



ASEYORI CONFIRMED

# ALAGBAKA 2024

## Battle For Ikale Votes Heats Up

- ▶ Jimoh Ibrahim Pulls Grassroots Crowds, Gets Endorsement
- ▶ Akintelure Steps Out, Gains Grounds
- ▶ Odimayo Tours Local Government Areas
- ▶ Oye Akintola-Arikawe, Abayomi Sheba May Declare For Governor



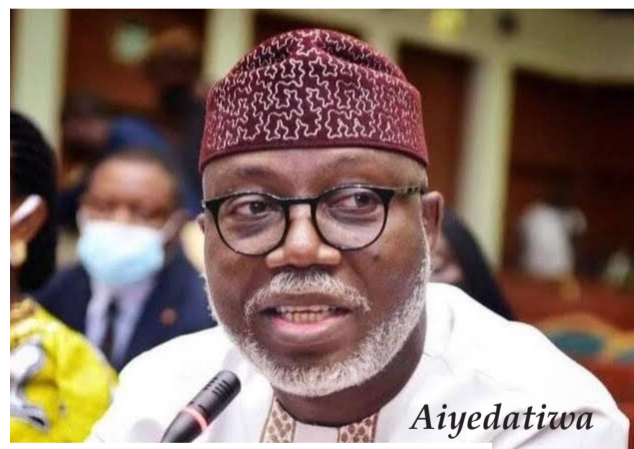
Jimoh Ibrahim



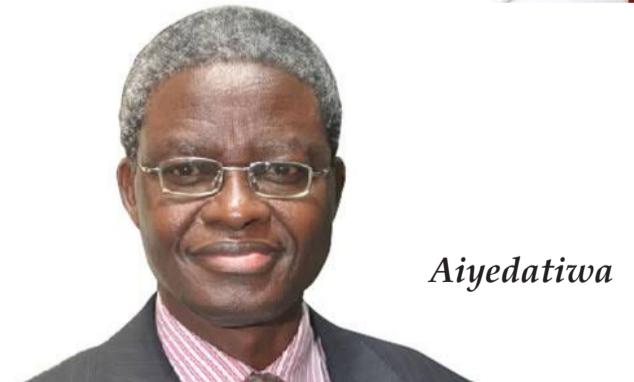
Akintelure



Odimayo



Aiyedatiwa



Aiyedatiwa

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"AYEDATICABAL?"

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"Oliwin ee sun aran"

Afenifere has no regrets supporting Tinubu to be president – Secretary



Kole Omololu

**UTOKO OMA IKALE**  
*Barrister Banjo Oyenakin*

*"Ikale taught me to give to Others"*



Oyenakin

## EDITORIAL PAGE

## FROM THE PUBLISHER

## EDITORIAL

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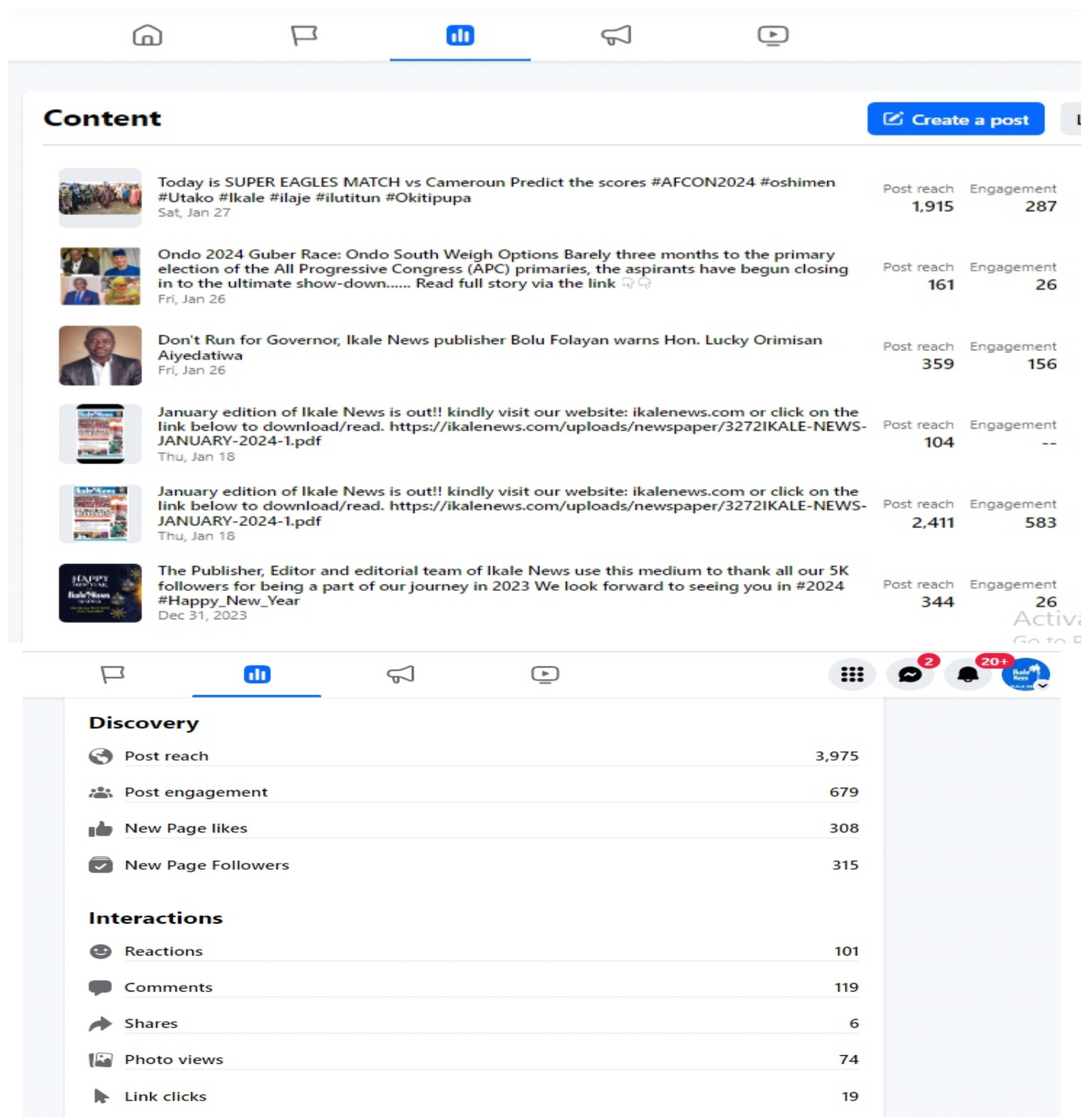
*A le o dede Ikale, Ilaje, Apoi, Arogbo!*

The purpose of setting up Ikale News is to promote our culture in Ikale and by extension, that of Ilaje, Apoi and Arogbo. We are focused and consistent on that. That you do not get sponsored negative stories about our people in this community newspaper should not make you think they don't come. Even with fat cheques. But we don't go for such. We have our jobs. We are doing this to grow our community! We can never be bought. And you can test us. Write down our people, we won't publish. Write them up, we will flaunt on our pages. This does not mean we won't be critical in our writing. But we won't publish attacks. We are properly trained journalists.

One reason that *Ikale News* supports Senator Jimoh Ibrahim a lot is that he values us. He does not say *Ikale News* is a small community newspaper, so when he runs ads in national dailies, he tells his media aides to "give *Ikale News*". That is why for the first ever, *Ikale News* is wrapped around in this February edition! I hope other contestants will also give us wrap-around ads. Or at least pull-outs.

We do not beg for ads o. *No be say we dey proud*. We know our worth. When it comes reaching *Ikale* people, we are the most authoritative media. We have people reading *Ikale News* in the UK, Libya (I dey surprised say more people read us in Libya than in the USA o). Within Nigeria, more people reading us are in Lagos,

followed by Okitipupa and Akure area. Ondo and Ibadan host plenty of our readers. People are reading us in Benin and Igbokoda too. Media analytics will tell you everything in these days of modern technology. So, we compare very well with national dailies and we beat many of them. We are not only widely-read, we have integrity. No newspaper covers *Ikale*, *Ilaje* and *Apoi* better than us. And this recent analytics that we just did would mean we have to devote more contents to our *Ilaje* people. They read us a lot and in uses and gratifications, the audience is the king. We will also increase our engagements (that is have more interactions with our readers). We are just beginning. *Ikale News* is second to none. Okay, check out our stats for last month (January 2024)!



# EDITORIAL PAGE

## FROM THE PUBLISHER

### Location

[Cities](#)
[Countries](#)

Nigeria	5,631
Libya	31
United Kingdom	21
Ghana	7
United States	7
Cameroon	3
Côte d'Ivoire	3
India	3
South Africa	3
United Arab Emirates	3

### Location

[Cities](#)
[Countries](#)

Lagos, Nigeria	1,893
Okitipupa, Nigeria	773
Akure, Nigeria	585
Ondo, Nigeria	543
Ibadan, Nigeria	534
Irele, Nigeria	127
Abuja, Nigeria	101
Ijebu Ode, Nigeria	81
Igbokoda, Nigeria	67
Bénin, Nigeria	61

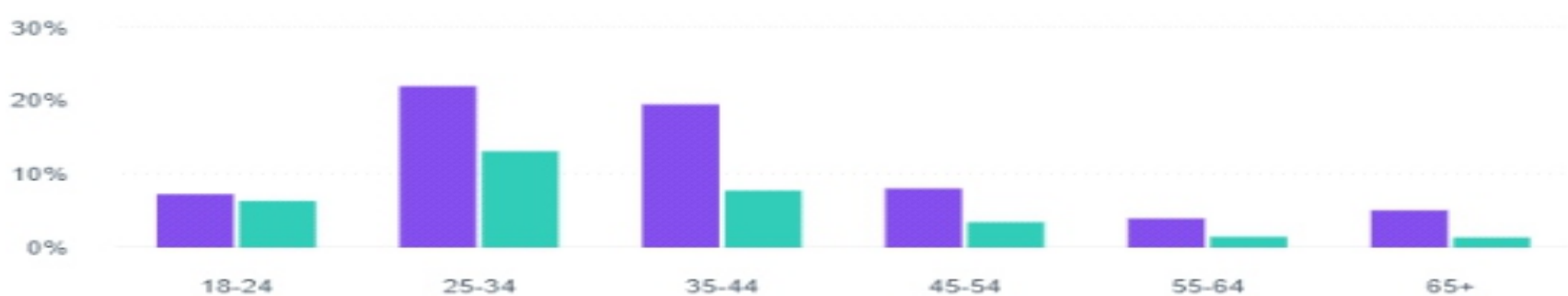
### Audience

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#### Age and Gender

■ Men 66.10%  
■ Women 33.90%



## BITTER PILLS

## AIYEDATICABAL?

I got some verbiage from a big sister from my home town, Igbotako, few weeks ago. What was my offence? I issued a press release advising Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa not to run in the APC governorship primary election coming up in two months' time because the law restricts him from serving only one term and this would mean Ondo South would only be able to serve one term, if he is governor.

That release, which I am competent and qualified to do as the publisher of one of Nigeria's longest running community newspaper and a stakeholder citizen of Ondo State, was all I did to get mouthful venom from the woman, whom I used to respect so much.

I was comforted by many calls from compatriots who asked me not to reply her. That is our culture, "agba dida, si e mu yan omade je ni" "being older is used to cheat the younger one." No wahala. I hope I will not get another bashing from her with this one o. Just doing my job!

Have you seen the list of Commissioner and advisers (nominees at the time of writing this) whose names Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa sent to the State Assembly for screening and approval? Hmm. Those who advising this governor should not try to destroy Aiyedatiwa's political career because of their selfish interests.

At the peak of the imbroglio before Aketi's passage, I wrote a passionate personal appeal in *Ikale News* (which was circulate in national media) urging the former governor to hand over power to his Deputy Lucky Aiyedatiwa. A week after, President Bola Tinubu intervened in the matter. There was some respite and then Aketi passed on. Aiyedati Lucky.

Such a very lucky politician. Governor of a State is not something easy to become and here he is seated on that throne without standing on any campaign podium...without spending

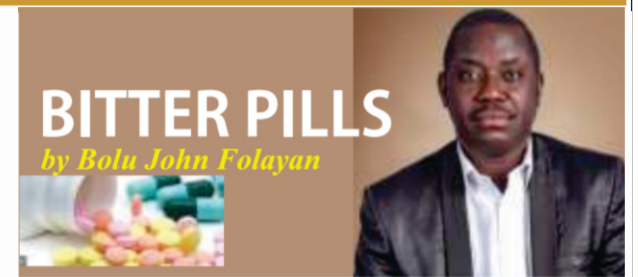
a dime. God gave it to him on a platter of gold!

