residency training guidelines, appraisal and upgrading, while asking the Federal Government to address high-handedness of chief medical directors of some health institutions, and to implement the National Health Act.

In 2013, the Lagos Chapter of the Nigeria Medical Association had also called for a strike to press home its request for improved conditions of service, better welfare and improved medical facilities. In addition to this, the industrial action called by the Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU) in July 2014 was national in its coverage and was aimed at addressing the professional inequalities existing among the various specialisations within the JOHESU versus the Nigeria Medical Association. JOHESU wanted its members to be made consultants like medical doctors. It also demanded to establish directorates for nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy, and other allied health sectors, while seeking an amendment bill to correct marginalisation of all health workers by doctors. Other demands included composition and appointment of the management boards of health institutions; extension of retirement age from 60 to 65 years; implementation of the National Health Insurance Scheme towards increased remuneration, and overall funding of health system.

Between July and August of the same year, the NMA itself also pressed for demands that included relativity and skipping in doctors' salaries; the reversal of the consultant status and directorates of allied health professionals, and call for improved funding of health system. The call for a reversal of the consultant status and directorates of allied health professionals by the NMA clearly ran counter to JOHESU's demand that there be directorates for allied workers in the nation's health sector.

Ironically, the NARD's demand bordering on the implementation of the National Health Act would turn out to be a major catalyst of crisis in the Health Ministry in later years. In 2019, the then serving Minister of Health, Isaac Adewole, had publicly admitted, during what appeared to be a clash of functions, that faulty structure of the establishment Act of the Nigeria's Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) had become a big monster haunting Nigeria's Ministry of Health before and during his time. In a recent public appearance, the health minister had connected the failure of the NHIS to serve majority of the Nigerian people for whom it was created, to the existence of loose ends in the Act which made a national health insurance voluntary rather than compulsory. The minister had also argued that the vesting of excessive power in the Governing Board made it possible for successive Executive Secretaries of the scheme to perpetuate acts of corruption that compromised service delivery to subscribers of the National Health Insurance Scheme. To make matters worse, the serving minister at the time had pointed out that the NHIS establishing Act did not make provision for a 'suspension' clause which could make it possible to sack underhanded managers of the Scheme, such as executive secretaries. Hence, he made a call to the National Assembly to repeal the Act and make provision for a better version of it, which, among many other things, would give priority to Nigerians who subscribed to the scheme.

Sadly, while the health sector has become crisis-ridden owing to these series of industrial actions and counter-actions, the Nigerian people remain at the receiving ends of the negative consequences of many of these medical strikes. Patients in critical conditions – including strokes, HIV/AIDS, sickle-cell emergencies, renal crises, and in most recent times, coronavirus patients – had often been left without any medical attention while strike actions lasted.

The study by Davies Adeloye and co. establishes the direct links that exist between efficient health system governance and promising health workers outputs, which ultimately have positive effects on the health sector of any country. For Nigeria, some of the reasons for incessant strike actions are leadership and governance related, and often cover systemic issues in thematic areas such as personnel administration, policy, finance/funding and remuneration, supremacy challenges, welfare and health workforce distribution.

The latest threat of strike action being issued by labour leadership is one in the series of recurring industrial actions in recent times. It is coming only more than a week after the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), a body of doctors in the employ of government, called off its strike over government's failure to meet its demands of a payment of unsettled wages, a raise in their pay package, alongside their demand for life insurance coverage, the provision of adequate bed spaces and drugs in public hospitals. The strike action, which had been foreshadowed by a warning strike by the resident doctors in June, is also directed at the provision of adequate protective equipment for doctors in the frontline of the treatment of coronavirus patients in the country. The call-off of the strike is only based on an agreement to give the government some time since, the industrial action is according to the government, 'ill-timed'. A similar situation had been recorded in 2004 when the NARD had threatened to embark on strike indefinitely if the government failed to meet the demands over its members' wages.

As though lurking in the shadows of the NARD's September strike, the Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU) had followed the trail of the NARD by going on a warning strike on the midnight of Sunday, September 13, 2020 to press home its demand for hazard and inducement allowance. While the Nigerian Minister of Health has been on his feet in the bid to make all needed interventions to the NARD and the JOHESU from the government's end, the Labour Minister, through his ministry's spokesperson, only issued statement to the effect that the striking Union was going on a head collision with the International Labour Organisation's 'Principles and Conventions on Strike' as well as section 18 of the Trades Disputes Act, Cap T8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004. The Labour minister, among other things, also greeted the unionists with the accusation that JOHESU was attempting to 'arm-twist' the Federal Government to meet its demands.

The Minister of Labour, Chris Ngige, had been seen calling out the striking unions as attempting to force the hands of government to meet their demands, while his counterpart in the Health Ministry, Prof. Osagie Ehanire, has been seen to be making frantic moves to reconcile the health workers and their issues with the government. The apparent contradictions in the discrete moves by the Minister of Labour and the





Health Minister represent the often-counterproductive nature of government approaches to issues of public interests. As each government administration gives way to a succeeding one, there seems to be no creative and lasting solutions in sight. Different subsections of the health sector, especially the public health subsector, have continued to call government's attention to its needs areas. Many of these are dictated by the gaps that now appear to be insatiable in the eye of the government. With the perception of the state of things in the health services sector, the Nigerian government seems to have taken on more issues than it can adequately manage. Some of the solutions, going forward, will have to begin with the readiness of government to summon the political will to show sincerity towards mitigating all the existing conflict areas in the health sector. This must begin with a decisive and thorough engagement of the identified areas. Without adequate welfare coverage for the millions of medical workers across the nation, the chances remain continually slim that the country will ever make its health services robust enough to meet current demands on its personnel. Government must also review defective

statutory provisions with the view to plug the various loopholes that make possible the seeming indiscriminate and unequal treatments of health workers in the allied health sectors. Inherent in these steps is a promising new order in which industrial actions are minimised; that is, if not completely suppressed. All of these expectations will find meaningful expression only through effective leadership, governance and personnel administration on the parts of government and the leadership of the discrete health unions.

Only when better conditions are restored in the health services sector can the Nigerian people and their government attain a new lease of life with far-reaching positive implications for the entire labour force and indeed for Nigerians of all ages and stations of life. Only then could the Nigerian state have come closer to the ideal world envisioned by Benjamin Disraeli the former British Prime Minister, when he wrote that 'The health of the people is really the foundation upon which all their happiness and all their powers as a State depend.'

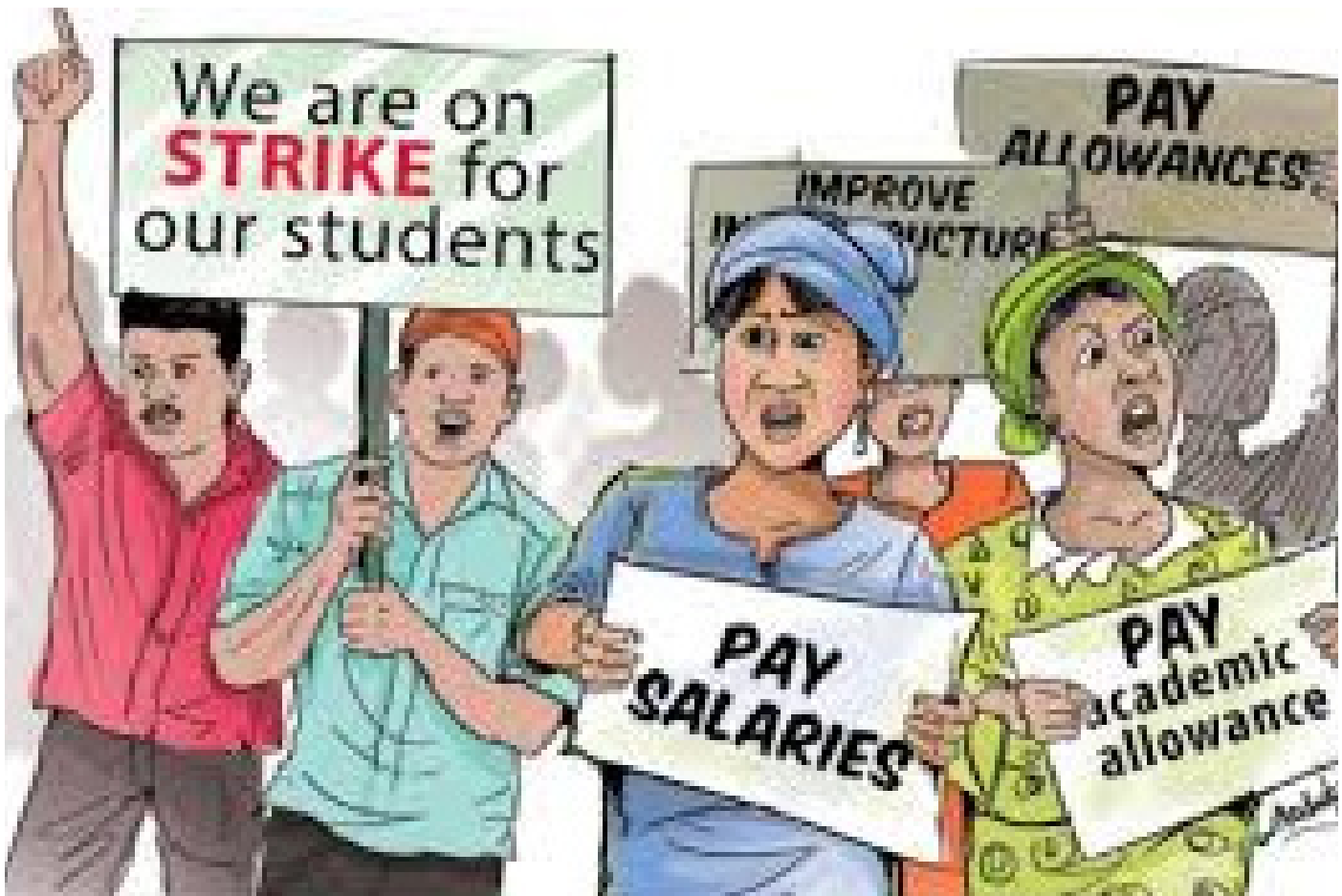
# AN UNENDING ASUU STRIKE

*Jude Nwabukei*

Perhaps one should be wondering how thunder strikes relate to ASUU strikes. A refresher course in physical geography will suffice. Thunder and lightning go hand in hand, so it would be expedient for one to be reminded of how lightning occurs which is then followed by the loud clap one hears in the sky as well as the occasional rumblings that are heard in the atmosphere. Lightning is extremely hot; a flash can heat the air around it to five times the temperature of the sun's surface. This heat causes the surrounding air to rapidly expand and vibrate and this creates the peeling thunder we hear immediately after seeing a lightning flash. This ensuing battle between the cloud and the ground can be likened to the one that exists between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). The Federal Government is the cloud that sends the lightning to the ground, while ASUU who is the ground in this case retaliates by sending the lightning through

the same channel back to the clouds. The Nigerian undergraduates and postgraduates hear the loud report and try to stay above the fray in order to avoid the electrocution or death of their higher education pursuits.

Formed in 1978 as a successor to the Nigerian Association of University Teachers which was formed in 1965, the Academic Staff Union of Universities became the umbrella body covering academic staff in all the Federal and State Universities in the country. The first national strike organised by the Union was in 1988 which was aimed at obtaining fair wages and university autonomy. This led to the proscription of the Union on August 7, 1988. In 1990, they were recalled and again banned on August 23 1992. By September 3 1992 an agreement was reached, between the union and the government, which met several of its demands, including the right of



workers to collective bargaining. The union organised further strikes in 1994 and 1996 in protest against the removal of staff by the Abacha regime. The return to democracy in 1999 witnessed a union that continued to be fervent in demanding the rights of university workers against opposition by the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo.

In July 2002, the issue woven around the financial mismanagement at the University of Ilorin, followed by the petition of the national president at that time to the Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission to investigate the members of staff who were involved in the act. 2007 witnessed another three-month strike. Then, in 2008, the union held two 'one-week' warning strikes to press demands which included an improved salary scheme and reinstatement of 49 lecturers who were dismissed some years earlier. In June 2009, ASUU struck again, ordering its members in federal and state universities nationwide to proceed on an indefinite strike over disagreements with the federal government on some unsettled agreements that had taken place about two and half years earlier. After three months of strikes, the union and other staff unions signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government and called off the industrial action. On July 1, 2013 ASUU, struck once more, this time with a strike that lasted five months and fifteen days and was called off on December 16 2013. ASUU's reason for embarking on the strike centred largely on funding and revitalisation of Nigerian public universities, as well as unpaid allowances in arrears of N92 Billion. 2017 and 2018 also had its fair share of the ASUU strike. It bordered again on demands and disagreements. By March this year, ASUU went on strike due to the government's refusal to negotiate the 2009 agreement. Recently, the National President of the union, Prof. Biodun Ogunyemi stated that universities in the country would not open until the federal government honoured the agreement it struck with the union.

