

# House Wades Into Procurement Controversy

P. 2&3



## Sanwo-Olu Relishes Partnership With US on Economic Growth

P.11

Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis: Lagos To Deworm 1.4m Pupils

P.12

Hamzat commends Ansar-Ud-Deen for commissioning ultra-modern hospital

P.23

Google Academy Awards N75m to 15 Nigerians

P.25

Obasa To Support 500 Students with Cash Gifts

P.9

Attack On Firefighter: Court Grants Suspect N200, 000 Bail

P.13

LASUTH CMD Wins Transformational Leadership Award

P.10

# House Wades Into Procurement Controversy

The Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Hon. Mudashiru Obasa said at a plenary held on Tuesday that though the executive arm of the government has refuted the report picked from the website of the state's Public Procurement Agency, the house committee would do the necessary investigation to affirm the authenticity of the report and establish all facts. This follows the decision of the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency to pull down the controversial reports of the government expenditure on its website, following a criticism by the Lagos governorship candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) in the 2023 general election, Funsho Doherty.

The Director General of the agency, Fatai Onafowote had said that PPA would not shy away from performing its statutory responsibility, adding that the law that set up PPA in 2012 made it mandatory to always make public the expenditure of the government.

He said that the agency is statute-barred to operate as mandated by the Lagos State Public Procurement Law for transparency, accuracy and accountability in all government transactions. Meanwhile the Human and Environmental Development Agenda, HEDA Resource Centre has called for the sanction of any official of the PPA that posted the controversial information, adding that Lagosians would need the corrections to be reposted at the website without delay.

The Executive Secretary of

HEDA, Mr. Sulaimon Arigbabu, who spoke with Echonews said that it would not be enough for the governor or the PPA boss to just tell members of the public that the post contained some errors but that the authentic reports must be made public as well.

Recall that Doherty had alleged the governor of non-judicious use of public fund in a document he picked on the PPA website.

The document, which had now been pulled down for correction, showed that the Lagos State governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, approved N7.5 million to replace liquid fragrance in his office and N3 billion to purchase rechargeable fans for the office of his deputy, Obafemi Hamzat. It also said that other contracts awarded by the

state's Public Procurement Agency (PPA) in the second and third quarters of 2023 include approval of over N440 million for the purchase of a new Lexus LX 600 Bulletproof Sport Utility Vehicle for use in the pool of Office of Chief of Staff.

Onafowote noted that the



Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu

information that Doherty picked online had been misinterpreted due to misunderstandings arising from a lack of clarity, which had triggered unintended misinterpretations.

He said, "We regret that specific details, particularly concerning the descriptions of

government dealings, may have inadvertently led to confusion, impacting both governmental entities and corporate partners providing services to the state. This arose largely from the lack of detailed descriptions in the project information, which has inadvertently led to

confusion in the public space. We empathize with public concerns and sincerely apologize for any distress caused. We never intend to cast doubt or cause misunderstandings that might tarnish the reputation of respected individuals and organisations involved in these transactions."

However in a separate interview with Doherty, the politician insisted that the state Public Procurement Agency must always publish the expenditure of the government despite the attack.

He that his criticism of the government should not stop the PPA from doing the right and legal duty of making the document public for people to read and criticized.

Despite the explanation of the PPA that its publication was misinterpreted, the ADC governorship candidate, said that the state governor has more explanation to offer Lagosians.

He told Echonews that PPA published information on the website is a normal thing under the law and that the agency should not see it a favour to the members of the public.



Obasa



Onafowote

## House Wades Into Procurement Controversy

As he put it "Public procurement agency law requires that any government contract be published. In essence, the government through any of such publications on the web is complying with its own law. So should we commend the government for being law-abiding? What does that show about our expectations of the government? Government ordinarily should be law-abiding. I think part of the issue is that we have come to have very low expectations from the government, so things that are right, we are seeing them as privileges and in that sense we are ourselves contributing to the

problems."

Earlier in his reaction, Governor Sanwo-Olu said his administration would continue to value objective criticism, but added that some critics hid their "malicious intentions" under the guise of playing political opposition to misrepresent the truth.

The Governor pointed out discrepancies in the figures quoted on the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA) website, which, he said, misled the public and generated controversy.

He said, "Officers in Lagos State have come out to show that there could be mistakes on some lines of items. There was a

particular issue where an item was meant to be N2 million, but was written as N2 billion. There are many discrepancies which have been corrected by PPA. We are not going to join issues with anyone on social media. All we are committed to is continuous service to the people of Lagos."

Sanwo-Olu said Lagos had maintained open books for check and balances, pointing out that the State had judiciously appropriated funds to projects and services that benefited the residents.

"I lead a team of dedicated public officers, civil servants and a self-motivated team of officials

that will always stand tall with anyone across the world. The building we are opening today is a testament to our commitment to responsible public service. This is a building that has been built on time within the budget and judicious expenditure. This is what we stand for in Lagos," the Governor said.

(Funsho Doherty)

However, the Lagos State House of Assembly has waded into the PPA controversial publication as it had called on the committee in charge of procurement to invite stakeholders to do a thorough scrutiny so as to see facts concerning the publications.



Funsho Doherty



HEDA Executive Secretary, Arigbabu

### APAPA NEWS

## BAPSECO Seeks Apapa Iganmu LCDA's Cooperation To Fight Insecurity

The leadership of Badia Peace and Security Organization (BAPSECO) in Apapa Iganmu Local Council Development Area (LCDA) has deliberated with the council chairman, Mrs. Funmilayo Muhammed on peace and security matters of the community. During the discussion, the leadership of BAPSECO shared their proposals on how they can collaborate more effectively in the realm of security.

The Secretary of the organization, Comrade Dube provided a comprehensive overview of BAPSECO's objectives and aims, which were duly noted and appreciated by the Council Boss. The set to be patron of the organization, Mr. Ajadi Olo m o w e w e acknowledged the remarkable efforts and achievements of the Chairman.

He implored the Chairman to endorse the security group, stressing the need for her full support to enable BAPSECO to extend its reach to other areas within the Badia community. According to reports the

deliberation was a productive and inspiring interaction.

The Chairman assured them that all the suggestions made have been taken into account for future cooperation.

She expressed her tireless efforts made towards ensuring that peace and harmony prevail in the community. She assured the group of her continued dedication to maintaining peace and security in the LCDA.

She noted Collaborative effort between the community and the law enforcement agencies as one vital aspect of achieving the goal on peace and security.

She also emphasized the importance of providing timely and accurate information to the police to aid them in their duties.

To facilitate efficient communication and collaboration, the Chairman exchanged contact information with few key members of the leadership team.

To allow the Chairman work closely with the team, to enhance security and foster a safer environment for all residents of Apapa Iganmu LCDA.

The Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly,



Security Group in Apapa Iganmu LCDA with the chairman, Mrs Muhammed



Hon. Mudashiru Obasa said at a plenary held on Tuesday said that though

the executive arm of the government had made frantic effort to rebuff the

story but then the house committee would do the necessary investigation

to affirm the authenticity of the report and establish all facts.

## Apapa Iganmu Youths Promise Support To LCDA Boss

The newly elected Apapa Iganmu Local Council Development Area (LCDA) Youth Coordinator, Comrade Ridwan and his deputy promised to adhere to the wise counsel of the Council chairman, Mrs. Funmilayo Muhammed as they paid her a courtesy visit at the council Secretariat.

They appreciated the Chairman's Commitment towards ushering in a new youth leadership. She assured a steadfast

support for the forum's endeavors and as well counselled the Coordinator to work harmoniously with fellow executives for a seamless tenure.

She counseled Comrade Ridwan, the Coordinator, to work harmoniously with fellow executives for a seamless tenure, conveying her sincere wishes for his success.

She Applauded the electoral committee's impartial conduct and underscored the importance of fairness in



Apapa Iganmu LCDA Newly elected youth Coordinator, deputy with the chairman, Mrs. Muhammed

their bye-election. Responding, Ridwan expressed sincere gratitude for the council boss's maternal guidance and affirmed his

dedication to implement her wise counsel. He emphasized the ethos of "Build the youth, build the nation, and respect the elders."



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# Lgs' CPS Seek Statutory Recognition

*The 57 Chief Press Secretaries to the Chairmen of Local Government and Local Council Development Areas in Lagos had their conference recently where they discussed the best way to disseminate information to the members of public. The Deputy Chairman of the forum shared his thoughts on the training and challenges of the office with our reporter, Kehinde Adeleye. Excerpts*

## Can we meet you and what's the essence of the CPS conference?

My name is Solomon Zosu from Badagry West Local Council Development Area. I'm also the deputy state chairman of Conference 57, Chief Secretaries. The essence of this conference is for us to reunite ourselves, connect, and above all come together for a special training session and this programme happens annually across the 57 local governments. We choose a specified local government where we come together to network, to connect and, of course, to be trained on our duty as the Chief Press Secretaries to our respective Chairmen.

## We observe there is no mutual relationship between the CPS and Information officers in most of the local government areas, what are you doing to address this?

It's just an insinuation, it's not true and it should not be regarded as an affirmative statement. In my local government for example we have a cordial relationship between my information officer and

myself as a CPS. The truth of the matter is the role of the Chief press secretary is different from the role of the information officer, even though they are related. In cases where the CPS works with the Boss during the weekends, the information officers are civil servants and are off for the weekends to cover activities of the chairman and that is why the CPS is directly working with the Chairman while the information officers are carrying the information of the different departments in the council. You will agree with me from my explanations that there will be an interrelationship between our job descriptions, but at the same time, there are distinct lines for individuals. Even though if relationship between the CPS and information officers are strained in some local government, I believe it is an issue of misunderstanding and I believe that the Chairman can intervene and settle it amicably.

## Some chairmen don't cherish the media, why is this so and what are you doing about this?

It might be because of their background.



Solomon Zosu

Some don't cherish media as such, you know, but the Chief Press Secretary has to help the chairman see the reason why he should buy into media. Because without media his activities cannot be projected. So even when some see the position of CPS as compensation to people who have failed in their political aspiration or compensation to some of their supporters, you can go for training if

given the opportunity so that you can improve in your work and project your principal in a good limelight and that's why we are also here educating and teaching ourselves the best way to go about our job.

The CPS media retreat is also recognized by the 57 Chairman in Lagos and we have experts here today that are teaching us about technicalities, management of course

the use of gadgets. Those are some of the things that we are here for today.

## Besides press statements and social media platforms, what other methods are you using to disseminate information to the public?

In my local government, we still make use of our town criers to disseminate Information. The basic is that information

needs to be passed across and aside from that, we also make use of new media and that's why we have professionals here too, teaching us more about information dissemination and new media. Importantly almost 95% of residents of Lagos, are on Facebook, the pepper sellers at home make use of social media, Facebook especially, and we also use Twitter and Instagram.

# Lgs' CPS Seek Statutory Recognition

## From experience, do you think local government administration is effective?

Local government administration is effective in Lagos, especially with the mode of information or the line of information that we have in Lagos State for us as CPS, we have been able to create competition among the local government due to the way we carry information because, by the time Badagry Local government, for example is having Bursary for students, I'll put it on general platform where we

have the other council chairmen, council managers, including all the CPS. When you see that a particular Local government has done bursary for their people, you'll be forced to buy ideas through those channels. In Lagos State there are rural areas, developing communities and developing councils and that's why President Tinubu during his term as Lagos Governor created those LCDAs for the people at the grassroots, especially to those at the interiors to also have a feel of what government looks

like. The benefit of local government administration is spreading across all LG and they are doing a lot with the resources that are being given to them individually I want to say kudos to President Tinubu who has also been able to extend the issue of palliative and by increasing the Joint Account Allocation Committee (JAAC) that's coming to the local government, because we all are privy to information.