Of course, the temptation to formally seek election for a formal four-year term is normal. Even if Governor Aiyedatiwa believes one term is good enough for people of Ondo South, generally conceded to produce the next governor by the wonderful political stakeholders of our beloved state, how he is going about it is very worrisome.

In body language and actions, Aiyedatiwa is still (or made to look as if he is) fighting Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu and his supporters in death! This is unlike us in Ondo South. Whatever Aketi might have done against Aiyedatiwa later, he should earn the governor's respect in life and in death. He chose Aiyedatiwa from the blues!

Yes, many people took advantage of Aketi's sickness to create bad blood between the two senior citizens of our state – some for their own selfish political ambitions. That is the immoral aspects of politics: Both camps were calculating that Aketi might die and they were trying to juggle their political fates. If they had succeeded in impeaching Aiyedatiwa, they would have put a deputy, and after Aketi's death, this deputy would have become governor now. That's the anti-Aiyedatiwa group. The pro-Aiyedatiwa cabal had their political calculus permanently on, doing the Maths that Aketi might die so that Aiyedatiwa could become governor. This latter group got their political algebra right.

Instead of Aiyedatiwa to take this victory in zmaganimity, he has continued to fight dead horses! First, he appointed a deputy governor who is anti-Aketi from Owo. From what we hear, he did not consult the party leadership in doing that. Same thing he did when he appointed the Secretary to the State Government. When some party leaders in the state, led by chairman, Engr Ade Adetimehim visited the governor and the cabal guiding him on this, the latter fired back at them that they could go to blazes. They quietly went back home, fully tongue-lashed, to



dress their wounds.

A week later, the list of commissioner and adviser nominees came out. Top on the list was Kayode Ajulo was the chief champion of doctrine of necessity, asking Aketi to resume or resign. He got rewarded with commissionership, most likely attorney-general. Number 2 on the list was Gbenga Omole, the unofficial spokesman of the Aiyedatiwa forces against Aketi. He was allegedly penciled for deputy governorship, (or was it Gbenga Ale who was promised) but *Oyinbo to da pencil lo da eraser*. At least he got something. Number three nominee Mrs Omowunmi Isaac, the chartered accountant that Aketi removed from the Public Procurement Bureau. Of course we hear that her removal was spiteful and was to give more room for Aketi's son, Jide, to continue his freelance sweeps across the ministries and parastatals. Fact remains she is anti-Aketi.

Who is next on that list? Johnson Alabi and Sowore! They were the spear head of the forged signature allegations and "resign now" campaigns. Sowore instigated the idea for a million people march around Ondo State which was to hold before Aketi's sudden death. Of course, Rasaq Obe and Gbenga Ale got nominated too. They were all troop commanders in the political war that Aketi survived.

Now, it is normal that a general rewards brigade commanders after heavy battles. But this one that Governor Aiyedatiwa just did shocked me to my bone marrows! Who is he still fighting now? Aketi or and his (alleged) supporters? You want to turn around a state for good as your publicists churn out in the media and the first ten nominees you made are of your acolytes during an unfortunate period of political polemics?

In the first place, the dissolution of the State Executive Council was ill-advised and badly executed. Aiyedatiwa only needed to shuffle the cabinet. In shuffling the cabinet, he could have asked as many people as necessary to go and injected new blood. So, what is the use dissolving

## BITTER PILLS

## AIYEDATICABAL?

an Exco and bring four people back out of six commissioners nominated? The advantage in shuffling the cabinet are many: You would not hit up the polity; you would not be seen as anti-Aketi and you can bring in neutral professionals (especially academics of note) into the cabinet. With due respect to these people that he nominated (they are very qualified in every sense), the undercurrents of the nomination suggest that Aiyetiditiawoncabal in Ondo State! Rightly or wrongly, that is the impression created.

The governor must quickly make more appointments to perish that thought.

In times like this, you should seek reconciliation by all means. Learn from how Asiwaju Bola Tinubu plays his politics! He is always forgiving! If Rauf Aregbesola and Yemi Osibajo go back to him today, he would warmly receive them! Of course, they would not get

primes seats there and then, but there would be seats for them.

Why fight Ade Adetimehin? Before you became governor, some people had been taking care of his interests. The same for other members of his exco. Politics is about interests. When you were deputy governor, you were (rendered) powerless. All you have to do now that you have power in your hands is to use that power to curry favours from all classes of politicians. It is not to use that power to fight people or to prove that the Cabal is now in charge. No. It does not work that way.

Aiyedatiwa is our own brother in Ondo South. Truth might be bitter but we will continue to tell our brother nothing but the truth. Do not let charlatans mislead you. You are seated as governor now. Be magnanimous in victory. If you insist on running for governor against wise counsel that you support Senator Jimoh Ibrahim and go on to replace him in the

Senate, then go ahead and run. After all, you are a lucky person. You can be lucky against. But for goodness, use this one year of your governor to develop Ondo State. I have not heard you talk about how to generate money. Governing well is not all about spending money. Anybody can spend money. Making it is the real issue. Anyone who wants to tell us he can govern Ondo State well must be able to prove to us he can generate money. That is the heart of our problem in Ondo State right now.

### QUOTE:

**“With due respect to these people that he nominated (they are very qualified in every sense), the undercurrents of the nomination suggest that Aiyetidaticabal”**

**“In times like this, you should seek reconciliation by all means. Learn from how Asiwaju Bola Tinubu plays his politics!”**

# Ondo Public Servants Allege Reckless Spending By Aiyedatiwa Amidst Political Ambitions

Public servants in Ondo State, operating under the banner of Concerned Ondo Public Servants (COPS), have voiced their concerns over what they allege to be the reckless spending of government funds by Governor Lucky Ayedatiwa. The public servants accuse the governor of channeling state resources towards political activities, ostensibly in support of his gubernatorial ambition.

In a statement issued by Segun Aderibigbe, the spokesperson for the group, COPS expressed dismay over the perceived misuse of taxpayer money. They stressed the need to rein in the governor and prevent further depletion of public funds for political purposes.

The statement reflects on the departure of the former Governor, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, who was acknowledged for his care and respect for Ondo State workers. However, since Governor Lucky Ayedatiwa assumed leadership, the group claims that governance has taken a

turn towards serving political interests, with decisions and policies seemingly driven by political ambition and self-interest. COPS particularly highlighted instances of monthly salary payments to party members, labeling the practice as insensitive. The group raised concerns about the allocation of millions of state resources towards pleasing party members, especially during recent stakeholders' meetings.

According to Aderibigbe, Governor Ayedatiwa distributed N100,000 to each party member who attended the stakeholders' meeting, resulting in a substantial drain on the state's resources. COPS emphasized that state resources should be directed towards benefiting the entire population and serving the public good, rather than being channeled for the exclusive benefit of the political party and its members.

The group further expressed alarm over the reported monthly deductions from the salaries of political appointees, with the

funds allegedly being remitted to the party's coffers. COPS argued that the revenue generated from these deductions should be sufficient to fund the party and its members, leaving state resources to cater to broader public needs.

Aderibigbe called attention to the significant amount of N17 billion reportedly accrued to the state's coffers in the past seven weeks alone, raising concerns about the escalating financial recklessness. The group attributed this to the upcoming gubernatorial election and urged the people to demand accountability to prevent continued mismanagement.

While Chief Press Secretary to Governor Ayedatiwa, Mr. Ebenezer Adeniyani, declined to comment on the allegations, another aide to the governor dismissed the accusations of reckless spending, attributing them to a quest for relevance. The aide acknowledged the distribution of money to stakeholders but emphasized it was meant as an appreciation for party members and occurred without the governor's knowledge.

# ALAGBAKA 2024

The battle for Ikale APC votes intensifies

- Jimoh Ibrahim increases his pace, combs wards across the state
- Akintelure launches his campaign to a rousing reception, sets up 'think tank'
- Igbasan leads Aiyedatiwa group from Irele as Femi Agagu and Aiyerin pledge support for Aiyedatiwa
- Akintola-Arikawe may formally declare interest join race soon

(From Our Reporters)

Two months to d-day, the battle for delegate votes in the All Progressive Congress (APC) has intensified as top runners in the race intensify their campaigns. On paper, political watchers believe whoever wins the APC ticket will become the next governor of the State but experts predict that in its usual manner, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) may roar into the race.

Early bed in the race, billionaire senator, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim has continued to pull stunning crowds from his ward-to-ward campaign, after his successful senatorial consultations in Ondo North, Central and South. His style of campaign is to work through party structures to reach the members of the party, calculating that most likely the primary election would be direct as it was in Kogi State and has been declared to be by

the party leadership in Edo State soon. Many other aspirants across the state have also started ward tours in obvious reaction to Dr. Ibrahim's challenge.

Speaking in Akure early February, Dr. Ibrahim said if elected, he would use the natural resources of Ondo State to accelerate the development of the state.

"We are going to barter the rocks in the North for those who need gravel for construction and then ask them to build out roads there. Down south, the Bitumen Act is at the final stages. With that in place, we will open new lines of income for the state and of course the bitumen would be used to build our roads apart from being a huge income earner." He said.

Responding to a question from reporters, Senator Jimoh said it was not true that President Bola Tinubu was planning to impose a candidate in the primary elections.

"Why would the president do that? As a human being, he could prefer one candidate to the other but that would not make him impose a candidate. He would rather ask all the contestants to go test their popularities on the ballot," he said.

Medical doctor and All Progressive Congress (APC) chieftain, Dr. Paul Akintelure and incumbent House of Reps member for

Okitipupa/Irele Federal Constituency, Mr. Jimi Odimayo also formally launched their campaigns for governor.

Dr. Akintelure told scores of his admirer in Akure, the Ondo State capital, that under his leadership, youths in the state would get N5 billion for small scale business as loans.

According to him, in order to develop the state, the revenue base of the state must be overhauled. "I will turn around the Gross Domestic Product of the state and channel the resources to development." He asserted.

The campaign train saw him criss-crossing Akure and parts of Ifedore/Idanre in the first week of his campaign. Dr. Akintelure, who spoke to journalists at the NUJ Press centre, said his priorities would be education, healthcare, infrastructure and youth empowerment.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, the ilaje-born governor is presently handicapped from coming out openly to campaign because his late boss Rotimi Akeredolu is yet to laid to rest. People consider it indecorous for him to start campaigning when Aketi is still in the morgue. But time is running against him. So, he flung out his commissioners and former commissioners across the state to begin spadework for him

In Irele, former commissioner for budget and



*Akintelure*



Jimoh Ibrahim

planning, Pastor Ade Igbasan held a meeting with some APC members in Irele LGA. Similarly, Pastor Femi Agagu, who was among the commissioners relieved on their duties by Aiyedatiwa, gathered some leaders of the APC in Okitipupa to Ilutitun, notably Pastor Segun Aiyerin, Alaspat Oguntimehin and Major Nike Alaka to drum support for Aiyedatiwa. As at the time of going to the press, Aiyedatiwa has not formally declared his interest to run for governor, much less disclose his programmes.

Stakeholders have expressed worry that if Aiyedatiwa runs and wins, he would only be able to serve as governor for one term. One of the arrow heads in the arguments is Ikale News publisher, Dr. Bolu John Folan.

Said the communication strategist: "Why a governor runs for two terms is basically to give him time to perform, He uses the first year to settle down, work for two years and uses the last one year to clear the ground and consolidate. Most of the things Agagu did was in the last three years of those six years and if he had a second term, it would have been so phenomenal. So, why should Ondo South be cut short? Governor Lucky has been deputy for three years and my thinking is that he should let others run. But it is an advice. He can test his political strength."

Also speaking to *Ikale News*, rights lawyer Dele Kuboye and: "whether the politicians admit or not, zoning is at the heart of Nigerian politics. On the last count, I noticed 10 people running for this primary. All of them are from Ondo South. That tells you that the politicians have tacitly conceded that Ondo South should produce the governor, at least in APC. How will it now make sense to have a governor that would not maximize the opportunity for the two terms? What can you do these days in four years?"

At the time of going to press, information hit our News Desk that legal luminary, Clement Oye Akintola-Arikawe may formally declare for governor under the APC, bringing the total number of aspirants from Ward 1, Igbotako to three.

In Irele, the lone aspirant from the APC so far is the incumbent member, House of Representatives (Irele/Okitipupa Federal Constituency), Hon. Jimi Odimayo. It is being remoured, however that his former predecessor, Hon. Abayomi Sheba may soon formally declare for "Alagbaka" under the platform of the People's Democratic Party, (PDP).

While Ikale aspirants are consolidating, former finance commissioner under Aketi, Mr. Wale Akinterinwa is the only non-Ikale/non-ilaje

seriously in the race.

Akinterinwa, who hails from Ile Oluji, has been scampering for votes in Akure North and South LGA early February. In one of his consultative meetings, he said former governor Rotimi Akeredolu had anointed him governor before the governor passed on.