The (in)action of the government and the resultant reaction by ASUU appears to be centred more on a battle of wits, a clash of egos and some little bits of sabotage by the government and some members of the union. Once again, this has to be explicated as clearly as possible. Anyone who has followed ASUU's industrial actions judiciously will realise that compared to other Trade Unions, they are better in the art and science of negotiation. Even industrial actions that were organised by the Nigerian Labour Congress during the Comrade

days of Adams Oshiomhole did not achieve the kind of outcomes that ASUU strikes have had. Their resilience and perseverance even in the face of the withdrawal of their wages is commendable. Beyond this, their fraternity with the media, their level of education and the other perks they rightfully enjoy from their research works, books and patents, gives them some level of influence and social capital that earns them other benefits including extra income. Also, unlike the government that only seeks the media for public relations or damage control purposes, the academics that make up the body called ASUU are constantly in the face of the public through media interviews, town hall meetings and social media. Between the government and ASUU, the calls for resumption of negotiations have been done by ASUU. The likely reason for this may be the government's unwillingness to negotiate or implement agreements as is the case with the 2009 agreement that has lingered for over ten years.

It must be noted however, that ASUUs internal politics has also affected its capacity to obtain its demands from the government. When the union embarked on a nationwide strike on November 5 2018, the University of Ilorin and Obafemi Awolowo University did not join the action on the grounds that they were not officially informed by the union. In OAU, there were talks of division in the OAU Chapter of ASUU which led to the creation of factions. This went on despite the plea by the ASUU Chairman OAU Chapter, Adeola Egbedokun that they should join the strike. More so, the demand for the exclusion from the Treasury Single Account on the grounds of autonomy falls under the murky waters of ASUU's politics. While one must agree that budgetary allocations to the education sector are extremely low, Nigerian Federal and State Universities have not shown that they can manage funds effectively. Part of ASUU's condition for calling off its strikes has been the exclusion of its internally generated revenue from the Treasury Single Account. For a union that constantly lambasts the government for its failure to fund public universities, ASUU should instigate universities in Nigeria to give proper account of funds allotted to them through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). Many Nigerians can still remember the fiasco that ensued between the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the University of Ilorin over alleged N2 billion fraud. According to the petition filed against the institution, there were cases of pension fraud, unremitted deductions, extortion from



students, contract inflation as well as unlawful payments to ex-principal officers of the university.

In 2017, the management of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso was found to be operating 97 different bank accounts and HMOs. It was reported then that for about five years, the institution had received a cumulative N13.7 billion which it failed to remit into the TSA. Within the same period, the management of the prestigious University of Ibadan (UI) was alleged to have declined auditing its account between 2010 and 2015. It was reported that the amount of funds unaccounted for by the management of the institution was so convoluted that external auditors were at a loss. What these instances point to is that our universities should put their houses in order before approaching the government to make demands. They have not been accountable enough to be entrusted with financial or administrative autonomy. While the agenda of the 2009 agreement is all-together noble, there are so many knotty issues revolving around their fiscal policies.

Whether the strikes are for wages and allowances or the provision of adequate infrastructure for Nigerian universities, ASUU must convince the government that it has been able to manage the little that has been given to it over the years. An institution that refuses to be audited lacks the moral ground to embark on strikes on the basis of poor funding. Strikes and Protests are generally about what the government has not done, hence, little is said about what was done. This brings us to the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). TETFund was established as Education Trust Fund by Act No.7 of 1993 and amended by Act No.40 of 1998 which was repealed and replaced with Tertiary Education Trust Fund Act 2011. This intervention agency was set up to provide supplementary support to all public tertiary institutions with the main objective of using funding alongside project management for the rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation of Tertiary Education in Nigeria. The fund's main source of income is the 2% education tax paid from the accessible profit of companies registered in Nigeria. This tax is collected by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) on behalf of the fund. While much may not be known about the fund's management of funds, the fact remains that there are federal and state universities that have benefited from TETFund at one point or the other as reflected in their website.

At a time when Student Protests are treated with kid gloves, one can only wonder if ASUU is not simply getting a taste of its medicine. Recently in August this year, the National Association of University Students (NAUS) and students from Polytechnics and Colleges of Education held nationwide protests demanding the immediate reopening of campuses in Nigeria. The aggrieved students stated that the continued closure of their schools reflected the insensitivity of the leadership to education. The leadership could either be the government or the leadership of ASUU. Without doubt the government has its faults but ASUU needs to look inwards and reflect on ways of bringing Nigerian universities up to the standard of foreign universities. In the United Kingdom, most public universities raise funds from a wide range of sources which include donations from alumni, philanthropists, foundations and the government. A website called Universities UK confirmed that only about a quarter of the income that universities receive comes directly from government sources. Is it not possible for Nigerian Universities to access grants from foundations that fund research? Is it not possible to create a system whereby alumni of these universities can make willful donations? In a country where people can raise \$9,000 for reality TV, it is certain that if ASUU mandates its members to be transparent in their management of funds, the public will be willing to lend them a helping hand. ASUU might want to borrow a leaf from how successful NGOs are run. One of the main requirements for getting funds from donor lies in their accountability.

ASUU should begin to organise symposia and workshops on ways of generating internal revenue because world class institutions are not entirely reliant on their government for funding. The union has continued to adopt strikes as the main method for compelling the government to fund universities and it is obvious that it is not sustainable. They may need to devise other strategies as strikes are definitely not producing the desired results. Sometime last year, the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) generated electricity from waste. This was done in a bid to make the university self-sufficient and stop it from going cap in hand to the federal government for funds for research, wages or allowances. Like UNN, Nigerian Universities must begin to use their intellectual prowess for the benefit of the universities they serve. What is preventing the Faculties of Agriculture from having Farms where individuals and organisations can purchase fresh food



items? Who says that the various Departments of Film, Music and Theatre arts cannot build studios that can compete with the ones in Hollywood? These are some of the questions that the union should begin to ask its members.

Universities should begin to develop different ways of funding their operations through endowment funds, these are funds generated by donations from the public. These accumulated funds are then invested into real estate or stocks. This is the case in the United States where 97 universities have an asset base of over \$1 billion. For any of these solutions to work, Nigerian universities must improve its corporate governance and transparency as this will boost the confidence of donors and investors to look towards their direction. The University of Lagos is known for its campus shuttle, a transport system operated within the university that generates internal revenue for the University. In addition, universities are now coming up with radio stations that are run mainly by teachers and students of Mass Communication. All these are instances of ventures that can generate IGR. However, caution must be taken to ensure that the three cardinal goals of teaching, research and community service are not left out in the management of these ventures.

The analogy of thunder and lightning, made earlier, was used to address the impasse between ASUU and the federal government. Now architects and builders are aware of something called the lightning rod. The lightning rod is a metal rod mounted on structures in order to protect the structure from lightning strike. In

other words, ASUU should begin to gravitate towards being more self-sufficient and protecting themselves from the capricious stance of the government after they leave the negotiating table. The federal government had in the past, suggested alternative financing arrangements like private sector financing, student loan schemes and the creation of an education bank. ASUU resisted the idea of the education bank on the ground that it would make students perpetually indebted. They may need to give the idea of an education bank a rethink, and work out realistic repayment plans that can make it sustainable.

In developed nations like the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, student loans are used to help students get adequate funding for their education. Some of the academics in ASUU were beneficiaries of scholarships and grants, if Nigerian students cannot be given scholarships, they can at least be given loans. Students are the underlying fulcrum on which most of their demands rest on, so they should seriously look into this. There is a popular saying that one cannot keep doing the same thing and expect to get a different result. The 2009 agreement and the attendant issues that come with it has become a tug of war between ASUU and the federal government and it appears that both parties are not willing to reach some form of compromise anytime soon. No university that wants to succeed in all ramifications will look to the government for the greater part of its funding. The Nigerian government is presently in no state to fully fund Nigerian Universities especially at a time when the economy is trying to recover from the effects of the pandemic.



## PROTEST IS PERSONALITY

*Prof. Mark Nwagwu*

I want to wear the accolade of ‘Protester-in-Chief’, PIC. All of life is one large protest. Generally, we seek the good and avoid evil. We want to drown evil with a lot of good: we spend our time doing good avoiding evil in whatever form it comes to us. In the process, we do not think of evil as such in our actions: that would not be proactive. Evil has no space in our character. From time to time we fail, and something untoward enters in our thoughts which may gain control of our soul. For a while we consider evil as something acceptable, even mellifluous. If we are not careful, we begin to take pleasure in our new-found delights and soon swoon into the depths of corruption. With faith, with determination, with resolve, we come back to our true self and pursue the good.

We wonder, where is Nigeria headed to – to the rocks of transformed oil blocks, to forlorn forests of our ancestors of bye-gone years, or to a future to fulfil our yearning destiny? I live in the village of my fathers and

I tell those I often chastise just how lucky they are: that if you have no one who corrects you, keeps you on your toes, tells you where you were wrong, and shows you the light, you are a most unfortunate person. I am not convinced they understand me. But it was not always like this. Corrections make the person. Their personality can be read off a book of the corrections they have received and to what measure they have put them to good effect. We may ask, in what ways has government put to use the corrections they have received through protests?

The great French painter Eugene Delacroix’s masterpiece, *Liberty Guiding the People* depicts a beautiful woman, her bosom bare, waving the French flag leading an army of revolutionists. I interpreted this painting to mean, women give birth to revolutions, protests, leading to order in society. In colonial times, the imperialists did as they wished, protest or no protest. In 1929 what is described as Women’s Market Rebellion, was touched





off by imposition of direct taxation on women and the introduction of new local courts especially of warrant chiefs who, as they saw it, danced to the obnoxious tunes of the colonialists. Women all the way in Calabar, Opobo, Umuahia, Owerri organised themselves in their thousands into a formidable fighting force from village to village, town to town, in protest, marching through forests to the colonial masters. In all, 51 women and 1 man were killed over the period of November to December 1929. But they had won the fight: women's taxation was abolished.

In 1949, the coal miners of Iva Valley, Enugu, who were poorly paid, demanded salary increases and better conditions of service. Rather than respond positively, the colonial masters wantonly massacred many of them. The shooting led to mass protests of Nigerians, the fight for independence was still in its infancy but the killings provided fodder for nationalists in the fierce struggle for independence. The Zikist Movement, 1946-50, a youth wing of NCNC, of young indefatigable revolutionaries, including Anthony Enahoro, Fred Anyiam, Oged Macaulay, Raji Abdallah, Osita Agwuna and Mokuwugo Okoye, stood out to fight for the beleaguered Nigerians who had no voice, calling on them to mobilise and be ready to run their own government according to their own designs. The colonial masters, who saw this as an affront and a threat, charged them to court for sedition. They were found guilty and sentenced to fines or imprisonment or both. In 1950, the Movement was proscribed. But it was clear: protest is personality.

Protests pave the way of victory for many who bare their teeth ready to bite off the ears and tongues and lips of their apparent oppressors. Will we ever forget Mrs. Funmilayo Ransom-Kuti. She formed an organisation of over 20,000 individuals, most of them women. She rallied them against price controls which hurt women merchants. In 1949, she led a protest against the Alake of Egbaland, alleging abuse of authority by the Oba who had been granted authority by the colonial government to collect taxes. He subsequently relinquished his crown for a time due to the protest. Mrs. Ransom-Kuti successfully saw the abolition of separate taxes for women. Later, her children, in particular Fela and Beko, continued in her noble tradition of protests and defiance of military authorities. In 1978, she was thrown from a second-floor window when Fela's house, Kalakuta Republic, was stormed by armed military personnel. She lapsed into a coma in February 1978 and died on 13

April, 1978 as a result of the injuries. She taught us with her life: Protest is Freedom; Protest is Character; Protest is Personality.

We have to learn to suffer that we may be winners in the end. The University College, Ibadan, was as excellent as they come in all things considered worthy for human wellbeing, particularly in knowledge and character. When in 1957, fences erected on the ground floors of the halls were broken, an unheard-of precedence of mountainous proportions was set in Nigeria's bruised library of student protests. Since its foundation in 1948, this would be the first time the students would fiercely protest against a matter they found gruesomely offensive to their refinement and grandeur as the best of Nigeria. We were rusticated and returned to College about six weeks later. We all wrote individually to obey all College rules and regulations.

During the 1960/61 academic year, the National Union of Nigerian Students, NUNS, under the leadership of Osita Okeke, the president, marched on The House of Representatives, Lagos, demanding the abrogation of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact waiting to be passed into law. The students gained access to parliament, disrupted the meetings, and took away some vital files. The police unrelentingly descended on them and dealt them heavy blows. Osita returned to Kuti Hall, his head wrapped in bloody bandages, his shirt and pants torn. He wore them sagaciously with the air of a conquering knight. The pact was suspended in the meantime. In 1961, the University College Ibadan Students Union, under the presidency of Abidoye Babalola, returned to Parliament in Lagos and finally gave the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact a final burial, marked by pandemonium in the chambers, police rough-handling of students who returned with bruised faces and broken noses. Students had proudly and courageously shown their mettle. Protest is personality.

