

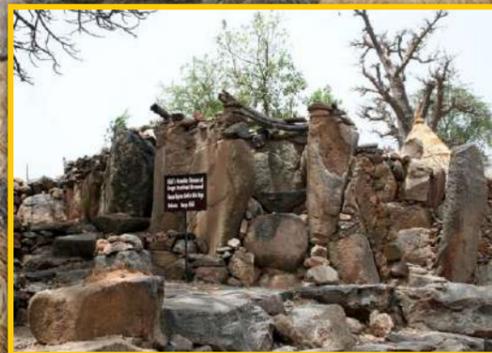
Old Oyo National Park is one of the national parks of Nigeria, located across northern Oyo State and southern Kwara State, Nigeria. The park is 2,512 km² of land in northern Oyo State, south-west Nigeria, at latitude 8° 15' and 9° 00'N and longitude 3° 35' and 4° 42' E. The location has inevitably placed the park at a vantage position of abundance land area as well as diverse wildlife and cultural/historical settings. The landscaping and organised space within the large yard has made the facility very endearing to the public. It is rich in plant and animal resources including buffaloes, bushbuck and a variety of birds.

Old Oyo National Park



Sukur Cultural Landscape is Africa's first cultural landscape to receive World Heritage List inscription. Located on a hill above the village of Sukur in Madagali local government area of Adamawa State; north-eastern of Nigeria along Nigeria/Cameroon border, some 290 km from Yola. It is a hilltop settlement which stood at an elevation of 1045 m consists of the Palace of the Hidi, villages and the relics of an ancient settlement with a recorded history of iron smelting technology industry, which earned it a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999. Sukur is, flourishing trade, and strong political institution dating back to the 16th century.

Sukur



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**NIGERIAN BORN
KAYCEE MADU
APPOINTED
MINISTER OF JUSTICE
IN CANADA**



**SIRIKA APPLIES
PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY
ON RESUMPTION OF
FOREIGN FLIGHTS**



**BALANCING CULINARY FLAVOR
TO SERVE BOTH LOCAL,
INTERNATIONAL MARKET**



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CANNOT BE COMPLETE
WITHOUT STEEP PENALTIES
FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

**SPECIAL FOCUS
ON 50 MOST
OUTSTANDING
HOTELS AND
HOSPITALITY
OUTFITS IN
OYO STATE**

**AFDB:
ADESINA RE-ELECTED
FOR SECOND TERM**



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PUBLISHER'S CORNER

Effectiveness of servant leadership Compared with the other leadership styles

The increased competition in the modern corporate environment has elevated the significance of effective leadership. Despite the importance of different leadership styles for different organisational structures and management styles, servant leadership has gained prominence among different leadership styles. The amplified importance of servant leadership is in line with its major focus on employee empowerment, development and persuasion.

Employees are recognised as one of the most important stakeholders in the 21st century, which further enhances the relevance of servant leadership. Servant leaders are able to boost the individual as well as collective performance of their employees by serving their needs. In addition, servant leadership style is also inclined towards promoting empathy, awareness and stewardship within the organisation. These characteristics of leadership style highlight the superiority of servant leaders for boosting employees performance as well as organisational competitiveness.

In order to become an effective servant leader, it is paramount to show empathy because empathetic behavior enables leaders to understand the needs and wants of each employee. In this manner, servant leaders are able to address employees' needs as well as motivate them through strong employers' relations. Again, empathetic behavior also makes it a prerequisite for servant leaders to develop effective listening skills. Without effective listening skills, servant leaders find it difficult to persuade followers for sharing their feelings. Empathetic behavior and effective listening skills simultaneously contribute towards increased awareness of servant leaders regarding employee problems, weaknesses and strengths. Accordingly, servant leaders are in a better position to address the weaknesses of their followers while exploiting their individual strength. This behavior of servant leaders results in higher job satisfaction levels of employees.

For this reason, servant leadership style has a positive impact on collective employee performance. Furthermore, servant leaders have exceptional persuasive ability for altering the actions of their

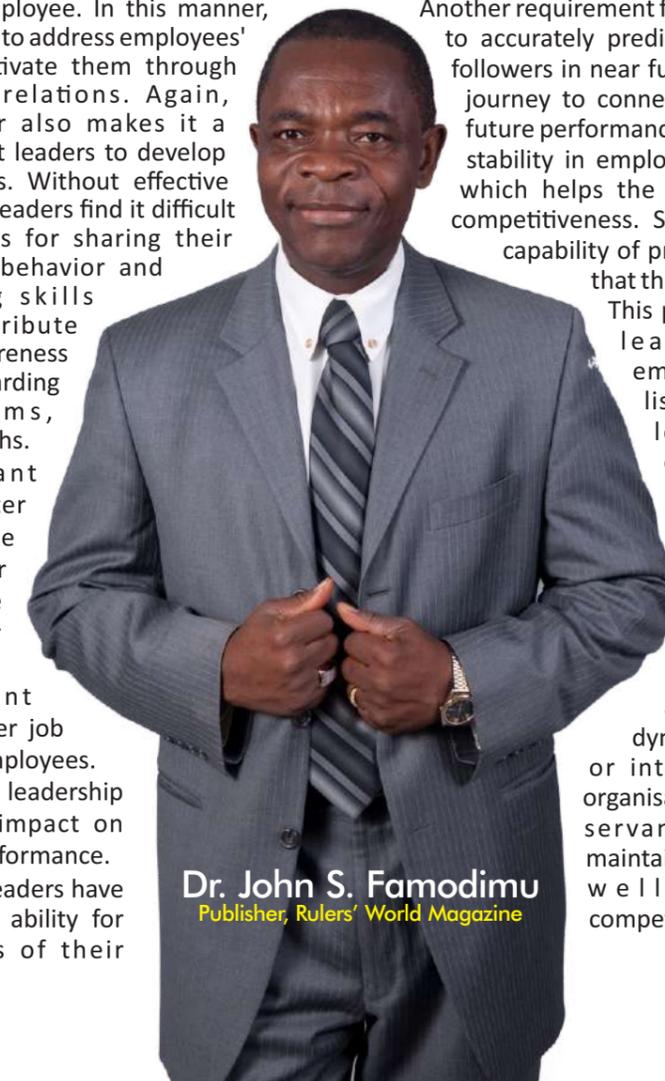
followers. There is a need for continuous improvement in employee performance within the modern competitive environment. Servant leaders are able to persuade employees by influencing their opinions. Such persuasion skills are beneficial for aligning cultural values of employees with organisational values. Similarly, persuasion skills are also essential for effective negotiations and efficient conflict resolution. Effective negotiations are not only useful for maximising positive outcomes, but are also critical for avoiding conflict at the workplace. Conflicts have a negative impact on employee performance as well as employee relations. For this reason, effective negotiations are crucial for promoting teamwork among followers.

Consequently, the aforementioned characteristics of servant leaders allow them to build strong communities while committing themselves to the growth of their followers. This is the primary reason for servant leaders' trait of stewardship. Servant leaders aim at supervising and taking responsibility for their followers' actions. These characteristics of servant leaders highlight their devotion towards growth of their followers as opposed to selfish gains.

Another requirement for becoming a servant leader is to accurately predict the performance needs of followers in near future. Servant leaders are on a journey to connect the past, present with the future performance of their followers. In this way, stability in employee performance is achieved, which helps the organisation to maintain its competitiveness. Servant leaders have a better capability of predicting the future challenges that threaten employee performance.

This particular capability of servant leaders is based on their empathetic behavior, effective listening skills and increased level of awareness. Such characteristics of servant leaders allow them to identify future challenges that threaten employee performance, based on previous and existing challenges.

Accordingly, servant leaders are better prepared for any dynamic changes in the external or internal environment of the organisation. These characteristics of servant leaders allow them to maintain employees' performance as well as organisational competitiveness.



Dr. John S. Famodimu
 Publisher, Rulers' World Magazine

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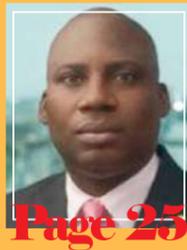
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....News Media

Publisher

Dr. John S. Famodimu

Editor

Prince Wale Matt'Olapade

Writers

Kunle Bakare
Tunde Olasupo
Florence Olugbodi
Oyewole Oyedapo

Contributors

Wole Opatola
Abubakar Muhammed
Abidemi Onifade

Graphics

'Dele Olasupo

Marketing/Advert

Adetunji Olaniyi

Printing

Femi Ilori

Letter to the editor must include writer's full name, address and telephone number, may be edited for purposes of clarity of expression, orderly presentation of materials or space, and should be addressed to president@rulersworld.com or rulersworldng@gmail.com
Tel: +234 817 380 0172

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AFDB: ADESINA RE-ELECTED FOR SECOND TERM

'ITS YET ANOTHER CALL FOR SELFLESS SERVICE TO AFDB'

As Buhari, senate president, Ooni of Ife, governors congratulate Adesina

DR Akinwumi Adesina was on Thursday, August 27, 2020, unanimously endorsed by all the 81 member countries of African Development Bank (AfDB) for another term of five years as the 55th annual meetings of the bank which ended in Cote D'Ivoire.

A globally renowned development economist and a World Food Prize Laureate and Sunhak Peace Prize Laureate, Dr Adesina has distinguished himself in driving a bold agenda to reform the bank and accelerate Africa's development. He was first elected as President of the bank on May 28, 2015.

The election result, which gave him a hundred percent of votes of all regional and non-regional members of the bank, was announced by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the Bank, Mrs Niale Kaba, and Minister of National Planning of Côte d'Ivoire.

The election took place on the final day of the 2020 Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank Group, which was held virtually for the first time in the bank's history.

Kaba said, "I am delighted that the Board of Governors have re-elected Dr Adesina for a second term in office as President. As shareholders, we strongly support the bank and will give him all the necessary support to carry forward and implement his compelling vision for the bank over the next five years." Adesina's first term focused on the bold new agenda for the Bank Group based on five development priorities known as the High 5s: Light up and Power Africa; Feed Africa; Industrialise Africa; Integrate Africa; and Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa.



| Dr. Akinwumi Adesina |

During Adesina's first term, the bank achieved impactful results on the lives of 335 million Africans, including: 18 million people with access to electricity; 141 million people benefiting from improved agricultural technologies for food security; 15 million people benefiting from access to finance from private investments; 101 million people provided with access to improved transport; and 60 million people gaining access to water and

sanitation.

The bank has maintained its AAA-ratings by all major global credit rating agencies for five years in a row. The Board of Governors of the Bank Group approved a 125 per cent increase in the General Capital of the Bank, raising its capital from \$93 billion to \$208 billion, the largest in the history of the Bank.

The African Development Fund received a \$7.6 billion pledge from donors, a 32 per cent increase, for support to low income countries and fragile states. The bank was ranked the fourth most transparent institution globally by Publish What You Fund, bolstering its strong governance credentials for transparency and accountability.

Under Adesina's leadership, the African Development Bank's Board of Directors approved a \$10 billion facility to support African countries to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The bank also launched a \$3 billion COVID-19 social bond on the global capital markets, the highest US dollar denominated social bond ever in world history, which is listed on the London Stock Exchange, Luxembourg Stock Exchange and NASDAQ.

Adesina said, "I am deeply grateful for the collective trust, strong confidence and support of our shareholders for electing me for a second term as President. It is yet another call for selfless service to Africa and the African Development Bank, to which I will passionately devote myself."

The African Development Bank is Africa's premier development finance institution, comprising 54 regional and 27 non-regional member countries.

"The future beckons us for a more developed Africa and a much stronger and resilient African Development Bank Group. We will build on the strong foundations of success in the past five years, while further strengthening the institution for greater effectiveness and impacts," Adesina said.

President Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari has felicitated with President of African Development Bank (AfDB), Dr Akinwunmi Adesina, on his re-election for a second term in office.

The president's congratulatory message was conveyed by Mr Femi Adesina, the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, in Abuja on Thursday.

He said the news of the victory came during the Council of State meeting, which was attended by

former heads of state, Senate President, governors, former Chief Justices of Nigeria, some Ministers, and senior government officials.

"As Secretary to Government of the Federation, Mr Boss Mustapha, announced the good news, President Buhari led a round of applause, and declared "He deserves it."

Buhari extended appreciation to the African Union for its endorsement of the AfDB President much earlier, and to shareholders of the bank who worked tirelessly to ensure the return of the visionary leader. According to him, Adesina's versatility, experience at both national and international engagements, will be further deployed to energize the pan-African financial institution.

Senate President Lawan

President of the Senate, Ahmed Lawan, says Dr Akinwunmi Adesina's re-election as President of African Development Bank (AfDB) is an attestation to his performance.

Lawan said this in a statement signed by his Special Adviser (Media), Mr Ola Awoniyi on Thursday in Abuja.

He said that Adesina's victory affirms the confidence and trust of the shareholders, management and staff of the bank in his leadership of the bank and the direction he is taking it.

"The renewal of your mandate is an attestation to your excellent performance as president, evident in the bank's numerous developmental initiatives on the African continent.

"I am elated to convey the joy and pride of the entire National Assembly over the electoral acclamation for integrity, grace, substance and hardwork.

"Your re-election should be an impetus for taking the continental financial institution to a greater height, realising that the reward for hard work is more work," Lawan said.

Governor Makinde

Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State has congratulated the President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), Dr Akinwunmi Adesina, following his re-election for another term.

Makinde, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Taiwo Adisa, on Friday in Ibadan stated that the victory was well-deserved.

The governor said "the world class technocrat remains a pride to Nigeria and the Yoruba race."

The statement further quoted the governor as saying that Adesina had raised standards and brought

about immense growth in the multilateral development finance institution in the last five years of his first tenure.

"I was not surprised that Adesina was re-elected to lead the bank for another term as his insightful leadership and sense of direction which have repositioned the bank could not have gone unnoticed by stakeholders and member-countries.

"The victory is well-deserved and it did not come to me as a surprise because Dr. Adesina's astute and visionary leadership at the bank in the last five years has been so convincing that member-countries cannot ignore them.

Governor Sanwo-Olu

Lagos State Governor, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, in his congratulatory message to Dr Adesina, said his reelection was etched on his hard work.

Sanwo-Olu, in a statement issued by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr Gboyega Akosile, said that Adesina's re-election was a testimony to his dedication and commitment to the growth and development of the African continent.

He described Adesina as a good ambassador of Nigeria and Africa that deserved to be re-elected, having distinguished himself during his first term in office as the head of the international organisation.

