

Church Celebrates With The Needy

By Babasola Osipeju
PRODUCTION EDITOR

Three needy homes were full of joy and appreciation recently when Ajayi Dahunsi Memorial Baptist Church, Ilasamaja, visited to share with them the joy of the season. The church embarked on the visit as part of the activities marking her 40th Anniversary and dedication of her new church building.

Places visited include General Hospital, Isolo; Modupe Cole Memorial School, Yaba; and Wesley School, Surulere.

According to the Chairman of the Dedication Committee, Deacon Ademola Atunbi, the visit is to rejoice with these people and express the goodness of God to His children.

"This is not new, as the church visits these homes from time to time; but this is different. We are celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the existence of our church and also dedicating a new church building. We thought we should not do it alone, instead, we should share the joy with others," he said.

Atunbi stated that the grand finale would come up Saturday, December 22, at the church complex, 55/57 Akanro Street, Ilasamaja, where the building would be dedicated. The church also plans to launch a N20 million pipe organ at the occasion.

Dignitaries from the Baptist world are expected at the occasion.

School Holds Christmas Party For Pupils

By Funmi Mustapha
REPORTER, Lagos

The Intellectual Nursery and Primary School has organised a Christmas party for its pupils to mark the end of the year activities.

According to the Proprietress, Moronke Mobolaji, the purpose of the party is for the children to feel the joy of Christmas and birth of Jesus Christ who came to die for the world. "We want the children to know that they have a saviour that died for them. The season is not only for dining and winning, but the most important thing is that they should have that feeling that there is a saviour who came to the world as a child like them. We want them to have that sense of belonging and the heart to serve God now and in the future," she said.

In his speech, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Chairman, Pastor Samuel Weyinmi Nanna, said love is the essence of the season. He stated that people are suffering today due to lack of love. "Christ is the reason for this season and you can't call yourself a Christian if you can't show love to one another. Love is giving, forgiving and the essence of this season. You cannot remove it from this life," he said.

While admonishing the children to be a good example at home and to their peers while on holiday, a patron, Yinka Jekami, appealed to the parents to show love to their children especially this season and strive to give them good education, saying children are their future.

The event also featured choreography, drama, Christmas carol and dance competition.

Yuletide: Ban On Fireworks Still.

In Force, Police Warn • Advise Parents To Caution Wards

By Victor Ebimomi
REPORTER, Lagos

The Lagos State Police Command has reiterated that the ban on fireworks popularly called 'bangers' this yuletide is still in force and threatened to deal with anyone flouting the ban.

Speaking with *Daily Independent* on Thursday, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Frank Mba, said the police had been reluctant to enforce the ban all this while because of the number of people that were involved, but warned that it is now poised to

enforce it and would not mind to use force where necessary.

He appealed to parents and guardians to caution their children, stressing that the ban is for the betterment of the society.

The parent, he said, must play their own role because it is not

every time that the police must use force to get things done.

According to him, there are many disadvantages associated with the fireworks, which necessitated its ban during this period of the year.

Apartment from the possibility of it causing fire outbreaks, it could

aggravate the condition of people with heart problem if they are continuously exposed to the sound.

Also, it could create unnecessary fear in the people particularly of the recurrent incidents of armed robberies as people could mistake their sound for that of gun; a

situation which, he said, could as well cause unnecessary distraction for the police.

He noted that armed robbers could also hide under the guise of the fireworks to perpetrate their diabolical acts with ease and without people around knowing until it is late.

It will be recalled that the Lagos State Police Commissioner, Mohammed Abubakar, some weeks ago slammed a ban on the use of fireworks during this period of the year because of its security implications following rising crime wave in the state.

Obey Traffic Rules, LAMATA Boss Counsels Motorists

By Grace Omoshaba
REPORTER, Lagos

Managing Director of the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA), Dr. Dayo Mobereola, has appealed to motorists, particularly commercial drivers, to obey traffic rules and reduce speed to stay alive into the New Year.

Mobereola made the appeal in his office as commuters' urge to travel for Christmas and New Year festivities has increased traffic pressure on the roads.

"I want to sincerely appeal to motorists, particularly commercial drivers, to spare a thought at this time of the year when more accidents are recorded. This is not the time drivers can make money they have not made in the last 11 months," he said.