Protests define the person. On the night of April 14-15, 2014, 276 mostly Christian female students were kidnapped from the secondary school in Chibok in Borno State, the responsibility for which was claimed by Boko Haram insurgents. Swiftly, Oby Ezekwesili, a former Vice-President of the World Bank and former Minister of Education, swung into action with an organisation Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG), with Aisha Yesufu as co-chair, in determined and sustained protest of the kidnapping. Every day, BBOG led a



resolute protest at the Unity Fountain across from Transcorp Hotel, Abuja. To date, 107 had been released, 112 still missing, 57 having escaped. To drive home her message of fighting for the soul of Nigeria, Ezekwesili announced she would run as the presidential candidate of Allied Congress Party of Nigeria in the 2019 elections. Unfortunately, she could not bring her dreams to fruition as she had to withdraw from the election on 24 January 2019.

We have Nelson Mandela protesting apartheid and suffering long solitary confinement in defiance of the ignoble laws and perpetration of injustice and murders on his people. He stands taller than most mortals of the twentieth century. And there is Steve Biko who was shot and killed in Soweto. Protest is personality. Will we ever forget Tai Solarin, master protester of all time, who was severally jailed for criticising the military for human rights abuse? In 1983, he was arrested in his home and held in prison, after his release had been ordered by a Lagos High Court judge. Not only was he not released he was transferred to Maidugiri prison in May and held for several months before he was allowed to go home. Before this, in 1971, we have the infamous, deleterious and obnoxious killing of Kunle Adepoju a student at University of Ibadan when students of Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall were protesting the poor conditions of their meals. Recently, Premium Times of 10 September 2020 had a story that journalists from Premium Times,

Sahara Reporters, Cable TV and Galaxy TV were attacked and arrested for covering protests over hikes in fuel prices and electricity and the deregistration of their party, Social Party of Nigeria. The Supreme Court on 14 August 2014 gave a unanimous landmark ruling in a case brought by Gladys Ada Ukeje upholding the rights of a female child to the inheritance of her late father's estate. Ms. Gladys in going to the courts to protest an age-old tradition, defines her personality.

In her long history as an independent nation of six decades, Nigeria has witnessed an apparently unaccounted number of protests. Each time, it had seemed that the people had learnt one lesson or two in the process. As for the government, whether it learns anything remains a fact yet to be ascertained. Perhaps if government duly learns its lessons from the message drummed home to her through protests, the Nigerian polity could have had more reasons to smile today. It would have looked back to see how many steps it took right due to its willingness and openness to learn from the people. Where government had often failed to yield to protests, it could also look back to see the missteps recorded on account of its lack of clarity, sincerity and the will to do. A lot of times, government perhaps had said no where it ought to have said yes, only because it paid attention to the personalities leading the protests rather than the merits of the issues being protested.



## Trending



IDPs: Internally displaced politicians. 🤔😂





## WHAT SENSE IN PRICE HIKE?

*Babatunde Odunbawo*

The recently announced hike in the pump price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and electricity tariff is generally perceived as doom for most Nigerian homes. This is comprehensible as many are still grappling with the backlash of the total lockdown occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic. It won't be out of place to express such apprehension as the citizenry has suffered similar fate from successive governments, the effect of which is an unprecedented inflationary rate.

The country's Bonny Light Crude Oil ranks amongst the best in the world which grants Nigeria, a big seat at the roundtable of the global Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Since the discovery, exploration and exportation of the fecund crude oil in Oloibiri, Afam and Boma (all in the Niger Delta region) in 1958, the economic life wire of the country has become a nightmare to the ordinary man on the street.

Owing to the establishment of the first oil in Okan field, off the coast of old Bendel State, and more oil wells within the South-South region, the nation swiftly gravitated towards a mono-product economy, while the once buoyant Agricultural sector suffered utter abandonment.

Due to the increased demand for the Nigerian crude oil between 1970 and 1978 with an average of 23.4% increase, the Warri refinery was established in 1978 with a total production of 100,000 barrels per day (bpd) and another one was opened at Kaduna in 1980 with a potential capacity of 260,000. No doubt, the Oil sector has since become the prime mover of the Nigerian economy influencing every part of the economy.

As it is expected of such a highly priced essential commodity within any economy, any increase in the prices of the fuel product would spell doom for other sectors of the economy. Following in its trail is a galloping inflationary rate which is not healthy for the economic state of the country, judging from the fact that the currency is hinged on the dominance of other importing foreign economies.

If the reports that the manufacturing sector contributes less than 2.5% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is anything to go by, a further push in the prices of goods and services will mean that unemployment would shoot up and there would gross hardship in the land.



In the 1982, the Shagari-led administration increased the pump prices of fuel from an initial 0.5k to 0.20k which was sustained till 1985 when General Ibrahim Babangida's government further pushed the price index to 0.395.

Still under IBB's watch, the prices went up again in 1990 to 0.60k; in 1991 to 0.70k; 3.25k to 1992; 11:00k in 1993. His successor, General Sani Abacha maintained the pump prices and there was generally a stable economy for his 5-year stint at Aso Rock. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's civilian administration increased the price to 20 Naira in 1999; 22:00Naira in 2000; 26 Naira in 2001; 30 Naira in 2002. The successive increase in prices continued in 2003 to a price of 40 Naira; 55 Naira in 2004; 60 Naira in 2005; 65 Naira in 2006 and 70 Naira in 2007. The succeeding Musa Yar'Adua administration reduced the price to 65 Naira until the Goodluck Jonathan administration increased the price to 120 Naira.

In the beginning of 2000s, there has been clarion call for deregulation of the upstream and downstream of the Nigerian oil sector. The reason being that the government aims to get rid of certain unscrupulous elements who feed fat from the subsidy meant to cushion the effect of the importation cost of the oil products. Sadly, the oil subsidy generates comments and analysis only on the pages of dailies and dies a natural death. Again, the nation pays for what it can't enjoy.

The Honourable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Timipre Sylva, in a statement affirmed that the long overdue deregulation is set to take off. Speaking on the deregulation of the oil sector, he noted that 'Deregulation means that the Government will no longer continue to be the main supplier of Petroleum Products, but will encourage private sector to take over the role of supplying Petroleum Products... It has become expedient for the Ministry of Petroleum to explain misconceptions around the issue of Petroleum Products Deregulation... After a thorough examination of the economics of subsidising PMS for domestic consumption, the government concluded that it was unrealistic to continue with the burden of subsidising PMS to the tune of trillions of Naira every year. More so, when the subsidy was benefiting in large part the rich rather than the poor and ordinary Nigerians.'

The newly introduced pump prices of petroleum products is meant to open up the oil sector (downstream) to more operatives which leaves for a balanced, more transparent, efficient and realistic pricing system for petroleum products of fuel in the country.

In this case, the government will only perform the regulatory role for the sector and will desist from its age-long role of being the fixer of prices. The equilibrium market prices will then be determined by the 'invisible hands' of demand and supply. Hence, the announcements made by Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) on the increase of pump prices of fuel from N143.80 per litre to N151.56 per litre. The deregulation of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) known as petrol is partly due to the fact that the budget can no longer sustain the funding the subsidy of such product.

On the other hand, the tariff adjustment by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) which has resulted into over 50% increase is part of the move by the government to further improve poor transmission capacity and distribution capacity of electricity in the country. The project will be undertaken by Siemens, a foreign company, in no distant time.

Truth be told, these are the hardest of times. The effect of the covid-19 pandemic leaving many out of jobs, the lucky ones that are retained are either half-paid or losing out in one way or the day. An increase in the price of fuel from N145 Naira to N151.56 per litre and electricity tariff from N30.23 per kwh to over N66 would definitely hit hard at people.

The cost of transportation and food items would increase by some percentages and living standards further brought down. Why then, is the increase of any these essential commodities a good lease of life?

Both fuel and power are very crucial aspects of the everyday life. The degree of responsiveness of the people to the price changes of any of the two commodities and services would cause a significant effect on the economy in ways that reduces the intrusive powers of government in the realms of demand and supply. These infrastructural changes employed by the government is for the greater good, for the greatest number of the citizenry because it will cause positive change(s) in the nearest future.



## STYLING ANKARA PIECES

*Ameenah Oke*



In a world where fashion is ever changing, it is a thing of delight to note that there are some pieces that remain ever trendy. Prints and patterns, colour and shapes are those fashion forays that always make a statement. Whether it's one piece in your outfit or the overall look, having a print fabric in your ensemble easily makes you stand out.

And what better print to wear than our very own ankara? The ankara fabric was, in fact, originally designed by the Dutch for the Indonesian textile market. But it gained more popularity in Africa because of the culture markings on it. And in today's world of fashion, the markings on our ankara fabric draws inspiration from more than our roots.

Ankara fabric is a vibrant mix of colours and wonderful patterns, whether geometric or fluid, they arrest the eye and lift the spirits. You can't wear ankara and be dull, you begin to shine from afar. It is therefore no surprise that ankara is used to make more than clothes. The fabric is now seen in use for making bags, shoes, pillows, even furniture and jewelry. And why not? Who doesn't want to sit in a room full of vibrant print fabric?

Styling ankara pieces can sometimes be tricky to style, but that's why you have your dear ankara godmother here to help. You can style Ankara pieces with solid colours or print, or with their very own ankara brethren and you will definitely look good doing it.

### MAKING A BOLD STATEMENT





Nothing says big, bold and bougie like an all-ankara ensemble. If you want to blind your enemies with the vibrance of your ankara, then serve it to them from head to toe. The beautiful thing about matching your ankara from head to toe is that you don't have much styling left to do. Some muted jewelry and accessories to complete the look will do just fine. You want the ankara to shine, so don't hide its beauty with overstated jewelry.

### MIX AND MATCH



Whoever said you don't mix prints and patterns obviously hasn't experienced ankara. And I use the word experience with confidence, because it is a sight to behold. This sort of style is what we call 'serving them hot-hot', where you don't give them a whole ensemble but you whet their appetites with two strong pieces of ankara-made clothing or accessories.

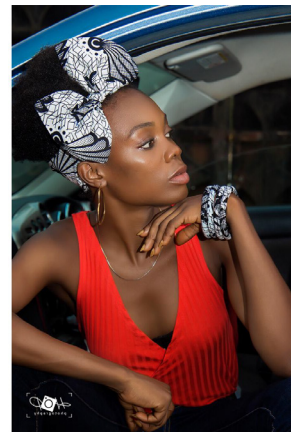
This styling method requires a little more thought than the bold statement but it is definitely worth the small effort you will make. First, you must ensure that the pieces you want to pair are complimentary (unless your bold statement is the clash, then wehdon ma). You must also ensure that your accessories are not working against your ankara, so be discreet with them. Let the ankara announce your presence and command respect.

### BEACH BUNNY



Girls just wanna have some fun in the sun with their wonderful ankara beach accessories. Whether it's an ankara trimmed hat, or a waist/cross body bag to hold your phone and ATM card, the ankara fabric brings some class and vibe to your beach experience. And your photos are going to be amazing as well. That definitely doesn't hurt.

### BOW IT OUT OR WRAP IT UP



Bows and headbands, as well as head wraps have become a massive fashion statement. You can convey all the message you need to convey with some beautiful ankara head gear. Or are you having a bad hair day? Let me introduce you to the world of ankara head covers and wraps. These beauties take the shame out of your bad-for-the-day hair by providing you with a ready solution that's stylish and chic. Style your headband with some neutral clothing and let it be the centerpiece, or add some more ankara accessories for a full ankara face lift.

## BAG IT UP



When you want your ankara 'chic' to be different from the crowd, you carry a bag that is made with the most divine ankara fabric. So that whenever you drop that bag, your audience is dazzled by its beautiful brilliance. I would advise you style your ankara bag with matching ankara shoes or jewelry so you have an echo effect. It is also a great addition to monochrome looks and neutral inspired clothes.

## ANKARA TECH



What, you thought ankara was only for casual outfits? Let me tell you that you are very much mistaken. Just imagine walking into that boardroom in your power suit carrying a stunning ankara laptop bag. The confidence you walk in with when you know you are carrying a thing of beauty and a conversation starter. Believe me, it is a very good ice breaker at the very least.

## ACCESSORIZE



We can't write an article about ankara pieces if we don't include accessories and jewelry. Ankara earrings and bangles are among the most common ankara pieces you will find because they are an instant outfit elevator. They give you boho chic vibes, or the edgy sexy lady vibes depending on how you pair them. Make a statement with a bold pair of earrings, or dangle a multitude of ankara bangles on your wrists to call attention to your whole vibe. And if accessories aren't your thing, how about a nice bold ankara notebook to show you mean business.