The governor said that Adesina had in the last 30 years proved himself as a good administrator and technocrat in different public offices at national and international levels.

"I am confident that your re-election will bring more development to the African continent as you supervise the affairs of African Development Bank

for another five years,"

Governor Fayemi

Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti also congratulated Dr Akinwunmi Adesina, on his re-election as President of African Development Bank (AfDB).

Fayemi in a congratulatory message signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr Yinka Oyebo, hailed Dr Adesina's re-election, describing it as well deserved. The Chairman, Nigerian Governors' Forum (NGF) said Adesina's re-election was an attestation to his dynamic and pragmatic leadership which had helped to reposition the bank.

"This is great news for all lovers of development. It is a befitting reward of Adesina's visionary leadership which has increased the growth and influence of the bank these past few years.

"There is no doubt Adesina's presidency has strategically repositioned the AfDB with attendant positive impact on the economies of many national and sub-national governments in Africa."

Ooni of Ife

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, joined other dignitaries to congratulate Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina, over his re-election as the President of the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Ooni expressed his heartfelt joy through a statement signed by his Director of Media and Public Affairs, Mr Moses Olafare, obtained by the **News Agency of Nigeria** (NAN) on Friday, in Ile-Ife.

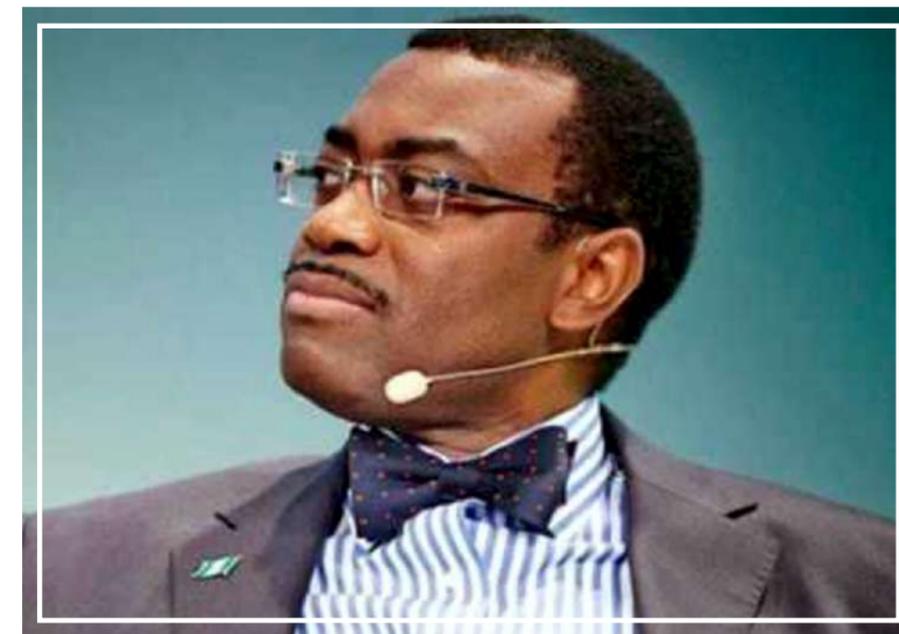
He explained that Dr Akinwunmi's re-election is a product of his good character and hard work.

"Omoluabi is the name we descendants of Oduduwa

call good character and it is the same way we address people like our very unique Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina with such unique human quality.

"Aside from being an Omoluabi with enviable human qualities, records of the re-elected AfDB president show hard work, love for one's country and uprightness.

"The entire Oduduwa race is indeed proud to have this gem among us; from his humble beginning as a farmer's child to his days as a Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



Why SON, NAFDAC must frequently monitor, re-access standard of certified organisations

Gabriel Oshokha

Globally, standards remain a premium in protecting a country, society or a cluster of community from falling prey of selfish individuals who cut corners to make more for themselves at the expense of the masses.

But the question here is: when will all these stop? Will there be a time when all these will be a thing of the past? The answer is no, and this is because we live in a complex society and a more serious reason we have watchdogs on standard. But again, must the standard authorities relax?

There is a resounding need for a constant monitoring and check on companies already certified to see if they are keeping to the rules.

The menace of expired items in Nigeria is an endemic issue cloaked in deception, and unscrupulous people thrive on the dividends for their livelihood.

Expired items in this context comprise common items in frequent demand, which are also prone to easy manipulation, particularly by vendors. These items are bottled water, cosmetics, food and drugs.

And investigations have shown that they are the items on the discount shelves of most superstores that are being sold to undiscerning and non-probing customers.

I remembered with a deep sense of grief how an expired drug led to the death of my elder sister. It was a devastating tragedy and indeed a bad news that will forever linger in my heart.

My sister died because of crass ignorance. And I fervently believe that if she were lettered and curious about the dangers associated with expired medication, she wouldn't have passed on untimely.

Also very painful, too, was the tragic exit of a friend's younger brother, who died of food poisoning. That was a couple of years ago. The victim was in his thirties. He was not mindful that some people could be so mischievous to the extent that they could gamble with human life for money. It never crossed the mind of the deceased that expired food could easily kill. And because he was insensitive to the havoc of expired food, he paid the supreme price on the altar of profiteering. The fate that befell the young man is one out of the many cases of deaths arising from expired food.

Recently, the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) reportedly sealed off a

firm in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, over expired items which were found in their retail and storage location in Abuja.

FCCPC disclosed that food products purchased were expired, even as of the time they were being sold to customers.

The regulatory body also discovered large and inexplicable inventories of Laziz Salad Cream, Laziz Mayonnaise, Laziz Vegetable oil in sachets, and Laziz Thousand Island Salad Cream.

The report claimed "the commission uncovered what appeared to be unapproved and unsafe production, decanting, or repackaging of vegetable oil."

A similar scenario also played out in Port Harcourt in Rivers State. It was a stunning revelation of a popular superstore in the state, allegedly selling goods several days after their expiry date and also reportedly manipulating the prices of some of its products.

The report affirmed that that 'spice supreme poultry seasoning' was found on the discount shelf and even sold at a higher price weeks after its expiration.

The unfolding instances, therefore, are clear cases of profiteering in the country even in the face of the current challenges facing Nigerians occasioned by the novel COVID-19 pandemic.

Again, how best can one describe the underhand practices of some evil-minded Nigerians who import expired drugs into the country after striking deals with the manufacturers?

And in what apt language can anyone describe profit-motivated vendors of bottled water, who alter the expiry date of such an essential product to suit their whims?

It is therefore not an overstatement that the current situation we find ourselves in calls for a rethink because some Nigerian wolves in sheep's clothing amongst us have embraced a game of the smartest takes it all in order to satisfy the yearnings of their avaricious nature.

And although the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) Act stipulates that producers of essential items like the ones listed in this piece, should operate within the confines of Nigerian laws, some recalcitrant individuals have often resorted to cutting corners.

And so, the only option left for NAFDAC is to frequently apply the long arm of the law on defaulters of laid down regulations in order to serve as a deterrent to others with



Mr. Osita Aboloma



Natural Wellness

08032098499

eunicenze@yahoo.com

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS THAT CAN CAUSE CANCER

There are some household products we use everyday that seems so innocent but are actually hurting us and reducing our lifespan.

It is therefore better to get rid of them before they get rid of you.

- 1. Ethylene Oxide in Old Books**
One of the constituents of old books is ethylene oxide. This is a chemical commonly used to sterilize old books, medical supplies, and some food supplies. While it might not pose much danger to you, the most significant risk applies to people that do spray them. However, residues can linger in old books sitting on your shelves.
- 2. Vinyl Flooring**
Vinyl flooring contains dioxins and PVC, which is a cancer-causing substance. There is a big chance of developing cancer if you have this installed in your home. Dioxins as well are carcinogenic because it is a toxin that is produced when making vinyl flooring. In contrast, use porcelain flooring or bamboo instead of vinyl flooring.

3. Carpets and Area Rugs
The presence of acetone, flame retardants, and formaldehyde in rugs and carpets makes them carcinogenic. Also, the new smell of carpet and rug when bought is linked to a chemical that triggers respiratory complications. In contrast, we recommend using sisal rugs or all-natural wool.

4. Your Dry Cleaning Process
The use of some chemicals in dry cleaning like perchloroethylene could also trigger cancer. Unknown to many people, the process of dry cleaning cloth is not health. It leaves harmful chemicals on the fabric, which hurts man. Some chemicals used in dissolving stains also causes cancer. In contrast, we recommend using a water-based dry cleaning process.

5. Couch
That is right, your flame retardant couch could be coated in carcinogenic chemicals as well. There are many fire outbreaks due to cigarettes. As a result, many sofas come with flame retardants which cause cancer. This, however, is mainly peculiar to couch made many years ago.

6. Leather Furniture
Many leather furniture comes with chromium. This is a carcinogen common

in over 50% of leather furniture produced. In addition, the process of drying leather also causes cancer. This makes factory workers susceptible. The best bet is to check the furniture label and chose the ones that are chromium free.

7. Bug Spray
Many insecticides and pesticides are dangerous. In addition to many toxic chemicals, they contain organophosphates. This is why bug sprays are only recommended for outdoor use because people are less likely to inhale them. When bug spray is used inside, the residue remains on surfaces, which could be dangerous. It increases the risk of developing lymphoma or leukemia when inhaled. In contrast, we recommend an all-natural spray as an alternative if you want to use indoor.

8. Weed Killers
The carcinogenic substance common in weed killers is glysohate. Excessive glysohate has been found to increase the growth of tumor cells in a rodent. This is why you need to be careful and use homemade solutions

Contd from pg 5 Why SON, NAFDAC must frequently monitor, re-access standard of certified organisations

such criminal disposition. Again, it should tighten its noose on suspected importers of expired products who connive with manufacturers. NAFDAC should also carry out random raids on select supermarkets and other retail outlets in major cities with tendencies for ripping off unsuspecting customers through sale of expired items. Many producers of sachet water operate in unwholesome environments, but hide under the guise of being registered entities under NAFDAC. But the truth is, many of them are not officially captured in NAFDAC's database. Those in this fold are behind the production of unsafe water in circulation, and the regulatory body should therefore beam its searchlight on them. It should quickly come to the rescue of the vulnerable non-lettered, particularly, who accept any product with a

manufacturer's label at any superstore or a retail outlet hook, line, and sinker. The Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) should also sustain the tempo by ensuring that importers as well as local producers of essential items comply with safety standards. SON task force should not relent on its clampdown on vendors and producers dealing in expired items, and then bring the culprits to book. The Consumer Protection Council (CPC) should also be alive to its responsibilities geared towards protecting consumers from exploitative practices as well as coming to their aid to seek redress for proven cases of exploitation. And to achieve this aim, no effort will be too great towards ridding Nigeria of expired items.



Unraveling the Amazing Cashew Beach Island in Akwa Ibom

Located in Southern Nigeria, lying between latitudes 4°32'N and 5°33'N, Akwa Ibom State has amazing road networks and some of the most breathtaking scenarios in West Africa. The state envelops a rich bizarre of amazing sunset; plain land, multi streamed islands, beautiful vegetation, abundant seafood as well as an ancient history and some of the most developed tourist resorts in South-South Nigeria.

The main focus of this article rests on Iko Beach, the longest coastal beach in West Africa. Iko Beach is situated in Ikoroette Clan. Ikoroette is one of the clans in Eastern Obolo. As a Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State, Eastern Obolo has land borders with Mkpat Enin Local Government Area to the north, Onna Local Government Area to the northeast, Ikot Abasi Local Government Area to the west, Ibeno Local Government Area to the southeast and it is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the south.

Road trip from any part of the town in Akwa Ibom State to Iko Jetty (or river bank) is superlatively smooth. Iko people are warm and greatly receptive. Iko beach and its beautifully dotted havens remain a multibillion dollar unexplored tourist attraction repertoire in Akwa Ibom State. From a five minute boat cruise across the slow moving arterial of Iko River down to the white massive beach overlooking the tidal ocean, and from the sprouting cashews trees on Iko Islands, to a bunch of hefty bamboo trees encompassing its enclave - Iko beach is beautifully designed by nature to soothe, woo and heal. It is impossible to get to the beach and return unhappy.

The heavily tidal oceans intermittently cruise aboard and hurl clean the seafront leaving the beach sand neat and cool. What more can we ask for? God's mighty hand has done it all, but as God in the beginning commanded Adam to keep and

tend the Garden of Eden, we all have a duty to put Iko beach in the world tourism map where it ought to be.

Ibom Tourism Nigeria for the past five years like a lone voice in the wilderness has been crying out for local, national and international investors to come harness the tourism goldmine we have in Iko. Again, to make bold its unrelenting commitment and passion to make Iko beach visible to the world, Ibom Tourism Nigeria on its billed tour tagged 'August, 2020 Unlock' voyaged thirty-seven nature lovers across the state to savor the wondrous ambience of the beach.

Time and space will elude me, if I set out to enumerate a million economic value chain and high employment ratios Iko Beach can create if given lively nightlife, vibrant and unique coastal cottages for lodging, outdoor adventures and an eclectic range of mind-expanding attractions such as museum, surfing facilities, beach bars, parks, and spots for games.

Also, since Akwa Ibom State has one of the best culinary reputations in Nigeria, setting up gigantic restaurants with menus designed to impress at Iko Island would be a kill for tourists who would always desire a mix of seafood, chilled local drinks (palm-wine, zobo, soymilk, kunu), wood-fired delicacies (yam, potato, plantain, cassava), proteins such as grilled pork, roasted chicken, suya, braised lamb etc. for beach meals, our local meals like afang, editan, melon atama, white soup, ikpang-kwukwo and lots more would remain satisfying bud teaser for tourists.

It is my humble plea that Iko Beach be discovered by passionate investors, as there are a lot more profits we can as a people harvest from Iko if given due attention.



The new face of Nigeria rail transportation

The rail system is globally the cheapest and safest means of transportation, and it is also pleasurable.

Reliving the exhilaration of transportation by rail, an octogenarian who preferred anonymity while taking a trip down memory lane, said, transportation by train offers passengers absolute peace of mind, and railway stations were a beehive of activities in those days.

"Milling passengers engage in conversations on different topics while expecting the arrival of the next train.

"And the moment a train blared its horn from a distance, passengers surged forward, wearing smiles on their faces. It was a delightful experience in those days. And being on a train also gave one the privilege to know many villages, towns and cities as the train journeyed.