Mobereola added that LAMATA would reform the state transportation system through the implementation of inter-modal transportation. With the system in place, he noted that people would be able to travel from one point to the other in predictable time.

He said part of the government's plan for the New Year is to open three ferry routes to promote water transportation and reduce traffic congestions in the metropolis.

The three routes are Ikorodu to Marina (CMS) via Oworonshoki and Ebute Ero; LASU (Ojo) to Marina (CMS) via Ijegun Egba and Liverpool (Apapa) and Osborne to Marina.

Mobereola also encouraged the private sector to contribute to the government's efforts in alleviating the transport challenges being faced by Lagosians.

"We are encouraging the private sector under the Public Private Sector Participation (PPP) to bring in low-bed waterbuses that ensure safety of commuters," he said.

He also urged Lagosians to keep faith with the government in the quest to reform the transport system and change their lifestyle.



• A newspaper vendor taking a nap after hours of selling in Abuja on Thursday

Photo: Jide Oyekunle

Pipeline Explosion Victims Cry Out Over Neglect

By Grace Omoshaba
REPORTER, Lagos

The victims of Awori pipeline explosion in Abule-Egba, Ojokoro Local Council Development of Lagos State, have lamented the failure of the government to fulfil its promises to the communities affected by the fire outbreak.

According to the Baale of Abule-Egba-Awori, Alhaji Tajudeen Seriki, several efforts to get the government and other corporate bodies to fulfill their promises after the fire incident which claimed thousands of lives and rendered many homeless, have been futile.

"The government and so many other organisations promised us a lot of things, but none fulfilled it.

For instance, they promised to make our entire roads motorable, even NNPC did not fulfill its own part of the promises. We have been spending our money to get things done here. It was the council and our community that even buried the victims," he lamented.

He added that about five months after the incident, the vandals always come to scoop the fuel at night. This made the Ifesowapo Community market, comprising Joint Technicians Association, Opeleyeru Sawmill and United Waste Recycling Product to secure the place by employing night guards to monitor the place while they also contributed to build security gates at the entrance and exist of the street where the pipeline is located.

Also speaking with *Daily Independent*, the Chairman of the

Joint Technicians Association, Mr. Julius Ayeni, said though properties were lost to the fire incident, he thanked God that of all the people that died in the fire, none was a member of the association.

"It was a tragic incident. We lost so many things. We even thought we won't be able to survive it financially, but we thank God for His mercies," he said.

He added that the incident created fear in their customers, who have refused to patronise them, especially those whose cars got burnt.

The fire incident was caused by explosion when vandals went to scoop fuel at a petroleum pipeline there. The pipe exploded at exactly 8.30am on December 26, 2006 and left about a 1,000 dead, while properties worth millions were lost.

Lagos Promises New Dawn On Highways

By Stella Odueme
REPORTER, Lagos

In its avowed determination to restore its beauty and transform the city of Lagos environment into the one of pride that can compete favourably with those of developed cities of the world, all street traders along the major highways in the state have been warned to relocate immediately or face prosecution according to the State Street Trading Laws.

This warning came from the Commissioner for Environment, Dr. Muiz Banire, to street traders along Obafemi Awolowo Way, Ikeja; Oba Akran Road, Ikeja; Ikorodu Road, Maryland, Ilupeju bye pass, Anthony, Barracks, Stadium, Ojuelegba, Apogbon, Marina, Victoria Island, during a special motorised public enlightenment campaign on Thursday.

Banire frowned at the high level of environmental abuse

and degradation of the highways and major streets, warning street traders along Ilupeju bye pass very close to the LSDPC Office that have turned the axis into car interior accessories display joint to immediately vacate the entire area before the end of the year or face arrest.

He also cautioned the ram sellers along Gbagada, Bariga, and Oworonsoki expressway to also vacate the place to check degradation and abuse by the

sellers.

"Those who build kiosks and attachments along the setbacks or along drainage alignments should remove them immediately because my ministry's task force and Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) officials have been empowered to embark on a serious clean up of the state's major highways and streets in the New Year," he stated.

"All property owners in the state, who have turned residential buildings to club houses, hotels,

motels and other commercial uses, should immediately revert them to their original use and approved building plans, as recent studies by environmentalists has shown that those who reside in these areas are exposed to ill health and untimely death," he added.

Banire enjoined owners of such residential houses and neighbours to join hands with the government to restore Lagos to the dream of its founding fathers.