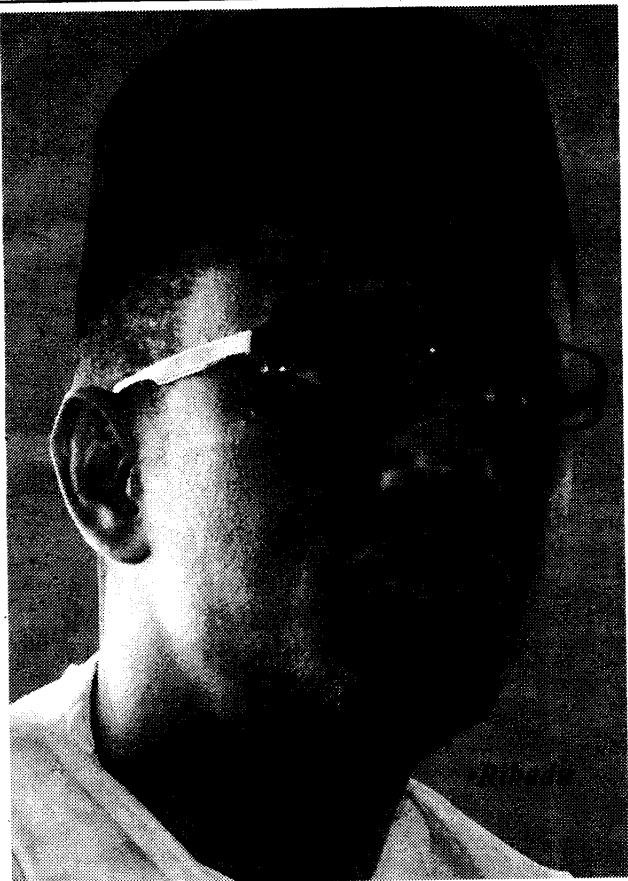


THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY, 2012



FG Approves 8 Agencies For Port Operations

The Federal Government has approved eight agencies to operate within the Nigerian ports to ease the clearance of goods.

A statement issued by Mr. Chuks Iloegbunam, the Communication Adviser to the Chairman of Committee on Ports Reforms, in Abuja on Wednesday stated that other agencies not listed could only operate on invitation.

It listed the approved agencies as Nigerian Ports Authority, Nigerian Maritime and Safety Agency, Nigerian Customs Service and Nigerian Police (Ports

Health Authority.

"All other bodies can now only enter the ports and operate in them on the basis of specific invitation as the need arises."

"The position will remain unchanged unless and until the president directs otherwise," it said.

The statement stressed that all pronouncements of the Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, and all actions of the committee were being issued with the approval of the president.

It said that the Ports Reforms Committee solicited the coop-

Stakeholders in the oil and gas industry say the appointment of Malam Nuhu Ribadu as the Chairman of the 21-man Petroleum Revenue Special Task Force will guarantee transparency in the sector.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that President Goodluck Jonathan on Tuesday announced the appointment of Ribadu, a former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), along with 20 other members of the task force.

The stakeholders, who spoke with NAN on Wednesday, in Lagos, noted that Ribadu's appointment was consistent with Jonathan's policies and promises.

They also lauded the Minister of Petroleum Resources, Mrs. Diezani Allison-Madueke, for setting up a task force designed to enhance probity and accountability in the operations of the petroleum industry.

Dr. Diran Fawibe, the Chief Executive Officer of International Energy Services, noted that the task force comprised the names of people who had excelled in their various professional callings.

"Nigerians, however, expect them to be objective and courageous in taking right decision that will enhance the socio-economic growth of the country," he said.

Fawibe urged other members of the task force to support Ribadu so that collectively, they would achieve the objectives for which the task force was set up.

Also speaking, Mr. Tokunbo Korodo, the Chairman of the National Union of Petroleum

and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), urged the task force to live up to the expectations of Nigerians.

"There are lots of irregularities in the system which need to be corrected and the team is expected to address all these," he said.

Korodo said that the task force was expected to right all the wrongs in the petroleum industry.

Mr. Olumide Ogunmade, the Chairman of the Western Zone of the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN), praised the Allison-Madueke for setting up the task force to address the corruption in the system.

Ogunmade said that the minister had demonstrated good intentions in her bid to ensure that the objectives of the current reforms in the NNPC were achieved.

Other members of the task force include Mr. Steve Oronsaye, Malam Abba Kyari,

Ms. Benedicta Molokwu, Mr. Supo Sasore (SAN), Mr. Tony Idigbe (SAN), and Mr. Anthony George-Ikoli, SAN.

Also on the task force are Mrs. Omolara Akanji, Mr. Olisa Agbakoba (SAN), Mr. Ituah

Ighodalo, Mr. Bon Otti, Prof. Olusegun Okunnu, Malam Samaila Zubairu, Ignatius Adegunle, Mr. Gerald Ilukwe, and representatives of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and the Ministry of Finance.

Soldier Arraigned Over Alleged Murder

A 24-year-old soldier, Azeez Olaleye, has been arraigned before a Yaba Magistrates' Court for allegedly stabbing a resident, Bukola Folawiyi, to death.

The accused is facing one-count charge of murder.

The prosecutor, Sergeant Victor Erada, told the court that the incident occurred on February 19, 2011 at Ketu.

Erada said the accused was asked by Chukwuemeka Onwuka to assist him in arresting fraudsters to whom he claimed he had lost N100,000.

According to the prosecutor, Onwuka took the accused to where the presumed fraudsters were and pointed to the de-

ceased as the "culprit."

In the process of trying to arrest the deceased, the accused brought out a jack-knife and stabbed him in the neck, leading to his bleeding to death.

He said that the alleged offence contravened Section 221 of the Criminal Code, Laws of Lagos State.

Magistrate S. K. Matepo, ordered that the plea of the accused should not be taken until the duplicate case file was sent from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP).

Matepo ordered that the accused be remanded in prison custody, pending advice from the DPP and deferred further hearing till March 6.

Army Bars Visitors From Barracks

BY FEMI ADI/KADUNA

The Army has tightened security at the 1 Mechanised Division, Kaduna following an attempt by suspected members of the Boko Haram to bomb the barracks on Tuesday. Visitors to the barracks were disallowed entry by soldiers posted to the entrance of the division.

PM..NEWS gathered that authorities at the barracks got wind of the planned bomb attack by the Boko Haram sect two days before the suicide attempt.

Though the Army Public Re-

lations Officer, Abubakar Edun, declined to speak on the issue, sources within the barracks hinted that the soldiers had been briefed on the planned attack before the suicide bomber arrived. He added that he was surprised that the bomber was allowed to move past the first gate.

"We were ordered to prepare and observe any suspicious movement around our formations. That was why we shot the suicide bomber when he tried to bomb the 1 Division headquarters," the source disclosed.

Tension still pervades the army barracks and other security

formations in Kaduna when PM..NEWS went round the Kalapazin, Dalet, Kotoko and NDA barracks. Soldiers disallowed our reporter and others from entering the barracks.

Investigations also revealed that security had been beefed up on all roads leading to the barracks, police stations and other security formations within the metropolis.

A combined team of armed soldiers and policemen mounted guard at major roads and carried out checks on both passengers and vehicles.