

Accident Claims Five In Oyinlola's Campaign Train

By Gbenga Faturoti,
CORRESPONDENT, Osogbo.

Tragedy struck at the Ikeji-Arakeji, in Oriade Local Government Area of Osun State, when five members of Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola campaign train lost their lives and several others injured in a ghastly motor accident.

The accident occurred on Tuesday evening, at the Ikeji-Arakeji junction when the NAFDAC

Impounds N10m Worth Vegetable Oil

By Onche Odeh
REPORTER

Vegetable oil valued at N10 million, tucked in three truck loads and over 800 cartons of similar products have been impounded by National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC).

The vegetable oil stocks were impounded because they were unregistered and not fortified with vitamin 'A', as stipulated by the regulatory agency.

The agency had in the last one week, commenced a nation-wide crack down on manufacturers, importers, distributors and marketers of vegetable oil who ran foul of NAFDAC registration and fortification regulations.

The vegetable oil were seized by NAFDAC regulatory officers during raids of supermarkets and open markets in Port-Harcourt, Kano and Maiduguri. Brands of vegetable oil commonly affected by the illegal importation and non-fortification with vitamin 'A' were Kings, Turkey, Leisure, Gino, Bimol, Moi oil, Oki, Sania, Mazola, Pride Corn oil, Laser Saborel and White Pure vegetable oil.

Maitama Sule Charges Youth

Nigeria's former Permanent Representative to United Nations, Alhaji Maitama Sule has charged the nation's youths to shun ethno-religious sentiments and other vices which have the potentials of threatening the Nigeria nation, just as he blamed the inadequacies in Nigerian democracy to non consideration of the people's culture in our democratic system.

"We are operating a system that is not African. Democracy is a relative word, the culture of a people and its antecedents should reflect in their democratic system. Think of the USA, the Britain and other democratic nations in the west, their cultures are part of their democracy and that is why they are succeeding," the elder statesman said.

The Dan Masanin Kano made these remarks on Wednesday at the Kano State National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) orientation camp where he addressed the 2007 Batch A corps members. The topic was NYSC: an attempt to foster national unity and de-

party supporters were returning from campaign held in the area.

Daily Independent reliably gathered that the accident occurred when an Abuja bound trailer rammed into the hired commercial bus of the campaign team, when it was coming out from the Ikeji-Arakeji junction.

The trailer, according to an eyewitness, was on a high

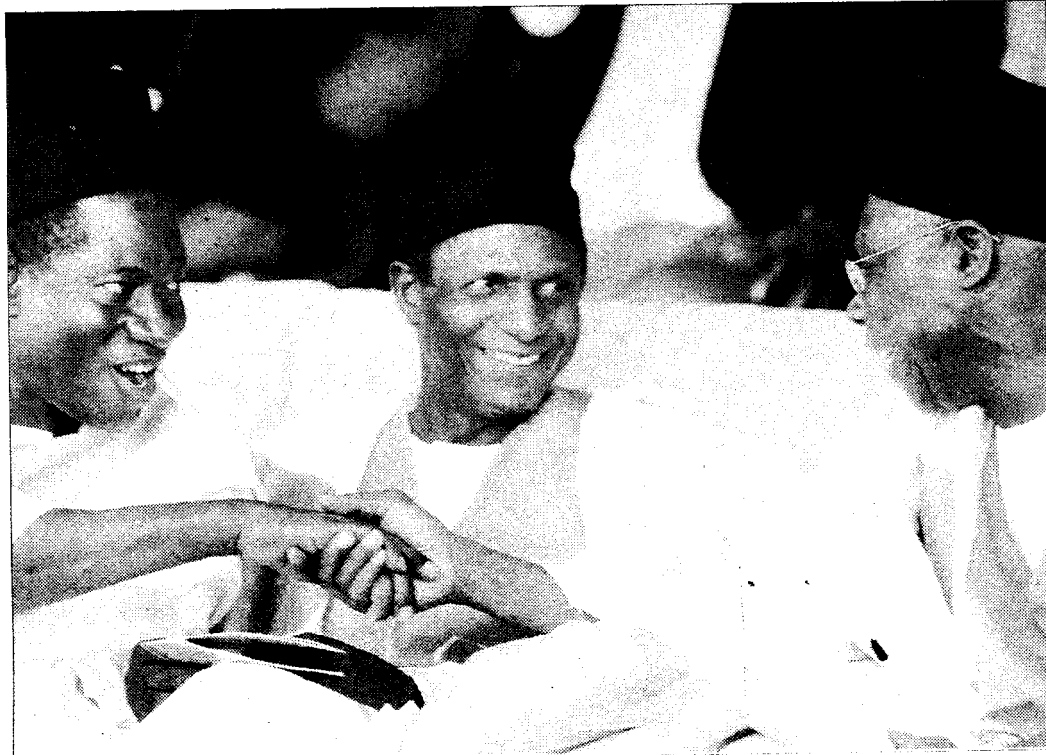
speed when suddenly the bus conveying the politicians came out from the junction to the express road.

The driver of the trailer, the account added, could not apply brake as he was on speed. Two people reportedly died on the spot while another three died on the way to the hospital.

