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Ikale News



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FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



TINUBU MUST REVIEW CONFAB REPORT

- AKIN ARIKAWA

Also In This Edition



- I am to serve humanity -Prof. Faduyile
- Bitter Pills, Archives, Ikale Kids



“If Ondo People want me as Governor, I will run”
– Jimoh Ibrahim

MAMA MODEOLA AKINBO GOES HOME




2023 UTAKO Day

- December 25 - Business Meeting/ Gala Night
- December 26 - D-day - Games, Medical, Music, Olugbu, Launching

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EDITORIAL PAGE

FROM THE PUBLISHER

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We Are Rebranding *Ikale News*

Last month we hit 5,000 view on our online patronage in *Ikale News*. I celebrated it is a big way with my guys. We have over one thousand views in our Video uploads and podcasts of *Ikale Language* also. These were coming barely a year after we started *Ikale News* online, via ikalenews.com

The story of *Ikale News* is always fascinating for me to tell again and again. I did not plan to establish a newspaper of this sort at all. I was a reporter with *Champion Newspapers* and was doing my Master's Degree in 1991 when Professor Andrew Moemeka of the University of Lagos taught us *Community Journalism*.

It was specialized course. All of the things he taught us just fitted *Ikaleland* and *Ikale* people. Prof Moemeka who died just few months ago, also taught us *Development Communication*. In my term paper, I did something like a community newspaper for *Ikale* people. After the programme, I felt like actualizing it. I just planned to run one edition and forget about it all. But our people simply fell in love with it. Since then, we have been unstoppable.

Between 1992 and two years ago we have stopped publishing at one time or the other. Sometimes we did for over two years. But everywhere I went, I would be confronted with the question "When is *Ikale News* coming back?" I could not answer because I knew they would not understand. The reason was at that point, or during those years, print journalism was transmuting to online journalism. Print journalism was becoming unsustainable and community newspapers were worse off because journalism lives on advertisements and community newspapers rarely get adverts. Some people

suggested that they would be giving me subventions to continue to print. But printing was not even the major issue. Circulation or distribution was. We used to spend double to amount of print cost to distribute.

God in His merciful ways brought respite with the coming of online journalism. Today, we still print hard copies on special occasions. Otherwise, we are just online. It is free and we do not make money from it but we are happy we are reaching out better. We have our readers strewn the entire globe – Germany, London, America, Canada and across Nigeria. It is easy for us to distribute now.

From the foregoing, we only have to work rebrand our contents. We have been doing this in the past two editions. Apart of aesthetics of the newspaper, we are improving contents. We have introduced a new column that we refer to as *UKOTO OMA IKALE*. It is to celebrate outstanding *Ikale* sons and daughters. We have also revived our interview column: *HOT HEAT*. We have plans to rework our sports pages. We want to give a new orientation to our youths, especially in terms of entertainment and sports. We have also introduced *IKALE PROVERBS* with Baba Liliken (a sage). We want to really upload unique *Ikale* proverbs and use style to promote *Ikale* language. I have found that *Ikale* has its own proverbs separate from Yoruba proverbs and that our own proverbs seem very deep. We have to be documenting them before they go extinct before our very eyes.

Our kids column, *Ikale Kids* is taking a new look. As usual, our emphasis in that column is to educate *Ikale* young ones. Adults too can learn from the stories told there by Deaconess

Omotayo Folayan. Sometimes we repeat the column so that people who missed the last edition can read. We do so for a few other contents, not because we don't have contents, but for emphasis.

The long and short of it is that your *IkaleNews* will continue fly high and high. Let us continue to work together for the development of *Ikale* land. What do we need from you? Adverts! That is the life wire of journalism.

THE FOUNDATIONS ARE COMING UP!

We are elated that several more foundations are springing up to help our people. Since last month that we published a story on Femi Omolehinwa Foundation, B.A. Akinmosin Foundation, Faduyile Foundation and Jimoh Ibrahim Educational Foundation, at least two more foundations have announced programmes. Most of them are on education, the most important tool for personal and societal development. I know that the Femi Omolehinwa Foundation and the B.A. Akinmosin Foundations are presenting scholarships this December of thereabouts. I understand that others like DOD Foundation by Dr. Olumuyiwa Foundation and the Omosehin Foundation are also awarding scholarships this year. We never can tell what people being supported by these foundations will become in future. So, we will continue to support the cause. I reliably learnt that some of the foundations are already receiving support from members of the society. May God continue to bless them. All of us cannot start and operate scholarship foundations. We not have the resources beyond one student. We can easily throw that money for one into the pool so that these foundations can help. God bless you for doing so.

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EDITORIAL PAGE

STILL ON AYEDATIWA

The Ayedatiwa saga has refused to go. Deputy Governor Ayedatiwa has apologized to his boss, but the impeachment fever refuses to go. We hope it will. Such that we can have the peace to go ahead running the state.

I think all stakeholders have learned various lessons. The bitter truth is that much as Aketi has his own problems and high-handedness, Ayedatiwa has not done so well for his people.

It seems the Ilajes are just falling behind him for the fact that he is one of their own. This is all I have been stressing- that when we have these opportunities, let us use them to serve well.

But we insist as a community newspaper that this is not the time to sack Ayedatiwa. It does not make sense at all. Aketi is still recuperating. He needs a strong, loyal deputy to hold the forte. We need an energetic deputy to supervise projects and do a lot of things.

THE REBRANDING CONTINUES...

Rebranding of your number one community newspaper, *Ikale News* continues. By the special grace of God, we will do a hard copy edition for January. We hope to do a special edition on Professor C.O. Daramola, the former minister: A distinguished *Ikale* academic.

He will turn 80 years old in January. From then on, we should be able to do hard copies quarterly or half-yearly for our legislators to sponsor. We will document their efforts on quarterly basis or worst scenario, bi-annually. They do not have to wait four years when election is knocking to brief the people of what they have been doing. That is where *Ikale News* is there. As we all know, *Ikale News* is not a commercial project. We exist for community service. Our advert rates are very ridiculously low. We do not sell the newspaper.

We believe that community media is a major tool for development. It is not only me. All those working for *Ikale News* do so for free. They have their

FROM THE PUBLISHER

jobs. Apart from Youth Corps members, we do not pay anybody any allowances.

This is reason we appreciate your support in form of donations and advertisements. Of course, trust your newspaper: When it comes to reaching *Ikale* at home and in the Diaspora, *Ikale News* is second to none. *Ee si ularun*. It is the truth.

A ma ka hedo o.



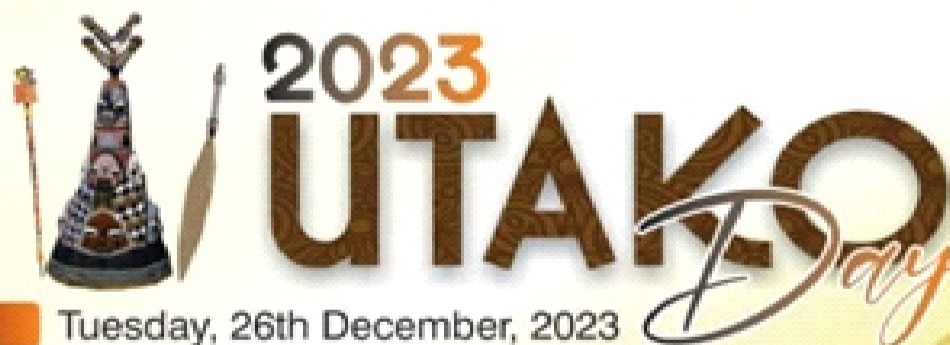
Bolu John Folayan (PhD)
Editor, *Ikale News*



The Rebuja in Council
HRM Oba Dr. Gbadebo Bajowa,
(Lubokun iv, Rebuja of Osooro Land); Igbotako Development Forum (IDF)
& The Entire **IGBOTAKO COMMUNITY**

Request the pleasure of

to the



DATE: Tuesday, 26th December, 2023
TIME: 11.00am
VENUE: St. Pius Catholic School Playground,
Igbotako, Ondo State.

Chairman of the Day: His Highness Rotimi Ikugbayigbe
(Olu of Ifado-Akoko)

Chief Host:
SENATOR (DR.) JIMOH IBRAHIM

Chairlady/Chairperson: Mrs. Rosanah Olowu
(Nee Omogbehin)

Special Guest of Honour
Prof. Sola Olowoselu

Principal Guest of Honour
Barrister Phillips Olufemi Ogunjumelo

RSVP
Oloja Sunday Adejuwon +2347031518877
Oluremi Olabiwonnu +2348027638604

BITTER PILLS

Wanted: Ajodun Achievements of Political Office Holders

Two of ardent fans of Ikale News called me last month to commend our efforts to promote community development. They however pointedly asked why I give Jimoh Ibrahim a lot of coverage in the newspaper.

I gave several reasons. The most important thing is that Jimoh Ibrahim is the Senator representing us Ikale people. And he has been representing us well. I am vindicated. I knew they gentleman inside out and I was sure he would represent us well. So, as a community newspaper, we exist to project our what our leaders are doing or not doing. No apologies for that, even if that those representatives are my avowed enemies!

The other points in favour of Senator Jimoh Ibrahim is that he is a news maker. The favourite food of the journalist is "news". Jimoh Ibrahim is a news maker any day. Top media houses queue up to get interviews from him because he would give them news. We have literally labored to get our other representatives in Ikale News. Its not that we charge them fees for appearances.

No. It is free. We have passed brown envelopes at this level. Tell us what you are doing and we will report to our people. In this regard, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim is redefining legislative representation. You can see that the others (Hon Jimi Odinayo and the state legislators) are trying to pace up. This is good for our development.

Then of course, it is pay-back time for Ibrahim. He was one of the pillars behind *Ikale News* when we started it as a hobby in June 1992. He encouraged us morally and financially and if *Ikale News* is what it is today, he should benefit from its service now that he is formally representing Ikale people. My position always is that *Ikale News* is for all. Whether you are Muslim, Christian or Pagan; PDP or APC or Labour. Our primary interest is Ikale interest. If you hate Ikale people, you cannot be our friend. No way.

How do you feel seeing our representative to his feat among 109 Senators to make speeches time and again not just to open his mouth to speak but to speak so eloquently? Oh, during the screening of the chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Senator Ibrahim rose again last month and spoke. I recorded him:

Mr. President. My name is Jimoh Ibrahim, representing Ondo South. Of a serious note, the GDP to tax is 18%, meaning that we have

rooms; opportunities to bring in more people into the tax nets and get more revenue. But the challenge is the economic power of people to be taxed. Are you advising, Mr. President of Nigeria, to look at tax integration? At least partial integration, meaning that, like the Senate President was concerned about PAYEE.

PAYEE is for the state government. It's not for the Federal Government, you know that. And in that situation, if we do partial integration, as suggested by the Senate President on the PAYEE phenomenon, those who have respite to celebrate, to look at inward into the economic and the poverty ratio that we have in this country. And that's a very, very important one.

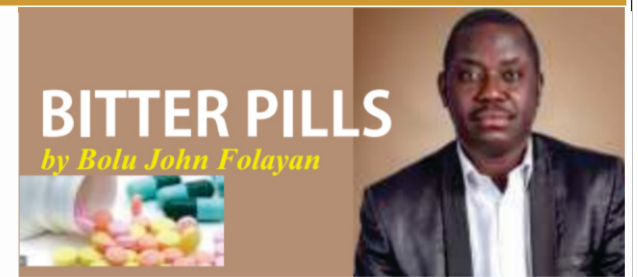
Secondly, Mr. President, is the fact that the company expenses is deductible against company income. The Inland Revenue Service doesn't want to look at company expenses when they are computing tax. Without those expenses, there is no way tax can be generated.

As Chairman of Inland Revenue, I do know you have a good look at that Because we are giving just two minutes, I don't want to take much time or offend the Senate President. Now, the key point is that, Mr. President, on a finalnote, it's not every day we have a first-class holder coming before us. And this is a fantastic one. He has demonstrated himself at the first degree level, first class. At master's level ...distinction, and all of this from Ife, University of Ife. I think he's a celebrity. Although he doesn't have a degree in Harvard, he did certificate course, there.

Mr. President, I clearly indulge that we celebrate Mr. Cadoso for being very, very fantastic in terms of his academic knowledge. I didn't make him first class. So, it's not every day that we come by first class honors. And if not because our Senate President is such a person that really wants many things to be said, ordinarily, these candidates must have taken a bow and go.

I will say that, I do hope Mr. Chairman of FIRS, you will have authority to answer my two questions. Partial, if you are clear, partial tax integration, and then again, particularly for payee or for company, whatever you want to do. The GDP to tax ratio, which is 18%, giving you more room And then, company deductible expenses against income.

We keep shouting that companies are making money, they are not paying tax. Don't we know that expenses are deductible against income? And what will you do to make sure that you bring this to bear. Thank you once again, Mr. Senate President, for the great opportunity to share something in respect of this.



Thank you very much.

Wow! I love that. That National Assembly, the first thing you need to make impact is to have a voice. Forget it if you don't have a voice. And having a voice is not about have a vocal cord. It goes with carriage and pedigree.

That is why I am raising the bar for our political appointees and representatives. Very soon, an umbrella body for all Ikale people will be launched. One of programmes of the organization is a bi-annual or annual FACE THE PELUPELU programme. It is going to be "Ajodun of Political Office Holders"

I remember as a young boy in Osooro when the Zion and C&S Churches did there Ajodun. It used to be colourful. This one is political ajodun. No more room for bench warmers and representatives who would not be accountable. Oh, you have to face the PELUPELU and give accounts. There will be full media blitz. So, those who have nothing to offer will not even come and seek a second term. It would be so obvious.

Things are getting better. And I am not writing something totally new. The person who represented us in the House of Representatives in the last interregnum did practically nothing. And when he tried to seek second term, his own political party leaders rejected him. They told him its not about money. They collected their shares but when the elections proper came, they did not vote for him. That is a big lesson for political office holders, not only the elected ones. Let us go up there and serve. What does it cost to serve? It's a big privilege to serve at whatever level.

For political appointees, it is coming to the same story. Mr. Femi Agagu our commissioner for education for over six years now must have done a lot of things for Ikale people. They will like to know.

We will be seeking interview with him shortly. The same thing with our beautiful mama, Princess Oladunni Odu. She is an amazon that I admire so much because in terms of personal success, she has proved that Ikale women are of substance. But in terms of achievements I do not know what she has done. I have not said she did not do much. I do not know.

We don't care who make the information available to us. We just need the information. When she was in UBE, she did wonders (of course you expected that also because Olusegun Agagu was at the helms). As SSG, I want to know what she is doing and has done.

Even Councillors now will have to give accounts. Much more local government chairmen. It is the era of accountability and it is part and parcel of democracy.

OPINION

INSIDE STUFF
With Oloja Martins


Time to Fix Tinubu's Chaotic Presidency

Now that the fear of the Supreme Court is gone for the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu administration, this seems to be the right time for the President to fix the chaos that has taken some steam out of the awesomeness that is usually inherent in presidential palace.

Doubtless, there have been too frequent dissonance and crisis of coherence in the office of the president. And this is not good for reputation management. It is too early for his reputation managers to be running around to control damage that can be quite challenging in this digital media age when information travels at the speed of light. It is Nigeria's presidency and we have a responsibility to counsel for its stability before it is too late.

