

SEPTEMBER, 2006

Volume 12



# DEMOCRACY WATCH

An E-newsletter from the TMG

## Transition Monitoring Group

(A coalition of  
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NGOs and Civil  
Society  
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The E-Newsletter  
(Democracy Watch) is  
produced monthly via  
email by the Transition  
Monitoring Group  
(TMG)

The Transition  
Monitoring Group  
(TMG) is a coalition of  
over 230 human rights,  
non-governmental and  
civil society  
organizations formed  
in August 1998 for the  
purpose of developing  
integrity in the electoral  
process by monitoring  
and reporting on the

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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.

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## GOVERNANCE

### Iwu Explains Election Order

The Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu, said that the commission fixed the presidential election for April 21, 2007 in order to prevent what he called "a bandwagon effect". He said the commission did not want the choices of the electorate in the governorship and State Houses of Assembly election scheduled to hold on April 14, to influence them in the subsequent elections such as the Presidential and National Assembly elections.

Iwu stated that October 7, 2006 has being fixed for the update of voters' register and that the commission will give notice of polls in November 8, 2006, February 6, 2007 has also been fixed as the last day for the submission/substitution of candidates by political parties while the commission will publish the list of parties' candidates on March, 24, 2007, which the law says must be done 14 days before the day of election.

He said the commission tarried a little longer in releasing the time table because by the provision of the electoral law, the commission was not supposed to issue timetable for polls this early as, according to him the law says it should be issued at least 150 days to the elections. He allayed fears over possible lack of time to arrange for run-off elections in the event these become necessary, saying "our laws provide for run-off elections in case of ties or lack of decisive winners within the time provided by the law. We have a fixed time for the run-off. He admitted that although the present voters' register which the commission would update in October, was fraught with many problems, he pointed out that the State Independent Electoral Commission (SIECs) could still sue it for the conduct of Local Government elections which he said was not under INEC's purview.

He also justified the delay in conducting the voters' register, saying, 'voters' registration done early will not succeed as these involved sensitive materials that are better allowed to move round close to the polls. The Commission also declared that only political parties have constitutional powers of screening and presenting candidates for the 2007 general elections but that while screening candidates, the political parties must abide by the provisions of Section 137 of 1999 Constitution for its candidate to qualify for the contest.

Thisday, Thursday, August 31, 2006 pg1/4/The Guardian, Thursday, August 31, 2006 pg1/2

### INEC Conference Seeks Delay of Census Result

Stakeholders in the nation's electoral process rose from a three-day national forum in Abuja and called on the Federal Government to delay the release of the 2006 population census, saying it will reduce tension and provide a favourable atmosphere for the conduct of the 2007 general elections. The stakeholders felt that the census figures, which might eventually affect the delimitation of the constituencies and allotment of polling boots might become controversial and consequently raise temper in the land. These factors put together the participants reasoned at the forum said might have adverse consequences on the conduct of the general elections, as a violent protest of the figure could disrupt the election.

Thisday, Friday, September 1, 2006 pg1/4

### **NPC to release census results in December**

Almost seven months after the last headcount, the National Population Commission (NPC) has now taking definite stand on the release of the census. Indeed it has set a deadline. The commission disclosed this through the chairman of Public Enlightenment Committee of the commission, Dr. Duro Famojaro. He said the results would be released at the last quarter of the year, and that when the results comes, Nigerians should expect the best as this the first time in the country's history that sophisticated electronics machines were used for data processing to ensure reliably, accurate and acceptable figures, unlike in the past when forms were manually processed, Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and Optical Mark Reader (OMR) forms, which were machine readable were used.

The Guardian, Friday, September 29, 2006 pg3

### **INEC to transmit 2007 election live**

The two-day conference on 2007 general elections organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in collaboration with civil society organizations ended in Enugu recently with INEC reassuring stakeholders that the forthcoming elections will be transparent by instant counting at the collating centres and simultaneously transmitting live. The commission also promised to abridge the distance between the collation centres and polling stations. INEC made this pledge as part of efforts to build the confidence of the people in the commission's efforts to ensure free and fair polls.

The chairman told participants that the issue o time limit for election petitions remains one of the biggest problems before the commission.

Thisday, Friday, September 29, 2006 pg5

### **2007: INEC cautions media on election results**

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has cautioned the media organizations particularly the electronic media against the publication of election results that are not authorized or officially released by the electoral body. Noting that in the past, the media had independently sourced election results and published them, this the commission says had caused confusion particularly when the results later released by it differed from what were published.

INEC commissioner Mr. Sutley Daze who presented the chairman, Prof. Maurice Iwu at the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of Broadcasting Organizations of Nigeria (BON) assured that the results of the 2007 election will not be delayed before being released, he offered that the best was for the media to wait for the official result from the commission for the sake of national interest. He added that with electronic voting, collation of results nationwide would be very fast.

Thisday, Friday, September 8, 2006 pg7

### **INEC begins voters registration in October**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) will commence voters registration in Abuja in October 7, 2006 says Okezie Nwankwo, spokesperson for the commission gave this hint in a statement he released lately. According to him, the voters' registration would be the final one before the general election in 2007. The exercise will put to rest the fear nursed by Nigerians and political analysts about the preparedness of the electoral body to organize 2007 elections.

Daily Trust, Friday, September 08, 2006 pg32

### **2007: No room for multiple registrations – INEC Commissioner**

The Federal Commission of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), in Sokoto, Alhaji Awwal Babayo Shehu has said that 3,035 polling units have been identified in the state for 2007 election. Alhaji Shehu said each of the polling units which was identified through geographic Information System, will register not more than 500 voter in order to avoid overcrowding. He further explained the registration machine to be used has the capability to authenticate voter's card in order to check the practice of multiple registration, impersonation and eliminate multiple thumbprint. Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 12, 2006 pg11

### **INEC pledges to enforce polls rules**

The guidelines on conduct of the 2007 polls will be fully enforced, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has reaffirmed. The commission restated the no-compromise stance on electoral rules in Abuja at a meeting with party leaders.

Its chairman, Prof. Maurice Iwu used the occasion to assure Nigerians that INEC would organize free and fair and credible elections next year. He told politicians not expect any change of the rules of the game under any guise before and after the elections and that INEC would not dance to the tunes of candidates and parties, who might resort to last minute litigation to compel the commission to shift the goal-post when the contest had been kicked off. The Guardian, Tuesday, September 12, 2006

### **2007: INEC to cancel results of violent wards**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), says it will cancel results from any of the 120,000 electoral wards across the country where there is violence. INEC Federal Commission in Abuja, Mr. Satley Daze, gave the warning at the NIPR organized seminar in Jos yesterday, stressing that INEC has resolved to take such a tough stance to forestall all forms of violence in the 2003 general elections. He added that INEC is embarking on a mass voter education as well as bringing new technology to check cases of election rigging and to ease and hasten the announcement of election results. Daily Trust, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg3

### **Census result won't affect 2007 elections – NPC**

The National Population Commission has said the release of the results of the 2006 national population and housing census would not have any adverse impact on next year's elections. The commission's Chairman, Chief Samu'ila Danko Makama has said. He stated that the NPC is very confident that the outcome of the census would not in any way generate undue controversy and tension as to negatively affect the conduct of 2007 elections. This is against the background of recent calls for the withholding of census results until after next year's elections by politicians. Thisday, Friday, September 14, 2006 pg5

### **INEC told to restore constituency**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has been called upon to restore the second state constituency earlier created in order to avert hard feelings in Ogbadibo Local Government Area of Benue state. Chairman of the local government of Caretakers Committee, Chief Fabian Agada who made the call when INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner for Benue state paid

him a visit.