The veteran technocrat said he was the candidate to beat in the race and dispelled rumours that he was planning to step down for the front runner in the race, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim.

Apart from Aiyedatiwa, Dr. Soji Ehinlanwo is another Ilaje son running for the coveted office. Most of Dr. Ehinlanwo's campaign so far have been on the social media. Serial contestant, Olusola Oke, a senior member of the bar was still weighing his chances, especially with his kinsman, Aiyedatiwa, being touted to run also for governor. Experts say, Oke would not run against Aiyedatiwa.

"I do not think Olusola Oke has a good chance of winning the ticket. The odds against him are too high." Though considered a weakling in the race, Odumayo is making steady progress. At a rally in Akure, Hon Olayinka Alabi said the young and successful Odumayo would clinch the ticket because he is the most qualified among the contestants so far.

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**FOR GOVERNOR ONDO 2024**



## NEWS



# Akintelure, Proposes N5 Billion Annual Loan for Youths

By Samuel Olaniya (Acting Editor)

Governorship aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ondo state, Paul Akintelure, has unveiled a youth-focused plan, stating, "I'm going to involve youths in what I will call the Graduate Entrepreneurship Scheme." Under this scheme, he aims to provide a substantial N5 billion annually as a loan to the state's youths, adding that "N5 million each will be given annually to 1000 youths registered under the scheme." The goal is to create 12,000 jobs annually through this initiative.

He emphasized the inclusivity of the plan, stating, "It won't be limited to agriculture alone but it's about whatever you want to do, whatever skill you prefer because we will take it to the National Youth Service Corps." Akintelure further explained his commitment to the youth, saying, "We are also going to pay them money in addition to what NYSC will pay them."

Highlighting the economic impact, Akintelure shared his vision, stating, "My dream is to double the GDP of Ondo in my one year of administration." He underscored

his intent to focus on agriculture, emphasizing, "We are going to pay attention to what is called value addition in agriculture."

The aspirant also shed light on the collaborative efforts with the National Youth Service Corps, noting, "We are going to take [the Graduate Entrepreneurship Scheme] to the National Youth Service Corps." Furthermore, he pledged to incentivize youths participating in the NYSC scheme, saying, "At the end of the year, we will invite them to defend the project."

In addressing the financial aspect of the plan, Akintelure detailed, "At the end of the day, we are going to earmark N5 million each for the N1,000 graduates, and they are going to repay in 10 years. The loan will be interest-free." He clarified the repayment structure, stating, "In other words, they're going to refund 45,000 monthly."

On the broader economic landscape, Akintelure asserted, "There is no government that can run without private sector involvement." To ensure civil servants benefit, he

introduced the concept of the "Pensioners' Retirement Self Employment Scheme," designed for those at level 14 and above, aged 55 and above, or with 30 years in service. He explained, "It will encourage people from level 14 and above, who are 55 years and above or 30 years in service to apply for voluntary retirement after completing training for six months."

In framing his governance approach, Akintelure drew a connection with President Bola Tinubu, stating, "It will work in a way of transforming our natural resources."

He emphasized his intent to leverage resources, particularly the state's vast sand deposits, saying, "We have the best port sand in this country and that is why we need the glass industry."

Highlighting the cooperative relationship, he added, "We are aware that most of these mineral resources are federal government-owned, but it is my synergy, relationship with the president that will see me through."

## NEWS

# Hon. Banji Okunomo Endorses Barr. Jimoh Ibrahim for Ondo Governorship

By Samuel Olaniyan (Ag. Editor)



**Banji Okunomo**

In a significant endorsement, Hon. Banji Ben Okunomo, a revered leader in Ondo South and a prominent member of the All Progressives Congress (APC), has thrown his support behind Barr. Jimoh Ibrahim, CFR, as the aspirant best suited to become the next Governor of Ondo State.

In an exclusive interview with topshotnews, Hon. Okunomo expressed his confidence in Barr. Jimoh Ibrahim, emphasizing the need for a governor who is attuned to the people's needs and committed to bringing joy to their lives. "For a number of people both within and outside the party who have had the opportunity to interface with Sen. Jimoh Ibrahim, what they all see is a candidate and not an aspirant," remarked Hon. Okunomo, highlighting the distinction he sees in Ibrahim's leadership qualities.

As a first-class Law Graduate and a former Governorship aspirant, Hon. Okunomo underscored Sen. Ibrahim's unique qualities, describing him as a candidate ready not only to win the primaries but also the General Election for the APC.

"As a former Governorship aspirant, I have gone through the nitty-gritty of

political contests, and I have come to realize that whoever wants to be Governor in this State must possess certain qualities. Those qualities I can see them clearly in Sen. Ibrahim. That also explains why I had to subsume my own aspiration to work with him," he added.

Hon. Okunomo stressed the need for a governor who can bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the state, challenging the traditional approach to governance. He criticized the historical reliance on federal allocations without creative additions for wealth creation, advocating for a leader who can think outside the box.

"We need a Governor that can bring something new on board to relieve the agonies of the suffering masses. The Governor we need is one that is sophisticated in ideas, sound and well-educated as well as sufficient in knowledge which encompasses agenda and programs that can meet the burning desires and needs of the people at this auspicious time. Without being immodest, the one I have seen with all these qualities is Senator Ibrahim."

Responding to questions about Sen. Ibrahim's chances in the party's primary election, Hon. Okunomo expressed confidence, stating that winning primaries requires preparation, and Sen. Ibrahim's aspiration has been systematically conceptualized and implemented with precision.

"APC cannot afford to incubate someone who will turn out to be just a candidate of the primary election and not one who can win the General election. Sen. Jimoh Ibrahim has been working across the length and breadth of Ondo State, making resources available to the people at the grassroots, reaching out with gifts and all kinds of empowerment packages for the poor, the downtrodden, and the needy."

Hon. Okunomo highlighted Sen. Ibrahim's remarkable achievements at the National Assembly, particularly the sponsorship of the Bitumen Development Commission bill, showcasing his preparedness for the gubernatorial task.

While describing Sen. Ibrahim as the pride of APC, Hon. Okunomo emphasized the party's stance that there won't be an automatic ticket for any aspirant, reinforcing the significance of Sen. Ibrahim's candidacy in the upcoming election.



**Jimoh Ibrahim**

## NEWS



# Governor Aiyedatiwa Lambasted over “lopsided” Appointments

By Mary Adedokun

In a move that has stirred controversy, Ondo State Governor, Hon. Lucky Orimisan Aiyedatiwa, has come under scrutiny for his recent nominations and appointments. The Governor forwarded the names of six Commissioner-nominees and appointed Special Advisers, a decision that is raising eyebrows due to perceived flaws in the process.

The Commissioner-nominees are (who have been sworn in at press time) were Mrs. Omowumi Isaac, ACCA, Mr. Olukayode A. Ajulo, SAN, OON, Engr. Razaq Obe, Pastor Emmanuel Igbasan, Barrister Akinwumi Sowore, Mr. Oseni Oyeniyi

Critics argue that the nominations lack diversity and appear to favor specific interests, calling into question the transparency of the selection process. The choices have been characterized as lopsided, raising concerns about the Governor's commitment to inclusivity.

Governor Aiyedatiwa's appointments for Special Advisers further fuel the controversy: as he appointed Hon. Olugbenga Omole as Special Adviser on Information & Strategy, Mrs. Olamide Falana - Special Adviser on Gender Affairs. Mr. Alabi Johnson - Special Adviser on Energy

The appointments are seen as reinforcing existing power structures rather than addressing the diverse needs of the state.

The Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Prince Ebenezer Adeniyen, released a statement on February 2, 2024, announcing these appointments. However, the choices are now facing increased scrutiny, with critics demanding a more inclusive and balanced representation in the state's leadership. The Governor's decisions are expected to face further deliberation as they undergo screening and confirmation by the State House of Assembly.

The spokesperson for Governor

Aiyedatiwa, Prince Ebenezer Adeniyen, however dismissed these concerns, emphasizing the governor's prerogative to appoint his team. The rebuttal suggests a divergence in perspectives, with critics contending that the appointments may not truly reflect the collective interests of the state.

Yemi Adegboyega, the General Secretary of the Ondo Solidarity Front, raises poignant questions about the motives behind these appointments. The alleged orchestrated attacks on Akeredolu during his illness, now seemingly rewarded, invite scrutiny into the ethics and intentions of those involved.

As Ondo State witnesses a shift in leadership, the perceived lopsidedness in appointments and the cloud of betrayal cast shadows over the Aiyedatiwa administration. The political chessboard unfolds, revealing a narrative of calculated moves, alliances, and a lingering question: What did Akeredolu do to Aiyedatiwa to warrant such apparent animosity even in death?

## POLITICAL UPDATE

# Atikase Labels Governor's APC Stakeholders Meeting as Factional



*Otito Atikase*

Ondo State delegate on the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) board, Hon. Otito Atikase has labeled the recent Stakeholders meeting orchestrated by Governor Hon Lucky Ayedatiwa as a factional gathering.

Atikase made this assertion in Akure, the capital of Ondo state, during a media address.

In a statement released by his media aide, Owei Segun, Atikase criticized the recent stakeholders' meeting called by Governor Ayedatiwa, noting it as factional. He argued that, as an aspirant, the governor should

have deferred to the party chairman to convene such a meeting, describing the governor's involvement as potentially divisive.

Atikase, an Ilaje grassroots politician, directed criticism towards the state party chairman, Engr Ade Adetimehin, for participating in a meeting that, according to Atikase, had the potential to deepen existing divisions within the party.

He chose not to openly endorse any gubernatorial aspirant, expressing confidence in the party's ultimate decision. Atikase pledged his support once the party identifies a unifying candidate, emphasizing that the party's decision should be regarded as final and binding on all members.

Atikase also provided constructive criticism regarding the dissolution of the state executive council, suggesting that Governor Ayedatiwa should have postponed such actions until after the primary election.

Concerning the certificate forgery saga, Atikase urged transparency from Governor Ayedatiwa, highlighting the importance of dispelling any potential misinformation that could be exploited by political opponents.

# JIMOH IBRAHIM

takes **Tinubu's Renewed Hope** message to 203 Ondo wards



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# UTOKO OMA IKALE

## "There Will Be Light At The End Of The Tunnel"

*Barr. Banjo Ayenakin*

*Ukoto Oma Ikafe is back. We have discovered another ukoto oma ikale out of the lot and we are here to showcase him. His name is Barrister Banjo Ayenakin is the Principal Partner of Banjo Ayenakin & Co, a renowned Law Firm in Akure, Ondo State and with a branch in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. He is the Founder of Banjo Ayenakin Foundation, a charity organization with the objective of raising young people who are visionary and who imbibe the ideals of transformative leadership and to also serve as a platform for human empowerment. He is also the Convener and Director General of African Centre for Human Empowerment, an NGO that intervenes in the area of education and youth empowerment. In this interview with our Executive Editor, IBIKUNLE IKUYINMINU, Ethe Akure Branch Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) speaks on the significance of backgrounds to successes in life, his passion for humanity, the demise of Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, and hope for our people in the face of the economic harakiri in the country. It is a library material. Enjoy it !!!*

### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF SIR

Thank you. My name is Olabanjo Aiyenakin. I was born in 1972 in Ode-Irele, Irele Local Government. I attended Stella Maris College, Okitipupa. I left primary school in 1982. I was in the secondary school between 1983 and 1988. I leaving Stella Maris College, Okitipupa, I proceeded to Ondo Boys High School, Ondo for my HSC between 1989 and 1990. Immediately after my HSC, I went to University of Benin where I studied English and Literature which I later abandoned and I went to the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife where I studied Law and graduated in 2000. I was called to the Nigerian Bar having completed my education at the Nigerian Law School in 2002. I did my NYSC in 2003 and in 2004, I began to practise in the law firm of Akanni SAN Law Firm in Ado-Ekiti. In 2010, I came back to Akure where I started my own law firm and I have been a private legal practitioner from 2010 till now. By the grace of God, I have had the opportunity also to lecture. I lecture at the Adekunle Ajasin University as an adjunct lecturer teaching law. I teach customary law, law of banking and labour law.

But presently, I'm on sabbatical. Let me call



it leave, because I am the current chairman of NBA here. The position is demanding. Let me also remarkably say that I was also a member, I mean I was appointed by Governor Olusegun Mimiko as a Member of the Governing Council of the Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, for about four years. I served meritoriously in that capacity until the present administration got to power.

LET US GO BACK TO YOUR DAYS AS A KID IN IKALE. THERE WAS SOMETHING THAT WAS COMMON AMONG YOUTHS YOUTHS IN THOSE DAYS. IT IS CALLED NICKNAMES OR BETTER STILL ALIAS. IN OTHER WORDS, YOUR PARENTS DECIDED TO NAME YOU ADE BUT YOU WOULD FEEL THAT WAS NOT BIG ENOUGH AND YOU WOULD CALL YOURSELF ADESCO. IS THERE ANY OF

SUCH NICKNAMES ASSOCIATED WITH YOU?

