




**I Am Going To Be Your Next President**  
- Akpabio ▶ p2



**Edu Advises Women To Contest For Political Offices** ▶ p2

**PASTOR UMO ENO IS A BEACON OF LIGHT**

“ He is one of the few Christians we have in the East, not only in Akwa Ibom, but in the whole of the Eastern part of Nigeria who has shown creativity, imagination, dedication, boldness and commitment. I think God has given him the ability to translate the Bible to meet the needs of the people. ”



To know a man's character, check his history.  
Rev Dr Uma Ukpai (April, 2014)

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# The EVANGELIST

... A Peculiar Voice In The Crowd

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## 2023 PRESIDENTIAL RACE:

# Udom To Sign Pact With Workers

By **Wale Raji, Lagos**

**A**s Nigerian workers celebrate Worker's Day this year May 1, governor of Akwa Ibom State and leading presidential aspirant on the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), has said help is on the way to suffering Nigerian workers and masses. In a goodwill message to Nigerian workers released on his behalf by Bola Bolawole, spokesperson of the Udom Emmanuel Presidential Campaign Council, Gov. Emmanuel said the suffering of Nigerian workers have not gone unnoticed and their cries for help have not gone unheard.

"Tell Nigerian workers, indeed all Nigerians, that help is on the way. I have

Contd on back page



Gov. Udom Emmanuel and leading presidential aspirant of the PDP addressing the media after being screened by the party leadership at Legacy House, Abuja

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**Kidnappers Knelt Down, Begged Me To Pray For Them Before Releasing Me** - Apostle John Okoriko ▶ p3

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CMYK



## NEWS

# I Am Going To Be Your Next President -Akpabio



Senator Godswill Akpabio, Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, will declare his intention to vie for office of Nigeria's President in the 2023 general elections on Wednesday.

Akpabio who defected to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in 2018 will contest under the party. Jackson Udom, Chief Press Secretary to the minister, who spoke with Straightnews publisher confirmed Akpabio's declaration bid on Monday, May 2.

"Yes, it is true. He will declare on Wednesday. We had scheduled the date for Thursday but was rescheduled so that it does not clash with Mr. President Buhari's visit to Ebonyi on Thursday," Udom said.

"My boss will declare at Ikot Ekpene Stadium in Akwa Ibom at 11 a.m. We invite all to the uncommon declaration," he added.

Akpabio, Akwa Ibom Governor from 2007-2015, was popularly known as 'Uncommon transformer' in different quarters owing to his life-changing projects in the state.

The Niger Delta Affairs Minister will square against Nigeria's Vice President

Yemi Osinbajo; Bola Tinubu, former Lagos Governor; Rotimi Amaechi, Transportation Minister, and Yahaya Bello, Kogi Governor, among others for the ticket.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Akwa Ibom State has debunked the allegation that the just concluded party AdHocDelegate elections last Saturday in the State did not hold.

In an interview with our reporter, Mr. Aniekan Akpan, the State Party Chairman said that the exercise took place in all the Local Government Areas across the State and evidences abound.

"I am amazed at these allegations which amount to nothing because party faithfuls turn out enmass to vote for their candidate and duly elected the three AdHoc delegates as stipulated by law without rancor and crisis. I've also heard of the said protests,

# PDP Denies Manipulation Of Primaries

but I think such actions were mere waste of time because every party members has confirmed taking part in the exercise," he said.

A group of persons, who claimed to be PDP members were seen on TV with play cards, purportedly protesting the high jacking

of materials and intimidation.

Akpan said those who protested if any wanted to foment trouble and perhaps were disappointed because those they supported did not win.

"We always play by the rules and those who worked hard deserve to win, not

some party members who were not in their community during the primaries but now wants to cause confusion or attract unnecessary attention. They should know that politics is a game of numbers because the majority will always have their way."

# Edu Advises Women To Contest For Political Offices

The newly elected Women Leader of the Ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) Dr. Betta Edu said she is encouraged that more women have picked up forms to contest the forthcoming party's primary.

Edu in an interview on Tuesday disclosed that in her party, two women have bought nomination forms, 8 for National Assembly, and several for House of Assembly.

She said, "The numbers that i have given was as at Monday, I am sure more

are still coming up to purchase their forms. We are also encouraging others to come out and contest. Our women are often intimidated by the men because most of them do wait for opportunity, this is not what you do in politics, if

you want to succeed, you compete and fight for recognition. We are trying to educate the women to do this and make bold steps.

"In Nigeria, they often say that politics is a dirty game and associate it with violence too, I've been in politics for years now, attend late politics meetings, for example, I have started a meeting by 8am and it ended 5am the next day, no man harassed me, instead they respected my contributions and take them seriously. Is only those who are not sincere and honest that chose to use politics to cover up their dirty habit. Therefore, women who are discipline can be in politics without lowering their guard."

Dr. Edu also commended women in other party parties, especially the SDP and PDP who have also picked up nomination forms to contest the forthcoming primaries of their party. She advised them to be tenacious, focus and work towards becoming candidate because that is the only way they can vie for election and qualify to represent their people.

# OBA, Okon Boycott Delegates Congress, Plan Protest March In Abuja, Uyo

Fresh indications have emerged on why the Senator representing Akwa Ibom North East, Senator Bassey Albert Akpan was conspicuously absent during the just concluded wards Adhoc delegates Congress in his ward in Ibiono Ibom local government area.

Our investigations reveal that Senator Bassey Albert and two other aspirants in the Governorship race in the State, had reportedly hatched a plot to instigate crises in the State through a sponsored protest which was geared to discredit the wards congresses in Akwa Ibom.

The two other aspirants, Mr Akan Okon and Mr Akan Udofia, it has been uncovered, are neck deep in an alleged plot to pay some

irate youths to go and stage an unwarranted protest match at the PDP national secretariat in Abuja.

"They are also hatching a plot to match some streets in Uyo to protest the outcome of the recently held congress, with allegations that the exercise did not hold.

"This is because they feel they can can unilaterally use their connection with the national leadership to cancel the result of the primaries held last Saturday," a source told our reporter.

Governor Udom Emmanuel had on Saturday, April 30th, addressed journalists in the State, after voting in the exercise in his ward, alleging that those complaining over the conduct of the primaries,

are either not in the State, or are just refusing to visit their respective wards centers, where the congresses are taking place. Our investigation reveals that Senator Bassey Albert for example, did not attend the exercise in his ward, a video of the exercise held in his Ward in Eastern Ibiono Ward 1, has surfaced online. Although no reason was given for his boycott of the exercise held at Government Primary School, Use Ikot Oku, some members of the ward were heard speculating that Senator Albert may have been busy attending to other issues in Uyo, the State capital.

The well attended exercise was conducted by the returning officer Mr Okon Essien for elected Adhoc

delegates at Ibiono Eastern Ward 1.

The winners who emerged after the open balloting were former Ibiono Ibom chairman, Prince Eyo Utit, Mr Victor Essien and Mrs Emem Eyibio.

A leader in the ward, Chief Isreal Utit commended the party faithfuls for their large turnout.

He hinted that since 1999, the area has always been faithful to PDP and assured that the members will remain peaceful throughout the exercise.

It was learnt that the other two aspirant fingered in the plot, Akan Okon from Itu local government area and Akan Udofia from Nsit Ibom local government area had also shunned the exercises in their respective wards.



BRIEFS:

**Kidnappers Knelt Down, Begged Me To Pray For Them Before Releasing Me – Apostle John Okoriko**



The founder of Solid Rock Kingdom Church, Apostle John Okoriko has shared his experience in the hands of kidnappers after his release. According to him, the kidnappers before releasing him, knelt down and asked him to pray for them. Recall that the pastor was whisked away from his house by some gunmen in April 2022. It was gathered that the terrorists had stormed the cleric's residence in Mkpato Enin Local Government Area of the state and abducted him while he was resting. Subsequently, they reached out to his family and church members to demand an initial payment of N100 million as ransom. Okoriko who has now regained his freedom narrated his awful experiences with the terrorists. According to him, the terrorists that abducted him are numbering about five. Okoriko told his followers that two among his abductors knelt before him to seek prayers before he was allowed to go. He said: "The torture was much. They did terrible things to my body to force me to bring money to them. I told them I have not seen such money in my entire life. "They told me I am the richest pastor in Akwa

Ibom. They did all manner of things to me. Out of the five-man gang that abducted me, two of them knelt and asked me to pray for them before they released me in the evening to go," Okoriko revealed. Apostle Okoriko commended the former Chairman of the State Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Prelate Emeritus of Methodist Church, Sunday Mbang, and founder of Believers Assembly, Apostle Isaiah Isong, for their roles in ensuring his release. He said the duo set up a team of people who gathered to pray for him. Okoriko said after his release, he first visited the capital ground of his church because it was close to the kidnapper's den, and Prelate Sunday Mbang, the next morning, following the dream he had about Mbang. He said, "That night, I saw my father who died in 1990 sitting in place as a court session with great men and women. When he talked to me, he turned to Prelate Sunday Mbang. "In the morning, I showed myself to Prelate Mbang and prostrated before him and told him my experiences. Quoting the scripture from Psalm 129: 2, I told him that from my youth, people have attacked me but they never prevailed over me."