Thisday, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg6

### **2007: 27 parties don't have valid structures – INEC**

Resident Electoral Commissioner in Enugu, Alhaji Bulama Abdul has lamented that most of the registered parties in the state do not have structures, which could boost their chances of clinching elective positions when 2007 general elections finally kicks-off. Bulama said that out of the 45 registered parties, only 18 parties have met INEC guidelines in terms of structures, while 27 others were yet to do so. He advised the parties to observe the guidelines so as to be qualified to field candidates during the coming election, the commissioner stated that except this is done, the parties will not be qualified for election.

Thisday, Sunday, September 17, 2006

### **INEC reforms to correct past errors says Iwu**

The Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu has explained that the lapses in past elections in the country had prompted the ongoing reform of the electoral system by the commission. Iwu expresses optimism that a faithful implementation of the reforms would create an enabling environment for the conduct of credible polls in 2007. he said the reforms were particularly targeted at curbing among others, the influence of money politics, violence gender inequality and the mindset of the citizens on elections.

The Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2006 pg3

### **INEC, PDP disagree over Voters' Registration procedure**

The Resident Electoral Commissioner in Lagos state, Chief Ayo Dada, has urged political parties to sensitize their members on the voters' registration, which begins on October 7, 2006. The call came on heels of doubts expressed by the state People Democratic Party (PDP), Mr. Rasheed Williams, that the information on the new technology was doubtful, however enjoined non-governmental organizations to participate in mobilization of the electorates. The commissioner stated that there is need to embark on the mobilization to commence in earnest, as the exercise was less than 23 days away.

Thisday, Sunday, September 17, 2006

### **Buhari: Support FG on 2007 Polls**

Former Head of State, Major Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (rtd), has called on the elite in the country to cooperate with the Federal Government in its efforts to ensure free and fair elections in 2007. He said this at the national forum organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), on the forthcoming polls. Buhari said all hands should be on deck to complement the efforts of the government in delivering a hitch-free exercise next year.

According to him, both the political and business elite have a duty to contribute their quota towards a successful outcome as the country is about to mark another watershed in her history, he said no other consideration, be it ethnic, religion or material should be strong enough to stop Nigerians from doing what is right in moving the country forward especially during the polls.

Thisday, Thursday, August 31, 2006 pg1/4

### **EFCC: We cant screen candidates but...**

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) will not prevent candidates standing for political offices in the 2007 general elections, but will investigate them the commission has said. If any 'questionable' findings arise, they will be prosecuted.

Osita Nwajah, EFCC's head of Media and Publicity, said the commission has never said it will screen candidate for the elections, he said the commission has only said that it was going to investigate and possibly prosecute any candidate that has any questionable background, pointing out that only political parties can screen candidates and present them for elections. He said, what the commission would do is to investigate a candidate once he make his intention know, to know where the candidate is coming from and if found wanting, the commission will take him to court, so it is the business of the political parties to decide whether they want to field a candidate facing criminal charges in court.

Daily Trust, Friday, September 1, 2006 pg1/4

### **SSS begins profile on politician**

Towards ensuring successful 2007 polls, the SSS has commenced the compilation of profiles on leading politicians in the country. Mr. Ad Mu'azu, the service Public relations Officer said the measure was aimed at enhancing sanity in the nation's polity as the elections draws near. He said that individual profiles would be built for all politicians cutting across all the registered political parties in the country.

He said the service was determined to forestall acts of hooliganism and similar vices in the nation's polity. He advice politicians to avoid nurturing political thugs in the name of youth vanguard. He said such group would no longer be tolerated by the service as they were often used by their sponsors to cause trouble, he said such groups would be arrested and prosecuted along with their sponsors.

Meanwhile, the State Security Services (SSS) has reviewed political development in the country and asserted that they were capable of destabilizing the country if left unchecked. It therefore vowed to deal with individuals, politicians, political parties and institutions engaged in actions that could undermine the 2007 general elections. It also stated that it would screen all ad-hoc personnel of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for the conduct of the elections.

Daily Trust, Thursday, August 31, 2006 pg39/ The Guardian, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg5

### **SSS arrests alleged political thugs in Ibadan**

In order to forestall vandalisation of people's property during political rallies, as well as assault on political opponents, the men of State Security Service (SSS) have begun a clampdown on undesirable persons in the society. Hence, four loyalist of a popular politician in Ibadan, Oyo state capital, have been arrested and detained by security operatives.

The action of the operatives is not unconnected with the recent unprovoked attacks on traders, perceived political opponents and rival groups by the thugs. The search for more thugs the operatives says continues.

The Guardian, Tuesday, September 19, 2006

### **Women's participation will ensure political development**

Women's political participation could solve the ongoing political crisis in the country, a female governorship aspirant has said. Hajiya Halima Alfa, contesting for the Kogi state guber race said it was time for women to agitate for gender shift to enable them contribute their quota to the nation

building. She said that although women were faced with some traditional hindrances hindering them from participating in politics, they could participate fully by overcoming them.

Daily Trust, Thursday, August 31, 2006 pg39

### **Police to treat thugs as armed robbers**

Members of political parties and supporters of political aspirants or candidates who attend political rallies or campaign with dangerous weapons would henceforth be treated as armed robbers Delta state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Udom U. Ekpoudom, said in Warri at the launch of "Operation Crime-Free 2006 Ember Months and War Against Political Thuggery".

Thisday, Friday, September 1, 2006 pg6

### **ANPP Convention Holds**

The All Nigeria People's Party held its national convention on Friday, September 01, 2006; the event will feature the accreditation of delegates from the states. The aspirants are said to have rejected the plan for a consensus candidate for the principal position. Hopes are high that the convention will be successful.

However, former head of state and President flag-bearer of the All Nigerian Peoples' Party (ANPP) in the 2003 presidential election, Major Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, alleged that there was massive rigging in the election that produced the second Republic Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chief Edwin Umeh Ezeoke, as Chairman of the party. He said this at the Hausa Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) monitored in Kaduna.

Daily Trust, Friday, September 1, 2006 pg1/4/Thisday, Tuesday, September 5, 2006

### **NBA: Electoral Act will not produce credible polls**

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) has warned that the 2006 Electoral Act as presently constituted could not guarantee credible elections in 2007 general elections. The NBA, which spoke through its newly elected Chairman, Mr. Olisa Agbakoba (SAN) in Port Harcourt also demanded delineated areas of amendment of the 1999 Constitution. The Chairman observed that the existing electoral law of the country was grossly defective and could hardly produce a reliable and credible election, adding that the procedure of attempting to conduct elections without reviewing voters' register was wrong.

According to him, if the country is able to insist and keep to procedures of conducting elections without short-circuiting some of the rules, then the country would have substantially solved the problem of election rigging.