Yes, I was given a nickname by my friends. I was called Banjora. (Laughters)

I WAS GIVEN LABOLA AND IT HAS STRUCK TILL DATE. HOW DID YOU COME ABOUT THAT NAME?

Well, my friends coined it from my name, Banjo. My first name is Banjo and A is Ayenakin. So they just called it Banjora. Even my email used to be [banjora@gmail.com](mailto:banjora@gmail.com).

YOU ARE A SON OF A STERN ADMINISTRATOR AND CONSUMMATE PRINCIPAL AS I HEARD, WHILE YOUR MUM IS A SEASONED NURSE. HOW DID YOU BENEFIT FROM THAT RICH BACKGROUND?

Whao! Background is very significant to

# UTOKO OMA IKALE

*"There Will Be Light At The End Of The Tunnel"*

successes in life. And there is something we call extant. My family background, by virtue of the fact that I was born by parents who are literate, my father is a product of the University of Ibadan who read Political Science and mum read Nursing Science. My mum is a nurse and my dad was the Principal of a secondary school. This gave me the opportunity to have a good training and a good foundation at home.

I was somewhere today and I had the privilege of speaking with some students. I told them when I was in primary 5, that my father gave me a novel we call "Eze Goes to School", and when I had finished reading it, I told the story to everybody in the family. My dad said, Oh, you are a good storyteller; you are going to be a lawyer. And that was how I cut the vision of being a lawyer. And so, that opportunity of being born by parents who are literate, who are educated, and who are visionary gave me the impetus to become what I am today. Another advantage I had was that before we were taught anything in school, my father would have taught me at home. So it was so easy for me to excel. I started reading English Language from primary 2, and there was nothing I couldn't read as at that time. So I thank God for the kind of parents I have.

I WAS ABOUT ASKING YOU WHY YOU OPTED FOR LAW IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT THE SUMMARY OF YOUR RICH BACKGROUND HAS SETTLED THAT. BUT THEN, AS THE AKURE NBA CHAIRMAN, HOW DID YOU RECEIVE THE NEWS OF THE DEMISE OF THE FORMER GOVERNOR OF ONDO STATE, ARAKUNRIN OLUWAROTIMI AKEREDOLU WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND FOR THAT MATTER ONE WHO ONCE LED THE ASSOCIATION AS THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT?

The news was so shocking because I thought Mr. Governor was going to pull through bearing in mind the kind of treatment that he received and the news I was hearing. I thought he possibly might put through or survive it. I also heard he had undergone like 2 surgical operations, so I had thought he would make it. But unfortunately, his demise was a rude shock. The news was devastating. We

have lost a colossus. We have lost an enigma. We have lost a visionary leader. It is minus for Ondo State.

WHAT LEGACIES WILL YOU LOVE YOUNGER PRACTITIONERS OF LAW TO EMULATE FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCTS OF THE FORMER GOVERNOR AND SENIOR ADVOCATE OF NIGERIA?

The major attributes I will want young legal practitioners and administrators to emulate from late Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu (SAN) are, number one, commitment, two, dedication, three, integrity, four, confidence. Akeredolu was confident. Akeredolu was fearless. Akeredolu was a man of integrity. Akeredolu was not given to frivolity. The last but not the least, vision. He was a visionary leader.

YOU SEEM TO BE VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY AS IT PERTAINS TO THE YOUTHS AND EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT. IS POLITICS THE MOTIVATION?

**“ I was giving out biros, pencils, erasers, all those little, little things that I could afford as a young boy to the indigenes as a student ”**

Not at all. Politics is never the motivation. My motivation is the fact that I believe everything must not be based on gains. Every motivation must be based on humanity. I don't do things for personal gains. Not at all. I do my things because of humanity. I love people passionately. Whether I know you before, whether I have met you before, whether you can be of assistance to me tomorrow, these are not what matter to me. Provided you are human, I will love you and I will serve you. So my involvement in community development is not because I

have interest in politics. At the moment, I can't say whether I have interest in politics. I am not rulling it out o, but I am saying that at the moment, I am focused on my career and community development. I am facing humanitarian activities. I am doing whatever I am doing for my community and the larger society on humanitarian grounds. Recently, I organized a football competition

(CUTS IN) WE ARE COMING TO THAT SIR

Ok. It was across Ikale and it was highly impressive.

AND THAT REMINDS ME SIR, THE BANJO AYENAKIN FOUNDATION IS A RECURRING DECIMAL ON THE LIST OF HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATE. WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE FOUNDATION?

The objective of the Banjo Ayenakin Foundation (BAF) is to raise young people who are visionary and who imbibe the ideas of transformative leadership, and to also serve as a platform for human empowerment. The foundation is an offshoot of my NGO African Centre for Human Empowerment.

I have been doing African Centre for Human Empowerment right from my university days, even though I was doing that to also be a blessing to young people. I was giving out biros, pencils, erasers, all those little, little things that I could afford as a young boy to the indigenes as a student. But today, Banjo Ayenakin Foundation has empowered a lot of youths. In terms of education, we have given out textbooks. We motivate.

In fact, at Stella Maris College, Okitipupa where I finished from, Methodist High School, Okitipupa, Arerin Grammar School, Ode-Irele, United Grammar School, Ode-Irele, and several secondary schools, I made sure that every session, whosoever scored the highest grades in Mathematics and English got cash awards from us. We also gave them books. The essence is to encourage healthy competition and to motivate young people to aspire to be the best they can be. And these are also offshoots of the objectives of the Banjo Ayenakin Foundation.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF FUNDS AND THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE EFFORT TO RUN SUCCESSFULLY THE BANJO AYENAKIN FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT?



# UTOKO OMA IKALE

*"There Will Be Light At The End Of The Tunnel"*

Well, the source of funding for the Banjo Ayenakin Football Competition was Banjo Ayenakin and Co Law Firm. It is from my law firm. My law firm is the sponsor and we did not receive any grant or aid from anybody whatsoever. We didn't have any difficulty running it because we already knew how much it would cost us. And we knew that it was within our budget and we were able to fund it successfully. We bought the trophies. We bought the jerseys. We bought the booths and we also gave them cash awards to complement the trophies. And the trophies are not such trophies that we collect back after the events. They are trophies that we have given out completely.

WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS?

I have several role models. In the legal profession, Chief Afe Babalola, SAN, Wole Olanipekun, SAN, those two are my role models, and that is why I am patterning so many things about my life along these two foremost legal luminaries. Chief Afe Babalola is a humanitarian leader. He is a giver. He is a perfect example of a true humanist. I am trying to be like him. Chief Afe Babalola has invested massively in education.

I am also trying to do the same. I have a school called Kings Court and the vision is to have Kings Court Primary School, Kings Court Secondary School, and Kings Court University in such a way that we will have moderate fees for every class of pupil/student, even as we offer the best educational services. In terms of my Pastoral Work, or perhaps you don't know I am also a Pastor, Bishop Adejumo is my role model. And when it comes to politics, Chief Obafemi Awolowo (God bless the memory of his soul) is my role model.

IN THE MIDST OF YOUR VERY HECTIC SCHEDULE, DO YOU FIND TIME TO UNWIND?

Yes, I do.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND SIR?

The only thing I do to unwind is I play table tennis, I am a good player of table tennis. And sometimes, may be till I was 45, I used to play football. But now, age and attrition are telling on me.

AND ON A FINAL NOTE SIR, GIVEN THE DOWNTURN ECONOMY COUPLED WITH GALLOPING INFLATIONARY TRENDS IN THE COUNTRY, WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE

TO THE GOOD PEOPLE OF IKALE LAND?

My message is not only to the good people of Ikale, but indeed across Ondo State and the country at large. Luckily enough, I am aware that this medium has gone online and that its likes on facebook and other online media are wonderful and fantastic. My message of hope is that no matter how dark the tunnel may be, there will be rays of light at the end. I want to encourage our people, especially my fellow Ikales, the youths, never to give up. Ikale people are known to be resilience and visionary, consistent and persistent. In the face of this bad economy, this downturn economy, I want us to come up with a higher level of resilience, to come up with a higher level of creativity.

I want to encourage, particularly our people in Ikale, to be united. Let us see ourselves as one. And I want to encourage well meaning Ikale sons and daughters of Ikale Land who have carved out a niche for themselves in one profession or the other to give back to our communities. Let us see Ikale as our first constituency and empower the youths.

There is this Ikale adage that says "ti okete ba dagba tan, omu omo e lo maa mu". If we give back to our young ones, by the time we are in our 80s and 90s, they are the ones who will also take care of us. I told someone recently that even if you are still rich at 80 and 90, will you be your own doctor, lawyer or engineer at that age? You can't be everything to yourself. You still have your children. And your children will not be your biological children alone. For me, I don't see my biological children as my only children.

I probably picked that trait from Ikale or as an Ikale. That's how we were brought up I have people that I sponsor in school who are not my children. Even in my children's school, when they were in primary school, my children will tell you that daddy, there is a boy in my class that cannot pay his school fees, and the boy is brilliant. Daddy please come and pay it. And I will gladly pay it. So it is my prayer that God will help us all

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AMEN. I SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOU FOR HAVING ME SIR.

Thank you sir.

## POLITICAL NEWS

# Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo Embarks on Local Government Consultation Tour Ahead of Ondo Gubernatorial Election



*Jimi Odimayo*

As the 2024 gubernatorial election approaches in Ondo State, Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo, a prominent aspirant for the position, has launched his Local Government Campaign Consultation Tour. The tour commenced with a visit to Irele Local Government, where Hon. Odimayo engaged with leaders and members of the All Progressives Congress (APC), seeking their support for the upcoming primaries.

During his interaction with party members in Irele LG, Hon. Odimayo highlighted his legislative achievements and the impact he has had on the 2024 budget as a lawmaker. He emphasized various projects undertaken, such as the installation of boreholes in Iju Oke Oja and Igbotako, providing Subsidy Removal effect allowances to two hundred constituents, appointing eighty-nine (89) aides, and implementing educational initiatives like Summer Lessons for secondary school students.

Hon. Odimayo also shared news about the inclusion of a Modern Laboratory in Okitipupa/Irele Federal Constituency in the 2024 Nigerian budget. He assured the community that the execution of these projects would commence shortly, underscoring his commitment to infrastructural development. Furthermore, the gubernatorial aspirant outlined additional projects slated for implementation as per the 2024 budget. These include the construction of integrated solar lights, drilling thirty-five boreholes in Okitipupa/Irele Federal Constituency, and organizing training programs for women and youth in bead making and various skills.

Expressing confidence in securing the party's ticket, Hon. Odimayo called for the support of the people in the upcoming primaries. Notable figures, including Hon. Shadrack Olowojuni (Segro), the Ondo South Senatorial District Coordinator for Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo, Hon. Olayinka Alabi, Former Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development in Ondo State, and Hon. Olutayo Babalayo Esq (Olu T), the former APC Youth Leader in Ondo State, joined in encouraging party members to actively engage at the grassroots level and mobilize support for Hon. Odimayo.

Prominent community leaders, including Mrs Adesuko, Mr Omogunloye Ajigbade, Chief Victor Emonesene, and others, expressed their support and prayers for Hon. Odimayo's success in the April primaries.

The event witnessed the presence of distinguished APC chieftains, including Hon. Shadrack Olowojuni (Segro), High Chief Olamigoke (Baba Jagbale), Chief Femi Moyegun, Chief Segun Ogunwo, Elder Adetuwo, Elder Obajulaye (Baba Dedede), Hon. Femi Okunjemiruwa, Elder Robert Iluyemi, Hon. Stephen Olowodasa, Hon. Idogun Oluwole, Hon. Gbenga Olademehin, Comrade Sola Adekugbe, the Oloja of Barogbo Community, Chief Victor Emonesene, and Mrs. Kekeowo Elfielda, along with Youth Leaders across the ten (10) wards and Ward Chairmen.

In attendance with the gubernatorial aspirant were key figures such as Hon. Olayinka Alabi, Hon. Babalayo Olutayo (Olu

T), Hon. Abiodun Kayode (Olu K), and the Central Senatorial Women Leader for Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo, Mrs Akinyemi Olabimpe, among other significant individuals.

Meanwhile in similar spirit Hon Odimayo also visited Ilaje LG as part of his consultative meetings with party stakeholders.

Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo, engaged with the executives of Ilaje Local Government within the All Progressive Congress (APC), ward chairmen and supporters of Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo across the twelve wards (12) in the local government yesterday.

Hon. Odimayo while addressing the party chieftains and supporters underscored his extensive academic, professional, and political background, asserting his capability to elevate Ondo State to greater heights. In his pursuit of the party's nomination in the impending primaries, he sought the backing of the local APC executives, ward chairmen, leaders and party faithful.