## What is your take on fake news and what machinery do you have in place to

## check the menace?

Fake news is common and unfortunately, it spreads like wildfire but we try as much from the local government to debunk such when it arises. It's most common, especially during elections. What is the future of CPS 57? Do we expect growth from LG to national? Nobody prays to remain in one place for a very long time. We are moving and I will keep moving. I've been CPS for years. We are also praying that one day we'll become chairman, Governor, Commissioner, and

Board members, but beyond that, we're also grooming new people who will take over leadership even when we leave this platform like we have new members coming in as we speak.

## Does the chairman see to the growth of CPS 57 to make them a better individual after office?

Personally, my principal is doing his best, and I must commend him for that, but some, are not enjoying it because the CPS position is not state statutory. Each CPS is at the mercy of the Chairman of the local

government and that is why we are agitating that they take us to the capacity of supervisors so that every privilege, accruable to supervisors as cabinet members, we can also benefit from it.

## What's the relationship between CPS 57 and media houses in information dissemination?

We've got a good relationship with the media and we work hand-in-hand to disseminate the good works of our principals, that's why someone like you is here on invite. We are media-friendly



Group picture of the CPS at the conference

# SGBV: EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Hands Over Intervention Programme To Lagos



The European Union-United Nations, EU-UN Spotlight Initiative has formally handed its five-year intervention programme on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), especially against women, girls and youths, to Gender-oriented Ministries and Agencies of the Lagos State Government. Speaking at the hand-over ceremony held on Friday at the Airport Hotel, Ikeja, the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Hon. (Mrs.) Cecelia Bolaji Dada disclosed

that the project has identified SGBV as an abuse and degrading treatment against humanity that must be addressed. She reiterated that the project has created awareness for women in particular, as the majority of them can now speak out against any form of abuse meted against them or a violation of their human rights. While noting that the project was a step towards greater things to come in Lagos State, Dada said, "We are delighted to be here on a historic day that

finalises the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative handover ceremony, as an intervention programme being directed at giving voices to the indigent, vulnerable and downtrodden citizenry across the Lagos metropolis, with deliberate move in curbing all forms of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. The Commissioner equally commended the Governor of Lagos State Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu who approved the EU-UN Spotlight intervention project as well as various partners that supported the

advocacy campaigns in Lagos State, saying, "As a Ministry, we have conceived various livelihood empowerment and support programmes for over 300 Gender-Based Violence Survivors through UNDP fund being coordinated by Foundation for Resilient Empowerment Programme (FRED)". She charged stakeholders to continuously embark on publicity on the project to reach out to more vulnerable Lagosians, just as she commended the efforts of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative for its various advocacy and sensitization programmes with stakeholders to curb the menace of SGBV, as well as enlighten media correspondents against stigmatisation reportage. Dada stated that WAPA, in collaboration with LASEMA, has

designed several training and capacity building sessions which berthed the call toll number – 767, as the first point of call for help, just as various government officials, law enforcement agencies, healthcare workers, and social workers were incorporated to help as a follow-up to calls received from 767. These selected officials have also been trained in identifying, responding to, and preventing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence across their various communities as well as in all 57 Local government and Local Council Development Areas. Speaking earlier, the representative of the First Lady of Lagos State and SSA to the Governor on Domestic Affairs, Mrs. Motolani Ladipo stated that the collaboration between the State Government and EU-UN Spotlight Initiative was a welcome development that gave women hope and a sustainable chance of survival using the available

support services provided. She reaffirmed the State Government's support for the project and looked forward to the positive effects of the campaign on the citizenry of Lagos State. The representative of the Chief Judge of Lagos State, Hon. Justice Abiola Soladayo encouraged survivors of Sexual and Gender- Violence to endeavour to speak out for concise investigations devoid of mediocrity so that offenders can be punished accordingly. The representative of the UN Resident Coordinator in Nigeria and National Coordinator of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, Ms. Anu John commended the efforts of the Lagos State Government to support the course of curbing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against women, girls and youths in the State. The event was well attended by dignitaries from UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Civil Society Organisations, as well as students from various Secondary Schools in Lagos State.

## "We are Implementing Comprehensive Action Plan To Address Environmental Issues"

Lagos State Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab has stated that the Ministry is diligently organising and implementing a comprehensive action plan to tackle all the issues of the environment head-on. A statement signed by him noted that flooding, noise pollution, and the unlawful blockage of walkways represent critical challenges that impact the lives and livelihoods of the citizens and must be effectively tackled.

"This proactive response will involve collaborative efforts among various departments within the Ministry, in conjunction with relevant authorities, to ensure the effective resolution of these environmental challenges. Additionally, public awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagements will be conducted to foster community involvement and adherence to environmental regulations", he explained. Wahab urged all



residents and stakeholders to join hands in the collective endeavour to maintain a clean, safe, and sustainable environment for everyone in Lagos State. He averred that his Office has been inundated with numerous environmental complaints from concerned residents across the State, saying "As a responsible Ministry, we will continue to act swiftly upon receiving these vital complaints, and we are fully committed

to responding promptly and decisively to restore law and order across the state". He stated emphatically that as the custodians of the state's environmental well-being, the Ministry acknowledges the significance of addressing these concerns with utmost urgency. "Together, we can mitigate these environmental issues and restore the serenity and orderliness of our communities. It is a Greater Lagos rising and all of us are involved", he said.

# Lagos Govt Seeks Driving Schools' Safety Initiatives



The Lagos State Commissioner for Transportation, Mr. Oluwaseun Osiyemi has sought Driving Schools Instructors and Operators' enhanced safety initiatives, adding that building around safety initiatives in an emerging mega city like

Lagos State is aimed at aligning it with global road safety performance target. He stated this at the Year 2023 Driving School Instructors and Operators' Train-The-Trainer workshop organised by the Lagos State Drivers' Institute with the theme: "Drivers

Taking Safety Initiatives in a Smart City" at STO-Resource Centre, CBD, Alausa, Ikeja Lagos. According to the Commissioner, Safety initiatives refer to a situation whereby motorists are not just simply working in a standard safe environment but are also

contributing ideas and proactively increasing the standard of safety in their environment.

The Special Adviser to Governor on Transportation, Honourable Sola Giwa said Driving School Instructors and Operators are very important stakeholders, hence they have a lot to do considering the attitudinal behaviour of the motoring public on Lagos roads. He said the State government would so much appreciate their concern on safety precautionary measures in their training curriculum.

In a similar vein, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Mr. Olawale Musa commended Driving School Instructors and Operators for their mutual and beneficial collaboration with the state government in its efforts to reduce fatality on Lagos

roads.

Earlier in her welcome address, General Manager, Lagos State Drivers Institute, Mrs. Afusat Tihamiyu said the theme, "Drivers Taking Safety Initiatives is reinforced by the Institute's belief that transportation serves as the engine of growth while other aspects of social political and economic life take a cue.

Tihamiyu said for the Institute to play host to the event, is a clear manifestation of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's commitment to the creation of a working synergy with the major stakeholders to deliberate on concrete issues towards mutually beneficial cooperation, collaboration and comprehensive consolidation.

The LASDRI boss opined that the yearly

interactive and engaging forum which offers a unique opportunity for stakeholders in the transport sub-section in the country, is aimed at improving the quality of service delivery.

Consequently, she urged all the participants to use the yearly training opportunity to join hands with Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu led administration to explore the potentials embedded in the first pillar of his THEMES Plus agenda - Transportation and Traffic Management - in a bid to tackle associated problems in public transportation and keep Lagos moving with pride.

Other notable individuals who attended the workshop include the representatives of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), Vehicle Inspection Service (VIS), Motor Vehicle Administration Agency (MVAA), Coalition of Driving Schools in Lagos State and other various stakeholders.

# Lagos Govt Vows To Reclaim All Drainage Alignments, Setbacks

The Lagos State Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, on Sunday, vowed that the State Government will continue to ramp up enforcement operations across the State to restore setbacks and drainage alignments towards preventing flooding.

The Commissioner, who asserted at Magodo, when he led the Environment team on an inspection tour of some enforcement sites at Dodan Barracks, Norman Williams Rd, the Bucknor Oke-Afa channel in Oshodi/Isolo Local Government and Magodo, reiterated that enforcement will be a continuous exercise geared towards making the State flood free.

He maintained that the activities of the Ministry are on the field, hence the reason why he leads from the front. "We come out every day and also push our people and officers out because we are a public-facing Ministry and we must continually enforce compliance", he said. Wahab, who was

accompanied by Special Adviser, Environment, Olakunle Rotimi Akodu, Permanent Secretary, Office of Environmental Services, Dr. Gaji Omobolaji and some directors from the Ministry, said the present administration was at the forefront of promoting and enforcing a flood-free Lagos.

Speaking on what transpired at the Oke Afa/Bucknor location in Oshodi Isolo where several buildings on the drainage setback have been pulled down after delays in enforcing the law, adding that some of the residents sued the State to prevent it from reclaiming the setback. The case was, however, struck out, enabling the Ministry to act decisively in the interest of the generality of the people so the contractor that would work on the secondary collector could be mobilised to the site

He said it was regrettable that all the houses built on the setback had no drainage clearance.

"Houses were found to have been built and, in the process, they closed



(Lagos State Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab with other officials during the inspection of drainage setbacks)

up the natural path of water but will later turn around to accuse the government of inaction concerning flooding", he said.

The team also inspected Dodan Barracks/Norman Williams Channel, to ascertain the level of compliance concerning the enforcement of setback for the secondary collector in the axis as well as to decide how to clean and desilt the blocked collector that has affected the State House.

He averred that major

cleaning still needs to be done at Norman Williams/ Awolowo Road Channel but the flood situation has reduced drastically, adding that in the new week equipment would be deployed to the channel to be cleared inward the lagoon.

According to him, People should do a proper charting of their land to know where their land is situated, whether commercial or residential or mixed area before building,

saying all requirements must be met before construction commences.

At Amuwo Odofin, Wahab inspected the Sewage Treatment Plant that is expected to serve the residents, adding that an issue regarding joint usage of the location has been settled and that the Wastewater Agency would take over the facility next week.

The Commissioner and his team also visited the Magodo Wetland site to

check the state of the natural wetland in the Estate and directed that a signpost should be erected there to ward off people who intend to take over and build on the wetland.

"We don't want a repeat of what is being experienced at Isheri-Oshun, if such is allowed, what will be experienced will surely be more disastrous compared to what is being experienced in Isheri-Oshun axis now", he warned.

The Special Adviser on Environment Mr. Olakunle Rotimi-Akodu stated that the Sanwo-Olu administration is determined to prevent further loss of lives and properties occasioned by flooding and that was what necessitated the continuous reclamation of drainage alignments across the state in the first place.

He said the reclamation of these Drainage Channels would contribute to a sustainable environment and a quality living environment for everyone, adding that the cooperation of all residents was necessary for a flood-free and sustainable environment.