COVER

**Why Government, Private Firms Honour the May Day Labour Holiday**

Unlike the master-slave relationship of the pre-colonial Nigerian society, modern industrial labour relationship is compelled by many factors to comply with some standard practices that tends or intends to better the lot of an average Nigerian worker. The workers day public holidays slated to hold on 1 May annually is one of such factors, a standard practice developed over the years of agitation by unions across the world, championed by the International Working Men Association to give some sense of dignity and power in their employment relationship with the employer. However, a typical employer, especially in Nigeria would not willingly want to grant such a freedom to his/her workers save for the agitative efforts of early Labour Union Activists.

I always give special credit to Late Dr Philip Imuodu in matters of this regard. The militant approach of his union established some ground-breaking legacies that benefit Nigerian workers to this day and in years to come. Nevertheless, efforts of the early unionists alone couldn't have pulled the string to give workers most of the privileges, like the May Day holiday celebration they are enjoying today. Other forces immensely contributed to the lasting changes that have occurred in employment relations in Nigeria over the years. My intention in this post is to deliberate on the above points and more as the major reasons why employers of Labour in

Nigeria have no choice but to honour the May Day workers celebration holiday. Now let's look at these factors in more details. Factors that Shaped Employment Relationship and Gave Birth to May Day Holiday in Nigeria International Standard Practices Compliance: even though the workers day holiday is a salient point in virtually every employment contract, it is a key point in the international statutes such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and the article of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Dignity of Labour is a very important aspect of the International Organisation Article. Therefore, as a way of celebrating the workers, every member nation of the ILO is obliged to observe some standard practices recognized by the organization, one of which

is special day celebration/observant like the May Day in Nigeria. Other member nations have special days set aside to celebrate their workers. Thus, employers have no option but seek to protect themselves and businesses by complying in order to avoid regulatory sanctions which may be leveled against default. This brings us to the next point. 2. Move to Avoid Sanctions for Defaulting on the Labour Act: My experience as an HR professional and Compliance Officer over the years I have learned many lessons regarding why organizations honour the May Day holiday. Like I highlighted in the previous point, the of sanctions by regulatory agencies is one of the reason. Two is the overall benefit or the direct or indirect effect of such a celebration of a special day for workers on productivity.

3. Recognition of the Peaceful Assembly and Association Clause: Labour Legislations in Nigeria is vocal about the right to peaceful assembly and association by employees of labour. The very reason is a negation of restricting workers by some employers from joining Labour Unions. Most organizations state clearly in their employee handbooks the workers are prohibited from participating or holding membership in unions. Therefore, there is no escape route for employers of labour than to comply with the regulation. However, granting workers freedom to participate in the May Day Holiday is more a gain than loss. 4. Influence of Collective bargaining. 5. Acknowledgement of the Dignity of Labour: Be it ever so salient, the pride to honour or be portrayed as a believer or observer of the dignity of labour.





**BRIEFS:**

## A'ibom State SIEC Preps To Have Highest Number Of Valid Votes Come 2023 General Elections

*By Solomon OKPO*

The Akwa Ibom state Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in preparation for the 2023 general elections holds a sensitisation seminar to build a solid voter base in Akwa Ibom. Speaking at the seminar which held at Ibo Hall Uyo on Thursday 28 April 2022, the deputy governor of Akwa Ibom state, Mr. Moses Ekpo said "It is critical that we should be armed properly so that our votes will count. Even in the nominations, the political parties will require that you vote people into primaries, as this factor is important in the voting process". He also made mention of cultivating a good approach towards the voting exercise, whether PDP or not, we all should be able to vote responsibly, to make sure that each vote counts. Speaking also at the seminar, the chairman Akwa Ibom state Independent National Electoral Commission (AKISIEC) Elder Aniedi Ikoikwak, spoke on the need

to collectively build a solid voter base in our bid to secure a strong and influential presence on Nigeria's electoral map. Elder Aniedi Ikoikwak further explained the purpose of the gathering as a means to stimulate a cross-fertilisation of ideas, strategies and modalities that would produce tangible results. He said "If Akwa Ibom is to achieve the objective of becoming a state with one of the highest number of valid voter registration figures in Nigeria, this would in no doubt be instrumental to making Akwa Ibom state a delectable bride for all political suitors in Nigeria". Elder Aniedi urged the carefully selected stake holders which cut across the executive and legislative arms of government, the 3rd tier of government, functional political parties, the traditional institution, Christian and Muslim leaders to put their authority to good use by conveying the outcome of this seminar to different communities beginning from the grass root level.



**NEWS**

# A Land Of Abundance, Overlooked

*By Our Correspondent*

The Mbiabong Mbat community, in Ini Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom, is a place of most intriguing paradox.

It has one of the richly blessed vast arable lands in the state, suitable for the production of various kinds of food and cash crops, but left in an 18th century state of living, for the agrarian local folks.

Following the establishment of the Mbiabong Mbat - Ekoi Government Model Rice Farm, in the 1960s, the community had become familiar with big scale farming activities of a Fadama type, for many decades.

From rice, maize, yam, okro, pepper, spring onions, fishery, palm wine and cucumber, the vast wetland that stretches from the Nkari Federal Government dam site, through the paddy fields of Akpeng-Ntan, the farm site, down to the farming community of the Ikpe Group of villages, the people make a dogged living through difficult terrain.

They toil and crop with no access roads, no supporting farm tools, electricity nor health facilities.

For Mbiabong Mbat,



particularly, it is the Udom Emmanuel administration that made history there, three years ago, when it wired, installed and connected the village to the public grid.

And even today, the people have never forgotten that feat.

The village head, Eteidung Jonah Udo, who spoke to The Evangelist recently, said the Udom administration was going to repeat the record-making strides in 2018, when the state government attempted to open up the area for real development.

A road project, put under the supervision of Dr. Godwin Ntukude, was to begin at the age-old Fiong-

Etok community market, traverse Mbiabong Ikot Udo, Mbiabong Mbat, through the Akpeng-Ntan wetland, down to Ekoi Ikpe Atan-Ubom.

Had the road been done to completion, the project would have open up a huge corridor for intensified agric production and produce evacuation, thus providing the much needed employment for the large number of youth in the area, aside enhancing the income and the food needs of the local households.

That dream failed. To make a real practical sense of that critical project, the soil needed to have been scarified and tarred.

But against all counsel, its

execution was bogged down by the clayey nature of the terrain.

And it was apparent that this aspect may not have been included in the execution plan. The perennial difficulties of access to the area, which is only possible during the dry season, have remained.

According to Eteidung Jonah Udo, it had become clearer to his community that it is Gov. Udom Emmanuel who has been the first, to bring development to the area, and therefore, appealed to him to kindly do all he can, to bless them with the execution and completion of that all-important rural project.



Akwa Ibom State Governor, Mr Udom Emmanuel, at the just concluded PDP delegates congress, in his ward.

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PHOTO NEWS

**Gov Emmanuel Fetes Muslim Community With Food Items/Cash**



In the spirit of the season, Governor Udom Emmanuel on Monday, donated food items and cash to the Muslim community in Akwa Ibom.

The brief ceremony took place at one of the settlements of the Muslim community known as Nasarawa in Itam, Itu, Akwa Ibom. Presenting the items, Mr Emmanuel Ogbole, who is the Special Assistant to the Governor on Projects Monitoring, said the items demonstrated the oneness and peaceful coexistence that has existed between the Christian community and Muslim community in Akwa

Ibom state. He relayed Governor Emmanuel's prayers for the continued blessings of God upon the Muslim family and indeed to all Nigerians. Mr Ogbole who is also the Chairman of Arewa Community in Akwa Ibom State also stressed on the need to continue with the peace that has existed within the state for the past 7 years. In their response the leaders of the northern community, thanked the Governor for the gifts, he also thanked the people of Akwa Ibom for creating an accommodating environment for them to thrive.