There are several ways ankara fabrics can be paired and used, but one thing is certain about all of them - THEY STAND OUT. Join the team of standout fashionistas today and get some ankara pieces in your wardrobe.

Model: Thoche

Pieces & Pictures: @thoche

@breezyhandbags

@cl\_trends



## WHO'S YOUR DADDY?

Ameenah Oke

What has your daddy ever done for you that was worth breaking the internet over? Did he pay for your education or get you a really good job? Did he give you connections that have helped you establish yourself as a force to be reckoned with personally and professionally? These are the questions flying all over social media as Florence Otedola (DJ Cuppy) showcased the rainbow of Ferraris bought for her and her sisters by their billionaire father, Chief Femi Otedola.



Papa took us shopping and bought one of each! 💕💕💕 #FerrariPortofino



It is no secret that the Otedolas are among the richest families in Nigeria, with their businesses in several industries like Oil and Gas, the Banking Sector and so much more. The Otedola name is one that is sure to open doors at any turn. It doesn't hurt that the Otedola children are also huge successes in their fields, and seem to be cool and collected according to their social media interactions.

Cuppy, as she's fondly called, is probably the most visible in the public eye and she is a DJ, singer, producer and philanthropist that has won several awards for her work. Her sister, Temi, who is most famous for dating Nigerian artiste Mr Eazi, is a fashion blogger and entrepreneur.

Although the other two Otedola siblings aren't as much in the public eye, we do know or have read about them. Fewa, the only boy and last child of the family is autistic but is obviously very loved by his family. And Tolani, the first child is a talented singer and songwriter.



ERUKUMACAKURA @KAYO... · Sep 16

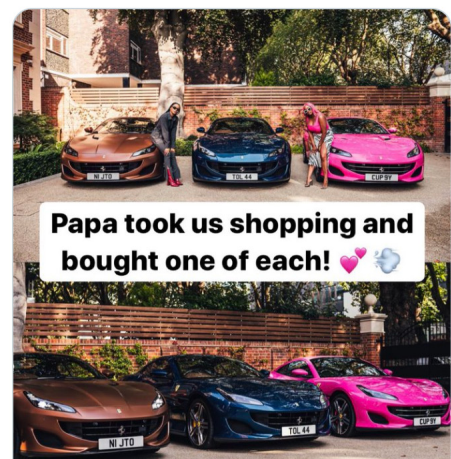
Please @cuppymusic if you don't want problems let's marry now or else both of us go die ooo 😂😂😂 #Otedola #CuppyDat



The latest publicized Otedola shopping spree however had many Nigerians asking the question, "God When?" in askance of when they would be able to afford such luxury. It also served to bring even more popularity to the girls as it seems that everyone wants to see just what the Otedola sisters are doing for themselves.

Even if you can't save to buy a Ferrari, atleast start saving to buy a Camry.

#Ferrari #Otedola





From people speculating over who would marry the Otedola girls to berating their own fathers for not being rich, the internet has been a spectacular avenue for thrilling ‘Gbas-Gbos’. One thing that has been made clear though is that this money must be made, not just for ourselves but for the children we will have.

Nigerians on the reason to double, triple or even quadruple their hustle to ensure that they and their generations to come are celebrated just as much. While it doesn’t always matter who your daddy is, it certainly matters who your friends are as your network is your net worth.



**INNOVATOR** @Olayinka\_N · Sep 16

Are you looking for a driver or just a wash man ? I have a masters degree in washing cars.  
I've washed over 30 cars across 4 owners.  
Hire me cuppy !!! I can wash underwear too o as bonus 😊

#CuppyDat #Ferrari #Otedola



💬 1 ❤️ 4

What started as a lark and showcase of wealth and ‘pamperedness’ has become an eye-opener to many



**Anthony Edogbo** @officialto... · Sep 16

Thanks dad

#Innoson #Otedola



💬 3 ❤️ 9

And you can of course trust the Nigerian sense of humour to take over. It’s all good-natured bantering and we are all happy for them.

But I have to ask in case any of them reads this article: is there room for a new daughter somewhere there? Or, is it a best friend you need? Please tell me where to apply.





## DADDY G. O. VS. DADDY FREEZE

*Babatunde Odubanwo*



The internet went wild with comments generated by the remarks made by Pastor David Ibiyeomie, founder and General Overseer of Salvation Ministries against popular radio presenter, Ifedayo Olarinde also known as Daddy Freeze. The ensuing rash comments by the clergyman was in response to the alleged insult by Daddy Freeze to Ibiyeomie's spiritual mentor, Bishop David Oyedepo, the presiding Bishop of Living Faith Ministries.

Pastor David Ibiyeomie had in a viral video of one of his Sunday church services cursed the famed On-Air personality saying that he (Pastor Ibiyeomie) 'cannot be alive' while Daddy insulted his 'Father'. Ibiyeomie went ahead to make other unsalted statement calling the Head of the Free the Sheeple Movement, Daddy Freeze, 'bastard and foreigner'.

Pastor Ibiyeomie was quoted as saying, 'I curse the day you were born. I will tear you into pieces – you bastard! He is insulting him because he has no father. You can never insult a father if you have one; be warned. A man whose wife left him, has no good job, will be insulting my father and people will be laughing online. I will never be alive to see such and do nothing against it. Who gave birth to you? Do you have a father? Show us his picture.'

In the minutes-long video, the Head Pastor further threw caution to the wind and made nonsense of Daddy Freeze 'Somali' origin. Since the video surfaced

online, the internet has gone wild with irate comments mostly condemning the clergyman for his unguarded, uncivilised comments against Daddy Freeze.

Reacting to the supposed death threats by the man of God, Daddy Freeze said, 'I also need to draw the attention of the public and the law enforcement to the threat of life that was issued to me in that video. Pastor Ibiyeomie, I don't know if you know that threat to life is a criminal offence and let it be on the record that you threatened my life. Is this how Nigerians are going to accept this? If anything happens to me, I hope you know who to hold accountable. Are we going to keep quiet and let this lie because it is coming from a pastor?'

As if Pastor Ibiyeomie's comment wasn't enough, the Senior Pastor of Dunamis International Christian Centre, Paul Eneche has also come down heavily on Daddy Freeze, saying, 'Someone said they called him a bastard. I believe that the title is not less than what it is, because if that is not the title to be called, when last did you behave like someone who grew in a home? When last did you behave like someone whose father gave him any morals or value? When last did a tailor advise a surgeon how to operate? When last did a carpenter tell a Senior Advocate of Nigeria how to stand before the court to defend a case? What do you know about marriage when you can't keep a home? What do you know about life, success and destiny? Who is a baggage

of moral bankruptcy? A baggage of emptiness of character, talking about people who you are never up to and will never be up to, even if they gave you a thousand lifetimes. If you are in the same class of architecture with Bishop David Oyedepo, ask yourself, where will your position be?’

The big question is, who is to be blamed? The question is imperative in order to x-ray the root cause of the verbal vituperation that seems to be the modern-day fashion of Nigerian pastors. It is not unusual to read in the papers or watch on YouTube or any other social media platform of pastors who swears or curses someone or people who have cursed them. Have they forgotten the scriptural verse that states, ‘Bless they that curse you’? Better put, is it that the word of God – which they profess to be anchor of their calling – is no longer relevant? Or, can we just assume that they are merely seeking cheap publicity?

Daddy Freeze, like every other Nigerian, has the right to question what is deemed inappropriate or wrong, even though many wouldn’t subscribe to him calling names, not even that of a respectable man of God as Bishop David Oyedepo.

In every word of it, the revered Bishop has achieved commendable feats in the ministry. He is a spiritual mentor to millions around the world, an encyclopedia of the Bible, a man versed in several areas of knowledge, a bold speaker, one who, by the special grace of the Almighty was wrought quite a number of signs; and a global ambassador of goodwill.

Papa as fondly called by his members and admirers is not just a person you can fight and not expect some reactions from all angles. Daddy Freeze, quite younger, has made some marks too, in the line of his profession. Although warped by scandals, the mixed-race broadcaster still manages to keep his head above waters. Quite sure, he must have weighed his options before making such comments against Bishop Oyedepo.

It would be recalled that Daddy Freeze is at large one of the greatest critics of some Nigerian pastors. In reality, he has taken up the cases of the likes of Pastor E. A. Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God at a time when the discourse bordered on tithes and the first fruits. Daddy Freeze argued vehemently that the reverse was the case as purported by the RCCG General

Overseer. Known for his outspokenness, Daddy Freeze continues to speak up against several churches, letting the leaders of such churches know that they are unfair to their members.

Some theorists and theologians would agree with some of Daddy Freeze’s stance. To his credit, Daddy Freeze’s Free the Sheeple Movement has grown in numbers largely populated by youths. Candidly speaking, it is not respectable and decorous for Daddy Freeze to mouth abusive words, throw name-calling or curse another person.

As the saying goes, ‘respect is reciprocal’. Had Daddy Freeze come up with a less aggressive approach in propagating his ‘ministry’, the less his condemnation. That is not to say that Pastor Ibiyeomie’s threats on his life should be ignored by law enforcement authorities. In an ideal context, the Pastor in question should be called in for questioning by security agencies. There is no ignorance in law. The clergyman should be made to sign that no harm would come close to Daddy Freeze and should apologize for calling him a bastard.

Pastor Eneche, on the other hand, should tender a note of apology, while same goes for Daddy Freeze. In a civilised world, there are ways issues should be tackled without necessarily taking up a fight against the other party. We all agree to disagree; we disagree to agree. Daddy Freeze has since tendered an unreserved apology to Pastor Oyedepo. He did so without asserting that he would continue to criticise church leaders with a proper language. However, the church leaders, Pastor Ibiyeomie and Pastor Paul Eneche, have kept mum on the matter, a clear refusal to withdraw their insult or apologise to Daddy Freeze.

In the meantime, church leaders must begin to cultivate the culture of cautioning themselves while standing before a live audience! The recent outpouring of aggression by some Christian leaders is, by all standards, not ‘Christ-like’. If they must be church founders and Christian leaders, they must first of all be respectable Christians.



# Show case



Tems (Temilade Openiyi) is a Nigerian alternative RnB and NeoSoul singer and songwriter. The young singer broke records mildly with her song, 'Try Me', in 2019. Tems was born to a British father and a Nigerian mother. She started to work her love for music when she was 11 years old. She was encouraged by her music teacher who prodded her to learn the piano. She also sang while she played her brother's guitar. She has gone ahead to work with the African-American Khalid, and Nigerian Pop-Star Davido in the remix of Khalid's love song, 'Know Your Worth'. Tems has also featured in the songs of international artistes such as Show Dem Camp, Blackmagic, DRB Lasigi and Odunsi bringing to their songs her unique feminine power and voice to Afrobeats, Afro-pop, highlife and others sonic vibes.

Tems has released songs 'Looku Looku', 'Damages', 'Mr Rebel', and most recently, 'These Days'. Tems sometimes mixes Pidgin English, British English and a Patwa twang to her songs which usually explores love, relationships and a bit of social discourse.

## Education

### UNILAG: WALE BABALAKIN RESIGNS TAKES INITIATIVE TO WRITE LETTER TO MINISTER OF EDUCATION

*Suleiman Galadima*



Suspended UNILAG Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, Dr Wale Babalakin, recently resigned following his embroiled persona in the ongoing administrative crisis at the University. He was suspended alongside Prof. Toyin Ogundipe, the last substantive Vice Chancellor of the university.

The suspended Pro Chancellor had addressed a letter to Mallam Adamu Adamu, the Honourable Minister of Education, dated 15th of September 2020, thanking the latter for recommending him for the position of the Pro Chancellor and Chair of the Governing Council of the university, stating clearly the reasons behind his resignation. In the letter, Babalakin stated the reasons behind the removal of the Vice Chancellor under his authority as the Pro Chancellor and given the quorum formed by the Governing Council. He implied that the FG's undermined the powers of the Governing Council by asking both himself and the Vice Chancellor to 'recuse' themselves from governing the University, when the Governing Council had removed the Vice Chancellor, Prof Toyin Ogundipe.

In his letter, he informed the honourable minister of the bias and illegality of the Presidential Visitation Panel, who were not made up of a 'Committee of Vice Chancellors' but also set up to implicate the Chairman of the Governing Council. He stated that the panel did not have jurisdiction to make decisions over some to the issues which it was assigned to engage, as they remain in the purview of a competent court. Nevertheless, Babalakin stated that he appeared in the Panel

inquiry out of respect for the minister. He accused the panel of hounding witnesses who spoke against the suspended Vice Chancellor. He noted that this and many other issues made the Chancellor of the University, His Royal Highness, Alhaji (Dr) Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai Al Amin El-Kanemi CFR, to strongly advise that 'the Visitation Panel should not submit any formal report to the Minister that may hinder my ability to deal with the issues comprehensively.'