Thisday, Saturday, September 2, 2006 pg1/4

### **ANPP chieftain blames politicians, parties for electoral violence**

A chieftain of the All Nigeria Peoples' Party (ANPP) in Yobe state has blamed politicians and political parties for the escalation of political violence in the country. Alhaji Bulama Bukar, who is the administrative secretary of the ANPP in the state made the accusation at a stakeholder's forum organized by the Yobe state Independent Electoral Commission (YSIEC). His word "We here; the politicians and political parties are responsible for training political thugs, finance them and direct them of what to do. If you ask the police now, where political thugs are, they cannot tell you, but we know the thugs, we know where they are". He said that all political parties in Nigeria are guilty of political violence.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, September 6, 2006 pg8

### **2007: Clerics seek role in candidates' screening**

Religious leaders from the 19 Northern states have demanded to participate in the screening of politicians seeking elective public offices in the 2007 elections. The Christian and Islamic leaders put the request forward during the voter education workshop, organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), for religious leaders from the northern states. The representatives of both the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Dr. Lateef Adegbite and Christian Association of Nigeria, Mr. Samuel Salifu, the bodies observed that as critical stakeholders in the electoral process, their participation in the screening of political office seekers would ensure the emergence of more credible and God-fearing candidates. They noted that though this request is not in accordance with the constitution, but in line with good governance.

Thisday, Wednesday, September 6, 2006 pg8

### **25,000 Ohaneze Youths to Monitor Elections**

Ohaneze Youth Council said it would mobilize Over 25,000 youths to monitor the 2007 elections in Enugu state, to ensure that it will be free and fair. The chairman of the Council Prince Ezenwa Igwebo made the statement in Enugu, he politicians have diverted the affairs of politics by the use of thugs and political war lords, adding that it will not fold its arms and allow malpractices.

Accusing politicians of losing focus and sense of direction about true and fair political contest and participation, Igwebo condemned the tragic manner at which some "over-zealous and disgruntled contestants have been playing the game of politics in the state. The council called on the Enugu state commissioner of Police to be at alert in combating any act of malpractices during the coming election, adding that the police has an important role to play to ensure a free and fair election.

Thisday, Wednesday, September 6, 2006 pg10

### **Ehindero: Politicians carry arms at rallies**

As the nation approaches the 2007 elections, the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, has raised alarm on the proliferation of arms in large quantities in the country, warning that their use by politicians could spell doom for the political process. Ehindero stated this when he appeared before the Senate for 3 hours and 15 minutes, to explain the reason behind the increasing crime wave, especially political assassinations. He however, assured the nation that the police were on top of the situation as machinery had been put in place to combat the crime rate.

Thisday, Thursday, September 7, 2006 pg1/4

### **Group faults police plan to buy arms for polls**

Plans by the Nigeria Police to buy 80,000 firearms in preparation for the 2007 elections have been condemned by the Campaign Against Arms Trade Network (CAAT). CAAT in a statement by its national coordinator, Mr. Innocent Adjegnughure, urged that the purpose for arms purchase should not be for the sake of elections as this may result in using them to harass, intimidate and oppress political opponents and adversaries of the government. Reasonable arms should only be bought by the state for the purpose of ensuring safety of life, property and territorial integrity of the nation.

This is a reaction to a statement made by the police spokesman, Mr. Haz Iwendi during a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) interview in September 1, 2006, where he hinted that the Federal Government would buy firearms to arm the police for the polls.

The Guardian, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg6

### **Candidates May face EFCC for polls**

To ensure that corrupt politicians are no longer elected into office from next year; the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has planned to investigate all candidates presented by political parties and prosecute any one indicted. Benue State Resident Electoral Commissioner, Austin Okojie, announced this, when he was addressing a stakeholders' forum organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Okojie said it was the responsibility of political parties to screen their candidates, but that such candidates will be "critically investigated" by the EFCC whenever they were presented, the basis for EFCC's action is that when anyone presents himself for a public office, he makes himself available for public scrutiny, this is to protect the public from being foisted with crooks.

The Guardian, Saturday, September 9, 2006 pg3

### **Senatorial Aspirant Escape Assassination**

Woman senatorial aspirant from Benue south senatorial District, Dr. (Mrs.) Enyantu Ifenne, escaped what was suspected to be political assassination early yesterday morning while traveling to Makurdi from Otukpo, as two gunmen positioned on the middle of the road opened fire on her vehicle while trying to escape. She said she was attacked while on her way to Makurdi in company of a political associate when some two gunmen suspected to be hired assassins tried to stop them three kilometers to Taraku town, but the driver was smart enough to make a U-turn with the car and headed back to Otukpo but not without receiving array of bullets pumped into the left back door of the car, shattering the windows.

Thisday, Friday, September 14, 2006 pg 7

### **Jigawa PDP crisis: Police teargas Lamido's supporters**

The political crisis between Governor Saminu Turaki and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sule Lamido, has taken a new turn as detachment of policemen from the Dutse police headquarters teargas a rally organized by the Lamido camp, arresting the state PDP chairman, Isa Duniya Bahutu and two other. The crisis began when a detachment of policemen sent to the area demanded that the meeting of the politicians be stopped, as it had no police permission.

The meeting was to have been called by the former minister to announce the withdrawal of some commissioners and special advisers from the Jigawa state government as a result of seeming disagreement between the former minister and the governor Saminu Turaki. Many people were injured as they tried to escape the suffocating teargas.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg3

### **Corruption, major obstacle to Democracy**

Alliance for Democracy gubernatorial aspirant in Osun state, Dr. Yemi Oladimeji, has noted that corruption remain the greatest obstacle to the survival of democracy in the country. He opined that if there is no corruption in governance and leaders are at home to fairness equity; and transparency, Nigeria would be a world leader very soon. He said further that Nigeria has glorified corruption to the most despicable level imaginable. Our leaders have mortgaged the future of the younger ones through greed.

Thisday, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg23

### **ACD faction rejects fusion into Action Congress**

A faction of the Advance Congress of Democrats (ACD) has backed out of the Action Congress (AC) merger announced by some political parties recently. A former presidential aspirant of the All People Grand Alliance (APGA), Mr. George Ike Okoye, leads the breakaway ACD group. Okoye is asking the Independent National Electoral Commission not to recognize the merger. He further stressed that there was no meeting point between the crown, which is the logo of the ACD, and the broom, which the AC has adopted.

The Guardian, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg3

### **2007: Kebbi ANPP will avoid primaries unless – Chairman**

As the date for the gubernatorial primaries approaches, the chairman of the All Nigerians People Party's (ANPP) in Kebbi state, Alhaji Abdullah Lamba, has confirmed that the party will do everything possible to avoid primary election. The party is said to be in consultation with all the aspirants in order to come out with a consensus candidate for the gubernatorial race and other elections. He said history has proved that most political parties fall into crisis immediately after party primaries and "that is why we here in Kebbi want to avoid that by doing everything possible to adopt consensus candidates in all elective positions". He however said the party may have to go for the primaries if all attempt to persuade aspirants to accept the consensus arrangement fail.

Daily Trust, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg45

### **Government house not for blood thirsty people**

The Governor of Taraba State, Jolly Nyame has told all governorship aspirants jostling to succeed him in 2007 that the road to the Government House in Jalingo is not for blood thirsty people. He said all PDP aspirants in the state must denounce violence and political thuggery.

His words were a backdrop of the growing menace of political thuggery in the state, he also advised all aspirants to shun god fatherism rely on God as the only giver of power, stressing that nobody can enthrone anyone into any political position but God. Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 19, 2006 pg7

### **Money Politics: Buhari Organization want EFCC to probe parties**

The Buhari Organization (TBO) has condemned the perpetuation of money politics in Nigeria and called on the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) to focus attention on the activities of political parties that condone such. The Plateau State Coordinator of the organization Mr. Usaman Yasin made who made the call in Jos described the use of money to buy votes, rigging and other electoral malpractices democratic crimes, which should be curbed in the fight against corruption in the country.

Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 19, 2006

### **2007: LP pledges to present credible candidates**

The Labour Party (LP) has pledged to present credible candidates for the 2007 general elections. Its national chairman, Dan Nwanyanwu has said that the party was sourcing for "very popular, credible and electable candidates". He said "we will present to Nigerians only persons of impeccable character; those who command high respect and enjoy general acceptability in their respective communities for the polls". The chairman also condemned the spate of political killings in the country, and urged members to avoid acts of violence.

The chairman added that LP would hold its non-elective national convention in Abuja in November to endorse mode of cooperation with other political parties and elect a presidential candidate.  
Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 19, 2006

### **Ekiti PDP insist on primaries, Fayose sues for peace**

The Governor of Ekiti state Mr. Ayodele Fayose and the PDP chairman in the state, Mr. Ropo Adesanya have insisted that all aspirants will go through primaries to win the party's ticket. Governor Fayose also pleaded with party members nursing any grudge against him or the party to forgive and forget. He admitted his shortcomings but he noted that as a human being, there was no way he could be happy with the defeat of the party in the state.  
The Guardian, Tuesday, September 19, 2006

### **EFCC to charge 15 Govs to court**

Not less than 13 state governors may be charged to court for alleged financial misappropriation and embezzlement of their states' funds, the chairman of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu told the Senate during session with the senate, he added that in October, the commission will head to court to charge 15 governors out of the 31 investigated by his commission.

States governors specifically named as currently being investigated are: Abia, Anambra, Benue Borno, Delta, Ekiti, Edo, Ebonyi, Imo, Jigawa, Kwara, Kano, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Osun, Oyo, Ogun, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Zamfara, among others. But that cases have been established against 15 states for now others are still being investigated. He said categorically that Cross River State is the only state without any case against it governor.  
Daily Trust/Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2006 pg1/4/ 1/2

### **Babangida dumps PDP for NDP – Aide**

Former Military President, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida doubting his chances of contesting the 2007 presidential elections on the platform of the People Democratic Party (PDP) has dumped the party for the National Democratic Party (NDP). The Media Assistant to the former military ruler, Kasim Afegbua disclosed this lately. He said that Babangida would soon personally make the move public and use the occasion to kick off his presidential campaign.  
The Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2006 pg3

### **PPA denies merger with other parties**

The Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) has denied speculations that it has merged with political parties to form a mega party. The Party state Chairman Chief Benedict Meregini, said his party had neither merged nor was it intending to merge with any party or parties or associations. But added that PPA may ally with like minds in order to achieve her goals in any given election. PPA will not merge with other parties and lose it name or identity but may co-operate with like minds in order to win any particular election.  
The Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2006 pg6

### **AD expels Tinubu, Akande, others**

The Alliance for Democracy (AD), has expelled Lagos state governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Chief Bisi Akande and other members of the party who attended the recent launch of the newly registered party, Action Congress (AC), which held at Abuja recently. This was announce in a press statement jointly signed by the AD's interim national chairman, Alhaji Abdulkarim Dayyabu and national secretary Chief Goddy Ugwu, respectively.  
Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 26, 2006 pg5

### **Kano guber aspirant alleges death threats**

A People Democratic Party (PDP) gubernatorial aspirant in Kano state, Alhaji shehu Yusuf Kura, has alleged that some top politicians in the state including a retired military general are after his life because of his political ambition. Alhaji Kura said ugly political tactics such as character assassination, intimidation harrasement and blackmail employed by some prominent people both in and outside Kano state to truncate his political ambition alarmed him. He singled out the chairman, board of directors of Nagarta Radio, Alhaji Magaji Dambatta and former national security adviser, General Liyu Gusau as the planners and executioners of the cruel plan against him.  
Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 26, 2006

### **2007: DPP, UNPP adopt IBB**

The Democratic People Party (DPP) has endorsed former military president, Ibrahim Babangida as it presidential candidate in 2007 elections, the Niger state chairman of the party, Alhaji Aminu Bello, says even as the United Nigeria Peoples Party (UNPP) equally adopted the former president as its presidential flag bearer. He said the party endorsed the former military president based on his impeccable records and achievements. He also explained that the party had thrown open to all zones the governorship seat of Niger state stating that zoning was undemocratic.  
Daily Trust, Tuesday, September 26, 2006 pg7

### **SSS accuses Abia Politicians of training thugs for 2007 polls**

Cult members are being recruited and trained by politicians in Abia state ahead of the 2007 elections, the State Security Service (SSS) reveals. The state SSS director, Mrs. Z.M.E Sule, who disclosed this however, said that a careful profiling was being done on the activities of such politicians and their thugs. She said recent reports indicated that politicians in the state had started "massive recruitment, training, enlisting and deployment of cult members for the 2007 elections". She also accused traditional leaders in the state o colluding with criminal to destroy public infrastructure.

The Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2006 pg7

### **Accord Party denies link with PDP**

A Newly registered political party; Accord Party says it was out to care a niche for itself and has vowed to mobilize everything in its arsenal to fight rigging in the 2007 elections. The National Chairman of the party Alhaji Ikra Aliyu Bilbis and the national secretary, Chief Longers Anyanwu, said contrary to speculations that they are an appendage of the People Democratic Party (PDP), the new party was formed out of the desire to make the grassroots the hub of Nigerian politics and consolidate on the gains so far recorded under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Guardian, Thursday, September 28, 2007 pg7

### **PDP ready for planned Mega Party says Ali**

The chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Dr. Ahmadu Ali (rtd) says the party is ready to face the opposition in whatever colouration they come at next years polls. He stated that the opposition parties planned working arrangement under a mega party would not affect the fortunes of the PDP at the forthcoming elections. Ali stated this while addressing a delegation from Kwara state led by Governor Bukola Saraki visited him.

The Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) has said that it is not part of the merger of some political parties that gave birth to Action Congress (AC) a mega party formed to counter the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The party chairman made this known recently.

The Guardian, Saturday, September 9 2006 pg5/Thisday, Monday, September 25, 2006pg6

### **Nigerians condemn high nomination fees by parties**

Nigerians who reacted to a recent opinion poll conducted by the Guardian faulted the fees currently being charged by some political parties for the purchase of nomination forms into various elective offices nation wide. The fees are said to vary among the parties, and it range from N300,000 for council chairmen to N1million for senatorial candidates. In the PDP, House of representatives aspirants are to pay between N500,000 and N700,000 while governorship hopefuls are to pay N5million and the fee for those eyeing the presidency is N10million. The polls finding are generally that the amounts are generally unacceptable. The Guardian, Wednesday, September 13, 2006pg1/4

### **Presidency provides evidence of payment to Atiku**

The presidency has provided financial instruments to further prove that vice president Atiku has no defence over his indictment by both the EFCC and the Administrative Panel of inquiry. The President also accused the Vice President of failing to respond to the substantive issues in his indictment by the Chief Bayo Ojo-led administrative panel, while denying that the move against the estranged deputy was politically motivated.

The president also denied his deputy's claim that the controversial Marine float account was jointly operated by both of them to prosecute the 2003 presidential campaign, insisting that Atiku owns the company.

