

## Arewa youths warn on attempts to discard zoning

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE Arewa Youth Movement has said attempts to scuttle the People Democratic Party (PDP) zoning arrangement would lead to chaos across the country as it stressed that northern youths would fight to ensure that the move is resisted.

The North Central Coordinator of the movement who spoke with our correspondent in Minna yesterday at a pro-zoning rally maintained that northern youths were already resolved to throw caution to the wind to wrestle the move.

He said they were presently touring parts of the country to educate northern youths on the need to stand their ground against any attempt to put off the PDP zoning arraignment as he said a "total war" would be declared as soon as the arrangement is put off. He said the state of mind of the youths at every place visited informed that they were set to resist it if the matter is not well handled. "We are going round the country to sensitise northern youths on the national debate on zoning which for which we are in total support that the north must complete its eight year mandate as earlier agreed. I must warn that any attempt to frustrate the moves to retain zoning in Nigeria will be met with violence as the youths are prepared to take up arms to fight for the strict adherence of the arrangement as blood may spill if this is changed to favour a political zone," he said.

He warned that politics is a sensitive activity, adding that people are ready to die for it, especially when their rights are trampled upon. Meanwhile, the national President of the Nigerian Youth Movement Malam Aliyu Adamu has cautioned Senator Abaaji to steer clear of making declarative statements on the person of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. Adamu who was at the rally told *Daily Trust* that the Senator had no right to say that IBB would back out of the race without due consultation with the campaign team. "The Senator is not an adviser to IBB and should not say what he doesn't know as the General is set to go all length to secure a mandate in the 2011 presidential election," he said.

# Body of boy, 18, found in gutter

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

THE body of an 18-year-old boy, Ashiru Baita, popularly called Alhaji, was found in a gutter along Zoo road in Kano metropolis yesterday. It was discovered at about 9 am by some boys passing by who drew the attention of other people to the scene.

Though the cause of his death has not yet been known, his father, Alhaji Baita Jiddah Kura, who spoke to *Daily Trust*, said he had the conviction that he must have

been kidnapped by ritualists.

"I believe that he was kidnapped by ritualists because his mother only sent him to buy Okro and he never returned only for me to be informed that he was found dead in a gutter," he said.

On whether the boy had any form of illness, Jidda said, "He had been battling epilepsy for years but it has been long he had an attack. In fact, he washed his clothes before his mother sent him. I believe it was not his sickness that brought him to the gut-

ter because the place he was supposed to buy the Okro was just across the road, not far from the house", he said.

The gutter in which the body was found was not far from the family house. Men of the state fire service recovered the body from the gutter about an hour and a half after it was discovered. The Kano State Police Public Relations Officer SP Baba Mohammed Azare confirmed the incident. He said police investigations were on as the corpse had been taken to

hospital for doctor's confirmation and establishment of possible cause of the death. He said the next line of action to be taken by the police would depend on the medical report. Commander of the state Fire Service Kassim Musa told *Daily Trust* that there was a cut on the boy's neck and an alleged indication that he was struck with a sharp object on the neck. He also said the cause of the death could only be ascertained based on the awaiting medical report.



FROM left: Governors Timipre Sylva of Bayelsa State, Emmanuel Uduaghan of Delta State, Liyel Imoke of Cross River State and Rotimi Amaechi of Rivers State, at amnesty meeting in Abuja yesterday.

## Accident claims 8 lives in Bauchi

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

AN accident involving a trailer and Toyota Lite ace bus that occurred 13 kilometers from Bauchi along the Jos road yesterday has left eight persons dead and 7 others critically injured. Bauchi State Sector commander of the FRSC Mr. Sunday Maku said the accident was as a result of dangerous overtaking by the bus.

"The bus dangerously overtook the trailer but it got hooked and later caught fire. Eight persons died and 7 received various types of injury. Both the dead and injured were taken to the ATBU Teaching Hospital, Bauchi," he said.

The Bauchi-Jos road is noted for fatal accidents. The state government had about two years ago signed a contract for the dualization of the road from Zaranda Hotel to Miri Village to reduce accidents but the project has not yet taken off.

## Niger declares support for zoning

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

FOLLOWING the decision of the Northern Governors Forum (NGF) to resolve on the Peoples Democratic (PDP) zoning arrangement, the Niger State government yesterday resolved to abide by the party's initial agreement to keep to zoning.

The decision according to the Niger State Commissioner for Information and Communications Alhaji Aliyu Baba-Barau who spoke in Minna yesterday after a joint stakeholders' meeting told *Daily Trust* that the decision was based on the collective input of all stakeholders in the political sphere in the state.

He explained that all political and traditional office holders were earlier asked to go back to their constituen-

cies to engage the people in detailed appraisals of the zoning debate with a view to having a unified decision. While maintaining that the decision was not a party affair, he stated that it was a collective understanding of the entire stakeholders from all the 25 local governments of the state.

"Governor Muazu Babangida Aliyu read out the resolution from all the 25 local government areas of the state and we have resolved to uphold the zoning arrangement pending the final outcome of what the Northern Governors Forum finally rules on", he said.

Baba-Barau who disclosed that the decision to uphold the PDP zoning arrangement was borne out of moves to pave way for the North to complete its term as enshrined in the

party's constitution maintained that the Niger State resolve was subject to the ratification by the NGF.

"We have resolved at state level and that is what our governor is going to present at the NGF meeting which will be subject to what the forum finally decides on based on inputs from other 19 member states at the meeting", he said.

The Speaker, Niger State House of Assembly Musa Ma'ali told our correspondent that the decision was restricted only to Niger State PDP and not a reflection of the other 19 states. He said in arriving at the decision, the political stakeholders took their time to make a careful assessment of the implications it would have on the political environment of Nigeria.