Babalakin reeled out the various capacities in which he had served the government in the tertiary education sub-sector, asserting that, in all his roles from the position of Pro Chancellor, University of Maiduguri in 2009 to the position of Pro-Chancellor in the University of Lagos in 2017, he neither receive all the perks of the position as stipulated by the conditions of service nor did he leverage on his position to get contracts or favours. There he claimed to have not only the legal powers but also the moral authority to checkmate the corruption in the University of Lagos.

'These were made possible by a system that provided resources and also ensured proper monitoring of the resources. The educational system in Nigeria requires more funding but most importantly, it requires prudent management of the limited resources. It was my determination to ensure that the limited resources of the University of Lagos were properly utilized that motivated me to lead the Governing Council to take the decisions which the Governing Council took.' In a previous article, The Journal had made an expose on the issues between Wale Babalakin and Toyin Ogundipe recently.



## Education

# ON SCHOOL RESUMPTION AND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

*Oluwatosin Ojebisi*



With the Government's approval on reopening of schools, different states have revealed tentative dates which schools are to resume for the commencement of academic activities, while a state like Lagos already permitted tertiary institutions to reopen on September 14, 2020. However, there are still reasons for concerns. On the one hand is the low compliance to the health and safety protocols as Nigeria still records daily COVID-19 cases, and on the other hand is the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)'s demand that its conditions should be met by the Federal Government before concurring with the resumption directive. Notwithstanding, there is a need to approach the resumption of schools – especially tertiary institutions – with caution.

Calling for caution, the Chairman of ASUU, University of Ibadan chapter, Prof. Ayo Akinwale, recently condemned the move by the Government to reopen schools in the country. The premise on which he formed his opinion is based on several reasons which has plagued tertiary institutions in Nigeria. For instance, he stated the issue of overcrowding in facilities on campus,

insufficiency of certain amenities like clean water, among others.

Undoubtedly, these are valid reasons to worry. Recall also that in South Africa schools reopened in June when authorities decided to ease lockdown restrictions, but in July, there was a surge in the number of cases which led to the closure of schools again. In an address, South Africa's President, Cyril Ramaphosa stated that, the current academic year will be extended beyond the end of 2020 due to the disruptions caused by the pandemic. In the same vein, schools in Israel were reopened on 17th May 2020, due to a decline but within two months of reopening, several teachers and students had been quarantined which further led to a closure of schools again in order to curtail the spread of the disease.

Meanwhile, the Director-General, Office of Education Quality Assurance, Lagos State Ministry of Education, Mrs Abiola Seriki-Ayeni, disclosed that the state government will not hesitate to shut schools if there is a spike in COVID-19 cases after the reopening of schools. She further admonished schools to have qualitative



safety plans that would help protect students, teachers and workers when schools reopen in the state.

Also laudable are the new guidelines recently released by the Federal Government. The guidelines for schools include, conducting COVID-19 risk assessment every week, local governments and states were directed to conduct monthly and quarterly COVID-19 risk assessment in schools respectively, schools are to set up school health teams including teachers and learners that would facilitate implementation of the safety protocols in schools. LGAs and States have been advised to set up multi-sectoral school health committees dedicated to supporting and monitoring the implementation of safety protocols in the school. The assessment will determine the schools' level of compliance with safety protocols including physical distancing, hand-washing and the use of face masks, whose violation can put students at risk of COVID-19.

While all these are great initiatives, it is pertinent to address the fundamental issues and answer some serious questions. For tertiary institutions, are these institutions well equipped with the required infrastructures and amenities to ensure students stay safe and healthy? What are the measures on ground in case students contract the disease? Will classrooms be fumigated before reopening? Are there learning alternatives for sick students? The people are yet to get answers to these questions and many more unasked questions.

On the other hand, there is the strike action which ASUU embarked on since the March 23, 2020. One would think that with all that has happened globally in

the past months, ASUU would rethink its strategy in approaching the Federal Government on its demands. After reopening of schools, ASUU decided that lecturers will not be resuming to work yet because its demands have not been met by the Government. The demands which includes a review and implementation of the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS), the software developed by ASUU to replace the federal government's Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) and the provision of adequate facilities in the universities that would curtail the spread of the COVID-19.

While the latter is a just demand from ASUU at this time, the former may be subjected to further discussions without holding on to it as a basis for not returning to the classrooms. Ultimately, prolonged closure of tertiary institutions will be incredibly detrimental to the learnings of students, especially those in public institutions, as they have more to lose if the stay at home persist, unlike their counterpart in private institutions who would forge ahead in life.

To avert a looming disaster, just as the Oyo state Government has planned a shift in learning sessions for primary and secondary school, tertiary institutions should also adopt a system that works for both lecturers and students, while also adhering to the safety protocol. The public also cannot stop appealing to the Government to take tertiary institutions seriously and also provide adequate funding necessary to keep them functional at a time like this.



## Education

# TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSITIONS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

*Oriyomi Adebare-Anthony*



If there is one thing the COVID-19 pandemic has made glaring, it is that Nigerian public tertiary institutions are not as technologically advanced as they should be. If this were not so, academic activities would not be grounded as they currently are, the coronavirus notwithstanding. While some students of private universities have continued with their classes, written exams, submitted and defended projects, and even graduated, their public institution counterparts are not as lucky. The differentiating factor between these institutions is technology and how it is deployed or ignored.

Many years ago, chalkboards were the thing in schools. As time went on, white boards came in vogue and nearly all universities switched to this. From the 2000s, teaching evolved to using interactive white boards, projectors and other tech-driven tools. This was not a problem for most private institutions but public institutions have not fared so well.

To appreciate the current situation of things, I spoke with a cross section of (ex)students of private and public universities.

Mr O\* got his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees, and is currently running his Ph.D. program at the Faculty of Social Science of Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU). During Okanlawon's M.Sc. days in 2014/15, lecturers used white boards to teach. Lectures were delivered in person, hard or soft copies of reading materials were shared, assignments were submitted on paper and copies printed out for course mates. His department had an electronic board, but it was only used for special occasions – seminar presentations and the likes. Mr Okanlawon was asked if there had been a technology-dependent change in lecture delivery since his M.Sc. programme, he said there were a few, when asked to name them he said he would have to think about it.

A graduate of Microbiology and Medicine of the same institution, Mr Adeyinka, was asked to compare his experience as a student of different departments/faculties in terms of tech-enabled lecture delivery. His reply: 'Of course, there are differences in mode of lecture deliver, which in my opinion there shouldn't be much difference. But Health Sciences explored more options. Power point presentation was the baseline

but Health Sciences only did a little better.' He added that they were able to submit assignments via email. A's experience as a Microbiology undergraduate was quite different from this. Then, lecturers taught with white marker boards, notes were dictated, assignments were submitted on paper, and PowerPoint presentations with projectors were reserved for seminars. Mr A graduated from Microbiology in 2011 and from Medicine in 2019. While OAU is a federal university, state universities are not different in this regard. Ms Chizoba is a 2019 graduate of English Language and Education of the Olabisi Onabanjo University. According to her, her lecturers never deployed online teaching methods beyond sharing soft copies of assignments.

Like the adage says, 'Where one man's father's farm ends is where another person's father's farm begins,' a look at what is obtainable in private institutions is necessary here. Mr Tajudeen attends Redeemers University. Tajudeen was asked a number of questions including: how lectures are deployed, the type of boards used, how assignments are submitted, and how tests and examinations are conducted. His response: lecturers are delivered via WhatsApp, voice notes, text, PowerPoint presentations. They also use Zoom, Google Classroom, and school apps to receive lectures. School classes have both white boards and Samsung electronic boards. Assignments are submitted directly to lecturers via email or WhatsApp. Tests and exams are also conducted online.

More digging would only show the lack of and in some cases the disjointed technological advancement in public universities vis-à-vis the private ones. Which begs the questions, why the disparity? What are the effects of this disparity? And what is the way forward?

Babcock is having zoom graduation on 20th of August & sending graduands their gowns through DHL. Law students defended their projects through Zoom & school exams were done online (not without some tech issues). Still, a good example of an institution moving with the times.

10:18 AM · Aug 4, 2020 from Abuja, Nigeria · Twitter for iPhone

4.1K Retweets 346 Quote Tweets 13.5K Likes



Replying to [redacted] · Aug 4

Covenant University students also have classes through Zoom. Submit assignments online. Education didn't stop cos of a pandemic. These institutions are getting it right, regardless of what anyone says. If you choose to glorify suffering in education, this may not be for you.

Babcock University will be resuming virtually in 4 days time. For about 6 months public schools have been shut cos of COVID-19 & ASUU with students in limbo, whiling away valuable time.

Remember this whenever you wonder why people willingly choose to pay those 'exorbitant' fees.

7:19 AM · Sep 3, 2020 · Twitter for Android

1.9K Retweets 73 Quote Tweets 5.5K Likes



Reasons for this disparity are not hidden, except one wants to behave like the proverbial Ostrich. First, the funding available to both institutions is not the same. While most public universities charge between N20,000 – N200,000 as tuition fees per session, private universities charge between N500,000 – N1,000,000 per session. This difference in finance plays a big role in the facilities and infrastructure the universities can acquire. Since public tertiary institutions cannot charge higher fees because they are targeted at the poor and middle-income earners, they have to rely on the government to meet whatever deficits they have. The same government that allocated just 6.7% of the N10.8 trillion 2020 budget to education?

Another reason why public universities are not transitioning technologically as expected is a fear of change. Change is constant but it does not come without some resistance. Asking lecturers in their 50s, 60s, and even 70s to start holding online classes, or to upload assignments to Google Classroom, or even chat with their students via WhatsApp could be akin to asking a leopard to change its spot. Very difficult. This fear lies between ego/pride and ignorance. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is not helping matters. In an interview with The PUNCH newspapers published on June 16, 2020, chairman of the union, Professor Ogunyemi, had said, 'Online teaching required some special pedagogical skills and training of lecturers who would be involved and giving them re-orientation which takes time for them to attune their minds.' If the apex body of lecturers is saying this, who will champion the much-change?

The outcomes of this reluctance to move with the times are varied. One is the extra monies and time some graduates spend to learn some software or other hard skills that they should have learnt while in school. Those who are unable to learn these skills find themselves at a



disadvantage when there's a need for it. Another is the possible longer stay in school as seen with the current pandemic. If there was no ASUU strike, availability of robust tech-enabled learning platforms would have saved our undergraduates from an extra year as most would likely face this year.

ASUU is still on strike. Covenant University, Babcock University and other private Universities in Nigeria moved online, delivered content, assessed the students, and now they are graduating. Most students studying in Federal and State Universities did not enjoy this 'privilege.'

12:24 AM · Aug 5, 2020 · Twitter Web App

4K Retweets 236 Quote Tweets 13.3K Likes



Lack of innovation, being relegated to the background, and a further widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, are other consequences of the technological stagnation in public universities.

Is there a way forward? Definitely. It lies between resourcefulness and more funding. Public universities have to prioritise deploying technology in as many ways as they can. Some of these solutions do not cost so much if there's the will to use them. Older lecturers also need to overcome their fear of technology and be humble enough to ask for help from the younger ones. Other avenues of funding should be explored. The government should also be ready to do beyond what they are currently doing.

A story shared by an interviewee gives hope for the future.

Mr Mustapha has three degrees from OAU and is also a lecturer there. He was asked to compare his experience as a student from 2007 - 2019 to his current role as a lecturer. In his opinion: 'Yes, there is a massive difference in method, about 80% improvement compared to my time as a student. Though we are not there yet but a lot has changed.'

*"1. Classes and lectures are given on google classroom now and not used then. The Google classroom has everything you will need. Both grading and deadlines for assignments."*

*2. 80% of the classes where manual notes copying but now about 20% of notes copying perhaps for explanation sake while the soft copy or hard copy is given directly to the class.*

*3. Many at times, the students can organize a WhatsApp group for information dissemination and delivery of lecture materials which has enhanced the students-lecturers' relationship, but in our time, we are too intimidated to be in same group if any with our lecturers.*

*4. 80% of tests in some levels are also CBTs.*

He added that 'this change is already sweeping across some faculties such as Education and Agriculture but the major issue is funding and it has really slow-paced the inclusion of technology in teaching method(s).'

The names used in this article are fictitious because the respondents have requested anonymity

## Urban Development

# RESTRUCTURING THE METROPOLIS WITH A SCENIC PARK SHOCK, SECURITY OR SERENITY FOR MAGODO RESIDENTS?

*Femi Morgan*



The Magodo Scenic Park is an idea of a private contractor who has received the approval of the Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency, LASPARK, an arm of the Lagos State Ministry of Environment. The idea is to beautify and manage a park.