Thisday, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg1/4

### **Vice-President sues FG**

Vice President Atiku Abubakar took the case against his indictment by the EFCC and Federal Government Administrative Panel of inquiry to court, asking that it be quashed because it has no basis in law. The vice-President's suit was filed on a day the senate, after a heated debate decide to refer the reports sent to it by the President last week to its Judiciary Committee for advice. The Vice-President filled the suit at the Federal High Court, Abuja. Seeking among others an order setting aside the decision of the Federal Executive Council to accept the September 5, 2006 report of the panel of inquiry that indicted him for fraud and embezzlement of public funds.

He is also asking for an order of injunction to perpetually restrain the Attorney General of the Federation as first defendant from implementing or acting upon or enforcing in any way whatsoever the report of the panel of inquiry. He also wants the court to declare that EFCC and Chief Bayo Ojo-led panel are in breach of his right to fair hearing in their reports and that the said reports are null, void and of no effect whatsoever.

Thisday, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg1/4

### **ANPP ask Obasanjo, Atiku to resign**

The All Nigerian People Party (ANPP) has advised president Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice-President Atiku Abubakar to resign in the interest of democracy as the frosty relationship between the two men deteriorates. The national chairman of the party Chief Edwin Ume-Ezeoke, who made this known in an open letter to Obasanjo and Atiku, said if the trend is allowed to continue, Nigeria's democracy might be brought to an abrupt end.

Daily Trust, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg1/4

### **Atiku fingers Obasanjo in PTDF scam**

The rift between President Obasanjo and his deputy reached a crescendo yesterday as Atiku Abubakar provided evidence indicting the president and his family for benefiting from the controversial Petroleum Technology Development fund (PTDF). This is coming barely 24 hours after the president provided financial documents exposing Atiku's complicity in the PTDF deal.

Meanwhile, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Southern Senators said they support the probe of the allegations contained in the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), investigation report against Vice President Atiku Abubakar.

Daily Trust, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg1/4

### **Transcorp Ready For EFCC Probe**

*\*CNPP factions differ on Obasanjo, Atiku feud*

Nigeria's mega corporation, Transnational Corporation Plc (Transcorp) has disclosed its readiness for probe by the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Meanwhile, the face off between Obasanjo and Atiku appears to have divided the ranks of registered political parties in the country, given the conflicting reactions they have been making on the matter, while the Folape Agoro faction of the association has asked Abubakar to resign, the other group led by the Second Republic Governor of Kaduna state Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa believes that the probe should be extended to the President.

Similarly, the justice Party (JP) believes that the Vice-President is being persecuted for opposing the botched third term bid of the president.

The Guardian, Wednesday, September 13, 2006 pg1/2

### **Obasanjo has shares in Transcorp – Okereke-Onyuike**

The Chairman of the Transnational Corporation (Transcorp), Mrs. Ndidi Okereke-Onyuike has confirmed that President Olusegun Obasanjo hold equity shares in the corporation. She confirmed the ownership of Transcorp shares by Obasanjo Farm in trust for the president while testifying before the House of Representatives Committee on the Capital Market.

She further noted that earlier this year, Obasanjo instructed that the Obasanjo Farms shares in the corporation be divested, but she stated that she did not confirm whether the shares have been divested or not.

Daily Trust, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg3

### **Afenifere urges NASS to probe PDP's 2003 election account**

Worried by recent revelations following the feud between President Olusegun Obasanjo and his vice, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the pan Yoruba socio-political and economic organization, Afenifere has called for a probe of the funding of the PDP's 2003 elections. The call was contained in a press statement signed by the publicity secretary of the group, Mr. Yinka Odumakin. The press statement is titled "We must probe PDP's funding of the 2003 elections".

The group said the probe has become necessary since the Vice President has alleged that the Marine Float Account was a secret account for the 2003 elections jointly managed by the president and himself and also that Governor Joshua Dariye of plateau state donated N100 million into the account for the purpose of the elections. They further stated that the probe will be a veritable way to minimize rigging in the 2007 elections because many politicians have already started boasting of "capturing this or that" in the 2007 general elections. It is a welcome development for the nation's democracy they conclude.

Daily Trust, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg3

### **Atiku releases 14 cheques paid to PDP, others**

No fewer than 14 cheques detailing payments allegedly made to PDP and other organizations from MOFA account at the Abuja Branch of Trans International Bank. The vice president alleged that African Leadership Forum (ALF), IBAD Nigeria Limited and Ibogun Olaogun Development Association benefited from the account. The cheques stubs which were released showed that PDP got N401million; ALF, a non-governmental organization owned by Obasanjo had a cheque of N10million in it name; IBAD Nigeria Limited allegedly owned by Obasanjo had a total of N66million in cheque; Ibogun Olaogun, the maternal community of Obasanjo had a cheque of N4million.

The PDP said it has given up on reconciling President Olusegun Obasanjo and his deputy, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

Thisday, Thursday, September 14, 2006 pg4

### **PTDF: payment to my relations voluntary**

President Olusegun Obasanjo came close to accepting that his family and relations benefited from the controversial Petroleum Technology and Development Fund through his senior special assistant, Mrs. Remi Oyo when he said that it could not possibly be president Obasanjo's duty or responsibility to account for any presents which others voluntarily choose to give his relations, aides, or associates. However, the president denied that he diverted public funds as alleged by vice president Atiku.

Thisday, Friday, September 14, 2006 pg10

### **PTDF: Forensic Investigation Indict Atiku**

Contrary to vice president Atiku Abubakar's claim that his indictment by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Federal Government Administration Panel of Inquiry is a premeditated political action intended to halt his presidential ambition, the report of a forensic investigation into the PTDF has shown that he is culpable for the mismanagement of the fund. The report, which is a special audit/forensic investigation of the PTDF, has it that the vice president's approval for the release of \$20million from the treasury and subsequent placement in Trans-International Bank without appropriation and approval by the Federal Executive Council was improper and amounted to abuse of office. The report is dated September 7, 2006 and addressed to the EFCC Chairman, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu

Thisday, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg1/4

### **Atiku challenges EFCC to make MOFAS account public**

Vice president Atiku Abubakar has challenged the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to make the details of the transactions contained in Otunba Oyewole Fasawe's MOFAS Account at Abuja Branch of the defunct Trans International Bank (TIB) public arguing that such an exercise will show that President Olusegun Obasanjo, rather than him should be indicted for abuse of office. This came up shortly as an Abuja Federal High Court granted the Vice President leave to serve members of the Administrative Panel all papers related to the case through the office of the Attorney General of the Federation.

Thisday, Saturday, September 16, 2006 pg1/4

### **Nnamani warns Senators against bias on VP matter**

Senate President, Sen. Ken Nnamani has cautioned senators not to divide the senate along the lines of President Olusegun Obasanjo and his vice Atiku Abubakar as they get set to receive the report of the Judiciary Committee on the reports of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Administrative Panel of Inquiry reports. He told the senator to act as statesmen and not be seen to make statements that were likely to inflame passion and further heat up the polity.

Thisday, Wednesday, September 20, 2006 pg1/4

### **U.S shuns Obasanjo, Atiku feud, keen on 2007 elections**

The United States (U.S) government is more interested in a credible conduct of the coming general election in Nigeria than the current open feud between president Obasanjo and his vice Atiku. The U.S Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Dr. Jendayi Frazer, disclosed this in an interview recently. He said the U.S is currently focusing on working with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct a free and fair election. She added that the U.S government regards the feud between Obasanjo and Atiku as the handiwork of politicians, who normally "try to smear the reputation of their opponents".