The Muhammadu Buhari-led government deserves a pat on the back for breathing new life into the rail transportation system in Nigeria. And not just

reviving the system, the government went the extra mile to put a standard gauge rail project touching many parts of the country.

In effect, the ongoing rail project by the government of Nigeria is a marked improvement on the intermodal rail system on ground.

The Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, while casting light on the new rail system, said "intermodal means you take off from the seaport and receive cargoes because this rail construction would go to Apapa seaport, so you just offload straight onto the train.

"If you construct the rail up to Kano, goods will get to Kano. When the goods arrive in Kano, trucks will take the goods to the various warehouses."

The inter-city standard gauge rail system promises affordability. This implies passengers will pay less fare as opposed to the exorbitant transportation charges by commercial drivers, particularly during festive periods.

Giving his word in Abeokuta, Ogun State capital, the Minister of Transportation said "we will charge between N500 and N600 but if we charge from N1,000 and above, I won't be comfortable about it. I don't want to do what I did in Kaduna. I just went to Kaduna and found that they charge N1,000."

The standard gauge rail system will also facilitate quick movement of passengers and goods from one station to another, and even less stressful. This means a passenger can safely tell the duration of a trip as the movement of a train is never hindered by gridlock.

Amaechi who spoke during the inspection of the standard gauge rail system in Abeokuta, said, "what this offers you is that for the direct express train, in one hour and fifteen minutes you're in Ibadan, which is better than struggling on the Abeokuta road. And this will reduce road accidents, crimes, police checkpoints as well as Customs Service."

It is a fact that kidnapping, robbery and other violent incidents have made road transportation in Nigeria less appealing.

Amaechi allayed the fears of train passengers, saying, "Just as we are doing in Kaduna to Abuja rail line, in each coach, we have enough police officers. "On the tracks, in every truck, there are adjoining

roads which the police and other security agents patrol, too. The trains are very secure."

The Managing Director of the Nigeria Railway Corporation (NRC), Mr Fidert Okhiria, who recently lent credence to the security of the trains, said, "NRC has built modern terminals comparable to airports, especially in the Abuja to Kaduna railway corridor. The terminals have entry and exit points where passengers and luggage are screened so as to avert concealment of dangerous weapons."

It is also worthy of note that the standard gauge rail system will be sustained in terms of maintenance.

According to Amaechi, "the Chinese are taking 150 Nigerians to a university in China to train them in railway engineering in order to sustain the railway system they eventually leave."

But the minister pointed out that, "It will depend on the government in power after the current administration has left."

Giving an instance, Amaechi said "The ballast (these stones you see on the track) must be replaced either once yearly or three years."

In a recent update, the managing director of NRC, during a tour of inspection of the Lagos to Ibadan standard gauge rail line, in company of Amaechi and the Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, disclosed that "NRC will begin passenger train operations in September from Itakpe to Warri and Lagos to Ibadan.

Also, the Lagos to Ogun mass transit, according to NRC, will resume soon.

According to NRC, "10 major and minor stations on the 156 kilometres rail line were at varying stages of completion, while the rail track has been completed to Ebute-Meta junction (EBJ) Rail Station and Ibadan.

The stations along the corridor are Apapa, EBJ, Agege, Agbado, Kajola, Papalanto, Abeokuta, Olodo, Omi-Adio and Ibadan.

The massive ongoing Nigeria railway project is being undertaken by China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC).

The standard gauge project across the country, according to Amaechi, will reportedly cover Lagos to Kano, Port-Harcourt to Maiduguri to Lagos to Kaduna, Lagos to Calabar and the Central line being Abuja to Warri.

Amaechi assured that all things being equal, the ongoing project will be completed before April 2023.

The Chinese are taking 150 Nigerians to a university in China to train them in railway engineering in order to sustain the railway system they eventually leave.



Iseyin: Home of Aso Oke

Iseyin is in Oyo State, southwest Nigeria. Notable for the rich and progressive cultural heritage which spans from cloth weaving to being at the forefront of Islamic civilisation and liberation.

The land is a fertile agricultural base with many people whose livelihood depends on it. There is no major government establishment or education institution in this city, but the

inhabitants and indigenes thrive still; thanks to both the craftsmanship and the duo of subsistence and commercial farming.

One of the major problems bedeviling this ancient town to which she wasn't able to attract much grandiose establishment is the Oro Festival. The yearly celebration of some age-long traditions with the belief that any woman who sees Oro will die; as they would be killed by the cruel god, Oro itself.

But in the long run, majority of the female folks who by one accident or the other happened to witness this weren't killed by this man made deity rather they were attacked by the bogus, whose livelihood and reverence depends on this object of fear which infringes on rights of inhabitants, crippling the city's economy for more than a week annually, banning the female population of the town from movement.

Inside the ancient palace of the **Aseyin** had some monumental edifice that was named after some past Aseyin such as the Asijibi roundabout and some ongoing

projects that will further beautify the palace.

Another age long site in Iseyin is the **Agbede Oba**, an area where blacksmiths use metals to carve so many things for homes and farming.

Iseyin great hunters and history

The emergence of Iseyin was not arbitrary. However, its geographical endowment was an attractive feast to the earlier farmers and hunters being a fecund forestland harbouring both mild and wild games, thereby promising to agriculturists and game-hunters to thrive upon. The slight modification in its landscape whereby Iseyin city tucks into itself within an expanse of land surrounded by four high hills has a link with history.

Aaba Odo-Iseyin with his people plumbed the depth of loneliness as the first set of settlers to exploit the earlier bewildered forest now called Iseyin. He was an ordinary hunter of no royal or chieftaincy extraction who migrated from Ile-Ife for hunting purposes, so he could not have established himself as the owner of the land and probably the Oba. But he built for himself and his people a camp base at Ipokun where they rest and reside after daily work. The base was later relocated to Igbo-Odofofin. Aaba belonged to Oro creed.

Ipale, another valiant hunter, later joined Aaba and led his own people to settle at another part of the forest to continue their work. Like Aaba, he had no link with royal hegemony and he was also of Oro Creed. It is noteworthy that no name had been given to this forest at this time when these hunters were moving in.

Oke-esa and Jagun Ilado, in order, migrated in to settle as hunters. They, together with their people, settled at different portions of the land. Jagun had his Base at Igbo-Iwoye (in present Ilado area). They were not

different from the previous hunters in mission, origin and creed. Aaba took it upon himself to convince the other hunters to visit Ebedi in submission, and he invited them to a meeting at their meeting place. They all came, and he discharged the message. Despite all his explanations, only Ipale and Jagun were convinced to visit Ebedi and they did so. Oke-Esa considered such an invitation disdainful and refused to tow the path of his colleagues. When Ebedi got wind of this, he was not hesitant to place a statement on Oke-Esa, and put an eternal ban on him and his descendants from being a chief or community head in the history of Iseyin. And since then no Aseyin has dared to appoint anybody as Baale in Oke-Esa community till today.

The other three hunters were appointed the heads of their respective communities. Their titles were Aaba Odo-Iseyin (Dunmoba community), Ipale (Ekunle community), Jagun (Ilado community). Ipale was also given the right to apportion land to strangers who wished to settle in Iseyinland. Among the beneficiaries were Baale Koso and his people, Onikosa and his people, Baale Ladogan and his people, and many others.

Aaba later made arrangements to settle Ebedi at Ekunle. He accepted and settled there. Ebedi was of Sango creed (Sango god of thunder), but for the humility of the three hunters who submitted to him who were of Oro extraction, he approved Oro Oracle as the official oracle with which Iseyin was created, and decided to honour it by celebrating it yearly (the time during which women in the town are confined in for some hours daily for a week, and peaked the seventh and seventeenth day with full day confinement). And this was the beginning of yearly Oro festival in Iseyin as depicted in one of its panegyrics 'Iseyin Oro Omo Ebedi'. In addition, he endorsed 'sacrifice to Oro' as part of rites necessary to make any Aseyin.

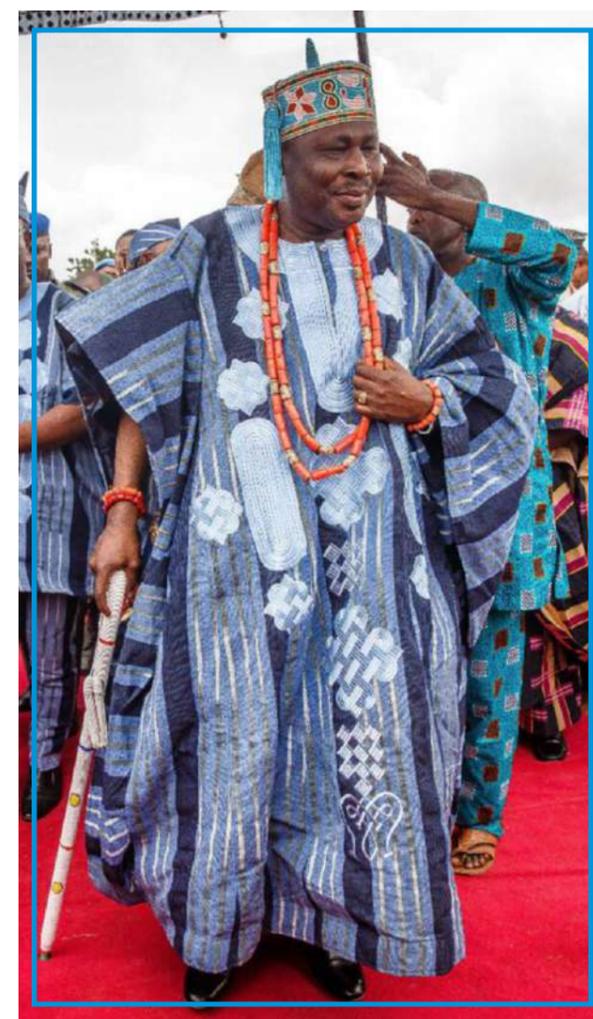
Then, after Ebedi had settled down at Ekunle, as a valiant and responsible leader, he deemed it necessary to provide security for his subjects against external aggression and intrusion rampant then. So he set out to Dahomey (now Benin Republic) to seek powers to ward off insurgence and enslavement from this newly established town christened Iseyin, the name emanated from palm kernel processing. The assignment took Ebedi a very long length of time which his people construed to mean that he had been beset with a calamity beyond his control so made his return impossible.

And a community without a leader is on the brink of disorder, they decided to appoint an Oba. They chose Ebedi's brother Ogbolu as the first Aseyin of Iseyin. The event turned dramatic at the time Ogbolu's installation ceremony was at its peak, Ebedi resurfaced with an army of supporters including sophisticated security experts and servants, both males and females.

Not too far at the outskirts, Ebedi caught winds of drum beats and tunes signifying a grand celebration in the town. Ebedi ordered his entourage to stop a bit, he sighted a pregnant woman plucking leaves nearby, and he approached her and elicited from her what was happening in the town.

Ebedi was sad and disappointed with the development. With courage and a great sense of patriotism, he sent all his security outfits he brought from Dahomey and their usage through the women to his sibling, the new Oba. He informed the woman to instruct Ogbolu that he could no more enter the town to avert anarchism or possible breakdown.

Consequently, Ebedi transmogrified into a high hill (Ebedi Hill). Thus, it has been in tradition that all installed Aseyins must make sacrifices to Ebedi Hill yearly. His entourage followed the same footstep. Ogba, one of his charms experts, transformed to a river (Odo-Ogba) and channeled across the length of Iseyinland. His chief servants, Oluofi, Eyinjue and Atamafon also transform into high hills at different locations on the outskirts of the town, making Iseyin to be surrounded by four historical hills. Others in the entourage who



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Cont from pg 8

transformed into rivers were Igbobi, Atori and Ajumoda. Ogidiyi, Adabo, Iserin and Okutapamo also transformed into some other things out of disappointment and inability to go back to Dahomey.

This made Ebedi a very popular hero and most mentioned name in the history of Iseyin, and that Ebedi is a substitute to Iseyin as the name of the town.

No town can compete with us in Aso Ofi —Aseyin of Iseyin

Aseyin of Iseyinland, Oba (Dr) Abodul Ganiyu Adekunle Salau, Ologunbe-Ajinese I is a veterinary doctor and the 26th monarch of the ancient city of Iseyin. In this brief chat with 'KUNLE BAKARE, he speaks on the uniqueness of the ancient enclave and why it is still relevant till date.

Can you tell us why Iseyin is unique among other cities?

It is a very unique town because of its cultural identity. We have a peaceful environment, we have religious harmony and we also know how to tolerate ourselves. Predominantly, we are farmers and I can tell you that Iseyin alone could be the food basket of Oyo State. We are also known in the area of crafting iron to mold different farm equipment. Above all, I don't see any town that can compete with us in weaving Aso Ofi; that alone makes our town unique.

Where did the people of Iseyin come from?

Ile-Ife is the ancestral home of the Yorubas. We are all descendants of Oduduwa. History made it clear that we are all descendants of Oduduwa and that is why I aligned with history and I have not read or heard contrary stories anywhere. So, I am a descendant of Oduduwa.

Does that explain why you are very close to the new Ooni of Ife?

Yes, it is just an issue of a son visiting his father. You see, the present Ooni is very young and intelligent. He is humble and when one sees a progressive person he should be supported to move higher. He is the supreme Oba in Yorubaland but he does not see himself that way and God himself adores humility. It's in the Quran. I saw the humility in him. The Ooni has been coming to visit me here and I do visit him without prior notice. In fact, we have become family friends. Our case has become a son visiting his father and vice-versa.

We have been able to maintain peace in our town

— Chief Adeola Adeagbo, Otun Agbaakin of Iseyin

How are you able to manage the relative peace here?

As the Otun Agbaakin, I report directly to the Aseyin and I also liaise with the law enforcement agencies in the town to bridge the gap between them and the people. We have our way of settling issues before it gets out of hand and that informs the reason the Aseyin got the most peaceful award from the Oyo State Commissioner of Police.

Also, we maintain peace between the people and government agents in the area of street trading and we talk regularly with religious leaders, in both Christian and Islamic circles and that's why we have religious tolerance and harmony. So much violence would have happened but we thank God for the way we handle issues.

Recently, a police officer accidentally shot a community member and the people wanted to revolt but we took charge and the issue was resolved amicably.

What is the major occupation of your people here?

We are into weaving of the most popular Aso-oke. We are into arts and crafts. Farming, too, is a major occupation of our people.

We were told that it was forbidden to kill zebras. How true is this?