Besides, it is not too early to claim that the president's men are not collating the groundswell of opinion on how to fix the presidential bureaucracy and the public sector. This is about twenty-five years of unbroken democracy and the institutions of governance including the presidential bureaucracy that should set the tone for efficient management of the public service, shouldn't be this wobbly and brittle. This column has since 2016 contained more than twenty contextual commentaries on the expediency of a strong presidential bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy of the presidency organically comprises the office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, the office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation and the Office of the Chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission. These three offices are creations of the Constitution of Nigeria.

The Obasanjo administration disrupted the presidential bureaucracy when he added the office of Chief of Staff to the President, as part of the personal staff to the president. The Yar'Adua administration (2007-2010) scrapped the Chief of Staff post while President Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2011-2015) reinstated it and the office exists till the present.

So the presidential bureaucracy today exists with the office of Chief of Staff and the officer (CoS-P) can artfully hijack the

presidential bureaucracy with or without the consent of the president. This is where the dissonance that can set off a chaotic bureaucracy in the office of the president occurs. In the last administration of President Buhari, for instance, there were instances when the Chief of Staff signed letters of even transfer of a Permanent Secretary, instead of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation. Just as we have seen in the current administration whereby the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity has been announcing presidential appointments without details of the appointees: This is the remit of the office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, who is the Secretary to the Cabinet Council, Head of the Cabinet Secretariat and Secretary to the Security and Defence Council.

“
**Presidential
 Yacht in the noisy
 N2.2 trillion worth
 of supplementary
 budget?**
 ”

There are seven offices headed by permanent secretaries in the SGF's office. These offices include Special Services Office (SSO) with a responsibility for managing the bureaucracy of defence and security services of the federation. The SSA Media's office since the Buhari administration, has been usurping the duties of the Minister of Information too. This has been due to the curious chaos in the presidential bureaucracy that lost its mojo during the post Yar'Adua administration when a politician who had no solid civil service background was appointed to the office of SGF. This is the origin of the current chaos and present and clear danger to the polity.

What is more curious, why has the presidential bureaucracy become so ordinary to the extent that the President had to announce directly the ban of his son, among other non-members of the Executive Council from the Council Chamber? How did the strangers stray into the Federal Executive Council Chambers? What happened to organisational efficiency in the office of the SGF and indeed the presidential bureaucracy?

What is responsible for embarrassing withdrawal of appointments of people into the federal public service these days? Ministerial nominees and even nominees to the Federal Civil Service Commission have been withdrawn. Who supervised the budget details of the controversial N5b worth of Presidential Yacht in the noisy N2.2 trillion worth of supplementary budget?

How did the office of the First Lady surface in the purchase of SUVs for the office of the President? How did it take a Senator to tell Nigerians that the Yacht had been paid for before the outcry? Was the Navy unaware of the delivery without payment that would have been explained before the Senator Ndume's revelation? Where was Senator Ndume too when the National Assembly was talking of transfer of the Yacht's N5 billion vote to the Students Loan subhead? When did the office of the President know about the controversial Yacht? Where were the concerned ministers and presidential bureaucrats when the details of the supplementary budget were being prepared?

The SGF should be made to take back his office and remit as head of the presidential bureaucracy before it is too late. These challenges would have been avoided if they had been listening to and reading suggestions from those who have retired from the public service that once worked. One of such suggestions, for instance, came through an article in The Guardian barely two months ago by a retired federal Permanent Secretary who once worked in the office of the SGF and was the pioneer Director General of the Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR), Dr Goke Adegrooye. Here are excerpts from the classic he wrote on the federal and

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OPINION

INSIDE STUFF
With Oloja Martins


presidential bureaucracy titled: 'Too Early To Say We Are Losing It: But Can The Bureaucracy Come To The Rescue?'

'...From several people across social, economic and religious strata within my own ethnic group, all solid and passionate supporters of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu including those who before he was sworn in are so close to him personally as not to require a notice to see him, the one common thread opening their conversation in the last three weeks, be it on telephone or when we meet, after the titular salutation courtesy of Egbon, Bros, Doctor, Awe (buddy) in palpably worrisome tone is: "we are losing it"! This is in direct contradiction to the euphoria of the first week after swearing in with courageous and far-reaching policy decisions that were commended by most Nigerians, the international community and, indeed, politicians across party lines.

While acknowledging the challenge of the Niger Coup to his administration at this early stage of his presidency and are able to wave aside the complaints of those who claimed to have worked for his success at the last election but are now sidelined, they seem worried by two main issues, namely:

media posts alleging payment of huge sums of money to key individuals around the President to influence appointment into political offices and/or facilitate meetings with the President; and the new cabinet in terms of its size and composition. They point to the geo-political distribution of the portfolios as smacking of a reverse replay of what we accused the last President of, and the non-fulfilment of the promise publicly made to Malam Nasir el Rufai as both not reflecting the true Yoruba spirit.

Their "we are losing it" outburst, is driven by a sense of collective responsibility and it exudes their true Yorubanness as Omoluabi who want fairness for all, the fear that their expectation of a magic wand by the President is becoming a mirage, and the urgency of a reassurance to the populace as an imperative.

It has become my lot to embark on a well calculated gerrymandering to reassure them that things will begin to fall into place

very soon.

They all assume that as a former top civil servant living in Abuja and with working experience in the Presidency, I must be one of those advising the team of PBAT behind the scenes and as such should be aware of what's going on. Yet I am at sea myself in finding a solid base to anchor the many theses of reassurance that I have been carefully offloading on them on a regular basis, as I am equally worried that the firm steps that are required to stem the tide might be gradually slipping away.

New Appointments and Deployments Demand Acculturation:

Anywhere in the world, the swearing in of a new President and his Deputy entails new appointments of many aides, political office holders in executive positions and cabinet members, based on careful screening and selection processes. Because these aides and other political appointees are coming from diverse backgrounds, systems and terrains, manifestation of effectiveness and efficiency at their new duty posts is a function of not just the induction protocols they have been taken through but how soon such inductions have been made to take place, ideally before but not later than a couple of weeks after taking office. Otherwise, their entry into the system could lead to other challenges requiring strong efforts to tackle.

In my address at the public presentation of my twin-volume book – Restoring Good Governance in Nigeria at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, Thursday, 25 June, 2015, under the title: Of Indigenous Species and the Threat of Invasive Species as the rationale for the books, I stated that "In the absence of careful selection and systematic introduction protocols, there is the danger of introducing species that can become systematically destructive and a threat to the survival of the native populations in the ecosystem".

And that "this usually happens when such species are introduced at the top bureaucratic and/or political office holder levels where they are calling the shots and can deploy their own strains of practices, procedures and behaviours in carrying out their responsibilities".

Induction training and protocols are an important and indispensable tool of human resources management. With the return to democratic governance in 1999, it was the first step taken by the Obasanjo Administration. Indeed, so crucial did he consider it that he made it to commence within a week after inauguration, with sitting permanent secretaries and key persons from outside the bureaucracy that he had considered as potential Ministers, Special Advisers, Senior Special Assistants etc as the participants. It was from the Induction that he was able to off-load some perm secs and make up his mind on his choice of Ministers and Advisers in certain States. Professor Adebayo Adedeji, now late, was the principal Facilitator. That Induction for political office holders lasted 10 days.

It was subsequently extended to the Directorate level officers GL 17, 16 & 15 as a 2-week course that spanned 20 editions, commencing under Abu Obe and concluded under Yayale Ahmed as Head of the Civil Service of the Federation. I was the chairman of the team that synthesized the proceedings of the 20 editions into a single Report for the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation for presentation to the President. The establishment of the Bureau of Public Service Reforms is one of the outcomes of that series of Induction Course.

You can see why the Tinubu's presidential bureaucracy that is crisis-prone at the moment needs to be rejigged to wake up to its responsibility before it is too late!

There are seven offices headed by permanent secretaries in the SGF's office. These offices include Special Services Office (SSO) with a responsibility for managing the bureaucracy of defence and security services of the federation.

The SSA Media's office since the Buhari administration, has been usurping the duties of the Minister of Information too. This has been due to the curious chaos in the presidential bureaucracy that lost its mojo during the post Yar'Adua administration when a politician who had no solid civil service background was appointed to the office of SGF. This is the origin of the current chaos and present and clear danger to the polity.

HOT SEAT**“It was unfortunate that Buhari killed the Confab Report. President Tinubu should review that document”****- Veteran Technocrat, Akin Arikawe**

On our Hot Seat this month is Barrister Akin Arikawe. “Bra Aken”, as is more popularly known by the younger generation of Ikale in Abuja, was the pioneer Director General, Debt Management Office, was Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and President of Ikale Progressives Association, Abuja. The veteran lawyer and administrator has presided over very delicate matters concerning Nigeria at various times. You probably would not believe that it was an Ikale man that superintended the payment of all Nigeria's debts! Nigeria was free of all debts under his management. Ikale News editorial board felt we should put him on the spot to share experiences now that he is now retired. He would not want to speak on so many things (probably leaving them for his Memoirs, which we are working with him to produce (very tasking job though). Meanwhile, he was kind enough to open up on several issues with our Abuja Bureau Chief, BAYO JIMOH on many issues. Enjoy.....

Many of our readers want to hear from you, especially on your background and your public service career?

My name is Akin Arikawe I was born Igbotako on 6th December 1947. I attended Baptist Day School from 1954 to 1959, then from 1960 to 1962 I was in St. Louis secondary Modern School also in Igbotako. I spent a year in Stella Maris in 1963 before going to the Teacher's Training College in Akure between 1964 to 1966 so I was a grade two teacher I left there I came to Okitipupa to teach for one year that was in 1967. I left there to join the Nigeria Railways Corporation for one year before I was in there training school for six months and worked for them for six months I discovered it wasn't a place to make progress so I quickly left.

Fortunately, I had what it takes to go to the University, by June 1968 September I entered UNILAG I read Political Science, and finished in June 1972 joined the Federal Civil Service from there I read Law and Economics did Master's Programme in Administration. So that is the basic of my what I did, and I remain in the Federal civil service until 2007. I rose through the ranks to become a Permanent Secretary in the system.

You obviously had a rewarding service for fatherland...

Yeah. it was a real rewarding service, because I did so many things for government which probably they thought was difficult. For example, between 1995 and 1998 they took me to one section, they called it Debt Management Division of External Finance. That division had not been able to deliver anything in more than 10 years. So what I was able to resuscitate it. And that was the reason why they made me to go and be the pioneer Director General to the Debt Management Office. To the glory of God, you can see the outcome. We were able to compile our debt figures, and paid off all Nigeria multilateral loans and Nigeria was free of debt.

So in the course of that Obasanjo called me in 2004 March.

As in... he made a direct call to you?

President Olusegun Obasanjo could call any



key official of government any time of the day. Sometimes he did call me at 2 am...

Oh, really?

Oh Yes. So, he said: "You have performed so well and I want to thank you for all you have done in the Debt Management Office. By next month when we are appointing new permanent secretaries you will be one of them, in August I will give you a National Honour. You have done so well and I learnt you're not staying in government quarters I will sell a government quarter to you and he did".

So it was a lot of recognition and appreciation I

thank God for that. I later became the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Finance until I retired in July 2007.

After leaving the Federal Civil Service in 2007, what other ways have you engaged yourself?

Well, nothing consistent, little bits of this and that. For example, between 2009 and 2012 I was on the board of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency. Though, the Agency wasn't well funded at the time, we were able to do the little we could. In

HOT SEAT

between that 2009 to 2011. I was the coordinator of our vision of 2020 in order to document what it takes to attain economic feat, that will make us one of the largest economies in the world, or the 20th largest economy in the world by 2020. All those kind of things, I was the National coordinator.

Let's go back in time sir. When you were at UNILAG studying political science, was that at any point you were thinking that you will be involved in politics?

I have never thought so. I believe that will be useful to my people, whether or not I am in politics. By being in the Federal Civil Service. So many people were able to get employment from Ikale through me. I give glory to God for that. Then in terms of helping the area, whatever work you do in terms of making sure that the budget reflects it, so I was able to do ensure that Ondo state, Ikale and Igbotako are not left behind. And we thank God for that. The only thing that happened immediately I left the place was the issue of blackout in Ikaleland, it happened while I was no longer there. If it has happened when I was there it would have made a lot of difference because the loan which we took to set-up those two plants in Omotosho was a Chinese loan contracted through my office as Director General Debt Management Office and also the one at Papalanto in Ogun state. By then, the policy of Obasanjo regime was that anywhere there is a plant you must first supply the local communities before supplying the National grid but when President Jonathan came he changed everything and made it impossible till date and that has been the story. So, I feel satisfied that, politics or not I'm able to impact people. Again, Nigeria politics has been so monetized. It is one thing to say I want to go into politics another thing is to have the resources. So I never planned to go into politics. That is not to say that I'm not interested in politics. But I know that if I try to say I want to be a candidate that I need more money, than I have.

In terms of service delivery and effectiveness. Do you think there's a thin line or are they changes between what was happening during your time in federal civil service and now?

There's a lot of difference because one the problems that arose when Obasanjo came in, in 1999, he had this idea, that there was need to professionalise some cadres and put professionals like accounting, like accountant general's office and so on the implementation was not thorough. All the thieves that have sacked in the private sector applied, many of them got employed and they wreaked havoc on the system. Because before then, it is it takes a lot from civil servant to think about corner money here. Everybody follows the rules. That's not to say that one out of hundred won't get shortchanged the system. But that cadre of people that came in midway, and they were they were brought into senior positions, then they didn't learn the rope.

They didn't learn the ethics, they only came with their private sector knowledge of me first before others. So that's the kind of thing that really wreaks havoc, in terms of corruption, embezzlement, dishonesty, lack of integrity, all the kinds of, so but the deliberate attempt

during Jonathan to also weaken the civil service was also there, the ministers, because the President supported them once somebody say my permanent secretary doesn't obey me, they transfer you, they didn't even find out why. And in many cases, the reason why they call it permanent secretary an accounting officer is for him to uphold the rules or regulation, especially of expenditure. If there is nobody who will or hold rules, then there won't be no rules and nothing would happen in terms of positive. So there is a lot of decadence. Nowadays which needs to be addressed.

So the decadence of the federal civil service started when President Obasanjo introduced the professionalism into some cadres?

It started from that reform because some of the personnel who held sensitive positions, and were brought into system didn't do well.

Sir, you were part of the delegation to the 2014 Political Confab. And now, the recommendation of that conference, are yet to be implemented?

I feel bad about it. The first thing President Buhari said was that they didn't believe in the conference, and that we will never use it, which is sad. Even if you don't believe in all the conclusions, there will be something there. There will be something which you can implement, which will make sense. Take this rotational presidency this question of North South. It was well spelt out there. The Southern delegation wanted it to be rotated among the geopolitical zones. But you know, the Northerners don't want that.

They wanted North South. We say fine, that's all right. In order to please the Igbos in number of states, it was recommended that the zones should have nine. But that was neither here nor there. Because if you start to create more states, you are putting more money on administration, but that was part of the conclusion of the conference, and then the real issue of the conference, is devolution, that the states should get more power or more money none of those things have been implemented. That state should have their own police, there would still be a federal police to dictate some common standards. The Southwest as a caucus, they wanted a situation in which the geopolitical zones became units of governance.

What would be your advise to the President Tinubu's administration on the 2014 Conference Reports?

They should look at it. There are so many aspects of the report that are useful, like this question of devolution, the federal needs to share the loads, in terms of what they are doing, in order to be able to do it well. The states, should take more responsibility as to how to run their local situation. And these administration should look into it and try as much as possible to implement it.

