

4 ABU students, driver killed in auto crash

Hir Joseph, Lafia

A fully loaded mini bus conveying students of the Accountancy Department of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, yesterday, veered off the road at Tse-Kucha, near the Benue Cement Company (BCC) in Gboko, landing in a ditch and

killing five on the spot. The driver of the vehicle, who was one of the five persons killed in the accident, was dodging one of the large potholes riddling the road when he lost control.

The Toyota Hiace bus with registration number KD 19A10, belonging to the university, was

returning from Obudu in the neighbouring Cross River State where the students went on an excursion. The accident occurred at about 6pm while darkness was setting in.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Benue State Sector Command of the federal Road

Safety Commission (FRSC), Audu Samson and the Unit Commander of the Gboko Unit of FRSC, Ado Yusuf all confirmed the accident. Yusuf told Weekly Trust that his men were still carrying out recovery at press time, saying four students and the driver died in the accident while 13 students

suffered varying degrees of injuries.

He said both the corpses and the injured students were rushed to the General Hospital in Gboko. "The vehicle was mutilated beyond recognition. We are still recovering at the scene of the accident," Yusuf added.

NUPENG gives FG 14-day ultimatum to probe PPPRA

• ...suspends strike

Francis Okeke

THE Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas (NUPENG) workers yesterday gave the Federal Government 14 days of ultimatum to probe the Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) or face a strike.

The union also yesterday suspended the strike it embarked upon five days ago protesting the bad roads in Nigeria. The union had suspended transportation of petroleum products to Abuja during the strike due to what they claimed were the bad roads in the country.

Speaking after a meeting with the Minister of Labour and Productivity Chief Emeka Wogu which led to the suspension of the strike action, the union said the 14 days ultimatum was to allow government to flush the rot in the

PPPRA.

NUPENG President Comrade Igwe Achesi lamented that the Chairman of the PPPRA Ahmadu Ali "dubiously allocates products to 'portfolio carriers' who neither had the facilities nor any investment in the country" showing commitment to product availability.

Achesi added that the union had also resolved that if after the ultimatum government did not budge, it will shut down both private and government depots.

"Until government listens to us after the 14 days, no product should be bought again from portfolio carrying marketers who do not have anything to show for in this country.

"We will as well after the 14 days shut down all our private depots and if possible even the government depots."

Stocks: Reps summon Oteh, Dangote, Okereke-Onyuike, others

Turaki A. Hassan

THE House of Representatives has summoned the Director General of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Ms Arunma Oteh, former

Director General of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), Professor Ndi Okereke Onyuike and the exchange's former chairman, Alhaji Aliko Dangote to appear before it on Tuesday.

Others invited by the House are the interim administrator of NSE, Mr. Emmanuel Ikhazoboh and the council chairman, Mr.

Ballama Manu who are to come along with other stakeholders.

This is coming on the heels of the sack of Professor Onyuike from the turbulent stock market by SEC and the impending investigation by SEC into the activities of the of NSE under her leadership.

Chairman of the House Committee on Capital Market, Rep. Umar Buba Jibril (PDP, Kogi) who disclosed this yesterday in an interview with newsmen at the National Assembly Abuja, said the summon was to chart a way forward for the stock market.

Ramadan Tafsir: Sheikh Saidu replaces Gumi

Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

AS the Ramadan Tafsir of Sultan Bello Mosque, Kaduna will soon begin, the management of Sultan Bello Mosque yesterday announced that a Jos-based Islamic preacher, Sheikh Alhassan Saidu would deliver the lecture pending the release of Dr. Ahmad Gumi by the Saudi Arabian authorities.

Following the demise of Malam Lawal Abubakar who succeeded, Sheikh Abubakar Gumi in 2004, Dr. Gumi took over the annual Ramadan tafsir. He was arrested on February 24, this year by the Saudi Arabia security over an alleged link with Farouk

Abdulmutallab, suspected attempted bomber of an American aircraft.