Yes, that beautiful horse. Can you see any sane hunter that will point a gun at it? It may not be in only Iseyin, other places too will not kill the zebra. In fact, it has its uniqueness and if a horse falls sick, it does not use any drug, but according to the tradition here, a virgin will be mandated to cross over it and it will get up.

Iseyin is notorious because of the Oro festival. Do you subscribe to this?

We are not notorious, it's just an annual thing to remember the ancestors. Iseyin has been without Oro but when the first king Ogbolu was installed at the expense of his brother Ebedi, who went to the forest to look for powers could not come on time, his younger brother was made the king and when he came back, he could not enter the town so he entered the womb of a pregnant woman who later gave birth to what is called Oro today.

That is why any Oba must visit the Igbo Oro before his coronation and if he dies he must also be taken to Igbo Oro before burial.

Can you remember any of the forbidden things in the land?

Our monarch must not eat fresh yam until after the Oro festival, even, he must not step on the peeled waste of yam until the day that preceded the festival.

Are you alright with the level of development here?

We can't be satisfied. We can be Oliver Twist. We thank God for the Ibadan-Iseyin road. But I still want to remind the governor not to forget his campaign promises. We need a higher institution of learning and he should not forget the tarring of ikere dam. If these are done, it will be good.



Mobile apps on the upswing in banking services

Tunde Olasupo

Banking all over the world at various times has made a number of dynamic strides. Reminiscing the turn of events in the last few decades. We have seen an excellent move from analogue banking to digital banking progressively. Different stages of revolution in banking from branch experience where a customer interfaces with a human teller to a much easier and comfortable automated teller experience, loan desk officer to a credit card, cheques issuance to wireless transfer, cash payment for goods and services to POS and many more changes have taken place successively.

Banking has always gained the support of technology over the years but the advent of smartphones brought about a greater revolution in banking that saw the sector's customer base and transaction volume grow in leaps and bounds within a short period. This development has also made the banks continually seek a means to edge out one another through robust mobile technology.

Mobile banking application adoption in the last one year has therefore made banking to be more attractive, and bank customers are already very elated about this development. In the past, a customer must factor the time he would spend in the bank to his daily schedule, but today, the business of the day can be totally faced without distractions.

Mobile application, otherwise called mobile app derives its efficiency from the features of a specific app. As expected, banks have consistently outpaced one another by regularly increasing the features of their mobile apps. Some of the basic

features expected of a banking app include account balances check, money transfer, bills payment, account statement and so on. The consulting firm, PwC, indicated in its recent research on mobile banking that mobile channels emerged the most preferred way of making financial transactions in Nigeria today. The research further established the fact behind the surge in mobile channels preference as the availability of affordable smartphones and the awareness of e-commerce in the country.

Many now see the convenience and speed in making payments for transactions with their smartphones. PwC further records that more than 377 million mobile money transactions valued at N5.1 trillion were posted across Nigerian banks in 2019, quadrupling the value posted in 2018. E-bills payments also grew by 40 per cent from N0.5 trillion to about N0.7 trillion in 2019.

Exploring the performance of the popular banking apps using the Google Play Store ratings and review, we observed a keen competition among the banking apps with each one trying to catch up with the other in terms of rating.

Bank apps that seem to be in the frontline are Zenith Bank App, GTworld, UBA Mobile, First Mobile, Access Bank App, Ecobank Mobile and Fidelity Online, as they have experienced over one million downloads each, by users. The complaints from some of the users about each of the apps have mostly been network shortcomings while they also expressed that in a few moments the apps suffered some glitches. We cannot but say the banking app has contributed in no little measure to relieving the banking hall of its usual human traffic.



Nine ways to determine if a person is right for you

Trust your feeling

Yes, that's the first rule. Trust your feelings, your intuition, your instinct; it is a place deep inside of you, where you have 'a feeling or a knowing', that something is right or not right.

In the words of Eva Gizowska, "Trust your feelings when you meet someone new. They might seem perfectly charming and friendly, but if your sixth sense makes you feel uncomfortable, even if you can't explain this logically, go with your intuition."

Trusting your feelings might be the first step towards knowing if the person you're in a relationship with now is actually the right mate for you. However, never separate your head from your heart when making relationship decisions. Intuition is a heartfelt sensation, so you still have to pay attention to your head. The purpose of the head is to protect the heart. If there is no accord between your heart and your head, if the two are not mutually in agreement then there is a problem somewhere. You need to look closely into it.

Mutual respect

Respect determines a lot in a relationship. Mutual respect in a relationship is important. Do not sacrifice your self-respect in a relationship, if not you will lose your value and up in a toxic relationship.

A mate who respects you will value your opinion and be willing to compromise on certain issues and not always act abusively. The person should be able to listen to your concerns and feelings non-judgmentally. The person should also appreciate you; share your successes and achievements sincerely with you.

Similarities of values

Values are the core essence of your life. What you believe in, what shapes your perceptions about life,

what makes up who you are. So, does your potential partner share the same values with you?

The person should be flexible enough to accommodate your values and respect them. A partner who wants you to compromise your values or change them, might not be the right person. Or if you try to change your values to please your partner to be in a relationship, it is a sign the person is not right for you. Don't change your standard to fit into someone else's life. Shared values are very important in a relationship

Right qualities

If you have an idea of what qualities you are looking for in a mate, it's a big help. Qualities as in the right ones, there might be good qualities that may not be right for you; the qualities you desire should be intrinsic and realistic and not based on whimsical or peripheral ideas.

In as much as one can, you should look out for your desired qualities, don't make an unrealistic shopping list of what you want and don't go in search of perfection because no one is perfect. But then, you just don't have to settle for anyone simply because he/she is available. Availability is not compatibility; your choice has to conform to some basic inert qualities of who you want in your life

Don't set high expectations and scrutinise your intended partners through it. I tell you, they will always fall short of your expectations. You cannot get all you desire in one person. Choose a person you can tolerate his/her flaws and one that shares the same core values with you.

Be yourself in a relationship

Your partner should appreciate and value your personality in totality; should tolerate your flaws and all. You should be able to feel comfortable

around your partner and not be in a continual struggle to hide some aspect of your character. You should feel at ease, relaxed and free to be yourself in the relationship.

That is, you should not be afraid to act, or speak. You should be free to air your opinion without the fear of ridicule or intimidation.

You should not live in pretence or in fear of exposing who or what you are. Your mate has to accept your good part, your weakness and your faults without trying to change you to his/her taste.

Easy communication

Good and easy communication is the hallmark of any good relationship. Your partner should be someone you can really talk to and talk with, someone you can absolutely feel confident enough to open up to and tell everything about you, your hope, your fear and the intentions of your heart. I mean you can discuss everything under the sun with that person.

You should be able to argue or hold debt with your partner without fear of incurring the person's ire. Your partner should be able to patiently correct you when you're wrong and not insult your ignorance, and shouldn't always want an argument to end in his/her favour.

Your mate stimulate your mind

Your mate should be able to stimulate your mind and

have a positive influence on your life. The person should give you ample support to work on your dream in the relationship. You don't have to postpone, forsake or restructure your dream because you are in a relationship.

Your mate should make you happy

Does your partner make you happy, smile, laugh and feel good generally? And, do you actually feel loved in the relationship. Are you glad and grateful that the person will be part of your life? In addition, has life and living become better and more meaningful because the person is there.

Your mate must be truly committed

Are you in the relationship alone? Are you planning and thinking about your future alone? Is your partner committed to everything about you; your life, career, aspirations, hopes and dreams? The person should be part of them for that will give you the confidence the person truly cares about you.

And so, to determine if someone is the right person for you takes time, and it goes beyond the initial attraction. It is very important that you give yourself time to study the person and situation before reaching that final decision. Never go into a relationship with anyone who treats or sees you as an option.

SUCCESS OF ANY BUSINESS DEPENDS ON VISION DRIVING IT — ARMSTRONG

Chief Olaleye Olanipekun Armstrong is the Chief Executive Officer of Strong Energy Oil and Gas and media guru. In this interview with Florence Olugbudi, he speaks on his business trend, challenges and priorities.



LOOKING at your profession critically, what will you say is your source of motivation?

My vision is very significant in answering this question because it is what drives every business. More so, I love the game of business with or without profit. My vision is clearly written down and from time to time I connect myself with it constantly.

What actually inspired you into the media, oil and gas business?

Well, I grew up loving business; I use to hawk things for my mum from a tender age until I was in SS3. Another advantage I got too was that I grew up with my grandmother who was also a businesswoman. More so, I couldn't see myself working for anyone and getting fulfillment.



—Mark Havercroft

Balancing culinary flavor to serve both local, international market

IT'S no secret that hotel, resorts and Safari operators have traditionally paid plenty of attention to the job of attracting international guests and charging in foreign currency, but that's all

changed thanks to COVID-19. With the pandemic cutting a swathe through the industry, and statisticians estimating declines of up to 80 per cent in the international tourism economy for 2020, domestic tourists will be a key factor.

The key to bridging this gap in expectations, suggests Africa hospitality expert, Mark Havercroft, Regional Director for Africa for Minor Hotels, lies in carefully curated and unforgettable travel experiences that appeal to local expectations.

Competitiveness, he explains, lies in the ability to create and integrate value-added products or experiences which, in the current scenario, have to appeal across the traveller spectrum, while taking advantage of what makes a particular destination unique and distinguishable for tourists.

"These include features that set the destination apart, and include things such as culture, architecture, gastronomy, infrastructure landscape, events and shopping," not something a local guest feels can be had at home, says Havercroft, speaking from the experience of Minor Hotels, which has successfully migrated into Africa to expand its footprint from Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, the Indian Ocean, Europe and South America.

Fine dining with a local twist

A menu offering local ingredients prepared with international flair will always be a drawcard for international and domestic travellers alike. Take, for example, the Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort's "Grilled Lobster", roasted on an open fire on the beach within steps to the Indian Ocean which pays luxurious tribute to Mozambique's Portuguese heritage.

Other meals that appeal across the board combine well-known international dishes with bold local flavours, such as the Anantara Medjumbe Island Resort's "Island Benedict with English muffin, lobster, poached egg, bacon, avocado and curry hollandaise sauce".

Of course, impeccable service from well-trained team members is an essential part of this dining experience, says Havercroft.

A wine list to celebrate

Start with innovative cocktails that showcase authentic African flavours, like Mundambi Gin, a New Harbour Distillery gin infused with the Mundambi flower. Mix cucumber rind over lots of ice and a splash of Fever Tree tonic, and you have a unique smoky spice and citrus taste experience that guests won't get anywhere else, locally or internationally. Then move your guests on to a well selected choice of excellent local and imported wines that pair perfectly with their meal.

A view to remember

Locals looking for the ideal spot to entertain important clients or celebrate special occasions appreciate exceptional venues just as much as domestic and international travellers. Offer comfortable and luxurious surroundings, locally inspired decor that creates a true sense of place, and if you can add breathtaking views that showcase the surrounding natural beauty, you have a winning combination for every type of guest.

Events that educate and entertain

Include some local culture and give your guests even more to boast about to their friends back home. From local music playing softly in the background of the lobby through to bespoke day trips that take guests out of the hotel, there are plenty of ways to get this right. It's also critical to take note of, for example, Generation Z travellers' appetite for more risk and adventure, which marks a significant shift away from traditional sun, sea and sand, and attraction-based tourism. This requires an out-of-the-box response that provides diverse and distinct experiences, while supporting the socio-cultural and economic development of local communities.

So, it's essential to offer the expected guided horseback rides, boat trips, dune surfing, island picnics hikes and escorted trips to the "mainland" to visit a bustling street market followed by a meal in an authentic local restaurant. And we know that for those who prefer to take things at a more relaxed pace, a romantic sunset picnic with food provided by a personal chef, or a spa day using products made in the community will appeal to both domestic and international visitors.

Getting the balance right

Today's travellers are seeking familiar comforts they can rely on, a dash of indigenous adventure and a sense of luxury that reminds them they've earned this holiday -- or a blend of all three. Whether they're local or have crossed an ocean to reach your establishment, says Havercroft, ensure that what you're offering will entice them to return - and become the kind of word-of-mouth ambassadors that may just be your saving grace during these unparalleled challenges for tourism.

HOW TO START A POULTRY BUSINESS WITH LITTLE CAPITAL

KUNLE BAKARE

Poultry business is the form of animal husbandry which raises domesticated birds such as chickens, ducks, Turkey's and gees and other birds to produce meat or eggs for food and it originated from the agricultural era.

In the past, people paid little attention to breeding birds but with the recent global unstable economy, many Nigerians have been compelled to start up backyards farming, rearing chickens for their consumption and small business to offset some domestic bills.

Agricultural science which is a major sector of university education includes all aspects of poultry farming but in recent times, many people, including young school leavers, have seen poultry business as a way out of poverty.



Many ventured into the business without prior knowledge of animal husbandry, while some were successful out of stroke of luck, others are counting losses.

However, one can still do the business without a university education, but it is very essential that one gets adequate knowledge before investing in the business.

Poultry business is a very broad niche with different aspects which include egg production (layers breeding), meat production (broilers), chicken breeding (hatchery), poultry equipment and manufacturing, and feed production.

Egg and meat processing (packaging and marketing)

Poultry farming and consultancy

This is to tell you that poultry business has a broad branch, therefore you need to choose your area of concentration. If you have the capital and the technicalities of the

business, you can do all but it is better to find out which area is profitable with lowest duration.

For a beginner, I will suggest an investment in production of four weeks old broilers. Even if one gets a loan to start the business, the repayment can commence from the third week because your broiler is good and ready to go anytime from 21 days when their vaccinations must have been concluded.

This beginner aspect of broiler production is one of the most lucrative businesses in poultry, provided it is properly set up and managed. This aspect of livestock farming presents one of the finest opportunities for entrepreneurs to make good money within a short period of time due to the quick maturity of birds.

Engagement

Anyone can engage in poultry business. It doesn't matter the education background or how rich you are, you can start at any level and grow as big as you want within a period of time. The most important thing is that you should have the interest to start somewhere.

One of the factors that make poultry business ideal is that chicks grow faster than anticipated if you use the right formula and feeding procedure, unlike goats that takes two to three years to mature, A chicken can be ready for the market within 28 weeks but in the case of broilers, it can be ready for the market from six weeks for meat production. That is why it is ideal for those seeking loan to take advantage in the broiler production, because it is one of the lower hanging fruits in the business when you consider loan and short period of repayment.