The Guardian, Tuesday, September 26, 2006 pg1/2

## **This Month's Politricks:**

### **2007 Elections: Beyond the timetable**

After months of anxiety over the funding and capacity of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to organize general elections in 2007, it is heartwarming that at last a timetable has been drawn up. On Tuesday, August 26, 2006 INEC announced that state and presidential elections to usher in a new government that will succeed President Olusegun Obasanjo will be held in April next year on two separate dates. Governorship and state assembly elections are slated for April 14, while the presidential and national assembly elections will take place on April 21. The chairman of INEC Prof. Maurice Iwu made this announcement during the National Forum organized by INEC, and he declared that his commission is up to the task and that he has the whole electoral situation under control.

On his own part, President Obasanjo said categorically that he was looking forward to handing over to another President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on May 29, 2007 and that thereafter, he would be returning to his farm. He however, warned that he would not allow corrupt persons, criminals or sectional and religious bigots to succeed him. He accused all those who are still

contemplating the advent of an Interim National Government (ING) as a way of salvaging the failed third term campaign as being either ignorant of the provisions of the Nigeria Constitution, evil minded or plain mischief-makers. It was most reassuring to hear such words from the president.

But some nagging issues still remain. Our presidential system allows for all winners in a general election to assume office on the same day, thus making no provision for continuity, as is the case in the United States. What if a president cannot be found within the deadline, what then happens? Does the incumbent continue? These are some of the issues that are agitating the mind of Nigerians. The political programmes appear too crowded for comfort. INEC says voter registration will take place in October. In November, the National Population Census (NPC) will announce the preliminary results of the census. The NPC must be aware that the exercise was mired in controversy even before the commencement of enumeration. Then in December, the PDP and other political parties will hold their primaries. These primaries, by their nature are a beehive of chaotic political activities with last minute realignments by politicians and their supporters.

With more than 40 political parties, already registered, and with no real ideological differentiation, we can imagine a situation where the electorates are thoroughly confused on polling day. Moreover, the mammoth logistical problems this will present must not be underestimated, as Nigeria has never before hosted this large number of political parties.

Finally, president proudly proclaims that corrupt and dubious persons will not succeed him. It is not his place to say this much as we share his desire for the emergence of honest and credible leaders, it must be said that at the end of the day, if an individual has not been convicted of any offence, such a person cannot be denied his right to vie for office in a democracy. It must be remembered that ultimately, it is the people who must decide who their leaders should be. The right to choose must include the right to choose wrongly. We must all guard against the imposition of persons on the electorate however well-intentioned

The Guardian, Wednesday, September 6, 2006 pg18

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Arrest stall Congo's poll results**

Authorities in Congo have arrested 10 electoral workers for allegedly cheating to help a legislative candidate in the country's historic vote. The announcement of results has been delayed after the arrest. The workers allegedly cheated on behalf of the rebel supporter-turned-candidate for post-war Congo's 500-seat legislature, pushing the release of final results back. The electoral workers were arrested in Kinshasa,

Six electoral workers out of about 50000 across the vast nation of Congo were earlier detained on charges of cheating during the presidential vote count. Meanwhile, international electoral monitoring groups have identified regularities in the country's first multi-party vote in 45 years; they generally agree the problems wouldn't affect the outcome in a country of 25 million registered voters.

The Guardian, Wednesday, September 6, 2006 pg10

### **No majority for Congo parliament**

Results from the Democratic Republic of Congo's parliamentary polls leave the president's party with the biggest tally of seats by no overall majority. Out of 500 seats Joseph Kabila's PPRD took

111 seats and the MLC party of his rival Jean-Pierre Bemba took 64 seats while the other seats were won by smaller parties and independents.

Meanwhile President Kabila and ex-rebel leader Bemba will face each other in a run-off next month after neither of them won 50% of the presidential vote. More than 9,700 candidates ran in the legislative election and 32 stood in the first round of the presidential election.

The Guardian, Saturday, September 9, 2006 pg15

### **Togo's opposition rejects new PM**

The main opposition Union of Forces for Change (UFC) in Togo has foreclosed possible participation in the government to be formed by newly appointed Prime Minister Yawovi Agboyibo. The party's third vice-chairman, Patrick Lawson has said a member of his party should have been chosen if there was need for genuine reconciliation in the country. But he said his party remains committed to the August Comprehensive Political Agreement signed by Togo political stakeholders after a national dialogue brokered by Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore. He also urged all political stakeholders to sink their differences and forge ahead.

The Guardian, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg10

### **Court confirms Congo polls date**

The Supreme Court in the Democratic Republic of Congo has ruled that the second round of landmark elections can go ahead as planned. It overturned its own ruling earlier last week that the October 29 date broke the constitution. The court also confirmed that President Joseph Kabila and ex-rebel leader Jean Pierre Bemba would contest the run-off. The July 30 election was the first democratic poll to be held since 1960. The announcement of the provisional first round results led to days of sporadic gun battles in Kinshasa between the two men's security forces, which left 23 dead and several others injured.

Thisday, Monday, September 18, 2006 pg80

### **Zambians vote in presidential polls**

Zambian voters cast their ballots yesterday in general elections with the incumbent president Levy Mwanawasa seeking a second five-year term. There are presidential candidates challenging him and he is facing a strong challenge from former minister Michael Sata, who has accused the president of selling off Zambian resources to foreign interest. After voting, Mr. Sata praised Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe. European Union monitors across the country report no sign of troubles. Some voters however, complained of delay in casting their votes. Opinion however puts Mr. Mwanawasa ahead.

The opposition vote is divided between the other two main candidates: Mr. Sata, of the Patriotic Front, and Hakainde Hichilema of United Democratic Alliance, which includes former President Kenneth Kaunda's party. Godfrey Miyanda and Kenny Ngondo are also running for the presidency. Meanwhile, some 4million Zambians were registered to vote in presidential and parliamentary polls, with results expected soon.

Daily Trust, Friday, September 29, 2006 pg17

## **We Country Stori**

### **Dis na we country tori for September**

De Oga patapata wey de on top mata for election for we country wey dem dey call Pro. Maurice Iwu don break the timetable for we election wey dey com for 2007 into small small pieces oh. Him don talk say de election wey go bring de people wey go represent us for National Assembly and de Oga presidio of we country go happen for April 21, and de one for the governor of we state and we representatives for we State House of Assemblies go happen for April 14, 2006 so dat chance to do magomago no go dey for we politicians. Him com talk say registration to fit vote go start for October 7, 2006. Dem stil take mouth talk say dem go cancel any ward wey cause trouble for de election wey we dey do preparation for. Dem say dem go show we election for television so dat we go see de things wey de happen and how dem dey take count de vote dem.

Dem com warn people wey dey write and talk we country tori say mak dem wait make INEC announce de results well well befor dem begin carry dem own tori make dem for no mak mistake or cause katakata for we country. Dem say e no go dey possible for people wey wan register plenty times sake of say dem wan vote plenty time for we election becos INEC don kark for ground to tak see say dem no go fit. INEC say inside all de party wey tanda say dem wan contest for 2007 election, 27 of dem no get wetin oyinbo dey call valid structure, na him be say dem never dey serious say dem wan rule for we country next year.