Recently, the Governor of Ondo state, Rotimi Akeredolu assented to the Bill for the creation of 33 LCDA in which the headquarters of Ikale North has been domiciled in Igbotako. How do you feel about this?

I feel very happy about that. because Ondo state over the years has been shortchanged in the creation local governments. If you take Ogun state for example, there is a local government headquarters in Sagamu, another one in Ikenne, another one in Ijebu-igbo if

you know how close they are, you will be amazed that in the whole of Okitipupa division, we have only four local governments, only four, how come? And because of that, it has diminished our representation in Akure and the National Assembly. It has affected us very negatively. So, the creation is good, Lagos has 20 local governments, Kano has 40, before 1990 but Lagos and Kano have 20-20 each. Meanwhile, from Kano they created Jigawa, and Jigawa 27 local governments and Kano still has 40 while Lagos state remains 20 that is to show you the South has been shortchanged, especially Western Nigeria, and so well shortchanged in the creation of local government. Also, the local governments have not been functional in terms of ability to deliver any service. I hope those who have created this one will give them the money that both will come from the Federation account or come from the state put it together let the local government try some projects like rural roads, they should be able to do that, as of now, the Okitipupa local government can't do anything they don't even have anything, they just collect their salary.

What would you recommend as a way of developing the newly created LCDA?

Yeah, good numbers of us are already discussing that how to make impacts with the people. The major challenge we have is lack of electricity, if that problem is solved you find that it is easy to encourage people to go into small scale or big scale business or whatever. Our people are not lazy; they work hard and they will be persuaded to generate money for themselves and money for the government. But without electricity, I cannot think of how we can accelerate development if we cannot have small scale industry.

Again. I have some fears. It looks like all the land for arable land have been used to plant palm trees what we they eat later? These are cash crops, they can produce cash. They can't produce food. People need to be educated, that a people that cannot feed themselves are bunch of slaves. And that kind of phenomenon is prevalent in all the Ikaleland. So, I have that kind of worry about the practice of our people. If we have electricity I think people will do better in terms of small scale industries as well as be able to engage himself employ the small level of people to work for themselves.

As the President of the Ikale Progressives Association, Abuja Chapter, tell us about the activities of the association and its achievements over the years?

The primary purpose of the association is Ikale consciousness that has been well achieved. And again, if things are not as good, people can rally around you and give you comfort. So that that aspect is well achieved. In terms of development. Last year, we launched an educational scheme, and that is to prevalent that to help our people, especially those who are going to sit for the West Africa Examination Council. In the coming year, this 2024, what we are planning to do is to assist in paying their examination fees both for WAEC and NECO. Hopefully, that those who don't have money, won't be denied.

Thank you sir, for squeezing your time for this interview. I wish you continued success.

You are welcome.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Femi Aiyejusunle Gives Back To The Society Aye APC Leaders Pay Tributes to a Worthy Son

By Ibikunle Ikuyinminu (Executive Editor)

The new corps of legislators in Ikaledland are setting a new pace in representing their communities. Virtually all of them are responding or planning to respond to the hard times being faced by their constituents, never mind the outcry over the purchase of luxury cars for the legislators at national and state levels.

The latest politician giving back in Ikaledland is not even a serving legislator. He is Femi Aiyejusunle, an urbane, astute, suave, resourceful and humane grassroots politician and chieftain of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Okitipupa Local Government Area. He is also a former aspirant for the House of Assembly Position in Okitipupa Constituency 2 in Ondo State. Aiyejusunle,

Known in social and political circles as Molar, has on Friday October 20, 2023 empowered several numbers of APC women from his Ode-Aye home town with different empowerment programmes targeted at raising the standards of living of the people. In this connection, this astute politician gave out services rendering machines, clothes and cash in order to ameliorate the likely economic hardship the subsidy removal could meet on the women.

Gifts splashed on party faithful were cash,

sewing machines, grinding machines and clothings.

According to Molar, the event was another milestone in his efforts to raise the standard of living of his constituents. He expressed appreciation to the people for their unflinching support and commitment to good governance as demonstrated by Arakunrin Oluwarorimi Akeredolu, Governor of Ondo State.

When cornered by Ikale News on the rationale for the empowerment, he remarked that the programme was in honour of his people. His words: "I have been doing this even when I never planned to venture into politics. I have been doing things like this even without publicity given my personality as a fastidiously private person who does not cherish publicity.

But today's programme marks another step in the direction of enhancing the living standards of my people" Aiyejusunle who noted that "it is the human followers that constitute the powers of the masquerade appreciated the love the people have for him, especially as they stood behind him while he ran the House of Assembly race some months back. He however appealed to the beneficiaries of the empowerment initiatives to make judicious use of the items to grow their economic fortunes and values.

He assured the people, especially the womenfolk, that Governor Akeredolu would never disappoint them even as he urged them to shun rumour mongering, blackmails, pull-him-down syndrome. It combine to give people the impression that politics is a dirty game. Aiyejusunle specially appreciated the coordinating woman, Esther Oladimeji who was until recently, former Women Leader of Ode-Aye Ward 1 for what he described as "her loyalty to the party and the coordinating spirit she put into this since onset". Present at the empowerment programme are party leaders from the two wards in the town and many fans and admirers of this dynamic notable political phenomenon.

One of the beneficiaries contacted on phone, Talabi Bologun simply told our correspondent that Hon. Femi Aiyejusunle "is an angel in the midst of men". He was full of gratitude to God for blessing the All Progressive Congress in Ode-Aye and indeed Ondo State with a vibrant politician like Femi Aiyejusunle who she described as wonderful and fantastic, and who to her and many others, has always been a waging block, especially when they want to lose their political sanity.



FEATURE

IKALE PROVERBS with Baba Liliken



Ikale News: Baba le o. O ma ti jo megwa ke. Which Ikale proverbs are you sharing with us in this edition?

Baba Liliken: I will give you six solid Ikale proverbs. You know that I normally give you Ikale Proverbs, not necessarily Yoruba proverbs. We have distinct proverbs in Ikale Language as you know.

Ikale News; Yes, Baba.

Baba Liliken:: Three of the proverbs I will share with you shortly were actually said by one of your *Ikale News* people who visited me last week. I think his from Ode-Aye.

Ikale News: That should be Labola. His real name is Ibikunle Ikuyinminnu

Baba Liliken: *Ahaa... Wo se.* : Short handsome young man from Laye Lope. He is very good with Ikale proverbs. So, the first three proverbs I would share in this edition, the young man actually said it while we were discussing.

Ikale News: *Oya Baba, me gbo.*

Baba Liliken: I asked him to give me the latest about the Supreme Court judgment on the Tinubu, Obi and Atiku case and Labola said “**Baba, erun orofo ee jo namu namu.**”

Ikale News: What does that mean Baba.

Baba Liliken: It translates literally “the mouth does not dance without a cause” but the real meaning is that I have to give him something before he could divulge the information I sought from him. You can use the proverb anytime when you don't want to give out something for free.

Ikale News: I see. It is true, before your

mouth will be shaking or rolling, something must be inside... Okay, Baba, tell us the second.

Baba Liliken: After he told me Tinubu won at the Supreme Court. I was trying to tell him that Atiku actually bungled PDP's chances of producing the president. I was trying to explain that he should have done everything possible not to let Wike and Obi leave PDP. Labola cut in and said “**Baba Liliken, je ja nsewe le iwin, ja tu ohan mo**”

Ikale News: That translates “Baba Liliken, let us cover the feaces with leaves and pick the oranges and drink” What has feaces got to do with Tinubu and Atiku

Baba Liliken (laughs). It has nothing to do with feaces. It means let us ignore imperfections and things that do not matter and face the real facts or issues. When kids go to the bottom of fruit trees like orange trees and cherry trees in the morning or evening, they usually pick ripe fruits that fall on the ground. However, some people also liter the ground with feaces. So you see feaces on the ground along side ripe oranges. So what Labola is saying is that you let us pick what matters to us – the oranges – and forget that it is by the side of feaces! Let us face the real business that concerns us.

Ikale News: Hmm. Ikale has beautiful proverbs o. So, tell me th third one that Labola used when discussing with you Baba.

Baba Liliken:: Yes, our discussion veered to matter between Aketi and his deputy Ayedatiwa. He told me that the challenges Ayedatiwa has with Aketi was caused by the wife and son. According to him, those two reported Ayedatiwa to the governor I now asked him why he did something bad about the governor before his wife and son. Labola now said, “Baba it was not like that. Ayedatiwa said something about the governor

during a private discussion with a top party member and it was that one who reported to the governor's son. “**Ayedatiwa has forgotten that one yi ajen ma ohun e, ee korin ni orun**”

Ikale News: Hmmmmm. “The person whose voice the witches know should not sing in the middle of the night”. *Kai!*

Baba Liliken: *Wo seeee.* I means one should be careful to say some things especially before people who know you inside out”. It can also be used to say a public figure has no hiding place; so be careful

Ikale News: so long with Labola Baba. Tell me the other three proverbs you promised me.

Baba Liliken: “**Owo umale, oun en mu ton ade ori e se rin.**” Translation: “The masquerade fits his crown by himself”. It simply means you should be able to or ready to carry your burden by yourself, not waiting for anyone. You see, Ikale masquerades (which we call Umale) are dressed before they come out in the public to dance. But in the course of dancing, the crown often displaces. It is only the Masquerade who can easily know this and in the better position to fix it. So when you see Ikale Masquerade often holding their crown, that is what they are doing. **Owo Umale oun en mu ton ade ori e se rin.**

Ikale News: That is very true. Baba, what of the proverb “**An j afoju ee tan una ale, o ji at ohon, ati orun, ki iyi ghon ri nine?**” What does it mean?

Baba Liliken: First let me tell you the literary translation. It says “They ask the blind person why he is not putting on his lantern when it is night time, and he or she replies that when it is noon or night it is the same for him”. The meaning is that “people should not worry about what won't make a difference”. For instance, if peple nare going to watch a football match while some others are are going to watch the masquerade, you you are not interested in both, you can say “**An j afoju ee tan una ale, o ji at ohon, ati orun, ki iyi ghon ri nine?**” So, it does not have to be about lantern or light.

Ikale News: Now the last for the day Baba

Baba Liliken: “**Asiwere eniyan ki yi ojo igboro j'e pa rin**”. Translation: “It is only a mad man that gets beaten by rain in the middle of the town” That means that person should be able to take available shelter. But the madpersn does not see the essence. He or she enjoys being beaten in the rain. It simply means the wise person takes heed at the nick of time. I remember the last time I travelled to Akotogbo. I was at the park in Ode Irele and the driver of the commercial bus entered the car drunk. I quietly disembarked and entered another bus. Because... “**Asiwere eniyan ki yi ojo igboro j'e pa rin**”

Ikale News: Thank you Baba Liliken. Waa pe ghun wa o Baba.

Baba Liliken: Wo se o. O dugba'se.

CULTURE

Eje Festival-Ilado-Akoko 2023

Eje Festival is an annual event common to all Akokos in Ikale land.

At the inauguration of the new monarch at Ilado-Akoko in 2021, the very first thing he did was to constitute a committee that will organise the Eje Festival in our community.

Moved by his passion to positively impact his people especially, the womenfolk through empowerment program where women were trained on how to produce soaps, detergents, bathing soaps, olive oil, candles etc.

Following the remarkable success recorded through this empowerment program, he instituted a day solely for the celebration of our womenfolks to be done annually at the last Saturday of October, instead of the usual pagan celebration at Eje Festival in other places.

While still retaining the name to identify with our roots, the king turned the day to moments of joy and happiness for our women. The Eje Festival 2023 being third in the series was a resounding success by all standards. For the first time, we were able to bring in the

Simba Group that showcased their brands of Motorcycles and other products.

Building on the success recorded at this year's event, we plan to improve on the Festival to expand the scope to last at least three days to accommodate other activities for the benefit of all.

We want to acknowledge the massive support from our sons and daughters through their generous donations to the success of this year's Festival. We look forward to more cooperation in the coming year. Congratulations and thank you all.



CULTURE

“There is nothing we can achieve to develop Ikaleland without unity” Says, High Chief Bamidele Omosehin, The Ligha of Osooro”

As part of our new series to give voice for community leaders, we serve you in this edition an exclusive interview with the Ligha of Osooro Kingdom, High Chief Bamidele Omosehin on contemporary issues affecting the Kingdom. The High Chief spoke with our Executive Editor, Ibikunle Ikuyinminu. Excerpts:

Could you please tell me a little about your background, especially what led to your leaving the shores of Nigeria and why you have sojourned for so long in America?

As you already know, I am an Ikale man from Iju Odo, just like every other person, things weren't this rosy when growing up, but I've always believed that hardwork, determination, perseverance combined with integrity and positive attitude can make anyone successful in life.

I left Nigeria to the overseas, to enable me expand my business and importantly to discover new things. Interestingly, though I have my businesses outside Nigeria, but I have always maintained a very close distance with Nigeria as there was never a year that I don't visit Nigeria five to six times in a year. You should also know that I have businesses in Nigeria to monitor too. Whatever happens. Wherever you may be, home is home. Home is the best.

I am sure you also get home-sick High Chief because in these American and European countries, there is still racial discrimination, especially discrimination against blacks? Is that what makes you touch home often?

Well, there are no continents or countries where you don't experience these things. Of course, you must have heard about the situation in South Africa, where some Africans discriminate against fellow Africans. Let's even narrow it down to our country. Even in Nigeria, people talk of discrimination in some ways. The issue of ethnicity and tribalism that is being experienced here is also an example of discrimination.

So I would rather use this opportunity to maintain that only people with short vision and myopic minds would entertain such acts in this present age and time. The greatest virtue for humanity now is to show love and kindness to anyone in need. A little act of love and kindness to anyone in need would make the world a better place.

Whether taught or acquired, the fact still remains that discrimination against the

Blacks is rife in the U.S. Perhaps you may wish to look at this from the economic status angle.

I don't know what your views about America are, but it is important to establish here that America is a free state, just like Nigeria, a nation-state with different colors and races coming together as one. You must have heard this popular saying about America as God's own country, where opportunity abounds for all colors and races. The richest in America aren't white, and recall that former president Barack Obama is a black man from Kenya, and there are a lot of black successful people in America.

Like I said earlier, discrimination happens almost everywhere; advantaged people discriminate against disadvantaged people, so it is important to keep a positive attitude in business to be successful. How you encounter racial challenges really also depends on where you are there. America is a massive country.

Let's come back home. How familiar are you with the challenge of development in Ikaleland?

I grew up in Ikaleland, I have my personal house there, and like I said earlier there was no time I visit Nigeria that I don't visit home. So I am very familiar.

You were recently installed as the Lisa of Osooro Kingdom. Let me congratulate you on behalf of the Board and Management of Ikale News. But if I may ask, what are your antecedents that recommended you for this exalted position? Why are you this passionate about Ikale tradition despite the fact that you live in the States? How will be able to carry out your cultural and royal responsibilities sir?