Though it is capital intensive, one can start with as low as between N50,000 and N100,000.

Basic needs for a beginner

Any beginner who wants to be successful in broiler business, must consider getting all it needs to operate a poultry which include a space, drinkers and feeders, drugs, cages (battery or deep litters), water tank, a good source to stock the chicks and an expert in case the beginner lacks basic knowledge of the business.

Sources of capital for startup

- Grants from family and friends
- Loans from banks

While a battery cage that can house 96 birds costs N60,000, a startup with little capital may adopt the deep litters and it is interesting to let you know that even the wood shaving is sold for N300 per bag. So, a starter can adopt the deep litters provided there is space of a bedroom size.

It is a money-spinning business that can bring fortune to farmers, if properly managed. At the moment, because of the little time it requires to learn the rudiments, a lot of young graduates have embraced the poultry business as a means of survival.

My music preaches unity, Africanism

—Yega

What is your fashion sense and what do your music preaches?

My fashion sense is unorthodox, daring and kind of radical. I love to combine contemporary wears with African clothing. My music preaches unity, Africanism, self awareness, Afro-centricity and above all its a form of escape from all the problems going on in the society

Your outing during the world cup fiesta in Moscow two years ago was explosive. Why you and what was the experience like?

Russia World Cup 2018, I still relieve the moment everyday in my head. Performing at the African Village was amazing, breathtaking and unforgettable. I made my country proud. There is more in the offering from Yega that the world is going to see. I am loaded with African content for the world, but I am holding the Yoruba adage that says 'ile ni ati mu eso ro de' meaning charity begins at home. I am living my Africanism style to the fullest, which I am blending with other brands of music. It is unique and it is actually going to be another brand for music lovers.

You did a lot of safety social responsibility recently on COVID-19. What is it all about and what is the aim?

I made a song titled "Free" for the COVID-19 sensitisation campaign my team and I embarked on. The whole idea was to go to local communities to sensitise the people about the precautions and ways to stay safe from the Coronavirus. We also went further to give them face masks and also share palliatives to cushion the effect the pandemic has had on the people.

What will you call your kind of music and how is the patronage like in Nigeria compared with other fusions?

I call my music Afrocentric music and it's been very well expected here so far. My team and I just need to put in more effort in distributing the music, so we are seeking brand and individual sponsors.

To what extent has the present pandemic affected the music and entertainment industry? How has it impacted your career as a musician?

It has affected it in a lot of ways. All shows have been on hold for now, so it's hard to connect with the fans one on one and has also reduced our revenue because a lot of our earnings as musicians come from live shows. On the bright side, it has also opened our minds to a lot of new ways we can connect with our fans especially online. It's been a gift and a curse so far.

What is the philosophy of your music and what innovation are you bringing into the fusion.

My philosophy is just preaching Africanism and self awareness, going back to our roots, knowing where we come from through music. I'm bringing a wicked fusion of the core Afrobeat and adding my own contemporary flavor with my sonorous voice and jazzy saxophone feel.



Professionally, how long have you been in the music industry and how many albums to your credit?

My first song was published in 2014. So, professionally, I've been doing it for six years. I'm yet to release an album. I've just been releasing singles but my E.P (mixtape) will be dropping before the year ends. I'm an independent artist. I'm not under a record label for now but my team and I have been reaching out to brands and individuals to invest and sponsor the brand YEGA.

Which record label and deal have you engaged in recently?

I've worked with Mayorkun, Runtown just to mention a few but I plan on working with everybody in the industry.

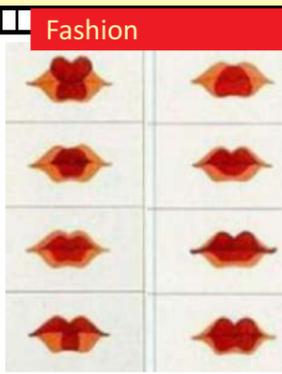
Have you done collaboration with any ace music artists and who else do you intend working with, in the industry?

My E.P is set to be released before this year ends. My Team and I are still embarking on our "Free Community Tour" where we go to local communities and sensitise the people about COVID-19.

What project do you have at hand or ongoing?

Social media is a very necessary platform for an entertainer because it's a link between the arts and the fans. That is to get to interact with us, ask us questions, see our upcoming tour dates and so much more.

It's all dependent on how the entertainer uses it.



Defining beauty through the lenses of time

Abidemi Onifade

Beauty they say is in the eyes of the beholder. This statement is taking us on a journey through the ages when women displayed the splendor of skin therapy and face-beat as we now call it. Beauty has been accompanied by different definitions across ages and time and these definitions have been greatly influenced by the availability and accessibility of beauty products.

Let's run through the Renaissance and Medieval eras together since there is little or no disparity between the two.

Beauty got its definition from pale or white face and skin. Pale skin was seen as a show of class, wealth and riches. It was common for the poor/peasants to work in the sun, thereby getting their skins tanned. Make up then was used to re-associate with the low class of people. Pale Ivory skin was highly desirable in these eras, so women who didn't have naturally white skin used white lead powder to achieve it.

The cheeks were dabbed with reddish pigments that serve as blush but with glow gotten from mercury. Mercury is one of the things women used for makeup and skincare routine in these eras. Mercury was also used to accent the burst line of women after white lead powder must have been applied. These eras saw the prominence of high and wide foreheads. Women would use an abrasive stone formed from the mixture of lava and water called Pumice stone to remove dead cells from their foreheads. Eyelashes were tweezed, kept thin and short.

In other words, out of prominence, the lipstick jobs were famously done by the use of vermilion. Vermilion is a bright red pigment consisting of mercuric sulfide. Since red or pink lipsticks were the deal in those eras, this mercuric sulfide came to the aid of women. Lipsticks were not spread over the lips

as it is done today, but were craftily done into heart shape to make but few. Beauty was a craft for the affluent in those eras and could come with pains also as some women would bleed their skin to achieve the white tone accepted at the time.

The 21st century's definition of beauty is dictated by a different set of rules. These rules are totally different from the rules of the previous eras. This century is witnessing people of different colors and genders embracing their uniqueness.

At the wake of this, beauty brands have emerged to satisfy individual definition of beauty. There is currently no generally dictated beautiful skin tone hence whether white, brown, black or orange; there are beauty products to suit needs. Powders no longer come in white lead but in different shades of skin color and type which spans across races and culture.

Beauty products are not just stumbled upon in this era but are well formulated to ensure that products are not harmful to the skin and to women's health at large.

For the women who desire light shade of their skin tone, formulas are available and they won't have to bleed their skins to achieve this. Mercuric sulfide that was used to achieve a glow and highlight effects has been substituted with a better formula which is called highlighter or bronzer. Vermilion was popular then because red lips were desirable, which is not the case in this generation. As said earlier, beauty and makeup is used to express oneself and to also pass messages. This century's fashion affair is attributed to an intentional breaking or bending of fashion rules. The beauty affair is not left out of this sweet fashion rebellion.



Leboku cultural fiesta lights up Calabar amidst global pandemic

THE Ancient city of Ugep, Yakurr local government area was agog with visitors and lovers of culture as the yearly Leboku New Yam Festival was held amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking at the event, the Senior Special Adviser, Governor's office/events, Ken Aklah said the government in line with its drive to promote agriculture, is once again using the festival as a catalyst to boost the state's economy post COVID-19.

"Leboku is an integral part of the agro-industrial revolution of the state. This year's event was restricted and reduced to two days leaving aside the grand finale which normally should be at the stadium.

This is in adherence to NCDC guidelines to help curtail the spread of COVID-19, Aklah said."

He further said it was difficult to have a complete covid-19 precaution in place like social distancing during the Etangala day but health officials were on ground to do health checks and ensure everyone was wearing nose masks.

Speaking also at the event, the Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Eric Anderson, expressed

excitement at this year's event. He said the leboku festival plays a significant role in the tourism ecosystem of the state and must always be given adequate attention.

"The Leboku festival is beyond party lines as men and women from all beliefs come together to celebrate. Culture as we know is one of the oldest uniting forces of any society and my duty as Commissioner is to promote the culture and tourism potential of Cross River State and leboku is one of them."

A community leader who spoke to our correspondent said "the Leboku festival presents us an opportunity to thank God for a fruitful and rewarding



harvest and to usher in a new farming season.

"The festival gives us opportunity, both old and young, to come together, share love and celebrate culture. We also use the festival to thank the ancestral spirits of the land for granting us a successful half year harvest of yams.

"The etangala masquerade which is celebrated alongside leboku also gives us an opportunity to sing out bad persons and condemn evil deeds in the community," he added.

The festival usually comes with a plethora of activities, such as the Etangala masquerade parade, the Ekoi dance, Mblemi, as well as the Mr and Miss Leboku pageant to select cultural ambassadors.

This year's contest saw Miss Obal Otu, 25 year old graduate of Animal Science from the Cross River University of Science and Technology (CRUTECH) and an indigene of Lekpankom in Ijiman emerge winner for the female category after a keenly contested stage show, while Great Obono, 24, from Kekomkole, Ijom council ward and graduate of Engineering at the same institution emerged winner in the male category.

13 FAAN loss of over 90% IGR, N17.5bn of aeronautical charges To COVID-19 Beggings for payment suspension, deferral, waivers

The Managing Director of Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Hamisu Yadudu has disclosed that the agency's Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) reduced by over 90 per cent in the last six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is just as the agency also revealed that it lost N17.5 billion of aeronautical charges in 23 weeks and N1.4 billion loss of non-aeronautical charges from April to June, 2020.

These were disclosed at a virtual stakeholders meeting held recently.

Speaking at the event Yadudu said that, notwithstanding the challenges posed by COVID-19 on FAAN's revenue, the agency has ensured that all its local airports have commenced domestic operations by meeting the requirements set by Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19.

He also stated that it was based on that fulfilment of the conditions that the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and other regulatory agencies and issued clearance to airports to reopen.

Yadudu said that during the lockdown, the airport managers opened airports and that were involved in evacuation flight arrangements at airports.

This, according to him, further made the agency incur cost on maintenance and utilities despite the total decline in traffic as well as revenue.

According to him, "In spite of the drastic drop in revenue, FAAN has managed to ensure that all its local airports have commenced domestic operations, having met the requirements by the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19, NCAA and other regulatory bodies and have been issued clearance to reopen."

He continued, "plans are also at an advanced stage to ensure that the international airports are set for re-opening on September 5, 2020, as announced by the Minister of Aviation as we will be seeing during the course of this meeting. All these have come at a huge cost to the authority with little or no cash inflow."

Speaking on the protocols put in place for the commencement of international operations as

guideline to ensure that more than 1,280 international passengers are allowed on a daily basis, Yadudu said that it would translate to reduced revenue for the agency, as fewer passengers would be coming in.

"The above automatically translates to fewer passengers and limited income even with the resumption of international operations. All these are issues of great concern to the authority and partly what has necessitated the need for all our stakeholders to rub minds on strategies to adopt to ensure that the industry remains in operation to provide the very much needed service," Yadudu said.

On his part, the Director of Finance and Accounts (DFA), Mrs. Nike Aboderin in her presentation titled, 'ongoing COVID-19 and implications on FAAN' revealed that the agency lost over N17.5 billion of aeronautical charges in 23 weeks and also N1.4 billion loss of non-aeronautical charges from April to June, 2020.

She explained that the loss is huge compared to the same period in 2019.

Aboderin lamented that compared to 2019, only 8.7 per cent of the agency's non aeronautical revenue charges were collected from April to June 2020.

She pointed out that as a result of the pandemic FAAN customers were not only defaulting on payment for services rendered to them but that there is an increasing request for payment suspension, deferral and waivers.

Aboderin further stated that 87 per cent of 2020 budgeted overhead cost was wiped out in six months with up to 95 per cent decline in weekly revenues.

Participants at the stakeholders meeting include the Aviation Minister, Senator Hadi Sirika, the Director General of NCAA, Musa Nuhu, the Managing Director of Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Fola Akinkuotu, Chief Executive Officer of Belujane Consult, Mr Chris Aligbe and other critical stakeholders.

Tax education certainly cannot be complete without steep penalties for non-compliance

Oluseye Arowolo is a Legal and Chartered Tax Practitioner with over 18 years' experience in professional services. He is a member of the National Tax Policy Implementation Committee. In this interview with TUNDE OLASUPO, he speaks on national tax policy, tax education and different incentives put in place by the government to reduce the burden of COVID-19 on the business community in Nigeria.



Following the adoption of National Tax Policy (NTP) in February 2017 and its implementation, do you think the document effectively covers alternative revenue generation for socio-economic development of the nation?

What is important in any nation is whether or not the nation has a tax system that looks like someone designed it on purpose. Our peculiar fiscal and tax administration history makes the adoption of the existing tax legislation must reflect the policy direction in the NTP and therefore need to be brought into alignment

with the thrust of the NTP. The then Finance Minister, Mrs Kemi Adeosun, set up the NTP Implementation Committee to deliver on this assignment. It is the efforts of this committee that dovetailed into the far reaching amendment provisions embodied in the Finance Act 2019.

The NTP is expected to provide a direction for Nigeria's tax system and establish a framework that all stakeholders would subscribe to and to which they would be held accountable. If you ask me therefore, the NTP is a keystone in evolving a tax system that addresses the challenge of fiscal federalism, taxing rights and revenue sharing among other fiscal related issues that plague the Nigerian economy at both micro and macro levels. The NTP should not become a redundant policy document or reference tool only for academics. The NTP should be the 'Bible' that guides the thinking, formulation and execution of strategies relevant to taking tax administration at all levels (assessment, collection etc) and the tax system at large to optimum heights.

Consequently, inadequate revenue generation is a function of several factors; prior minimal emphasis on taxation as the primary source of government revenue because of the huge focus on oil revenue. This resulted in poor and ineffective tax administration, entrenchment of poor tax compliance culture amongst taxable persons and taxpayers; outright tax evasion etc. Taxation became a child of necessity from 2014 at federal level and from then, we have seen significant investment in tax education, sensitisation and awareness programmes. Tax authorities have also become more aggressive with tax

enforcement.

Decades of poor tax compliance culture and inefficiencies in tax administration will however not disappear overnight.

Hence, one of the pre-eminent objectives of the NTP is still how to create, deepen and institutionalise a culture of voluntary tax compliance amongst individuals and corporate citizens of Nigeria. Voluntary tax compliance describes that situation in which the greater number of citizens fulfill their civic tax duty/obligation without any form of coercion or threat of sanctions (in form of penalty or interest, or fines or imprisonment); a situation where tax returns are filed as and when due and the corresponding tax paid.