They also thanked the Governor for creating a peaceful environment for them to carry out their businesses, and admonished Muslim faithful to carry out their activities peacefully. Udom Emmanuel greets Muslims, urges them to reflect on the virtues of Ramadan Gov. Emmanuel in a message earlier had urged Muslims to reflect on the virtues of Ramadan for the well-being of the individual and the overall good of the society. "The month of Ramadan is the month of forgiveness: we must learn to forgive and pursue peace with our

fellow human beings. "Ramadan preaches giving, especially from the rich to the poor: This promotes the idea of redistribution of wealth for a more equitable society. "Ramadan is the month of holy living where the faithful run away from sin and live a life of piety and abstinence: This promotes spiritual development and draws us closer to our Maker. "Ramadan is the month of fasting when we deny ourselves, share in the pains and experiences of others: This promotes a better understand of the suffering of others and the inequalities prevalent in our society.

"All these lessons learnt during the Ramadan period are not expected to end with it but to form an integral part of our daily living. "These are virtues beneficial to Muslims and non-Muslims alike", he said. Gov. Emmanuel then reiterated that our society will be a better place if we live our lives in accordance with the virtues preached at Ramadan. "Problems of insecurity, the scourge of corruption and other social vices bedeviling our country will be a thing of the past if we imbibe the spirit of Ramadan. "The spirit and letters

of Ramadan will help build a just and fair society where human life is valued and where the rights of the weak are not trampled under foot by the strong. "If we abide by the tenets of Ramadan, truth and justice will prevail in our polity, and bigotry of all hues will be eschewed by our people" Emmanuel then enjoined Muslims not to despair despite the harsh economic and social conditions of the moment but to continue to pray to God to intervene in the affairs of the country. "Keep hope alive. Help is on the way", he added.





## EDITORIAL

## OUR MISSION

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“The media is the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and the guilty innocent, and that’s power”

# Metaphor For Wasteful Public Expenditure

## - A Case Of Abandoned AKNC Goss Community Machine

A signature example of tear-jerking wasteful public spending that defined the spend-thrift administration of Senator Godswill Akpabio in Akwa Ibom State is the multi-billion Goss-Community Printing Press that continues to rot away at the premises of state government-owned newspaper corporation, The Pioneer.

The ultra-modern equipment, which drives thriving business for many private newspaper companies in the country, was commissioned with fanfare as crown jewel among 'legacies of uncommon transformation'- the slogan that was most disingenuously invented to justify plunder of public resources by the profligate administration. Regrettably, the printing press has not been put to use and continues to rot away since it was installed in 2015.

Besides calling to question the rationale for acquiring and installing the equipment and abandoning it since installation, even when there is available local capacity to engage the technology, the dangers possible in warehousing sophisticated technology in prolonged inactivity cannot be over-emphasized.

To the administration of Governor Udom

Emmanuel which has imposed on itself the mandate of restoration, especially jump-starting the economy of the state by establishing new industries and reactivating those that became dormant or lost competing spirit, fixing the elegant mess at The Pioneer is a task that is not only urgent but also imperative because spending billions of tax payers money to acquire sophisticated equipment only to abandon it soon after installation is not a befitting testimony of prudence in management.

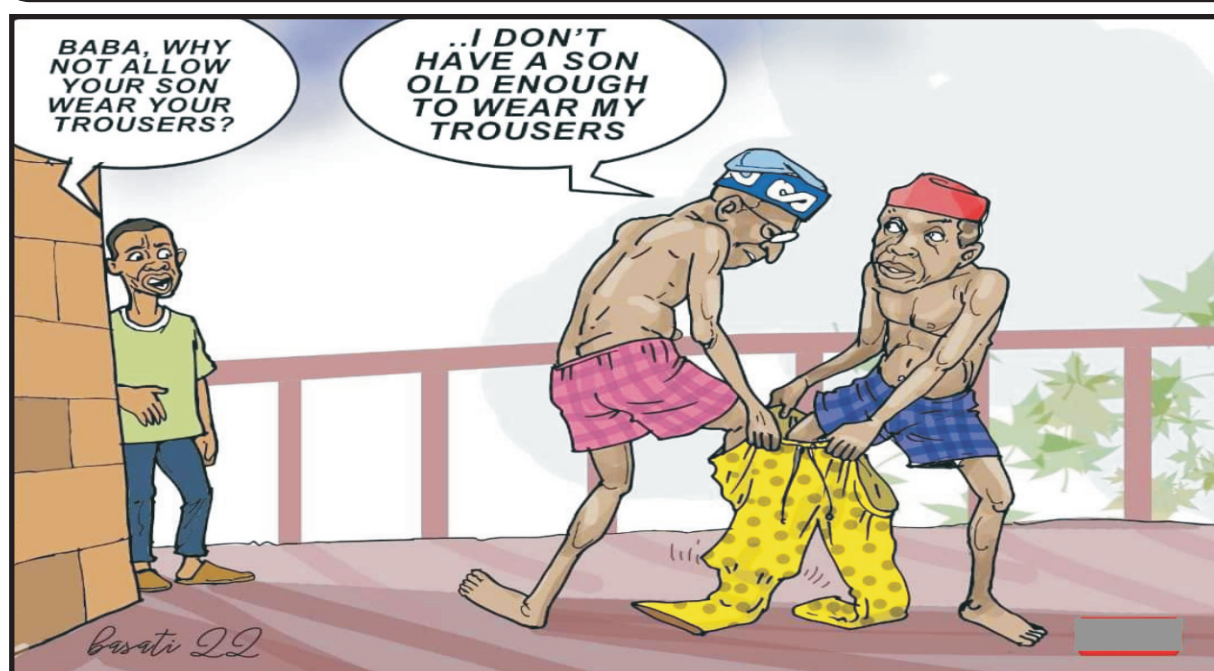
There is a more urgent reason to commission the ultra-modern Goss-Community Printing Press which continues to waste away at The Pioneer newspapers in Uyo.

The press can help to lift the standing army of idle youths in the state from unemployment and prevent them from being manipulated into thuggery and cultism by desperate politicians.

What is worse is watching, perhaps helplessly, as the wastefulness magnifies.

Invariably, that will earn collateral blame for the current administration.

Governor Udom cannot afford to keep the idle Goss-Community Printing Press at The Pioneer as a metaphor for wasteful public expenditure.



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## Opinion

WELL DONE, HON. Frank Archibong

# FRANK ARCHIBONG: Repositioning Local Government Council

By *Sammy Etuk Jnr.*

Local Government Administration remains the closest government to the people, often the people are worried about the inability to get across to their leaders hence, they look forward to the Local Council Authorities for succour. In the past, there has been a disconnect between the people and the local government council, this led to mistrust, misunderstanding, and total lack of confidence in the local administration.

The people considered the local government authority as a misnomer or administer by a group of rogue, who may not be responsible to the people.

Therefore, the Local Government Council was seen as a place set up to compensate political cronies by critics.

This belief made the people to discountenance whatever the Local Government represents and the masses expected to benefit from this Government seemingly assessable to them turn their back on such administration and gave up the hope of waiting for redemption. Some people recalled that Local Government Council Authorities were the last hope of the people during the Colonial days and consider current Local Government Council Authorities as an aberration instead of the third tier of Government.

The advent of the new Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mr. Frank Archibong has changed the history, bringing a phase that has made the Local Government Council a bride to all, he is also a product of the Local Government system having served as a two-term Local Government Chairman.

His philosophy of making Local Government the Government of the masses and ensuring that the grassroots participate in governance has been his greatest leverage and dear to his heart.

He once told a group of councilors who paid him a visit, "the Local Government Council is the only government that our people can truly connect with at any time.

If a market woman wants to complain about a problem in their locality, she cannot run to the Government House at any State Capital to meet the Governor or take a flight to Abuja to meet with the President.

The woman can only come here to meet us because the transport will not be much and those who live nearby can trek to the Council's Secretariat to give us the information.

This is why we should always make ourselves available to the people because this is their government." With such philosophy, Mr. Archibong on his appointment as a Commissioner by Governor Udom Emmanuel went on to ensure that the Local Government Council Chairmen and Councilors in the State do not abandon their Council Secretariats.