# Obasa To Support 500 Students with Cash Gifts

Kehinde Adeleye

The Speaker, Lagos State House of Assembly, Mr. Mudashiru Ajayi Obasa is set to gift 500 indigent students in Agege community the sum of #50,000 each. The cash support is in celebration of his 51th birthday which was held last week. He made the promise to

support some carefully selected indigent pupils and students, when he visited his primary school Alma Mata, in Oyewole School Complex and other surrounding schools. He continued that the unconditional cash benefits to the beneficiaries is to lift their morale and liven

up the spirit in them to continue to pursue their educational future. Over 500 pupils and students in Agege community have been drawn from various schools to benefit from the unconditional cash gift of Fifty thousand (N50,000) each, as his token to support their educational pursuits. The Beneficiaries, all

expressed their joy and appreciations, for the unexpected financial aid. Parents, guardians, teachers and others present at the presentation of the cash, lauded the records breaking speaker's gestures.



# Hammed Urges Agege Youths To Embrace Opportunities

Kehinde Adeleye



Member representing Agege Federal Constituency, at the Federal House of Representatives, Mr Wale Hammed met with Community media practitioners within the Agege Federal Constituency.

The lawmaker who also served as the vice Chairman of the House Committee on Police Affairs, tasked the media practitioners and youths in his constituency to give more efforts and dedication to the advancement of the Agege Federal Constituency. He believes that this is a shared responsibility that calls for everyone's participation.

Hammed stated that the fact that he was elected to represent the good people of Agege Federal Constituency does not mean he could do the Job alone. He said, "I need everyone of you like I need my constituents too to be part of the assignment before us".

"My primary aim is to help improve the lives of our people in Agege Federal Constituency. I am determined and

committed towards the upliftment of lives in Agege, the development of our youths and others is of paramount importance to me as a representative, so we must all come together and ensure all hands are on deck to ensure the good people of Agege gets quality representation and enjoy the dividends of democracy", he said.

In a brief discourse, Hammed told the practitioners about his background, how difficult life was for him in high school and college, and how important it was to him to have received an education and achieve so much in life—all while keeping in mind the Agege community from which he hails.

He continued by challenging the young people of Agege to seize any chance that presents themselves. In addition, he stated that he stands for all the decent people of Agege, regardless of their language, gender, color, tribe, religion, or other characteristics.

"I am not a politician who discriminate, but a politician ready and

available to serve every resident of Agege Federal Constituency irrespective of who you are or the political party you voted for during the election.

"I'm also taking this chance to encourage our young people to apply for the Nigeria Police Force, as it will probably close in a few weeks. From my office, our young people may anticipate better professional options and more stable employment. In order to create a safe and secure Agege Federal Constituency, we will make sure that our kids have access to the greatest employment possibilities in the area.

The publisher of AgegeTv Online and Chairman of the Association Agege and Orile-Agege Community Media Practitioners, Comr. Oloyede S. Kolawole, responded as follows:

"We appreciate the opportunity and privilege created by you to meet with you today sir, as Community Media Practitioners that we are, Agege and Orile-Agege comes first in our hearts because we are concerned about the progress and development of our communities in Agege"

"We are available to be partners in progress with you if it has to do with the upliftment of lives and properties in Agege. We also promise to discharge our primary duties without fear or favour and you should be ready to face criticism when necessary because that's the only way we can grow Agege together and also grow ourselves together as Stakeholders of our great Community, Agege"

Other members of the group also assured him of their commitment towards the task ahead and urged him to carry them along for the purpose of achieving a common goal.

# Equitable Digital Healthcare: LASHMA Completes Phase 1 Implementation Research

The Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA), has completed the Phase 1 implementation research to test equitable digital-first care in Lagos State.

The Permanent Secretary, Dr. Emmanuella Zamba, disclosed this during the multi-stakeholders workshop organised by the Agency in consortium with Solina Centre for International Development and Research (SCIDaR) and Village Reach at Water Cress Hotels, Ikeja.

Dr. Zamba said that with the research, four models have been identified and proposed to LASHMA for the operation of telehealth services in the State. These, she mentioned, are the Hotline model, Market kiosk model, Community Pharmacy kiosks and video-enabled mobile application model.

She recalled that during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Lagos State Government established the Telemedicine service (EKOTELEMED) to reduce the number of patients who were going to Hospitals, and to protect both the health workers and residents in the State from contacting COVID-19 virus.

Since the establishment of the Telemedicine service, she said that many residents have been enjoying the service from the comfort of their homes or offices via audio or visual means on their phones.

This, she explained, prompted the research so that residents in underserved populations who, due to reasons such as distance, to facility, geographical location and high cost of



transportation to the nearest hospital, are prevented from accessing medical services when the need arises.

Dr. Zamba further said that the Government is working hard to ensure that telehealth services are taken closer to the underserved population especially now that the result from the assessment has revealed that respondents were willing to utilise telehealth models to access a broad range of healthcare services such as General Health Information, Diagnosis of Health Conditions, Prescription of Medicine, Chronic Disease Management, Immunization, and Family Planning Services

Urging stakeholders to review the hypotheses and select the most appropriate one suitable for the target audience. Dr. Zamba promised that the Agency would also review the research, consider and implement the best option which will be most appropriate for the target audience.

The Project Director, SCIDaR, Mr. King Ewa-Henshaw, while delivering the technical learning assessment report to the stakeholders, said that 1, 064 respondents were interviewed and segmented into three vulnerable groups.

He added that 51 per cent of the population was in the least vulnerable segment, 30 per cent belonged to the more vulnerable segment and 12 per cent were in the most vulnerable category

while seven per cent of the respondents were uncategorised as they do not belong to any segment outlined in the pathway methodology.

Mr. King said that during the research, 64 underserved wards were identified through IBILE Divisions and these were based on health outcomes, Socio-Economic Status (SES) and health facility coverage.

The Project Director disclosed that the research also revealed that if telehealth service is taken to the people, 81 per cent of the population have agreed that telehealth services will be more convenient for them to access care and more than 70 per cent of the sampled population are willing to pay at least N3,000 premium per annum for Telehealth Services.

On the language to use, he said that data suggested that LASHMA should provide telehealth service primarily in Yoruba and English Language as 88 per cent of the population speak Yoruba, 66 per cent speak English and only three per cent speak neither Yoruba or English.

The research funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation had stakeholders such as the Member, Board of Trustees, Society for Telemedicine and EHealth in Nigeria, Dr. Raphael Akangbe; Chairman, Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lagos Branch, Pharm. Lawrence Ekhaton; Consultant, BMGF, Mr. Olukunle Daramola; Telehealth service providers and target audience were also at the event.

#AGreaterLagosRising.

# No Law Permits Development of Event Centre in GRA, Ikeja – LASPPPA

The Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority (LASPPPA) has reiterated that Ikeja GRA is strictly for residential purposes as the law forbids the development of event centres in the area.

A statement signed by the Agency's General Manager, Mr. Kehinde Osinaike stressed that it's important to clarify that the law, as reflected by the Revised Ikeja Model City Plan, is clear on the land use zoning of Ikeja GRA as strictly residential. As such, the Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority is obligated to allow only residential

developments in the area

Osinaike said, "This clarification becomes important in view of the baseless claim by a developer that LASPPPA sealed the site of his ongoing construction of an event centre at Ikeja GRA for personal reasons".

"The Lagos State Urban and Regional Planning and Development Law, 2019 as amended and LASPPPA Regulations 2019 are clear on the mandate of the LASPPPA to issue permits to qualified applicants and ensure the sanctity of the

Master/Model City Plans of Lagos State, which the government invested heavily on to ensure seamless development of the State for the benefit of all", he added.

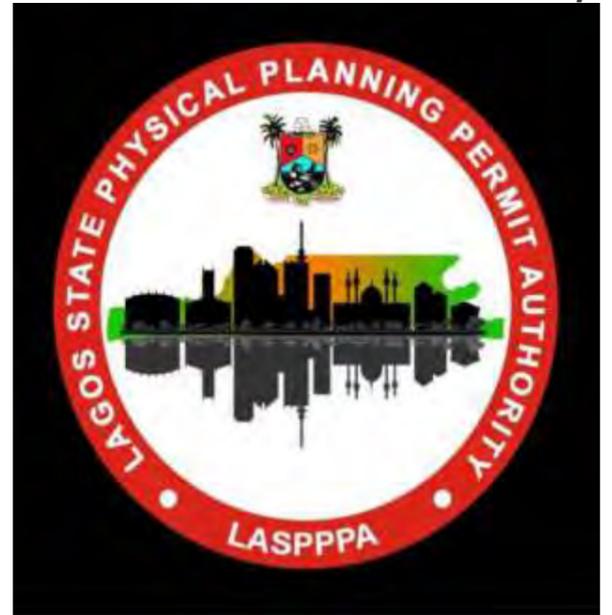
Furthermore, the General Manager emphasised that in line with the livable, organised and orderly built environment vision of Lagos State, the State does not joke with the application of its planning laws, no matter whose ox is gored. It is only people who have refused to pay heed to warnings that usually fall victim to sealing, demolition, and other severe punishments by the Agency.

His words, "I strongly believe that our nation

will know true development when the elites begin to seek the common good and weigh individual interest against public interest. It profits society for us to obey the law, build rights, and not resort to needless blame games or blackmail.

"To forbid the bastardisation of the Revised Ikeja Model City Plans, I strongly advise developers who are interested in event centres and other forms of commercial developments in Ikeja GRA to look for other sites elsewhere, where such will be permissible.

"Property owners and developers are hereby



enjoined to respect the Lagos State Government's zero tolerance for illegal developments by taking advantage of

the State Ministry of Lagos State Physical Planning and Urban Development free Planning Information service to guide in proper site selection", Osinaike stated.

## LASUTH CMD Wins Transformational Leadership Award



(Chief Medical Director of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Prof. Adetokunbo Fabamwo (middle) flanked by HOS, Bode Agoro (left) and one other personality during the presentation of the award)

The Chief Medical Director of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Prof. Adetokunbo Fabamwo, recently won the Transformational Leader Award from the Office of Transformation, Creativity and Innovation (OTCI) during its 2023 Lagos State Public Service Ideas Day Competition, with the theme: "Building a Future-Ready Public Service" held at the Adeyemi-Bero Auditorium, Alausa.

According to the OTCI, the award was in

recognition of LASUTH's continuous commitment to providing quality healthcare services to the people of Lagos and its environs. It is well known that LASUTH is a multidisciplinary healthcare provider, that has grown in leaps and bounds over the years and this growth has continuously nudged the hospital towards becoming a quaternary health institution of repute in Nigeria, Sub-Saharan Africa and the world at large.

"All these would not have materialised but

for the proficient management and excellent members of staff led by the visionary Chief Medical Director, Prof. Adetokunbo O. Fabamwo, who has constantly birthed various innovations that have creatively transformed the face of the institution", it added.

While receiving the award, the CMD acknowledged the Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, for his unwavering support towards the hospital, in terms of funding, infrastructural development, manpower development and provision of adequate equipment.

He said, "Our mandate is to ensure that LASUTH becomes a one-stop shop tertiary health institution in Nigeria and Africa at large. In LASUTH, we are not content with being a tertiary institution, our dream is to become a quaternary institution in the near future and we are already on our way there".

Fabamwo dedicated the award to the citizens of Lagos State, especially the hard-working staff of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

## LASUTH Hosts Lions Club International President



(International President of the Lions Club, Dr. Patty Hill tilling the ground)

The Management of Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) recently hosted the International President of the Lions Club, Dr. Patty Hill and members of the Lions Club Nigeria who were on a familiarisation visit to the hospital for improved collaboration. The Chief Medical Director of LASUTH, Prof. Adetokunbo O. Fabamwo, in his welcome address, said the Lions Club has been a veritable benefactor to LASUTH as the club has been instrumental in rendering needed help and assistance to the facility for some years now.