Thank you very much. On my predecessor. Well,



High Chief Bamidele Omosehin
Lisa Osooro of Kingdom

I hope you are aware that, unlike other chieftaincy titles conferred or bestowed upon notable individuals by Obas. Lisa, (Ligha is proper Ikale dialect), like traditional monarchs, is a family affair, and my father Omosehin was the first gazetted Lisa of Osooro kingdom, which the state recognizes. I never imagined myself as the Lisa, but you know, God grants power and position to anyone he sees fit, and when God says it's time, I couldn't say no. In terms of my passion for tradition, regardless of one's level of exposure or education, it is always responsible to know and remember one's roots. Regardless of my current height or level, I am first and foremost a proud Ikaleman. It has gone beyond passion now. It

CULTURE

***“There is nothing we can achieve to develop Ikaleland without unity”
Says, High Chief Bamidele Omosehin, The Ligha of Osooro”***



is a responsibility. By the grace of God I will not disappoint my people.

Tell us your traditional roles as the Lisa of Osooro Kingdom?

The Lisa of Osooro is the field marshal, the prime minister of Osooro Kingdom - second in command to the Rebuja of Osooro Kingdom. The traditional role of Lisa of Osooro is to promote peace and unity among the people and help in defending the land from external aggression. The Lisa is mostly described as the lion that defends the land.

But we have heard in the past cases of rivalry between the Lisa and Osooro royal fathers (other than the Rebuja) as to who is superior to the other. Some Lisa before you claimed they were next in authority to the Rebuja and that other Royal fathers in Osooro were their subordinates. This caused a lot of problems as those royal fathers never accepted that position. What is your take on this sir?

According to oral and written history, the Lisa of Osooro kingdom is known and widely referred to as the prime minister of the Osooro kingdom and, there wouldn't be a reason to start rivalry with the royal

fathers as the Lisa and the royal fathers are always in close working relationship towards the development of the kingdom. A good student of Osooro history will easily confirm that.

I cannot but ask this sir; rumours were rife that you worked for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in the last presidential election and that the foundation you set up was targeted towards the actualization of the presidential dream of the incumbent Nigerian President believed to be a very good friend of yours.

Well I don't know where that is coming from, but if it will interest you to know, I work for the best interests of the country at the moment. Let me just leave at that.

And talking about the Bamidele Omosehin Foundation and the Bamidele Omosehin Unity Cup, what are the objectives? Is politics the motivation? Who are the beneficiaries of the initiatives?

As a humanitarian, my happiest moment has always been when I am able to help others, no matter how small, that informed my decision to open the Bamidele Omosehin Foundation, to enable me coordinate and respond adequately to

the need of disadvantaged members of our community. The objective behind the Unity cup was first to unite all our people, as you know that if there was ever a time to be united as people is now. Secondly to immortalise my late father, so in the real sense the football competition is played to remember the legacies of Pa Omosehin, my late father and there was no political undertone to it.

How would you use your position as the Lisa of Osooro to contribute to bringing back the unity of Osooro Kingdom and by extension, Ikaleland?

Leadership position is a trust and a responsibility for collective development and growth, throughout my life, I have personally or through my foundation worked for the growth and unity Ikaleland and Osooro kingdom in general, becoming the Lisa would mean more challenge and responsibilities to do more.

The Foundation is a first step. More projects and ideas are under way. We cannot progress as a people without being united.

Tell us your view about intra-ikale marriage. How do you think this can affect the preservation of our cultural heritage?

Marriage is one of the oldest method of sustainable and building relationships, and intra-Ikale marriage would no doubt help maintain our heritage and culture. Of course, every culture is dynamic. It is left for the people to preserve the good side of their cultures always. We need to work on this in the area of marriage. Not exactly intra-ikale marriage as you said but in terms of preserving the way Ikale people do marriage. In Yorubaland, unnecessary modernity is polluting Yoruba culture of marriage.

Who are your role models?

I have a lot of role model but the biggest among them was my father. From him, I learnt that the greatest virtue that made me who I am today, the virtue of hard work and integrity.

What advise do you have for Ikale youths?

My advise to the Ikale Youths is to believe in themselves and know that no one except they themselves can stop them. Youths should shun criminality and uphold good virtues of hard work, honesty and integrity in whatever work or thing they find themselves doing.

Thank you very much for this warm interview sir.

You are most welcome.

THE UKOTO OMA IKALE COLUMN

“I believe that life should be dedicated for service to humanity”

- Says **FROF. DAYO FADUYILE**

The rebranding of your community newspaper, arguably the Number One Community Newspaper in Nigeria, continues with this addition: “Ukoto Oma Ikale Column”. It is meant to showcase any outstanding Ikale son or daughter who epitomizes the virtues of Ikale (Omoluabi Ikale). It is our way of celebrating our own. To kick-start the column is the humble distinguished professor of pathology and special adviser to the Ondo State Governor, Dr. Dayo Faduyile. Our tireless Executive Editor, Ibikunle Iku Yinminu hooked him up in Akure to generate the following interesting interview:



The name Prof. Dayo Faduyile, no doubt, is a recurring decimal in the Ondo State's political equation. But then, the starting point for this interview will be to ask you to tell us a little about yourself for the benefit of some of our readers who may not be very familiar with you.

Thank you very much. I am Prof. Francis Adedayo Faduyile. I am the first son of the Abodi of Ikale Land, Oba George Babatunde Faduyile. And also the son of Olori Grace Olabode Faduyile of Igbolomii in Ilaje Local Government. I had my education in Ondo and I proceeded to study Medicine at the University of Lagos. I did my housemanship at Ade Oyo Hospital in Ibadan. I did my NYSC in Kaduna State and I started work back in Ondo State in 1999 as a medical officer.

Again, I went for further studies to become a consultant pathologist at LUTH where I had my first degree and I became a consultant pathologist in 2007, and I have since been working with the Lagos State University as a Lecturer and I got promoted up to the zenith to become a Professor of Pathology in the year 2020. And I am married to Grace Oluranti Faduyile and we have four children. I had taken political positions generally when I started work as a Doctor in Ondo State. I am not talking about the one I had when I was a student.

But as a Doctor, I was the secretary of NMA in Ondo State between 1999 and 2000. In my residency, I was also a social secretary to LUTHRD, and I later became the President of LUTHRD in 2006. I was also National Publicity Secretary of the National Association of Resident Doctors in 2005. And when I got to LASUTH, I was the Vice Chairman of the Medical and Dental

Consultants Association, LASUTH Branch. Later, I became the Chairman of that branch. I was also elected in 2012 as the Chairman of the Nigerian Medical Association, Lagos State Chapter. Lagos is a state and a zone too. It accommodates over a third of all the doctors in this country. So I was their Chairman between 2012 and 2014. And subsequently, I contested for the national position of the Nigerian Medical Association as their President and in 2018, I was the President through 2020. And after that, I had appointment with the Governor of Ondo State, Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, CON, Supreme Commander of Amotekun as his Special Adviser on Health. I have had some degrees which include MBBS (1996), Fellow of Medical College of Pathology (2007); I have an MBA obtained at FUTA in 2004. Also to my credit is a Master of Science in Cell Biology and Genetics (2006). I have a Diploma in Forensic and Identification in 2011. I was also awarded a Doctor of Medicine by the National Post-Graduate Medical College. I guess that is detailed enough.

You grew up as a son of a stern Principal, and now as an adult, you are a Prince from the source. What changes have you noticed in HRM the Abodi of Ikale Land?

Well, I must tell you that until recently, I haven't been, I mean it has been difficult for me to change my view of interaction with the Abodi. I have always seen him as my Principal. Throughout my secondary school, he was my Principal. It was an interaction in which what happens in Rome, let it remain in Rome. When you are in school, you are dealing with him as your Principal. When you are at home, he deals with you as the father. And coincidentally, my dad and my mum were principals. Both of them retired as school principals. So it is imperative for me to say that Abodi had hitherto been very, very strict. He is a disciplinarian to a fault. He sticks to all his words. And any student who passed through him can attest to his high level of discipline. Both in school and at home, you must behave very well. But now that he is a King, I think he is ageing too.

When you have seen life beyond the way you see, it is imperative that you relax a little. He has relaxed but it is not very significant. He still maintains his principles. But when we were younger, may be we were rascally, he used to wipe us, give us a lot of cains. But now, may be as a king, he cannot cain anybody. And he has also relaxed on the punishment he usually gave at that time. So when I see young boys and girls around him misbehaving, quote and unquote, I have a reminiscence of those old days when you dared not do that. He would just warn you and go. But I think I still

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enjoy his goodwill everywhere I go because they hold him in a very high esteem. And amongst his peers as Oba, I also notice that he is popular among them as a very straight forward, firm man who stands by his words.

And talking about your mum, the Olori, she is a consummate Catholic. How does she combine isese with Catholicism?

Well, Olori is another interesting fellow. I think she is my first love. I had a lot of love from her while growing up. And she has consistently shown love to me up till now. As a Catholic, she has imbibed a lot of Godliness in the children, to pray very often, to lead us to prayer sessions, and again it is like a very major change by the time the couple, I mean Kabiesi and Olori have decided to come and take the traditional throne because Kabiesi was a staunch Catholic Choir Master who has been deeply involved in Catholicism. And they have to see them in another way - in the traditional institution. But I have the belief that many of those things that we speak against at the traditional level are not that as it were. If I believe that Jesus is Lord and I sit down with some people, it doesn't change my belief. Olori performs her roles to support Kabiesi and still goes to church. Olori is a comunicant and she participates actively in the catholic church and catholic events.

Will you describe yourself as a political activist or a politician?

Well, I don't know your level of definition of being a politician or an activist. But I want to say that I have one major thing that in the course of my professional duty that i hate people to call me, and if you go to the gathering of pathologists or gathering of Medical Doctors, whenever they see me, the first thing they will talk about is, Ah! politics.

Even when I was getting my promotion from my level of activity as a professional, a lot of people were surprised that I could get promotion to become a Professor, because they have seen me as an embodiment of politics. And the question I always pose to them is that, look, is there anything you are doing in terms of our profession, in terms of the activities, lecturing that I am not doing as much as you do? And the answer is NO. I do everything that every person who is a pathologist, who is an academic does. But I have been seen and labelled as a politician. I think my politics is a little bit different from the career politicians or the activists called politicians. I will fight for you and I can leave everything I do to fight for a course of someone who is being oppressed. In fact, when I was in the university, one of my room mates, we had an information that we should go and do something.

(Cuts in) Prof., this is exactly what I am saying. It goes a long way to say that political activism is different from competitive partisan politics.

Yes, that is where I am going. So the young man told me, Francis, they said we are asked to do this thing. I was taking it with lackadaisical interest but he came back and asked me what was wrong with me. He told me if it were to be

for other people, I would have started fighting and ensuring that this and that is done. Now it is your own and why are you sitting down? I said I would go and do it. And that is the activism I see in myself. I fight for the rights of people. I've been in places that they have accused people wrongly and I have stuck up my neck to show them that look, forget it, I can stand for you. But in competitive politics, I have contested because I believe the only way we can improve the life of people is being part of those who make the policy. And politics gives you the opportunity to make policies. As an individual, I can touch the life of one or two people. But as a politician, I can touch the lives of a community, of a state, of a larger group of people. So I believe it is my activism, it is my restlessness, coming to help the society that has put me on line in competitive politics. I had contested for House of Assembly in Okitipupa Constituency 1 under ACN in 2010-2011. I was on the ballot. Of course, I did not win. Labour Party won all the seats then. And in 2015, I contested for House of Representatives but I didn't clinch that ticket in the party primaries. And in the last election, I contested with the incumbent Governor for the governorship of the state, until the party leadership met me that we should have a way in which I aligned my interest with the current governor. So I have been into competitive politics, but it is really based on radical change and departure from business as usual.

So that is to say you are both an activist and a politician

I think so.

Aside from that, what were your legacies as President of the Nigerian Medical Association?

Thank you very much. When I became President of NMA, everybody in this country knows that there is so much uneasiness within the health sector. There were strikes upon strikes and there was unhealthy rivalry among the medical professionals. The nurses are fighting against doctors. The pharmacists are fighting against doctors.

Everybody is just fighting. And I believe that if everyone of us keeps fighting, like things fall apart, the center cannot hold. And the first thing i did was to bring all the other parts, meet them. And I can tell you it was a difficult task. But at the end, within the two -year tenure that I had, I was able to bring the workers back into the fold to have good relationships with doctors. I was able to bring the pharmacists back and this culminated into when we had COVID. But COVID came at the tail end of my tenure. And the three of us worked harmoniously together. And by that time, and up till now, we have had very less friction among these three medical professional groups. I inherited a 25-year-old legal

tussle on the NMA land which Babangida gave us in 1985 and the land is in the Central Business District of Abuja, FCT. We had a legal tussle and NMA had been found guilty at the high court and we had been fined to pay 300million naira to that contractor and that is a percentage of payment that increases the interest that was in-built in that.

And that time I took over, we had appealed to the Court of Appeal. But in my own belief, in front of my people, I told them that if we go to the appeal, either we win or we did not win, we would still go to the Supreme Court. And it would take nothing less than 10 to 15 years before we can resolve it. We decided to opt for the alternative dispute resolution. And lo and behold, within the two years that I stayed, I was able to interact with our judgement-creditor and we were able to bring the case out of court.

And instead of paying 300million naira the court had awarded in his favour, we paid 70million naira. And apart from that, I was able to make our doctors all over the country to contribute #20,000 per those less than 10 years post-qualifications and #40,000 per those more than 10 years post-qualification. And that gave us up to #1.2b that we raised. And I can tell you we laid the foundation of our new secretariat. And that secretariat is being built as we are talking. Again, we had the opportunity of interacting with the President and Commander in Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at that time. Just before I came in, the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria had not been constituted for upward of 3 to 5 years. And the Council of the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria is the one regulating clinical practices and what did I do? I made concerted efforts to meet the President. Meanwhile, my predecessor,



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in his 2-year tenure, never had the opportunity to see the President. And for my own 2-year tenure, I was able to have two courtesy visits with Mr. President. And the first one came barely three months after I came on board, and within five months that I got to the office, the Governing Council of the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria was set up. And from there, we have proper regulation of the Medical and Dental Practitioners in this country. Again, for the first time in Nigeria, the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) invited the NMA President to come and ring the bell. That was a major achievement, major way in which we have been recognized. We rang the bell at the stock exchange.

And that was the first time we were able to have very constant interaction with the government and during the COVID era that, NMA partnered actively with the government and together we were able to curtail the spread of that disease and made it not to affect a lot of our country-men. So these are things I can easily say I achieved in my tenure.

Why did you choose Pathology as your primary field?

Well, the stigma with pathologists is tough. Everybody thinks that as the doctor of the dead, nobody wants to relate with you. And sincerely too, I take it as a call from God. I chose Pathology because it was a call from God as I know most Doctors do not want to have anything to do with a Psychologist. But I guess I love pathology because it looks as if that is the scientific part of the medical practice.

As a surgeon, once you know it, you can always do anything. As a physician, it is more of apprenticeship. For Pathologists, we go to the details. And you can determine from first principle how the process of that disease starts, how it got to this presentation, and how it gets to and determines the prognosis. So it is a course that is all-encompassing. Pathology is the bedrock of medical practice. A pathologist will discuss with a gynaecologist as if he has full knowledge of gynaecology. He will discuss with an orthopedist surgeon. He will discuss with a paediatrician. He will discuss with every part of the specialty in medicine. And he is a totally consummate Medical Doctor. And I think I love it.

Our readers out there are interested in knowing what Primary Health Care is all about. Prof., what is it?