He encouraged them to make sure the masses feel the presence of government at



that level. Emmanuel Uwemedimoh, a Geologist based in Kanu confess that he was overwhelmed when he visited two Local Government Councils in Akwa Ibom State recently.

Said he, "Some years back when I came to Akwa Ibom, I could not see the Local Government Chairman on sit nor the Councilors. It was really frustrating, I had to go back without accomplishing what I came for in Akwa Ibom, this time around, a Chairman who attended to me told me that if he was not in the office on Monday morning, the Commissioner will be very upset.

He said that he lives in his village about 5 kilometers from the Local Government Secretariat and assured that his colleagues from other Local Government Areas in the State do same." Emmanuel did not want to disclose the name of the Local

Government Councils he visited to avoid any controversy, especially when he mentioned his previous experience.

But this testimony is a reflection of the changes which were not part of previous administrations.

The Local Government Councils are expected to serve people and bring governance closer to our communities, this is what the Commissioner is advocating and practically ensuring its implementation.

Also, he has stabilized the traditional institution by giving them adequate support and making sure disputes are not allowed to see the light of the day.

The Oku Ibom and Chairman of the Akwa Ibom State Traditional Council, His Eminence, Ntenyin Solomon Etuk enjoys the cooperation and support of Mr. Archibong at all times.

Ntenyin Etuk once referred to the Commissioner as an astute administrator who has made things easy for the Traditional Rulers. He was particularly happy with the approvals of decisions taken by the Traditional Councils. "Now, recognition of newly selected Traditional Rulers gets immediate approval as soon as the authorize authorities send in the information, we are happy with the present administration and its leadership," Ntenyin Etuk said. Mr. Archibong does not think that those who benefit from his benevolence should give him kudos because he is a man who believes in giving than receiving.

Hence, this should not be counted for him as an achievement, his admirers said he wants to finish strong and leave an active Local Government system in the State for posterity.



## POLITICS

# A'ibom PDP Concludes Ward Elective Congress

As part of the build up to party primaries for the 2023 polls, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Akwa Ibom State has concluded its ward congresses across the state to elect ad hoc delegates who will vote at the party's primary election, with stakeholders and members adjudging the exercise as peaceful, credible and satisfactory.

Governor Udom Emmanuel, who took part in the exercise in his home ward, Awa Ward 1, Onna Local Government Area, commended the peaceful and orderly conduct of the congress, crediting it to the peaceful and united disposition of PDP in Akwa Ibom State, which he said has always been the case.

Emmanuel who lauded the great turn out of members of the party to the delegate congress, also congratulated the ad hoc delegates who emerged through voting across all wards in the state, adding that they reflect the collective will of the party stakeholders and members who cast votes for them.

Joining party stakeholders and members of PDP in Abak Urban Ward 3 at Bishop Clark Primary School, Deputy Governor, Mr. Moses Ekpo, expressed satisfaction with the process of electing ad hoc delegates from the ward, describing it as peaceful and transparent.

In Ekim Enen, Southern Uruan Ward 2, the home ward of the Speaker of Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Aniekan Basse, commended members of the Party for their peaceful conduct and successful Ward Congresses Uruan LGA.

Also, the State Chairman of the party, Rt. Hon (Elder) Aniekan Akpan while leading members of the State Congress Monitoring Committee to supervise the

progress of the exercise in different wards of the state, saluted the conduct of members of the party during the exercise, noting that the Congress has held simultaneously in all wards peacefully.

"Materials for the Adhoc

delegate election arrived on time and everything has been going on peacefully. In the end, the people have the final answer and only those who are voted for will emerge as Adhoc delegates and they are the ones to vote their preferred aspirants

during the primary elections which comes up in a week", he said.

News correspondents who monitored the exercise across the state reported that there was orderly conduct in all wards across the state and delegates were

unanimously elected.

In Etim Ekpo, the immediate Past National Legal Adviser of PDP and Senatorial Aspirant for Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District, Barr. Emmanuel Enoidem commended the peaceful and orderly conduct of party

faithful in the election of ad-hoc delegates across the state.

Barr. Enoidem who spoke shortly after participating in the election of the three ad-hoc delegates for Etim Ekpo Ward 1, described the PDP as a people oriented





# POLITICS

## ...Gov. Emmanuel, Stakeholders, Members Score Party High on Credibility, Fairness of Exercise

democratic platform that is focused on development and expressed the confidence that delegates elected will make the party proud.

In Anwa Udo Akai, venue for Ikot Ekpene Ward 1 congress, 10 PDP faithful

contested the election, after proper accreditation and voting, Rose Akaninyene Inyang, Hon. David Umana and comr Nsikak Lawrence were duly elected as Adhoc delegates to represent Ikot Ekpene ward 1.

In Essien Udim local

government area, a State house of assembly Aspirant, Prince Ukpog Akpabio and other PDP faithfuls who turned out enmasse to exercise their franchise, adjudged the entire process as peaceful, credible and transparent.

Similarly, PDP faithfuls in Obot Akara ward 1, converged at Community Secondary School, Ikpe Mbak Eyop where Margaret Akpan Ukpog, Nduunno Okon Eshiet, Emmanuel Okon Udom emerged. In Ibiakpan Obotim II, Nsit

Ubium Local Government Area, Pastor Umo Eno who was part of the exercise, affirmed the peaceful conduct of the congeess, expressing confidence in the party which he said has shown a great deal of internal democracy.

Speaking with reporters, the Chairman, Ikot Ekpene local government area, Rt. Hon Unyime Etim while describing the entire process as peaceful and transparent, commended the Aniekan Akpan -led PDP in the State for being very organized as usual.

In Ikono and Ini LGAs, congresses which were held at the ward centres of the two sister LGAs had in attendance all party faithful cutting across all age divides as well as political stakeholders of the area.

At the end of the exercise, the immediate past Commissioner for Agriculture who also emerged winner in Ikpe Ward 2, Ini LGA alongside others described the process as peaceful and "well conducted".

Also speaking from Ikono, the immediate past Chairman of Ikono LGC, Hon. Itooro Columba who also contested and won, noted that the election was keenly contested and went well.

In Urueoffong/Oruko, the Honourable Commissioner for Transport, Hon. Uno Etim Uno, the Council Chairman Hon Precious Selong and Member representing Urueoffong/Oruko Constituency in Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Asukwo Archibong and other PDP faithfuls who turned out in significant numbers to exercise their franchise, tagged the process as peaceful, credible and commendable.

The member representing Ibesikpo Asutan in the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly Hon. Aniekan Uko has described today Adhoc delegates election as one of the most fair and creditable election ever conducted in the state.

Three ad hoc delegates elected in each ward shall be eligible to vote alongside statutory delegates at the primary elections of the party.





## INTERVIEW

# Pastor Umo Eno Is Part Of Our MANDA, Commitment To Succeed Gov Emmanuel – Ekerete Nathan

*Mr Ekerete Nathan is the newly inaugurated youth leader of Maintain Peace Movement (MPM), FCT Chapter, Abuja. He is also youth leader of Ikot-Ekpene/Essien Udim/Obot Akara Federal Constituency Development Association, Abuja, as well as vice chairman, Akwa Ibom Community, Mpape branch, Abuja.*

*In this encounter with our FCT correspondent, Emmanuel Iyoho, Ekerete Nathan who was at the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), National Headquarters (Wadata House), recently, when the top PDP gubernatorial aspirant in the state, Pastor Umo Eno, picked his form for the race, speaks extensively on the person of Pastor Umo Eno, his chances of not only emerging as the PDP flag bearer in the forthcoming primary election, but a potential winner as the governor of Akwa Ibom State come 2023 general elections.*

*The youth leader also speaks on other socio-political and economical issues as regarding youths, women and overall development of the state.*

*Excerpts:*

*Nice to meet you, sir.*

It's a pleasure. My name is Comrade Ekerete Nathan. I am from Essien Udim Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom.

A project consultant by the grace of God.

I was inaugurated as the youth leader of the Maintain Peace Movement (MPM), FCT, Abuja Chapter, on the 24 January, 2022 at the Akwa Ibom House, Abuja.

I am equally the youth leader of Ikot-Ekpene/Essien Udom/Obot Kara Federal Constituency Development Association, Abuja. In the past, I had undertaken several initiatives for the economic, social and political inclusion of youths of my federal Constituency, Akwa Ibom Community, Abuja, Akwa Ibom State and beyond.

