

## JTF arrests 17 kidnap suspects in Imo

**T**HE Joint Security Task Force, comprising the Police, Army and the State Security Services (SSS), in Imo State yesterday paraded 17 kidnap suspects. The Task Force freed 27 victims when it clamped down on the suspects. Those freed include Chief Anthony Elebolisa, Mr. Anthony Mgberekpe and the wife of a former House of Assembly member, Mrs. Nzekwe. Items recovered from the suspects include a rocket launcher, four AK 47 rifles, live bullets, a Toyota Camry numbered CH 92 FKJ and a 4 Runner Jeep marked Abuja HV 431 ABC.

### •Frees 27 hostages

From Emma Mgbaurike, Owerri

Brigade Commander of 34 Brigade Modebo Alkali said one of the suspects was killed and another injured while trying to escape.

He said three members of the gang escaped.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (ASP), Operations, Celestine Okoye said the task force is determined to ensure security in the state.

SSS Director Kalama Samuel called for a collaboration between security agencies and the media.

## Fed Govt awards N1.7b erosion control contract in Abia

From Ugochukwu Eke, Umuahia

**T**HE Federal Government has awarded contracts worth N1.7 billion to check erosion in Abia State. The erosion sites to be worked on are Ururuala in Isiala Ngwa; Ubakala in Umuahia South and Pepples Road in Aba.

Commissioner for Environment Solomon Ogunji told reporters in Umuahia, the state capital, that the state partnered the Federal Government to check erosion. He said the state would pay a counterpart fund of N30 million.

Ogunji said the World Bank would assist through the introduction of the National Erosion and Water-Shed programme.

He said: "Funds from the World Bank programme would be spent on other erosion sites, such as the five prominent erosion sites in the state and the 77 newly identified sites. Work is on-going at all these sites."

Ogunji thanked Governor Theodore Orji for the prompt payment of Abia's counterpart funds, adding that "it is the reason erosion is under control in the state."

On refuse disposal, he urged residents to make use of the refuse receptacles placed at various points across the state.

The commissioner said proper refuse disposal would lead to clean drains, which would prevent flooding and erosion.

## Accord pleads with Ladoja: don't return to PDP

From Bisi Oladele, Ibadan

**F**ORMER governor of Oyo State and leader of the Accord in the Southwest, Senator Rashidi Ladoja, continued yesterday to maintain his status as a beautiful bride to major parties.

The leadership of the AP in the Southwest visited the former governor and begged him not to return to the Peoples Democratic Party

(PDP). Ladoja, according to a source, hosted about 15 leaders of the AP in the Southwest.

Led by the National Vice-Chairman (South West), Chief Kayode Ojo, the party leaders stormed the Ondo Street, Bodija home of Ladoja to plead with him to stay back in the party he laboured hard to form and nurture.



•Anambra State Governor Peter Obi (middle) inaugurating the Nkisi Water Works Erosion Control Project in Onitsha. With him are Commissioner For Environment Michael Egbebi (right); the member representing Onitsha North 1 Constituency in the House of Assembly, Mr Chigbo Enwenzor (left); and others...on Wednesday.

## Stop this blackmail, Ogun tells bankers

**T**HE Ogun State Government yesterday took exception to a statement credited to the Chairman of the Ijebu chapter of the Bankers' Forum, Mr. Funmi Olusoga that banks in Ijebu will not open for customers in protest against robbery attacks on some of them.

In his statement, Mr. Olusoga was quoted to have used reckless and intemperate language to describe the state government.

But a statement by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Mr. Taiwo Adeoluwa, said the bankers' action could portray the state in bad light.

The statement reads: "We view the statement as a calculated attempt to portray our government as insensitive and unresponsive, particularly since we have always provided periodic information to the Bankers Forum on the sustained efforts to provide necessary equipment for security agencies in the state."

"The threat by the Bankers' Forum to deny customers access to banking services on account of security complaint is gradually turning to blackmail."

"For the avoidance of doubt, we need to put it on record that in the nine months that this administration

has spent in office, we have invested almost N3.7 billion to provide security for our people."

"Last December, we ordered 10 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) to complement the two we met on ground. Even at that, only one of the two was working. We quickly repaired the other. These were measures aimed at tackling the immediate security challenge."

"We equally purchased 125 patrol vans equipped with communication gadgets for the use of the anti-crime joint military-police task force that we established, 'Operation Mesa', the Quick Response Squad (QRS) and

the other security agencies. Some of the patrol vans had been deployed. The others will soon be allocated."