The injured persons are currently receiving medical attention at the Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesha

and Ladoké Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital (LAUTECH), Osogbo. The remains of the dead victims have also been deposited at LAUTECH Hospital's mortuary in Osogbo.

Meanwhile, Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola has suspended his campaign rally slated for Ede and adjoining towns, in order to sympathise with the deceased family.



President Olusegun Obasanjo greeting PDP Vice Presidential candidate, Good Luck Jonathan at the party's campaign rally in Sokoto, on Tuesday. Admiring both men is the presidential candidate, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (middle).

Fayose: Group Tackles Obasanjo

An interest group, the Ekiti Elite for Good Governance, on Monday, challenged President Olusegun Obasanjo to mention specifically what the people of Ekiti State have benefited from his administration in the last eight years, to justify voting for his party again in the forthcoming general election.

The coordinator of the group, Dr. Ojo Olubodun, in a statement issued in Ado-Ekiti, said the last eight years have been characterised by unful-

filled promises by President Obasanjo.

Olubodun specifically mentioned the Ado-Otun-Omu-Aran Road, which, he said, Obasanjo had flagged off about four times within a space of five years, without anything done on the road.

The recent grading of the road, according to him, was done by the Fayose administration shortly before his suspension in October last year.

Besides, the coordinator recalled the construction of the 132 KVA sub-station promised by

Obasanjo about four years ago, which has long been abandoned, thus throwing the state into unprecedented darkness with attendant effect on socio-economic life.

"It was Fayose, out of his determination to cushion this effect, that started the extension of electricity from Ilesha to Ado-Ekiti which was scheduled for commissioning in October last year but which General Adetunji Olurin is now claiming to be part of his achievements"

National AIDS Committee Upgraded

By Yinka Shokunbi
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT
Lagos

President Olusegun Obasanjo has finally assented to the law transforming the National Action Committee on AIDS (NACA), into a full-fledged Agency.

Professor Babatunde Osotimehin made this disclosure to newsmen on Wednesday, at an interactive session on the Score Card of the AIDS body.

Osotimehin also announced that the Global Fund which last year suspended its financial assistance to the country, has approved a new grant of \$180 million for an-

other five-year round of programme implementation, in the country.

According to him, with the transformation, the AIDS body now holds more responsibilities as an independent oversight body, for all HIV/AIDS programmes throughout the country and would also have budgetary allocations.

Speaking on the journey of the AIDS committee in the last eight years, Osotimehin noted that one of the achievements of the body was its ability to reverse the transmission trend of the HIV infection from the zero-prevalence level of 5.8 per cent in 2001 to 4.4 per cent in 2005.

"Although by 1994, the prevalence rate of infection in the country began to rise from 3.8 per cent to 4.5 per cent in 1996 and by 1999, it rose to 5.4 per cent and peaked in 2001 at 5.8 per cent.

"By the time we scaled up the country's intervention programme to include a comprehensive multi sectoral approach to the fight, the rate began to drop and in 2003, it was 5.0 and by 2005 it further dropped to 4.4 per cent," the NACA chair said.

He told reporters that another round of sero-prevalence survey is to be carried out this year to further ascertain the incidence of the infection in the country.

Non-sensitive Election Materials Arrive Lagos

•As ACE Demands Iwu's Sack

By Rafiu Ajakaye
REPORTER, Lagos

Lagos Resident Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Commissioner, Ayo Dada, has confirmed delivery of bulky "non-sensitive" electoral materials, which he said affirmed the conviction of the body to conduct free and fair polls.

A statement on Wednesday quoted Dada as saying the materials included "different categories of forms, envelopes, bags, markers and training manuals. Others include stamps, gums indelible inks and writing materials".

"Sensitive materials such as result sheets and ballot papers would be dispatched soon", the statement added.

This emerged as the Alliance for Credible Election (ACE-Nigeria) pressed for the sack of INEC boss, Maurice Iwu, which it accused of "deliberately working to truncate the elections and pave the way for tenure elongation".

ACE said in a statement it had in January conducted an opinion, which indicted Iwu of double standard and of acting the script of the presidency, and is worried that voter's register is not ready days to the election.

"The primary responsibility to deliver credible elections in 2007 lies with Prof. Maurice Iwu and his commissioners", Emma Ezeazu, ACE's secretary-general, said in a statement. At a book launch on Tuesday, Ezeazu insisted that the only way to violent and credible election is to relieve Iwu of his duty.

Robbers Raid Six Banks, Kill Four Policemen In Anambra

By Okey Muduforo
CORRESPONDENT, Awka

A gang of 40 robbers on Wednesday unleashed terror on the residents of Nnewi in Anambra State when six commercial banks were raided.

Before the operation - which lasted between 1 a.m and 5 a.m. on Bank Road situated at the Nkwo Nnewi motorcycle spare parts market - four policemen on patrol were killed in Obosi, near Nnewi.

Police Public Relations Officer, Fidelis Agbo, who conducted reporters round the scene of the robbery, said six banks were attacked but the robbers gained entry into only two (names withheld).

Items the police recovered from them include four hammers, three chisels, over 800 expended bullets, three live ammunitions, seven gas cylinders, and a bus suspected to have been used by the gang.

Agbo said although the four policemen were killed in Obosi, there are indications that the gunmen who attacked them from buses may have been the robbers who probably thought they were being trailed.