

# News

## Sambo charges FRCN to live up to expectation

By Baba Ngedu  
Reporter, Kaduna

VICE President Mohammed Namadi Sambo has charged the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) to stop basking in the euphoria of past glory.

Sambo said "time has come for FRCN to unbundle itself from the past glory of the Sardauna era. Those golden days must be improved upon, especially in this era of digital media. We have to cultivate a positive outlook that advances humanity and the course of the human race".

Speaking at the 50th anniversary of FRCN in Kaduna, Sambo said, "It is instructive for me to remind you that the idea behind the setting up of those national stations was basically the inculcation of national cohesion and integration, all of which are slipping into a state of comatose".

## One die as 13 soldiers escape death in Ogun

By Segun Adeleye  
Correspondent Abeokuta

THIRTEEN soldiers narrowly escaped death along the Siun-Kobape-Saganu-Lagos road in Ogun State on Thursday.

However, middle-aged man, simply identified as "Nasco" on Thursday afternoon died in the multiple auto crashes.

The accident occurred around 1.00pm, when a white Toyota Hiace marked Lagos CG 415 FKJ veered off its lane as a result of burst tyre and rammed into a truck with registration number OGUN XA 170 ABG and a Prado Jeep marked LAGOS EJ 57 LND.

The truck driver, who was conveying medical materials from Abeokuta to Ibiade in Ogunwaterside Area of the state lost his life on the spot while his body was still trapped in the vehicle.

Officials of the Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Corps (TRACE) and the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) were at the scene of the incident to control traffic snarl on the highway.

## Mayo-Bless School visits INL

By Oyeniran Apata  
Correspondent Lagos

STAFF and pupils of Mayo-Bless Schools, Aguda, Lagos, on Thursday, have paid an excursion visit to Independent Newspapers Limited.

The inquisitive pupils, led by the proprietress of the school, Mrs. Elizabeth Adewusi, were conducted round the major operational areas of the organisation by Head, Human Resources, Kehinde Okeowo, assisted by other officials of the company.

Okeowo, who took the visitors round the complex, explained the processes of news gathering, reporting, editing, graphics, photography, printing as well as distribution channels of the of the Independent titles to the attentive primary school pupils.

The proprietress of the school, in an interview, told our correspondent that visits to industries, organisations as well as excursion to other places of interest were part of the school's methods of imparting knowledge to the children in order to shape their lives.

# Insecurity: Ogun faults bankers' threat to down tool

By Tunde Opesetan  
Snr Reporter, Lagos

OGUN State government has faulted a threat by bankers in Ijebu township to down tool in protest against incessant robbery attacks on them, insisting that the threat was nothing but blackmail.

A statement issued on Thursday by the Secretary to the State Government, Taiwo Adeoluwa, also faulted comments credited to the Chairman of Ijebu Bankers' Forum, Funmi Olusoga, stressing that the statements were calculated to portray the state government as insensitive and unresponsive.

Adeoluwa noted that the government was not pleased

with Olusoga's comments since there had always been periodic information to the Bankers' Forum on the efforts to provide necessary equipment for security agencies in the state.

The Ogun SSG stressed that the government had spent N3.7 billion in the last nine months to provide security for the people, and so it was not true that the state government under Ibikunle Amosun had been paying lip service to security.

According to Adeoluwa: "Last December, we ordered 10 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) to complement the two we met on ground. Even at that, only one of the two was working. We quickly repaired the other. These were measures

aimed at tackling the immediate security challenge. We equally purchased 125 patrol vans equipped with communication gadgets for the use of the anti-crime joint military-police task force that we established, 'Operation Mesa', the Quick Response Squad (QRS) and the other security agencies. Some of the patrol vans had been deployed. The others will soon be allocated.

"We also got the Police High Command to approve the special deployment of 262 additional mobile policemen from MOPOL 20 based in Lagos to complement the activities of the 'Operation Mesa' and other security agencies," he said.

Adeoluwa stressed that while the bankers believe that only the

presence of APCs could give them necessary assurances, it should be noted that APCs are not like cars that could be purchased off the shelf, adding that apart from the period it takes to get them from the manufacturing plant after placing an order, one requires security clearances from both the country of manufacture and the end user's country.

He, however, appealed to the people of the state not to entertain fear as a result of the statement made by the Bankers' Forum, adding: "The Forum appears not to appreciate the elaborate arrangements the government has put in place, or rather, the body is acting under other influences in a move to discredit the government."



New Chairman, EKO Hospital, Sony Folorunso Kuku (left), out-going chairman, Amaechi Obiora (middle), and in-coming Chief Medical Director, Olusegun Odukoya, at the formal presentation of the new management team of the hospital in Lagos on Thursday...

Photo: Yinka Shokunbi.