The CMD listed several projects the Club birthed in the hospital, including the Oncology building, the Diabetes Clinic which was recently renovated and the Eye Institute which was also equipped with state-of-the-art ophthalmic equipment worth millions of naira.

In her remark, the International President of Lions Club, Dr. Patty Hill said nothing makes her happier than collaborating with a health institution that takes its duties with utmost reverence. She acknowledged and appreciated the quantum effort that health practitioners at the hospital put into their work.

Hill further noted that the Lions Club's mission is deeply rooted in humanitarian activities which makes donations to LASUTH not just an activity but one that fulfils purpose.

The immediate Past District Governor of the Lions Club Nigeria (404B2), Aare Lekan Owolabi stated that the President's visit is historical as she is the first International President to visit Nigeria while in office. He said the partnership between Lions Club International and LASUTH started way back in 2007 when the Oncology building was donated to the hospital under the leadership of PAL Dame Adetope Tychus.

He concluded by appreciating the Management of the hospital for giving the highest recognition to Lions Club International by inscribing the Club's name on the hospital's Honor Roll.

The CMD, the Lions Club International President and LASUTH management later went on a facility tour followed by a brief tree planting ceremony to mark the historic visit.

# Sanwo-Olu Relishes Partnership With US on Economic Growth



(United States Consul-General, Mr. Will Stevens with Lagos state Deputy Governor, Dr. Obafemi Hamzat at the US-Nigeria Council for Food Security, Trade and Investment)

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu has restated his administration's commitment and willingness to sustain momentum in promoting an enduring and mutually beneficial partnership with both local and foreign investors.

The Governor said this at the US-Nigeria Council for Food Security, Trade and Investment, themed: "A New US-Nigeria Partnership for Economic Revival" held

at Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

Sanwo-Olu, who was represented by the Deputy Governor, Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, added that the prospect for generous return on investment in several sectors including agriculture and its value chain, multimodal transport system, healthcare service and waste to wealth, among others, is huge.

He further emphasised that the state

government will continue to offer all the necessary support that will make doing business in the state a rewarding experience as Lagos State is open more than ever before for business: "Lagos State is, more than ever before, open for business and we will continue to offer all the necessary support that will make doing business in Lagos a rewarding experience", Sanwo-Olu promised.

He noted that the relationship between the United States and Nigeria is not just significant but pivotal, adding that "As we gather under the theme 'A New US-Nigeria Partnership for Economic Revival', we acknowledge the profound impact that a strengthened collaboration can have on both our nations and the broader international community".

Speaking further, the Governor said the Council for Food Security, Trade and Investment serves as a bridge, connecting the dots between Nigeria

and the United States and creating a roadmap for mutually beneficial collaboration.

He added that the event provides a unique platform for fostering dialogue and understanding between high-level representatives from the United States and Nigeria.

He averred that it is the amalgamation of expertise and experience that positions Nigeria to explore the vast potentials that lie in the realms of investment and trade.

Sanwo-Olu said, "Nigeria, with its vibrant and diverse economy, holds immense promise for our American counterparts, likewise the United States with its innovative spirit and robust economic foundation stands ready to contribute significantly to Nigeria's economic growth and development.

In his remarks, the Governor of the Central

Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Yemi Cardoso noted that the Central Bank of Nigeria is committed to supporting the actualization of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda which relates to having a trillion dollars economy in another seven years, which is a very ambitious goal and shows that the present administration understands the need for partnership and collaboration.

Speaking on the development recorded in Lagos, the CBN Governor said the quality of governance in the State has made it become the fifth largest economy in Africa and the tremendous growth experience is linked to the consistency in policy making and strong leadership.

Similarly, the former United States Ambassador to Nigeria and Chairman, US-Nigeria Council for Food Security, Trade and Investment, Terence McCulley stated that within six months of President Bola Ahmed

Tinubu's assumption of office, he made notable reforms through his "Renewed Hope Agenda", in areas such as floating exchange rate, eliminating the fuel subsidy, shaking up the Central Bank and defense leadership, among others.

He added that the different initiatives witnessed since the inception of Tinubu's administration have increased investor's interest, adding that the biggest cause for optimism is Tinubu's promise "To adapt his tech policy from his experience as Lagos State Governor to a national scale".

In his remarks, the United States Consul-General, Mr. Will Stevens stated that certain sectors are prioritised in economic relationships and must be considered when engaging the US government.

Citing examples of energy, climate, agriculture and technology, he noted that Nigeria must collaborate with the US for cleaner energy, electrify Nigeria and bring power closer to the people.

## Content Creation: Lagos Govt Seeks Collaboration With Film Industry



(Cross section of personalities at the third Nigeria Digital Content Regulation Conference (NDCRC))

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu has called for effective collaboration with industry experts and regulatory bodies to establish a framework that will promote responsible content creation, distribution

and consumption. He made the call at the third Nigeria Digital Content Regulation Conference (NDCRC) which took place

recently at Radisson Blu Hotel, Isaac John Street, GRA Ikeja.

Sanwo-Olu, who was represented by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Mrs. Toyin Atekoja, noted that the lack of global standards for regulating digital content raises concerns about the impact on cultural values and societal norms.

He said, "As content travels across borders, it is essential to ensure that it respects the diversity and sensitivities of different cultures. The absence of guidelines can potentially lead to the

spread of content that may be offensive, inappropriate, or harmful to certain communities".

The Governor reiterated that his administration is committed to supporting the growth of the film industry while ensuring that it upholds the highest standards of creativity, ethics, and cultural sensitivity. He implored all stakeholders - filmmakers, industry associations, regulatory bodies, and international partners, to join hands with the State Government in shaping global standards for regulating digital content".

On his part, Executive Director/CEO, National Film and Video Censors Board, Alhaji Adedayo Thomas, the convener of the conference, thanked Mr. Governor for his tremendous support in the industry and equally appreciated all stakeholders present at the event.

Adedayo informed participants that the objective of the third edition of the NDCRC is to primarily discuss the growth of the film industry and evaluate concerns around global standards for regulation of digital content in the face of advances in the development of cutting-edge technologies.

# Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis : Lagos To Deworm 1.4m Pupils



... Targets 10 Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis Endemic LGAs

In a move to tackle Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH), the Lagos State Government has initiated a free school-based mass deworming programme across 10 endemic Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the State. Partnering with the Federal Ministry of Health and a Non-governmental organisation, Evidence

Action, the campaign aims to treat 1.4 million school-aged children between five and 14 years old, who are susceptible to parasitic worm infections in Lagos State.

Speaking at the flag-off of the exercise today, at CMS Primary School, Bariga, the Commissioner for Health, Prof. Akin

Abayomi explained that the mass deworming exercise will hold in 10 soil-transmitted helminthiasis endemic local governments including of Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Amuwo-Odofin, Apapa, Badagry, Epe, Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Ojo and Shomolu.

Prof. Abayomi, who was represented by the Lagos State Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Coordinator, Mrs. Modupe Dawodu, further disclosed that the exercise would run for five days, from Tuesday, 21st to Saturday, 25th November, 2023.

He added that children, aged five and 14 years, in Schools and Communities in the 10 LGAs will be dewormed and treated for soil-transmitted helminthiasis using Mebendazole Tablets (500mg) during the

exercise.

The Commissioner noted that School-based deworming is an important evidence-based strategy to treat children at risk of parasitic worm infections, adding that teachers and community health workers have been trained to safely and effectively administer the medicines to the children.

While urging residents in the affected LGAs to take advantage of exercise, the Commissioner noted that the exercise reflects the State Government's commitment towards a worm-free state for all, especially school-aged children.

Also speaking, the Country Director, Evidence Action, Pharm Tope Ogunbi who was represented by the Senior

Programme Manager, Maryann Edeh, stated that the school-based deworming programme is an effective and cost-effective strategy to ensure that the diseases disrupting the educational growth of children are treated.

She noted that the mass deworming campaign reflects the commitment of the Lagos State government through the Ministries of Health, Basic Education and State Universal Education Board (SUBEB) and Evidence Action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals One and Three, as well as the Government's top health priorities in reducing poverty.

The Country Director explained that Evidence Action has delivered over 1.8 billion deworming treatments globally and is happy to

continue to support governments across the world and in Nigeria with cost-effective and evidence-based health interventions to reduce the burden of poverty.

She stressed that Evidence Action through the Deworm programme is proud to collaborate with the Lagos State Ministry of Health to provide mass deworming treatment of STH targeting 1.4 million children across the 10 endemic LGAs through active collaboration with other line ministries in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Health.

She, therefore, encouraged parents residing in the affected LGAs where the exercise is being held to ensure that their children and wards within the target age bracket receive deworming treatment, noting that the treatment is free and effective.

## Lagos Open For New Investments, Ready For Business-Sanwo-Olu



(Governor Sanwo-Olu with management of the Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited, led by its Group Chairman, Mr. Jung Won Ju)

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu has reiterated his administration's commitment to investments from local and international companies, saying Lagos is ready for business and open to new investments.

The Governor spoke during a courtesy visit by the management of the Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited, led by its Group Chairman, Mr. Jung Won Ju, at the Lagos House, Ikeja.

Governor Sanwo-Olu assured investors that his administration will create an enabling environment for investments and businesses to grow in the State. He said the Lagos State Government is ready

and willing to partner with Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited in automobile, real estate and technology.

He said: "The relationship between South Korea and Nigeria dates back several decades and we all know how the Daewoo Industry is worldwide. We are aware of your strength and capacity. Lagos is ready for business and it is open for new investments. I know Daewoo Nigeria has been here for a while but this is an opportunity for you to take that relationship to another level.

"So, on this your visit, don't let it just be a visit to show; let it be a visit of commitment and real partnership. Let it be a visit where there will be real transactions on the

table that both of us can take away.

"We are here to create the enabling environment for investments and businesses to grow. So, whatever you need from our side for your investments within our means, you can be rest assured that we are willing to do it for as long as we see a mutually beneficial relationship.

"Our city is open. We are ready and willing to create that partnership with you in automobile, real estate and technology because we have a very strong and capable youth population that is dynamic. They are very professional and they are ready to work."

Speaking earlier, Mr. Jung Won Ju, said his company will be investing in real estate and infrastructure in Nigeria, saying Lagos has been identified as one of the major investment areas because Lagos is the economic capital of Nigeria.

Also speaking, the General Manager, Contract and Business Development of Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited, Mr. Adekunle Ilesanmi, commended Lagos State for accommodating a lot of investments and providing an enabling environment for returns on investments.

He said: "We are going to be investing in housing, real estate and infrastructure. Daewoo has over 40 years of commitment in Nigeria. We are trying to increase our investments in the country and Lagos has been identified as one of the major investment areas because Lagos is the economic capital of

Nigeria.

"The chairman is willing and has assured Mr. Governor that we will make that commitment in a short time, especially in the real estate and housing.

"It is very commendable to see Lagos State accommodating a lot of investments and giving

an enabling environment to all the investors coming in and ensuring that there is a return on investments. That makes Lagos attractive because when you invest here, you are sure of a return on your investment. The government is going to support you to be able to have a return on your investment."

## Lagos Govt Committed To Improving Lives of Residents -Sanwo-Olu

The Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to bring about significant improvement in the quality of lives of people in Lagos State.

