

News

BRIEFLY

Nigerian Content Fund

The Nigerian Content Development Fund is to attract one per cent of every contract awarded in the Nigerian oil and gas industry in accordance with the Nigerian Content Act recently signed into law. The Acting Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Monitoring Board, Engr. Ernest Nwapa who disclosed this in Onne, Rivers State on Thursday evening after inspecting the pipe threading yard of Botro Marine & Oil Services, explained that the fund would be deployed specifically for developing the capacity of Nigerian service providers in the oil and gas sectors. He explained that the Fund which will be managed by the board of NCMB and is different from the \$350 million Local Content Fund put together by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in 2007 to serve as a working capital for Nigerian companies that got service contracts in the oil and gas industry. "In this case, you need to demonstrate the ability of an investment and the board will begin to talk to you. You are going to show a business plan and prove that the investment will be able to repay the loan."

Air Nigeria

The new owners of Virgin Nigeria Airline, NICON Group, have renamed the airline, Air Nigeria. With the renaming of the airline, the new owners have dumped the Virgin Nigeria brand, owned by British businessman, Richard Branson. The airlines new name and logo was unveiled in Lagos, by the chairman of NICON group, Jimoh Ibrahim. Ibrahim said the change in name became necessary to make the controversial carrier indigenous. He also said the first branded aircraft for the airline in the new name will arrive in Nigeria next week from France. He said the remaining aircraft in the new name would follow suit while the focus of the turnaround of the troubled airline would address financial distress before focusing on human resources engineering. The new livery on the aircraft with the name Air Nigeria was displayed to pressmen in a slide by the airlines managing director, Mr. Kinfe Kahssaye.

Senator Atiku Bagudu

The Kebbi State election petition tribunal sitting in Birnin Kebbi has dismissed the petition against Senator Atiku Bagudu of the People Democratic Party representing Kebbi Central Senatorial district in the National Assembly. The chairperson of the tribunal, Justice Elizabeth Kpojime along with Justice Godwin Abraham and Justice Bassey Tambu Ebuta, dismissed the petition against senator Bagudu for want of evidence. The Democratic People Party candidate, Barrister Aliyu Sambo had challenged the December 19, 2009 bye-election that produced Bagudu as the winner of the election on grounds that Bagudu was not qualified as at the time he was elected and that he did not score the highest vote in the election as claimed by the Independent Electoral Commission. Bagudu polled 285,855 votes in the election while Sambo score 8,577 votes.

Robbers Kill 2 Cops in Edo

Armed robbers yesterday killed two policemen in Igarra, headquarters of Akoko-Edo Local Government area of Edo State. The two policemen attached to the Igarra police station were on check point along Igarra-Auchi road near Igbira camp before they met their untimely death in the hands of the armed robbers. The third out of the four on roadblock was reportedly taken away by the robbers who were said to have also taken away the policemen's arms and ammunition. THISDAY gathered that the robbers were going towards Igarra in Akoko-Edo Local Government council in two vehicles where the deputy governor, Pius Odubu was expected to commission some projects yesterday. The incident caused panic among road users who had to turn back and waited for several hours until the police cleared the road for road. It was gathered that there was no resistance from the policemen when the robbers, numbering about eight opened fire on them.

Environment-Friendly Fuel

The management of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation said it has embarked on the development more environmentally-friendly fuels as part of efforts aimed at reducing carbon emissions to the environment. The Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Engr. Austeen Oniwon who spoke at the ceremony organised by the corporation to mark the United Nation's World Environment Day celebrations in Abuja said plans are underway to acquire the necessary technology infrastructure needed to produce a cleaner fuel at the Apapa Jetty and Mosimi product reception facilities in Lagos. "NNPC is trying to get the infrastructure in place that would enable the blending of ethanol to get the right mix that would produce greener fuel," he said. The Group Executive Director of Engineering and Technical Services, Mr. Billy Agha said in furtherance of the corporation's global warming control measures, it has embarked on several gas utilisation projects with joint venture partners to achieve gas flare-down in all its operations.