Making the announcement during yesterday's jumaat prayer, the Chief Imam of the Mosque, Sheikh Abdulhamid Balale Wali said "Malam Saidu is the Assistant of Dr. Gumi. They were both appointed by the late Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Maccido and the Emir of Zazzau, Dr. Shehu Idris. The letters for their appointment were conveyed by the former Secretary-General of the Jamatul Nasrul Islam (JNI) Justice Abdulkadir Orire. This is not the first time; Malam Saidu would conduct the Tafsir. Whenever Dr. Gumi is not around, he delivers it," he said.

He urged Muslims in the country to continue to pray for the quick release of Dr. Gumi. "He is no longer in detention, he is now under house arrest. And we have gathered that he is in very sound health. His family members do see him," he added.

He said efforts are in top gear to secure his release by the Nigerian government. "The Kaduna state governor, Mr. Patrick Yakowa and the Emir of Zazzau, Dr. Shehu Idris few days ago traveled to Abuja and discussed the issue with Mr. President. The case is now between the Nigerian and Saudi Arabia governments but we are hoping that he will soon be released," he said.

Jonathan appoints new aides

Mohammed S. Shehu

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan has appointed Professor Precious Kassey Garba as the Chief Economic Adviser to the President and Professor Dan Adebisi as his Special Adviser on Policy Monitoring and Performance Evaluation.

Until her appointment, Garba has served as Professor of Economics and Dean, Faculty of The Social Sciences at the University of Ibadan. She was also Vice President of the Nigerian Economic Society between 2003 and 2007. Garba is a recipient of several prizes in academic research and author of many research works on Economics.

Bridge collapse cuts off Kano-Maiduguri highway

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

COMMERCIAL and social activities between the North-western and North-eastern parts of the country were halted yesterday following the collapse of a bridge at Masaya Village along Kano-Maiduguri Highway.

Located at Masaya River in Birnin-Kudu local government area of Jigawa state, the bridged collapsed as a result of gully erosion that cut-off the only road that linked the eastern and western part of the north by about 100 feet by 200 metre of the highway.

Motorists going to Gwaram, Bauchi and Gombe from Kano and Dutse, the capital of Jigawa could only have a stop-over at one side of the bridge and upload their

passengers and goods for onward transfer to the other side of the road and vice versa.

Also, boats and or canoes could not be used to ferry good and passengers, hence, only youths could be seen transferring both goods and passengers from one side of the bridge to the other at the expense of the owners and drivers.

Villagers told Weekly Trust that the bridge collapsed in the night, as according to one villager Malam Ibrahim Ismail, the community discovered the collapse of the bridge in the morning.

Secretary to Birnin-Kudu local government, Malam Muhammad Auwalu Babaldu said the bridged collapsed as result of a land slide caused by a heavy rainfall in the night.

One killed, two injured in fresh Tafawa Balewa violence

Ahmed Mohammed, Bauchi

ONE person was killed and two people were injured yesterday in fresh violence which took place in Tafawa Balewa Local Government area of Bauchi state.

Narrating the incident to newsmen in Bauchi Police Commissioner Danlami Yar'adua said the crisis started in the area two weeks ago when Bauchi State government and Tafawa Balewa local government council engaged the services of a contractor to install devices that will boost the signal of state radio FM station in the area.

Yar'adua said over 200 youths protested the installation of the devices. They destroyed the contractors' vehicles and equipments until police rescued

them. Police received a complaint from the contractor and government that some youths took laws in to their hands and destroyed contractor's properties.

He said in the course of investigation Police pick six people alleged to have a hand in the fracas for questioning and over 1000 youths now came out en masse to Tafawa Balewa Police Station protesting and chanting.

Commissioner said police opened fire on the rioters in self-defense under order 237 which allows Police men to defend themselves in other to prevent the youths from burning the police station in the process three people were shot one died on the way to Hospital and remaining two were injured they were admitted in Hospital.

Pic: Kennedy Egbonodje



FROM right: Managing Director, Amat Electronical Engineering Company Limited, Engineer Charles Njoku, of the occasion, Engineer Ashim A. Oyekan and Managing Director, Lotatronics Limited Mrs. Fatima Teidi, during the commissioning of Fair Trade Business Complex in Abuja Thursday.