Primary Health Care is the basis of the care of health. You see, a lot of us have a wrong impression about health. The wrong impression we have about health is that you get sick, you go to the hospital, they treat you and you are healthy. And that is health. No. Health goes beyond being sick. Provision of good water, portable water has the effect on health. Good food, that is agriculture, has effects on health. Accommodation (housing) has effects on health. Health education has effects on health. So it is the primary health care that covers all these little, little parts as well as preventing medicine that makes it a primary health care which is at the basis.

The Primary Health Care also takes care of immunization. It takes care of health education, how you keep proper hygiene, how you take care of the human waist, how you take care of your environment. And that is where the bedrock of good health is. And that is one area that the government of Nigeria is not paying proper attention to because the primary health care is at the level of the local government and a lot of local government leaders are not.

(Cuts in) Yes, we remember it was Prof. Olikoye Ransome Kuti that came up with the initiative during the Babangida Regime then and it was working. Why is it that the process is in shambles today?

Well, it is in shambles because we have changed our orientation. Our politicians came and they believe they have what they could do was to build up gigantic projects, build up big hospitals, buy big machineries and boost and commission those places and they take up the accolades.

Meanwhile, at the primary health care, you need a lot of small small utensils, you need a lot of people who go to the villages and the communities to inform them on how to do things. You need to make sure that you have good roads. You need to make sure that you have portable waters. And

“Health education has effects on health”

these are intangible things which you cannot easily access. But the politicians love only things that you can see. Oh! I have built one 10 kilometer road. You make noise about it. Meanwhile, you can do this thing. So we have shifted our interest and we are more of people who are doing house dressing. And that is what makes primary health care centers to have largely collapsed.

Again, we are talking about personnel. During Olikoye Ransome Kuti, we had what we call rural posting allowance. And this is to encourage people to go to those places to have extra money to keep them there.

Unfortunately, we have relegated that rural posting and everybody loves to be in the urban area. For obvious reasons, even if you want to be in the rural area, how are you sure that your children, your wards can have good schools to go to? How are you sure you can have portable water to drink? What type of housing will you get at this level? These are things we need to put in place as we are going at primary health care. But largely, go to the primary health care, just see one room being opened, Bush occupying the entire place. So, it is

the reason of our misplaced priority that has caused the collapse of primary health care.

And it is also coming gradually into the secondary health care which are our general hospitals. Because all what the governments in place now are doing, look at the teaching hospitals saying they have bought multi-billion naira equipments and doing this and doing that which serves a very small fraction of the population and it is the primary health care management that will take care of a larger number of people and the money you need for that is just very small compared to when you are using a huge amount to purchase for few people in the urban area.

And in a relative development, Prof., elsewhere health insurance works but it doesn't work in Nigeria. Why?

Well, I will want to disagree with you that it is not working in Nigeria. It is working. What has happened is that a lot of

(Cuts in) Let me say it works but not as efficacious as it is in other countries.

I agree with you in that respect. And the major reason why we are having problems with health insurance in this country is the orientation of our people. Number one, as you are, as we are, there is nobody who keeps a certain amount that, okay, this five thousand naira, let me be keeping it there till I fall sick, that I will go and take that money.

Nobody does that. What it means is that when sickness comes, it is the money that is with you that you will go and start looking for where to seek help. And this has caused a lot of mortality death. The basis, the reason behind health insurance is that you contribute small amount and you have that large pool of money and you can use that large pool of money to treat our individual selves. But the question that we ask many of us is that we have paid this amount of money and have not been sick; so can I go and collect my money back? That is the psyche that many of our people have. But the unfortunate thing they don't know is that the fact that you have put that small amount of money does not mean that when you are sick, you will rely on that small amount of money.

You will take much more than that?

So we need a lot to educate our people. The second level are the organizers. Those who organize it or those who superintend the health insurance, many of them are not faithful. When they have a large pool of money, they have this sense of belonging that this money is big and that they can put hands in it and mismanage it.

And they tend to forget that it is the cumulative around that money that is revolving. Thirdly is that we are not truthful to ourselves. The fact that we have health insurance does not mean that when you are not sick, you will just come to the hospital and say Doctor, just give me this, just give me that. And you will just go and keep it at home. So, many times, people just come and take

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drugs that they do not need. And that one puts a lot of pressure on that pool of fund. But importantly, in Ondo State, for instance, we have a robust contributory health insurance in which by the grace of God, the Governor of Ondo State has given me that opportunity to superintend in the state. And we have a fantastic Director General of the health insurance. And what has happened is that we had taken the vulnerable group; we have gone to enrol all the civil servants in Ondo State under the origin. And today, those that have enrolled under the Ondo State Comprehensive Health Insurance today, the Contributory Health Insurance today is over 113, 000 people, unlike the national health insurance that has been in place for over 15 years and in Ondo State, they are still less than 15,000 to 20, 000. So you can see the giant lead. And we are gradually moving to the crunches which is to affect the artisans, the banana sellers, the welders, the bricklayers, etc, so that we can bring them to the pool. And the success story we record day by day is giving us a lot of confidence that we can do very well. So I can tell you a good example of a successful health insurance is in Ondo State.

Ok, let us look at the Akeredolu Administration in the state. How would you objectively assess the performance of Arakunrin? You have been able to itemize some of his laudable achievements in the health sector, but we still want you to rate Aketi sector-by-sector and what he has been able to do for our people in Ikaledland.

Well, you are putting so many things together. You are saying sector by sector and you are also saying in Ikaledland. Let's first talk about sector by sector.

Go ahead, sir.

I want to say that every government in Nigeria, in the past four, five years, faced some hardships. The first was COVID that brought the world into its kneel. And it took about two years. And as we were coming out from the COVID Pandemic, we got involved in Russia and Ukraine war that also caused a lot of economic downturn. So for what we have seen, it makes the resources available to government to be low. But I can tell you, Akeredolu in education has done very well. Why do I say so? If you have seen any of the competitive programmes, quiz, debates, mathematics competition, Ondo State usually comes first three. It's first, second or third nationally. So it shows that our educational system is doing well. However, you may see some shortfalls, but Aketi is doing well. Mr. Talk and Do is doing excellently well in education.

(Cuts in) And you do not think it is the cumulative effects of the efforts of past administrations that is responsible for the wins?

Certainly it can. But Aketi has been there for about seven years. So if he had made it worse, it wouldn't have gotten to that extent. But it means that he is either doing something that is good or he is improving on it. Because he has stayed for a larger for a larger period, that is

seven years now. So, I'm not saying that those who were before him did not do, but the truth is that when those people were there, were they able to those accolades? The answer is NO. Good for you as a journalist, you can inquire and research on that. Secondly, if you go on construction,

if you go to construction, I think after a long period, after Agagu, I think this is the state governor that we have had that has done this construction road massively in Ondo State. The facts are there. Unfortunately, I don't have at my fingertips the mileage that we have covered. It is monumental and I can tell you Akeredolu has done so much in terms of infrastructural development. SUBEB under Arakunrin has built a lot of primary schools, provided a lot of equipments, chairs and tables in our primary schools. OK? And that is in education and infrastructure.

You should not forget that the first overhead bridge

well. In sports, you know are a time our football team was almost relegated, but it has had life and we are doing well now. We are still in Division One. At a time, we actually participated in the West African Football this thing. We have had some good athletes that came from condo State and they are doing very well. One of these wrestlers from Ondo State grew up here and was picked up here. So in Sports, we are doing well. In rural development, there have been a lot of openings of our rural roads and I can tell you also in agriculture, we have a

(Cuts in) Prof., talking about appointments and patronages, how have we benefitted in Ikaledland?

Now you are coined down to Ikaledland. I think in terms of Ikaledland, we may not have seen a lot of or massive jobs and I have told you it is because we had a contracted economy. If you want to do business as usual, then the government will not



in Ondo State was constructed by this current Governor and another one is coming up in Akure here. And these are life-changing events that we have seen. Our Primary Health Care Development Agency has a lot of awards that we have received. If you want the details, I can ask them to write them out for you. We have recorded the best in vaccination as we have a good percentage in coverage. These are some of the things that were achieved during the Akeredolu's administration. Again, our cultural group in the last Arts and Culture in Lagos came third and first in one and another competitions.

That means in culture and tourism, we have done

be able to meet up with its obligation. The Governor has decided to keep a lean government. He may have set up a lot of agencies, a lot of boards, but I think massive fending, but there are so many great things we have seen in Ikaledland since Governor Akeredolu came in. If you remember, the only state higher institution in Okitipupa was almost in ruin by the time Mr. Governor came in, but today, it's a bubbling place. The Okitipupa/Irele bridge was almost abandoned, taken over by the Oluwa River. But he came and fixed it. And these are projects that we can see, visible ones. There are other things that are in the offing, like the Araromi seaside

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tourism center. There is a large number of well detailed plan in place that is being followed up, and it is also this government that was able to successfully have the approval for the building of Ondo Port and the process of starting Ondo Port is in place. And so, these are some of the things that Mr. Governor has done in our area. Even before Mr. Governor came, our OOPC was moribund. You could actually cut planks and timbers in the plant plantation, but today, he is finding ways of making that place to function and yield some results for our people. These are some of the things Mr. Governor has done to Ikaleland.

You are believed to be one of our very best in Ikaleland. Critics of the administration believe that given your intimidating CV, you should have been considered for a commissionership instead of being made a Special Adviser.

It is not the office that made the man, it is the man that made the office.

In other words, you are more than contented with the current office.

Yes. It is a call to service. It is not the size that matters but what you do with that position. My calling is to serve humanity.

We hear rumours that you are warming up for the governorship of the state but we only deem it fit to hear from the horse's mouth.

Yes. I told you that I contested in 2020. If this one coming is the rumour of which you hear, it is true. If I have been asked to step down and I did step down for Mr. Governor, then it goes to say that when it comes thereafter, I have special interest to come out. Certainly, I will come out.

If you were to be governor of Ondo State, what would you do differently?

There are so many things I would do differently.

You can begin to itemize some of them.

And I do not want to be too elaborate because my manifesto will soon be out. But importantly, we are in a generation that we cannot continue to do business as usual. One of the major things we have in Ondo State that is affecting the good people of Ondo State is employment. And employment is largely on the youths. We have so many of our youths that are either unemployed or underemployed. We have so many of them because the adage says an idle mind is the devil's workshop. We have so many of them who have opted into some bad behaviours like Yahoo, internet crimes, but I must tell you, anybody who goes into counterfeiting, anybody who goes into internet crimes are no dullards. They are sharp people.

The only thing we need to do is to help them to move them from that negative pathways to positive pathways. The first thing I have to tell you is that do you know that phones and laptops today are things that will not likely get off in the next five to ten years? We will continue to use them. And do you know that even assembling laptops and phones, we rarely have them in Nigeria? Meanwhile, we

go to places like China, Japan, you see small small technical knowledge where the teaching is to acquire skill. Ondo State, precisely Ilaje area, has sands that can produce the first sheet glass in the entire south west, that is Oluwa Glass, and the hardware of our phones and computers is made from silica. So if we can follow the current technology, we can make silica and produce the hardware of phones and computer laptops and we have a lot of people.

All we just need is to bring some of these expatriates to come and give us skill acquisition, not a certificate or an academic-oriented certification where you learn the skill of how to make that hardware. When you remove your phone, you just see some dot, dot, dot in a place so to speak and that place will have what we can use to get a lot of people to do it. And we can start putting a lot of phones, putting a lot of computers. We will never run dry. There is nothing stopping us from having an institute that will take care of our riverine area because we have so many things we can get from that. We can put our youths to be doing computing, to be doing softwares and to be working on that because it is the brain you use to hack into any software that you use to create your own software start. Again, looking at our civil service, we have been doing the same thing, passing files upon files.

But COVID changed how the world behaved and interacted. Up till the period of COVID, Today, we can do a management meeting with members in different parts of the world and you can sit down and hear yourselves, read that on time and you discuss easily. So who says you cannot bring it into the civil service? Who says that our civil service cannot be that sharp? Where you want to do this thing, you press it. Everybody can sit down anywhere and we can get a report of an action as soon as possible.

Let's talk about the Faduyile Foundation, what is the objective of the foundation?

Well, that foundation is a little bit different from the normal foundation you see where people pump money and they do something because of their interest, their pecuniary interest in a short while. It is a foundation that we are looking on to help manage the top process of people and get them to better themselves. One of the things that we have done in concert with the Abodi Ikale sponsorship was that we harnessed students at the level of JSS and we trained them through SSS and we trained them in the universities. We have done that in couple years. In fact, one day, I was at the airport and a young man came to prostrate and he greeted me.

I said I didn't know him and he said yes I didn't know him. He said he was one of those beneficiaries. He said he finished from the University of Benin and I think he was travelling out of the country that day. He was full of praises, he was full of thanks. Again, we want to help people to understand that there is dignity in labour. The view of many young people today is that we want to cut cost and make it at all cost. And I will always let them know that it is better for you to have that dignity and be contented with whatever we have.

We have ventured into some medical treatments at a time in concert with this optamologist group in

Ilese. We have brought them, a lot of people in Okitipupa Local Government, Irele Local Government, have enjoyed the free glasses and free surgery we have done and I have been participating with a lot of my people in my club, the Ikale Young Elites Club in football competitions and also quiz competitions for our secondary school students. What we want to do is to bring a new set of people that we want to look into the future and be happy for whatever they want to do, make endsmeat and make the society a better place.

How do you unwind after a typical day's job?

I love staying with friends and a lot of people see me as a very serious fellow. But when they see me where I unwind, they marvel. I'm a very jovial, jolly good friend. I enjoy being with friends, talking, chatting and generally being who I am.

On a final note, your message to the people of Ikaleland especially as the next governorship election is around the corner.

Well, my message to Ikaleland and Ondo state generally, because the paper, with the newspaper tabloids, will go round, even outside the country, my advice to our people is that not all that glitters is gold. Everybody will come and say I can do this or that. Let us know their antecedents. If I know who you are five, ten years ago, I can say full well what you can do.

There is no way you can suddenly be an angel when you have been a person who is a pain in the eye of the people. And we have a lot of them coming out, showing that they love the people. We have some people who do not have good manners, who are now claiming they are the best people. Let us look for people with good strategies. I have been a publicity secretary of NMA, as President of ARD, as national PRO, as Chairman of Medical and Dental Council Consultants Association of Nigeria, as Chairman of the Nigerian Medical Association, Lagos, as National President of Nigerian Medical Association, as Special Adviser on Health to the Governor of Ondo State. Go and look at that record, you can see that we have sterling quality of delivery. We have some people who you want to ask what is the he known for in terms of business.

We have some people who only lay claim to be in politics that nothing else they can do. To these people, when you ask them to go back to their primary jobs, they are bound to be at sea. Let us be careful in our choice. Let us look well. And I can tell you, if I become the Governor of this state, I will change the lot in the state fast and it will be better.

And above all, Ondo State will have the benefit of improved health and improved education because I came from those two places as a Professor in the University and as a Consultant Pathologist who is in the health profession with my administrative acumen that I have over the years.

We want to appreciate you for this very warm interview sir.

It's my pleasure.
(ends)



BUSINESS MEETING

(Powered by: Senator Jimoh Ibrahim/Aseyori and Ikale News)

As part of efforts to make the Founder's Day of Igbotako more result-oriented, the concept of Business Meeting is being introduced to precede the celebrations, for the first time this year.

The maiden Business Meeting will hold this year on Monday December 25, 2023 at Igbotako Town Hall from 2pm to 5pm.

Target audience: Youths, artisans and small business owners.

