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DEMOCRACY WATCH

An E-newsletter from the TMG

Transition Monitoring Group

(A coalition of
Human Rights
NGOs and Civil
Society
Organizations)

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The Transition
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purpose of developing
integrity in the electoral
process by monitoring
and reporting on the

MAJOR HEADLINE:

- **Governance**
- **International News**
- **We Country Stori**
- **For The Records**
-
- **Opinion**
- **This month's Politricks**
- **News Titbits**

GOVERNANCE

Voters' registration begins

The voters' registration exercise begins today Wednesday, October 25, 2006, amidst protest from youth corps members in one state and a failure too deliver the counting machines needed to at least two other state. Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), agents announced they would not be able to issue the final voting cards registering voters until closer to the election.

Youth corps members recruited for the voters' registration in Imo state have protested what they say is inadequate training allowances. Nearly 1000 corps members stormed the INEC office in Owerri saying they still do not know how much they were supposed to receive.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 25, 2006 pg1/4

Vote Registration: Machines disappoint INEC officials

Inspite of the three weeks shift to enable the Independent National Electoral Commission (INAEC) to adequately prepare for the voter registration exercise, which commenced nationwide on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 confusion, uncertainty and fears, have already beclouded the exercise. In Sokoto state, only six out of the 23 local government areas had the opportunity of seeing registration officers. Even then there are numerous problems ranging from lack of qualified personnel to handle registration facilities, batteries running down within a short time, no laminating machines or some of the machines have developed faults before they were put into use. Also the

prosecution of the political programme.

The work of the TMG is handled under a coordinating committee system of decision making and a secretariat which carries out its day to day activities. In addition to national committees of the TMG, it also has Zonal and State Coordinators drawn from among member organizations. TMG's Chairperson coordinates the activities of these committees and of the secretariat.

Comments from Readers are Welcome and can be sent to

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use of the youth service corps members who do not understand the local language of 90 percent of eligible voters is yet another big problems as most people have their names wrongly spelt. Worrysome also is the lack of adequate machines to effectively cover a large portion of the community with the stipulated time.

Within 3,035 polling units, the exercise in Sokoto state has commenced in only 15 units thereby leaving over 95 percent of the population in limbo. Although the state Commissioner for INEC, Alhaji Auwal Babayo Shehu has assured that each unit would be covered for a period of 10 days, there are fears and doubts whether every eligible voter in the state will be registered. Most alarming is the inadequate supply of computers to the state, which requires 760 but was provided with only 30 with the commission still assuring eligible voters that there was no cause for alarm.

Weekly Trust, October, 28 – 3 November, 2006 pg5

10 Machines for 2,000 units in Kebbi

The nationwide voters' registration exercise began in Kebbi state on a worrisome note with only 10 of the 600 registration machines required in the state are at hand, making the state Acting Governor, Alhaji Sulaiman Muhammad Argungu, suspect attempts to short change the people of the state during the exercise. The state commissioner for INEC Alhaji Garba Muhammad Bawa explained that out of the 10 machines three each had been allocated to Birnin Kebbi, and Argungu while Yauri and Zuru got two each. This showed that the exercise started in only 10 polling units of the four local governments out of the 2,398 polling units in the 21 local government areas of the state. He however, assured that the remaining machines would be supplied as the exercise progresses.

Weekly Trust, October 28 – 31, 2006 pg5

Manual registration in Lagos

Flat batteries and malfunctioning machines were some of the problems facing the Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Lagos as it began registration of voters for the forthcoming 2007 general elections. Many people were disappointed as the Officials were either not presents in their areas or the machines brought for the exercise.

A visit to the twenty local government areas in the state reveals that only seventeen machines were made available to register millions of prospective voters. In some local government, only two machines were given to the INEC officials to perform the exercise in the whole local government.

Again at Ikeja, INEC officials were seen taking voters' details manually, according to one of the officials, the machine given to them to conduct the exercise was not functioning and as a result, they sent it back to the headquarters for repairs. At another centre, the INEC officials could not commence the registration exercise as they were waiting for a technician to come and fix one of the machines components.

Weekly Trust, October 28 – 31 2006 pg6

We've inadequate Data Machines – INEC Chief

Oyo state residential Electoral Commissioner, Alhaji Isyaku Kawu Maigoro, has said the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), has an inadequate Direct Data Capture (DDC) machines for the ongoing registration exercise. The commissioner while addressing the people of the state said that out of 1,199 machines appropriated to the state, the state has so far taken delivery o 36 machines out which four were discovered to be technically faulty.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 31, 2006 pg8

Afenifere seeks cancellation

Afenifere, the pan-Yoruba socio-political organization has called for immediate cancellation to the ongoing voters' registration exercise by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), alleging that the whole exercise was a total failure. The group alleged that failure of the electronic registration regime thus far only reveal that INEC Chairman, Prof. Maurice Iwu cannot be trusted and called for his replacement before the exercise proceeds.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 31, 2006 pg8

Nigerians in Diaspora seek voting rights

There are indications that Nigerians in the Diaspora may next year initiate what they tagged "Bill On Diaspora Voting Rights", if the National Assembly or the executive arm of government fail to take up the matter before February next year. The vice Chairman, World Igbo Congress, Chief Joseph Nzequome, said the president has promised to look into their demand when the WIC executives paid him a visit in December, 2005. He therefore advice the National Assembly to take their agitation seriously, saying such request was their inalienable right as Nigerians.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 31, 2006 pg8

Borno communities stop women from voters' registration

Five communities in Bama area of Borno state have prevented their women from registering in the designated registration centres of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the areas. The communities which called themselves as "Islamic Fundamentalists", have also protested against the immunization of their children against the six child-killer diseases, claiming that the vaccine were designed by the World Health Organization (WHO) to sterilize women. Lamenting the communities' position on voters' registration and immunization schemes, the Shehu of Dikwa, Alhaji Kyari Ibrahim El-Kanemi said that the refusal of the communities in Bama to register had not only cause a lot of setback, but had led to a "serious resistance on the communities to current registration exercise and the immunization programmes of the federal and state government.

He said failure to address the twin problems might scuttle the voters' registration exercise in his domain and other communities that might take and share the same position on refusing women to register for the 2007 general election.

The Guardian, Monday, October 30, 2006 pg7

Obasanjo: Electronic System to check registration fraud

President Olusegun Obasanjo was formally registered to vote for the 2007 elections on Sunday, October 29, 2006 at his family home in Ita Eleko, Abeokuta, where he called on Nigerians to ensure that they are registered. The President who arrived the registration centre at exactly 9.56am in company of Ogun state Governor, Otunba Gbenga Daniel, and was taken through the registration exercise that lasted 2 minutes by the Ogun state Resident Electoral Commissioner, Barrister Nwakpa. After the exercise, the president was duly issued his voters' registration card.

Obasanjo, after the registration exercise, said the formal introduction of the electronic registration would put to an end the question of double registration and fraudulent transfer of voters' card during elections. He disclosed that though there had been complaints about difficulty encountered in the process of registration, due to insufficient machines, the President however gave assurances that in

the next few days, the problems would be effectively addressed. He urged Nigerians to ensure that they are registered, as it is their passport for voting.

Thisday, Monday, October 30, 2006 pg4

Emir warns against mixing religion with voter registration

The Emir of Katsina Alhaji (Dr.) Muhammadu Kabir Usman has warned citizens of the state to avoid involving deceptive religious leaders in the upcoming voter registration exercise whose motive is to mislead the public. The Emir who delivered a salah message to the state during the traditional Hawan Sallah celebration at his palace, further described participation of Katsina People in the forthcoming voter registration exercise as a modern Jihad that must be waged to protect the integrity of the people.