Despite a huge amount already spent on the development of a viable database of residents in the country, many residents are yet to be captured in the tax system. What do you think is the way out to achieve this process?

I have offered my thoughts on this during my session at The Guardian Masterclass Forum on Unlocking Nigeria's revenue potential in 2014, six years

ago today. Below are some of my recommendations:

Accelerate data integration across all available databases to ensure no hiding place for any taxable person. The BVN is helping in this regard by providing visibility across financial transactions. But more can be done and progressively implementing measures that bring visibility on individual corporations and transactions will make tax evasion unattractive

Destroy the perception of "untouchable taxpayers or taxable persons, rock their boats through relentless detection and enforcement measures. Greater political will is required to be demonstrated in this regard. For instance, it was heartwarming to read in 2018 that the Oyo State IRS shut Obasanjo Farms Ltd in Ibadan on account of tax evasion. We need more of these examples to reassure taxpayers and taxable persons that seemingly untouchables are being pursued as well. Adopt strategies to get the 20 per cent that contribute 80 per cent or more of Nigeria's tax revenue to as near 100 per cent compliance as possible; no gaps.

We also need to adopt strategies that nurture compliance by those not yet in the tax net; voluntary disclosure programmes/tax amnesty; improve taxpayer convenience to make payment. That is, compliance strategies that speaks to the identified attitudes of taxpayers and/or taxable persons as follows:

For those who decide to comply, capacity to deploy the full force of the law is welcome here; those who do not want to comply, capacity to deter by detection is relevant here; those who try but don't always succeed to comply, capacity to help is useful here and those who are willing to do the right thing, capacity to make compliance easy/easier is applicable here.

Reward innovation and implement innovative strategies; "pay tax on the go", as easy as saying tax and other good, proven and adaptable practices on revenue collection from other countries.

Holistic review of the tax regime: the need for a fair, simple, predictable and administratively efficient tax system cannot be over-emphasized at any time. Thus, a review of the whole tax regime to debottleneck the system and make tax compliance friendly for citizens must be emplaced.

Crucial to the above suggestions is the pre-eminent need to address the trust deficit between government at all levels and citizens who form the subs-set for taxable persons and taxpayers. This can only be done by ensuring transparency and enforcing penal

consequences of economic and financial crimes at an accelerated pace.

A situation whereby more than 60 per cent of collected or earned revenue by the government ends up in the pockets of individuals or crony corporations cannot encourage tax compliance in citizens who are at the receiving end of the negative impact of those leakages.

So, there is a need for an emphatic tone of intolerance to economic and financial crimes, which leak away or divert tax payers money to personal pockets from the top across all the tiers of government. Adherence to the principle that the state shall direct its policy towards ensuring fiscal responsibility and accountability to Nigerians must be evident and not by lip service.

What kind of approach do you think is best for the government to adopt in bridging the excessive gap in tax education?

Borrowing the words of Nelson Mandela of blessed memory, "the power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation."

I personally believe that aggressive tax education provides the key to a more efficient tax system in Nigeria. Tax system here would include not just education of taxpayers but also education and re-education of members of the tax authorities. As I have stated above, my idea of tax education includes tax evasion deterrents, penalties and fines because tax education certainly cannot be complete without steep penalties for non-compliance. At all times, the consequence for non-compliance must be steeper than that cost of compliance.

The relevance of taxation as a primary and most significant tool of government finance must be infused into the academic curriculum across primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Of course, government functionaries must also lead by example in words and in actions.

Accordingly, the journey to proper tax education and awareness starts with the simplification of the provisions of the tax laws, proper education of the Nigerian populace by the inclusion of tax education in formal and informal educational systems and institutions and finally ensuring that there are and enforcing very steep consequences for non-compliance.

Sirika applies principle of reciprocity on resumption of foreign flights

Onyeama says it'll be a positive revolution for aviation world

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown that paralysed the global economy has brought about strict measures in international bilateral

deals in aviation flight operations.

For the Federal Government of Nigeria, especially the aviation sector, which is one of the badly hit industries, things are not going to be the same as countries of the world roll out stringent measures as they resume international flight operations.

However, Nigeria is not leaving any stone unturned as the FG has stated that Nigeria would enforce the principle of reciprocity in granting permission to airlines to resume operations in the country as it opens its airspace.

With the August 29 date of resuming international flight operations announced by the Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, and the date readjustment to September 5, Nigeria will also pay countries, which are not favourable to Nigerian flag carriers, back in their coin.

A statement issued by the Director, Public Affairs, Ministry of Aviation, James Odaudu, said that what it

means is that only airlines from countries that allow flights from Nigeria would be allowed to fly into and out of the country.

Sirika disclosed recently in a media briefing of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Abuja that the country's position is informed by the ban placed by some countries on flights from Nigeria, and that Nigeria's decision was taken in the interest of its citizens.

Sirika, who was represented by

the Director-General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Musa Nuhu, also disclosed that airlines will be informed on arrangements put in place to ensure that resumption of flights will be hitch-free.

He also stated that for now, only a few flights per day would be permitted as a test run for the protocols put in place to ensure a safe return to international operations.

The protocols, according to him, would be made public in due course.

He expressed his appreciation to the airlines, aviation workers, travellers and all stakeholders for their patience and understanding

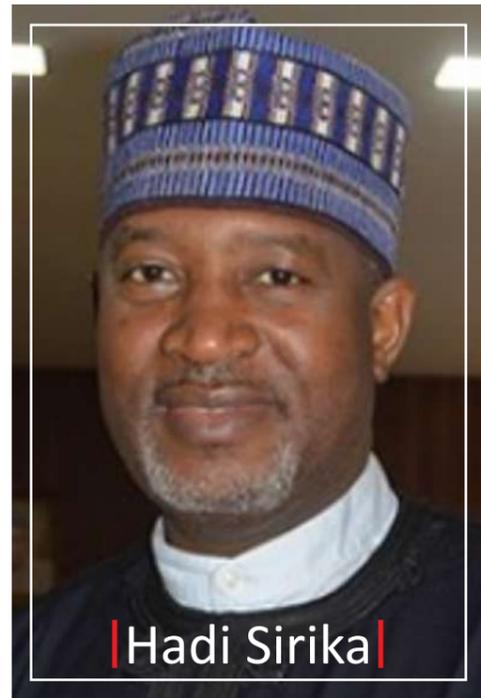
and urged all hands to be on deck in ensuring a successful and efficient resumption of international flight operations.

In reaction to the unprecedented gesture, Allen Onyeama said the decision would elevate the image of Nigeria in the comity of nations and send a signal to international airlines that it is no more business as usual.

Onyeama's comment is contained in a letter he wrote to the Minister to commend him on this laudable decision by the Federal Government. In the letter Onyeama said, "You are causing a positive revolution in the aviation world. You have, by this action, brought so much respect to our people and our nation. Nigerians all over the world are walking tall with enormous pride since the last few hours when the news broke out. This is the beginning of the end of the stigmatisation of Nigeria and everything Nigerian. God bless you always. From my sincere heart, I have come to appreciate your nationalistic tendencies."

Onyeama said the Minister, by his conduct and commitment, has ensured that the aviation industry is unencumbered, noting that Sirika facilitated the Customs duty waiver on aircraft and spares and currently working on the unification of charges paid by domestic airlines.

The Air Peace Chairman, also commended the Minister for his overall commitment to the aviation industry, from his efforts towards restoring infrastructure at airports to his intervention in labour issues, adding that Sirika has done so much to protect domestic airlines by spearheading earlier the policy that only Nigerian carriers should engage in evacuation conducted by the Federal Government.



Five innovative ways hoteliers can fight back in this time of COVID-19

There's no denying the fact that the hospitality industry globally has experienced a dramatic decline in guest stay as a result of travel restrictions and border closures. The maths is devastatingly simple: no travellers, means no income.

In South Africa alone, according to data from Statistics SA, the entire tourist accommodation industry experienced a dramatic decline of total income – a staggering 98.7 per cent year on year in April, and 98 per cent y/y in May.

The African continent as a whole lost almost \$55 billion in travel and tourism revenue in just three months due to the knock-on effects of the pandemic, according to the African Union (AU) commissioner for infrastructure and energy, Amani Abou-Zeid.

She further emphasised that the livelihoods of 24 million families are linked to the hospitality industry, representing almost 10 per cent of Africa's gross domestic product (GDP).

The blow is particularly severe, Abou-Zeid said, with the pandemic striking in a year when the continent had expected to see an increase in travel and air transport. Pre COVID-19, the African hospitality market experienced a significant upward growth trajectory, attracting \$1.8 billion in capital last year alone and sparking increased interest amongst global investors.

As travel gradually resumes globally, Mark Havercroft, Minor Hotels Regional Director for Africa, is frank that it's going to be a battle to undo the damage wreaked by that pandemic - that manifested in empty hotel rooms, job losses and a scenario of ever-changing regulations. He is however adamant that there's still potential for investors on the continent and that Africa will, without a doubt, recover faster than most.

"Africa is home to some of the world's fastest-growing economies. There is huge potential for growth and expansion across the continent for hospitality businesses seeking expansion into new markets. The boom may be delayed a little, but we anticipate significant movement once travel resumes fully," Havercroft predicts.

"There will be a frantic race to attract guests' arrivals back in the beginning, but savvy hoteliers are already working really hard behind the scenes on innovative business strategies to engage guests and boost consumer confidence."

He notes that while it may be a hard climb back to the top, the views from the summit will be worth the hike. Here Havercroft shares his views about some ways in which hoteliers can turn challenges into opportunities to navigate the new normal.

Make bold decisions

Ensuring the longevity of hotels post COVID-19 will require bold decisions. For example, Tsogo Sun Hotels recently sold its 50 per cent stake in the Maia Resort property in the Seychelles to Minor Hotels. The R465 million sale will directly help that group mitigate the economic fallout of the

The livelihoods of 24 million families are linked To the Hospitality industry

pandemic.

It could also necessitate the backing up of existing investments. Minor Hotels continues pursuing opportunities to invest across Africa to increase the company's sizable footprint, which includes Europe, Asia, the Middle East and South America. Havercroft says the company is walking the talk in terms of its stance that there is still significant potential for investors across the continent.

The group's brands in Africa, Avani and Anantara, continue to expand too. The Anantara Bel-Ombre Mauritius Resort and Spa will reopen their doors in December 2020, and Avani Nairobi Suites is in development and scheduled to open in December 2021. This is in addition to Anantara establishments in Zambia and Mozambique, as well as Avani resorts in Namibia, Lesotho, Botswana, Mozambique, the Seychelles and Zambia.

Fine-tune your target market

While the absence of international travellers for the immediate future throws up a major hurdle, Havercroft believes that it is the burgeoning domestic business and leisure market that will reignite the industry, and ultimately help the sector regain its firm footing.

He suggests that hospitality businesses consider refocusing their target market: "The continent has a growing middle class population, now comprising more than 350 million of the total 1 billion people on the continent. Hospitality businesses would be wise to focus on tapping into this market right now as intra and inter-country travel begins opening up."

Ensure you're guest-ready

Safety, safety, safety! This will be the core element for hotels working on attracting guests back - not just into the lobby but making sure they actually check in. If guests do not feel safe from the get-go, not only won't they stay now, but also won't return later.

While the hospitality industry is already held to strict hygiene standards, advanced cleaning protocols will be essential to ensure consumer confidence.

"As travel increases, bringing more people through establishments, it is imperative to protect both guests and team members alike. We must be

understanding and respectful of the consumer, who will be cautiously travelling further out of their comfort zone than they have for quite some time. Not only will increased hygiene measures need to be in place, but these must be clearly visible to ensure comfort and reassurance," Havercroft says.

Expand your offerings

It will be a long journey until hospitality businesses see the number of guests they were used to in a pre COVID-19 world. Research from McKinsey on the United States hotel industry, for example, suggests that recovery to prior levels could take until 2023 or even later.

Havercroft cautions that luxury establishments that are unwilling to budge on steep prices aimed at international guests won't be seeing many guests through the door until the world has begun to recover in the aftermath of the pandemic.

He recommends that all accommodation offerings consider pricing that will attract domestic travellers who are willing and able to travel, but who are likely to be facing economic challenges under the current trying conditions.

Focus on community

With the world united in the battle against COVID-19, the desperate plight of so many of our fellow citizens has been brought into sharp focus. One easy way for the average person to feel like they're giving back to those less fortunate is to support businesses that they know are making a difference in their communities.

Havercroft notes that Minor Hotels is dedicated to both sustainable hotel development and corporate responsibility, ensuring positive contributions to both economies and ecosystems.

"Now, more than ever, businesses must be using their platform and industry status to help others. By setting the bar high, companies encourage others to do the same. People want to know that their money isn't just being spent for themselves, but that it's also helping create jobs, boost communities and put food on the tables of local families."

Nigerian Born Kaycee Madu Appointed Minister of Justice in Canada



Nigerians in the diaspora have continued to carve a niche for themselves in their different areas of endeavour, making the country proud again.

And one of those who have written his names in the history is Kaycee Madu, 47, a Nigerian-born Canadian, who was recently appointed as the Justice Minister and Solicitor General of Alberta, a province in Canada.

Kaycee Madu was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, representing the constituency of Edmonton-South West, on April 16, 2019. He was appointed as Minister of Justice and Solicitor General on August 25, 2020 and previously served as the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

On March 4, 2020, Kaycee Madu was designated as a Queen's Counsel by the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta via an Order-in-Council. Queen's Counsel is the highest honour awarded to lawyers who have made significant contributions to the advancement of law and society.

Mr Madu has been a lawyer for 16 years, practising in both Nigeria and Alberta. He operated a law office with his wife and has worked for Legal Aid Alberta. He volunteers with the Edmonton Community Legal Centre and the lawyer referral program of the Law Society of Alberta.

Mr Madu was awarded the Premier's award of excellence in the bronze medal category in 2009 with a team of his colleagues at the government of Alberta, where he worked as a senior technical advisor focusing on legislative and regulatory reviews, operational and strategic public policies, issues management and stakeholder consultation.

Born and raised in the southeastern part of Nigeria, Mr Madu graduated from the University of Lagos with a bachelor of laws honours degree in 2001. He and his wife,

Emem, migrated to Canada in 2005 and have three children.