Objectives:

1. To discuss and proffer solutions to challenges facing the development of Igbotako Community generally.
2. To redirect and support youths towards entrepreneurship
3. To seek ways of promoting existing small and business enterprises in Igbotako
4. To establish and constitute an Exco for IGBOTAKO SMALL & MEDIUM ENTREPRENEURS FORUM (ISMEF).

Chairman/Lead Speaker;
Mr. Nimbe Ayenuyo (NIBECO)

Panelists

1. Mr. Femi Ogunje
2. Mr. Femi Akinmosin
3. Deacon Goke Owamoboye
4. Engnr Felix Ayejunikanwa
5. Dr. Paul Akintelure
6. Dr. Yomi Omogbehin (Longman)
7. DCP Olubode Ojajuni
8. Mr. Felix Odofin
9. Dr. Foluke O. Ayodele
10. Mrs Dolapo Ayenuro
11. Dr Bolu John Folayan

Guest of Honour:
Oloja Sunday Adejuwon

Chairman Utako Day 2023

To register, contact Felix Odofin on 08082245488, 09039093801

e-signed:
Dr Bolu John Folayan
Coordinator
Utako Day 2023 Business Meeting

Powered by



&



Senator Jimoh Ibrahim

And Other Well-meaning
Igbotako Sons And Daughters

FEATURE

“If Ondo People want me as Governor, I will run” – Jimoh Ibrahim (Culled from ThisDay Newspaper)

The Senator representing Ondo South Senatorial District, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim, in this interview on the sidelines of the just concluded IMF/World Bank Annual meetings in Marrakech, Morocco, reiterated the need for the Bola Tinubu-led administration to consider taking more debt in order to fix the ailing economy. Obinna Chima provides the excerpts:

During screening of Olayemi Cardoso as Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria by the Senate, you said Nigeria shouldn't be afraid of debt and you cited countries with huge debts that seem to be doing very well. What informed the position you canvassed given that the country is presently faced with a debt crisis?

Let me be honest with you, in Nigeria, the variables are weak. Debt ratio to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 30 per cent; cashflow to GDP – 1.3 per cent, worst in the world. So, our GDP is about \$420 billion, but the cash available for President Bola Tinubu to spend when he came in was 1.3 per cent of the GDP. Is that enough a country forward? Then debt service ratio to GDP is 93 per cent. So, for a 100 per cent income you make, 93 per cent go into debt service and you have just seven per cent left.

You have capital projects; you are recurrent expenditure, we are in contemporary times and there are innovations, Artificial Intelligence and so many things you are expected to do with just seven per cent of your income and it is impossible. You can see very clearly that the economy will not move forward. Now, the only way you can move the economy forward is by taxing the people more, because tax ratio to GDP is 18 per cent, meaning that there is room to tax more people. But the economic power of the people you want to tax is poor, so how do you tax them? So, what can you do since you cannot tax? If you do Ways and Means by printing money, you weaken your currency. So, what can you do again? You can only borrow.

The only thing left for Nigeria is to borrow and from the economic indices, you will see that you can still borrow because your GDP to debt ratio is 30 per cent, meaning you still have 70 per cent opportunity to borrow. But lenders are not willing to lend the country money because its repayment ratio is poor. That is because at 93 per cent, you have only seven per cent chance of paying back. I won't lend you money if I am a borrower because the chances of your repayment is just seven per cent out of 100 per cent.

But we can run around it by talking to our



Billionaire business mogul and Senator representing Ondo South Senatorial District, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim CFR, Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio and others at the senate today, Monday, 6th November, 2023

friends and making them know that the reason for borrowing the money is to improve our economy and that when the economy rebounds, we can repay them. One of the things I suggested was that we should borrow in a large basket. You are in a small basket and so you are constrained. Expand your basket of borrowing to about \$150 billion and then pay off your \$70 billion. That means you can get a 30 per cent rebate if you are paying the creditors today.

Allow direct disbursement from him to you, so that you can get 30 per cent discount; get a 10-year moratorium period for the entire large basket that you are doing and come back home to find out where things are bad and fix the economy and things would be fine.

Again, what is the debt profile people are shouting about? You heard from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that the debt ratio to the global GDP is 235 per cent. So, the world has even over-borrowed by 135 per cent of its assets. That is why economies are growing sluggishly. So, why are people complaining that Nigeria has so much debts? The United Arab Emirates is just 11 million

people, three million indigenous and they are owing \$168 billion and they are repaying \$20 billion every year, and they have never defaulted. They have developed the place, the economy is open, regulation is reduced, people are doing business and people are avoiding your country and taking their businesses there.

That is why today they can decide to ban some countries from entering their country. Look, with globalisation, things are not supposed to be easy and Nigeria must move very fast. If you don't want to borrow, how will you run the economy?

If the government eventually decide to take your advice and borrow, what are the areas you thing the funds should be applied to for maximum impact and for the fund to be able to generate income and make repayment easy?

Invest it on your infrastructure, information technology (IT) and make sure that the economy is open for business, so that you can attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from other countries. People should get your visa easy and if they get into the country, there must be infrastructure – rail and road transportation and

FEATURE

security, to enable them to do their business and go back. You have fertile ground for agriculture. The United States imports onions of about \$100 billion yearly, from India. We can ten times of that. We also need laboratory for farmers to be able to test their produce to be exported.

Now, agricultural produce from Nigeria are taken to Ghana for laboratory test, before they are exported. Is that not complete madness? So, you can work on IT, innovation and infrastructure. Lastly, we have 11,886 federal government's abandoned mega projects in Nigeria. Three of those projects are more than 60 per cent of Nigeria's debts – Ajaokuta is \$6 billion spent; Sure-P – \$4.5 billion spent, and Second Niger bridge- \$5.5 billion spent. Add them together, you will see that it is more than 60 per cent. Then there is 11,882 left that you not touched. In, my PhD thesis, I looked at 20 successful projects and 20 failed projects and I did statistical analysis to find out why some projects given to Julius Berger fail and why some given to same company succeed. My thesis has been published by Macmillan press.

To me, you cannot have that large number of abandoned projects and be borrowing money. People would want to know if you are spending the money on the abandoned projects. For example, I was at Ajaokuta for my research and honestly, to do Ajaokuta as a greenfield project, you need \$1.2 billion and to complete the existing Ajaokuta, you need \$1.8 billion.

So, you have to find out which is the best option for you. But when you do Ajaokuta, you will be able to arrest 25 per cent of your importation of iron and that helps your economy to grow. Every Nigerian wants to build a house and I estimate that there are about 350 million Nigerians and any house you build, 30 per cent of the iron is imported and that takes off about 30 per cent of your budget value. So, why are you not fixing Ajaokuta so that you don't depend on Russia for the importation of iron.

You are a top member of the ruling All Progressives Congress. Have you had time to discuss some of these ideas with the president and his cabinet members?

I am not a canvasser of knowledge that doesn't want reward for it. I am not hoarding it otherwise I won't be saying what I just told you. But what I am saying is that those who have the pain should be able to ask for solution.

I have pushed some of these ideas in the Senate where I have moved quite a number of bills. For example, I brought the bitumen development bill. If we have bitumen for example, it is an alternative to oil and that means we can just be fine as a country and you can have your forex coming in. The problem here is that forex is not coming in as expected. So, it is not as if we are not talking to policymakers, we just do it at a level where you can earn your respect.

This government has come up with wholesale reforms and it appears as if Nigerians are suffocating. Do you think that we have the buffers to carry out all these reforms at same time?

Well, it is not as if they are reforms that are too fundamental that cannot be contained. The challenge is that the present government did not inform Nigerians in absolute terms, what they met on ground, so that if you are doing assessment, you will know who to blame and when you are assess this government, you will know what to benchmark its achievements with. When the Bola Tinubu government came, GDP to current account was completely deficit and during President Goodluck Jonathan it was positive. President Muhammadu Buhari gave a deficit of N16 billion GDP to current account.

That was just in the first year when he came in. you can imagine that he spent eight years in damaging the economy. So, when Tinubu came in as a new government, we are not saying criticise Buhari, but publish all the metrics let Nigerians know where we are and that is the job of the Minister of Finance is to publish the metrics to Nigerians let us know where we are. Bola Tinubu means well to Nigerians, he wants to do a lot, but at same time he doesn't want to wound the Buhari's administration.

That is where the conflict is. It is important to tell Nigerians what was handed over to you. He got a handover note from Buhari, he should publish the summary let Nigerians know the state of affairs, so that people would understand the background to the ongoing reforms and then they can know that the pain can be in the long-run or in the short-run. I think lack of information is the challenge. When people don't have adequate information, no matter how good your intentions are, it can be misinterpreted.

Do you have plans to contest the Ondo State governorship election next year?

I am available if Ondo State people want me. But I am not going to do a do or die politics. If I put myself forward, if they want me, they would vote for me and I will help to put things in normal shape. But, if for any reason they don't want me, I will be very glad because it would be a fantastic opportunity for me to enjoy my retirement and I will return to Cambridge to continue supervising my PhD students.

Are you going to contest the primary election?

If I am currently a Senator from the south, that means I am the political leader from the south and if you throw political groundnut around, you should know where the probability is. There are high chances, but I have not made up my mind. I have told the governor and I have enlisted his consent; I am going to tell the President and other stakeholders in my State. If any of them advise me not, I will accept it. I don't really have to kill myself about it because God has been so kind to me. That is why I said I will not do a do or die politics. If they see my credentials and feel this Oxford-Harvard-Cambridge trained would be better, that's fine, but I don't need to make myself a nuisance to anybody because I want to be a governor.



IKALE KIDS

Moonlight Games

Hello children, how are you and everyone? Hope you enjoyed your holiday, you are back in school now hope you are enjoying your new class and meeting new friends. Make sure you stay focused and determined, to go higher in your grade from the on-set. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy they say. Happy independence to you all. I also greet Ikale children in the diaspora – UK, Germany, United States, Canada, African countries etc. I urge Ikale parents to use the opportunity provided by *Ikale News* and this column to get their children familiar with home. East or West, home is the best. Not matter how successful you are elsewhere, it is most relevant in your roots. Don't forget home. You can even teach your Oyinbo friends the games we teach here! So, they know you are proud Ikales and proud Africans!

Today, we want to continue on our moonlight games. We shall discuss on modern ones and some of the old generations ones too. Let us start with one of the old ones:

OMO OBA KAN GESIN LO.(A PRINCE RIDING ON AN HORSE.

This game, the children will form a circle. One of them will be in the circle representing a prince while the others will be singing and clapping their hands. The person representing the prince will be moving round in the circle while they are singing and will be demonstrating what the lyrics of the song is saying.

Song : *Omo oba kan gesin lo, gesin lo, gesin lo, omo oba gesin lo, gesin loo*

O mu iyawo re kan dani, kan dani, kan dani, o mu iyawo re kan dani, kaan dani.

Awon mejeeji sowo po, so wo po, so wo po, awon mejeeji sowo po, so wo po.

Awon mejeeji mo o jo, mo o jo mo o jo. Awon mejeeji mo jo, won n mo jo..

(Parents: Please translate the song for the kids.)

As the one representing the prince move round while the others are singing and clapping, when they get to 'o mu iyawo re kan dani', he will pick a fine girl, and the two of them will be moving round to the song, when they get to awon mejeeji sowopo, sowopo. They will hold themselves, and continue moving round, when the song get to *awon mejeeji mo o jo, mo o jo*, they will be dancing.. And when they are done with the song, another set will take over, And they will go round till all have participated or if they are tired.

Advantages of the game:

It create unity and love amongst the children.

It is a form of exercise

It makes them happy

It helps them develop a listening ear.

It teaches children their local language.

Disadvantages

Some children take it personal when a boy picks a girl as wife.

Those who did not know the song may be put off and decided not to continue.

OH THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

This is one is a modern one and the Ikale kids in the cities within and outside Nigeria should love it. Children will gather and be sing the accompanying song here..marching as they sing and go round and round...

Song:

Oh the grand old Duke of York,

He has ten thousand men

He march them up, to the top of the hill

And he march them down again

And when they were up, they were up

And when they were down they were down

And when they were only half way up

They were neither up nor down.

They will march up and down and be singing as they do so.

ROSE BUD :

This one too is an old play children will find interesting. Children will gather and form a big circle, One of them will come to the middle and be singing and dancing while the others respond..

Song:

Rose bud, im a little ikale girl,

Rose bud im a little ikale girl.

Rose bud im a little ikale girl

One little ikale girl,

Eeh!! eeh!! eeh

One little

Two little

Three little ikale girls

Four little

Five little

Six little ikale girls

Seven little

Eight little

Nine little ikale girls

Ten little ikale girls.

When they finish the song another person will enter the circle and start singing. And mention another tribe or village he or she comes from. It may even be ibo, Hausa, ilaje, you just need to mention the area.

Advantages

This one keeps them happy and they interact more

It makes them to know different villages and tribes in Nigeria. For instance, for you as Ikale Kid, you it will make you know your home town...you can mention Ilutitun, Akotogbo, Ode-Irele, Igodan, Igbotako, Erekiti, Iju Odo, Ikoya and so on!

OMO OBA FAUSA :

Children will gather and sit in a circle, one of them will take something, it may be pieces of cloth, scarf or even paper, he will hide it in his hand. Will be moving round at the back of those sitted they will be responding and clapping.



Deaconess Omotayo Folayan

Lead : *Omo oba Fausa*

Response : *ki lo fi se fausa*

Lead : *Omo oba kalaba*

Response : *kilo fi se kalaba*

Lead : *oloko ku le ni o*

Response : *A o je igbado oloko*

Lead : *Oloko ku leni o*

Response : *A o je igbado oloko.*

Lead : *E ma weyin o*

Response : *weyin*

Lead : *E ma sofo*

Response : *ofofo o dara.*

When he get to e ma weyin o, he will increase his speed and be running round, he wil carefully drop what is on his hand at the back of one of them unnoticed, and continue running, if the person did not notice by the time he get back to his back he will beat the person and the person will now take turn to play. But paraventure the person noticed before he get back to him, the person will pick and be running after him and the person playing before will sit at his place. He will now start playing his turn. But he can not beat him again.

Its an interesting game. Meaning of the song in brief:

Lead : omo oba Fausa : (Princess Fausa)

Response: what did you do to princes Fausa

Lead : Princess Kalaba

Response : What did you do to princess Kalaba

Lead: The farmer has died today

Response Ha, we will eat the farmers corn

Lead: Don't look back

Response : Look back

Lead: Dont leak the secret

Response: That is a bad thing to do.

Benefits of the game.

It makes children to be smart

It makes them to be at alert especially of their environment

It makes them to keep fit.

It makes them happy and united.

It teaches them to be truthful.

Disadvantages

A child that can not endure the beating may be crying. This is common among younger ones but the older ones knows its part of the play.

They can get easily tired with the running.

This brings us to the end of our moonlight games for this edition. I hope you enjoy it. If so, try to teach your friends the games. Don't forget to drop your opinions for me in through ikalenews.com. I want to know you are enjoying what we do here.

. Till next month that i will come your way. Be good children. God bless and keep us all.

NEWS

Aiyedatiwa Impeachment: Embattled Deputy Gov apologises to Akeredolu

Ondo Assembly ignores apology, vows to proceed with Impeachment process



Lucky Aiyedatiwa

Embattled Deputy Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa has resorted to fate by apologizing to Gov Akeredolu over recent impeachment process facing him

At a media briefing in Akure the state capital, Aiyedatiwa expressed regrets that negative reports that had trailed the crisis must have caused embarrassment to the governor in the last few months.