He said the people of old used bows and arrows, swords and the likes to fight and protect their rights and identity, all of which today's technology has simplified to sheets of paper saying that it was crucial to rise and catch up with the challenges of modern development.

Daily Trust, Tuesday, October 24, 2006 pg6

Voters' Registration: INEC hires boats, bicycles in Taraba

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Taraba state has hired boats and bicycles for use during the revalidation of voters' register, the resident electoral commissioner, Reverend John Densu, reveals. He said the boats and bicycles would be used to transport material and personnel to remote areas that are not accessible by vehicles. He cited one of those areas to include Karim Lamido local government, which has transportation barriers like, rives and dams that separate the communities from the others.

Daily Trust, Tuesday, October 24, 2006 pg9

Buhari task INEC on voters' registration

Former Head of State and 2003 presidential candidate of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Major Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (rtd) has called on Nigerians to participate in the voters' registration exercise, which commences throughout the country from October 25, 2006. He also charged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to undertake the process creditably and diligently. According to him, being registered to vote is a civic duty for all adult citizens through the performance of which they will be able to exercise their rights to vote in next year's general elections.

Thisday, Wednesday, October 25, 2006 pg1/4

Ekiti Assembly: Speaker tells Fayose to prepare defence

The Speaker of Ekiti House of Assembly, Chief Friday Aderemi, has asked the Governor of Ekiti state, Mr. Ayodele Fayose, currently facing impeachment charges to prepare his defence over the alleged gross misconduct instead of attacking the integrity of the investigation panel set up to probe him. The speaker while speaking through his Special Assistant, Charles Adenitan, Aderemi said the apprehension over the membership of the panel would not help his case before the panel.

He maintained that since the investigation would be conducted in the open, the governor should concentrate on how to present credible evidence to the panel instead of trying to denigrate the integrity of the panel of judges.

The Guardian, Monday, October 9, 2006 pg1/2

Governors meet on Fayose, impeachment notice

The move for the impeachment of both the Ekiti state governor Ayodele Fayose and his Deputy, Mrs. Biodun Olujimi shifted into higher gear recently as both of them finally admitted receiving an impeachment notice, meaning the process is now formal and the constitutional countdown begins. But the chairman of the Governors Forum, Chief Lucky Igbinedion of Edo state says Fayose's case would be discuss at their meeting on Thursday, October 5, 2006 to find an amicable solution to the rift between Fayose, his deputy and the Ekiti State House of Assemble.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg1/2

Ekiti House suspends Chief Judge, freezes state accounts

Parties to the deepening political crisis in Ekiti state threw more punches at each other as the legislature and the judiciary remained divided on the constitution of the panel to probe graft charges against Governor Ayodele Fayose and his deputy, Mrs. Abiodun Olujimi. The state House of Assembly, which threw the first blow, passed a motion suspending the Chief Judge Kayode Bamisile from the office over alleged shoddy handling of the judicial aspect of the impeachment bid against the governor. As the seven-man panel is said to be dominated by the governors allies. The lawmakers also stopped the governor from accessing funds from the state's treasury. The legislatures based their action on alleged illegal movement of the state property and withdrawal of a huge amount of public funds by the executive.

Justice Bamisile on the other hand did not accept the legislator's action saying his suspension from office was illegal. He says the Nigerian constitution clearly states who could suspend or remove him from office.

The Guardian, Thursday, October 12, 2006 pg1/2

Governor oppose EFCC moves against Dariye, Fayose

The Governors Forum has condemned what it called "the use of force" to impeach two of their colleagues. The governors condemned the current battle between the EFCC and the Plateau and Ekiti state governments. "We condemn the use of force to cajole the respective Houses of Assembly to impeach their governors. We demand that the appropriate procedures be followed devoid of intimidation and coercion" say the governors.

Daily Trust, Monday, October 9, 2006 pg1/4

Fayose: Panel inaugurated amidst tight security

The Chief Judge of Ekiti state, Justice Kayode Bamisile has inaugurated the seven man panel set up to investigate charges of gross misconduct against the state governor, Mr. Ayo Fayose and his deputy, Mrs. Biodun Olujimi. The CJ performed the inauguration amidst heavy security alleged threat to his life by some unnamed personalities in the state. But in a quick reaction, the Speaker of the House, Hon. Friday Aderemi caused a stir as he stormed the High Court 1, venue of the ceremony in protest against the personalities of the panelists, describing the list as a kangaroo, which he said contained the names of people with questionable characters.

Subsequently, the house summoned the CJ to appear in person with the Curriculum Vitae of the seven members of the panel. The CJ opened up his address by raising alarm that since he had been directed to set up the panel there has been series of pressures on him on who to appoint and

who not to appoint as members.
Thisday, Wednesday, October 11, 2006 pg5

Fayose: New panel submits report

The commissioner of Information in Ekiti state has denied Governor Ayo Fayose has been arrested as he tried to flee the state. Gboyega Oguntuase said, " He is still the governor and is immune from arrest". He said he did not know the governor's whereabouts for security reasons". The governor may have gone to visit family he said.

Speculation Fayose left arose when a meeting scheduled between him and local government officials was cancelled without given any reason. Police and soldiers were on the streets of Ekiti state trying to quell any violence that may erupt when a panel decides if the governor will be impeached. A gang of the governor supporters attacked the Ekiti House of Assembly where the panel met. They tried to set the building on fire witnesses said.

Daily Trust, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg1/4

Ekiti: Belgore voids Acting CJ's job

Respite seems to have come to the embattled Ekiti state governor, Mr. Ayo Fayose as the Chief Justice of Nigeria and chairman of the National Judicial Council, (NJC) Justice Alfa Belgore, CON has declared as "illegal" the appointment of the acting CJ in Ekiti state by the State House of Assembly. The lawmakers had on Wednesday, October 11, 2006 suspended the state Chief Judge, Justice Kayode Bamisile, for appointing a panel the legislators considered as being made up of people of "questionable characters", to probe the alleged financial misconduct and abuse of office by governor Fayose. The panel headed by Mr. Remi Bamgboye, sat and cleared the governor of all charges.

But not satisfied with the composition of the panel, the state legislators suspended Bamisile and appointed Justice Aladejana who immediately named another panel headed by Mr. Emmanuel Bamidele Omotosho, which swung into action almost immediately. But Justice Belgore in a letter rendered the second sitting of the panel null and void and unconstitutional.

The Guardian, Saturday, October 14, 2006 pg1/3

Ekiti Speaker takes over

The Governor of Ekiti state, Mr. Ayo Fayose and his deputy, Chief Biodun Olujimi, have been removed from office by the state House of Assembly following the submission of the report of the seven-man panel that investigated allegations of gross misconduct leveled against them. Aderemi was sworn in by Aladejana and would hold office for a maximum of three months pending the conduct of election of another governor by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The removal of Fayose and Olujimi may however, have set the stage for a rash of impeachments that could claim the seats of five more governors.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 17, 2006 pg1/4

It's illegal, says AGF, Govs' Forum, NBA

The removal of Governor Ayo Fayose of Ekiti state and his deputy, Chief Biodun Olujimi, received knocks from the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Chief Bayo Ojo (SAN),

the Governors' Forum and the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), all describing it as unconstitutional. The NBA led by its president, Mr. Olisa Agbakoba, the action was not only unconstitutional and should not be allowed to stand, it also urged all lawyers to boycott acting Ekiti CJ's court.

