

Plane crashlands with 3 survivors in Benin

From RALPH OKHIRIA, Benin
A PRIVATE aircraft with registration number 5NBEX yesterday crash-landed at the Benin Airport, Edo State. Three persons aboard the plane however escaped death as the See Page 2 Col 6

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How Saraki's loss was Saraki's gain — P7



AGAIN, BOMB BLAST IN SULEJA ...4 killed, 7 injured

From JUSTINA ASISHANA, Minna
THE commercial town of Suleja was thrown into a pandemonium yesterday afternoon as a bomb explosion rocked the town leaving four people dead and seven others seriously injured.

The bomb which was thrown into the premises of All Christian Fellowship Mission, a worship center along

Church Road in Suleja at about 2.30 pm also affected a nearby worship center, Faith Mission Church.

It was also gathered that aside from the All Christian Fellowship Mission, the building of Faith Mission Church, a nearby church was also affected by the explosion.

At the time of filing this report, the details of the attack was still hazy but unconfirmed sources said that the explosive was thrown from a moving motorcycle into the church

premises. While the police put the number of casualty at two with three injured, eyewitnesses stated that four people were affected and seven sustained different degrees of injury.

It was gathered that the effect of the explosion would have been monumental because the

area accommodates churches and many worshippers would have been affected but for the fact that Christian worshippers had retired home after the day's service.

We however gathered that among the casualty were two women and one of the women was the secretary to the pastor

of All Christian Fellowship Mission while a male member lost both legs but is alive and unconscious.

Meanwhile, the bodies of the victims have been deposited at Suleja General Hospital, while those injured have been transferred to Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital.

As at the time of filing this report, Police have cordoned off the area, while most traders hurriedly lock up their stalls after the news of the bomb blast went round the town.

The bomb explosion which is the third explosion in the space of five months in Suleja, See Page 2 Col 6

...Explosives rock Maiduguri

From ABUBAKARA BABA, Maiduguri
SERIES of bombs yesterday exploded in various parts of Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

The incidents come barely nine hours after a bomb exploded at about 8.30pm of yesterday at Landan-Ciki ward, also within the metropolis.

These latest development

happened two days after the state banned the use of motorcycles in Maiduguri metropolis and Jere Local Government Area to curtail the recently-increased attacks being launched by suspected members of the Yusufiya sect.

The Joint Taskforce on the Restoration of Order is yet to provide detailed information about the damage caused by the multiple explosions.

The spokesman for the unit, Colonel Victor Ebhaleme, told our correspondent that the unit commander, Major General Jack Nwoagwu, was preparing to either issue a press statement or address newsmen on the development.

Meanwhile, residents of Landan-ciki, where a bomb exploded yesterday, are massively deserting their See Page 2 Col 2



Vice President Mohammed Namadi Sambo presenting overall winner's trophy to Rivers State's representative during the official closing ceremony of 17th National Sports Festival in Port Harcourt on Saturday.

866 MFBs need capacity building, stability to perform —CBN

From COBHAM NSA, Abuja

THE 866 Microfinance Banks (MFBs) licensed by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) as at April 2011 need capacity building and a stable financial environment to operate and effectively deliver service to their teeming customers across the country. CBN's Director in charge of Other Financial Institutions Department (OFID), Mr. Olufemi Fabanwo said though

the apex bank was still processing more applications for licensing, it would not relent in the current efforts at reforming the sector to reach the largely unbanked populace.

Speaking at the formal signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between HASAL Institute for Microfinance Studies (HIMS Academy Limited) and

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We must improve sports rating —Sambo ...'Garden City Games 2011' end, Rivers tops medal table

From SUNDAY ODE, Abuja

THE Vice President, Arc Mohammed Namadi Sambo, has charged the National Sports Commission (NSC) to

improve Nigeria's international sports rating.

The Vice President gave this charge, at the closing ceremony of the 17th National Sports Festival, tagged "Garden City

Games 2011" hosted by Rivers State.