He gave the assurance during the opening ceremony of the 35th Annual General Conference of the Fountain of Hope International (FOHI) with the theme: "I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens Me".

The Governor, represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Barr. 'Bimbola Salu-



(Secretary to the State Government, Barr. 'Bimbola Salu-Hundeyin with other personalities from Fountain of Hope International)

Hundeyin, noted that in accordance with the FOHI Conference theme, his administration will achieve all the pillars in the T.H.E.M.E.S Plus Development Agenda for the good of everyone.

He applauded members of Fountain of Hope International for their tireless efforts in promoting unity and charitable services.

He added that your commitment to

reaching out to the less privileged, irrespective of denominational differences, reflects the true essence of Christianity which emphasises love and compassion.

In his words, "As a government, we are proud to be associated with you, in that many lives have been touched by your dedication, contribution and humanitarian services to the society".

He urged members to use the opportunity of the conference to dialogue, understand and share spiritual growth while renewing their commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ's teachings on love, tolerance and hope in the Almighty God..

# Attack On Firefighter: Court Grants Suspect N200, 000 Bail

Magistrate A. A. Adesanya of the Lagos State Special Offences (Mobile) Court, Bolade, Oshodi, has granted bail to one Waheed Balogun (40) arraigned before the Court over an attack on a firefighter while carrying out his official duties. The Judge stated the accused is granted release on the payment of #200,000:00 among other conditions, just as she

adjourned the hearing until the 19th day of December 2023, to allow all involved parties to perfect their matters. Speaking on the matter after the adjournment, Margaret Adeseye, the Director of the Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service (LSFRS) said the Agency initiated legal proceedings against the accused, Waheed Balogun, for an attack on a Firefighter in October

at 167 Egbe Road, Cele Egbe, Ikotun, Lagos. She emphasised that the incident constitutes one of 12 assaults against operatives of the Agency in 2023. The Director restated the LSFRS' unwavering commitment to undertaking a comprehensive legal process to ensure justice is served and to establish a precedent that deters similar actions in the future. The accused, in his



defence, had contended that he attacked the Firefighter for obstructing his operations with a Fire truck. The accused, in his operations with a Fire truck. The accused, in his operations with a Fire truck.

## Man Remanded In Ikoyi Prison For Defiling Minor

By Felix Kuyinu

Acconvict, Jegede Folorunsho has been remanded at the Ikoyi Correctional Centre for allegedly defiling an eight-year-old girl.

Folorunsho, 54, committed the sexual assault on October 4, 2023 at No 4 Adegbite Lane in the Mushin area of Lagos State.

The police at the Mushin Police Division where the matter was reported brought the defendant to the Ebute Metta Magistrates' court on Monday with a remand application while requesting the court to permit them duplicate and send the case file to the office of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions for legal advice.

The prosecutor, Paul Ugorji who told the court that the matter was transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Panty, Yaba for discreet investigation said the offence



contravened Section 137 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, Nigeria, 2015.

A confessional statement presented before Magistrate Olajide Ajayi also

featured a 12-paragraph remand application charge which read, "That you, Jegede Folorunsho, on October 4, 2023, at No 4 Adegbite Lane, Mushin Lagos State, in the Lagos Magisterial District, did

defile one girl (name withheld), a minor of eight years, by having carnal knowledge of her and thereby, committed an offence punishable under Section 137 of the Criminal Law of Lagos

State, 2015."

Following the remand application, the defendant's plea was not taken.

The magistrate granted the prayer of the police and ordered that the

defendant be remanded in prison and ordered that the case file be sent to the DPP for legal advice.

The case was adjourned till December 15, 2023, for the DPP's advice.

# Kosofe LG Boss Promises Better Budget Implementation In 2024

Kehinde Adeleye



The Chairman of Kosofe Local Government, Mr. Adedoyin Ogunlewe has vowed to ensure that all the useful contributions made at this year's budget retreat held at the Novatel Hotels, Lekki, are implemented and given legal teeth. The two-day budget retreat with the theme, "Budget of Public Growth and Development" was aimed at reviewing the fiscal achievements of the current year and projects for the coming year.

The financial deliberation was a purposeful round table discussion aimed at achieving a greater Kosofe Local Government and opening up the

frontiers of infrastructural development with the provision of essential services.

The Chairman charged all the Council's officials to work towards achieving a realistic and sustainable budget estimate for the 2024 fiscal year. Ogunlewe disclosed this while addressing Executive members, management, revenue officers and other participants at the retreat.

He said, "In order to ensure quality service delivery, continuous infrastructural development and equitable distribution of dividends of democracy to the residents in all sectors of

governance, we must be accountable in our estimate and also make sure that our estimates are in line with these sectors for us to achieve a better revenue from last year's income."

Speaking further, "It is important for every contribution made at this retreat to be implemented and passed into law to achieve utmost results for the benefit of the entire constituents".

"Kosofe must be one of the leading Local Governments in Lagos State, in the area of quality service delivery; with the modalities being put in place for the preparation and execution of the year 2024 budget estimates", the council boss added.

The Chairman explained further that his

Administration has resolved irrevocably that a positive impact like that of last year would repeat itself this year in terms of continuous infrastructure upgrading while his administration would prioritize some key areas.

He reiterated that such areas as health care services, Education, and road construction, among others, would top his agenda, adding that he would not relent in ensuring that innovative ideas are brought on board.

Ogunlewe gave thanks to Almighty God for all the Council's modest achievements in the year under review as attested to by the

people through their positive feedback, promising other purposeful and people-centred projects in the coming year.

The Head of Administration, Mr. Ola Olanrewaju buttressed the importance of the Year 2024 Budget to be robust and realistic to ensure the good people of Kosofe enjoy more dividends of democracy from the present administration.

The facilitator of the retreat, Mr. Adeniyi Adeleke commended the Executive Chairman for the quality and adequate service delivery.

He further charged all technocrats in the LGA to display

efficiency, professionalism and transparency, and also ensure clear accountability as service providers.

The Head of the Department of Budget Planning and Statistics, Mrs. Adesina A.O. thanked all the participants for their positive contributions towards the preparation of the Year 2024 budget estimate at the retreat.

The Vice Chairman; Mr. Oluwole Sosanya led the Executive members which included the Secretary to the Local Government, Mr. Fatai Gbadebo; Chief of Staff; Mr. Akinyemi Abiona, Council Treasurer, Mr. Ojikutu; HOD Budget, Mrs. Adesina A.O; executive members, SSA's, CDA chairman and SSA on Community affairs, management and some members of the Council.

# Itire Ikate Chairman Distributes Foodstuff To Staff

By Nurudeen Adebayo



Itire-Ikate Local Council Development Area's Chairman, Hon. (Dr.) Ahmed Olanrewaju Apatira, took a compassionate step recently by distributing foodstuff to the entire staff of the council. The distribution took place at the council

secretariat located on Airways Rd. in Ijesha. The diverse group of recipients included Executive and Clerical officers, Health Workers, Environmental Health Officers, Sweepers, Drivers, Cleaners, Security Personnel, and all

Non-pensionable staff. Dr. Apatira, in emphasizing the empathetic nature of the initiative, expressed, "The most crucial aspect of today's event is the spirit of empathy driving our actions. "We, as a government, empathize with people from all walks of life and remain committed to

helping them navigate the challenges of the current times." Gratitude was extended to the staff for their dedicated service, with Dr. Apatira reaffirming his unwavering readiness to provide ongoing support to make their

lives easier. The distribution of food palliatives was underscored as part of the government's efforts to alleviate the impact of the removal of fuel subsidy on national lives. While acknowledging the limitations in reach, Dr. Apatira

highlighted that the initiative is ongoing, with beneficiaries identified on a nonpartisan basis. This move reflects a commitment to inclusivity and underscores the council's dedication to supporting its personnel during these challenging times.

# Beneficiaries Applaud Ajala's Mega Skill Acquisition

Kehinde Adeleye

**H**undreds of beneficiaries of the skill acquisition programme by the Odi-Olowo-Ojuwoye LCDA have commended the chairman of the council, Mr. Rasaq Ajala for his efforts in providing such opportunity. They said they were proud of the initiative, which has made their aspirations come true. **L a u n c h e d o n**

November 13, 2023, and scheduled to end on November 27, the two-week programme has received recognition for its all-encompassing approach to skill development. The programme, which is being run by the council's Department of Women's Affairs and Poverty Alleviation and Agriculture and Social Services, has

10,000 participants as its goal and is intended to empower people inside and outside of the LCDA. The Chairman emphasised the programme core objective, stating, "People earn a good living with their skills. This annual programme is aimed at reducing unemployment rates among the residents. We cannot continue to depend on the government for our basic needs. Once a

skill is acquired, we will become independent, and that is exactly what we intend to achieve." The programme covers a wide range of skills and is being held at LCDA. These include the production of fabrics and souvenirs, catering, foods and drinks technology, the production of household essentials, event planning and decoration, gele techniques, nylon production and cutting, gift item customization and printing, smartphone graphics, cakes, and buttering.

Some participant who spoke to our correspondent commend the initiative as a pathway to self sufficiency. Oni Mary, a participant in the fabrics section, expressed gratitude for the programme accessible teaching methods, saying, "I really appreciate Hon Rasaq Ajala for this initiative. This is an avenue to make us independent." Mariam Akinniyi shared her positive experience, acknowledging the chairman's efforts, "The chairman has been doing

wonderfully well. I have been taught a lot of things. I have acquired completely new skills since the commencement of this program." Judith Commander, specialising in catering, applauded the chairman for making her dreams tangible, stating, "Hon Rasaq Ajala is making my dream become realistic. I dream to become a caterer. With this programme, this dream is achievable." Archibong from Ayetoto Fadeyi expressed gratitude for the newfound knowledge, saying, "I am happy that Hon Ajala made this happen. We thank him for giving us this opportunity. After this program, I can establish my own business."

## RFCS, Odi-Olowo Ojuwoye LCDA Give Free Medicals To Residents

By Saheed Afolabi



**O**di-Olowo Ojuwoye LCDA and the Restore Foundation for Child Sight (RFCS) partnered together to deliver free medical to residents of the community. The free medical outreach was based on free eye tests and treatments which was done at Kosybethel Primary School at Ajenifuja street, Ilupeju. A significant turnout of children and parents

showcased the community's strong interest in having their eyes examined and treated. The chairman of Odi-Olowo Ojuwoye LCDA, Rasaq Ajala, expressed appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the doctors and caregivers present at the venue. He provided words of encouragement to the children as he was on ground to monitor the event. Ajala commended the

Restore Foundation for Child Sight (RFCS), a collaborative partner with the council in organizing this impactful program. Supervisor for health Nureini Ogunbona, appreciated Ajala for approving and actively supporting the programme. He also expressed appreciation to the Restore Foundation for Child Sight (RFCS), a noteworthy non-governmental organisation, for their valuable support.

## Bamigboye Strategises With Security Operatives Ahead Of Yuletide Season

By Saheed Afolabi

**T**he chairman of Mushin LG, Mr Emmanuel Bamigboye has held a strategic meeting with security operatives in the community ahead of the Yuletide Season. The festive season is known for its populated activities which will involve different people from different

backgrounds storming the local council area. The Mushin council boss, Bamigboye was glad to have a robust engagement with the security agencies on how to ensure the safety and security of the lives of people during the festive season. The chairman was

satisfied with the recommendations of the security outfits and promised residents of a peaceful and secured atmosphere in December. "We had a robust deliberation on ways to re-strategise and prepare for the Yuletide season. "All the security agencies operating in Mushin, both from the state and federal, were in attendance."