The process the state House of Assembly used in removing the governor was flawed because it was based on a grave violation of the 1999 constitution.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 17, 2006

Ekiti NBA rejects Agbakoba's order on acting chief judge

Members of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) in Ado-Ekiti have resolved to ignore the directive of the organization's National President, Mr. Olisa Agbakoba (SAN) that no lawyer should appear before the state's Acting Chief Judge. The chairman of the Ado-Ekiti branch of the NBA, Mr. Ojo Ogundele said that his chapter would not comply with the directive of Agbakoba to stay away from Justice Aladejana's court. Ogundele said his branch took a decision to write the NBA National Executive Council (NEC) to seek the proper interpretation of section 188 (5) and section 292 of the nation's Constitution before a court to settle the matter. He said that until this was done, the comments of both Agbakoba and the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Alfa Belgore would remain unfortunate.

Meanwhile, Justice Bamisile has challenged this action before an Ado Ekiti High Court. At the last hearing, the case was adjourned till October 19, 2006.

The Guardian, Tuesday, October 17, 2006 pg3

Assembly serves Gov Obi impeachment notice

An impeachment notice has been served on the Anambra governor six months after he came into office. Meanwhile, the People Democratic Party (PDP) has asked the state's House of Assembly to drop the matter against Peter Obi. The four paged notice signed by the 18 members of the House accused the governor and his deputy Dame Viry Etiaba, of awarding contracts to business associates and friends and moving the state's money into a bank where Mr. Obi used to be the chairman.

The Governor in his response said he has not received any notice from anybody and has not committed any impeachable offence. The PDP national leadership in Abuja has directed the Anambra House of Assembly to drop the impeachment proceeding against Gov. Peter Obi.

Daily Trust, Tuesday, October 17, 2006

Anarchy looms: Fayose, Aderemi, and Olujimi 'in charge'

From hiding, impeached Ekiti state governor, Mr. Ayo Fayose declared that he was still in office and that the going on in his state had all the trappings of a coup plot in a democracy. His declaration came on a day power struggles raged between Fayose's deputy, Chief Biodun Olujimi, and the Acting Governor, Chief Friday Aderemi. The state House of Assembly in a latest development passed a resolution removing the Chief Judge, Justice Kayode Bamisile, whom it had suspended in the wake of the moves to impeach Fayose and his deputy.

Fayose in a telephone conversation with Channels Television recently said: "I have not been impeached at all. It has only been a coup against the people and the judiciary". He said he was speaking from Ado Ekiti, the state capital, against speculations that he was in Ibadan, Ghana,

Ireland or under arrest.

The Acting Governor, Aderemi move into the Governor's office and summoned the Accountant General to brief him on the finances of the state, allas the impeached deputy governor amidst a detachment of her security aides, Chief Olujimi returned to her office claiming that she was in charge and ordered the Accountant General not to honor any directive from anywhere else, and summoned the state executive council to a meeting.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 18, 2006 pg1/2

NBA urges govt to shun Ekiti acting governor

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) has urged the Federal Government not to grant any form of official recognition to the new government in Ekiti state. NBA's view in Lagos was that Aderemi, who was sworn in recently as acting governor, did not merit it as he circumvented due process to rise to the executive position. Mr. Agbakoba NBA's president stated this at a press conference.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 18, 2006 pg1/6

Ekiti host state of emergency

As the constitutional crisis in Ekiti state deepens with Deputy Governor Biodun Olujim and Friday Aderemi wrestling for power, indications has emerged that president Obasanjo will declare a state of emergency in the troubled state. Information also have it that a former military governor of Oyo state, Brig. Gen. Tunji Olurin, has been tipped as the Administrator of the state and will hold the position for six months in the first instance.

Thisday, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg1/4

Anambra insist on removing Obi

Despite the intervention of the leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the Anambra state House of Assembly has insisted on impeaching Governor Peter Obi. The PDP National Chairman, Dr. Ahmadu Ali, held a closed-door meeting in Asaba, Delta state with the leadership of the Anambra state House of Assembly and top officials of the party in the state with a view to stopping the impeachment. But report has it that the legislatures led by the Speaker, Mr. Michael Balonwu, resolved to go ahead with the impeachment proceedings.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 18, 2006

ANPP alleges plot to cause national chaos

The All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) alleged that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) led Federal Government plans to throw the nation into a state of chaos. According to ANPP, the plot to cause anarchy is to make the country ungovernable so as to warrant the declaration of state of emergency that could scuttle the 2007 general election. The party's Chairman Edwin Ume-Ezeoke said the party was concerned about what he called the political debacle and circuit show that were rearing their ugly heads in Ekiti, Plateau and Anambra states, saying if not checked, the situation could send the country backwards democratically.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 18, 2006 pg3

No plan to impeach Nnamani says Speaker

Enugu state House of Assembly Speaker, Chief Abel Chukwu has refuted media reports that the

House was under pressure to begin impeachment process on Governor Chimaroke Nnamani. He also denied speculations that his position had come under serious threat over allegations that he received about N35 million from Nnamani to retain his loyalty and confidence after the visit of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to the state in January this year. He further added that there is no disagreement between the Enugu state House of Assembly and Governor Nnamani.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 18, 2006

INEC shelves Plateau by election

By elections in Plateau state have been stopped by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The 14 lawmakers say they have served a court order on election regulators in Abuja. Meanwhile, lawyers acting for Michael Dapialong said the 14 lawmakers have no right to challenge his appointment as the new Speaker of the house of assembly.

In a statement signed by INEC's director of publicity, Pastor Segun Adeogun, INEC said, "the was on October 16, 2006 served with the court processes by the affected 14 members of the Plateau State House of Assembly seeking to stop the commission from conducting a bye-election into their seats. In the light of the development and consistent with the rule of law, INEC has decided to stay action on the conduct of the bye-elections pending the outcome of the application before the court".

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 18, 2006 pg1/4

ANPP conducts presidential primaries Dec. 17

The All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) said it will conduct a national convention December 17, 2006 to come up with its presidential flag bearer. According to the party, the payment and collection of nomination forms will begin from Wednesday, October 18, 2006, while completed forms are expected back to the party by December 8, 2006. The party further scheduled other states and federal election primaries to begin from October 18, and end by December 9, 2006.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 18, 2006 pg3

Eight-man 'House moves to impeach Dariye'

Eight of the 24 members of the Plateau state House of Assembly on Thursday, October 5 breezed into the Assembly Chambers and declared that they were holding a valid legislative meeting while being heavily guarded by over 400 policemen and officials of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the eight legislators proceeded to pass resolutions.

They declared the former speaker Mr. Simon Lalong impeached and appointed a replacement, Mr. Michael Dapialong, who represents the Quaana Pan South Constituency of the state. They thereafter passed a resolution serving an impeachment notice on the state governor, Chief Joshua Chibi Dariye. The eight legislators came from Abuja where they had been detained and went back to Abuja with the house mace after passing the resolution.

The Guardian, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg1/2

Code of Conduct indicts 15 gobs

A list of governors suspected to be hiding their assets from corruption investigators has been leaked. The Code of Conduct Bureau is set to charge 15 governors for "false declaration of assets". The document list properties both in Nigeria and around the world which include cars, and bank accounts

owned by the governors but which have not been declared on an official register as required by law.