The proposed scenic park is located on the stretch near CMD Road. The land which accommodated some car dealers, mechanics, food sellers and transport company once had the presence of the Lagos Ministry of Transportation. The left side of the stretch of the CMDA Road is dotted with office blocks such as the EFCC office, private business office spaces, bank buildings such as those housing commercial banks like First Bank, EcoBank, Guaranty Trust Bank, Polaris Bank and Zenith Bank and their respective ATM booths. To be sighted on the right side is the proposed Magodo Scenic Park. On the far right of the garden is the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. The banners of the proposed park show that the contract had already been awarded to

park managers, The Surveillant, and they are expected to complete the project in 40days. It has been up to two weeks since our reporter has continued to follow this development. The banner and the mowing of the stretch of open but narrow field signifies the presence of The Surveillant Fire LTD. The banner made an impression of the proposed facilities to be made available to the public. The Magodo Scenic Park will have a car park, a recreational park, a horticultural garden, a baseball court, and an automobile service centre.

Many residents have expressed the concern that if the proposed scenic park is not well secured and maintained, it may be used as ground for hoodlums, armed robbers, thieves, kidnappers and arsonists who may find easy escape through the Lagos-Ibadan expressway or through CMD-Ikosi Road, after snatching monies, vehicles and valuables in the park. The CMD Road is an important road for residents of Ikosi-Ketu, Shangisha, and Magodo residents. It is also an important route to Ketu which



could lead to Oshodi and Mile 2 areas, amongst others. We spoke to our contact who provided us with the details of a government official as well as the details of Adetoun Ibilola Popoola, the General Manager of LASPARK. The LASPARK, according to the Lagos State Government website, is set to provide core services like park management, tree planting and tree management, horticultural research, landscaping and design, park management services and environmental compliance monitoring visits. LASPARK is saddled to create a greener and healthier Lagos, through the creation of a safe and healthy State. The agency is driven to establish functional parks, and recreational centres in line with international best practices.

We spoke to the GM of LASPARK who told us she would not be able to speak on the project. She directed us to Ms Titilayo Ajirotutu, a Public Affairs official of the LASPARK, who was willing to speak extensively on the subject. Ajirotutu was unable to confirm whether the stretch of the CMD Road had been contracted as at the time of our telephone conversation. Although all the Lagos State officials we spoke to engaged us with professional decorum, Ms Ajirotutu evaded all our questions, repeating that there was a process on the adoption of spaces belonging to the state government.

‘There is a process, the Lagos State Government would advertise the space, then a private contractor would tender his interest for the space. The private contractor will present a proposal which will go through scrutiny and then would be approved given the fact that the firm has proven to deliver such services.’

She explained that the Lagos State Government was reclaiming its spaces, advertising them and putting them up for ‘adoption’ so that private companies in the environment industry can beautify and manage it. She said that Lagos State had to take this sweeping action because former adoption contracts were not used for the purpose it was meant for. ‘Former contractors have not been faithful to the agreement we signed with them. They used the space for car wash, car dealership and mechanic workshop such as you see on that stretch of the CMD Road you mentioned. Car dealers and others are not supposed to be there. They should go and acquire their own property and sell on their own property,’ she said in a telephone conversation.

Ajirotutu also added that a lot of factors are considered when they give such spaces to a private company. ‘I will have to confirm whether that stretch at CMD Road has been adopted by a private company.’ She assured that factors such as expertise in maintenance and environmental standards are part of the yardstick used in giving approvals for such a project. ‘We are very strict on maintenance and security around our parks.’ When asked her about the state of the Lagos State Park in Ojota and other areas of the state, she replied that the Gani Fawehimi Park and the Abiola Garden Park in Ojota are managed by LASPARK and are well maintained. She also claimed that given the regular monitoring of other parks by LASPARK officials, all LASPARK spaces under Public-Private Partnerships are also monitored in order to abide by the set environmental maintenance standards.

As at the time of report, we were able to confirm that the name of the company of the firm that may have adopted the space was The Surveillant. The banners at the site neither showed the firm’s address, email address nor did it provide any website. It provided a phone number for enquiries but calls were not picked. After we sent a text message to the number asking for their audience concerning the project, we decided to do an online search to ascertain the company and to engage them on some of the lingering questions from the public. Our online search provided a corporate company, The Surveillant Fire LTD, based in Shangisha, Magodo, Lagos. It also provided Surveillant Export Nigeria Limited, based in Lagos Island, and Surveillant Fire Academy, Magodo, Lagos; all registered companies under the Corporate Affairs Commission. However, the designated number on the banner on site at CMD Road did not reflect on any of their website or on online web directories. None of these companies have anything, by their name, to do with providing a scenic garden, managing the environment and providing solutions and management for air, water and waste compliance.

A further online search showed that the triad of Surveillant Fire LTD, Surveillant Fire Academy, and Surveillant Export are extensions or affiliates to one another, as they all share the same addresses in Magodo and in Lagos Island.

Our team of reporters finally got around to speak with Jumade Adejola of the Surveillant Fire Academy and the project manager of the Magodo Scenic Park, who



clarified that the firm used to be into export business but have so far closed down their export operations. They admitted that they are the same ones who run the Surveillant Academy.

However, he said that they had long closed operations on the Export arm. They informed us that they are the self-same contractors handling the Magodo Scenic Park. 'We are into a few other businesses apart from fire services and safety trainings, but we have long closed down on our export business.' He clarified further on the safety of the proposed area, 'If you check the banner, you will see that there is going to be a car park and other recreational infrastructure there. So, there is going to be a perimeter fence in the plan. The fence will block the park from the express road. When we see that it needs reinforcement, we will reinforce it.' We tried to ask about the intricacies of due process and he said 'I am not in charge of giving you information on how or whether we were qualified for it. We got the contract; that information should be given to you by LASPARK, the bit of information that I will provide is on the work we are doing there.'

Jumade Adeola said that although cars parked at the scenic would be at 'owners' risk', the Lagos State Government had already provided the needed security for the area; therefore, there was no other plans put in place to secure anyone's vehicles except the customary police patrols. 'We are not providing any extraordinary security to the park, even the cars parked in front of the

banks are at 'owners' risk.' It will be a gated park like other LASPARK gardens and parks.

Then we asked about the planned maintenance processes, but Adejola deflected the question by asking, 'Do you think there will be a project where there will not be a maintenance plan?' Jumade Adejola further explained: 'I appreciate what you are doing as journalist, you are trying to do an investigation or a probe, but I am wondering why you are not focusing on the advantages that the park will bring to the people living on CMD Road. This park will help to decongest the area. It will provide recreational facilities to people living in the area so that they can rest and enjoy with their families. It will provide some ambience and fulfil the mandate of the Lagos State Government, which is to provide recreational spaces in a mega-city. This is what we are trying to provide through a public-private partnership,' he said.

On when the project was commissioned and when it would be due for completion, we did not get a response, as at the time of engaging him. In our effort to reach Ms Titi Ajorututu, Public Affairs officer of the Lagos State Park to determine whether due process was followed in approving the park, we did not get any response as she did not answer her calls at the time of this report.



## QUESTIONS FOR PAUL KAGAME

*Michael Chiedoziem Chukwudera*



President Paul Kagame of Rwanda is, no doubt, one of Africa's most impressive leaders. With so many reputable achievements to his name, what clearly stands out – and what most records converge on – is the fact that, from the year 2000 when he took over power, he has successfully guided Rwanda from a failed state ravaged by longstanding conflicts and a genocidal war to a prosperous middle-income-earning country and one of Africa's hub of development in the 21st century. This has won for him the hearts of many African nationalists for achieving, within the space of two decades, what is a dream for many African countries including giants like Nigeria.

Paul Kagame was born on October 23rd 1957 in Ruanda-Urudi, the last child of six children of a Tutsi family. But when he was two years, there was a revolution which brought about the age-long dominance of the Tutsi in Rwanda. There were palpable tensions in the country at the time and violence directed against the Tutsis. For

this reason, Kagame's family fled Rwanda to Uganda. It was in Uganda that Paul Kagame grew up, enlisted in the army in the 1980s, and fought on the side of the rebels who helped President Yoweri Museveni take over power. Later, he joined the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) which invaded Rwanda in 1990. Paul Kagame was to become the leader of RPF after its leader, Rwigyema died early in the war. And, through this position, he came to play a pivotal role in negotiating the ceasefire which ended the Rwandan genocide of 1994, where between 500,000 to 1,000,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed.

Paul Kagame served as the Vice President and Rwanda's de-facto leader from 1994 to 2000. He officially ascended the seat of presidency in 2000. Kagame has also been credited to have restored unity to Rwanda together with having spearheaded her economic resurgence in his so-far two decades timeline as president. The former he has achieved by strategically erasing the tensions left in the

country after the genocide by forgiving its perpetrators and seeking for redress of the wound of the victims. The latter, he has achieved, according to analysts, through continuous commitment to reforms, creation of a good business environment and implementation of a strategy to raise productivity and diversification of services. President Kagame had set a long-term target of making Rwanda a middle-income earning country by 2020. And reports show that the Rwandan economy as of 2010 was on a trajectory of steady growth, having expanded by 45.6 per cent from \$5.77 billion in 2010 to \$8.4 billion in 2016, amidst significantly reducing poverty levels. A 2015 report by Mc Veigh also shows that as of 2013, the country is developing strongly on key indicators, including health care and education; annual growth between 2004 and 2010 averaged 8% per year.

But, while President Kagame has since gotten on the good books of many African nationalists, he also has some ardent critics who accuse him of being one of the most repressive presidents in Africa. President Kagame's critics have accused him of trampling on fundamental human rights and freedom of expression in the country. Reportedly since the two decades of President Kagame's reign, eight journalists have been killed or have gone missing, 11 have been given long jail terms, and 33 forced to flee Rwanda. Political opponents are dealt ruthlessly with and others have either been forced to flee or have died under mysterious circumstances. And despite the economic growth and relative peace which the country has enjoyed under President Kagame, the country is yet to attain real democratic status.

President Kagame has currently ruled Rwanda for 20 years. After his first tenure as a democratically elected president ended in 2010, he sought re-election for another term in office for which he was eligible. And in 2015, a referendum was staged by his government, allegedly signed by over 3 million Rwandans asking for President Kagame to remain in office. Due to this new reform, President Kagame could remain in office till 2034. Although President Kagame has won the elections which kept him in office by a landslide (95.1% in 2003, 93.08% in 2010 and 98.79%), there are speculations that the elections have not been free and fair and have been largely controlled processes tailored to keep Kagame in power. The president's critics have alleged that one of the reasons President Kagame is so keen on holding on to power is because he has failed in his mission to end the ethnic tensions which led to the Civil war around 1990

and the genocide in 1994. According to an anonymous critic cited in a 2017 report by BBC, 'Rwanda is still heavily divided along ethnic lines, and in a free election, Mr Kagame would not win. For the president, it would signal that his biggest political mission – to end the ethnic divisions that caused the genocide – had failed. And probably this fear, more than any other, is driving him to repel threats to his rule.' The same critic is also quoted to have said, "Kagame's biggest mistake has been to say that we are Banyarwanda [all Rwandans]. He is ignoring the root cause of the problem: The tribe. How can anyone say there is no tribe in Rwanda?"

One wonders in the midst of President Kagame's success, what truly is the future of Rwanda whenever he leaves office. If President Kagame has to remain in office for more ten years after two decades and has been a bit intolerant to his political opponents in order to keep checking the country's ethnic problems the way he has done, could his critics, then, be right to say he has failed in that regard? A successful political tenure is one in which the pioneers can confidently leave office, confident of the system they have built, to have moulded worthy successors. Paul Kagame seems not to be satisfied with himself in this regard and certainly doesn't feel secure enough to leave office.

While President Kagame's performance is a source of pride to most African nationalists, it is not out of place to inquire if in the process of moving on from one mistake, an equivalent mistake is not being made. History is replete with issues that have been repressed by prosperous governments coming back to haunt the ignorant populace. It is a valid worry to ask what plans President Kagame has to ensure that the peace Rwanda currently enjoys under his government outlives his many tenures as president. There have been some prices for this peace, some of which involve, not very pleasant speculations – of which he has been accused of repression. Sustainable progress can only be maintained by lasting peace. And whether President Kagame has found the lasting solution to Rwanda's ethnic tensions remains to be known.

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## Oustanding Careers

### TOYIN ADEYINKA



Chief Toyin Adeyinka is an accomplished civil engineer, businessman and property developer who has been in the business for over four decades. He is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Sparklight Group, a renowned indigenous engineering and property development firm in Nigeria. His journey into the profession started when he was admitted into the Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Worcester, Massachusetts, to study Civil Engineering. As a student at WPI, he had good performances in his subjects and developed interest in structures and bridge designs, areas which would become fundamental to his future profession. He subsequently studied for a Master's degree at the Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts where he advanced his knowledge of engineering by specialising in structure and construction management. He started his professional career with Walter J. Hickey Associates in the US as a bridge engineer, and his impressive performance earned him a role in the classic design lay-out for the infrastructure development of a

new industrial town in Jubail, Saudi Arabia. On his return to Nigeria in the early 1980s, Chief Adeyinka joined Julius Berger, a Nigerian based German construction company. He was one of the early few Nigerian engineers who became quite knowledgeable in German engineering technology especially in the areas of the design of structures, calculations, and bridge work. A few of his works reflecting these skills include some bridges in Lagos. He left Julius Berger to join the Nigerian Railway Corporation as a Senior Bridge Engineer, and later rose to become the Head of the Bridge Section of the national corporation.