Mr Madu enjoys poetry, soccer, travelling and strategic military studies. He volunteers with Alberta's Nigerian and Igbo communities.

He was the 927th member to be sworn in to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Reactions to Madu's appointment

President Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari has rejoiced with Nigerian born Kaycee Madu, appointed Minister of Justice and Solicitor General for the Government of Alberta, in Canada.

In a congratulatory statement by Mr Femi Adesina, the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, in Abuja, the president congratulate Madu for making history as the first African born provincial Minister in Canadian history as well as the Provincial Secretary and Keeper of the Great Seal of the Province of Alberta.

Buhari described the honour as landmark and historic, saying "it once again pedestals people of Nigerian descent as go-getters, who distinguish themselves in different walks of life."

According to the president, as the first black Justice Minister and Solicitor-General in Canada, Madu has written himself into history books.

He urged Nigerians, both at home and abroad, to remain good ambassadors of their country.

Also, the former Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, reacted to the appointment of Mr Madu.

Atiku said Madu's appointment has the capacity to impact the world.

In a tweet, the former Vice President expressed confidence that Madu would do well in his duty as Minister.

"Nigerian-born @KayceeMaduYEG's appointment as Minister of Justice in Canada further proves that Nigerians are indeed global players with unlimited capacity to impact our world positively.

"I congratulate Mr Madu on his appointment, and I'm confident he will do very well."

Jason Kenney

@jkenney

Very pleased to count a trailblazer like @KayceeMaduYEG on our team.

From the beginning, Kaycee's story has been absolutely inspiring to all of us.

Now he is writing the next chapter as the first black Justice Minister in Canadian history.

African Canadian Civic Engagement Council

@ACCEC_Canada

Congratulations to the Honourable @KayceeMaduYEG, Madu for this tremendous and unprecedented accomplishment as Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. First black and African born in Canada to this role.

@DavidLametti

Congratulations to @KayceeMaduYEG on your historic appointment as Alberta's Justice Minister and Solicitor General. I look forward to working with you to build a fairer and more efficient justice system for Albertans and all Canadians.

@SylviaJonesMPP

Congratulations on your new role @KayceeMaduYEG, along with Ontario AG @douglasdowney, we look forward to working with you on key inter-provincial community safety initiatives, including tackling the heinous crime of human trafficking, as well as gun and gang violence.

Kaycee Madu's reflection on his new appointment

As I reflect upon my new appointment as the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, the importance of carrying this ministry forward amid these difficult social and economic times weighs heavily on my mind.

My fundamental belief that every soul deserves equal access to justice has always informed my legal work, and that will never change.

I spent my entire professional career fighting for those who lacked means, including at Legal Aid Alberta, Labour, Immigration, and Human Rights Tribunals, and in

the courts. My views on the application of justice and equality will always be integral to which I am as a father, husband, citizen, lawyer, and politician.

As a foreign-trained lawyer, I cherish the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which says, "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination." I want to ensure that these words flourish in the lives of Albertans, and inspire confidence, not uncertainty.

I am determined to make sure our justice system represents all Albertans in a way that is fair and accountable. In particular, I believe modernising the Police Act will be a necessary step towards ensuring equality for marginalised people before the law, and I look forward to that important work ahead.

I am proud of all the work my predecessor, the Honourable Doug Schweitzer, our new Minister of Jobs, Economy, and Innovation has done to move this file forward. Minister Schweitzer has taken major steps towards addressing police funding, the scourge of rural crime, and reform of the parole system, among other things. I look forward to continuing his good work in these areas.

I also look forward to working on many critical democratic reforms, including recall legislation and important citizenship initiative referendums, as well as taking the lead role within cabinet on the implementation of our government's fight for a fair deal within confederation.

While I am very proud of the work my team and I did on the Municipal Affairs file, I am beyond humbled to accept this new role, where I will pursue my fundamental beliefs of fairness, equality, and justice for all with every ounce of strength I have. I welcome my dear friend and colleague, the Honourable Tracy Allard, MLA for Grande Prairie as the new Minister of Municipal Affairs. I have confidence in her abilities and she will do amazing in this role.

I do want to thank all of my political and public service staff for their support, loyalty and dedication to public service and to Albertans.

I want to thank Premier Jason Kenney for putting his confidence in me to lead this important ministry. In addition to my new responsibilities, I will also be the Provincial Secretary and Keeper of the Great Seal of our province. I take these responsibilities extraordinarily seriously, and look forward to working hard on behalf of all Albertans.

I also want to thank my family – my wife, Emem, and my three beautiful children – for their constant support, love, and prayers.

Are free, fair polls becoming a mirage?

Abubakar Muhammed

National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Uche Secondus, stoked controversy recently when he reminded President Muhammadu Buhari that Adams Oshiomhole, immediate past national chairman of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and outspoken godfather in the ongoing governorship campaign in Edo State, won election twice under the PDP administration. The PDP boss was derided by some commentators who wondered whether he was asking the president to meddle in the elections in his party's (PDP) favour. Others however sided with the PDP boss, who was perhaps speaking with a sense of premonition, pointing to the spectacle of violent, crisis-ridden elections conducted since Buhari came to power in 2015.

Secondus, speaking on Tuesday, August 18 during the inauguration of the party's campaign council for the September 19, 2020 poll in Edo State, said under President Goodluck Jonathan in a ruling party, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole won election twice as opposition candidate because of the transparency of the time. He then lamented: As we go into this election in the same Edo, our citizens are in shock as the country continues to slide dangerously into one crisis or the other, urging the Federal Government to stop the use of military and other security operatives in abuse of electoral rules.

In 1999 when Nigeria returned to civil rule, Secondus PDP took charge of the country with a behemoth structure, riding roughshod over the political landscape. Olusegun Obasanjo, ex-Army General and Head of State, stunned Nigerians when he declared that an approaching general election was for him a matter of do-or-die, but the tide was to turn with the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan, the country's first minority president and advocate of free and fair polls. On May 29, 2015, Jonathan, widely criticised for the large-scale corruption that characterized his tenure but also celebrated for his positive disposition to human rights and humble mien, handed over power to Muhammadu Buhari, an ex-military Head of State, and the story of elections has been different ever since. Alhaji Abubakar Bello, a former speaker of the Kogi State House of Assembly and one-time acting governor of the state, put issues in perspective during the week.

According to him, in 1999, the electoral process in the

country was brutal, with the outcome meant for the strongest candidates. By 2003, the beneficiaries of the previous elections increased their efforts towards self-sustenance in office. Bello said: We witnessed excessive ballot box snatching all over the country during the 2003 general election, coupled with the burning of homes of opponents even before the commencement of the polls. By 2007, the country graduated into more violence and deep involvement of the judiciary during elections.

"Two things became obvious from these elections. One, cheat your opponents anyhow and wait for him at the courts; after all the loser needs to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the winner outsmarted him during the polls. The introduction of electoral reforms during the 2011 elections did give hope to some of us. Strangely, by the 2019 elections, we were back to 1999 with pains. Judicial decisions now prevail and produce our elected officials instead of the voters. Kill your opponents and bribe the courts to sustain you became the norm. We have returned to forceful elections again." Opposition victories during Jonathan's presidency

Watchers of the political landscape would readily admit that at no time in the country's history did the opposition parties fare better electorally than they did during the Jonathan presidency. There were at least six off-season governorship elections under Jonathan, but his PDP won only one: the October 2014 Ekiti governorship poll that produced Ayo Fayose.

On February 7, 2010, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared Peter Obi the winner of the previous days governorship election in Anambra State. Obi, candidate of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), had defeated Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo, a former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and candidate of the PDP. Obi was in office until March 17, March 2014 when he handed over power to Willie Obiano, another APGA candidate.

For his part, in July 2012, Adams Oshiomhole won the governorship election in Edo State. In a massive landslide for his party, the then Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) candidate and sitting governor won all 18 local government areas in the state, recorded 477,478 votes (72% of the total valid votes cast) against that of

his closest rival, the PDP's Charles Airhiavbere who had 144,235 votes. Oshiomhole, who had complained of the massive deployment of soldiers to the state ahead of the election, praised the then president profusely when the outcome of the poll was announced, saying that it had become clear that the president was committed to free and fair polls.

The opposition's good run continued in October 2012, when the then candidate of the Labour Party (LP) and sitting governor, Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, won the Ondo State governorship election and secured a second term of office. Congratulating Mimiko on the rare feat of becoming the first governor in the state's political history to win a second term of office, President Goodluck Jonathan, in a statement by the Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Reuben Abati, said: As Governor Mimiko looks forward to the commencement of his second term in Office, the President urges him to be prepared to work even harder to justify the fresh mandate given to him by the people of Ondo state who voted for his re-election on Saturday.

The statement added: President Jonathan assures Dr. Mimiko that the Federal Government will continue to engage constructively and positively with the Ondo State Government in collaborative efforts to achieve faster socio-economic development and better living conditions for people in the state and all other parts of Nigeria.

The Returning Officer, Adebisi Daramola, had declared Mimiko the winner of the election, having polled a total of 260,199 votes. The PDP, fielding Olusola Oke, placed second with 155,512, while ACN came third with 143,512 votes. CAN's candidate was Rotimi Akeredolu, now the sitting governor of the state. Two years later, the Osun State governor and the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Rauf Aregbesola, emerged winner of the governorship election conducted in the state. This was on August 9, 2014. In the results announced by the returning officer, then the Vice Chancellor of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Professor Bamitale Omole, Aregbesola won 394,684 votes, defeating the candidate of the ruling party, Senator Iyiola Omisore, who polled 292,747 votes.

The story under Buhari

If the mantra of free and fair elections enjoyed revival under Jonathan, the story has been different under the Buhari presidency. Since 2015, the good run enjoyed by the opposition under the previous administration has all but ended. For instance, the July 2018 governorship

election that returned APC's Kayode Fayemi as governor was marred by controversy, with local and international observers saying that it fell short of expectations. But there was more controversy to come. In September 2018, INEC stoked controversy by declaring the governorship election in Osun State inconclusive. The candidate of the PDP, Senator Ademola Adeleke, had scored 254,698 votes, with the candidate of the ruling APC and incumbent governor, Gboyega Oyetola, scoring 254,345 votes.

In view of the thin margin (353 votes), INEC declared the election "inconclusive" and scheduled a re-run for September 27, 2018. But there was a snag: INEC had applied different rules during a by-election conducted in Kogi State just before the Osun election. In that election, the winner, an APC candidate, had a margin just like Adeleke's, but was declared winner by the commission.

Reacting to the supplementary election which produced Oyetola as the winner of the governorship poll, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) accused the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) of compromise during the election. In the report by its ad hoc committee on the rerun, the association said the police refused to question the activities of the fierce-looking men who invaded the area at Orolu where part of the supplementary poll took place.

The ad hoc committee chaired by Mr. Tawo Tawo (SAN), stated in its report that the rerun fell far short of a free and fair election compared to what transpired in the election of September 22. The NBA said members of its observation team, monitored the election at Osogbo polling unit 17, ward 5, in Osogbo where they observed massive armed security presence with movement around the polling unit restricted voters and observers. The November 16, 2019 governorship poll which was won by the Kogi State governor and candidate of the ruling APC, Yahaya Bello, was widely reported to have been characterized by violence.

The way forward

To Abubakar Bello, the current climate of questionable elections is traceable to the failure of the executive to accent to the last Electoral Act amendment and the failure of the Supreme Court to uphold the gains of 2011, with its rejection of the Card Reader. If experience since 1999 is any indication, the attitude of a sitting government to free and fair polls goes a long way to define what happens under it. In this regard, it is perhaps difficult to expect the forthcoming governorship polls in Edo and Ondo States to enjoy local and international accolades.



Sportaneous

With Wole Opatola Twitter and Instagram @woleopatola

Bayern Munich, Sevilla

Uneasy European Champions of Unusual Climes

Against all odds, football managed to stage a return despite the plethora of crises that engulfed the globe following the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus disease which became a full blown pandemic that led to a worldwide shutdown for several months. Football, if ever in doubt, is now fully established as one game the whole world can't possibly do without. Football administrators, coaches, players, agents and other stakeholders all came together and arrived at a means to bring back the beautiful game despite the dangers, challenges and threat to lives.

Football matches had to be played at empty stadiums, players were undergoing Covid-19 tests weekly, coming for matches in face masks, carrying their own water bottles, barred from exchanging jerseys, amidst other measures. The matches also came thick and fast. Teams had to endure playing a minimum of two matches per week while the players had little or no rest returning to training after each match day.

At the end, football triumphed. The Europa and UEFA Champions Leagues came to a befitting end albeit in a weirdly unique fashion as the

elimination stages had to be subjected to a winner takes all one-off matches played at a neutral ground to fast track the conclusion of the competition.

This arrangement came with its frills, thrills and upsets as surprise winners emerged while some traditional teams got bundled out. The strongest eventually triumphed and as we all know it, the champions of Europe emerged with Sevilla once again claiming the Europa title while the Bavarians, Bayern Munich stormed to the Champions League crown.

Europe's football had been halted for three months prior, thus Lisbon on August 23, witnessed the occasion which had been allocated originally to Istanbul as two sides from France and Germany went for each other's jugular in a tightly contested final.

Bayern Munich's experience trumped Paris Saint-Germain's expensive ambition as it would be recalled that the German champions had dominated the competition in the mid-1970s but had not laid hands on the trophy since landing their fifth triumph in 2013. PSG, which, on the other hand, are being financed by the Gulf state of Qatar, had never even reached the final. Indeed, the last and only previous French

winners were Marseille back in 1993.

The wait must go on

It is the Bavarians' sixth win in the European Cup/Champions League, placing them joint-third in the overall trophy standings behind only Real Madrid who have lifted the title 13 times, and AC Milan (seven).

The victory over PSG was their 11th in as many games in the 2019-20 Champions League, making Bayern the first side to post a 100 per cent record in the tournament.

That impeccable run began all the way back in September 2019 with a 3-0 defeat of Red Star Belgrade, a result that set the tone for what turned out to be a thrilling, goal-filled dash to glory.

Along the way, Bayern netted 43 goals, a mark only bettered in Champions League history by Barcelona. The Catalans managed 45 in the 1999-00 edition, albeit having played 16 games to Bayern's 11.

For the Europa cup, Sevilla edged a breathlessly intense final 3-2 against Inter Milan in an equally closed-door drama in Cologne.

The contest provided a spectacle to match the high profile provided by the pandemic-enforced daily drama of squeezing the Europa League and Champions League play-offs into a summer fortnight of excitement.