The governors named are; James Ibori of Delta State, Lucky Igbinedion of Edo state, Ayo Fayose of Ekiti, Boni Haruna of Adamawa, Gbenga Daniel of Ogun, Olagunsoye Oyinlola of Osun state, Adamu Aliero of Kebbi, Attaihru Bafarawa of Sokoto, Ibrahim Turaki of Jigawa, Ahmad Makarfi of Kaduna, Goodluck Jonathan of Bayelsa, Chimaroke Nnamani of Enugu, Achike Udenwa of Imo, Sam Egwu of Ebonyi, and Bola Tinubu of Lagos. The assets declaration exercise was ordered by President Olusegun Obasanjo began in June 2006.

Daily Trust, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg1/4

EFCC declares Kalu's Mother wanted

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has declared the mother of Abia state governor, Mrs. Eunice Kalu, and 18 others wanted for questioning over alleged financial impropriety. The commission in a statement by its Head, Media and Publicity, Mr. Osita Nwajah, said the governor's mother and others had to be declared wanted because attempts by its officials to arrest them on Monday, October 9, 2006 were resisted by her security guards. But the governor, Orji Kalu denied, saying his mother could not have resisted arrest since she had nothing to hide.

Thisday, Wednesday, October 11, 2006 pg1/4

Court Restrains EFCC from arresting Kalu's mother, others

A Federal High Court sitting in Umuahia, Abia state has restrained the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) from arresting or detaining the mother of the state governor, Orji Uzor Kalu. The governor also accused the commission of acting in bad faith, stating that EFCC invaded his mother's home at mid-night to serve an arrest warrant and arrest, without an earlier invitation to her. The judge, H.T. Soba also granted leave to four other applicants in the case.

The Guardian, Thursday, October 12, 2006 pg3

EFCC: Udenwa vows to waive immunity for trial

Governor Achike Udenwa of Imo state has restated his earlier position that he is ready to waive his constitutional immunity, to stand trial in the court of law on any issues raised by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), concerning the finances of the state. This call came on the heels of media reports on the submissions of the EFCC boss, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu to the National Assembly, on his findings in 31 states of the Federation. The governor called on all people of the state to continue to lend their support to operatives of the agency.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 10, 2006 pg5

Cleric Tasks Obasanjo on credible polls

The prelate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Arch. Ola Makinde has told president Obasanjo that the only dividend of democracy he owes Nigerians is to create a level-playing field for all candidates in the 2007 elections. Makinde made this remark at an Inter-denominational service held to mark the Independence Day celebration at the National Christian Centre, Abuja. He said that more than anything else, Nigeria needs free, fair and credible general elections that would enthrone a purposeful leadership for the country come 2007.

The Punch, Monday, October 2, 2006 pg2

2007: INEC asks parties to reach out

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has urged the 45 registered political parties to make adequate preparations for the 2007 general elections as to get the mandate of Nigerians and not to unnecessarily accuse the commission of undue bias towards a particular political party. The Resident Electoral Commissioner of INEC in Ebonyi state, Mrs. Owi Maria Inibiye described as false the impression that the commission attached to a particular party. She maintained that INEC was determined to erase such an erroneous mind set, and further said that the adoption of an Electronic Registration system is a step in the right direction to reduce the problem of election mal-practice in the country. She urges parties to do their homework.

Thisday, Monday, October 2, 2006 pg7

2007: Sultan urges Muslim to register for voting

The sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, has called on Muslims to participate actively in the forthcoming voters revalidation exercise. He said the exercise was an important aspect of the democratic process, because no citizen could vote any candidate of his choice without acquiring voters card. He also used the opportunity to call on INEC to ensure timely delivery of personnel and equipment at every centre to avert a situation whereby eligible voters would not be registered within the stipulated period and assured of the commitment of the traditional institutions in the drive to educate the people on their civic responsibilities.

Thisday, Monday, October 2, 2006 pg11

2007: APGA presidential candidate emerges December

Flag bearers of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) for the 2007 general elections would emerge by December, according to a timetable released by the party's national chairman, Chief Victor Umeh. The party's primaries would hold in November 11 and December 2, to select candidates for state and federal elections billed for April next year. The timetable indicates that APGA's presidential candidate would emerge at a convention on December 2, while the governorship and legislative elections candidates would be selected on November 11. Ward congresses would hold on October 7, local government congresses on October 14 and state congresses on October 21 to elect officers of the party at the three levels.

Weekly Trust, September 30 – October 6, 2006 pg5

INEC cheque bounces

Says AC not recognized

A N20 billion cheque issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for the purchase of some electoral materials has bounced says INEC chairman Prof. Maurice Iwu. The cheque the commission says bounced because the money was trapped at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), but added that the problem will not affect the preparation for the 2007 general elections as it had a fall back arrangements, and that nothing would be allowed to hinder the commission's operations.

The commission further added that Action Congress (AC), the newly launched party is not recognized by it because the purported merger of parties to form the Action Congress had no recognition in the electoral law of the country, the commission says it was yet to receive a letter of request for merger of parties and stressed that with 30 days notification that must be given to INEC before conventions are held, there would be no merger in 2007.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 3, 2006 pg2

CBN denies withholding INEC funds

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in a swift reaction to allegations made by the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu that it was withholding an estimated N20 billion meant for next year's elections. Head of Corporate Affairs, Mr. Festus Odoko said there was no truth in the allegation because the ape bank has not received any such grant on behalf of INEC; hence it could not withhold it.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg3

AGF, CBN divided over N20bn INEC fund

A fresh wind of controversy over who is delaying the release of the N20billion Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) funds raged as the office of the Accountant General of the Federation (AGF) through its Information Officer, Larry Abang said it has ordered the payment of the money to the commission. But the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) said there was no such directive. The bank's spokesman Mr. Festus Odoko said the CBN has records of all it receives and there is no basis for the bank to give false statement.

Daily Trust, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg3

Why we stopped INEC cheques, by FG

The Ministry of Finance has explained why it blocked the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) from accessing part of its money, saying the electoral body failed to give a satisfactory account of how it spend N12.09billion earlier meant for the purchase of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), which was rejected by the National Assembly. But INEC in a swift reaction said it was not bothered by the "embargo" on its account and added that it would proceed with preparations for 2007 general elections, which it said would begin in December 14, 2006 with the revalidation of voters' register.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 10, 2006

AC faults Iwu, insists on right to contest polls

The Action Congress (AC) has condemned the statement credited to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu that AC was not recognized because the merger that produced it was not properly communicated. But the Chairman of AC Publicity Committee, Lai Mohammed, says the party lamented that a body set up to monitor the activities of political parties, among other responsibilities, either could not recognize a merger when it saw one or does not really know what constitutes a merger.

According to him, AC is not a merger of political parties, but the coming together of like minds from different political parties under an umbrella, and in this case to save the suffering masses of our country. He further states that while INEC has a right to ensure strict adherence to the processes leading to mergers, for parties that want to merge, it has no business controlling the movements and minds of politicians who wish to move from one party to another.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg6

Iwu, others task media on 2007 polls

Some eminent Nigerians like the former Director General of the Federal Radio Corporation of

Nigeria, Mr. Eddie Iroh and the Managing Director of the New Nigerian newspaper, Mr. Ndanusa Alao and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Chairman, Prof. Maurice Iwu says the success of the forthcoming general elections in the country would depend partly on how the media portray the exercise.

