

Buhari picks Bakare as running mate

BY ABDULWAHAB ABDULAH

LAGOS — PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the Congress for Progressive Change, CPC, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, yesterday announced Pastor Tunde Bakare of the Latter Rain Assembly, Lagos as his running mate for the 2011 presidential election.

Speaking through his spokesman, Mr Yinka Odumakin, Buhari explained that his choice of Bakare was borne out of the fact that there was need to put the best feet forward in what promises to be a decisive political challenge for the soul of Nigeria.

He made public the name of his running mate to beat the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, deadline for nomination of candidates that expired yesterday.

Expressing his enthusiasm that Nigerians will pick the best out of those contesting for political offices during this year's general elections, Buhari said: "We have seen the uncommon enthusiasm of our people to register to vote in spite of the many challenges of the exercise. That speaks to their desire to do what Tunisians and Egyptians are doing on the streets through the ballot box in April."

He said he believed that Nigerians deserve the best, hence one of the reasons he picked Pastor Bakare as his running mate.

INEC registration officials sleep in church

BY EMMA AMAIZE

WARRI— SOME of the registration officers recruited by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, are sleeping in churches because no accommodation was provided for them and also being starved of food.

Also at some registration units, politicians have induced the registration officials to register under-aged persons.

Investigations by Vanguard showed that two registration officials manning a registration unit at Olie Primary School, Akwukwu-Igbo in Oshimili North Local Government Area of Delta State were not provided with accommodation and so, they sleep in a church in the community.

Vanguard learnt that they were practically being starved of food as the officer who was supposed to feed them was allegedly withholding their money and other allowances.

A source said, "this is pitiable, those who brought these people here to register voters just abandoned

Mobile Policeman kills pregnant woman

BY HENRY UMORU

●As angry mob sets bank ablaze

ABUJA — MPAPE, a suburb in the nation's capital city, Abuja was yesterday thrown into confusion following the shooting to death of a pregnant woman in front of a branch of a new generation bank in the area by a mobile policeman.

The policeman, who shot at the victims, was said to be attached to the bank, just as the man carried out his action when the taxi driver refused the order that he must not make a U-turn in front of the bank.

According to an eye witness, a taxi had made a U-turn in front of the bank where a police officer was controlling traffic at about 7.30 a.m, given the high traffic flow at the time and was stopped by the officer.

The policeman was said to have confronted the driver and argument ensued, leading to the officer firing at the vehicle with the bullet hitting a pregnant woman on the passenger seat while another woman was wounded in the mouth.

A motor mechanic within

the vicinity who spoke on condition of anonymity, said irate passers-by on seeing the lifeless body of the woman had to confront the policeman who ran away and took refuge in the bank premises.

This, he said, made the angry mob to force their way into the bank, throwing stones and other objects, even as vehicles and other property within the bank were destroyed and the bank set ablaze as workers had to run for their dear lives.

Relative calm, he said,

however, returned when a team of policemen from the Mpape Police Division and the FCT Police Command arrived the scene.

Speaking on the incident, the Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, SP Jimoh Moshood, who claimed that the taxi was trying to force its way into the bank's restricted area at about 7:30 a.m, said he was first stopped by the private security guard at the bank, adding that one of the mobile policemen attached to the bank had to intervene

by hitting his rifle on the car in the bid to make the driver leave.

He said further that the Policeman triggered the gun and the bullet hit a female passenger on the front seat of the car who died on the way to the hospital leading to hoodlums and miscreants within the area to loot and set the bank on fire before a police patrol team arrived the scene.

Mob burns vehicles

According to him, eight vehicles and a dispatch motor cycle belonging to the bank were burnt by the mob while another vehicle was vandalized, even as property belonging to the bank including air conditioners were removed in the process.

He explained that patrol teams from the Mpape Police Division and B Department (Operations) of the command were mobilised to the scene to avoid further loss of lives and property, pointing out that the team ensured the bank's vault was protected.