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# Awari AI: Ikorodu Gears Up for Technological Renaissance

By Nurudeen Adebayo

For the first time in Nigeria, Awari AI is set to change this narrative by focusing on building AI knowledge, ensuring that computers will think like the residents of Ikorodu.

Awari AI is a rapidly expanding AI/robotics company that is facilitating the development and adoption of cutting-edge technology on the African continent, starting from Nigeria.

It has hired more than a hundred young people who completed Tech Talent and Data Science training at the SAIL Innovation Lab for respectable artificial intelligence positions.

Awari AI's landmark project promises transformative impact on Ikorodu, unlocking opportunities for growth and development.

"In Ikorodu, we have not been able to participate fully and harness the benefits of



Artificial Intelligence due to its foreign origin," stated Senator Abiru during the unveiling of Awari

AI's ground-breaking initiative.

The Commissioner for Science, Innovation, and Technology, Hon.



Tunbosun Alake, revealed that the State Government is committed to partnering on this visionary project.

He expressed gratitude to Senator Abiru for driving an initiative that holds the potential to redefine the technological landscape of Ikorodu.

Dignitaries present at the occasion included HRM Oba Engr. Kabir Adewale Shotobi, the Ayangbure of Ikorodu, who acknowledged the significance of the initiative for the local community. Oba Shotobi expressed optimism about Ikorodu becoming a hub for AI innovation, fostering economic growth and technological advancement.

The collaborative efforts between Awari AI and the State Government aim to bring tangible benefits to Ikorodu. Job creation, skills development, and economic empowerment are on the horizon, ensuring that the residents actively participate in the global AI sector.

Former deputy governor of Lagos State, Prince Abiodun Ogunleye, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe, and other local leaders echoed their support for the initiative, recognizing its potential to uplift Ikorodu's socio-economic landscape.

"As Awari AI begins hiring hundreds of individuals from Ikorodu through the SAIL Innovation Lab, we mark a historic moment for the community," emphasized Senator Abiru. This move provides Ikorodu residents with the opportunity to contribute actively to the global AI sector.

The support from individuals such as Prince Amid Oduborisha, President Oriwu Club, and Local Government council chairmen signifies a shared vision for Ikorodu's prosperity through technological innovation.

As Ikorodu emerges as a focal point for AI development, this collaborative effort is set to position the community as a key player in the global technology landscape.

## Senator Abiru Inducted into Ikorodu Division Hall of Fame

By Nurudeen Adebayo



In a momentous event at the Ikorodu Town Hall, Senator Mukhail Adetokunbo Abiru, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance, and other Financial Institutions, was accorded a warm reception as he was inducted into the

prestigious Ikorodu Division Hall of Fame. The induction, organized by the Ikorodu Division Resource Development Group (IDRDG), recognized Senator Abiru's exceptional contributions to the development of Ikorodu division and

the Lagos East Senatorial District.

Senator Abiru joined an esteemed group of individuals, including HRM Oba Engr. Kabiru Adewale Shotobi, Adegorushe V, The Ayangbure of Ikorodu Kingdom, and other notable personalities who have significantly impacted the region.

Noteworthy was the posthumous recognition of Late Dr. Jacobson Oladele Odulate, Late Chief Noah Oyekanmi Adebayo Arole, and Late Captain Harrison Adekunle Kuti.

The senator's admission into the Hall of Fame, a historic moment for the Ikorodu division, was a testament to his illustrious career, both in private and public service.

Senator Abiru, a former Managing Director/CEO of Polaris Bank Limited, played a pivotal role in the turnaround of SkyeBank Plc, ensuring the stability of the Nigerian financial system.

Hailing from a family with a legacy of service, Senator Abiru's father, Honourable Justice Mubasheer Akanbi Olatunji Abiru, was previously inducted into the Ikorodu Hall of Fame in 1993, further emphasizing the family's commitment to the community education and human capital development by donating N5 million to IDRDG initiatives.

His commitment to public service was highlighted by his successful election as

the Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in December 2020, securing an overwhelming 89% of the votes cast.

During his two and a half years in office, Senator Abiru redefined governance in the Lagos East Senatorial District through exemplary legislative representation, project facilitation, and empowerment initiatives. His outstanding performance resonated with the electorate, leading to his resounding re-election on February 25, 2023. Senator Tokunbo Abiru's professional journey includes key roles in leading Nigerian financial

institutions, such as First Bank of Nigeria and Guaranty Trust Bank. A fellow of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) and an Honorary Fellow of The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (FCIB), Senator Abiru's academic background includes a B.Sc. in Economics from Lagos State University and alumni status from both Lagos Business School (LBS) and Harvard Business School.

Happily married to Mrs. Feyisola Abiru, the couple is blessed with children. Senator Abiru's induction into the Ikorodu Division Hall of Fame marks not only a personal achievement but also a celebration of his commitment to the progress and well-being of the community.



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# Lawmaker, Emmanuel, Preaches Cleanliness At Oko-Oba Abbatoir

Kehinde Adeleye



The Lawmaker representing Ifako Ijaiye Constituency II at the Lagos State House of Assembly, Mr. Emmanuel Olotu visited the popular Oko Oba meat market Ifako Ijaiye as part of his oversight function. The visit, according to

the legislator who chairs the House Committee on Agriculture at the LAHA, was to ensure that the operators keep to the safety and health standards in the production and packaging of meat. He also emphasized the importance of

keeping in mind that poor hygienic food has been identified to contribute to recent global epidemics. "The number of people contracting cholera, diphtheria, and dysentery each day at various facilities around the nation is steadily rising and these

diseases are well-known. This is the reason for our visit, according to Olotu, so we could personally learn about the condition of the market, the goods being offered, and the surroundings" he said. To guarantee that every product sold in

the market is safe for human consumption, he assured the traders and customers that the market would receive a makeover that would bring it up to international standards of practice in the business. Olotu met with Abbatior's Seriki Hausawa, who assisted

him in navigating the market and introduced him to relaxed stakeholders. He also assured the Seriki of his intention not to intimidate anybody within the market, but described the visit as an opportunity to forge a relationship that will be beneficial to everyone across board.

# Olowa Seeks Leaders' Views for 2024 Budget



Ibeju-Lekki Local Government chairman, (Engr.) Abdullahi Sesan Olowa hosted the Local Government's Stakeholders to get their inputs in readiness for the preparation of the Year 2024 Budget.

Olowa emphasised on the importance of Stakeholders in Governance at all levels, particularly in Grassroots Development.

He recalled how their contributions had assisted in the provision of projects and programmes needed and executed by the Local Government.

"Because we count you worthy, we invited you here today to get directly your yearnings and lacks in order to make adequate budgetary provisions for the seven Political Wards that make up Ibeju-Lekki Local Government" the Mayor

said.

Baales, Political Leaders, Market Leaders, CDC/CDA Representatives, Youth Representatives, Artisans, Farmers and others who spoke at the occasion commended Olowa's administration for its achievements at all levels in the past while stating their requests per Political Ward for it to be captured in the Year 2024 Budget.

The Council Chair seized the opportunity of the Consultative Forum to brief the gathering on the current agreement with EKEDC regarding the epileptic Electric Power Supply the Council Area is facing

with the assurance that a lasting solution will be proffered soon with all hands on deck.

The influx of illegal immigrants into various communities of the Council Area was also raised and adequate solutions and suggestions was given to arrest the situation of illegal immigrants as well as the best way to curb the peddling of narcotics on beaches and other places in the area.

Olowa promised his Administration to adequately take into cognisance, capture in the Budget and make a reality of most if not all of the stakeholders' requests next year.

# Ikosi-Ejirin LCDA Holds Stakeholders Meeting Over 2024 Budget

By Mohammed Adekola.

Ikosi-Ejirin Local Council Development Area (LCDA) hosted a Stakeholders Consultative Forum at the LCDA Secretariat, Agbowa. The event attracted a diverse array of attendees, representing various sectors and interests from across the communities of the LCDA.

The gathering brought together distinguished guests from different strata of society to share and exchange insights for the upcoming 2024 budget. Notable among distinguished stakeholders present included royal fathers, HRM Oba Asunmo Ganiyu Aderibigbe, the Alayandelu of Odo-Ayandelu Kingdom, and HRM Oba Elias Omoloro, the Olota of Otta-Ikosi. Other Royal

fathers were ably represented, along with Gazetted chiefs, Baales, CDC/CDA Executives, Religious Leaders, Party Chieftains, and other prominent figures.

The Chairman of Ikosi-Ejirin LCDA, Akogun Wale Raji Anomo, after reading out some of the achievements and progress recorded over the years and how much the previous stakeholders' consultative forum held has significantly assisted in making sure that the activities of his administration are people-centric. He led the delegation, with the Vice Chairman, Alhaji Wasiu Dehinsilu, and other Executive Cabinet members actively participating. The Councillors present were led in by the Deputy Leader of the House, Mr. Wahab Qudus, while the

Council Manager, Mr. Sunday Awobajo and other management staff were also present.

The forum provided an open platform for stakeholders to discuss pressing community issues and share insights pivotal for shaping the 2024 budget. Discussions ranged from sustainable development initiatives to infrastructure improvements, educational enhancements, and the overall welfare of residents.

Chairman Anomo expressed gratitude to the stakeholders present for honoring the invitation of the Council. He emphasized the significance of collaborative efforts in achieving community goals and underscored the commitment of Ikosi-Ejirin LCDA to transparent and inclusive governance.



Oba Asunmo Ganiyu Aderibigbe commended the Chairman for his purposeful and impactful Leadership,

pointing out areas which the Chairman and his Cabinet need to also work on generally in order to have a more

prosperous Ikosi-Ejirin LCDA, which the Chairman appreciated and promised to work upon.

# Abiru's SAIL Innovation Lab Trains Over 100 Youths

By Mohammed Adekola.



Over one hundred young people who had undergone Tech Talent and Data Science training at the SAIL Innovation Lab have gotten decent artificial intelligence jobs with Awari AI, a fast-growing AI/Robotics firm that is enabling the development and

adoption of frontier technology on the African continent starting from Nigeria.

The firm which has chosen the SAIL Innovation Lab in Ikorodu as a launchpad to several locations in Nigeria and Africa, also partnered with the SAIL Innovation Lab for continuous talent

sourcing for the emerging multi billion dollar AI industry that is expected to shape all spheres of life in a few years from now.

The Senator representing Lagos East, Senator Mukhail Adetokunbo Abiru, in his remarks said the launch of partnership

with Awari AI signaled the beginning of a transformative journey in Ikorodu, and Lagos East Senatorial District as a whole.

He said, "The Awari AI project, which we launch, stands as a testament to our resolute commitment to embracing technology and innovation. It heralds a new era where industries will be redefined, jobs will be created, and our youth will be empowered.

"Throughout the annals of history, humanity has been witness to extraordinary revolutions. From the advent of steam power to the electrifying dawn of electricity, and from the proliferation of computers to the connected world of the internet, each era brought profound transformations to our lives.

"We stand on the precipice of the 4th Industrial Revolution, a realm characterized by artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, biotechnology, and automation. This revolution promises unprecedented opportunities for Nigeria and Africa, and it is incumbent upon us

to seize this moment".