The Chairman of APC in Ilaje Local Government, Apostle Adeboye Raphael extended a warm welcome to Hon. Odimayo, acknowledging his longstanding commitment to the APC. Apostle Raphael emphasized that Ilaje remains a second home for Odimayo. The party's leaders and supporters of Omo'oba Jimi Odimayo, gathered in various locations to welcome the philanthropist and voiced their confidence in his aspiration as they pledged united efforts to secure his victory in the forthcoming primaries.

The meeting witnessed the presence of key political figures, including the Former Chairman of Old Ilaje Local Government, Hon. Anjorin Coker, Hon. Orowole Akinwale Adamson, Ilaje's local government coordinator for Hon. Odimayo, Princess Aderonke, the APC Women Leader in Ilaje, Mr Sunday Ogungbamila, Chairman of Mahin ward, and Mr. Ogunfeyimi Adegbenro, Chairman of Ugbo Ward two among other notable individuals.

Accompanying the gubernatorial aspirant were prominent political leaders and associates, forming a robust entourage in anticipation of the forthcoming primary election.

## POLITICAL NEWS

# Okitipupa APC Leaders Endorse Senator Jimoh Ibrahim Bid for Ondo Guber



*The Ward consultation tour of the Aseyori Movement under the distinguished Senator representing Ondo South Senatorial District at the 10th Assembly and the leading aspirant of the All Progressives Congress in the forthcoming gubernatorial election in Ondo State, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim CFR hits Oloto/Ikoya ward, Ayeka/Igbodigo/Igodan/Okunmo ward, Ode - Aye 1&2 wards, Erinje ward and Okitipupa wards 1&2 today, January 26, 2024. The people praised and admired the senator for the demonstration of a true party man he demonstrated through the gesture.*

With less than three months remaining until the gubernatorial primary election in Ondo state, executives and 10 leaders per ward from the 13 wards in Okitipupa Local Government Area (LGA) have publicly expressed their endorsement of Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, CFR, as their preferred candidate for the upcoming gubernatorial primary election in the state.

Senator Tayo Alasoadura, the Chairman of Aseyori Leekansi in Ondo State, along with eight former local government chairmen, extended a warm welcome to all the executives and

leaders from the 13 wards of Okitipupa LGA, emphasizing the qualities that make Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, CFR, the ideal choice for the state's governorship. Senator Alasoadura commended Ibrahim's impactful representation during his brief tenure in the 10th Senate.

During an interview with the Aseyori media team, Hon Olufumi Omosuyi, a leader from Ode-aye in the local government, expressed the optimism of the local community, stating that Senator Ibrahim is perceived as the incoming governor of Ondo state due to his intellectual capabilities.

Omosuyi highlighted Ibrahim's outstanding profile and experience, describing him as the only aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) possessing the credentials and leadership qualities necessary to bring about transformative change in the state.

Furthermore, Omosuyi emphasized Senator Ibrahim's commitment to prioritizing the welfare of APC leaders in the state, citing the empowerment of 481 grassroots politicians in the local government as a testament to Ibrahim's dedication to their happiness and well-being.

# IKALE KIDS

## Moonlight Games

How are you children, hope you are all enjoying your holiday, were you able to make yourselves relevant at home this holiday by helping your mummies and daddies. The holiday is gradually going to an end and you will soon resume school. Be ready to do better this session.

It is unfortunate that many kids do not engage in these plays these days. Though I am not Ikale (I am Egba), my husband (who is Ikale) often recalls his experiences doing Moonlight Plays in Ikale. I found them not different from our own. It used to be a veritable avenue to learn. I encourage all Ikale parents to revive Moonlight Plays with their kids, wherever they may be – whether at home in Ikale, in the cities of Nigeria, or even abroad!

We shall continue our discussion on moonlight games and your benefits. We shall talk on two or three more types of games children can play at moonlight after the day's activities.

**EKUN ME'LAN :** Children will gather themselves and form a big circle, they will tighten their hands while holding themselves. One of them will be in the circle while the other will be outside, the one inside the circle represent the ram, while the one outside will represent the tiger. The one inside will want to come outside but will be careful not to be caught by the one outside. The Ram will do its possible best not to be caught by the tiger. Paraventure it is caught, the Ram will be outside and another set of people will do. As they are trying, to come out and the other trying to catch yhe one inside, the others will be singing. One person will lead while others will be responding

Lead : Ekun meran  
Chorus: mee  
Lead : o tori bo'gbo  
Chorus: mee  
Lead : o tori bo'gba  
Chorus: mee  
Lead : o fe mu o  
Chorus : mee  
Lead : ko ma le mu o  
Chorus: mee  
Lead : oju Ekun n pon  
Chorus : Iru Ekun , n le.

**Meaning of the song :** The lead is saying The tiger want to catch the Ram, and the response from the others is like the cry of the Ram : mee. The tiger is searching through the forest and the garden, and can not catch it, the tiger is furious and roaring as he could not catch the Ram, its tail too is rising up. The tiger will want to enter into the garden but the others will tighten their hands and be blocking him to prevent him from entering. But if the Ram was careless or relax the tiger may be able to catch it. And another set will take over.

### Advantages:

- 1)The game promote unity and love among the children
- 2) its a form of exercise and it keeps the children fit and healthy
- 3) it makes the children smart and courageous
- 4) it keeps them busy instead of engaging in activities that are not good,
- 5) it makes their day interesting and not boring.
- 6) its less dangerous..

### Disadvantages

- 1)It might be tiring sometimes ,if the tiger could not get the ram and they keep singing and singing.
- 2) if the person representing the tiger is not a bold and courageous child he may be easily tired and may be crying if he is a small child.

### MONINI MONINI

The children will all sit on the floor with their legs stretched out.one of them will bend down and be touching the legs of the children sitting down and be singing.

**Song:** *monini,  
monini monini  
Monini monin  
Mo barugbo kan lodo  
Moni o bun mi lomi mu  
O loun o bun mi lomi mu  
Mo ni o sapa kelenge  
Moni o sese kelelenge  
Bi ikako abiyamo  
Mini mini ka yi ko.*

*The summary* of the song is a child that met an old woman at the stream and ask the old woman to give him water but the old woman refused, so he's now describing the way the old woman looks, that the old woman arms and the legs are bent

The legs his hand touches last the person will bend it. This is how he will continue till all legs are bent and they will finish that section. They may continue by doing another round the first person will sit down another person will do it.

### ADVANTAGES

- 1)It promotes love and unity amongs children
- 2) Its a form of exercise that keeps then fit
- 3)it makes them healthy
- 4)Its a fast game
- 5) it makes them think, they should not be abusive so their legs too will not bend like old woman's leg

### DISADVANTAGES

- 1) The songs looks abusive
- 2) If they bend their legs for longbit may be painful to them.

### TALO'WA'NU OGBANAA.:

This is the like the yoruba version of 'Who is in the garden'. Children will gather themselves and form a big circle,they will put a small child in the middle, one of them will be outside the circle and will be



**Deaconess Omotayo Folayan**

singing and running at the same time, the others will be answering her.

Lead : Ta lo wa nu ogba naa  
Others: omo kekere kan ni  
Lead : se n wa wo  
Others: ma wa wo  
Lead : iwo lo pa  
Others ;: iwo lo mo

Lead : iwo lo gba iyawo soja to gbe weluwelu woja, omo bamku ti n wojuri , tele mi ka lo.

While singing and running, he will be touching each of them the last person he touches when he said 'tele mi kalo', will follow him, while the others will hold their hands back.. he will continue till their is no one and the little child in the middle is seen clearly and he too will follow thegardlike

### ADVANTAGES

- 1) It promote, love and unity among the children.
- 2) it keeps them fit and active..
- 3) Its healthy for the children

### DISADVANTAGES

it makes the children tired as they are running around  
it can make them to be hungry after the game as its energy sapping.

We have come to the end of moonlight game for now, till when next month. Keep being good children and face your studies as upu resume back to school.  
Bye for now.



# PHOTO NEWS

## DR PAUL AKINTELURE DECLARE FOR GOVERNOR



# PHOTO NEWS

## DR PAUL AKINTELURE DECLARE FOR GOVERNOR



# PHOTO NEWS

On The Campaign Trail Of Dr. Paul Akintelure



# ARCHIVE

## The Akoko-ikale: A Revision Of Colonial Historiography On The Construction Of Ethnic Identity In Southeastern Yorubaland (part 1)

*In this piece, OLUKOYA OGEN, a professor of history and international studies, Osun State University, gives an authentic story of the origin of Ikale-Akokos. Another Ikale News exclusive! This is a republication of the piece. Reactions are welcome.*

The Akoko-Ikale constitute a significant part of the Ikale sub-ethnic group in southeastern Yorubaland. However, as far as Yoruba historiography is concerned, the Akoko-Ikale and indeed the larger Ikale nation have suffered from neglect because they remain one of the least researched groups in Yorubaland. As a result of the dearth of serious academic works on the Ikale people, official and hegemonic accounts of Ikale's origin and ethnic identity that became institutionalized during the colonial era have become the abiding mantra in Ikale contemporary historical discourse. For instance, the Akoko-Ikale, as well as the generality of the people of Ikale, who are culturally, linguistically, and biologically of Yoruba stock, are widely perceived to have originated from Benin and so are Edoid people.

The need to address and underscore the threat to identity posed by Ikale's historiographical neglect and its fundamentally flawed Edo identity constitutes the major plank for this study. It is against this backdrop that this paper finds it expedient to focus on the origin and ethnic identity of the Akoko-Ikale. This important Ikale sub-group is singled out for scrutiny because of my belief that a systematic attempt at tracing the origin and pattern of migration of specific and very significant Ikale lineage groups such as the Akoko-Ikale represents the best way to discredit Ikale's widely alleged Edo identity and Benin ancestry.

The theoretical approach adopted is the genetic model of comparative historical inquiry. A genetic approach, when applied to the foregoing discourse, attempts to determine the ethnic identity of a people through investigating what they share in common with and wherein they differ from other societies (in this case, other Yoruba sub-ethnic groups) with which they are directly affiliated through lines of descent. Institutional and cultural similarities often rest on the



fact that one society descended from the other or that both had a common ancestor from whom each had acquired some traits?

As a major segment of the kale population, the Akoko-kale are found mainly in the Osooro district of Ikalaland, which happens to be the largest and most populous Ikale unit. Apart from the Osooro district of Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, the Akoko-kale also spread to Aiyede, Ayila, Ayetumara, Igodan Kade, Ajegunle, and so on, all in Ogun Waterside Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Archival accounts and secondary sources, as well as the official history of Osooro, like that of the other Ikale districts, state that the inhabitants of Osooro are Edoid people who migrated from Benin. Unofficial oral traditions collected in Ikalaland and Akokoland, however, give the impression that the Akoko-Ikale descended from hunters and warriors who migrated from the mainland Akoko-Yoruba country in the northernmost part of Ondo State, a distance of about two hundred and twenty kilometers from Ikalaland, probably during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries."

Given its wide territorial landscape and the fact that Akokoland represents a meeting ground for diverse peoples and cultures, ranging from Yoruboid, Edoid and Nupoid identities, it has been difficult to pinpoint the actual place where the Akoko-Ikale originated in Akokoland. While some Akoko

towns that speak various Yoruboid dialects—a few of which include, Ikare, Oka, Iira, Akungba, and Oba—have traced their origin to Ile-Ife, others like Isua, Epinmi, Ipe, Sosan, and Afa whose dialects are Edoid, claim that their movements to Akoko was directly from Benin. Yet, another section that comprises Ikaram, Akunu, Ibaram, Gedegede, Dada, and others whose dialects are an admixture of Yoruboid, Edoid, and Nupoid languages are believed to have migrated from Kabba in Kogi State. It is important therefore to find out if the Akoko-Ikale actually descended from any of these groups.

Rather than relying solely on conventional sources, such as archival documents, secondary sources, and oral history from palace historians, I draw on comparative evidence from Akoko-Ikale and Ise-Ifira totemic distribution, comparative dialectology, ethnographic surveys, oriki (praise poetry), family names, and rituals to establish a Yoruba origin and identity for the Akoko-Ikale.

Oriki is the most popular of the Yoruba oral poetic genres. Lasebikan aptly captures the historical significance of oriki:

**Oriki ni iso ibi ti enia ti se,**

It is oriki that reveals the origin of a person,

**bi won ti lagbara to ni idile won**

how powerful his ancestors were,

**bi nwon ti la to ati orisirisi nkan**

How wealthy they were and the

**akonitimwon se gbogbo.**

noble things that they had done.