He said "we cannot afford to lag behind countries 'not' as endowed as we are in the world of sports."

Tasking the NSC to initiate quality sports programmes and events outside the National Sports Festival, Arc Sambo noted that "responsibility lies with the sports administrators

to nurture the fresh talents discovered at this year's games with a view to projecting them on to the international stage to win laurels, and bring fame and glory to our fatherland."

Speaking further, Vice President Sambo described sports as a potent weapon of development saying, "As an administration therefore, we

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News

866 MFBs need capacity

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Academy of German Cooperative in Abuja, the Director said after five years of micro-finance banking in Nigeria, it has been established that a strong and secure financial air as well as enhanced capacity for operators were prerequisites for the sector to efficiently contribute to sustainable growth and development of the nation's economy.

Mr. Fabanwo, represented at the event by one Emmanuel Zakari, said the though the CBN was yet to fully achieved the set target of financial inclusiveness in its policy, some level of successes have been recorded within the period under review.

According to him, "What we want is sustainable growth in a stable economic environment. Until the financial institutions grow; the policy goal will not be met. But they have to grow in a stable environment," assuring that clampdown on the licenses of some MFBs in September last year would always be avoided because all necessary measures were being put in place to prevent a repeat occurrence.

He said in addressing the challenge, "Three things are key; the right philosophy; the right business model; and technical skill. I believe that things can turn around to provide all that. That is why we are particularly delighted on what is happening today."

The Director commended Hasal Institute for taking the initiative in the area of capacity building that would provide the opportunity for improved operations within the micro-finance sub-sector.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of HASAL Institute for Microfinance Studies, Mr Rogers Nwokedi said research had shown that most MFBs lacked the requisite expertise to run the business efficiently and successfully.

Mr Nwokedi, who made presentation on the HIMS Academy Limited, explained that the institute was set up to provide the training needs,

'We must improve sports rating'

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intend to harness the sporting and creative abilities of our youths in order to transform our nation."

He called on the private sector to partner with government at all levels in the provision of quality sporting facilities across the nation, stressing that the state of the art facilities put in place by the Rivers State Government should not be allowed to rot.

Arc Sambo used the occasion to appeal to the youth to shun violence and embrace patriotism and diligence, saying "Nigeria believes in you and you cannot afford to fail the nation."

Vice President Sambo, while commending Rivers State for a

identify needs of the sector, promote enterprise growth, and provide private sector led research institute.

He said the Institute was meant to provide alternative for the tertiary institutes and education as well as provide sustainable income generation and accelerated business growth in the country.

Also in his presentation, Representative of the Academy of German Cooperatives (ADG), Rudiger Meister said a total of 1,136 German Cooperatives financial sector operators, the equivalent of Nigeria's MFBs, were in existence in Germany.

He said given the existing cordial relations between Nigeria and Germany, the MoU was an expression of ADG commitment to its partnership with Hasal towards building the capacity of MFBs operators for effective service delivery in the country.

Maiduguri

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houses to save their lives from the actions of overzealous uniformed men.

Our correspondent reports that residents of the area, including women and children, were seen leaving on foot with their belongings which they could carry on their heads and hands for safer places.

The entire metropolis has become ghost town, with only few vehicles plying the streets.

Meanwhile, residents of Dikwa Estate say the joint taskforce has directed them to vacate their house until further notice.

Oyo can't pay Akala's May, June salaries now

From BAYO AKAMO,
Ibadan

GOVERNOR Abiola Ajimobi of Oyo State yesterday said his government cannot pay the May and June salaries of the state immediate past governor, Otunba Adebayo Alao-Akala and others for now.

The governor stated this in a statement made available to journalists signed by his Senior Special Assistant on Public

successful outing, called on all the athletes to be good ambassadors of the country wherever they go.

He was optimistic that with the discovery of new talents Nigeria was assured of better fortunes at the 2012 Olympic Games in London and several other international competitions.