Iwu said because the capacity of the media to reach a mass audience and to effect it for good or ill, any serious reformer must cultivate and partner with the media, hence they must live up to their responsibilities in reporting elections.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg7

*Voters Registration: **Senate summons Iwu***

For the second time in five weeks, chairman of the Independent national Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu appears before the senate to explaining the state of preparedness by the commission on the voters' registration exercise that begins on Saturday, October 7, 2006. The resolution by the senate to invite Iwu stemmed from a motion moved by Senator Mohammed Aruwa (Kaduna Central) under matter of urgent national importance, which was seconded by Senator Uche Chukwumerije (Abia North).

Thisday, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg2

2007 elections will be free and fair – Obasanjo

President Olusegun Obasanjo has reiterated the determination of his administration to ensure a successful, free and fair, transparent election next year. While bidding the out-going Ambassador/Head of Delegation of the European Commission, Mr. Leonidas Tezapsidis, farewell, the President noted that "it is in our best interest" to have successful elections.

Thisday, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg2

ANPP to give women fee nomination forms

The All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) has abolished nomination fees for women aspirants in its upcoming party primaries in order to give women equal opportunity in the political process. The national chairman of the party, Rt. Hon. Chief Edwin Ume Ezeoke made this known while receiving a delegation from the International Republican Institute (IRI) who paid him a courtesy visit recently. Chief Ume Ezeoke said the decision to waive nomination fees for women is targeted towards ensuring that more women are given the chance to take part in the political process ahead in 2007. He added that ANPP constitution is gender sensitive document, which strives to promote political participation by women. From the ward level to national level we have position for women.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 4, 2006 pg49

Afenifere calls on NASS to remove INEC boss

Afenifere, the Yoruba socio-cultural and political organization has called on the National Assembly to urgently order the removal of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) chairman Prof. Maurice Iwu, for there to be a peaceful 2007 general elections. The noted that despite the fact that INEC was ill prepared for the forthcoming 2007 elections, INEC boss "a few days ago had to tell the nation that a N20bn cheque issued by the Commission to purchase electoral materials bounced. We see no other reason for this information than preparing the minds of Nigerians for a shift in handover date.

Most worrisome to Afenifere about INEC alleged programming of the nation for a sabotage of the 2007 elections, Odumakin stated was the handling of the voters' registration exercise, which should kick off next Saturday. He explained that against opposition by Nigerians, Prof. Iwu is still insisting on using the e-registration whose pilot exercise in the Federal Capital Territory was a colossal failure. The group while insisting that Iwu should be removed, pointed out that he was only acting out a script written outside INEC building and that he was only pursuing an hidden agenda.
Daily Trust, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg7

INEC seeks alternative power supply from Benue LGs

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has appealed to the Benue state government to prevail on its 23 local government councils to provide generators as alternative power supply for the charging of electronic equipment to be used during the voters' registration. The state Resident Electoral Commissioner said the electronic equipment to be used for the exercise needed constant charging to be effective, hence the need for generators to be provided by the local councils. This, he said was necessary given that public power supply is characterized by failure.

He further informed that the registration will commence on October 7, in specially designated states, and commence in other state in October 21, and last till December 7, 2006. He said INEC had ordered 33,000 units of the electronic equipment to be used for registration in the 120,000 polling units in the nation.

Daily Trust, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg9

Voters' Registration: Iwu to demonstrate electronic machines before Senate

Due to his absence from Abuja, the senate has rescheduled the appearance by the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu before it to Tuesday, October 10. The senate President, Chief Ken Nnamani told the senate that Iwu would come with the electronic voters' registration machine for the purpose of demonstrating to the Senate how it works.
Thisday, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg 45

Iwu lists obstacles to free, fair elections

For the country to hold free and fair election next year, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) boss, Prof. Maurice Iwu has listed some obstacles to be overcome and first among them is electoral violence. Iwu warned in Abeokuta, Ogun state that if the issue of electoral violence was not addressed urgently, hopes that a free and fair election would hold next year would continue to be a mirage. He assured the electorates that their vote would count during the forthcoming general polls. He cited other hindrances against the holding of free and fair elections especially in the past according to Iwu to include; money politics, politicians' mindset and discrimination against women. He told politicians that the only way to win the election is to campaign vigorously to convince the electorates.

The Guardian, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg7

Iwu in Senate, explains Voters' Machine function

Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu explained the working of the voting machine to the upper chamber and demonstrated it by registering some Senators. Iwu explained that the battery of the machines ran low because it was not fully charged.

No fewer than 30 Senator filed out to be part of the demonstration after the Senate President, Sen. Ken Nnamani, followed by the deputy Senate President, Sen. Ibrahim Mantu, who stepped out to have his photograph and thumbprint captured by the machine.

Under five minutes the fully laminated voters' cards were produced from the machine to the admiration of Senators and the public gallery. But alas at 1.13pm, on getting to the turn of Sen. Nuhu Aliyu, the machine collapsed due to battery failure. Sen. Aliyu made an issue out of the development, asking whether the machine could be trusted to perform in the field.

Thisday, Wednesday, October 11,2006 pg5

PDP sells governorship forms for N3m

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Monday, October 9, 2006 in Abuja began the sale of nomination and expression of interest forms to elective office seekers in its fold. A statement signed by the party's National Publicity Secretary, Mr. John Odey, showed that the governorship aspirants would pay N3m for the nomination forms. Aspirants for State Houses of Assembly will pay N100,000 while those for House of Representatives will part with N500,000. Senatorial aspirants will pay N1m for their nomination forms.

On expression of interest, he said all aspirants for Houses of Assembly, House of Representatives, Senatorial and governorship positions would pay N10,000 each.

The Guardian, Wednesday, October 11, 2006 pg7

2007: Gana, Odili, Egwu, Attah, Marwa, Sarah Jibril, pick nomination forms

Six presidential aspirants under the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), picked nomination forms as a formal declaration of intention to contest next year's presidential election. The aspirants are former PDP Board of Trustees Secretary, Prof. Jerry Gana, Rivers state governor, Dr. Peter Odili, Ebonyi state Governor, Dr. sam Egwu, former Military Administrator of Lagost state, Brigadier-Gen. Buba Marwa, Governor Obong Victor Attah of Akwa Ibom state and Mrs. Sarah Jibril.

The aspirants picked both the nomination forms and the declaration of intent as specified by the party. The sale of forms opens to all categories of aspirants excluding aspirants for local government council polls under the PDP platform.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 11, 2006pg5

Rigging: PRP seeks removal of Benue INEC boss

The Benue state chapter of the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) has sought the removal of the state's resident commissioner of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Mr. Austin Okojie. The chairman of the PRP in the state, Mr. Baba Agan, called on the INEC national chairman, Prof. Maurice Iwu, to immediately remove Okojie on the ground that the resident commissioner is in the state to execute an agenda against the people.

Mr. Agan said the party had carried out an investigation which showed that Okojie was posted to the state to subvert the will of the people during the 2007 general elections, because of the state's opposition to president Obasanjo failed third term agenda and that investigation reveals that Okojie is from the same place as chief Tony Anenih and was sent to execute a hidden agenda.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, October 11, 2006 pg9

Senator Ekweremadu faces recall threat

Aggrieved indigenes of Enugu West Senatorial Zone staged a demonstration in major streets of Enugu calling for the recall of Senator Ekweremadu from the senate. Carrying placards, the indigenes, which include women, accused Ekweremadu of being insensitive to their plight in the last seven years that he has been representing them. The leader of the group, Chief Cosmas Chukwu said Sen. Ekweremadu was becoming a stumbling block in the ongoing investigations on the state government by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) over alleged corruption. The group says they have commenced a former recall of the senator.