# ARCHIVE

An analysis of the thematic content of a town's oriki tends to reveal the genesis of a town, the origin of its people, its taboo, ethos, and mores. Bolanle Awe sees oriki as a major contributory source for building up the panorama of Yoruba history. A comparative analysis of the oriki of the Akoko kale lineage and that of the Ise people in Ifira-Akoko offers the first clue to Akoko-Ikale's descent from Ise-Ifira. The opening verses of the lineage oriki of the Akoko-kale and that of Ise quarter in Ifira-Akoko read thus:

**Ise-Mira** (Akokoland)  
**Akoko-Ikale** (ikaleland)  
*Olokisi meji tako tabo*  
*Akoko oloke l oma ode*  
*Osungwa oro, igbehin oro*  
*Oma agunoke ma taju uku*

*Oma ta rokisi se oge*

*Oma oloke meji tako tabo*

The town of twin rocks of both sexes  
 Chief priests and priestess Fearless hill/rock  
 climbers that choose the hill as their  
 playground

Akoko people and their hilly/rocky terrain.  
 The descendants of *ade* fearless hill/rock  
 climbers Who originated from a town of twin  
 hillsrocks of both sexes.

Ikale's topography is characterized by its low elevation. In fact, the type of steep hills and high rising rocks found in all parts of Akokoland are virtually absent in the ikale country. This supports the fact that the ancestors of the Akoko-Ikale were migrants from Akokoland. It should be noted that the oriki of the Akoko-Ikale as noted above made reference to *olake meji tako tabo* This is similar to that of Ise quarter in Ifira-Akoko, which reads *olokisi meji takes tabe*." In Ifira dialect, *olokisi* means *olokiti* or *oloke* in the Ikale dialect. The fact, that the descendants of Akoko- Bale are described in their oriki as fearless hill climbers who are at home on top of hills also bears striking similarity to the oriki of the people of Ise in Ifira-Akoko, where the hilltop serves as their playground.

Apart from the significant similarities in their orik, shared totemic attributes between the Akoko-Ikale and the people of Ise-Ifira offers additional proof of their ethnic relatedness. Within the phenomenal development of new methodological techniques in African historiography, totemism has won wide recognition and acceptance. A totem is a natural object, animal, or plant that individuals or groups forbid and revere for reasons of self-identity. Totemism connotes that lineage groups or clans sharing a common totem, regardless of their modern

## The Akoko-ikale: A Revision Of Colonial Historiography On The Construction Of Ethnic Identity In Southeastern Yorubaland (part 1)

geographical spread, were ethnically related in the past. Thus totems are extremely helpful in discerning the patterns of migration and in tracing the line of ancestors or descendants.

The most prominent totem among the Akoko-Ikale is the porcupine, which is highly revered to the extent that all women married to Akoko-Ikale men and all the female descendants of the Akoko-Ikale are forbidden from eating or even stepping on the fins of the porcupine. The belief is that any woman that violates this rule would have her skin afflicted with various skin diseases before her eventual death. It is only among the people of the Ise quarter in Ifira-Akoko in the whole of Akokoland that a replication of this totem was discovered. Ise women and wives of Ise men at Ifira-Akoko are forbidden from eating or touching the porcupine." The reasons why the porcupine is revered among the Akoko-Ikale and the people of Ise in Ifira Akoko are also interrelated.

During the period of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which occasioned incessant attacks by the militarily powerful kingdom of Benin on Akokoland, the Ise in Ifira-Akoko was heavily depopulated. When it was discovered that it was mainly the men that were being seized and carted away, the women of Ise quarter rose up in defense of their male folks by using a porcupine to make sacrifice to the gods in order to ward off the attacks of the Benin marauders. It is generally believed that this religious sacrifice ended Edo military incursions and, as a way of commemorating this event, the porcupine became venerated. To this day, no woman must eat porcupine, touch it or step on its fins at Ise quarter. According to oral sources, dire adverse skin conditions culminating in death await any violation. The story among the Akoko-Ikale is that when their ancestors came to Ikaleland from their original home in Akoko, they either forgot or deliberately ignored the custom that forbids women from having anything to do with porcupine. Consequently, female children started dying in droves. The ifa oracle was consulted and this revealed that they must revert to the old practice that forbids the eating of porcupine. They were further directed to make rituals and sacrifices with this animal to appease the gods. This instruction was carried out and since then, the female children of the Akoko-Ikale women and those women married to Akoko-kale men have been barred from eating porcupine.

Looking for further corroboration, we found out that, apart from a common or shared oriki and the totemic attribute between the Akoko-Ikale and the people of Ise quarter in Ifira- Akoko, there are also striking similarities in family names, dialects, festivals, and religious roles. For instance, in Ikaleland the Akoko-Ikale are generally referred to as Akoko. There is no doubt that this nomenclature corroborates the fact that they are from Akokoland. Again, five of the most prominent family names among the Akoko-Ikale are found among the people of Ise quarters in Ifira-Akoko-Oguntimehin, Fagunwa, Oguntusin, Akinbuli, and Akindeko.

Of special importance is the reference to the religious role performed by the people of Ise in Ifira-Akoko traditional religious life, especially during the installation and coronation of the Olufira, the Oba of Ifira-Akoko. It is interesting to note that the Petu who is the head of the Akoko-Ikale, performs similar rituals and ceremonies during the installation and coronation of the Rebuja of Osooro in Ikaleland. These rituals are part of the compulsory traditional religious rites that must be performed on the Olufira and the Rebuja before their final installations.

Evidence from historical linguistics, especially comparative dialectology and lexicostatistics, provide additional evidence of Akoko-Ikale's descent from Ise quarter in Ifira- Akoko. Historical linguistics allows us to infer migration patterns of peoples in the past from the distribution of their languages. Linguistic evidence has proved useful for historians in establishing genetic links among the speakers of common languages. Akinjogbin and Atanda posit that linguistic evidence shows that the majority of the speakers of any language cannot originate from anywhere else rather than the home base of the language they speak.

Yoruba linguists have situated the Ikale dialect within the Yoruba dialectal continuum. Interestingly, the Ifira dialect is unmistakably a dialect of the Yoruba language. This particular point is surprising given the fact that Ifira is surrounded by such Edoid-speaking Akoko towns as Epinmi, Isua, Sosan, and Ipe. But most significantly, the dialect bears very close resemblance to the Ikale dialect both in its intonation and lexicosemantic structure. Apart from this, important specifically to highlight the methodological relevance of

## ARCHIVE

## The Akoko-ikale: A Revision Of Colonial Historiography On The Construction Of Ethnic Identity In Southeastern Yorubaland (part 1)



lexicostatistics of comparative dialectology in determining the ethnic identity of the Akoko-Ikale.

Lexicostatistics is a method designed to establish genetic relationships among languages by adding up the number of cognates in a standard word list which languages share and calculating the percentage-wise degree of similarity between the languages. Applied to our context, a group of 100 words was selected from the Ibadan Word List of 400 Basic schema these words were translated into standard Yoruba and Edo languages with the assistance of professional linguists in these languages. The translations were later compared and analyzed. The result shows that the degree of similarity between the two languages (cognate correspondence) only 19%

This correspondence between the Yoruba and Edo languages is based on true cognates identical and partially identical cognates whose differences are phonologically explicable because of their phonological regularity and consistency. This finding goes toward corroborating Armstrong's suggestion of the time-depth in the differentiation between the Yoruba and Edo language as 4,600 years. The implication is that the two languages have no recent diffusional or genetic resemblance. Indeed, the Ikale and Ifira dialects have never been classified as dialects of the Edo language. From the standpoint of linguistic evidence,

therefore, the inference is that the generality of the people of Ikale and Ifira have little or no genetic relationship with the Edo people.

Comparative dialectology on the other hand, is a phonological and semantic analysis of a select group of words in a standard wordlist that different dialects of a language share and calculating the cognate correspondence among the dialects. It is a useful means of deciphering the migration patterns of the sub-units in a common language group through the phonological and semantic analysis of its dialects. According to Adetugbo, dialectology seeks to characterize the nature, cause and course of discontinuities within a linguistic area. It studies language on the axes of both time and space.

Adetugbo concludes that dialectology has immense relevance to history because dialect studies offer convincing evidence of the patterns of migrations and historical origins of African precolonial peoples relying on the "Ibadan Word List of 400 Items," a group of 100 words was selected; Ikale and Ifira dialectal variants were also selected. The number of similar sounding words with the same meanings which these dialects share was added up. The percentage cognate correspondence between the two dialects was then calculated-with the result that the cognate correspondence of the Ifira and Ikale dialects is about 77%.<sup>40</sup>

From the percentages above we may conclude that Standard Yoruba (84%) and the Ifira dialect (77%) are cousins of the ikale dialect,

and that the Edo language (19%) is not related to either the Ikale or the Ifira dialect. Moreover, the present Regent of Ifira-Akoko, Princess Adejoke Adesulere, who incidentally is married to an Ikale man from Igodan near Okitipupa in Ikaleland, admitted that the first thing that struck her after getting married was the remarkable dialectal similarities between the Ifira and Ikale dialects. Again, the head of the quarter in Ifira-Akoko, Chief Foluso Aboluje who worked at the Ode-Aye farm settlement in Ikaleland for about five years in the early 1960s also confirmed the position of the Regent by acknowledging that he felt at home throughout his sojourn in Ikaleland because he could easily understand the Ikale dialect, which shares significant relationship with his own Ifira dialect. My own field studies in Akokoland also confirmed the Ikale-Ifira dialectal relationship.

Indeed, there is nowhere in the whole of Akokoland, apart from Ifira, where this dialectal similarity is replicated. Even the aforementioned-shared common totem between the Akoko-Ikale and the people of Ise-Ifira, the porcupine, is known as Ure in Ikale dialect and Un'e in Ifira dialect. Thus, relying on interdialectal and lexicostatistical evidence, I suggest that there is no significant linguistic relationship between the Ikale dialect and the Edo language to support the thesis that the Akoko-Ikale are Edoderived, or that Benin was the center of dispersal of the generality of the Ikale people. On the contrary, an Akoko-Ikale and Ifira-Akoko genetic relationship has been further confirmed by linguistic evidence.

Of fundamental importance to the thesis of this paper is the fact that the people of the quarter-as well as other quarters such as Ipinran, Irawo, Efon, and Iremu in Ifira-Akoko-are mainly from Modupere quarter in Ile-Ife. In fact, the people of Ifira-Akoko are generally referred to as Omo Modupere ni fe meaning, the descendants of Modupere in Ile-Ife. Interestingly, part of the original migrants from Modupere domiciled for a while at Okeluse under the Ojima of Okeluse. It is on record that succession disputes forced many groups to migrate from Okeluse to Ekiti, Akoko, and Ikole areas. Those who moved to Akokoland settled at Ifira-Akoko and named their quarter Ise or Use. It is for this reason that the Akoko-Ikale who later moved on to Ikaleland still refer to themselves as Oma lima nu Uhe (Use) or the descendants of Ojima in Okeluse. The lima (Ojima)

# ARCHIVE

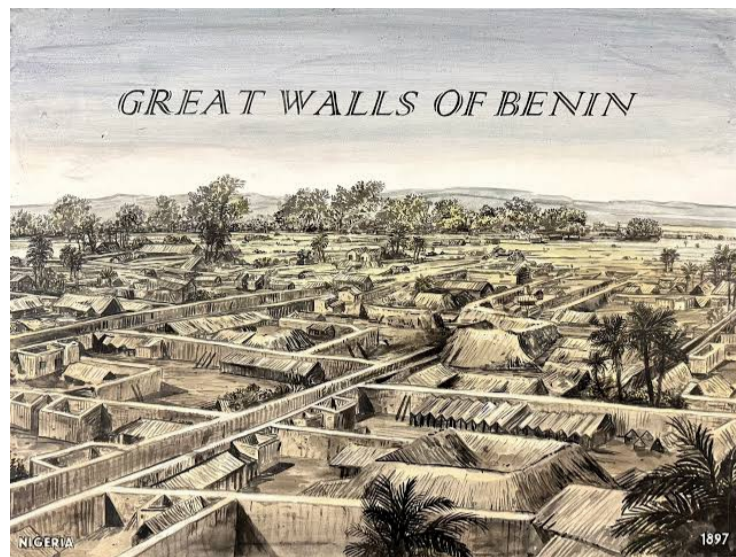
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chieftaincy is also a hereditary Akoko-Ikale family title in the Osooro kingdom of Ikaleland.

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing historical analysis of the origin of the Akoko-Ikale is that, if a veritable segment of the Ikale population could be traced to Ise quarter in Ifira Akoko, and if the people of Ise in Ifira-Akoko are the descendants of migrants from Ile-Ife. the bead and simplistic tag of an Edo identity for the inhabitants of Ikaleland becomes logically defensible and historically unsustainable. I should note that the result of this study tallies with findings from research that I have conducted on other major groups in Ikaleland especially in places like Ode-Idepe, Odelrele, Ode-Ajagba, Ode-Aye, Ode-Erinje, Ode-Igbodigo, and others.