In his remarks, the Rivers State Governor, Rotimi Amaechi, said the festival was meant to foster the spirit of friendship, brotherliness and national bond of unity, adding that sports is a veritable channel through which Nigeria could derive the much needed social contract that could redirect the energies of the incoming youth.

Earlier, the Director General



National Emergency Agency (NEMA) officials evacuating human parts at the scene of bomb blast at the All Christians Fellowship Mission in Suleja, Niger State ...yesterday. Photo: NAN

TIJJANIYYA MARKS BIRTH OF SHEIKH NYASS

From ABUBAKAR IMAM,
Sokoto

HUNDREDS of thousands of members of Tijjaniyya Islamic sect from around the world at the weekend converged in Sokoto State to celebrate the birth of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass.

Sheikh Nyass, a Senegalese, was the most celebrated leader of the sect in Africa. He was said to have led to the rooting of the sect in the region.

The busy Sokoto-Gusau

road became impassable for almost two days that the celebration which was held at the Sokoto Trade Fair Complex, lasted.

Motorists and other road users who were either coming or leaving the state were forced to divert and used the hard but the only alternative way.

The celebration was however, peaceful and attracted

prominent personalities, among them, the Governors of Kebbi and Zamfara states, Sultan of Sokoto and Sheikh Dahiru Usman Bauchi.

In his remarks, Sheikh Bauchi said the large number of people at the gathering symbolised the unity of the Muslim ummah and how they interact peacefully with one another.

Plane

From Front Page Col 6
plane over-ran the runway at the Benin Airport after several unsuccessful attempts to land.

The 10-seater plane believed to belong to Senator Andy Uba finally made a stop at a grassland several feet from the runway.

It was gathered that the private aircraft was chartered to pick up a passenger whose identity was unknown at the Benin Airport when the accident occurred.

Officials of the National Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) and Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria refused to comment on what happened.

Some lower rank officials attributed the cause to bad weather.

Fire service men were seen pouring water around the aircraft at about 2m apart to prevent a fire outbreak but what many said was a fuel leakage.

Bomb blast

From Front Page Col 6
with the first explosion on March 3, during the zonal campaign of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) killing 10, while the second occurred on the eve of the elections to the National Assembly at Suleja INEC office, killing eight people and several others injured including NYSC members.

Meanwhile, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) yesterday said there were series of bomb explosions in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

In FRCN's 4 o'clock news monitored in Kaduna said there was pandemonium in the town due to the explosions.

—Ajimobi

of all political office holders in Oyo State, including former Governor Adebayo Alao-Akala, his aides, current governor of the state, Senator Abiola Ajimobi and his aides, are yet to be paid because, after payment of the May minimum wage of 18,000 Naira, in conformity with agitation by workers in the state, there was nothing left to pay political office holders," he said.

Besides, Governor Ajimobi said that "former Governor Alao-Akala even has no moral right" to question the non-payment of his last month in office salary "when, in contravention of an injunction taken against him by a law court to the contrary."

The governor stated that Otunba Akala despite the court order "flagrantly paid himself and his aides a stupendous 300 per cent of his annual salary, which equals three-year salary, as severance package, leaving the treasury dry after."

Governor Ajimobi pointed out that the fact remains that the alleged "financial rascality and massive looting of Oyo State by the Alao-Akala government had

Communication, Dr Festus Adegade.

According to the governor, as at present, there was no way the present administration could pay any political office holders in the state both present and past considering the financial position of the state after paying the 18,000 Naira as minimum wage for its workers in May.

"The May and June salaries

of the NSC, Chief Patrick Ekeji, restated the commitment of the commission to continue to maintain international standards and bring sanity to the games.

He disclosed that the games had metamorphosed into a spectacular sporting event since its inception in 1973. The sports festival saw Rivers State coming tops with 135 gold, 295 silver and 85 bronze medals.

It also saw the breaking of the African record in the 53kg women's weightlifting category and the setting of a new national record by a 17-year-old, Miss Chinyere Fidelis.

Lagos State is set to host the next games in 2012, while Cross River State would host that of 2014.