Pledging his loyalty to the governor and commitment to the development of Ondo State, the deputy governor detached himself from any protest and calls for the Governor to resign.

Legislators in the state recently declared that they would welcome national APC officials to step in and mediate a political resolution to the impeachment process that had been started against Aiyedatiwa.

APC national leadership intervened and met with state party officials and assembly members before the parliament made its decision, according to a statement signed by Olatunji Oshati, the party's spokeswoman.

On his part Aiyedatiwa has explained the reason behind the conflict between him and his principal stating that powers jostling for the governorship in the next elections are behind his ordeal

Aiyedatiwa said political contenders preparing for next year's governorship election exploited situations in the state.

He said the Sunshine State has witnessed a series of events triggered by the health challenges faced by the governor which he noted gave rise to lots of assumptions, falsehoods, insinuations, misunderstandings, misconceptions, and exploitation by political contenders preparing for the upcoming 2024 gubernatorial election in the state.

Addressing journalists at his Alagbaka office, the deputy governor said he was saddened by the embarrassment and discomfort Governor Akeredolu faced due to the barrage of negative news in the State as a result of the events of the last few months.

He said that since Governor Akeredolu's return to the nation, he has only met with him twice and has not had the chance to adequately inform the Governor on his leadership as Acting Governor.

When discussing the lessons to be taken from the crisis, Aiyedatiwa stated that he was aware that loyalty pays off.

He stated that there could be misconceptions while working in a setting of human dynamics. He stated: "You should remain stable. Irrespective of whatever is said, the truth will prevail when you remain stable committed, and loyal. Loyalty pays."

"I tendered this reserved apology because of the embarrassment and discomforts he faces. The event has brought all kinds of negative news. He deserves the unreserved apology. I am at the centre. That is exactly what I am tendering this apology for."

"We have continued to read in the media, all sorts of lies fabricated to create crisis just for the purpose of. The recent impeachment attempt by the Election House of Assembly and the ensuing reactions have further created division and chaos, with my loyalty to Mr. Governor being questioned."

"It is, therefore, imperative for me to put on record that there has never been any issue between Mr. Governor and myself and I have never undermined him. Political actors have only taken advantage of his absence to create a non-existent crisis for their own selfish interests."

"I am profoundly grateful to Mr Governor for his intervention and role in persuading the distinguished members of Ondo State House of Assembly to embrace the political solution offered by our great party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), in the face of the impeachment move."

"It is in reference to all of the above that I tender my unreserved apologies to Mr governor for the embarrassment and discomfort that the political chaos of these past months has caused"

NEWS

him and the good people of Ondo State. However in a twist of event, the Speaker of the Ondo state House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Olamide Oladiji, has warned the embattled Aiyedatiwa that his apology to the state governor would not him from impeachment.

The Speaker claimed that the apology was a matter of private concern between Aiyedatiwa and his principal.

Due to accusations of serious misbehavior, the Ondo Assembly has begun the process of impeaching the deputy governor.

A rift between the governor and his deputy is said to be connected to the impeachment procedure.

The Speaker also said claims that the impeachment process had divided the Assembly were untrue. He said steps had already been taken to unite the lawmakers.

Meanwhile, Aiyedatiwa Lawyer Ebun Olu-

Adegboruwa (SAN) revealed on Monday that the Federal High Court in Abuja “has adjourned further proceedings till November 17” in the suit Aiyedatiwa brought to prevent his impeachment.

He claims that the court, presided over by Justice Emeka Nwite, heard lengthy arguments from the parties' attorneys over the ramifications of the Ondo State House of Assembly's appeal against the court's ongoing orders before the Court of Appeal, Abuja, which led to the adjournment.

Adegboruwa said, “At the proceedings, the plaintiff informed the court of a new development that took place after the last court proceedings of October 16, 2023, which has an effect on the jurisdiction of the court.

“It was further argued on behalf of the plaintiff

that since the reliefs being sought by the House of Assembly in its appeal involves the issue of the jurisdiction of the Federal High Court and the status of the orders granted by the court on September 25, 2023, it would be better for the court to respect the authority of the Court of Appeal, since the principles of law forbid that the high court should struggle jurisdiction with the Court of Appeal.”

He claims that in response, every defense attorney refuted the claims made by the plaintiff, arguing that the Court of Appeal had not properly entered the appeal and that the House of Assembly's appeal record had been filed outside the deadline.

“After taking arguments from all counsel to the parties, the court adjourned the case till November 17, 2023, for ruling,” Adegboruwa stated.

Gunmen Invade Oluwa Forest Reserve, Destroys Farmer settlement *By Oluwaseyi Ogunsola*



Oluwa Forest

The people of Odigbo local government were greeted with horror, as gunmen attacked and invaded the Oluwa forest reserve in Temidire.

According to statement by some of the victims who were farmers in the settlement, the gunmen allegedly attacked the cocoa plantation

The farmers also alleged that the armed men, who invaded their farms shot sporadically into the air to scare them away.

The chairman of the farmers, Abayomi Isinleye, said that one of the invaders was apprehended and handed him over to Police Area Command in Ore.

Isinleye alleged that the gunmen were sent by SAO Agro-Allied Services Limited, the company to which the state government allotted their cocoa farm to.

According to him, “Despite a court order restraining the Agro-Allied Company

from taking over the land until the determination of the suit instituted by the farmers, the firm has continued to clear the plantations.”

He recalled that the existing interim injunction which was granted by Justice Aderemi Adegoroye of Ondo State High Court sitting in Ondo, restrained all respondents in the suit, including SAO Agro-Allied Services Limited, to stop bulldozing the farmers' cocoa plantations.

The chairman said that the operator of the bulldozer, who demanded for the court ruling when confronted by the farmers, urged the farmers to contact the management of SAO Agro-Allied Services before they could leave the farmlands.

According to him some of them had to struggle with the gunmen and were able to snatch two guns, a pump action and an air rifle, and one of the armed men was apprehended and taken to police station.

PHOTO NEWS

MAMA MODEOLA AKINBO GOES HOME
Pictures at the funeral service of community leader in Ikoya,
Mrs Modeola Akinbo Nee Akarigbo on 13th - 14th October, 2023



Before The Final Journey



Eldest Daughter, Modupe and her Husband, Felix



At the wake



Funeral service



The Son-in-law, Felix & Mama's Daughter, Modupe (Middle with Omoso Club of Igbotako Members)

PHOTO NEWS

MAMA MODEOLA AKINBO GOES HOME
Pictures at the funeral service of community leader in Ikoya,
Mrs Modeola Akinbo Nee Akarigbo on 13th - 14th October, 2023



Two of Mama's Children



Demola Suzi (left) with Son-inlaw of Mama, Engr Felix Ayejunikanwa

PHOTO NEWS

MAMA MODEOLA AKINBO GOES HOME
Pictures at the funeral service of community leader in Ikoya, Mrs Modeola Akinbo Nee Akarigbo on 13th - 14th October, 2023



Church service



Church service



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
FUSION OF AYE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

AYE KINGDOM CELEBRATES
SYMBOLIC ANNUAL LAYELU DAY

Aye Kingdom is set for this year's Layelu celebrations. It is an annual event that holds every second week of November in the last thirty-nine (39) years. It is a week-long activity which culminates into the final Layelu Day providing an opportunity for the Sons and Daughters of the kingdom who have travelled from far and near to gather together and meet minds on how to develop their community.

Aye Kingdom is an agrarian community in the Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. Aye is the second-largest community after Okitipupa in the LGA. Ode-Aye, the economic and administrative centre of the kingdom is centrally located within the communities that make up the kingdom. Ode-Aye popularly referred to as the Gateway to Ikale Land is the first major town when entering into Ikale Land from Ore town.

The community which has since the commencement of the yearly Layelu celebration has embarked on some monumental developmental projects which include the Layelu Hall, the ongoing construction of the Oba's Palace, the establishment of Layelu Microfinance Bank Limited, the funding of the Aye Skill Acquisition Centre, the running of a community library, etc.

The Fusion of Aye Development Associations (FOADA), the umbrella body of all Associations and Unions in the Aye kingdom within the last year financed the grading of some township roads, engaged youths in constructive dialogue on the security of life and properties and has been involved in the educational development of some secondary school student in their preparation for their final certificate exams.

The theme of this year's celebration is 'Going Forward'. This is because Aye Kingdom has decided to go forward in developing our community even in the face of daunting

**FUSION OF AYE DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATIONS**

Motto: Unity is Strength

BANKERS:

Layelu Microfinance Bank Ltd, Ode-Aye.
UBA PLC, Ode-Aye Branch.

SECRETARIAT:

Layelu Hall, P.O. Box 1, Ode-Aye,
Ondo State.
E-mail: foadaaye@gmail.com



challenges. We are resolute in our decisions and irrespective of whatever comes our way, we have resolved to continue to develop our land, our people and our Kingdom.

As the kingdom celebrates again this year 2023, some daily activities have been lined up to showcase our musical culture. The youths will be engaged in a friendly football match final on Thursday. On Friday is an interactive session where community leaders will discuss to chart a way forward in the needed development of the community. A lecture titled 'Alternative dispute resolution as opposed to litigation' will be delivered by Barr. Felix Ogunmade at the Layelu hall, Ode-Aye.

A seminar on youth development will take place on Tuesday the 7th and a special programme for ladies and women awareness will also take place on Wednesday the 8th at the Layelu Hall. Both programmes are sponsored by Ikale Connect.

Saturday is the grand finale of the celebration at the Layelu Hall grounds, Ode-Aye. It shall be a celebration of royalty, culture and tradition of the Aye kingdom. Donations for developmental projects will also be made by the sons and daughters of the kingdom. On Sunday 12th November, there will be a thanksgiving service at the Cherubim and Seraphim Zion Church, Ode-Aye.

I wish to welcome all Sons and Daughters of Aye Kingdom to the 2023 Layelu Celebrations.

e-signed

Chief Henry Olatujoye
Asoju Oba of Ikale Land
President FOADA

ARCHIVE

“My only regret being an Ikale”

- Exclusive interview Baba Zeblon Omoranmowo granted Ikale News before his death
- “Preserve the originality of Biripo music... that is our identity”

Few years ago, Biripo Music legend, Pa Zeblon Omoranmowo, arguably the greatest biripo musician Ikale produced passed on. or sixty years, he bestrode the traditional musical scene of Ondo State like a colossus. The 'Ikale traditional biripo music had been played before him, but he played it with such dexterity that he is the indisputable master. His name is Chief Zeblon Omoranmowo, the Hendoro of Erinje, Ikaleland. The name of his group, which he formed in 1945 is Ikale Awayemate Biripo Organization. Baba Zeblon, as he is fondly called, is loved by the young and the old alike. His voice is golden and his music is electrifying it makes you to dance when you don't want to. But most importantly, he is a master composer. Sometimes, he sings purely to entertain. At other times, his lyrics are laced with heavy social and political messages. He is a social crusader and for 60 years he has consistently lamented the lack of unity of the Ikale race, through his music. Yet, he has no apologies for his strong messages. In 1979, he sang that soon the military would return to the barracks but that if the civilians misused the opportunity, it would be bye-bye to democracy. That message turned out to be prophetic. In the 1990s, he sang "efubu Chief Zeblon Omoranmowo is not happy with the lack of unity and absence of a sense of purpose in Ikaleland. Here we reproduce an exclusive interview Ikale News EYITAYO FOLAYAN, had with him in 2004. Baba Zeby speaks very passable English mixed perfectly with Ikale and sometimes with Yoruba. Sometimes his Ikale goes deep but we have tried to translate the much we could. Below are excerpts from our interview with him Enjoy it. EDITOR

How many records have you waxed so far?

You mean since I began singing or for this year alone?

The total... altogether The one I released two weeks ago would make it 39; I have waxed 39 records. I do not release records anyhow. It could be once a year or twice a year.

Baba, what is the authentic Ikale music, real traditional Ikale music?

Thank you. They have invited me from Akure and I have explained to them. When you talk of real, original Ikale music, there are just four types of music. One, you have biripo. Second, you have iyere. The third is agbala. Then, you have kiriji. There was one we used to have even before we had asiko; it was called kube. Kube is no longer played

Is your band still intact after all these years?

Oh, very well. If you were here yesterday, you would have met us at our meeting. We used to be 25. But some members have died. Those of us remaining are about 17. Sixteen to seventeen. They are still there-we went to Lagos together to record my latest album.

Did you have a healthy relationship with Mama Comfort Omoge in her lifetime?

Very well. I had done seven albums before Comfort went into the studios to wax her first record. As you know, she played asiko. I encouraged her. We worked hand in hand. Anywhere she went I would follow her. It was Comfort and I who started PMAN - Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria in Ikale. Sunny Ade was the national chairman at a time. We started PMAN together. We went to all parts of the country concerning the association and I remember



that Comfort was appointed a member of the executives because she was the only prominent woman at a time.

Your song about the coming back of civilian administration in 1979 was prophetic. You were even arrested because of it...

Mogbo fo ujoba titon wa, oye ghan ye lo hibe yi, a ma se ire: bee se ire, o ma dugba e o" (I suddenly heard that a civilian government is coming, those coming in should do it well but if not, the government will collapse). I feel fulfilled singing about social problems in Ikale and through his music, I was able to lead a crusade for social reforms in Ikale. For the June 12 crises, and its after-effects, I sang, "ofo kan ye wa, aye e ma, ugbonbatiya, (aye e ma), olika a mika o (a a pen ya)" (A matter is brewing, the world does not know, when the

time comes every ethnic group (in Nigeria) will go its own way).

How do you get inspiration to compose those songs you sing in your records?

Normally, when I want to wax an album, would tell my band members to go to Lagos and book the studios for me. From then on, I start to compose my songs. I may be walking along the farm, the spirit would tell me to sing... to sing in a particular way. It could be I went to the market. If I see two persons fighting. I know the kind of song I would sing. I remember I once sang a song "gele ori re bata ehe re, Olopa ti ko dede lo"... (your head-gear your shoes, the policeman has taken them all away)... that song came to me one day when I went to Igbokoda. There was this woman that

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took her husband to court for divorce. Unfortunately, she did not have money to pay the normal court levies; it was the court bailiff that helped her out by paying the levies (iwe ori). Once I booked the studio, I would start going about seeking inspiration for songs. If I encounter people fighting. I would wait and watch, and then go on and compose a beautiful song out of it. Often, I looked at the political environment and events around and sang about them. In most cases, what I said came to pass. You remember when I sang about the return to civil rule and warned that the military would - no little kids and younger people know about it. You see, asiko biripo, agbala, Ihere and kiriji those four are typical ikale music. Whether it is naming ceremony, burial, marriage, those are the types of music we play in Ikale.

What kinds of instruments do you use and which ones do you play? Do you think the attitude by the youths of trying to modernize biripo is in order?

Thank you. I don't use too much variety of instruments. I use just four types of drums. They are okiri (that is the one that sounds 'gedebu, gedebu') you have agba (it is the longest; about four-and-half feet); there is the one we call iye ulu (it is a bit robust); then we have the oma ulu (when 'gedebu' speaks, the 'oma ulu' will respond, then the 'iye ulu' will join in the response, then agba' will come in. Those are the four drums we use in Ikale music. Of course we have the "agogo" (gong), pataka and the shekere. Of the four drums I mentioned, there is none I can't beat with dexterity. In fact, you can say I literally trained members of my band on all the instruments.