In this position, he became one of the first Nigerian engineers to deliver a bridge project without assistance from expatriates when he spearheaded the reconstruction of a pedestrian bridge that had collapsed on the Abeokuta railway track. He was also involved in the development of the design that raised the flooded rail tracks in Yamaltu Local Government Area of



Gombe State, and the Lagos State Mass Drainage Channelisation Programme. These tasks offered him enormous opportunities to develop leadership and management capacities, and to be extensively involved in the inspection of projects and training of newly qualified engineers.

Having acquired, as it were, a well-rounded professional and business orientation over the years, it was not long before the entrepreneurial side of Chief Adeyinka surged forth. He founded Sparklight Engineering Company Limited in 1986 in Lagos. He leveraged on the relationships he had built while at the Nigerian Railways, not only to bid for and win contracts for his firm, but also to execute such contracts with great efficiency and to the satisfaction of his clients. One success begat the next, and so he continued from one project to the other, serving individuals and various corporate and government organisations in various parts of the country.

Chief Adeyinka's charisma magnetism has helped him to forge admirable professional relationships that have attracted some of the best professionals to the Sparklight Group. Side by side with developing sound human capital is a conscious effort to institute a robust work ethic among his staff in the areas of accountability and teamwork. His hands-on approach to work enabled him to instill competence and efficiency in his staff through regular evaluation, supervision, and robust reward system.

An entrepreneur of cerebral propensities, Adeyinka's diversification of Sparklight's concerns into property, finance and manufacture from the 1990s provided for his businesses a solid foundation that helped him weather difficult times. He identified the growing demand for commercial and residential property in the early 1990s, and having ventured into the real estate business, he soon opened a brick-making company, and that offered some competitive advantage to the group, which currently includes the Sparklight Property Development Company, Ade & Ade Associates Limited, Amide Clay Industries (Nigeria) Limited, and Stallion Microfinance Bank, among others. For Chief Adeyinka, professional practice and business ventures should have a charitable dimension to their existence, and this underscores his establishment of the Adeyinka Technical Institute, which offers technical training to mostly indigent people on a charitable basis. This portrays a sense of, and commitment to, humanistic values in professional practice and business.

Chief Toyin Adeyinka is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Nigerian Society of Engineers. He has served his country as a member of the panel of enquiry into the Sokoto Airport Structural Failure, as well as the Committee for the Renegotiation of the Onne Port.



## Great People

### ***ALHAJI SHEHU IDRIS***



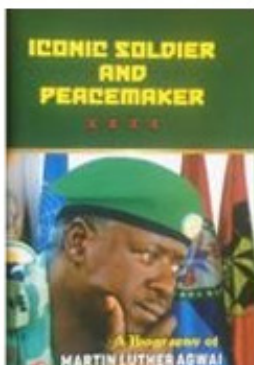
Alhaji Shehu Idris, Emir of Zazzau, passed on Sunday, 20th of September 2020, at the age of 87. Born on 20th February, 1936, the emir assumed the throne of his fathers at the age of 31 on 8th February 1975. He was the 18th Emir of Zazzau and the Chairman of Zazzau Emirate Council and the Kaduna State Emirate Council. A teacher and, later, private secretary to the Zazzau Emirate Council before his installation as emir, Shehu Idris was, until his death, the longest-ruling emir of the Zazzau emirate and was respected amongst his royal peers all over the country.

The monarch was known to have ruled in peace and harmony with the people and accommodated the princes of the land in the affairs of the Zazzau. Some of the remarkable things he did in his reign included the establishment of a number of positions for district heads with the objective of achieving an inclusive leadership. He was also actively involved in peace and reconciliation missions in Plateau State in the early 2000s. He served as Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, during his time.

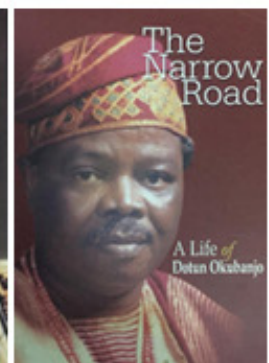
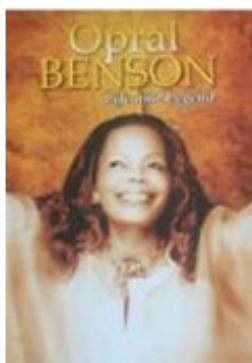
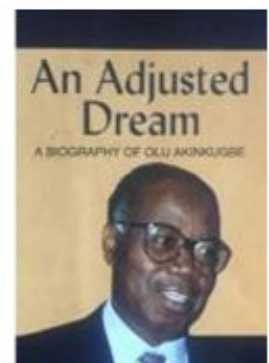
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**BOLANLE AWE****RENOWNED HISTORIAN AND ADMINISTRATOR**

*A historian, scholar, teacher, author and gender analyst of high repute, Bolanle's love for the lettered world has not waned. Through her pen and voice, she has worked tirelessly to inform and to change people's erroneous beliefs, especially as they pertain to women. The widely travelled intellectual colossus continues to win admiration and respect for her hard work, integrity, humane spirit and numerous achievements.*

**EARLY LIFE AND ANTECEDENTS**

I spent the first eight years of my life in the big, bustling town of Ilesa which was noted then for its active commercial life dominated by Lebanese and Ijesa traders operating in its famous main street, Adeti. Although my father was an Ibadan indigene, my first contact in those early days was with my mother's people since my father worked for John Holt & Co., a shipping and general merchandise company with a branch in Ilesa. It was therefore in Ilesa that I became aware of the larger family and relations.

My mother was an Ijesa woman from the Abede family, a branch of the royal family, the Uyarere ruling house. The Abede base in Ilesa is Omofe in the neighbourhood of the newly constituted Holy Trinity Cathedral Omofe. I grew, to know two of my grandfather's wives – Iya Pupa who was of a fair complexion, and Iya Dudu who was dark. My grandmother was Iya Dudu. She was a true matriarch and the focal point for her own branch of the Abede family. Her building, which was placed quite close to my three uncles', was the rallying point for all of us her grandchildren. She was an extremely industrious woman and her house was always full of activities while we her grandchildren played round, helping ourselves to whatever delicacies she gave us.

Although I stayed with my parents in our small nuclear family in another part of the town, I was always at Omofe, at any given opportunity. I enjoyed the fun of being there with my many cousins and other relations. Another focal point was my mother's eldest brother, Chief E.A. Ariyo.



Like his father, he was also a prince, governor of Ibala, another town outside Ilesa. He was a prosperous cocoa trader. Prominent in the compound was his impressive and, for us children, gigantic storey building, built in the Brazilian style. He also had many wives and many children. Babaloja Ibala (as we called him) was very lively and accommodating. We children felt free sitting with him in the evening listening to his jokes and stories. When eating, he would give each of us a morsel of pounded yam well-laced with rich soup and sometimes pieces of meat. Because of his generosity, all of us girls wanted to be his wives!

We always enjoyed his company. The older cousin used to go to his farm at Alabidan a few kilometres on the way to Osogbo after school hours. Sometimes, I followed them and returned home proudly carrying a tuber of yam to show that I had also gone to the farm. At times, I stayed in Omofe for so long, especially as it was near my school. On such occasions, my father would walk into the compound and, without any ceremony, drag me back home. Life at home was quieter and certainly more disciplined.

My father was of a quieter disposition, though my mother

was more outgoing and interacted easily with people in our neighbourhood. After spending some years in Ilesa, my father was transferred by his company, John Holt & Co. to Ibadan. Ibadan was a new experience for me in many ways. It was a much bigger town with more of the amenities of modern life. The first marvel for me in Ibadan was the discovery of electricity! I couldn't help hiding my amazement that by 'pinching the wall' (that is by putting on the electric switch on the wall) the light would appear! It was a new experience; unlike Ilesa where we used lanterns, candles and local oil lamps!

In Ibadan we lived in Araromi street, in an area generally known as Oke Padre (the settlement of the Roman Catholics). A big Roman Catholic Church was a prominent feature of the landscape. But our street, Araromi, was virtually a village within this area. It was inhabited primarily by civil servants, white collar workers, clerks etc. In many ways, they were a diverse lot – Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Muslims and adherents of African traditional religion. They came from different parts of Nigeria and even West Africa. I can remember quite dearly the tall and stately Mama Aganyin (Ghanaian woman) who was very popular with us children because



of the exquisite taste of her fried plantains! We all lived together in peace and harmony. We were exposed to the different religious practices including that of the old lady who placed offerings in a black broken pot for the Eṣu deity every five days. Of course, we children broke the fast in the evening with the Muslims. It was a happy place to be. The houses faced one another along the one main street, Araromi. We were like a large family; the fathers and mothers acted as loco parentis to all of us, the children.

Weddings, christenings, etc., were celebrated together. There was certainly no formality in the interactions, particularly among our mothers who visited one another without any ceremony. I also got to know members of my father's family at Oje. Every Sunday, we went, as it were, on pilgrimage to Oje to meet them. We would walk from Oke Padre, through the Olorisa Oko market, then by different shortcuts we would climb Oke Sapati (Shepherd's Hill, named after an early European trader in that area), then descend to Yemetu and finally across to Oje. It was always, the same happy gathering as at Omofo, Ilesa. We children would play all kinds of pranks, climb some of the fruit trees particularly in Papa Ajagunna's compound, and struggle especially for the agbayun fruit which leaves a sugary taste in one's mouth, making everything eaten thereafter sweet! In the evening, we would find our way home to Araromi Street.

Such were the environment in which I lived my childhood in Ilesa and Ibadan. It was for me and my late brother, Dapo, a happy childhood about which I still feel very emotional. It was also quite clear to my brother and me that our parents cared and took the job of parenting very seriously. My father cherished us particularly because of his background. An only child, he lost his mother when he was young, and he showed in the way he treated us that he appreciated having a family. He loved children generally and showered love on the children that came his way. He related to us in such a way that we felt comfortable with him; that notwithstanding, he could be firm and brooked no nonsense.

He insisted on good manners and stressed the importance of being courteous in our interactions with others. He was a stickler for observing proper etiquette at all times and insisted on good table manners, for instance, in the way we handled our cutlery and the eating of our food. He and mother complemented each other in this parenting business. Mother was a typical Ijesa woman – very strict and an extrovert who brooked no nonsense. She believed

that we should stand up for ourselves. I remember coming home crying once having been the victim of a bully's attack. Mother told me, 'Go back and fight back. You are not to return home in tears, feeling helpless; you must learn to stand up for yourself.' I acted on her words and the bullies became my friends. They were surprised at my courage.

Initially, I in particular balked at what I regarded as her high handedness, but later I began to understand her and appreciate the great depth of love behind her actions, and gradually we became friends. My father's death while I was still abroad and her own departure soon after I came back from Britain were and are still of a source of a sorrow whenever I reflect on their lives

### FORMAL EDUCATION

With such kind of parents, schooling was not a problem. It was taken for granted that we must have formal education. Both my parents could be described as well-educated within the context of the standards of those days. My mother was a professionally trained teacher, one of the first set to be so trained in the United Missionary College, Ibadan.

My father attended Ibadan Grammar School and from there went to England to spend a few years in Dulwich College, a public school in London. There was therefore on ceremony about enrolling me as a pupil at Holy Trinity School Omofo-Ilesa along with my numerous Ariyo and Ilori cousins in that neighbourhood. I enjoyed the school, particularly as it was near my grandmother's house and I easily disappear for snacks as well as enjoy the company of the company of my cousins. In 1942, however, I had to move to Ibadan where my father was transferred. Again, it was enrolment in another Anglican primary school, St. James's School, Oke Bola. It was not too far from Araromi, Oke Padre. We took a short cut to the Salvation Army Church and then went along the Ogunpa River, to Gbagi where the Lebanese traders, local traders and other firms had their shops, across Ogunpa River once again, then by a bush path to the junior primary school near the old church. It was fun.

Though the teachers certainly did not spare the rod, we had nicknames for all of them. At break time, one of my friends, Funso Olugbode and I used to go to the farmers working near the Ogunpa River to buy a long stick of very juicy sugar cane for one tenth of a penny instead of snacks! We moved to the senior primary school which has

since been demolished to make way for a petrol station! We spent one year there and many of us in that class took entrance examinations to various secondary schools. Four of us girls, Grace Moore, Funso Olugbode, Margaret Osifeso and I gained admission to C.M.S Girls School Lagos while some of the boys went to C.M.S Grammar School and Ibadan Grammar School.