One of such initiatives was the hosting of the first ever one month free digital skills acquisition, capacity building and vocational training by my office in partnership with Training Institutes in Abuja last year, among others. With this new privilege to serve in Maintain Peace Movement as youth leader, I hope to do more given the supports of the stakeholders and the government.

Maintain Peace Movement is a socio-political machinery under the grand patronship of the executive governor of Akwa Ibom State, Mr. Udom Emmanuel, to support the completion agenda of his administration, advocate for the sustenance of peace/development enjoyed in the state as well as his succession agenda.

*Pastor Umo Eno was in PDP Headquarters (Wadata House) recently, where he picked a*

*gubernatorial form under the platform of PDP. AS a youth leader, what is your comment on the event?*

I can bodily say yes, it was a successful outing. It was a major point to authenticate the aspiration of Pastor Umo Eno for the office of the governor of Akwa Ibom State ahead of the forthcoming Peoples Democratic Party primaries in the state. As you noticed at the Wadata Plaza, the Maintain Peace Movement, Abuja Chapter, led by my co-ordinator, Mr Akpan Usenekong, gave the governorship aspirant and the national leadership of the MPM the best of reception in the nation's capital.

We committed to providing the support system to our governorship hopeful and the national leadership of Maintain Peace Movement whenever occasion demands.

*Sir, what is your take on the role Maintain Peace Movement played during the events?*

As you may recall, the Maintain Peace Movement was established under the grand patronship of our governor, Mr. Udom Emmanuel, to mobilise support for his completion agenda and succession plan. Consequently, the national executive committee, local government area Committee and other satellite branches including FCT, Abuja, were inaugurated too. So, since then we sprung into action of mobilisation human, material, financial and strategic supports towards the mandates.

The role played by MPM in Abuja Chapter during the picking of the nomination forms by Pastor Umo Eno is part of our mandate and commitment



**Ekerete Nathan, Youths Leader**

to the succession planning Governor Udom Emmanuel. The chapter leadership and youth wing of the MPM, Abuja under my leadership is committed to this aspiration.

*Do you think Pastor Umo Eno, the governor's preferred Candidate for the 2023 in Akwa Ibom State, is the right man for the job?*

I believe! His profile in the public domain and his track record and experience in the private and sectors is also credible for engagement in public service.

The stakeholders of the state have noticed his competence, hence the massive endorsement he has enjoyed ever since he was presented as the preferred candidate for the 2023 in Akwa Ibom State gubernatorial race. Ahead of the party primaries, consultations are ongoing and I hope he will emerge as the flag bearer of the party afterward. I am optimistic about this.

*Sir, what are your plans towards the successful mobilisation of youths to*

*this cause?*

Akwa Ibom youths in the Federal Capital Territory are ready to participate in all the electoral processes at the state in 2023 and beyond.

We had started the mobilisation before today. Recall in the previous interview you granted me, I mentioned that we have massively mobilised Akwa Ibom youths in FCT to participate at the voters registration and validation exercise by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as well as the Peoples Democratic Party membership registration.

Once it is time for election, we shall be going home to our various polling units to exercise our franchise. We are intentional about that.

*Sir, elections are around the corner, come 2023 Nigerians are going to the polls to elect new president, governors, states lawmakers, national legislators, etc, across the country. What will be your advice to the youth as regards to youth participation in politics?*



## INTERVIEW

# Pastor Umo Eno Is Part Of Our MANDA, Commitment To Succeed Gov Emmanuel – *Ekerete Nathan*

I call on youths to take advantage of the forthcoming general elections to elect best leaders who will address the yearnings of the youth in the country.

The statistics shows that youths occupy over 75 per cent of the voting populations. It therefore means that if youths come together, we can install new leadership across board.

The youth must form a vanguard, identify a political party they can use to fly their candidates from the presidency to the governorship, national/states assemblies from 2023 and beyond.

This is a golden opportunity for the youth to end the decades of political deprivation.

“Youths are leaders of tomorrow”. In other words, youths are the nation's future leaders. Please, comment on this statement.

It is more honourable to say youths are the leaders of today than tomorrow. Over the years, youth have been relegated to the background and with this faulty premise that “they are the future leaders” So, youths had long come to consensus that they are ready to take up the leadership of the nation, states and the associated industries.

The youth have been victimised and excluded in many ways. One of such deprivations is the cause of the massive migration of Nigerian youths to Europe

and other continents. The trend has to stop or possibly reversed.

The government should honour every interest of the youth as contained in the National Youth Policy. Education must be used as for national development and social cohesion.

The youth must be intentionally empowered politically, economically and skillfully included in the scheme of things. The 2023 general election is an opportunity for the youth to prove that they are not leaders of tomorrow rather today.

*My comrade youth leader sir, what do you think should be done by the federal government, States and local government councils to halt youths migration to Europe and other continents of the world?*

The answer is not far-fetched! Government at all levels, the private sector and non-governmental organisations should as a matter of priority create jobs for the youth, create an enabling environment, invest in youth development, empowerment and inclusion among others.

The absence or uncomplimentary ratio of these social infrastructure to Nigerian youths population is the cause of the youthful migration.

*As a youth leader of Ikot-Ekpene Federal Constituency Forum, Abuja,*

***Government at all levels, the private sector and non-governmental organisations should as a matter of priority create jobs for the youth, create an enabling environment, invest in youth development, empowerment and inclusion among others.***



Pastor Umo Eno

*and a professional, do you think the proposed stoppage of Nigerian youths from going out of the country to seek greener pastures is a development?*

The matter is merely a proposal and it's not yet put to legislation! Again, I don't think stopping the youths from travelling for greener pastures is a good idea. Constitutionally, everyone is has the right for freedom of movement provided it is not contrary to the constitutional provisions. As a professional, migration in any case gives room for technological transfer, even as the opportunities are vice-versa.

*Finally sir, what should be your advice for the Nigerian youth who are planning to migrate to Europe or other continents for one reason or the other, and what is your message as far as Pastor Umo Eno's candidacy in the forthcoming 2023 general election in the state is concerned?*

I want them to travel through approved government channels, acquire skills

and certificates that will make them resourceful to themselves and the countries they wish to travel to. For those that will successfully travel, we expect them to be good ambassador of the country – Nigeria. I urge our youths who are still in the country to continue to keep faith with the country as they work toward achieving their dreams.

To this end, I hereby call on all the youth and indeed the entire Akwa Ibom people in the Federal Capital Territory to support the succession plan of Governor Udom Emmanuel's administration for sustainability of peace, infrastructure and industrial development in the state. Government is continuum and every leader will be interested in sustaining and consolidating on the gains of previous administrations. I think this one of the reasons we have to collectively support the completion agenda as well as initiatives of the Maintain Peace Movement in this regard ahead of the 2023 general elections and beyond.



## RELIGION

*Continued from last edition*

Bottomline: Fear makes a bad picture of things. The unprofitable servant that was given talent and he didn't use it exhibited fear and it produced nothing. Bow your head and tell the Lord to forgive you and that you're sorry for allowing fear to create problems in your life.

Prayer Rain:

During Ministration prayers by Daddy G.O

1. Lay your hands on your chest: I fire back every arrow of fear by the power in the blood of Jesus in the name of Jesus.

After ministration Prayers by Daddy G.O

2. My Father: arise, manifest yourself one in my life in the name of Jesus.

3. My Father: I fire back every anti success arrow in the name of Jesus.

4. Powers delaying my journey to breakthroughs, before I leave this place, die in the name of Jesus.



# FIRE IN THE WORD

With Pastor D. K. Olukoya  
G.O, MFM Worldwide

## FROM FEAR TO FAITH

*Text: Matthew 14:22-30, 2 Timothy 1:7, 1 John 4:18*

5. Every battle assigned to puncture my hope, die in the name of Jesus.

6. Every battle waiting for my tomorrow to swallow my glory, die by fire in the name of Jesus.

7. Any trap stopping my acceleration, catch your owner in the name of Jesus.

8. Powers assigned to waste my age, die in the name of Jesus.

You have certificate and you're not using it to do much, pray this prayer with holy anger:

9. Any coven harboring my certificate, release it by fire in

the name of Jesus.