We have noticed that in your songs, you sing about one 'Okoro' very often. Who is this 'Okoro' and why do you sing a lot about him?

The person we call okoro is this: o ne yo gbanyin, jo gbarinkan, ju wo bafo, jo gbo, juwo fanwo j'oye, Okoro ni. (The person who is smart and clever, intelligent and skillful; you beacon he understands is 'Okoro'). I created the personality in order to bring home my messages. If you are a good footballer, we call you Okoro, because you are very good at playing football. He may be a good musician, we call him Okoro because of that skill. It is not a name of a particular person.

Biripo is a highly skillful music. It has its own norms. You see, those four types I mentioned earlier, three of them gave birth to children'.

Continuation Of "My only regret being an Ikale"



Only one, agbala, never had children. Biripo had a lot of children. Biripo gave birth to asiko. It gave birth to kube and juju. It gave birth to ojeghe Kiriji on its own gave birth to ija. Iyere gave birth to agogo, Agbala is the only musical type that did not give birth to children. The drum you play for the slow agbala is different from the one we play for the fast type.

I do not want to discourage the upcoming ones and other musicians playing biripo. But the truth is that many people who claim to play biripo are not playing biripo. Buwa ba ti mu ila, juwo mu egusi, juwo lopo ma ata ati marigbo, ee se obe. (When you mix okro with egusi and pepper and add marigbo (leaves) to it, it is no longer soup.) If you want to cook okro soup, cook okro soup. If it is pepper stew you want, cook pepper stew. Quite a lot of musicians are not playing biripo. You don't mix biripo with agbala. You don't mix biripo with juju. How can you beat gangan or play guitar to biripo music? It robs it of originality. Some of them think because I am the forerunner and more popular, I don't want others to grow or that I want to block them. It is difficult to advise them. But a typical Ikale person who understands the language - will know when he or she listens that what they are playing is not biripo. You sing zion music, sing juju, then add pop to it, it is not biripo. Have you seen an Urhobo or Igbo sing Ikale music? When you mix it, you lose the value. I don't do it.

How do you distinguish the authentic biripo?

For example through the drumming. The drums in biripo music engage in conversations. The child (drum) calls the mother (iye ulu). Buwo ti ko 'keghere gwa'; oma ulu a wa dahun... o je e 'tete' Iye ulu a wa dahun, oo fi egben dedere". Bo ti fo egben dedere agba yon wa dahun, o ja 'ko dada, ja kodada, ja kodada'. Un yi agba je fo re. Ohun e de bo'ri dede ulu yo kun rin. The drums also

respond to the songs that we sing along.

What kinds of problems and challenges have you been facing as a musician?

If it comes to that, there are many. When I started the band in 1945, that is, this biripo band, I have lost many things. I bought the first vehicle, it was destroyed. I bought a second, it went the same way. I discovered that a member of my band (later killed by the gods) was behind the disasters. They attempted to take my life too.

I once ran under a trailer on a motorcycle. A lot of people thought I had died. God saved me in a miraculous way. Most of the problems were not natural but I thank God that he has been with me all through. Currently, I still face problems. For example, I do not have a record label despite the years I have put into this music. I just wax records and get paid. The marketer can print as many copies as he wants, it is all for him. But it is so because I have no one to promote me and back me. I do not get royalties on my records. Another thing is that no one has bought instruments modern instruments - for me.

I know of other musicians who have people who sponsor them to the studios. Some people even buy vehicles for them and ask them to pay gradually. I don't have anything like that. Yet my record don't stay over three months on the stall- people like my music. I can't say if this is the handiwork of God. I can't say. What I do now is that if you come and say I should come and record for you, you tell me where your studio is, I go there and record for you. If another one comes tomorrow and the terms are okay, I may decide to record for him. I have recorded in so many studios in Lagos. I started in Apapa in those days. But I don't have a studio of my own.

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What is your advice to Ikales on biripo music?

My advice is that we should not let this great music die. Let Ikales love one another. If we love one another, we will be at peace. I sing about it often in my music. They should not think that if we put somebody up there, it is only for his own benefit; no, it is for all Ikale. I am begging all Ikale musicians to play authentic Ikale music. Let us Ikale lift up these Ikale musicians. If I am brought up for instance, I know it is my duty to bring up other musicians. If I have a studio, it will help those coming behinds to be able to record, and so on. I will certainly lift those I know to be playing original biripo. Envy is too common in Ikale.

When we see that someone is rising, we try to pull him down. This is not the time to practice jealousy. Look at the Ibos. If you have Ibos in an establishment, that Ibo will ensure that he employs other Ibos and put them in convenient departments. An urhobo. man will do the same thing. Our own, Ikale will not employ Ikale; he will prefer to use that vacancy to make money from the Calabarmen. It is not good. Love is important. It has glory. It has roots. It brings about unity and development. Let us love one another in Ikale, God will hear out prayers

Can you still play for people at ceremonies...people in the cities think you would not want to come to cities to play.

It is easy I am still very agile as you can see and my voice is as good as ever. Anyote that wants me to play anywhere only needs to write me and inform me. Once you get to Okitipupa, just ask anyone that you want to see Chief Zeblon Omoranmowo. Even if the person posts the letter he can post it at the police, give it to the police, mobile police office or civil defence anywhere, I will get it, once Zeblon is on it. I have played in Ijebu Ife, jebu Igbo, Ikare Akoko, Akungba, so many places. I am available. I have played in Lagos at the Ikale Awards.

You sing a lot about politics and political developments. Why? Also why is it that our people in government don't come in to assist a veteran like you?

You see, I don't rely on the government of Nigeria. One yo ha mobaje, oun Oba e Jogh 'enran riu (The Oba can only trouble the kingmaker). This last election we did, I played a prominent role in the emergence of Dr. Olusegun Agagu as govern. Throughout Okitipupa to Aye, down to Osooro and Irele and Ajagha. I played a leading role. I prayed for him and worked for him. But since he got there, I have not even received a letter of appreciation from him. A letter just to say 'hello'.

Continuation Of "My only regret being an Ikale"

That is the problem with Ikale. (Our name: (kale) meaning ika- the wicked land - cannot be eulogized.) Ikale will rather love someone from another place. But the Bible says if we live in oneness, we will be more satisfied.

I have travelled widely; people from other places don't behave like that. It may be an oversight. Some people can say he cannot thank everybody. Not my type. It is only Ikale that I know who behaves like that. If the government of Ondo State appoints me into the board or department of its arts and culture, I merit it from what I have done in music. Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of Osun State appointed a Palace minstrel (Akewi Aafin) into the board of the State Council of Arts and Culture, getting seating allowances and teaching young people there, how then will I not merit more than that in Ondo State.

I knew Agagu very well. He is our son and I prayed for him with his policemen when they visited me. Besides, we were canvassing for him. We used to meet in Chief Ademeso's house. Today, I am here as Mr. Nobody. This development makes me afraid of Ikale. O mo 'fo Ikale bamerun (It makes me afraid of Ikale issues).

What is your opinion and advice on the efforts of Ikale News? The newspaper is doing very well.

It is educating our people far and near. Like this interview, you have come all the way from Lagos. It is not easy. But this will afford a lot of people who want to read about

Zeblon to do so. I will also read about our other people and what they are doing. That is the unity I am talking about. So, Ikale News is something all Ikale should rally round to build. Like I said, Oro Ikale ee yemi gedegede. Ikate fe joun bo'su neni, jiyin n'ola Ee se ren (I don't understand the matter with Ikale at all. Ikale likes to plant yam today and harvest it tomorrow. It is not like that) This newspaper, it is not now that we will see the gains. It is in the future. I thank the young man doing it.

Can you recall your first record Baba?

I did the small records then. I remember the first one... (he sings) That was the first one. The second was when I sang: (He begins to sing:) Hallelo, Halleloya, ajen ghonmare... Allelo, Alleloya, ajen gbonmare. Ajen fe p'oma je. Aposul'oke ma, Ajen gbonmare, oma ajen dagbatan o, a m'oma un'okore, Aposul'eema, Allelo Alletoya, ajen gbonmare (Hallelu, Halleluyah, the witch left the child; the witch wanted to kill his child but the Apostle warned him not to; the witch left the child. The witch's child grew up and the child was given out in marriage but the Apostle did not even know. Hallelu, Halleluyah, the witch left the child.) That was the second of the small records-three minute records.

The third one (of those small records) I sang s e n g h e n e n s e n , orighomohan...orighomotihan ee gbetuna o Jomo, senghenensen, Orighomohan. (I am lucky, dead lucky, I have a lucky head I don't have to warm my head near the fire Jomo, I am lucky indeed.) (Jomo is one of the High



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Chieftaincy titles in Ikaleland). It was difficult to do when we were waxing small plates- I had to sing four songs in three and half minutes.

Do Ikale musicians get together to work as one?

Very well. I can't be telling you about unity if as a leader I don't promote it. Next Friday, we (the PMAN) will have our meeting. We have biripo, asiko, juju (those who play guitar), fuji they are all there. At our last meeting at Maryland Hotel, we hosted other PMAN members from across the state. They gave me an award there, I will show you (the reporter) when we get to the house.

How has the government been helping

Continuation Of "My only regret being an Ikale"

you?

The government of Ondo State has never done anything to help me. They have never given me any award or financial support. Only the association - PMAN- gave me award. That is the Blackman's problem. If it is in the Whiteman's country, I would have been tired of receiving awards. Our people are like that. *Bu we sufan un ghan, en ki e fo wo kaabo.* (Unless you bribe them, they would not greet you welcome.)

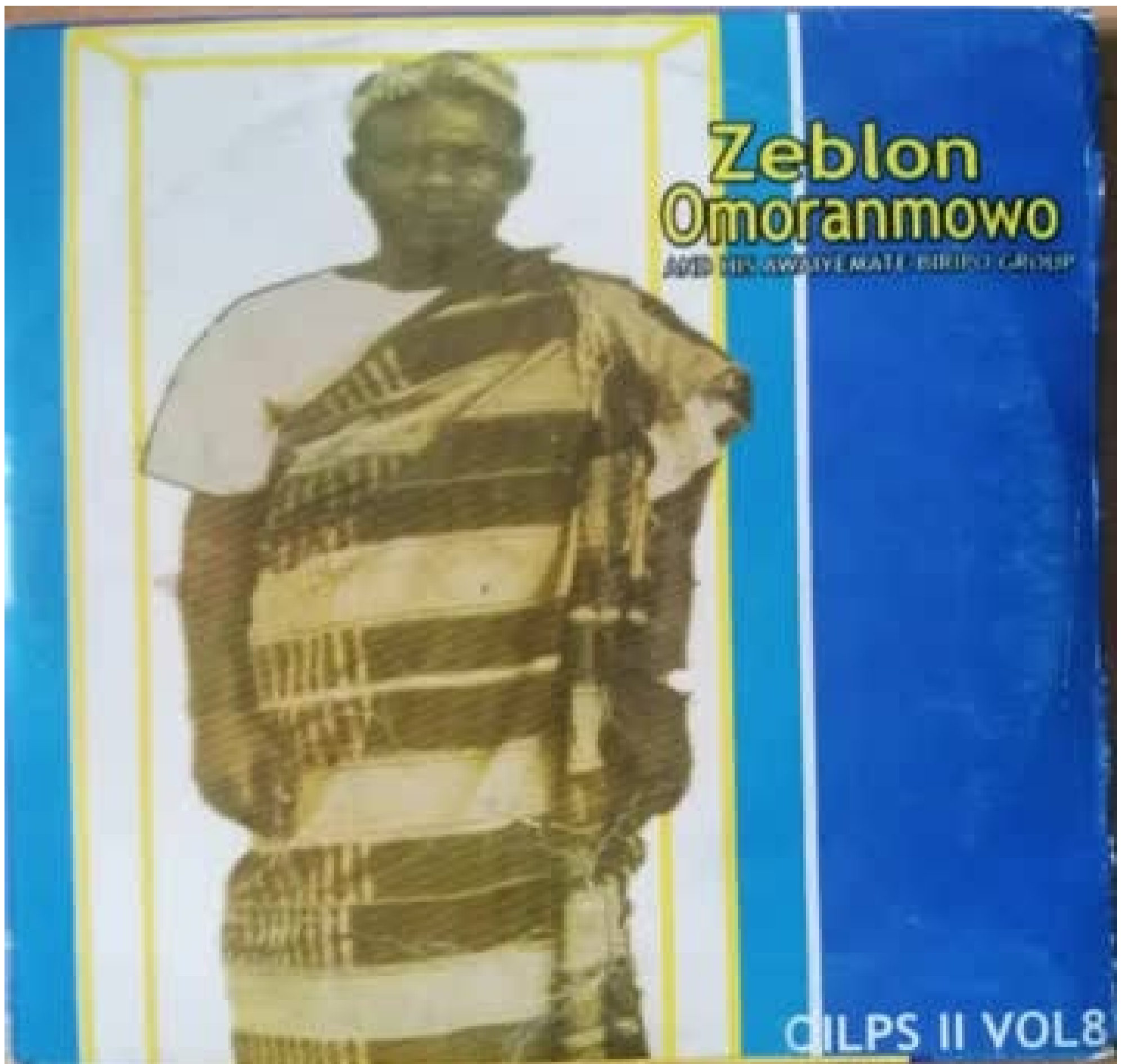
EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ikale News management gave Baba Zeblon Omoranmowo the Legends Awards at the ceremony held at Lagos Airport Hotel in 2010. It was his only Award in his lifetime, most probably, despite all he did to promote Ikale culture. All the*

biripo musicians still honour him till day as the ultimate legend. His works should be preserved and our local governments should preserve his legacies. His name should be preserved. What does it cost our local governments to name streets in major towns after Baba Zeblon Omoranmowo?

QUOTES TO SPICE THE PAGES

"If it is in the Whiteman's country, I would have been tired of receiving awards. Our people are like that. Bu we sufan un ghan, en ki e fo wo kaabo. (Unless you bribe them, they would not greet you welcome.)"

"Young biripo exponents should not adulterate the originality of Ikale biripo music."



NEWS

Jimoh Ibrahim Gets Akeredolu approval on Road repair in Ondo South

Samuel Olaniyan

People's senator, Jimoh Ibrahim have gotten approval from the Akeredolu led Government of Ondo state to carry out major repair and maintenance of roads within Ondo south senatorial District.

Ibrahim who had earlier sought the approval of the Governor, to carry out the proposed rehabilitation and maintenance of roads within the state, got the eventual green light from Ondo state Government in a memo personally signed by the Governor Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu and made available to Ikale News

The memo read in part 'I am pleased to inform you that your request for approval to carry out the road rehabilitation and maintenance project using your personal resources has been duly considered and approved. Your willingness to invest in the enhancement of our state's infrastructure is a testament to your leadership and concern for the well-being of our constituents.

In line with your proposal, I hereby grant you the authority to proceed with the rehabilitation and maintenance work on the designated roads. The projects outlined, from Okitipupa to Igbotako,

Igbotako Roundabout 1 to Big Soul Hotel, Roundabout 1 to Gen. Bajowa's house, and the new road construction at Idogun, are all essential endeavors that will undoubtedly contribute to the development of our state's infrastructure. It is heartening to know that you are ready to undertake this responsibility for the betterment of our constituents.

The governor was full of praise for the Igbotako-born business tycoon turned politician while he expressed his appreciation for his unwavering support towards improving the lives of the people of Ondo South Constituency and the state at large.