Thisday, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg46

TUC, NDI plan separate monitoring of 2007 polls

Trade Union Congress (TUC) is working out an arrangement with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to carry out independent monitoring of 2007 general elections in the country. The Asst. General Secretary of the union, Mr. Adamson Momoh, stated that the union decided to embark on independent monitoring of the elections because of the importance of the exercise to the future of the country. He noted that the next general elections would determine the sustainability of the current democratic form of governance in the country.

The Guardian, Friday, October 6, 2006 pg5

2007: No governor has been cleared, says EFCC

The notion that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has given any governor a clean bill of health is misconceived, and therefore untrue, the commission has said. The EFCC in statement by its Head, Media and Publicity, Mr. Osita Nwajah said it had not cleared any governor as claimed by some of the state chief executives, explaining that the claims were speculative. It said "for the avoidance of doubt, EFCC has not issued any clearance for whatever purpose, to any politician. Anyone advertising himself or herself as having been cleared by the commission as leverage for political ascendancy does so at his/her own risk.

Thisday, Tuesday, October 10, 2006 pg2

Taraba AC issues free nomination forms

In line with its promise to create a level playing field for all aspirants, the Action Congress (AC) in Taraba state is giving its nomination and expression of interest forms free to the elective office seekers. The move is also aimed at de-emphasizing money politics and encouraging credible persons without financial wherewithal to provide leadership to the people. The state's Chairman of the party Alhaji Danjuma Isa Munga made the declaration, he also said the party is preparing for 2007 polls, with a code of conduct for the aspirants.

He said the AC leadership would not allow any unholy rivalry and campaigns of calumny among aspirants, the aspirants were advised to keep their supporters in check to curb violence.

The guardian, Thursday, October 12, 2006 pg6

Obasanjo backs ICPC to prosecute 24 Governors

President Olusegun Obasanjo has accepted the proposal by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to provide funds in the 2007 budget for the investigation of state governors who may have misappropriated state funds. Head Publicity Enlightenment Dept of the body Mike Sowe, confirmed in a statement that the commission has sent 37 case files involving 24 state governors to the Chief Justice of the Federation for investigation and possible prosecution.

Thisday, Thursday, October 12, 2006 pg2

2007 Damning Documents Flood Abuja

Abuja is awash with damning documents detailing varied allegations against political aspirants for the 2007 elections. Those in focus are governorship, senatorial and House of Representatives contenders. Most of the documents have reportedly been sent to the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) as well as select Committees of the National Assembly.

Meanwhile, two senators, Mohammed Abba Aji and Arthur Nzeribe, have confirmed their involvement in petitions against their State Governors, Ali Modu Sherrif and Achike Udenwa respectively. Both Senators claimed that their governors have mismanaged tens of billions of Naira. The Guardian, Monday, October 9, 2006 pg1/7

INEC warn against multiple registration

The Resident Electoral Commissioner of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Yobe and Borno States, Alhaji Abba Kyari Sadiqau, has warned the commission's officers and supervisors against multiple registrations, at the training centre. INEC chief Prof. Maurice Iwu, said the authenticity, credibility and reliability of the new voters' register for the forthcoming general election would not only depend on the reliability of the direct data capture (DDC) method, but also on the officers' vigilance and close supervision of the entire national revalidation and registration exercise slated for October 21, 2006.

The Guardian, Monday, October 9, 2006 pg5

INEC grants AC political party

The uncertainty over the status of newly launched mega-party, Action Congress (AC), has been laid to rest following its confirmation as a full-fledged political party by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). In a letter dated August 25, 2006, addressed to AC National Chairman, Haruna Zurmi, INEC says that it had accorded AC a political party status. The INEC letter was signed by its Secretary, Abubakar Jauro. The letter shows that INEC has finally approved the application for change of name of the party from Action Peoples Congress (APC) to Action Congress (AC). The approval followed the consideration of the commission's report on the just concluded National Convention of the APC where it changed its name to AC.

The Guardian, Monday, October 9, 2006 backpage

INEC set for by-elections in Plateau

By-election for the seat for the seat of 14 Plateau Lawmakers is being organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The newly appointed Speaker of the House declared the seat belonging to 14 members of the state's House of Assembly arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) vacant. The election will be held October 28, 2006 says INEC. INEC received a letter from the Speaker of the Plateau state House of Assembly, Mr. Michael Dapialong, in which he requested INEC conduct by-election to replace the lawmakers who decamped to the Action Congress (AC) a source says.

Daily Trust, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg4

EFCC: I will resort to self help – Kalu

Governor Ori Uzor Kalu of Abia state says he is fully ready to resist 'unlawful moves by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), to arrest his mother and top official of his government'. He said he would not hesitate to "resort to self help, if EFCC resorts to self help," adding that he was aware that officials of the commission were planning to use 'extra legal means,' in an attempt to arrest his mother and aides. While referring to the Federal High Court order, which restrained the commission from arresting his mother and some of his aides, Kalu said what EFCC officials were planning was to resort to other ways of carrying out the arrest, in utter disregard to the court order.

Thisday, Monday, October 16, 2006pg6

Gbonigi blames Ekiti electorate for political crisis

If Ekiti people had been more discerning during the 2003 elections, instead of allowing their greed for money to becloud their judgment, the present political drama in the state could have been avoided. The retired Archbishop of the Anglican Diocese, Rev. Bolanle Gbonigi opined, while blaming the people of Ekiti state for the current crisis in the state. Gbonigi who spoke at an event in Ibadan said the people of Ekiti failed to elect those who could have served the state better, and opted for Fayose because of the bait of pipe borne water he dangled before them.

The Guardian, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg3

INEC can't declare Plateau legislators seats vacant says AC

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is incompetent to declare vacant seats of the 14 Plateau state legislators who recently decamped to the Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD) party, according to the Action Congress (AC). The AC chairman, media and publicity, Lai Mohammed, reacted to reports that INEC had declared the seats of the 14 Plateau state Legislators vacant and had tentatively scheduled by-elections for the seats for October 20, 2006. AC further explained that the issue of decamping from the party to another is governed by section 106 and 109 of the constitution and in this case, members of the Plateau state House of Assembly, who decamped from the PDP to ACD are fully protected by the constitution as it is public knowledge that there is a division within the PDP.

The party further stressed that in the absence of a recall by the relevant constituency or a valid declaration of vacancy by a properly constituted House and properly elected Speaker, INEC has absolutely no role to play in the matter.

The Guardian, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg4

22 parties to align for 2007 elections

To make an impact in the 2007 polls, 22 political parties have embarked on exploratory talks towards fielding consensus candidates. Known as the Patriotic Alliance (PA), the parties have held a series of meeting and will meet again on soon in Abuja to perfect strategies for the elections. While hinting on the meeting, Chief Maxi Okwu, chairman of the Citizens Popular Party (CPP), said that the coming together had become necessary for the nascent parties to have a leeway in the electoral contest.

Parties in the PA talks include the CPP, All Peoples Liberation Party (APLP); New Democrats (ND); Better Nigeria Peoples Party (BNPP), Nigerian Elements Progressive Party (NEPP), Accord and New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP). Factions of parties such as All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), led by Chief Chekwes Okorie, the Labour Party (LP), Community Party of Nigeria (CPN), Liberation Democratic Party of Nigeria (LDPN), Nigerian Advance Party (NAP) and National Action

Council (NAC), among others.
The Guardian, Monday, October 16, 2006 backpage

INEC releases final Timetable

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has released a comprehensive schedule of activities for the 2007 general elections, stipulating that political parties must submit the list of their presidential candidates and their personal particulars by December 22. Candidates for National Assembly elections and their particulars must also get to INEC not later than the same date. The electoral body also said the list of candidates and their personal particulars for the April 4 governorship and state assembly elections must get to the commission a week earlier.