We want to pray against two things that enters at midnight:

10. Arrows that entered into my life at midnight to strangulate me, backfire in the name of Jesus.

11. Strong man that entered into my life at midnight, die in the name of Jesus.

12. Every hand laid upon my life to convert me to a beggar, catch fire in the name of Jesus.

13. Point to someone & pray for the person: you my brother/sister, arise and shine in the name of Jesus.

14. Point to someone and pray for the person: you my brother/sister, pursue your pursuers in the name of Jesus.

15. Yoke broker, Jesus Christ: break my yoke in the name of Jesus.

16. Great Physician, my life is available: overshadow my life in the name of Jesus.

Important Announcement by Daddy G.O after ministration:

1. This year is the 30th anniversary of mountain of fire miracles ministry. It's coming up in the month of August 2019. Members are encouraged to participate in the preparation of this upcoming celebration with a proposed minimum contribution as advised by Daddy G.O.

2. We thank God for the lives of those contributing towards the award for first class graduates. They are over 300 in numbers and we want to reward them in our upcoming anniversary.

# Adeboye harps on total surrender for God's elevation

*By Our Correspondent*

Pastor Enoch Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) on Sunday said surrendering totally to God would bring about elevation and fulfilment of dreams.

Adeboye said this in his sermon with the theme "Supernatural Elevation" at the May Thanksgiving Service on Sunday.

According to him, elevation simply means movement to a higher level, quoting Psalm 121:1-2 and John 12:32.

He added that supernatural things were easy to understand if they were broken into two; super and natural.

"It is simply saying something that is superior

to the natural. In other words, there is the natural and there is something that is superior to the natural. Isaiah 40: 28-31.

"If the natural hooks up with the supernatural, then the natural will be able to do what ordinary people cannot do.

Supernatural is that which enables the natural, the ordinary to do that which cannot be done by ordinary means.

"In Judges, Samson was brought to the Philistines and the supernatural came upon Samson and the ropes binding Samson broke as if they were touched by fire.

"He took the jawbone of an animal that became the vessel of mass destruction and killed a thousand people because he became connected to the

supernatural, Judges 16:4-6."

Adeboye said that the supernatural, that which is beyond the natural, could be found in two categories.

These, he said were, divine, supernatural that comes from God that's the power that comes from God, Psalm 62:11, or the one that comes from the devil, Ephesians 2:2.

"There is evil power that comes from the devil and there is good power that comes from God. The power of the Almighty God is superior to any power that the devil has Philippians 2: 9-11.

"Supernatural Elevation means reaching a height that you cannot reach by natural means. Power that is beyond natural power moving you to a new

height."

Adeboye gave examples of people in the Bible that God elevated through total surrender to include Joseph, David among others who surrendered to God and were elevated.

"Are you ready to do God's will all the days of your life? It doesn't matter where you are hiding, He will bring you into the open.

"The sun of somebody is about to rise and when your sun rises, God will see to it that it never sets.

"Are you willing to surrender your life to Him and do His will at all times? Until you surrender completely to God, the elevation will not start and if it had started, it will stop.

"If you want to completely surrender your life to Jesus, ask Him to take over your



life completely from now on.

"come to Him now because He is the one who can make sure your promotion is

permanent.

"He is the one who can fulfil all dreams. Come to Him now, completely surrender to Him," he urged.



## FOR THE RECORD

## STATE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

# Toil, Zeal Of Nigerian Workers Laid Foundations Of Our Sovereignty, Freedom, Says Osinbajo At May Day Rally

*“...The Nigerian worker in every real sense laid the foundations of our sovereignty and freedom with their blood and tears, and nurture it till this day with their sweat and zeal.”*

VP also highlights several of Buhari administration's efforts:

Biggest Social Investment Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa

ESP's Survival Fund, payroll support scheme for over 1 million workers, MSMEs

Support for 4 million new farmers, Social Housing scheme, Solar Power Naija for 5 million homes, etc

Expanding health insurance coverage, aim for universal healthcare

Raise in minimum wage, increased retirement age of teachers

Upward review of pensions & liquidation of inherited liabilities through PTAD

Creation of Persons with Disabilities Commission, & National Centre for Senior Citizens

Increase of salaries for Nigerian Police

Review of Hazard Allowance for doctors & health workers after 15 years of stagnation

Expansion of Employee Compensation Act to include injured workers

Adds: What we must do to end ASUU strike

Nations are built by people and Nigeria is being built through the daily honest toil of hardworking Nigerian workers, according to Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, SAN,

Prof. Osinbajo stated this on Sunday afternoon in his remarks to commemorate the Workers' Day celebration which held at Eagle Square, Abuja, themed “Labour, Politics and the quest for Good Governance and Development in Nigeria.”

“You keep the engines of our country running despite the challenges we face. You are the strength and the hope of our nation. Whatever heights of greatness we achieve as a people will be because of your contributions to our national enterprise,” he said.

“In every real sense, the Nigerian worker laid the foundations of our sovereignty and freedom with their blood and tears and nurture it till this day with their sweat and zeal,” the VP added.

Praising workers for their sacrifices and dignity of labour, the Vice President said: “it is impossible to tell the story of our nation's liberation from colonial rule without dwelling at length on the heroic contributions of the labour movement to that struggle.

“The labour movement is a foundational movement in the making of our nation. You are heirs of a movement that was involved in literally building modern Nigeria.”

While he noted the important role of workers, the Vice President pointed out that nation-building is the responsibility of every Nigerian.

He further stated that “The progressive vision of inclusive growth and shared prosperity requires a revolution in our national productivity and our work ethic.

“On the part of the government, this means ensuring that every citizen has the opportunity to work, achieve productive personhood and participate in the development of their communities.”

“As a people, we must commit to an ethos of high productivity and innovation, and of using technology to transform the way we work and do business,” the VP stated, adding that “we cannot achieve this without a workforce that is attuned to optimizing our possibilities.”

Prof. Osinbajo observed that “the labour movement belongs firmly to the progressive political persuasion, noting that “labour has always made common cause with the progressives.”

He further stated that the ruling All Progressives



Congress was “an alliance of progressives” that in 2015 “became the first opposition party to defeat a ruling party against all odds and secure a national victory at the polls.”

“It was a watershed moment for our nation because, until that momentous event, the progressive tendency had been the neglected cornerstone of our nation's history.

The VP also noted that “progressive politics” is how politics can deliver good governance and development.

He explained: “as a progressive, I believe that good governance and development means compulsory free education for the unlettered, universal healthcare coverage, inclusion for the alienated, social mobility for the poor, justice for the wronged and social security for the vulnerable.

“The progressive vision of Nigeria is of a nation in which the relations between the government and the governed are defined by a social covenant. It is of a society in which no Nigerian is left behind. It is of a canopy of inclusive and broad-based prosperity in which the security and the welfare of each citizen are guaranteed.”

Buttressing further on the impact of progressives' politics on socio-economic development, the Vice President highlighted the Buhari administration's Social Investment Programmes, which have impacted tens of millions of beneficiaries nationwide

He also noted the establishment of “the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the National Centre for Senior Citizens to cater for the needs of our compatriots that live with disabilities and our elders”, as well as the “the enactment of the Not too Young to Run Act which modifies the age restrictions for seeking public office.”

He said this “opens doors of opportunity for more youth engagement in politics.”

According to the VP, these efforts by the government are further demonstrations of its commitment to inclusion in all its ramifications.

“We have pursued our progressive agenda for inclusion and social protection in a period of global turbulence,” Prof. Osinbajo added, assuring that “we are committed to doing much more.”

“We must continue to take care of our people, especially when they are no longer active. No society has achieved appreciable levels of development without looking out for the older demographic of its population, especially those who have faithfully served the country,” he

emphasized.

Highlighting the importance the administration places on workers' welfare, as well as the gains it has recorded despite global economic challenges - such as the fall in crude oil prices, COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Vice President emphasized that “regardless of all these challenges, this administration has been steadfast in tackling the issues facing Nigerian workers. This is why President Buhari implemented an increase in the national minimum wage in 2019.”

Speaking further on how the Federal Government tackled the global pandemic, the VP noted that proactive steps were taken quickly to cushion the socio-economic effects on Nigerian workers and Nigerians generally, through the implementation of the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), whose development and implementation the VP led.

Prof. Osinbajo recalled that the Federal Government placed Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSME) employees on payroll support during the pandemic.

