



• Managing Director/CEO, Skye Bank Plc., Mr. Akinola Akinfemiwa (left), and the bank's Chairman, Alhaji Musiliu Smith, at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State...yesterday

ICPC Probes Ondo Accounts

Still grappling with the stoppage of over N8billion contracts it awarded, by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), has placed the financial activities of Ondo State government since 2003 under another round of scrutiny.

But unlike the EFCC, ICPC went further in its probe by extending its searchlight to local government councils by requesting for details of all capital projects embarked upon by all the 18 local government councils in the state from 2003 to date.

ICPC, in its letter with Reference Number: ICPC/INV/MIN/T.Y/18 addressed to Commissioner for Finance and referred to the Accountant General of the State, Mrs Folake Ogunnikan and titled: Investigation activities: Request for Information/Documents, said it

was investigating a case of an alleged violation of provisions of the ICPC Acts No 5 of 2000, against some civil/public servants in Ondo State.

Signed by its Head of Department (HOD) Investigation, Mr Sotonye L. Wakama, a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), the anti-corruption agency ordered the state government to provide

details of all capital projects in all the 18 local governments from 2003 to date.

The Commission also directed the Accountant General to furnish it with a list of all Millennium Development Goals Projects embarked upon by the state government within the same period.

It also sought to know who gave the state government the

authority to deposit the state government finances/funds in interest yielding accounts as well as the exact amounts deposited in all such interest yielding accounts from May 2003 to date, as well as the actual amount of interest accruing there from.

The ICPC's summons was received in the office of the Finance Commissioner on January 15, 2009.

Corruption, Insecurity: House Summons Okiro, Aondoakaa, Farida

The House of Representatives yesterday summoned the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation, Mr. Michael Andoakaa as well as the Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mrs Farida Waziri, over the state of corruption and insecurity in the country.

The trio are expected to appear before the House Committee on

From Onwuka Nzeshe
in Abuja

Justice where they would answer questions on the increasing spate of general insecurity and the skepticism currently surrounding the execution of the anti-corruption war in the country.

Others expected to appear before the committee include the Director General of the State Security Service (SSS), Mr. Afakriya Gadzama, the

Chairman, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Justice Emmanuel Ayoola as well as Secretary, Code of Conduct Bureau, Alhaji Musa Buba.

In a letter of invitation to the Attorney General of the Federation and copied to heads of other security agencies the House of Representatives Committee on Justice said the security situation in the country and the rising wave of financial and other crimes had made the summons imperative.

The letter read in part: "In view of the worrisome security, law and order situation in Nigeria and public skepticism concerning the implementation of the anti-corruption and rule of law policies which are cardinal aspects of the seven-point agenda of the present administration of the federal government, the committee on justice invites you as the chief law officer to an interactive session on the activities of your office and the relevant law enforcement agencies."

happy soldiers from engaging in such dastardly acts.

The presidential task force which was set up by the Federal Government to fashion ways on checking illegalities along Nigerian waters, was told of the rising cases and the involvement of soldiers in the killings of innocent citizens between March and November last year.

From Segun James
in Yenagoa

Egele called on the Federal Government to prevail on the commanding officers of the Joint Military Task to release report of investigations done on the alleged killing and ensure the immediate prosecution of those involved to deter other trigger

FCT Report: Mark Promises Thorough Debate

Senate President, Senator David Mark, said yesterday that the Senate would thoroughly debate and consider the recommendations in the report of the Senate Joint Committee that investigated the activities of past administrations in the Federal Capital Territory.

The committee, headed by Senator Abubakar Sodangi, had

From Sufuyan Ojeifo
in Abuja

recommended in the 75-page report, the indictment of former Minister, Malam Nasir el-Rufai.

He gave the assurance at the end of plenary, saying that the Upper House would consider the report of the committee cover to

cover.

Mark said every Senator who was interested in contributing to the debate on the report would have the opportunity.

However, at the resumed debate on the report yesterday, Senator Jibril Aminu expressed concern that despite all the claims by the el-Rufai administration to the restoration of the Abuja master plan, no physical expansion, apart from demolition, took place in the capital city.

He argued that the recertification embarked upon by the administration was an ego trip to make him the only Minister of the FCT with his signatures on the Certificate of Occupancy (C of O).

Aminu said: "El-Rufai wielded so much powers that he has to abuse them. The recertification exercise, which he embarked upon that has created so much confusion should not be allowed to stand because all he wanted was to ensure that only his signature is on the C-of-O of land in Abuja."

N'Delta: Soldiers Killed 90 Persons - Maritime Workers

The Bayelsa State branch of the Maritime Workers Union (Mwu) yesterday alleged that rampaging soldiers of the Joint (Military) Task Force (JTF) on the Niger Delta killed over 90 persons and destroyed over 300 boats along the creeks and rivers of Bayelsa State in 2008.

The allegation rattled members of the Presidential Task Force on Inter-agency Maritime Security even as they called for the payment of compensation to affected families.

The presidential task force led by Real Admiral, Dele Ezeoba, at a Public Hearing in Yenagoa was told by the Chairman of the state chapter of the Maritime Workers' Union, Comrade Sylvanus Egele, that many of the Union members were killed by soldiers at the height of militancy in the state last year.

Kalu: I Didn't Attack Yar'Adua

Former Abia State Governor, Orji Uzor Kalu, yesterday denied reports quoting him as describing President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua "sick and incompetent."

Kalu described the report as the work of mischief makers and political lepers.

In a release signed by Media Assistant to Kalu, Emeka Obasi, in reaction to a publication in a Lagos based national daily, Kalu said as one who stood by the President during his days of med-

ication abroad, he would be the last to use health as a political weapon, not even at the traditional Igbotomma festival in Igbere.