This was stated in a public bulleting signed by Pro. Maurice Iwu, chairman of INEC and dated October 12, 2006. Which indicates that the processes leading to the election would be kick-started on November 8, with the issuance of notice of polls in line with section 31 (1) of the Electoral Act, 2006.

Parties fielding candidates for the polls can begin to collect nomination forms from INEC from January 15, 2007 and must return all such documents not later than two weeks from that date. Going by the schedule, no candidates may withdraw from the elections after February 3, 2007 for the governorship and state assembly category and February 10, 2007 for presidential and national assembly contest. In the guideline, INEC stated that parties cannot change their candidates or substitute names after withdrawal from the governorship and state assembly polls after February 13, 2007 and February 20, 2007 for the presidential and national assembly elections.

By March 8, 2007 the list of nominated candidates for the governorship and state assembly elections will be published, while that of the president and federal legislature will follow a week later, in line with the Electoral Act that provides for at least 30 days before the polls for the list to be published.

The processes will culminate on the governorship and state assembly elections on April 14, 2007 and April 21, 2007 for the presidential and national assembly polls while campaigns by candidates must end 24 hours before each polling. According to the notice, "run offs for the presidential/governorship elections will be fixed at the time or shortly after the announcement of results".

Thisday, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg1/4

Anambra: House at war with self

Anambra state House of Assembly has suspended five of its members who were opposed to the impeachment of Governor Peter Obi and his deputy, Dame Virgy Etiaba. According to the speaker, Mr. Mike Balowu, the members were suspended indefinitely for "actions inimical to the progress of the assembly and the state". The affected members are Antonia Okoye, (Onitsha South II), Joseph Dim Obi (Deputy Majority Leader), and Ben Nwosu (Antioch Constituency II). Others are Sylvester Okeke (Anaocha I), and the only All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) member, Emmanuel Iloegbunam (Njikoka I). The motion for their impeachment was moved by the Majority Leader, Humphrey Nsofor, and seconded by the Chief Whip, Ben Obidigo.

The speaker said the decision to suspend the five members was unanimous, adding that the House would pursue its bid to impeach the state governor and his deputy to a logical conclusion despite the intervention of the national secretariat of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Thisday, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg1/4

EFCC, ICPC cant stop me

Former Military President, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida (rtd) has declared that threats by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt and other Related Practices Commission (ICPC) cannot stop him from contesting the 2007 presidential elections. Babangida said his desire to contest for the President in 2007 was intact. He noted that he had resolved to pick the presidential form in November. He added that sincere the country was running a Gestapo government but a democracy based on 1999 Constitution, EFCC, ICPC and INEC had no roles in screening any aspirants out of the forthcoming general election.

The Guardian, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg1/4

INEC ad-hoc staff to enter bond

Ad-hoc staff recruited by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Sokoto will sign a bond of honesty in their electoral duties, INEC's federal commissioner in Sokoto, Alhaji Awwal Babayo Shehu added that any of the staff found wanting during the conduct of the registration of voters would be prosecuted by the commission.

He further explained that though this measure became necessary, the commission would expect them to live to their responsibilities. He said the commission recruited 3,760 area registration officer and 244 supervisors who will carry out the registration exercise in the state.

Daily Trust, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg9

INEC charges Youth Corps members to be transparent

FCT Resident Electoral Commissioner, Kabiru Ahmed, has called on NYSC members engaged for the voters' registration to be transparent. He urged them to stand firm against any interruption. He also warned against multiple voting, explaining that such conduct would render the voter's card invalid. He called on all stakeholders to cooperate with the commission during the exercise to ensure a hitch-free election process.

Daily Trust, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg31

Immigration to assist in voters' registration in Abuja

FCT Resident Electoral Commissioner, Kabir Ahmed says the immigration officers would support the commission during the voters' registration exercise starting on October 25. He explained that the move was to prevent non-Nigerians from registering as voters. He disclosed that 600 members of the NYSC were currently being trained on how to use the Direct Data Capture (DDC) machines, which would be used for the exercise. He urged politicians to report any irregularity arising from the event to INEC officials, adding that enough security personnel would be deployed to check any unlawful conduct.

Daily Trust, Thursday, October 19, 2006 pg31

This Month's Politricks:

Confusion as voters' Registration takes off

Poor Publicity in Kano and other

As the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) prepares for voters registration across the country, people in Kano, Katsina and Jigawa states appear not to know what is going on as findings has shows that publicity would mar the exercise in most states and especially in these states. No official response from the office of the Resident Electoral Commissioner in Kano, Dr. Humphrey Nwangeneh, as he seems to have ignored persistent request for information about INEC's readiness in the state. Investigation however reveals that only a fraction of the photographic equipment required for the exercise was available at the moment.

The All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) chairman in Kano state, Alhaji Sani Hashim Hotoro, said while flagging-off the campaign that his party was determined to ensure that all eligible voters were registered. He told the people of Garun Malam local government area that the voters' registration exercise was the only way the electorate could secure the fundamental right to vote and be voted for. He added that ANPP would ensure that no prospective voter would be prevented from registering the party attaches more importance to voters' registration as a tool for political emancipation.

On the other hand, officials of PDP at the headquarters disclosed that they had made adequate arrangements to mobilize people to participate in the voters' registration exercise. The party says it would pay utmost attention to voter registration, as it remains "the only way of returning power to the people".

Around the Kano state capital, most people were unaware of the exercise as there was not enough publicity and sensitization by the electoral body to inform the public on the voters' registration exercise. But INEC official in charge of Kano claimed that the exercise was adequately publicized.

Observers have adjudged arrangements for an exercise of such importance as to the prospects of the 2007 elections as very poor.

In Katsina, however, preparation for the nationwide voter registration was approached "with some seriousness" by both the state government and the states' INEC. The INEC's Resident Commissioner in the state Alhaji Abubakr Zaki, led members of the commission to the state council chambers in Katsina and demonstrated the direct data capture (DDC) machines to be used for the exercise. 10,000 ad hoc officials had been trained and deployed to four zonal centers at Funta, Daura, Dutsinma and Katsina.

In Jigawa State, report has it that the registration exercise is poorly publicized. Officials of the state's contact committee on the registration exercise seemed to be caught unaware. The state's commissioner for information, Alhaji Ibrahim Dandoka said that despite the limited time to prepare for the voter registration exercise, the state would work tirelessly to ensure that all prospective voters were registered. He regretted that the exercise was due at a time when the state government had slashed three hours off the working day to enable Muslim break their fast on time.

While dismissing fears that the exercise was threatened with failure, the state commissioner Alhaji Nasir Olanrewaju, said that over 7,500 officials have been trained to do the work, and that all training was completed and the necessary facilities were available. He assured the people of the state that the commission would do its best to ensure that all prospective voters were registered. But most people said they knew nothing of the exercise even political party officials denied knowledge of the exercise.

Weekly Trust, October 7 – 13, 2006

No registration materials in Yobe

There are indications that the voter registration exercise may face setbacks in Yobe state. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was still awaiting the required material at the time of filling this report though the exercise has been postponed by two weeks in the state. And findings shows that while INEC's headquarters was to supply about 429 direct data captured machines (DDC) for recording finger prints for the 1714 registration centers in Yobe state, only three such machines had so far been received. The three DDC supplied to Yobe state INEC were for the training of electoral officials.

