

Obasanjo illegally concessioned Ajaokuta – FG

Turaki A. Hassan

FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo usurped the powers of the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE) when the Presidency together with the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel in 2006 concessioned the Ajaokuta steel company in Kogi state to 'Global Infrastructure, BPE's Director General, Ms Bolanle Onogoruwa told the Senate ad-hoc committee investigating the activities of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) on the privatisation and commercialization of Federal government owned public enterprises in Nigeria from

1999 to date heard yesterday.

Ms Bolanle who spoke alongside Minister of state for Steel and Development, Alhaji Musa Sada said contrary to provisions of the Privatisation and Commercialisation Act of 1998, the presidency under Obasanjo did not involve the Bureau in the concessioning exercise.

For his part, Sada accused Global Infrastructure which also acquired Delta Steel company of asset stripping in Ajaokuta saying, "They were moving out equipments from Ajaokuta to Delta Steel. They cannibalised spare parts at the company and only wanted

to use the place as a warehouse for DSC. "The steel sector is in a sorry state, we have not been able to move forward and the inability to use the machines have resulted in depreciation of value. Global Infrastructure has succeeded in asset stripping. They bought Delta Steel company and won the concession of Ajaokuta, they later added Iron Ore and they ended up treating all those entities basically as one," the Minister informed the MPs.

He further disclosed that, the government spends about N4 billion naira annually to pay worker's salaries for doing nothing.

7 die in Benue auto-crash

Torila Kajo, Makurdi

A fatal accident yesterday occurred along Wukari Zaki-Biam road in Benue State in which seven people died on the spot, including 8 cows. Eyewitnesses said a trailer conveying cows was involved in a head-on collision with a station wagon. Details remain sketchy as at press-time.

But Police Public Relations Officer for Benue State Police Command Alalibe Ejike, who confirmed the accident, said he is awaiting briefing from the Divisional Police Officer of Ukum Local Government. The PPRO said the bodies of the victims have been deposited at NKST Hospital Mine.

'Presidency didn't suspend NTDC DG'

Nuruddeen M. Abdallah

THE Presidency has debunked rumours to the effect that the Director General of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), Chief Otunba Olusegun Runsewe has been suspended. The Special Adviser to the President on Media and Communications, Dr. Rueben Abati disclosed this during a chat with newsmen in Abuja yesterday. "The Presidency has not given directive for the suspension of the Director-General of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation, Otunba Olusegun Runsewe who is statutorily an appointee of

President Goodluck Jonathan," Abati said.

The presidential spokesperson explained also that "if a director of any agency will be suspended or removed, the minister in charge of such a parastatal will send a memo to the president for an approval to take such a step." He stated that "I have crosschecked from relevant desks, there is no such directive from the presidency for the suspension of NTDC DG."

When newsmen asked the presidential aide why chairman of the board of the NTDC, Uche Anya allegedly unilaterally decided to suspend the DG of the tourism corporation, Abati said: "That is unusual."

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ABAKANKI

ABEOKUTA

ABUJA

ADO EKITI

AJAKUTA

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ARGUNGU

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BAKURA

BAMA

BAUCHI

BENIN

BICI

BIDA

B/GWARI

B/KEBBI

B/KUDU

BIU

BUNGUDA

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