Kalu, who is Peoples Progressive Alliance (PPA) Board of Trustees Chairman, reiterated his resolve to contest the Presidency at the appropriate time.

"As a free citizen of Nigeria, I have the right to aspire to any position. But I will not tie my ambition to the President's health. Those who want to kill political opposition by all means are only

asking for an alternative, which is the military, and that will be dangerous," he said. Kalu also explained that he was in Enugu to visit his in-law, an oil magnate, and did not discuss the election tribunal.

"Yes, I visited my in-law in Enugu. What is wrong with that? He is not a politician. Those who go to the oil magnate to collect money don't know where we are coming from. I have no business with the tribunal. The judges in their conscience know that I have stayed clear of the cases," he said.

BRIEFLY

Petrodel Concludes Seismic Survey

Petrodel Resources Limited, a Niger Delta concern, has concluded a 2D seismic survey in its Tanga licence offshore Tanzania. The survey was carried out by the Munin Explorer and was completed within 15 days. During this time, the vessel mapped 1,200kilometres in waters between Tanzania, Pemba Island and Kenya. The company will now process and interpret its results, after which it proposes to farm-down from its current 100 per cent position. In 2009, Petrodel Resources expects to carry out a further 3D seismic survey offshore Latham, and to drill one exploration well onshore Kimbiji. Both licences are also in Tanzania, East Africa. Petrodel is a privately-held exploration and production company. The company's main assets are in Tanzania, where it holds interests in three licences.

PDP: Court Stays Execution of Earlier Judgment

Justice Sunday Imo of an Abia State High Court sitting in Umuahia yesterday ordered a stay of execution of the judgment he had earlier granted in favour of the former chairman of the state chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Alfredo Awah. Justice Imo also ordered that status quo ante be maintained, adding that the Ndidi Okereke-led state executive be allowed uninterrupted access to the party secretariat. "In the interest of justice, and to ensure peace in the party camp, the execution of the judgment entered in this suit on the basis of terms of settlement is stayed pending the disposal of the applications. Suit is adjourned to February 5, 2009 for adoption of written addresses of counsel," Justice Imo said.

Adeboye to Dedicate RCCG Provincial Headquarters

The General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Pastor E.A. Adeboye, will on Saturday, January 24, 2009 dedicate the Provincial Headquarters of RCCG Lagos Province 22. Pastor Adeboye will also dedicate other facilities such as the new administrative office complex and the children church complex, all within the same premises at 2/8 Pasoku Street, Ikorodu, Lagos. Briefing the press in Ikorodu, on the dedication, the Provincial Pastor, Charles Obasa said dedication is another milestone in the history of the province. "God in His faithfulness, has made the completion of all these projects at the provincial headquarters possible. And the province has grown to well over 240 parishes spreading around Ikorodu, Agbowo, Ketu, Epe and its environs.

Holidays and Cash

President and Chief Executive Officer, HolidaysandCash, Mr. Michael Faust, will be visiting Nigeria on Friday January 23, 2009. He will be visiting Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt for meetings and training with members and intending members of HolidaysandCash in Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt from January 24, 2009. Holiday and cash is available in every country of the world and has proved its international appeal with expansion into more than 30 countries within 30 days of inception. The programme has a privilege pack cost of \$240 for a year of incredible benefits with no monthly fees. The pack gives purchasers to an on-line portal that searches for travel deals of over 900,000 around the globe. This incentive is for all members at the lowest prices for hotels, flight booking and resort around the world.

NITEL: BPE, Not Responsible for Workers' Plight - Akunyili

Minister for Information and Communication, Professor Dora Akunyili, yesterday in Abuja absolved the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE) from the plight of former staff of Nigerian Telecommunication Ltd (NITEL). She stated this while receiving the top management delegation of the BPE, led by its Director-General, Dr. (Mrs.) Irene Chigbue in her office. She said BPE was not responsible for the non-payment of their five years severance package that was promised as retirement benefits by the management of the disengaged staff in 2006, contrary to public opinion. According to her, the former staff of NITEL who picketed the BPE offices last week are partly to be blamed for their plight. "NITEL structures are more solid than those of private telecom operators. To the NITEL staff that picketed BPE, government is working hard to pay you.

Pa Onyejebu Passes On

The first indigenous principal of Kings College, Lagos, a distinguished educationist, Mr. Robert Chukwuemeka Onyejebu is dead. Born on September 2, 1924, Onyejebu was buried on January 16, 2009 in his family homestead at Nnewi-ichi, Nnewi. Onyejebu was educated at the prestigious Government College, Umuahia and the Higher College, Yaba. While at the Higher College, Yaba, he sat and passed the intermediate Bachelor of Science Examination of University of London as an external student. It was such a great feat in those days that it earned front page headline in Zik's West African Pilot. In January, 1947, he was appointed Master Grade III and posted to King's College, Lagos where he taught till 1949 when he won another government scholarship to the then University College, Ibadan.

...Etisalat's Head of Corporate Communication Too

Etisalat Nigeria has announced the death of its pioneer Head of Corporate Communications, Nwugo Nwoke. She died on January 8, 2009, in Lagos, after a brief illness. Born in 1967, Nwoke was educated at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (1989) and the University of Lagos, bagging a B.A in English Language and Literature and an M.A in International Law and Diplomacy (1996) respectively. She also attended several local and international courses in the development of her professional career. In February 2008, she became Senior Manager, Corporate Communications, Etisalat Nigeria, bringing with her almost 20 years of dynamic experience gathered in top notch multinationalals like MTN Nigeria, British Council and Shell Petroleum Development Company, Nigeria.