Coaching Comeback

Sevilla's triumph provided remarkable rehabilitation for coach Julen Lopetegui. Two years ago, the former national youth coach endured the humiliation of being sacked within four months, either side of the World cup finals in Russia by both Spain and then Real Madrid.

He had never won a major trophy as a coach yet he deflected congratulations into a dedication of victory to the memory of two Sevilla club favourites who had died young.

Lopetegui said "This is for Antonio Reyes, Antonio Puerta and all of those who are no longer with us. For all of us, for me, for the fans, it is very special. We conceded three penalties

in the last three matches in the first five minutes but our team never surrendered."

The last nine Europa Leagues all have been won by Spanish or English teams - Sevilla have won four, Chelsea two and Atletico Madrid and Manchester United one each. The last Italian team to win was Parma in 1999.

Sevilla's excellent record of never losing an UEFA Cup or Europa League final continues -- six finals, six victories.

But this was a new Sevilla team -- with barely anybody left since their three wins in a row from 2014 to 2016.

Lopetegui took over last summer and built a new-look team. Nine of the starting XI in Cologne were in their first season at the club.

They were cheered on by two fans, with Sevilla giving two of their 25 tickets for officials to supporters with membership numbers 2108 and 2020 (to make the date of the game).

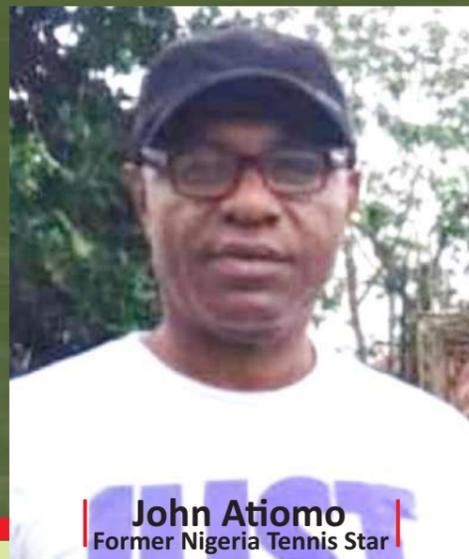
Roma, Wolves, Manchester United and now Inter have all fallen to Sevilla in the past few weeks. They have punched well above their weight, playing with unity in defence and flair in attack. "We had such tough games all tournament but we played so well as a team," said De Jong. "We were like a family, we worked together. It did not matter who played."

De Jong's two headers flipped the match on its head after Lukaku's blistering start. Godin's effort pulled Inter level but Sevilla, with the wonderful Ever Banega running the midfield in his last game for the club, soon took control and it was only a matter of time before the winning goal came, a deflection from Lukaku off Carlos' acrobatic effort.

The major leagues in Europe have just resumed for the 2020/2021 season, the Scottish and French leagues have been in full swing since August, same with Asia and South America while Africa, led by South Africa is also back in action.

Football never surrenders.

Follow the writer on Twitter and Instagram @woleopatola.



John Atiomo
Former Nigeria Tennis Star

Football money has killed Tennis in Nigeria — Atiomo

John Atiomo was a Nigerian Tennis Star who competed as a member of the Nigerian Tennis Contingent at the All-Africa Games in Nairobi, Kenya in 1987. He was a part of Nigeria's Davis Cup team in 1987 and 1988. In this interview with **Wole Opatola**, the former top three in Nigeria and top 10 Africa ranked tennis player revealed that all the money and attention being showered on football has practically killed tennis in Nigeria.

Let's meet John Atiomo

I am from Edo State, former MidWestern state. I am from Ubijaja but I grew up in Benin City. The third child out of seven children in a family of four boys and three girls. I graduated from Auchu Polytechnic. I won the NIPOGA games and became a programmed athlete of the then Edo State sports council and won honours for Edo state at the Junior festival then I graduated to the seniors before moving on to represent Nigeria at the All Africa Games in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1987 and the Davis Cup also in 1987 with Tony Mmoh, Sadiq Abdullahi, Nduka Odizor and others. I paired with Tony Mmoh when we played against Cote D'ivoire in Abidjan in the Davis Cup – big match, went all the way. The match lasted 5 hours and 20 minutes before we won.

How did you find your way Abroad?

I was a hit back home so the likes of Nduka Odizor, Sadiq Abdullahi and some other African Stars kept talking about me in the US until a coach came down from America to watch me play here in Nigeria at the Ogbe hard court, Kaduna clay court, Lagos Lord Rumen Classics, Ogun bridge court and with the right connection, I got a scholarship to study and play for Hampton University Virginia for four years and in my freshman year, we won the NCAA Division 2 National Championship which was a big thing back then in the states – my school was predominantly a black school so they do well in Track & Field and American Football but

Tennis which was considered a white man's sport was not one of the school's stronghold until we got there and won the Nationals in Houston. I got my Bachelors in Comprehensive Art in 1993 and Masters in Education in 1996. I then got hired by the school as an assistant Tennis coach to the legendary coach, Dr. Robert Screen. In 2012, I became the head coach, men and women after the retirement of Dr Screen. I only recently resigned to return home and see how I could help the kids and then I got hired as the Captain, Nigerian Davis Cup team. So it is interesting being a former player and now a coach and captain.

You came during the era of the likes of Nduka Odizor, Sadiq Abdullahi, Tony Mmoh, Jonathan Igbinovia and others but these days, we can hardly mention any big name in tennis in Nigeria. What really happened to Nigerian tennis?

I can tell you straight away that football happened. Football in the last 20 years has been so dominant in terms of popularity and resources and also it has enjoyed all the support. In my time, the foundation was there. We had programmes to help Athletes, to support them. I came from Edo State, the then Governor, Samuel Ogbemudia had different programmes in place. We had the programmed athletes initiative where athletes received rackets for free, shoes for free, coaches and coaching for free. Coaches got good salaries but now, everything is all gone. To answer your question, we had players to look up to, David Imonitie and the likes and there were opportunities. The ones before us got scholarships abroad and when they came back, we looked up to them. Right now, who is there, nobody! The little kids lack direction. The coaches have to take side jobs to survive, nobody is serious in the sport anymore.

The passion is no longer there. Coaches used to earn good salaries -- tennis was business. If there was any

tournament, funding was there for the trip, accommodation and little stipends. The difference between my era and now is commitment. We need to start afresh. We must bring back the discipline. We must go after the talents right here. Monitor their grades because you need that for them to qualify to be admitted into schools in the US. Monitor their skills, then with my connection, we can now communicate with coaches in the US.

Look, recruitment is big business in the US. It is huge, it is a billion dollar market. Players from all over the world want to come to the US to play tennis and also go to school. If we can get these players, the better for tennis in Nigeria. The structure is broken, we need to fix it. After I got my scholarship, some other players also came down to the US. The likes of Segun Akinloye, Amechi Nweje, Sunday Ogundeke then after them we had Sule Ladipo, Ganiyu Adeneken and others but after them, the structure just collapsed. So now we just have to go back to the drawing board.

So you mean athletes now choose football over tennis?

The money involved in football, when you think about Iwobi, Oshimen, Chukwueze and others, as a parent you will definitely choose football for your wards. Athletes are all rushing to football now and nobody wants to play tennis. We are practically begging athletes to take to tennis but we actually need to think beyond that. Like my experience, I had so much talent but there was no sponsorship – you have a tournament in Togo, no money to attend but I kept pushing until I got lucky and a coach came to watch me from the USA. There must always be an option. Football money is huge but not everybody will end up making it in football.

You captained Nigeria's DAVIS Cup team to Kenya. What happened? Nigeria didn't do well.

Yes we lost all our three games. We did not have the capacity to match up the other countries – we went for the Africa Zone Group III championships hosted by Kenya and we were drawn in pool A alongside Tunisia, Namibia and Mozambique but we got relegated after the trio of Emmanuel Audu, Emmanuel Idoko and Emmanuel Paul lost all their matches.

You see during our time, we made it to the Euro/Africa zone two. Remember in 1988, we played against Finland here at the Ogbe hard court. We started declining soon afterwards and we found ourselves in Africa zone three. Now we are in the last zone which is zone four. What happened was that our top three tennis stars were excluded from the team at the last minute due to disciplinary issues so we had to go with a makeshift team. We tried our best but it was not just

good enough.

So now what can we do to get back to where we were or even do better?

Like I said, we have to rebuild. We have to start from the bottom. We must bring back a lot of junior tournaments, a lot of clinics. We have six geo-political zones in Nigeria. In a year, at least in each zone, we must have up to six junior tournaments. It is from those junior tournaments that we will go to select the best talents, monitor them and start building from there. From the local junior tournaments, we then move on to the ITF juniors. That is how our kids can compete with other kids from the other parts of the world. The structure needs to be reinforced because the structure is broken. We need to support the players. There should be continuity and that is what we are lacking right now. This also has to do with sponsorships. Football has almost overshadowed the whole sports, sorry to say. Football was also popular back then but the government was also concentrating on other sports too including tennis, that was how we were able to excel, but right now everything is all about football. The government has to refocus. I know the government cannot do everything, so even the private sector should also come in to play a big role. Tennis is not expensive to organize. No big prize money at the junior level, just accommodation, feeding, provision of the courts and then trophies and medals for winners. Restructuring is tasking but it can be done. The former tennis greats from the country must also play a part.

I was going to come there. Those of you that were part of those historic years, do you still communicate?

Well for a very few – Sadiq Abdullahi is in Florida, USA. He is a professor in one of the Universities. David Imonitie is in Houston, Texas. He is a coach, a very passionate coach. He had a tennis academy in Nigeria, a 32-bed hostel for players, buses for movement, he brought up players like Segun Akinloye, Amechi Nweje and others. Tony Mmoh is in the US too. He is a businessman now and his son is in the top 100 Tennis player ranking in the world. Nduka Odizor comes home too from the states. He has a place in Abuja.

Now that you are retired from Tennis, how do you spend your pastime?

I play football (laughs). I am a Crescenter. I play football at Crescent Club here in Benin-City. The club is not only for retirees but people who love sport. I tell you what, a tennis court is about to be built at the club and hopefully it will be a part of the resurgence of tennis in Nigeria. We might just as well discover the next John Atiomo there.

Finally, I think am called by God to do business. He told me to build an apostolic business that will become a model and an example for others to follow.

How long have you been in business?

I started with media in 1998 and opened my first office in January 4, 1999, at Takie in Ogbomoso. After about 13 years of consistently doing that, we started preparation for the oil and gas retail outlet in 2011 and in 2016; we were able to open our first outlet. In all, we have been in active business for 22 years.

Do you have any challenges since the inception of your business?

Oh yes, that is constant and challenges are part of the process.

Challenges will surely come in form of different things. It could be

loss of money, human or capacity. They are simply meant to take us

through a process of study, understand and overcome. We are not meant

to celebrate challenges or call a pity party. If you give up in the days of challenges, it means your strength is small. Look critically

into the challenge and look into yourself too, inside you is the solution to the challenge.

Solutions are never outside your capacity,

waiting for people during challenges are wrong steps.

Nobody will help you. You must think deeply and find your solution.

So what are those challenges that ever want you to give up?

None was comparable to my vision. Maybe I'm different. Don't get me

wrong, I take break sometimes and at times I become tired too but I

still move on despite the challenges. So if you are expecting to have

a smooth business day is a mirage.

Any regret so far on this journey?

The only regret is that, I should have started earlier rather than spending all those years in the

university. More so, I was not supposed to build a residential house for myself when I did, that

much money was supposed to be used in building my business. It was a

rat race approach to build a house at that time, 12 years ago. The

house is a liability.

How do you source for fund for your business?

Finding business is the easiest part of multiplying it. For starters

who needed to raise initial capitals, I don't advice that you

go around seeking money help, my recommendations include to

turn your strength into money by doing

labour work or brain work.

Breakdown your

idea into the smallest you could start with, using the little funds

available. It will be good for you if you have a leverage to raise funds, but start small and growing big.

And for that already in business, your savings is meant to scale up your business and to make it

more successful, you can bring in

partners who are interested in what you do.

How lucrative is this your business sir?

It's not about being lucrative, but about solving notable problems and

in turn brings about profits.

Any plan to further expand your business in the future?

Expansion is always a constant phenomenal; no one intends to stay on

one spot continuously. More reason every business must reinvent every ten years.

What advice do you have for youngpreneurs?

Our younger generation must accept that there is no short cut to richness.

It takes time to build lasting wealth. Never be in a rush and stop the

get rich quick syndrome. People don't attain true riches until when

they are in their late 40s and early 50s, though there might be exception.

CHRISTIAN SINGLES CONNECTION

ATTENTION: CHRISTIAN SINGLES

Out of every two marriages, one ends up in divorce today before they reach their second anniversary. Statistics have concluded that spouses that did premarital counseling in a Christ-centered therapeutic clinic have a more stable-happy marriage. More and more single parents are in the society today than what have ever been in the past decades.

Unfortunately, survey revealed that one out of five marriages among Christian ministers also end up in divorce before the end of their fifth anniversary. Secularism and pluralism have taken over the spiritual health of many churches.

As part of the goal of this publication, we shall be publishing singles that are looking for mates in Rulers' World monthly publications. Your needs will be published on our website. If you are 21 years old and above and you are looking for a Christian mate, if you want a happy marital life, forward you picture and the following particulars to us:

Name: _____

Age or Date of birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Educational level: _____

Occupation: _____

Name of Church/Denomination: _____

Racial/Ethnic Background: _____

Nationality: _____

Hobby: _____

Please state briefly the type of personality you would like as a spouse stating the following:

Age: _____

Country(ies) of origin interested in: _____

Racial/Ethnic Background: _____

Career or occupation of interest to you: _____

State other interest briefly: _____

Some psychological inventory shall be used in doing this matching. Since this is a Christian connective service, it shall be biblically Christ-centered. Same sex connection is not welcome and unacceptable. We uphold the biblical teaching that homosexuality is abomination in the sight of the living God (Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:26-32). We forbid premarital sex because it is termed to be a sin of fornication in the sight of God (Hebrew 13:14).

Forward all information to:
The Christian Singles Connection
Rulers' World Communications Inc.

P.O. Box 467, Thiells, N.Y 10984, United States of America

The above information may be
attached with a copy of your picture and sent to
contact@rulersworld.com

www.afrochristiansconnect.com

Note that the confidentiality of your information is guaranteed.
You are at liberty to reveal your information to the mate of your choice.