Senator Abiru disclosed that he was passionate about tech and digital skills because of the massive job opportunities and economic growth that the sector can facilitate. He recalled that since 2022 when he embarked on the SAIL Innovation Lab project with five pilot programmes, over 150 participants in-class and 1,200 online trainees have been impacted positively.

"The SAIL Innovation Lab has left an indelible mark on the lives of over 4,173 participants through a diverse array of programs, including Tech Talent Development, STEM initiatives tailored for Senior Secondary School Students, Lagos East Teachers Fellowship, Start-Up Accelerator, and Data Science for Society.

"These programs have now evolved to offer job prospects through our esteemed partner organizations. Awari AI has taken the lead by employing nearly 100 of our graduates and pledging to continue its role as a platform for future outstanding participants seeking employment.

"In an era where digital skills have become an

essential currency, the SAIL Innovation Lab serves as a bridge, closing the digital divide. Our vision is to provide free training to young individuals in high-demand tech skills and work collaboratively with our partners to secure them decent job placements", Senator Abiru said in his remarks.

The minister of Communications and digital economy, Dr Bosun Tijani, said the SAIL Innovation Lab has been achieving its goals in less than seven months after the state of the earth innovation lab was commissioned.

Dr Tijani said, "We set out to open up the minds of young people to opportunities that are available globally, and these opportunities are no longer the preserve of the developed world. We live at a time when technology now connects each and everyone of us strongly. The technologies have given us the opportunities to overcome barriers and be part of the global economy.

The Commissioner for Science, Innovation and Technology, Hon. Tunbosun Alake, disclosed that the State Government will be partnering on the project. He thanked Senator Abiru for driving the initiative.

## Former Speaker, Ikuforiji, Emerges Epe Man of the Year.

By Mohammed Adekola.

The former speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Adeyemi Ikuforiji has emerged the Epe Division Man of the Year with more than 40% of the votes. Ikuforiji, a political icon in the Epe Division, was recognised for his positive influence in advancing the community development.

Epe Division Community Annual Awards (EDCAA) 2023 has produced at least 15 winners. They were announced at the event on Wednesday night. The event, which was hosted by the Concerned Nation Builders Initiative (CNI), witnessed some big margin and small margin victories. The awards, which were voted for by the public in an online poll,

were won by individuals, schools, organisations, and communities.

One of the most influential winners of the night was the apex leader of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Epe Division, Alhaji Akanni Seriki Bamu, who won the Epe Ambassador of the Year award for the Male category.

Yeye Chief Iyabo Osifeso won the Female category of the Epe Ambassador of the Year award, while media



entrepreneur, Babatunde Kaka, was voted the Youth

Influencer of the Year. St. Michael's Anglican Primary School, Popo

Oba, Epe, won the Best Primary School award with 28% of the vote, while Epe Girls Junior School was the recipient of the Best Public Junior Secondary School award. Epe Senior Grammar School, Epe, easily won the Best Senior Secondary School award with 45.9% of the vote.

Epe Federal Constituency also won the Most Performing Constituency award, while Epe Local Government was named the Most Performing LG/LCDA with 40.1% of

# Hamzat commends Ansar-Ud-Deen for commissioning ultra-modern hospital

By Rasaan Adebayo

Lagos State Deputy Governor, Dr. Kadri Hamzat, has commended Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, Akoka Branch, for establishing an ultra-modern hospital to offer quality health services to Nigerians.

The Deputy Governor charged religious bodies, social and other non-governmental organisations to collaborate with the government in its quest to ameliorate citizens' plights and bring services closer to them.

He said: "No nation develops just by the activities of the government alone, though such activities are essential but

citizens, religious bodies, charity organisations and non-state institutions also have roles to play in ameliorating the pains of people and bringing services closer to the people." Hamzat said the newly commissioned facility would bring healthcare closer to the people, relieve other general hospitals, and reduce the government's workload.

The Chairman, Akoka Branch, Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, Alhaji Alade Bashir Lawal stated that the commissioning of the hospital was to connect medical care and the general wellbeing of the people, noting that "the general

wellbeing of the people is inextricably related."

He noted that the facility underpinned the Akoka Branch's vision of building a good medical facility aimed at improving the health of the people and meet the particular needs of patients, families and communities.

Lawal solicited additional support from other members and well-wishers towards equipping the hospital with more facilities for effective utilisation.

Also in his remarks, the President of Ansar-Ud-Deen Society, Nigeria and Overseas, Alhaji Abdul-Rafiu Ademola Sanni commended the Akoka Branch for the laudable project, and appealed to the state government to



Dr. Obafemi Kadiri cutting the tape

hasten the ongoing construction of the road leading to the facility to ease movement to the hospital.

The immediate past President of the Society, Alhaji Abdul-Lateef

Olufemi Okunnu, who spoke through the State Council Chairman, Alhaji Rahman Salaudeen, admonished the members of the society to take ownership of the hospital by ensuring

that adequate maintenance is given to the facility. He urged the society to patronise the hospital for its personal use and ensure that the purpose it was made for is sustained.



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# Google Academy Awards N75m to 15 Nigerians

By Rasaq Adebayo

**N**ow fewer than 5,300 small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) across Africa have been awarded startup funds after graduating from Google's Hustle Academy.

The platform stated that the beneficiaries have showcased their commitment to enhancing their business skills and knowledge.

The graduation on Thursday marked a continuation of the programme's impact, with over 10,300 entrepreneurs having participated since its inception in 2022.

According to the firm, Hustle Academy programme, designed to address specific challenges faced by SMBs in Africa, offers practical skills and

resources to help the businesses grow.

"This year's graduation adds to the momentum gained from last year's 5,000 graduates, reflecting a growing community of businesses engaged in continuous learning and improvement.

"Alongside the graduation, 15 SMBs have been chosen to receive support from the N75 million Hustle Academy Fund. This initiative aims to provide a combination of financial assistance, mentorship, and business tool access to some of the most promising Nigerian SMBs. The recipients represent various industries and demonstrate the creativity of Nigerian entrepreneurs," it stated.

The Google West Africa Country Director, Olumide Balogun, said:



"The passion and resilience shown by these SMBs are truly inspiring. The Hustle Academy is a testament to what focused training and resources can

achieve. We are not just celebrating their graduation; we are recognising their potential to reshape and invigorate the Nigerian business landscape."

Commenting on the programme, one of the beneficiaries, the founder of Wauley Projects Limited, and a graduate from Nigeria, Femi Bolaji, said: "The

Hustle Academy has equipped us with vital business knowledge, and being selected for the fund is a significant boost that will propel our business forward."

**L**eading telecommunications network, Airtel, alongside its subsidiary, Smartcash Payment Service Bank, has been recognized at the highly esteemed LAIF (Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival) awards with a significant haul of trophies.

The recognition took place at the 18th edition of the foremost creativity event in Nigeria, ceremony which was held on Saturday, November 18, 2023, at The Hall, Victoria Island, Lagos. Airtel received a total of 20 awards, including 8 gold, 5 silver, and 7 bronze, while Smartcash secured 2 bronzes. According to LAIF, these companies showcased their

## Airtel, Smartcash Win 22 Awards at Advertising, Ideas Festival

By Rasaq Adebayo

incredible creativity and innovation in their advertising campaigns, demonstrating their commitment to delivering unique and engaging content.

Commenting on the recognition, Marketing Director, Airtel Nigeria, Ismail Adeshina said: "We are thrilled to receive multiple recognitions at the LAIF awards. It is good to know that our efforts towards delivering exceptional communications and driving meaningful brand engagement that



resonates with our customers are being recognized."

Chief Executive Officer, Smartcash, Muyiwa Ebitanmi, also expressed delight at the recognition, saying:

"We believe that the recognition is a testament to our dedication and hard work since we launched into the market. This will definitely fuel

passion to continue pushing the boundaries of creativity and innovation in the advertising industry." By clinching a total of 22 awards, Airtel, together with Smartcash, has once again solidified their positions as industry frontrunners.

The awards highlight their outstanding creativity and strategic brand communication and their consistency in maintaining high standards across multiple campaigns.

The Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF) is an annual event of the

Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN) that is widely regarded as the most prestigious platform in the Nigerian advertising industry that celebrates excellence, originality, and effectiveness. It is a platform that recognizes, rewards, and fosters creative excellence in all areas of marketing communications while helping to improve the quality of creative craft and to promote the spirit of healthy competition, applying global best practices to local executions.

# Beneficiaries Commend RAK Foundation On Provision Of Palliatives

By Saheed Afolabi

The beneficiaries of the food palliatives recently distributed by RAK foundation have commended the organisation for easing food consumption on them in the midst of high cost of living.

Leading Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Badagry distributed food palliative provided by

the Lagos State Government to the residents of Badagry.

The palliative according to the team RAK foundation lead, Antonia Sobulo is distributed to the vulnerable households, aged and less privileged across three riverine communities in Badagry of Gbaji, Gberefu Island and Imoba community. Sobulo noted that rice, bean, garri are the food items that were in the package for the

beneficiaries.

One of the beneficiaries, Mrs Senami Semasa appreciate the Lagos State Government for the palliative and commended the effort of RAK Foundation for ensuring it gets to the grassroots.

"We hardly benefit from Government program of this nature, we are happy that RAK foundation has brought this to us and pray that God will continue to bless the organisation." She said.



# Badagry LG Boss Reels Out Achievements Ahead of 2024 Budget Presentation

By Saheed Afolabi

The chairman of Badagry LG, Mr Olu Segun Onilude has reeled out his achievements in office while presenting the year 2024 budget to the legislative arm of the council.

The year 2024 budget tagged 'Budget of Consolidation' was laid before the legislators as part of the procedures for the operation.

The council boss appreciated the council authorities and various departments for their support in ensuring the judicious use of the 2023 budget.

"The outgoing year 2023 budget was prepared and implemented in line with the state government's agenda and the manifesto of our great party, All Progressives Congress (APC).

"I thank the executive council, the management team, led by the Council-Manager/Head of

Admin, the political leaders, Obas, Baales, Chiefs, the entire members of staff of the local government, and the entire populace of our dear local government, for their unalloyed support and encouragement."

Onilude appraised the budget performance of the previous budget.

"In the current and outgoing fiscal year, this administration has embarked on many projects which includes but not limited to the following; Completion of the new administration building, Completion of the customary court building, Remodelling of the Badagry Town hall, Construction of PHC at Ajara-Torikoh, and Marina, Badagry, Construction of staff quarters, Purchase of Generator set and other valuable equipment for the PHCs, Construction of modern staff toilets, Purchase of 500kva transformers for Awhanjigoh and Ajara-Isalu Communities,



Purchase of revenue buses, Official cars and Grader, etc.

Onilude affirms his administration's commitment to the core values of quality service delivery and responsive governance.

"For us as an administration, we do not want to relent in our resolve to continue to set the pace through

people-oriented projects and policies. From the summary of our activities spanning six years and counting, it is indisputably clear that so far the objectives of my administration have been achieved. The goal is to continue to do more."

The leader of the house, Taofik Akindele in his remarks promised that

the bill will be passed into law in the shortest possible time.

"The legislative council remains committed and will work tirelessly to pass the bill into law within the shortest possible time. Our budget performance for this fiscal year as reported by the Department of Budget is 90%. This house

commends you on the many significant projects embarked on by this administration.

"There is no gainsaying that money is the breath of life of any government, this house is fully committed as lawmakers to intensify efforts on our oversight functions to support your administration policy on revenue generation."