According to him, the damage would have been less if the angry mob had not denied the fire service team access to the bank, even as he said details of the damages suffered by the bank would be determined in the course of investigation which was being headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Criminal Investigation Department.



From right: Princess Sarah Adebisi Sosan, Deputy Governor; Governor Babatunde Fashola of Lagos State; Mr Abdul Hakeem Abdul Lateef, Special Adviser, Political and Legislative Powers Bureau and Mr. Ben Akabueze, Commissioner of Budget and Planning during the signing of 2011 Appropriation Bill into law at the State House, Alausa, Ikeja, yesterday. Photo by Bunmi Azeez.

Royal father murdered in A-Ibom

BY TONY NYONG

UYO — A ROYAL father and the Paramount ruler of Nsit Ubium Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Edidem Robert Obot, has been assassinated in his palace at Ikot Ekpene-Udo.

The late first class monarch and former Accountant was killed at about 3.00 p.m. on Sunday by unknown gunmen who stormed his palace.

According to reports, late

Edidem Obot was said to have received a call from one of his interns in the palace that some visitors were waiting for him and that he should return home.

A palace staff, who did not want to be named, said it was the call that made him to rush back to his palace and as he entered the palace he was faced with his killers who pumped bullets into his body.

The late paramount ruler, Vanguard gathered, did not

die immediately as he was rushed to a private hospital in Eket, and later moved out to the University Teaching Hospital, Uyo when his condition became worse, where he gave up the ghost.

When Vanguard arrived the palace, the gate was locked even as sympathisers gathered around the place waiting.

The state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Zanni Mogaji, who have since visited the area told our correspondent that investigation on the

matter had commenced and assured that the killers of the paramount ruler would be found.

The state government, in its reaction, condemned the assassination of the paramount ruler.

Speaking with newsmen in Uyo, the state Commissioner for Information and Social Re-orientation, Mr. Aniekan Umanah, said the late traditional ruler was a man of peace whose death came as a rude shock to the state government.

Jonathan orders evacuation of Nigerians from Egypt

BY DANIEL IDONOR

ANKARA, TURKEY — AAS Americans and Turkish nationals are being evacuated from the troubled Egypt, President Goodluck Jonathan has directed the immediate evacuation of Nigerians from the North Africa nation.

To this end, the President has ordered the National Security Adviser, Gen. Andrew Azazi (rtd) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Odein Ajumogobia to immediately evacuate trapped Nigerians at the Egyptian airport in Cairo.

In a telephone interview

from his base in Addis Ababa, Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Mr Ima Niboro, told Vanguard yesterday that President Jonathan gave the directive Sunday night when he got the news while attending the 16th Ordinary African Union Summit with the theme, "Towards Greater Unity and Integration through shared Value."

Some 200 Nigerian travellers, amongst them students, businessmen, government officials, and others on medical visits are said to be stranded at Cairo's International Airport due to the turmoil

in that country.

They are said to have been at the airport for days with no access to call home as Egyptian authorities had blocked mobile

services as well as access to internet, living in very harsh conditions.

Egypt Air said to have been cancelling flights to African cities (Lagos,

Kano, Accra, Nairobi, Entebbe and others) even though it was still operating many flights to European and Arabian cities smoothly.

AMCON delays \$9.8bn bond sale

ABUJA — ASSET Management Corp. of Nigeria, AMCON, the state-owned company set up to buy non-performing debts from banks, delayed issuing N1.5 trillion (\$9.8 billion) of bonds yesterday as it hadn't obtained all regulatory approvals in

time, Executive Director for Finance, Foluke Dosumu, said.

According to her, "the reason is that we are still doing the registration with the various regulatory bodies," adding that the bonds will be issued before the end of the first quarter.

She said part of the debt would replace N1.04 billion of so-called consideration bonds that were sold on December 31 and the consideration bonds wouldn't be tradable until they were replaced with properly registered bonds.