He further noted that as part of the ESP, “we introduced the Food for Jobs Agricultural Programme, providing support for over 4 million farmers. We started the most ambitious social housing programme in our nation's history, and we started the Solar Naija Programme to connect 5 million homes with solar power.

“We set up the MSME Survival Fund which disbursed over N56.8 billion to over 800, 000 people. The Fund also provided grants, free business registration and payroll support to over 1 million artisans, micro and small business owners.

Aside from the ESP implementation, Prof. Osinbajo disclosed that the Buhari Administration “increased the retirement age of teachers so that they can spend more years in service educating our children.”

“Recently, we implemented an upward review of the salaries and wages of the men and women of the Nigeria Police Force as part of our broader commitment to improving the welfare and service conditions of those charged with safeguarding the rest of us,” he stated.

The Vice President also highlighted other aspects the Government is ramping up efforts to support and improve the welfare of Nigerian workers, including the provision of health insurance.

“No Nigerian, especially one who contributes to

the development of the nation by way of labour, should be denied primary health care because of affordability.

“Currently, only workers in organized labour benefit from the current health insurance system. Our goal is universal health care, to fund it we must look beyond our meagre Federal and State budgets, the answer is compulsory insurance coverage for all Nigerians.”

He added that Government's focus is not only on the health of those currently in the workforce but also for senior citizens who spent their prime in service.

“This is why the Federal Ministry of Health has established a Ministerial Committee whose mandate is to come up with a framework for the provision of Health Insurance coverage for our retired senior citizens. I must mention here that after 15 years of stagnation, we have now reviewed the hazard allowance for doctors and other health workers. The circular to that effect has now been released and it is with effect from December 2021.”

Prof. Osinbajo further said the Federal Government will “also expand and deepen implementation of the Employee Compensation Act so that workers all over the country receive compensation for injuries suffered in the line of duty and in the case of death, their dependents are adequately compensated.”

The Vice President also addressed the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), as he appealed to the body and the broader labour community to embrace dialogue with Government.

“We are not unmindful of the anxieties of our children and their parents who are plagued by thoughts of an uncertain future as they stay home because their universities have been shut by an industrial action,” he observed.

Calling on the Nigeria Labour Congress and Trade Union Congress to help facilitate a resolution, Prof. Osinbajo stated: “we both want the same thing – a country that works for all and offers each citizen a fair deal – even if occasionally we differ on how to achieve this goal. But at all times, we have through dialogue found a path forward... I believe that we can find a path forward in good faith. And this is what we must do”

He also noted Government's efforts in addressing security challenges by “re-engineering our security architecture with greater focus on technology and modern force multiplier platforms.”

Prof. Osinbajo also stated the administration's determination to improve the education sector, ramp up its Social Investment Programmes, broadband connectivity for Nigerians by 2025, and “establish a technology economy that will leverage on our broadband connectivity for all.”

This, he noted, will “encourage tech companies to train more tech engineers and increase the quantum and quality of tech talent in Nigeria.”

“We have the talent, the resources, the resourcefulness, the resilience and the faith to do all these and more in a few short years. But we must decisively defeat the anarchists and terrorists, unite and heal our people and let a united and powerful country attain its manifest destiny,” he observed.

The Vice President also recalled iconic national figures such as Pa Michael Imoudu, Mallam Aminu Kano, Nduka Eze, F.O. Coker, E.E. Esua and M.A. Bankole, whom he noted: “played critical roles in our quest for liberation from colonial rule and were leading lights of the labour movement.”



## Politics

# Should Goodluck Jonathan run?

*By Michael Bush*

**N**ot that the man is waiting on us. Barring any last-minute Politics Nigeriana trademark hocus-pocus, the then sitting President who was poorly treated and shoved aside in the build-up to 2015 shall be invited back by the same forces, repackaged and brought before the Nigerian electorate. That much might already have happened in the spiritual realm. We're just waiting to see it manifest in the physical.

Characteristically, Nigerians are all over the place: talking, cross-talking and criss-talking -whatever that means. While many urge the man to go for it, others want none of it. Some are quoting the law and the morality of why he shouldn't dare. We are a peculiar people, Nigerians.

Who has law or morality helped in this country? Those mouthing that the former President will lose respect should explain in one short sentence how that respect affected the price of fish for the man since he left Aso Rock in 2015. Run, Dear Dr. Jonathan, run. Win or lose, you'd achieve some things.

One, you would have cleared your name in addition to bursting the lies against you in 2015. Two, more importantly, you would inspire and encourage a generation to imbibe the virtues of patience, humility and love, which are the hallmarks of your life. Rest assured this is a win-win for you. In fact, to say it the way it is, you've nothing to lose by running but too much by not.

However, Your Excellency, while you consult widely, also make copious notes right away on the past, the present and the future. You shall need them to hit the sky flying, from day one. Remember, neither history nor time will be on your side. A fool twice is a fool forever!

Supreme controversial steps to sanity If you read the serving of last Monday, this is not a follow-up. This entry stands on its own; a step or two apart and higher. By the way, many thanks for how massively you responded last Monday. You all proved that you spare no efforts when it comes to sorting out your mental health issues.

In your feedback, many of you raised questions about the need for political office seekers in Nigeria to first undergo psychiatric tests. You and I know that we are a funny people. We love to instigate laughter by creating fun. We love to distract ourselves anytime the sane thing to do is all eyes on the ball, all hands to the pump.

In Nigeria, psychiatric tests can prove talismanic though. They are the only foolproof, corruptionproof, ethnicityproof, religionproof and politicsproof means of authenticating



Johnathan

the few compatriots whose head, as we say, is still correct. The only snag is that these tests must be taken by everyone, aspirants, candidates, electorate, umpires; everybody. Those who question the sanity status of Nigerians so far elected to public offices must widen the net to include as well that of those who continuously voted for them. It takes two to tango, right? Since we have continued to deride every set of our democratic leaders, isn't it time perhaps the searchlight was also beamed on ourselves? Isn't it clear that our mental state had since gone kaput? Isn't it insanity to apply the Stone Age leadership recruitment process of money-for-hand, back-for-ground that we always do -but expect impossible magic, every time?

The point is that, for Nigeria to break lose from the shackles of insane

political and sundry approaches, step one is general psychiatric tests. Clearly, that's the end of that discussion. How can people who were/are too afraid, too superstitious or too religious to take a mere COVID-19 vaccine agree to and actually take psychiatry tests? Our people should stop behaving like Russia's Vladimir Putin who keeps threatening the world with nukes!

With the psychiatric test blackmail having failed, Nigerians in dire need of returning to political sanity must simply recalibrate their mind to the point of enjoying what ought to be endured. Stop, go back to the beginning of the last sentence, and read that again; this time with more intentionality. Ignore the pain, enjoy what else is there. That must be what psychologists call motivational or psychological hedonism.

Rather than kill yourself or destroy your mind, exterminate your hateful thoughts and painful reactions to things or persons that hurt you. If that doesn't work, engage the last gear; the gear that has never failed and never shall. Condition your mind to believe that that person or that thing no longer exists. That the person had long died and been buried!

That might sound extreme but you'd find that this Machiavellian mental health strategy offers incredible boost to your overall health. Never go down without fighting and sacrificing what or who is not you. Do everything to ensure your sanity is not tampered with. Guard the territory and boundaries of your mental health with everything you have, and 25 hours daily!

God bless Nigeria!



# Akwa Utd's Six-match Unbeaten Run Halted In Katsina

Akwa United's unbeaten run of form under coach Ayodeji Ayeni came to an end at the Muhammadu Dikko stadium on Sunday, as Destiny Ashadi's second half strike earned hosts Katsina United a slim 1-0 victory over the reigning Champions on match-day 26 of the 2021/2022 Nigeria Professional Football League season. The Promise Keepers were undefeated in six matches under coach Ayeni who took charge of the team in mid-season, but the defeat in Katsina saw the champions losing for the first time in seven matches as they drop from 5th to 6th position on the log with 39 points from 26 games. After recording back-to-back victories against Nasarawa United and Lobi Stars, Akwa United were hoping for a another positive outing in Katsina, but after a goalless first half, Destiny Ashadi's goal in the 57th minute secure all three points for Katsina United. In his post match interview, coach Ayodeji Ayeni explained that many factors contributed to his team's

defeat and described it as painful. "We came here with the intention of getting something out of this game but many things worked against us. My players were tired after enduring tedious two days journey on the road. The weather condition on the day of the match was not friendly at all, as we had to observe two stoppages for the players to have a cooling (water) break. "On the whole, we played against a good side and I think our performance wasn't bad, it's only that we were unable to make good use of our chances. Katsina United won the match because they were able to convert the chance they had. We have taken some positives from the game and we hope to build on it as we look forward to our next game at home". Akwa United won the first leg 2-0 in Uyo on match-day 6, before losing 1-0 on Sunday. They will next host Enyimba International on Match-day 27 at the Nest of Champions on Sunday 8th May, 2022.