"We also got the police high command to approve the special deployment of 262 additional mobile policemen from MOPOL 20 based in Lagos to complement the activities of the 'Operation Mesa' and other security agencies."

"While the bankers believe that only the presence of APCs can give them necessary assurances to operate unimpeded, it should be noted that APCs are not like cars that can be purchased off the shelf."

## Aregbesola approves workers' promotion

From Adesoji Adeniyi, Osogbo

**O**SUN State Governor Mr. Rauf Aregbesola has approved the 2011 promotion for all eligible officers in the state civil service.

The approval came in the wake of the conclusion of arrangements by the Civil Service Commission for the conduct of the promotion examinations and interviews.

According to a statement signed by the Permanent

Secretary in the Civil Service Commission, Mrs. Moji Oladipo, the written examination for eligible senior civil servants for the promotion and the candidates who scored below 50 per cent in the 2009 promotion examination has been scheduled to hold on April 14.

According to the statement, the examination will

hold at Ataoja School of Science, Osogbo for senior officers, Osogbo Grammar School for middle-cadre officers while confidential secretaries and secretarial assistants will write their examination at the Unity School, Osogbo.

The use of English, general papers, public service rules, financial regulations and specific job-related questions are parts of the courses

included in the examination.

The statement further said that all agencies of government should conduct promotion examination for junior officers on Grade levels 01 - 06 with the total marks which must be 40 while the results of the examinations should be submitted in triplicate to the state Civil Service Commission not later than April 20.

## Suspected cultists attack protesting Labour leaders over strike

**T**HE gulf between the management of the Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Ago - Iwoye and the three unions in the institution deepened yesterday with the unions declaring Vice Chancellor Prof. Wale Olaitan, a "Persona non Grata" on the campus.

They alleged the vice chan-

From Ernest Nwoko, Abeokuta

cellor sent proxies to violently disrupt their peaceful protest.

The three unions - Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Non - Academic (NASU) and Na-

tional Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT), accused Prof Olaitan of unleashing people suspected to be cultists on a peaceful rally.

The suspected cultists allegedly beat up the protesters including the NASU Chairman, Mr. Rahman

Adewole.

The unions were protesting the non-payment of the arrears of their salaries for three months since 2010 as well as the alleged "selective staff recruitment and promotion" by the management without recourse to due process.

## 13 soldiers survive as truck driver dies in Ogun road accident

From Ernest Nwoko, Abeokuta

**N**O fewer than 13 soldiers survived a road crash in Ogun State when their bus collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction on the Dega stretch of the Abeokuta - Kobape - Sagamu dual carriage road.

While the military officers sustained serious injuries, the driver of the truck marked Ogun XB 170 ABG, died on the spot.

An eyewitness told *The Nation* the accident occurred when a white Toyota Hiace bus, marked Lagos CG 415FKJ, conveying the soldiers veered off its lane after one of its tyres burst.

The truck driver, simply identified as 'Nasco', was said to be returning from Abeokuta on his way to Ibiade in Ogun Waterside Local Government Area of the state.

The officers, who were said to be returning to Abeokuta

from Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, were rushed to the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Idi-Aba, Abeokuta for attention.

Officials of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Corps (TRACE), the Police and sympathisers, battled for hours to evacuate the body of the truck driver from behind the wheels where he was trapped.

A man, who identified himself as the motor assistant to the deceased, said they were transporting medical supplies from Abeokuta when the bus suddenly crashed into their truck.

The FMC Public Relations Officer, Mr. Segun Orisajo, who confirmed the accident, said: "Some soldiers were brought in this afternoon and they are being given treatment."

### THE NATION BUSINESS GUIDE

#### MORNING WALKER WITH REMOTE CONTROL

Attain a new energy level with **MORNING WALKER**

With sedentary work life lack of time and busy schedule, Morning Walker helps you stay in shape and keep fit.

Get relief from various life style ailments like Blood Pressure, Diabetes excess weight, Joint Pain, Insomnia etc. Walk 10,000 steps in 15mins lying down burning 300 Calories

**Centbekah Industries Limited**

**CONTACT**

**LAGOS: 12/14 Broad Street, Opposite General Hospital, Lagos Island.**

08184800786, 08187432805, 08108309702, 08157033361, 08122301434

**Email: salesnigeria@morningwalker.com**

**DELIVERY IN 24 HRS NATIONWIDE**