## NIPOST retirees cry for help over unpaid 20 months pension arrears

By Ekene Okoro  
Snr Reporter, Lagos

ABOUT 4000 retirees under the aegis of the National Union of Nigerian Postal Services (NIPOST) have called on the National Assembly to intervene and compel the authorities of NIPOST to settle their 20 months pension arrears.

One of the affected retirees, a 67 years old woman, who did not want her name mentioned in print, told Daily Independent that they were planning another protest at the Lafaji, Obalende zonal office of NIPOST to register their displeasure over the development.

It would be recalled that the retirees last year August shut down all post offices nationwide to drive home their demand for the immediate payment of 73 months pension arrears to the tune of N4 billion for 9,433 pensioners.

She said last year's demonstration, which lasted days resulted in the payment of 21

months arrears with a promise that the rest would be paid by December 2011.

"After the 21 months that they paid us, they paid us one or two other months and promised that we will be paid the remaining by December, but this is March and we have not been answered", said.

## Lagos Court can't try Soyinka's suit against 1999 Constitution – NASS

By Tunde Opesetan  
Snr Reporter, Lagos

NATIONAL Assembly (NASS) insisted on Thursday that the Federal High Court in Lagos lacks the jurisdiction to adjudicate on a suit filed by Nobel Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka, and elder statesman, Fred Agbeyege, challenging the propriety of the 1999 Constitution.

The Clerk of the National Assembly, in a written address to challenge the suit, argued that

the subject matter of the case and the defendants were not within the jurisdiction of the Lagos Court.

National Assembly's lawyer, Friday Akoko, stressed that the suit, as presently constituted, did not comply with the provisions of Order 2 Rule 1(1) and (9) of the Federal High Court (Civil Procedure) Rules, 2009 which provides that other suits "shall be commenced and determined in the judicial division in which the defendant resides or carries on substantial part

of his business or in which the cause of action arose."

The Clerk also argued that the case was not initiated by due process of law and the condition precedent to the exercise of jurisdiction of the court was not complied with.

To this end, the Clerk wants the court to dismiss the suit for lack of jurisdiction.

Apart from the Clerk, other defendants are President Goodluck Jonathan; Federal Attorney General, Bello Adoke; Senate President, David Mark

and House of Representatives Speaker, Aminu Tambuwal.

Soyinka and Agbeyege are by the suit urging the court to declare the 1999 Constitution null, void and of no effect whatsoever.

They are the surviving plaintiffs in the suit, which originally had the late nonagenarian, Tanimose Bankole-Oki (SAN), as the first plaintiff.

Agbeyege replaced Bankole-Oki with the court's permission following the demise of Bankole-Oki last year.

## \$12.4b oil windfall: Judgment likely today

By Adam Adedimeji  
Law Editor, Lagos

THE Federal High Court in Abuja may today deliver the much awaited judgment on the controversial Okigbo Panel report and responsibility for the missing \$12.4 billion oil windfall.

Sola Egbeyinka of Falana and Falana Chambers, solicitor to the Registered Trustees of Socio-Economic and Accountability Project (SERAP) and five other rights groups that instituted the suit seeking the official publication of the report said this on Friday.

The non-governmental organisations had dragged the Attorney-General of the Federation and the Central Bank of Nigeria before the court over the much publicised 12.4 billion dollars oil windfall, which the country recorded between 1988 and 1994, during General Ibrahim Babagida's tenure as military president. The suit no FHC/ABJ/CS/640/10 was brought under the Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules 2009.

The plaintiffs asked the court to make an order compelling CBN and the AGF to publish detailed accounts relating to the spending of the colossal sum of money between 1988 and 1994. They also sought for an order of the court compelling the respondents to diligently and effectively bring to justice any one suspected of corruption and mismanagement.

## Pension reforms: Enugu to continue collaboration with private sector

By Emmanuel Nzomiwu  
Correspondent Enugu

ENUGU State Government has promised to continue its collaboration with private sector on pension reforms and other policies aimed at ensuring a happy life after retirement for its workforce.

Chief of Staff to Governor Sullivan Chime of Enugu State, Ifeoma Nwobodo, made the promise on Thursday at the commissioning of the regional office of Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers Limited in Enugu.

Nwobodo disclosed that the state government, under the leadership of Governor Sullivan Chime, would in pursuit of the goals set by the 4-point agenda of his administration, continue to provide an enabling environment for businesses to thrive in the state.

"Also, our continued collaboration with the private sector will include pension reforms and other policies aimed at ensuring a happy life after retirement for its workforce" the Chief of Staff said.

While commending Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers on the milestone achieved so far, Nwobodo urged the company to adopt the rules of good service delivery (Servicom) in all their operations to ensure effective and efficient service delivery.

Chief Executive Officer of Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers Limited, Dr Demola Sogunle, said the new regional office was one in a series of expansion moves that would encompass the opening of many new outlets and extend the company's national network.