# Nsikak Etim emerges champion in maiden South-South Opens scrabble tourney

Away from politics, the former African champion Nsikak Etim has emerged the winner of the maiden South-South Opens Scrabble tournament in the Master's category after edging fellow former continental "Word-Lord" Jimoh Saheed by seven cumulative points when both heavyweights finished with 11 wins apiece after 15 rounds of games in Asaba, Delta State on Sunday. The results underline the high-line competition as well as board intelligence displayed by the competitors. Nsikak and Saheed ended the two-day scrabble spectacle with scores tied on 11 wins and four defeats but with a difference of seven points separating the two after recording 827 and 820 points respectively. David Ogedengbe finished third ahead of early runner Noble Oshevire and scrabble wordsmiths pre-tournament favourites, Olatunde Oduwole and Wellington Jighere who place fourth and fifth on the log. In the Intermediate category, Olumide Oyejide dominates the second tier with 13 wins and 963

cumulative points while Onoto Ojiru and Orughele Akpofure come second and third with 10 wins each but are kept separate by cumulative points of 689 and 674 respectively. In the Opens category, Ijebulem Clement bears his mark by picking the pole position ahead of 62 players who registered while Osikhena "Capo" Ojior claims the Veterans category. The tournament had in attendance Toke Ake, the President of the Nigeria

Scrabble Federation (NSF) as well as the Vice President who is the Zonal Coordinator Bright Idahosa, and other top officials. 138 featured at the first major tournament in the zone this year with over two million naira won in cash prize money. Earlier, NSF Vice President, Bright Idahosa, said the Federation's quest to revamp the sport is yielding dividends, adding that over four championships have been

organized this year to raise more awareness of the sport. He called on corporate organizations, states, and Federal Governments, as well as well-meaning individuals, to sponsor scrabble championships across the country. For winning the Masters' category, Etim got N240,000, the intermediate winner received N140,000, the Open category winner received N75,000, while the veteran category winner got N100,000.



**NPFL Match Day 27 Fixtures:  
Sunday 08, May, 2022**

Lobi Stars Vs Katsina United

Akwa United Vs Enyimba FC

Gombe United Vs Sunshine Stars

Shooting Stars Vs Niger Tornadoes

Kano Pillars Vs Kwara United

Rivers United Vs MFM FC

Abia Warriors Vs Remo Stars

Rangers Int'l Vs Heartland FC

Wikki Tourists Vs Dakkada FC

Nasarawa United Vs Plateau United



# Udom To Sign Pact With Workers

**Contd from cover**

been moved by the cries of our people to join the presidential race. My passion is to bring my capacity and capability to bear on the economic life of this country to turn around a comatose economy to the benefit of all Nigerians. I am trained. I am tested. I understand the economy. I know the various languages it responds to. My track record in both the private and public sectors bears me out. I promise Nigerian workers that I as president of this great country will partner with them to turn the economy around.

Under my administration, workers will get their due. They will occupy a prime place in my consideration of policies and programmes"

Gov. Udom then called on Nigerian workers to stop agonising and bemoaning their situation and circumstance but should henceforth organize behind a man who can turn poverty into prosperity and restore the country's lost glory. "I know what to do to arrest the slide in the value of the Naira, to escape the debt trap that is strangulating the economy, to create jobs, and bring about a vast improvement in the decrepit state of infrastructure within the shortest possible time. If only with the success I have recorded with Ibom Air, where the country as a whole has failed, you know I have capacity and capability. If only with the fact that Akwa Ibom now manufactures and exports syringes overseas, you know I have the capacity to stop Nigeria's over-reliance on oil and diversify the economy. If only with the fact that little Akwa Ibom is second only to Lagos State in attracting Foreign Direct Investment, you know that I know how to attract investment into Nigeria. Workers of Nigeria, stop agonizing! Organize and partner with a man who has the passion to make

Nigeria great again. Udom Gabriel Emmanuel will wipe your tears. I wish you a happy workers day even as I extend my hand of fellowship to you. Grab it! And together we shall make Nigeria great again! May God help us all!" Meanwhile, Governor Udom Emmanuel of Akwa Ibom State and leading presidential aspirant of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), on Saturday 30th April 2022, scaled party

screening conducted for presidential aspirants in the 2023 elections on the platform of the party. The screening took place at Legacy House, Plot 2774, Shehu Shagari Way, Maitama, Abuja.

Answering questions from a battery of journalists after his screening, Gov. Emmanuel expressed optimism that he would fly the party's presidential flag at the end of the day.

He saluted the party for instituting the primaries, describing it as the right step in the right direction and a process that will entrench internal democracy within the parties as well as deepen the democratic culture in the country. He said the primaries have exposed the array of stars within the PDP, adding that Nigerians will not be disappointed as they pitch

their tent with the party in the 2023 elections.

Asked to comment on the stance of the Southern governors that the presidency must rotate to the South in 2023 vis-a-vis the insistence of some Northern aspirants to run notwithstanding, the aspirant said he stood with the decision of the party on the matter. "The party is supreme", he said.

Gov. Emmanuel has, in the

past few days, crisscrossed the country consulting with influential personalities, political figures, party leaders and members regarding his presidential ambition. He has been to Lagos, Cross Rivers, Delta, and Edo states, among others. On Friday, he addressed Southwest PDP leaders at Ibadan, where he was well received by Gov. Seyi Makinde and other PDP leaders from the zone.



Action Gov. Seyi Makinde of Oyo State raised the hand of Gov. Udom Emmanuel of Akwa Ibom State and leading presidential aspirant of the PDP during Emmanuel's visit to meet PDP Delegates from Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Osun and Ekiti States in Ibadan, Oyo State



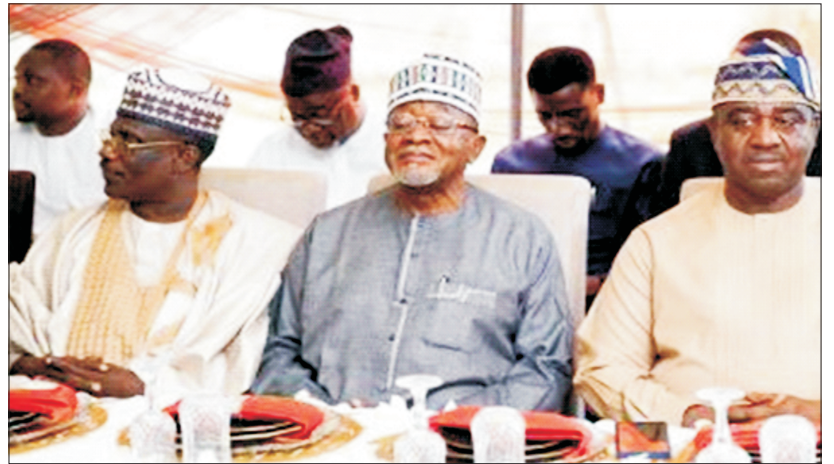
Gov Emmanuel chatting with Mr. David Mark, Chairman of the PDP Screening Committee at Legacy House, Abuja while other committee members looked on



(L-R) Dr Moshood Fayemiwo, Deputy Director-General, Mr. Bola Bolawole, Spokesman, Udom Gabriel Emmanuel Presidential Campaign Organization and delegates in Ibadan, Oyo State



Gov. Udom Emmanuel introduced the DG of his campaign, Col. Hamisu Shuaibu (Rtd) to a delegate in Ibadan, Oyo State while Gov. Makinde looked on.



Members of Udom Gabriel Emmanuel Presidential Campaign Organization (L-R) Hon. Buhari Bala, former National Treasurer of the PDP, Col. Hamisu Shuaibu (Rtd), DG and HE Sen. Gabriel Suswam, Chairman of the Emmanuel Presidential Campaign Council at Ibadan, Oyo State.



Gov. Udom Emmanuel and leading presidential aspirant of the PDP addressing the media after being screened by the party leadership at Legacy House, Abuja