# Igando-Ikotun Council Boss Restates Commitment To Sports Development

Kehinde Adeleye

**T**he Chairman, Igando ikotun Local Council Development Area (LCDA) Mr. Akinsanya Lasisi Ayinde at the weekend graced the

Community Primary School 1 ijegun inter-house sports competition, restating the commitment of his administration to sports development. Akinsanya, who was thrilled with the

students' performance, said that his administration would not leave any stone unturned in the development of grassroots sports. He said, "Education is that reset button you can press to change the society. We are lucky in Igando-Ikotun; we always had that culture. So, what we are doing in Ijegan is not new. We are trying to bring back what we have always

known: the all-round development of the child. "This is what our politics and our whole existence is about. It cannot be about us but the next generation. When I

see people in the society talk only about themselves and not about those who are not as privileged and those who are more vulnerable, it's quite upsetting."



# KJ Viktoria Emerges Champions Of Bet9ja Competition

By Saheed Afolabi

**K**J Viktoria have emerged the champions of the maiden edition of the Bet9ja Foundation Football Competition at the Ejigbo mini stadium, Lagos. Both sides played a barren draw in regulation time as the game was settled with the penalty shootout which KJ Viktoria won 5-4 by defeating Great Success FC. The game was an excruciating encounter as both sides were familiar foes that battled hard to gain momentum in the game.

The first half produced no goal as both sides resumed hostilities in the second half. KJ Viktoria had the most clear-cut chance in the second half but the effort was set wayward off the goal post in the 77th minute. The encounter couldn't produce any goal in 90 minutes as the center referee signalled for the game to go straight to penalty shootout. KJ Viktoria were the stronger side in the penalty shootout as their goalkeeper saved three spot kicks



against two spot kicks saved by Great Success goalkeeper. BYT Academy, Christian Uwandu was adjudged the highest goal scorer of

the tournament as he head the goal scorers chart with five goals. KJ Viktoria Tobi James was the Player Of The

Tournament following his match winning contributions to his side. Great Success FC Maxwell Usoro won the

award for the best goalkeeper of the tournament with his great reflexes and great goalkeeping skills which endeared him the award.

# Solaty Fatimoh Instrumental To Dannaz Ladies Win

By Saheed Afolabi

**D**annaz Ladies assistant captain, Solaty Fatimoh was instrumental to her club's first win in the Nigeria Women Football League (NWFL) Premiership against Naija Ratels. The Lagos-based side defeated Naija Ratels 2-0 at the Mobolaji Johnson Arena, Onikan. Delight Isaac scored a brace as Solaty made her NWFL Premiership debut to give the newly promoted first win in the elite Nigeria women's football League. Solaty solidified the control of the game to give Super Falcons captain, Onome Ebi led team a run for their money. The charismatic striker disclosed that the win

against Naija Ratels was a call to actions for her and the team. "I'm very happy about it and it's a wake up call for us because I believed we can do better than that, and we still have big matches ahead of us so we have to keep working hard and not allow the win to get to our head," she said. On playing against Super Falcons captain, Solaty applauded the veteran leadership skills. "It was a great honor playing against her. Her dedication to the team is what we young and upcoming players are looking up to." The Cedars will play host to Nasarawa Amazons at the Mobolaji Johnson Arena, Onikan on November 29.





## HEROES & HEROINES OF LAGOS

# A pioneer's legacy: Nathaniel Folarin Coker (July 22, 1923 – August 12, 2020)

The common sights, sounds and smells of Lagos Island's neatly swept narrow streets, yes the town had street sweepers, public water pumps strategically located at corners and intersections, the streets were lit and you would typically see the fortunately placed office workers in white short sleeves, and the wealthier merchants arrive in traditional well embroidered attire; the traders returning from markets as they approached home frontages with intricate agboles where branches of families lived hidden behind; the waft of freshly baked bread greeting passers by.

Elective democracy had been introduced in Nigeria, a new constitution (known as the Clifford Constitution, after Governor Hugh Clifford) was promulgated. General elections were to be held in Nigeria for the first time in 1923.

This was the Colony province of Lagos in British Colonial Nigeria, the land of his birth and so it was, on a Sunday the 22nd of July 1923 when Alfred Babatunde Coker the eldest son of S. Alfred Coker a merchant of Balogun Square Ereko in the famed Olowogbowo area of Lagos who had married Eudora Remilekun Coker had: Nathaniel Folarin, one of their five children.

The five children Stella, Bode (Theophilus Olabode) and then the third Nathaniel Folarin. After him was Emmanuel Jonathan Olusegun and the fifth child was a girl Oluwatoyin (later Mrs Toyin Animashaun).

Folarin was a 'Lagos boy', a product of his environment, as every child is. His was the beautiful Lagos, where everyone on the island new one another, streets had meanings and local home government, was the only thing you knew and feared. The Lagos that did not tolerate the not -acceptable, or nonsense; 'eko o gba gber'.

This Lagos, in 1923 was the place of his birth and Oke Popo was his 'area', in days when the term 'area boys' was merely a description of where you came from. Popo is fairly central on the map of Lagos Island and Joseph Street runs like an artery from the



Marina, to Broad Street, Campbell, Igbosere, Bamgbose to Ricca streets – it was at number 28 Joseph street on the 22nd of July 1923 that Nathaniel Folarin Coker was born.

Baptised at Christ Church Marina, he was a regular Sunday school boy, served in the choir and enrolled in many church activities for the youth such as 'The Kuramo Campers' for young boys, where he was an award-winning swimmer. His strong church grooming saw him breakfasting with Bishop Leslie Gordon Vining and living at a time at Cathedral House with Bishop Howells.

Eleven years later he was enrolled at CMS Grammar School where he was described in his school leaving certificate on 30 May 1942 as follows:

"Coker is a lively intelligent and thoughtful young man whose presence in the school has been a pleasure to pupils and staff alike. He has shown himself, trustworthy and loyal. I can commend him to any he meets or works with, with confidence."

He then voyaged to Exeter in England, where he attended the university college now University of Exeter from 1948 -1950. There he obtained a Diploma in Public Administration. While he was in the UK, he consummated a friendship that had started from back home in his school days, a love that matured and travelled across the sea, which led to marriage in 1951 to Miss Larvinia Apinke ('Auntie Pinkie') Vaughan.

And then to the Inns of court, where he was called to the English Bar at Lincoln's Inn on 12th July 1960. His appetite for pioneering work was just beginning at the time when Nigeria was contemplating its future, Coker enrolled for and obtained a Higher Standard Certificate in Hausa, which he became a fluent speaker of, and joined the Public Service of Sokoto Province Northern Region as an Administrative Assistant in 1951. He moved to Kano province as an Assistant District Officer (Administrative class) in 1954. He struck many friendships as he rose through the ranks of northern public service and was fondly called 'Bature Coker' meaning 'whiteman Coker' by both friends and colleagues, like Alhaji Ibrahim Aminu (Uban Aiki) later Tafida of Sokoto and Muhammadu Maccido then Ciroman Sokoto and later Sultan of Sokoto.

Public service was his calling and once regionalisation took hold in Nigeria he moved to the Western Nigeria Public Service to be again – a pioneer – in that service. There he served as a senior Assistant in the Ministry of Justice, then led by the Attorney General & Minister of Justice Chief FRA Williams. Always a pioneer, he was in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information when that ministry ushered into creation the Mid-Western region. Ultimately becoming deputy permanent secretary in the Western Nigeria Ministry of Education in April 1964. His last posting in the West

was Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance till 1968 when he was called to the ultimate pioneering work – the creation of a new public service in Nigerias' oldest former colony but newest State, Lagos State.

The Governor of Western Nigeria, Colonel Adeyinka Adebayo agreed with the new Military Governor of the new Lagos State Major Mobolaji Johnson to despatch 'three of the best' Mr. S A Thomas who was assigned to Local Government and Chieftaincy affairs; Mr. A. B. A Johnston who took up Works & Planning and Mr. Folarin Coker who took up two ministries – Agriculture & Natural Resources as well as Trade & Industries! He struck a good working relationship with the Commissioner Alhaji Ganiyu Dawodu and cut the path for National and International trade fairs. No surprise that he was sent on to create the new ministry of Information and Tourism. As fate would have it, his son Folorunsho, would later be appointed Lagos State Commissioner for Tourism, the same ministry his father created. He is now Director General of Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation.

Folarin Coker was still to cut new pioneer paths yet again in the Ministries of Sports and Social Development under the first Naval Military Governors of Lagos State Navy Captains Shamsudeen Lawal and Ndubuisi Kanu.

He retired from civil, but not public service in 1989 at the statutory age of 55 full of vigour and miles of pioneering still in him; he went on to several national appointments. Becoming a fellow of the National Institute of International Affairs and conferred with the status of Officer of the Most Distinguished Order of the Niger (OON). In 1993 he was appointed Pro Chancellor and Chairman of Council of the University of Port Harcourt. In befitting honour the Lagos State Government named the Lagos State Clinic at the state secretariat Alausa after him.

His best known and most famous moniker is Baba Eto, the title became so coveted that it has been emulated by many in social circles; but in fact it was a formal and solemn title 'The Baba Eto of Lagos' as official spokesman and master curator of ceremonial occasions was conferred on him by Oba Adeyinka Oyekan II the revered Oba of Lagos; HRH Ooni Sijuwade Olubuse II later titled him Baba Eto of Yorubaland ensuring that only he held that moniker as of right.

He was socially conscious with a heart for community affairs –

leading to his conferment with the title Bobagunwa of Ijede Ekiti; he was a lovable sociable grandee, a self described 'social heavyweight' and therefore a leading member "Elderman" of Yoruba Tennis Club and Island Club. In later years he would be often immaculately turned out in white traditional attire with shoes that were the envy of any gathering.

He was a boardroom and corporate guru participating in many large invested private and quoted companies. In one dispute he battled, the now well known locus classicus court case GLOBE FISHING INDS. LTD. v. COKER (1990) 7 NWLR (PT. 162) 265 – all the way to the Supreme Court of Nigeria. Which I appeared in as counsel, albeit on the opposing side.

He was an avid writer, in one of his many books ('Salute to Stewardship') he quoted what must have been one of his favoured sayings: "Of mans legacy to eternity, the greatest is the written word" from Plato in Utopia.

I am particularly proud that I share more than one vocation with Chief Baba Eto; he was a senior lawyer, writer, biographer and therefore historian, his many books include 'A Nigerian Hero: Sir Adetokunboh Ademola'; " Iya Eko: Oyinkan Abayomi"; and 'The life of Bishop Kale'.

By his own admission one of his favourite homilies in his own voice was: 'Well well; I think I would say to you all – do thou always your best and leave to God the rest. For God is our paymaster'

The gift of longevity is, at the end, Gods gift but he left us with some other tips, he never used his installed air conditioning, never had a mobile phone and often ate amala and ewedu. Habits to be emulated perhaps?

He passed peacefully at 97 years, on Wednesday 12th of August 2020, with church music he requested for, playing softly to his ears. His memory will always be a blessing to his family and his nation.

He will be fondly remembered and sorely missed by 'Mama Foli', Alhaja Humuani Olayinka Agoro, and by Folorunsho and Aisha and his grandchildren Feyintola, Folayinka, Feyiseye Femi & Fife.

Chief Folarin Coker will be gratefully remembered by his beloved Lagos State and Nigeria - at -large for his pioneering work and by the Nigeria that he traversed without bias. He will be eternally remembered for his pioneering noble public service, which led to a long joyous 'beautiful life'.

(Called from Curdipia)



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