ACE Nigeria and TMG wey carry de palava of Nigeria election for them head sake of say dem want mak people wey we tak we hand choose rule us for this country don say dem no like the timetable wey INEC carry come outside, dem say the fit cause chuachua so make INEC change am quick quick.

Maj. Gen. Buhari don talk say him dey support de Federal Government of we country sake of say de government need the support of we people of de county. Him call everybody make dem join hand to support dis government. Buhari organization don say dem no like the way wey we politicians dey tak waste we country money sake of say dem wan win election for 2007. Dem don call dat ogbonge masquerade wey be EFCC wey everybody dey fear say make dem enter the mata quick quick befor yawa gas.

Police don talk say any person wey dem catch wey dey do thug for politician na thief o, especially if dem catch am wit anything wey fit wound person like gun, dagger, cutlass, knife or even juju. Dem com talk again say dem go buy weapon wey reach 80,000 to take work for 2007 election. But one group wey dem dey call Campaign Against Arms Trade Network (CAAT) don talk say tufia he no good make police buy that kind plenty gun and bullet sake of say we country wan do election, but them fit buy am to safe guard we country people live.

De lawyers wey dey for we country don talk say the Electoral Act wey be de law wey go guide we country election for next year don talk say the law no too de kampe, dem com dey call we country lawmakers to put correction for the law.

State Security Service (SSS) don talk say dem go see say de people wey go contest election for we country good well well, and dem no get bad record. Dem stil branch say any person wey dem catch say him dey sponsor thugs go see their red eye.

Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Babangida don say him go kuku leave PDP and join another party wey dem dey call National Democratic Party (NDP) so him go fit contest for president of we country. Him say as PDP don chance am him no vex.

Yawa don gas for Aso Rock oh, our president Obasanjo and him assistant Atiku Abubakar don

scatter ground sake of say EFCC talk say our veepee carry we country money wey dey Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) account, wey dem suppose tak do we people better borrow him friends dem, mak dem fit take do business. The thing don cause plenty wahala, even sef, we presido set panel of inquiry to tak look into de mata, and de panel come gree wit EFCC say we veepee commit de offense. Oga veepee com say him no go gree sake of say no be only him dey corrupt, him say baba wey be we presido sef dey corrupt. But baba don tell veepee say mak him clean himself commot for de quanta wey dey him head. Oga veepee com carry the mata go court, but before him no wetin dey happen, him party wey be PDP don nak am suspension for three month, naim be say dem say dem no wan see him face for their meeting for three months.

Plenty things day happen for we country o, fire dey for the bottom of governor of Ekiti state, Mr. Ayo Fayose sake of say EFCC say him don tak de money wey him people suppose tak chop life go put for account for Obodoyinbo. Fayose and 15 other governors get case to answer for country sake of say dem thief we money. The Ekiti State House of Assemble don tanda say dem give fayose 14 days make him tak answer question before dem go pursue am commot for State House go him house.

My country people, tori plenty well well dis month but na here I go stop for this month, but next month edition, I go nak una all dey tori wey dey happen for this we country. Mak una no forget say dis country na we own, and we vote na we power so make we go register so dat we go fit vote next year.

**Na Seyi Ojo Esq. (TMG) dey bring una dis tori**

#### **FOR THE RECORDS**



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#### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **OBASANJO/ATIKU AND EFCC SAGA**

The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) has watched with trepidation the ongoing face

off between the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Vice President and has come to the inevitable conclusion that the issues in contention if not properly handled and addressed have the potential of snowballing into a major constitutional and political crisis.

The TMG has also notes with dismay that Advisers and Aides of the President and the Vice President have sought to confuse the Nigerian people by abandoning the main issues in contention and are engaged in high level grandstanding and assuming a moral high ground that is questionable and unrealistic.

As a coalition of 250 member organizations working at various platforms for the stability of the nations fledgling democracy and economic development, we can not Afford to stand aloof and watch the unfortunate drama which in our opinion is the very height of disregard for, disrespect to and desecration of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the very foundation of our national existence.

**The Transition Monitoring Group is of the firm view and opinion:**

1. That it is unconstitutional, unethical and against the grains and values of democracy for the ruling Peoples Democratic Party to characterize issues bothering on corruption, abuse of office and gross misconduct leveled against the President and the Vice-President as a family affair.
2. That the President and the Vice President have no constitutional, statutory or moral right to call for a ceasefire in relation to issues bothering on corruption, abuse of office and gross misconduct. The issues in question are not personal to both of them but go to the root of our practice of constitutional democracy and the accountability of leaders to those they govern.
3. That the President and the Vice President should set the waive their immunity and subject themselves a thorough investigation by five Independent Counsel to be appointed by the Chief Justice of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The fabric of our nation will be strengthened and the moral standing of the two leaders strengthened if they are eventually exonerated.
4. That the Nigerian people and the Independent National Electoral Commission must not be distracted from focusing on the 2007 elections which is less than eight months away.
5. That while it supports the Economic and Crime Commission (EFCC) which has achieved successes in the fight against economic and financial crimes it urges the Commission to operate and carry out its activities and functions with the ambit and confines of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the law.
6. The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) reassures all Nigerians that as a democratic coalition, it will continue to stand for transparency, accountability, the rule of law and due process, in the exercise of power by all functionaries of government and governmental agencies and organs.

**Mabel Ade**  
National Coordinator  
Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)  
September 26, 2006

### **THE POSITION OF THE TRANSITION MONITORING GROUP (TMG) ON THE RELEASE OF ELECTION TIMETABLE BY INEC**

The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) is encouraged that the Independent National Electoral Commission has finally released a comprehensive program for activities leading to the 2007 elections. The program released includes a timetable for the conduct of all the strands of elections scheduled for April 2007.

However, the TMG is deeply worried at the sequence of the elections and the dangerous gaps embedded in the said timetable and sequence of elections. The TMG believes that unless the sequence and timeline for the elections are reviewed, the country may be headed towards a programmed failure of the process and this may invariably lead to a constitutional crisis.

The TMG is also worried at the optimism of the Independent National Electoral Commission that a candidate must secure on the first ballot a majority of votes cast and one quarter of all the votes cast at the election in two thirds of the states of the Federation including the Federal Capital Territory. The timetable released by the Commission has no allowance for the possibility of a second election in case no Presidential candidate wins on the first ballot.

The TMG's worry is predicated on the provisions of section 132(2) of the 1999 Constitution that makes it mandatory that elections to the office of President shall be held on a date not earlier than sixty days and not later than thirty days before the expiration of the term of office of the last holder of the office. The term of office of the President will expire on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of May 2007 and this leaves the Commission with 8 days to conduct the Presidential elections, collate the results and announce the results of the elections. In the case of a second election, the Commission will conduct, collate and announce the results within a period of less than 5 days. Any encroachment to the constitutional cut off period will make the elections and the results null and void.

The TMG is therefore worried that if this issue is not addressed, it may lead to a constitutional trap that will guarantee a programmed failure of the electoral process.

Given this scenario which has been closely studied by TMG, and the fears already expressed by majority of Nigerians and most importantly the imperative of credible and

sustainable conduct in 2007 we recommend the following:

1. That the electoral timetable released recently by INEC be adjusted to put paid to growing fears and speculations about the faith of the process in the event of a second election.
2. That the Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections should be slated for April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007 as against April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 as earlier released by INEC.
3. That the Presidential and National Assembly Elections be slated for April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 as against the April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007 proposed by the Commission.