There is no doubt that the erroneous notion that continues to ooze out from archival accounts, secondary sources, and contemporary oral history that Ikaleland was essentially and originally peopled by Benin migrants is the basic reason why core Yoruba groups like the Akoko- Ikale are also jointly classified as having originated from Benin. It seems apposite at this juncture then to address briefly some fundamental questions germane to the prevailing consensus on Ikale's ethnic identity. Why has the Benin theory of origin become the dominant paradigm in Ikale historical discourse? Why has it retained such an attraction to the contemporary Ikale mind? What could have been the underlying motive of the British colonial officials for actively supporting and documenting a distorted version of Ikale origins and ethnic identity?

The first major factor that informed the easy acquiescence to the Benin theory of origin, its wholesale acceptance, and its systematic dissemination by the major Ikale ruling houses is the legendary belief that the first Abodi, Jabado, a paramount ruler in Ikaleland, was the son of Oba Esigie of Benin. Other Edo-derived Ikale monarchs who came to Ikaleland with the Abodi were also reported to be Benin princes. What is seldom remembered, however, is the fact that the Abodi episode merely represented the military subjugation of the indigenous Ikale-Yoruba inhabitants of Ikaleland, as well as the grafting of a new dynasty on an existing sociopolitical framework. The



Abodi group was able to establish hegemony over some of the existing Ikale dynasties relative easily because of support from the militarily powerful kingdom of Benin. As B.A. Agiri put it:

Among non-literate societies, dynastic changes are legitimised in either of two ways: the succeeding dynasty discredits its predecessor completely and establishes its own legends and myths or it claims to be a direct descendant of its predecessor and incorporates its own myths into the existing ones.

For the Abodi group, the method of legitimation was the obliteration of the history of the indigenous people it met in Ikaleland and the establishment of a new history centered on migrations from Benin. The Benin theory was employed especially by the Abodi group as a strategy to legitimate political power. In an attempt to consolidate its hold on power further, the Abodi group required a new history, not only for the new dynasties it had helped to create, but also for the people it had subjugated.

Thus the Benin theory seeks the origins of the Abodi kingship rather than that of the Ikale people. In fact, it deliberately refuses to recognize the distinction between the history of a few Edo-derived Ikale monarchies and that of the Ikale people at large. What has been passed down from one generation to the other is that the dynastic history of a few powerful Edo-derived ikale ruling houses represents the authentic people.

With the advent of the rule and the colonial of the British decision to embark on officials writing of the assessment ikale intelligence and the bennin reports, seemed destined to inhere performantly to ikales sociohistorical psyche. The absolute confidence reposed in the reliability of these Colonial records by the ikale elite is a major reason why the Benin theory has survived so long. The usual defense is that these British officials recorded the traditions

they met on ground and as such their accounts are accurate and objectives.

Through these records the myth of an Edo origin for the generality of Ikale people became the dominant paradigm seized on by several Ikale dynasties and imposed on the Ikale people.

Curiously, the "Ikale Assessment and Intelligence Reports," which represent the core of Ikale archival accounts, relied mainly on the information provided by only three pro-Benin Ikale chiefs. These were all warrant chiefs selected by the colonial government for their complete loyalty to the British Crown and they all acted under the influence and active support of the Abodi. According to the "Ikale Assessment Report" Three chiefs are recognised as being the Ikale historians, Oloja Nigwo of Igbotako-Oshoro.... Bale Akinubi of Idepe and Bale Adekuroye of Aye, and most of the general history was related by them.

Given the fact that the general history of the Ikale people was related by only three chiefs, whose records and legacies showed a stubborn loyalty to the Benin throne and the British local officials, it is not surprising that the report proved unsatisfactory even to the colonial government. Indeed, the Hon. Secretary, Southern Provinces in a letter dated 26 June 1933 stopped just short of completely rejecting the entire report. His words: His Honour was not convinced that the people as a whole, from the lowest unit in the social scale to the highest, had been consulted at every stage of the enquiry, and that the scheme reflected not only their wishes but also accorded with their natural institutions."

"Unfortunately and ironically, these very archival accounts, whose credibility had been questioned and undermined by the British colonial officials who produced them, now form the kernel of Ikale's contemporary oral and written history.

For the British colonial officials, the Benin theory of origin appeared plausible simply because it was related by "responsible and trusted Ikale chiefs." However, while it is partly true that the British officials recorded the traditions that were related to them, we must not also forget that the primary objective of these officials was how to administer their colonies effectively and efficiently. The scenario in Ikaleland was particularly compelling. Confronted with a vast territory made up of fourteen kingdoms in a heavily forested area of Yorubaland, the British officials had to

*To be continued in next edition.*

## POLITICAL NEWS

# Senator Jimoh Ibrahim pulls grassroots crowds across Ondo State



The political landscape in Ondo State is buzzing with anticipation as Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, representing Ondo South, intensifies his campaign for the gubernatorial election as he gets set to clear the first hurdle, winning the APC ticket, in April.

His campaign train is making waves, boasting a diverse composition of core party loyalists, trusted followers, and enthusiastic youth and women supporters—all united in their dedication to the continuation of good governance in the post-Akeredolu era.

The pivotal question currently echoing across Ondo State is, who is best poised to lead the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) to victory in the upcoming November governorship election?

During a recent stop in Ondo Central, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, a notable businessman, and serving senator, conveyed a message of hope to the people, assuring them that Ondo State would be in safe hands if he were elected governor. Speaking in Ondo, the second-largest town in the Central District, Senator Ibrahim emphasized his commitment to prudent management, pledging growth and development across various sectors.

Many party chieftains view Ibrahim as a promising candidate, embodying essential qualities for visionary leadership. Prince Segun Oluyede, a member of the campaign group 'Aseyori Leekansi,' highlighted Ibrahim's impressive academic background, diverse business ventures, and impactful

infrastructure investments, citing these as indicative of his capability and trustworthiness.

"Compassion shines through his genuine concern for the downtrodden, demonstrated in philanthropic initiatives, legislative efforts, and transformative projects," added Oluyede.

Since the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) officially announced the election, Ibrahim has wasted no time, embarking on an extensive tour of the 18 local government areas and subsequently the 203 wards. Beginning his campaign from his native Ondo South, he has garnered substantial support, with many party members expressing confidence in his experienced political leadership.

# POLITICAL NEWS

## Senator Jimoh Ibrahim pulls grassroots crowds across Ondo State

While traversing Ondo Central, Ibrahim addressed the infrastructural challenges facing towns and villages, connecting with both the affluent and less privileged members of the community. Next on the itinerary is Ondo North, with a recent reconciliation meeting held in the district to align party leaders ahead of the by-election in Akoko North/East Federal Constituency. Thousands of supporters turned out in the South and Central to welcome Ibrahim, benefiting from palliatives distributed by his campaign team. The senator promised further support and initiatives, leaving the party faithful enthusiastic and supportive.

With the primary scheduled for April, Ibrahim faces competition from at least 10 other aspirants, the majority of whom hail from the South. Some question the timing of his visits to local party chapters, but Ibrahim insists that it is crucial for the grassroots, who are core electors, to be familiar with the candidates. "I would not mind doing it again because of the high regard I have for the generality of the people," Ibrahim stated, addressing concerns about opponents replicating his strategy later in the primary season.

Describing himself as the most experienced contender with an unmatched pedigree, Ibrahim's motivation stems from his commitment to the development of Ondo State. He envisions transforming the state into a self-sustaining investment haven, leveraging its abundant human and natural resources.

At 57, Ibrahim's leadership capability is underlined by his intellectual prowess, holding nine degrees from reputable institutions globally. His business ventures, ranging from banking and insurance to oil and gas, real estate, hospitality, and aviation, showcase his diverse expertise.

In addition to his financial and philanthropic support to constituents, Ibrahim has actively contributed to legislative initiatives during his eight months in the



*L-R, Mrs Modupe Jimoh-Ibrahiim, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, Gov. Biodun Oyebanji of Ekiti State and immediate past SSG of Ondo State Dr. Princess Oladunni Odu at the Akure Aiport. The political gladiators met as Jimoh transited on his grassroots tours.*



Senate. He sponsored bills for new educational institutions, proposed amendments, and the establishment of the Bitumen Development Commission.

As the campaign unfolds, Ibrahim's focus remains on direct outreach to APC members and leaders, showcasing himself as a candidate capable of transforming the fortunes of Ondo State. The senator's multifaceted approach includes empowerment initiatives, infrastructure development, and legislative advocacy, all aimed at building stronger support for the APC in the upcoming elections.

## POLITICAL NEWS

# Paul Akintelure Gains Ground as he launches his Visionary Plans

The city of Akure witnessed a frenzied display of emotions and enthusiasm early February as politician and medical doctor, Dr. Paul Akintelure, formally declared to run for the coveted position of Ondo State governor under the All Progressive Congress, APC.

Dr. Akintelure, a.k.a. DPA was running mate to Rotimi Akeredolu's first attempt to be governor of the state.

He arrived at the Correspondent Chapel was met with a warm welcome from SOME leaders and members of the APC in Ondo State, who gathered in large numbers at the venue. The event unfolded with an atmosphere of funfare and camaraderie, providing a platform for the people to express their unwavering support for his vision and plans for the state.

During the interactive session with the press, Dr. Paul passionately outlined his comprehensive developmental programs for Ondo State. Covering key areas such as education, healthcare, workers' welfare, agriculture, pensioners' support system, and infrastructure, he shared his vision for transforming the state. Dr. Paul also revealed ambitious plans to generate substantial employment opportunities for young graduates annually, aiming to eradicate unemployment and secure a brighter future for the people of Ondo State.

Post the press interaction, Dr. Paul embarked on a strategic visit to the three zones of Ifedore Local



Government Area, where he received a warm reception from DPA leaders led by the indefatigable former Speaker of Ondo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Ayo Agbonmuserin. Accompanying him were esteemed leaders such as Dr. Adeluse Obe and Hon. Segun Ojunrongbe. Seizing the opportunity, the governorship aspirant addressed the party faithful, sharing his meticulously crafted plans and visionary outlook for the state.

The overwhelming reception accorded to Dr. Paul by DPA leaders and members serves as a testament to the growing support for his governorship aspirations.

As the electoral clock ticks down, Dr. Paul's developmental agenda is anticipated to resonate with the people, solidifying his standing as a strong and viable candidate for the governorship of Ondo State.

The visit to Ifedore Local Government Area has not only strengthened Dr. Paul Akintelure's rapport with the DPA but has also ignited the imaginations of the people with his transformative programs. As the political landscape in Ondo State evolves, one thing is indisputable: Dr. Paul's candidacy is on the rise, and his vision for a better Ondo State is finding resonance among the populace. The event signals a promising trajectory for Dr. Paul Akintelure in the political arena.

# LIQUID

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## POLITICAL NEWS

# Afenifere has no regrets supporting Tinubu to be president – Secretary

*Culled: Punch*

*National Organising Secretary of the pan-Yoruba socio-political organisation, Afenifere, Chief Kole Omololu, shares his thoughts with PETER DADA on the current crisis bedevilling the group, among other issues*

**When did you become a chieftain of Afenifere?**

I was involved in the NADECO (the defunct National Democratic Coalition) movement in the United Kingdom; I was among Nigerian citizens demonstrating against the military junta headed by Sani Abacha. We covered very important areas of the capital of the United Kingdom, the Westminster Parliament, White Hall, Downing Street, Trafalgar Square, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. We would now settle at the Nigeria High Commission. At that moment, none of us knew that our photos had been taken and forwarded to Nigeria. I even took the risk of carrying my last baby by then on my neck to demonstrate at the High Commission. She is 34 years old now. No wonder she is a very strong manager at work now. I was arrested at the airport on my visit home and labelled an unpatriotic citizen.

**So, how did you escape from military captivity?**

How I escaped is a story in my forthcoming memoir. Before this, I was a follower of now Oba Olu Falae, who introduced me to Afenifere. I became the chairman of Afenifere UK, which enabled me to attend the caucus meeting in Nigeria. Pa Abraham Adesanya affirmed my chairmanship, which was recommended to him by my Afenifere colleagues. We hosted Pa Adesanya at a Nigerian restaurant called Labalaba in Brixton SW London. We further hosted the late Uncle Bola



*Kole Omololu*

Ige and Pa Solanke Onasanya at the same venue. Later on, we now launched Afenifere with the attendance of Pa Olanihun Ajayi, Pa Ayo Adebajo, Alhaji Ganiyu Olawale Dawodu, and Oba Olu Falae on Woolworth Road, London SE17. I was appointed the national organising secretary by the leader, Pa Folorunso (OFR), about 10 years ago or so.