Going to Lagos was for me a new experience; I had to be chaperoned for my first trip. My late Aunt, Mrs Helen Omolola Oluyide, took me there for the entrance examination. Starting in the school in January 1946 was a big jump! I was going to be in the boarding house, and have my first experience of leaving home. There were only twenty-five of us boarders but there was a strict seniority hierarchy. Proper deference to the senior girls was expected especially if they were two classes ahead of one. But it was all fun. The classes were small. We were only twenty-five in the first Form in 1946, but by 1951 when we were passing out, there were only twelve of us left. Such was the rigour of the teaching and the high standard.

Our school founded in 1869, was the oldest girls' school in the country and the first to field female students for the West African School Certificate and teach science subject. The teachers were dedicated and highly qualified. Discipline was high and for any bad behaviour we were sent out of class to stay under the mango tree in front of the Principal's office. This was the height of public disgrace as the Principal's office was in such a place that the school could see that one was guilty of a misdemeanour. Emphasis was on good behaviour as was to be expected of a Christian School. Academic achievement was also rated high. My class had 100% success when we left the school and certainly set a good standard for a school which had moved its location from Lagos to Ibadan and is now known as St. Anne's School. We were the first set to graduate from St. Anne's School.

## SOJOURN IN BRITAIN

After school at St. Anne's, the next port of call, which most of us in our class took for granted, was moving on to a tertiary institution and acquiring a profession. Usually, all of us became professionals in one field or another – Medicine, Law, Teaching, Nursing, etc. For some of us, the ultimate ambition then was to study in Britain even though University of Ibadan was already doing well. I, for one, had the mistaken belief that Ibadan students worked too hard and were under excessive pressure to do well. On the contrary, I felt it would be plain sailing studying in

Britain! I was lucky that my parents who had to foot the bill agreed with me and gave me that opportunity.

After the initial traumatic and deflating experience of seeking admission for the Sixth Form programme to study for my Advanced Levels in a boarding school, I got a place in a public school, the Perse School for Girls in Cambridge for the same purpose. It was a day school but I was fortunate to have as my guardians Uncle Ainshe and Auntie Pat (Russel) who took me to their home for the two years. Luckily for me, their daughter, Catherine, attended the same school and we left together every morning on our bicycles to get to school before 8am. Incidentally, cycling became my mode of transportation throughout my student days for the eight years I was in Britain. Life at the Perse School was exciting. The emphasis was not just on academic attainment though that loomed large and we were encouraged to go to Oxford, Cambridge or any other frontline university. However, there was a serious attempt to introduce us to the different cultural aspects of British life such as music, especially classical music, the theatre, the arts, sports – swimming in the River Cam, skating on it in the winter, and of course cricket. We had wonderful teachers who encouraged us to think about our environment, the political situation, etc. I made many friends with whom I went youth-hostelling to different parts of Britain and Europe.

I moved from Cambridge to St. Andrew's University in Scotland. Two of my mentors, Mrs Phabea Ogundipe and Mrs C.F. Oredugba had attended this beautiful university by the sea. There could have been no better university for an overseas student at that time. St. Andrews city was essentially a university town with a few retirees who liked the clean healthy environment where they could play golf. The Ancient and Modern golf course was famous and still is the Mecca for all serious golfers. But everything else in St. Andrew's revolved round us students, and to be happy and to enjoy one's stay, one had to fall into the spirit of an active student life.

The university was small, one of the oldest in Britain and it had a great deal of history about it. Lecturers and professors were friendly and approachable. It was therefore not difficult to discuss with them my ambition to do postgraduate work. My professors in History were products of Oxford University and they both suggested that I should apply to Oxford. I therefore sought admission to Somerville College, the old women's college in Oxford. After my initial disagreement with the





history tutor about the feasibility of research into African History, as against the history of Europeans in Africa, I was admitted to that College.

It was again another exciting experience. I was the first African postgraduate student in Somerville. The Principal of the college, Dame Janet Vaughan, a distinguished scientist who worked on the effect of the Hiroshima Bomb on human beings, took up the challenge of ensuring that I stayed in the course; so also did my supervisor Dame Margery Perham, the biographer of Fredrick Lugard, who was also highly reputed in colonial circles in those days. Of course, my moral tutor, Ms Agatha Ramm, who initially was sceptical about research into African history, constantly monitored my progress. Living and studying in Oxford constituted a tremendously unforgettable but enjoyable learning experience both academically and culturally.

After two years, I had fulfilled the six-term mandatory period of stay for postgraduate students in Oxford. By then, I was allowed to change my status from that of Bachelor of Literature (B.Litt.) to that of doctorate student (D.Phil.). I had also applied to the University of Ibadan and was given a position as an Assistant Lecturer in the History Department. I therefore packed my bag and baggage to come back home on the 30 September 1960 on the eve Nigeria's Independence.

### WORKING LIFE

I started my working life on the 1st of October 1960. I was appointed an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of History of the University of Ibadan. It was an experiment as I was the first Nigerian woman to be formally appointed as a member of the academic staff. My department rose up to the challenge and virtually everyone there saw it as his responsibility to ensure that I did not fail. I therefore had a soft landing into the academic world.

However, in 1967 I moved to the University of Lagos when my husband transferred his service from the University of Ibadan to that University. I was appointed in the School of African and Oriental Studies. I taught history there to the student in the Department of History and General African Studies to all undergraduates. The latter, irreverently called African Jazz by the students, was a compulsory course for all students of the university, regardless of their disciplines. Without a pass in that course, they could not graduate from the university. It was a most challenging course to teach as many of

the students particularly in the professional disciplines like Engineering and Medicine hardly appreciated the importance of being conversant with the significant facets of their culture with which that course was meant to familiarise them. The gratifying thing about this course is that many students often came back to acknowledge its importance particularly after their sojourn outside Nigeria.

However, I had to park my bag and baggage and come back to Ibadan in December 1969 when my husband again decided to go back to the University of Ibadan as Professor and head of his former department. I now moved to the Institute of African Studies as a Senior Research Fellow and was eventually promoted there to a Professorship in Oral History. I later served as the Director of that same institute from 1983 to 1991. It was initially a research outfit and only later took on the responsibility of teaching African Studies at the postgraduate level. I was able to go more deeply into the area of research on Ibadan which had always been my main area of interest. Research on Ibadan gave me an opportunity to look at our oral traditions and their significance for the reconstruction of the history of non-literate societies like Ibadan. It also gave me an opportunity to look at the contribution of women to the history and development of our society. One of the offshoots of that particular preoccupation was the establishment in 1987 of the Women's Research and Documentation Centre (WORDOC) by the institute.

I retired from the University in 1995. During my thirty-five years stay, I had the privilege of learning about the workings of that University in all its facets, as a teacher and researcher, as part of the management and policymaking, and as a staff employee having been a member and later President of ASUU (Academic Staff Union of University, University of Ibadan chapter). I retired from the Institute and took up an appointment in an entirely new and unfamiliar field. I became the Country Representative of the John D. and Catherine, T McArthur Foundation. This is an American foundation which was moving to Africa for the first time and chose Nigeria as its focal point. It had three other focal points in Brazil, Mexico and India. Its major area of interest when I became its Representative was reproductive health and the empowerment of women. It had two programmes – one for the development of mid-career young men and women in this area. They were awarded Fellowships to pursue their particular interests in this field after rigorous screening and interview by a panel of distinguished Nigerians. There was also a system of

grants-making for NGOs in this field to build up their capacity and to enable them explore emerging issues of reproductive health.

Their grant was designed to make provision for Nigerians in as many different parts of Nigeria as possible. I retired from the Foundation after a period of five years. My employment by this American foundation gave me an opportunity to have an insight into the American system of administration particularly at the level of a foundation, a big Non-Governmental Organisation.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: A TIME TO LIVE**

My life did not consist merely of being a professional teacher and the earning of an income. I lived a full life outside the Ivory tower. I was engaged in many extra-curricular activities. For instance, I got involved in the women's movement which had been pioneered by some of my mentors, and teachers like Chief (Mrs) Bolarinwa, Lady Deborah Jibowu, Lady Kofo Ademola, Chief (Mrs) Ighodalo, Professor (Mrs) Ogunseye, Chief (Mrs) Tanimowo Ogunlesi, Mrs. C. Oredugba. The sixties seemed to be the peak period for the formal reawakening of Nigerian women to their role in the development of the newly independent Nigerian state. Many women's organisations came into being, notably the National Council of Nigeria Women's Societies, which was meant to be an umbrella organisation for all women's societies. Later, there emerged the Nigerian Association of University Women (NAUW) which placed a great deal of emphasis on women's education. I was deeply involved in both and served as their secretary at different times.

I attended the international U.N. Conferences in Mexico in 1975, and Beijing in 1995 and participated in the seminar and non-governmental forum which raised fundamental questions about women and the intellectual rationale for these conferences. I came to recognise the importance of the cultural context in which we operate in Africa. Some of the outcomes of these conferences were the demands for a special portfolio, as it were, for looking at the concerns of women by each member government of the U.N. In Nigeria, the Federal government set up the National Commission for Women, which became the precursor for the present Ministry of Women Affairs. I had the privilege of being the founding Chairperson of that commission. Apart from such extra-curricular activities, I served at various times on different government committees, councils of government boards

and parastatals, the last being that of the Council of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka where I was Chairperson and Pro-Chancellor.

## **FAMILY**

However, in spite of all these activities, the interest of my family has always been preeminent. My husband and I met in Britain where we were both students in Oxford and Cambridge. London which was virtually equidistant from both places was our meeting place. It has been a relationship based intellectual foundations of respect and understanding. We also shared the same interests in cultural matters, politics and issues of principle and justice, and so on. Raising a family and keeping a home, and keeping up with my professional and extra-curricular activities did not pose too much of a problem as we were both academics teaching in the same universities. It was also not too difficult for him to appreciate the demands of my professional calling. Being on the campus meant I could juggle professional and domestic responsibilities without too much stress.

Moreover, my children attended the Staff Schools on the campus, while they were young. My joy has been to see them all five graduates in different professions away not surprisingly from the academia and basic disciplines like Physics and History! They have, in growing up, watched the decline in academia and the fortune of academics as teachers in service and as pensioners.

Even though we were both attached to our ancestral families, our cousins, sisters, etc., were always around and even staying (some to attend school, some on holidays), we are still a closely knit family. We insisted that the children must speak our language. My husband, a good swimmer, taught all of them swimming. I love traveling and in the good old days drove with them and other cousins to Togo and Ghana. My husband had a sabbatical leave in 1978 and he arranged it so that we could go right round the world from Nigeria to Britain, USA, Hawaii, Japan, India and then to Cameroon and back home.

Nevertheless, our relationship has not been without its strains and stresses. It is still very much a man's world and it is important to recognise the cultural context within which we operate, particularly as a Yoruba woman who on first getting married tends to lose status, which she gradually regains as she grows older and becomes the matriarch of the family.

For a woman who has had the advantage of exposure to other cultures where women earn greater respect, it may be galling but a woman has to make up her mind whether she still wants the marriage to work or go through the messy situation of a divorce, particularly where children are involved. Patience, forbearance and tolerance become the watchwords which, on second thoughts, are not peculiar to a particular marriage. It is a general fact.

## **RETIREMENT**

I still continue with my interest in NGO activities, keeping in touch with my children and grandchildren and my numerous relations and friends. I am more involved in church activities particularly at The Cathedral of St Peter, Aremo, my father's church where both my parents were buried. I am the diocesan historian and a member of the Cathedral's standing committee.

## **THE ETHOS OF MY LIFE**

It will be appropriate in concluding this brief account to affirm my beliefs and guiding principles. I believe that the grace of God has been the overriding influence in my life. I have therefore met with fortune and kindness wherever I go. As a Christian, I believe in loving one's neighbour as oneself, and doing unto others as one would want them do unto you. I am also proud of my dual heritage. First, I am a Nigerian and proud to be so in spite of the apparent failings of the present. We Nigerians are full of drive and sure of themselves, never ashamed or timid to say their piece in any assembly whether national and international.

In the second place, I recognise the mores and values embedded in the different cultures that make up this country, Nigeria. Within that context, I can proclaim that I am a Yoruba woman and very proud of its culture in all its many facets. Our material culture, whether in the arts, weaving and textiles, show a great deal of sophistication; so also, our music dance, literature and poetry and traditional festivals. Our values, as enshrined in the concept of *omoluabi*, portrays a worldview of a person who behaves in such a way as to earn the respect of his or her peers, because he or she demonstrates in his or her everyday conduct the most highly esteemed mores of the society – courteous behaviour, consideration for others, industry, and yet, possesses a certain degree of humility in his or her comportment. These are the virtues to which I constantly aspire in my journey through life.



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