Finally, the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) wishes to reassure all Nigerians that as a group mandated to ensure integrity and credibility in the electoral process, it will continue to work and support any positive, proactive and innovative initiative that will guarantee Nigerians a free and fair election in 2007.

Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria!!!

Mabel Ade  
National Coordinator  
Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)  
October 4, 2006

## **OPINION**

### **CIVILIAN-TO-CIVILIAN HANDOVER: WHY IT MUST COME TO PASS IN 2007?**

Events of the last few months in Nigeria have made it imperative for one to ask questions as negative as portraying 2007 election and the resultant climax, which is a peaceful handover as uncertain. However, as a Nigerian, an optimist and a transition monitor for that matter, I have no doubt in my mind that there will certainly be a credible election and a hand over, what I probably may not say for sure is whether it will be hitch-free or not. The eventual winner will also be acceptable to majority of Nigerians.

While we are all wishing that this expectation will come to pass with ceaseless prayer, since only God knows what 2007 will bring, it is also important that we Nigerians should stand by what we believe in and what binds us together, irrespective of widespread killings, intimidation and threats of hail and brimstone that have again characterized the democratic space.

It is sad that so far Nigeria is yet to understand or experience what it means to hand over from one civilian government to another. We have had a number of military to military takeovers by way of military Porsche though. We have also had military to civilian handover. For a long while in Nigeria it was one military takeover or another. I believe this reality has been a minus in the psyche and performance of our present civilian government, which not only has a military background and mindset, but also was further bequeathed with militarized constitution and action plan. It will require

the grace of God therefore for such a benefiting leader to throw away overnight prevailing militarized culture and orientation to put on the toga of Democratic culture that will impress all and sundry. The result of all that manifests in the myriads of strange occurrences you see and hear today in the polity.

I am again strongly persuaded that those who perpetrate violence in the system have spent time to understand the Nigerian psyche as is evident in 'kill one or two and the rest will definitely run away'. This factor is closely related to another belief that Nigerians value their lives more than anything else, that you can violate them, bruise them, ridicule them, slap them left right and centre and still go away scot-free, provided you spare their life for them. We strongly believe in Bob Marley's maxim, which says 'he who fights and run away, lives to fight another day'. But pray, we run away too often without mustering the courage to revisit the fight again. I know Nigeria have got brave men and women who can say never again to those cowards who go the extra mile to snuff life out of their opponents, (perceived or imagined), believing albeit, wrongly, that they have eliminated stiff competition ahead of them.

We may not indulge in physical combats now to stop these mischief-makers who only actually bankroll the killings, leaving the execution to their youthful hangers-on who have also been trained in the art of killing. We can however identify the brutal politicians among us (Governors and their ilk) who hide under the cover of providing democratic dividends, to inflict damages on innocent people.

I strongly believe that it is not out of place raising eyebrows against all those serving politicians who nurse second or third term ambitions in office. We know an average Nigerian politician would want to perpetuate himself in office at all costs. For that reason they abhor healthy competition, especially when the opponents parade high profile track records that threatens the incumbent. Perhaps only a few of our present crop of our leaders would watch their opponents grow in strength and popularity among the people, not when they are still in office or aspiring to remain in power. If you ask me, I'll put it to all Nigerians that the scenario is the cause of all the senseless bloodletting we have witnessed since democracy took root in Nigeria.

Although democracy is a preferred model, it almost always takes the blood of real democrats to sanitize the system that will ultimately usher in the cherished democratic environment we desire. In a speech to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1795, quoted in the Public Affairs Section Newsletter 'Crossroads' of the American Embassy, Fisher Ames, a federalist politician said of democracy, *"A monarchy is like a merchantman, you get on board and ride the wind and tide in safety and elation but, by and by, you strike a reef and go down. But democracy is like a raft, you never sink, but "your feet are always in the water"*.

Nigeria's democracy like any other can be likened to a journey worth taking though, but very tortuous, rough and rarely smooth with bumps and even a few treacherous turns. But it has become imperative that we must remain focused to cross the Rubicon despite the untold distractions we now see in the form of bloodshed. No matter who is killing who, Nigerians believe and are strongly agreeable on a number of incontrovertible truths;

- That election in 2007 must hold as planned
- That change in 2007 is not negotiable.
- That Nigerians are deeply interested in who assumes the face of that change.
- That no questionable character no matter how wealthy or highly placed will lead Nigerians against their wish.
- That Nigerians know and can recognize a credible politician when they see one and he will be acceptable to Nigerians irrespective of his extraction.

Through the most legitimate means available to Nigerians, which is the 2007 election, Nigerians will dismantle any and every scandalous structures mounted by the killers and their ilk. The 2007 election offers the Nigerian electorate another ample opportunity of expressing themselves through the ballots be it electronic or manual.

We believe that the four years the incumbents have remained in power is enough for the electorate to have appraised their performances, and then that appraisal normally would provide the necessary yardsticks that would earn the incumbents renewed mandate or a vote of no confidence that would usher in another.

Be that as it may, Nigerians expect nothing but a smooth transition from Obasanjo's civilian administration to another incoming civilian administration. We look forward therefore to a smooth electoral process; we also look forward to a rapidly proactive and innovative INEC between now and 2007 when they would effectively deliver on their promises. I can no longer fault Professor Iwu's confidence, continued pledges and commitments to a very credible and acceptable election conduct in 2007. He has shouted it from the mountaintops that he cannot be any body's student on how or how not to conduct a credible election. The whole truth is that he is adequately schooled in the art of credible elections even though he has not conducted one before, but he has promised that much. What he now needs is prayers and support, definitely not prophetic pessimism that would the nation no good.

The final assurance of a credible election in 2007 is the readiness of the security operatives to be democracy-friendly by protecting the electorate and their votes rather than snatching ballot boxes, and foment trouble, make peace rather than coerce officials. With the (unholy) wedlock of the Police and the Civil Defense Corps, it is expected that the sanity that the later have radiated in the discharge of their duties would spillover the former, in bringing about a smooth and violent-free elections in 2007.

Without being unnecessarily euphoric, I see a colorful handover ceremony where OBJ is handing over the reins of power to a neatly suited young man in his late forties, beaming with confident smiles to a cheering and hopeful crowd of Nigerians.

Good luck Nigerians.  
Long live Nigeria.

**Agathus Chibuiké Mgbeahuruiké**  
**TMG**

### **NEWS TITBITS**

#### **TMG's Step Down Training kicks off in 19 states of the Federation**

Following the just concluded Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop organized by Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) for 19 Master Trainers, Step Down Training have accordingly commenced in the selected states nationwide with support from National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

The beneficiaries of the on-going-step-down-training will subsequently observe the voters' registration exercise, which commences, nationwide by October 7, 2006.

The selected states by TMG's previous observation reports have tendencies of violent flagprint and

this informed their selection.

TMG's efforts to put up these vital pre-election preparation is in line with its believe that a successful voter registration exercise necessarily translates to a successful credible election.

### **TMG organizes Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop for voter Registration**

In continuation of its preparations to ensure credible elections in 2007, the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) with support from National Endowment for Democracy have organized a one-day Training of Trainers Workshop in Lagos.

The training, which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2006, was meant to train 19 Master Trainers selected from 19 states of the Federation who will in turn provide training to the 345 voter Registration Observers in those states.

The voter Registration exercise is schedule to commence by October 7, 2006 nationwide.

## **PHOTO SPEAK**

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