Originally, INEC intended to supply one DDC machines for each of the 1714 registration centers, the figure was later revised to 429, which means that each DDC is to cover four registration centers. The fact that only 3 of the 429 machines were in the possession of the state's INEC's has arouse the concerns of observers. But the state commissioner, Kyari Sadiq, says that there was no cause to worry as the headquarters has assured him that they would provide the DDC because it is vital to the registration.

Information has it that INEC is faced with shortage of funds for public enlightenment and payment for services to be rendered by officials contracted to carry out the registration exercise.

The registration exercise could face a major challenge in Yobe state on account of the difficult terrain, especially in the northern part of the state where a number of roads were not motorable. The resident electoral commissioners' assurance that INEC would deploy donkey's, camels and horses in these areas left observers in wondering whether the commission could effectively cover four registration centers.

Weekly Trust, October 7 – 13, 2006

Sokoto: How prepared is INEC

As voter registration begins in all parts of the country, the big question is whether the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is sufficiently equipped to persuade Nigerians to turn out en masse for the exercise. INEC argued that prospective voters have long been notified of the exercise, but if the commission's effort to enlighten and mobilize prospective voters in Sokoto state is anything to go by, there are doubts of adequate mobilization.

Weekly Trust, October 7 – 13, 2006

Voter registration: Lagosians bemoan shoddy preparations

Prospective voters in Lagos have expressed dissatisfaction about the preparation of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for the upcoming voter registration exercise in the state, vowing to resist any attempt to disenfranchise them. Many people spoke to say that INEC did not do enough in terms of public awareness to sensitize them towards the exercise. They added that there is nothing on ground to show that there will be any voter registration exercise in the state.

Lagos state INEC public relation officer, Mr. Adeniyi Olusola, however, said all arrangements have been put in place for a successful exercise. According to him, the state electoral body has recruited and trained about 10,000 staff for the voter registration exercise and that all the needed materials have already been distributed to the various 20 local government in the state.

Weekly Trust, October 14-20,2006 pg42

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN postpones Cote d'Ivoire's elections till next year

Amid increasing calls by Cote d'Ivoire's major opposition parties for the suspension of the country's constitution to help usher in elections and peace, the United Nations' election chief has said the long-delayed vote would be postponed for another year. He said the polls should be held before October next year. UN and other officials in the world's leading cocoa producer had previously said elections initially due to be held by October 31, 2006 would not take place on time, but no new date had been set. However, UN gave no official reasons for the postponing the vote, which is meant to be addressed by the UN Security Council in October 25, 2006.

The election is meant to help secure a fragile peace and unite the war-divided country, which has been split between a government-controlled south and rebel-held north since fighting broke out in 2002. About 10,000 UN and French forces are deployed in the country, many of them patrolling a buffer zone that separates the two sides.

The guardian, Monday, October 16, 2006 pg10

Ki-Moon wins straw polls for Annan's successor

All five-veto wielding members of the United Nation (UN) Security Council in a colour-coded voting endorsed the candidature of South Korea's Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister, Ban Ki-Moon as likely successor of Kofi Annan at the World body's secretariat. Five permanent secretaries have endorsed Ki-Moon while 10 more permanent secretaries will still have to endorse him, but at the meantime, Ki-Moon is still leading. Annan tenure will end in December.

The Guardian, Tuesday, October 3, 2006

Election Results sparks rioting in Zambia

Rioting broke out on Sunday, October 1, 2006 in the Zambian capital, Lusaka after president Levy Mwanawasa surged ahead in Presidential elections and his principal rival slipped into third place. The official Electoral Commission said Mwanawasa captured 39 percent of the votes counted so far ahead of United Democratic Alliance (UDA) leader, Hichilma Haikande with 30 percent, and Michael Sata who had been seen as the main rival with 28 percent. No casualties reported yet and no report of trouble in other part of the city or country.

Thisday, Monday, October 2, 2006 pg54

Observers Praise DR Congo's poll

Observers at the Democratic Republic of Congo's landmark presidential run-off have generally praised its organization, despite some disruptions. A US spokesman said the poll was "light years ahead of anything" previously seen in DR Congo. The vote is being rerun in the north-east town of Bumba, where polling stations were burnt, amid fraud claims. The first unofficial results says President Joseph Kabila and ex rebel Jean-Pierre Bemba are neck and neck.

Former Mozambique President Joachim Chisano said the electoral process had been well organized. Former Canadian prime minister and head of the US based Carter Centre's observing team Joe Clark said: "there does not appear to be a trend of either intimidation or violence. One

could almost say the opposite". But at least one person was killed on polling day when police opened fire on Mr. Bemba's supporters in Bumba, when they rioted after saying they had uncovered attempts to stuff the ballot boxes. Also, two election workers were shot dead by a drunken soldier, which spark riots, in which 43 polling stations were destroyed in Fataki in Ituri district, which remains one of the most unstable part of DR Congo.

We Country Stori

Dis na we country tori for October

My country people, plenty yawa don gas for Ekiti state o, de state House of Assembly don talk say make de governor Mr. Ayodele Fayose go sidon for house sake of say him don nearly finish the money wey Federal Government give am make he take do better for de poor people wey dey for de state. As dem remove am with him deputy wey him name be Mrs. Biodun Olujimi, na im Mr. Friday Aderemi wey be speaker for Ekiti House of Assembly come enter say na im go dey rule the people for de state, but before him go look back de deputy we dem remove come say na magomago dem take comot dem for office, na im be say she no gree say dem comot her for office. If you say woman pass man, he be like say I gree becos as dem remove de two both of dem, Fayose go hide, but Olujimi wey be woman show face for office dey challenge de new governor Aderemi say de way dem take comot her dey 'unconstitutional', na im be say dem no follow de way wey de constitution say make dem take remove dem.

As I say plenty yawa gas, na true o sake of say the Baba (Obasanjo) wey President don declare wetin oyinbo people dey call state of emergency for de state, that one be say na Federal Government dey rule for de state, because Baba don appoint de person wey dem dey call Brigadier Gen. Olurin (rtd) make im dey in charge of de state for six months because government don suspend all de people wey dey fight for de state. Na him be say no House of Assembly, no governor and Deputy for de state again, na only Olurin wey come from another state dey manage de poor state.

Make my country people wey dey for Anambra and Plateau state dey pray make emergency state no enter dem state oh becos de kin move wey dem dey make now fit bring emergency state come sidon yakata for dem state as he take sidon for Ekiti state.

My people una don register? Dis na de big question wey dey every person mouth, I say make I ask una sake of say me I never register as I dey talk so. De tin be say de machine wey INEC say dem buy to take do voter registration no reach anywhere at all at all, I even hear say de once wey dem bring plenty of dem no dey work, and de people we suppose use de machine never go training well well to take no how to dey use de machine.

FOR THE RECORDS



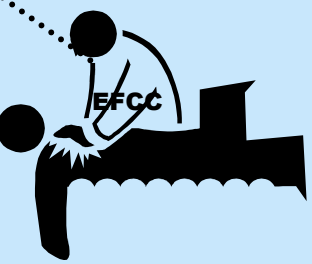
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Jus jokes

Gov, don't worry
by the time I finish
with U, **the**
decease will leave
others

Ha!! Na im
be se Baba
and EFCC
don kill me



OPINION

NEWS TITBITS

PHOTO SPEAK

ADD PICTURES HERE