**How is Afenifere faring now under the leadership of Chief Reuben Folorunso?**

I have never come across a leader like Pa Folorunso. He is exceptionally accommodating and deep with few words. Papa is a 1951 graduate of the University of Ibadan. He was one of the young intellectuals sitting around the table with the late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo. When the likes of Prof (Sam) Aluko, and Prof Abovade Cole dined with the leader (Awolowo), young Folorunso would

be there. Most of his contemporaries in the party were just running errands for the leader. Discussing issues with serious mental magnitude with the leader, you would find the young Reuben there.

As soon as he became the acting leader during the illness of our highly cherished and beloved leader, the Apamaku of Nigeria, Chief Abraham Aderigbe Adesanya, Pa Folorunso started picking up the fragments of what remained of Afenifere after the 2003 general elections. Not a single public statement was made without clearance from Pa Adesanya. The meetings moved to his Akure home after the death of Pa Adesanya. He would allow every shade of opinion before he passed his comment. Because of his welcoming nature, members strive to go to Akure for meetings despite the challenges of finance and security in the land. He has the ears of the President and

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governors. Under Pa Fasoranti, Afenifere is doing very well.

**It appears that the succession plan of the group is shaky. What are the laid down succession plan of Afenifere from the inception?**

The founder of the group was Chief Obafemi Awolowo. He died in 1987; our leaders met at Ikenne (Ogun State). Chief Bisi Onabanjo nominated Pa Michael Adekunle Ajasin. There was a secondment and the house unanimously voted Pa Ajasin. The meeting moved from Ikenne to Owo, the hometown of Pa Ajasin. Pa Ajasin fell sick as a result of old age, he graciously appointed Senator Abraham Adesanya to act on his behalf. After the appointment, the meeting continued in Owo. Why? It was because Pa Adesanya was acting on behalf of Pa Ajasin. He briefed the leader on the outcome of all meetings.

Chief Ajasin died later; the meeting moved to Ijebu Igbo where Senator Abraham Adesanya was unanimously elected as the leader. When Senator Abraham Adesanya fell sick, he appointed Fasoranti to act on his behalf. During this period, the convention of Afenifere remained intact. All meetings were held at the leader's place. Why was this so? It was because the role of an acting leader was meant to be a buffer and support system to the leader. The position is held in trust for the leader. Afenifere never had a retired leader, it is a life position.

As a result of fatigue of calamities that befell the leader, he decided to step aside and appoint an acting leader in the person of Pa Ayo Adebajo, and a deputy, HRH Dipo Olaitan, until the positions were scrapped on January 24, 2024, to pave the way for Afenifere National Elders' Caucus. Their decision will still be subject to the general assembly.

**At the recent meeting in Akure, the position of acting leader was scrapped but Pa Adebajo's group disagreed with the decision. What is going to**

**happen now?**

The Afenifere high command has spoken. Its decision is final.

**Some have linked the crisis in Afenifere to events before the 2023 general elections when Pa Ayo Adebajo insisted that the Yoruba socio-political organisation would support the Labour Party presidential candidate, Peter Obi, instead of Bola Tinubu. But the presidential election is over and a winner has emerged. Why is the crisis still on?**

The disagreement is in the open and not unusual. Remember that the leader, Pa Fasoranti, addressed the group in August 2023 and expressed his dissatisfaction with the way Afenifere was being run. He was concerned about the erosion of the collective leadership style of the group. He advised against dictatorial tendencies.

The leader believes Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu is the best who can implement what Afenifere stands for. He did it with the knowledge of most Afenifere and Yoruba leaders. He never singularly imposed any candidate on us; it was a collective decision. The decision to support Asiwaju was beyond Tinubu. He was seen as the best among the pack in all ramifications.

**What have been the roles of the other chieftains of the group in ending the crisis?**

They are making efforts. Let us give kudos to them because they have been striving to keep this group together and realise that Afenifere is a legacy group bequeathed to us by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his compatriots. At our August 2023 meeting, the members ran riot, demanding the expulsion of some individuals, but thanks to Oba Falae, who deployed his experience to quell the action. His resilience, wisdom, and brilliance are second to none, as he reminded members of the essence of Omoluabi in a Yoruba person. Dr Segun Mimiko deployed his time and resources to seek and sue for peace,

likewise Senator Iyiola Omisore. Archbishop Ayo Ladigbolu intervened and asked us to put Yoruba at the topmost of our hearts. Basorun Seinde Arogbofa was not daunted in suing for peace. He took personal risks for the sake of the group.

**So, what do you think is the way out of this crisis?**

The way out of the crisis is that the restructuring of the group has started to make it relevant to her calling.

**Afenifere was known for its constant call for the restructuring of the country. How come your group has not reminded President Tinubu of the need to begin the process of restructuring the country?**

I am concerned a little that this government will not take restructuring seriously; I will say that is their direction. Let us remember that they are the ones who included restructuring in the APC manifesto, and then we heard that President (Muhammadu) Buhari said they were not going to touch it because it was Afenifere's manifesto, and that Asiwaju and his people were pushing it.

If that is true, which I am looking at a strategic government, the way the man will handle restructuring will not be the way he wants it, maybe he wants an incremental restructuring in some area first before a statutory restructuring. When I say statutory, it has to have legislative backing. In the 2014 confab, I think the President was told to push it to the National Assembly for the benefit of what is called restructuring or rearrangement, I think a lot of people are taking the word 'restructuring' as a negative illustration. It is just grammar; we are talking about rearrangement of things to work better.

**Take for example, there was a time in Lagos when Ikorodu Road was impassable; it is a federal road but it is inside Lagos. The road was bad and the federal attention was not there.**



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**Look at the international airport road, Lagos; look at the road from there to the city, but the government of Lagos stepped in and did it by itself, waiting for reimbursement from the Federal Government. Why do we allow that to happen? Why do we not allow the state government to take care of all these things?**

States should be in charge, it should be in their budget. Bridge and road construction should be rearranged for things to work. How can someone in Abuja be in charge of the road in Aba because it is a federal road? All these things should be restructured. Why will Lagos State be collecting as much as half of the budget of the states combined? There should be a rearrangement. We are not encouraging productivity, but encouraging laziness. If you are hard-working as a state, the government should compensate you according to the amount you remit to the federal purse, rather than taking everything to a particular country; I am sure that those who encourage unitary government are regretting it now.

The major restructuring we want now is state police; this is very essential; the most important person in the life of a Yoruba is their king. They respect their kings more than the president. Look at them (kings) being killed and kidnapped by hoodlums and terrorists because we don't have enough policemen to guide the citizens. Substantial numbers of policemen are attached to big men (the VIPs). I just believe that state policing is important. The states should handle them; the people know each other. If a stranger is in their midst, they will know. Nigerians are tired of this mess (insecurity).

**Your group supported President Tinubu in the last election, but the administration has yet to ease the suffering of the people. Are you not regretting supporting him?**

We are not regretting anything. The continuation effect of former President Buhari's legacy is what President Tinubu is battling now. Terrorists,

bandits, and evil men of the underworld are out everywhere. Buhari bankrupted the humanity in us. There are satanic influences everywhere. It is like President Tinubu is starting from ground zero to rebuild Nigeria. Take, for example, most of our crude oil has been sold, swapping it for goods. The NNPC could not get enough forex to meet demand; hence the law of demand and supply will come into play in the market. The effect on inflation is hyper. The yoke on the people is burdensome.

The government must subsidise food and food items now. Food is a priority. For our safety, a total war on insecurity should be declared. Nigeria has 310,000 police personnel; out of these, about 100,000 are looking after big men, leaving 210,000 to look after 220 million citizens. It is laughable. The Federal Government can start as a pilot project with the state police system. The South-West is ready with the Amotekun, while Lagos has the Neighbourhood Watch Corps. Arm the personnel with the required tools. Apart from the internal turmoil, no foreigner will come and invest in an unsafe environment.

**What do you think should be done about the japa syndrome in Nigeria? Do you think it is right for Nigerian youths to abandon their country for greener pastures elsewhere?**

People are not just migrating from Nigeria but from other countries too; people migrate for more opportunities, including better education, and I believe that after their studies, they'll come back. Because of Internet communication, the youth know what's going on everywhere in the world and they want to be there. They see development over there and they want to experience how it feels. If they are professionals like doctors that we need most here, the government should finance them by providing more facilities so that the hospitals will be well equipped. We have some of the

best medical practitioners in the world; when they go abroad, they perform excellently. So, we are appealing to the government to look at our medical professional area; let us encourage them by providing good facilities for them and paying them good salaries.

There is nothing abroad that cannot be here; God has provided us with so many facilities to grow, and we have been told that by former American President, Barak Obama. The government should repair the damage that has been done and start afresh. It should also encourage the youth; Nigerian youths are one of the most brilliant in the world. They excel everywhere they find themselves.

**Chief Obafemi Awolowo brought about the idea of free education in the South-West, but that idea is no longer a priority for today's government at any level and that is one of the reasons people leave the country. What can be done to make Nigerians achieve quality and affordable education?**

Chief Obafemi Awolowo said the weapon for development is education. Without being informed, without being trained, without being educated, we are still going to be operating a primitive system. Many developed countries of the world don't take education for granted. For example, in the United Kingdom, education is just like crude oil. They invest big in it, which makes it one of the best in the world. People travel from other parts of the world to study in the UK. For their children, they must go to school. Everything is free up to age 18. After that, you will go to higher institutions. There is what we call a student loan; the government will provide it for you. Everything you need to have a good education, the government will provide it. After completing your education, you will start to work. So, education and health are very vital. Education should be our number one priority for development.

# PHOTO NEWS



*PHOTOS: Ondo South Senator and Billionaire business mogul, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, CFR, his wife, Mrs Modupe Jimoh Ibrahim, The Ekiti State Governor, His Excellency, Mr Biodun Oyebanji and the Immediate past Secretary, Ondo State Government (SSG), Princess Oladunni Odu during their arrival at the Akure Airport on Sunday, February 4, 2024.*



# FEATURE IKALE PROVERBS with Baba Liliken



**Ikale News;** Baba le o. How Ikale many proverbs do you have for us this month?

**Baba Liliken:** I have just four for you and I am sure you will find them very interesting and enlightening. But first, as a good, teacher, let me give you a test. Tell me any four of the Ikale Proverbs that I have told you so far.

**Ikale News:** Ah, Baba iyen de a le die o. We call it impromptu test. I used to have a professor those days that used to do that. He would just come to class and do test...without any warning o

**Baba Liliken:** Yes now. I had only Grade II but Grade II of those days is of higher quality than you B.Ed now. Hmmm *ji Oloun ko wa yo o. Oya me gbo...*

**Ikale News:** Okay Sir. Ine: “Ema uboyi obiren gwo bima, jaa ta fi ji gbe ago ti una”. Eji:

“Igi 'yia a mu eyin ti, j'e gbene duro, bo ka gwo lu'ne ee le pa one”. Iketa: “Wo gha n'aye, emi la e mo gha n'aye; we wa ka bimi gho kiseyi Oron ti ri?”

**Baba Liliken:** *Wo gbiyanju. Okun ikeren..*

**Ikale News:** “Omade ee ma oogun, e peun efo; e e ma fi uku 'yi aa pa re yen”.

**Baba Liliken:** *Wo gbiyanju gidi.* Now, let me give you additional proverbs that are relevant to the present times. **Oliwin ee**

**sun aran, yana wagho sun aghota.**

Translation: “the person that excreted feaces (shit) did not excrete worm, you that is a passer-by (who saw him excreting) now you excrete a venomous snake!”

**Ikale News:** Wow! Baba, I know the meaning. The person who is concerned about a matter is quiet...is not even saying anything. You that is not directly concerned you are the one making trouble.

**Baba Liliken:** Excactly. You got it. It's like in this political dispensation now. Our sons Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim and Dr. Paul Akintelure are seeking the ticket of the APC to be our governor. Their supporters now start fighting each other, calling out one another. Whereas this two distinguished sons go about peacefully in love and would never smite each other. You will now ask them, “can you be more concerned than the persons contesting?” *Ko se ke, ji Oliwin ee sun aran, ji yana wagho ti e sun agbaadun?*” I still used the proverb last week when settling a quarrel between two youths in Iyansan. One said the other borrowed money from him and refused to pay back. It was a very big fight o. I settled the matter and the person who borrowed gave the lender two weeks to pay back. The mother of the lender now said “no”. She said the borrower would not pay as he promised. We now started appealing to

her. She refused o. So I now asked her: *Oliwin ee sun aran, ko se ke mama, ji yana wagho tie sun aghota?*

**Ikale News:** Very relevant to our times, Baba. The English have a similar proverb to that: “Why are you more Catholic than the Pope?”

**Baba Liliken:** Good! Let me give you one more: **Ikale jii...** “**One yi aa gha ko ja ee, ji a ton duro dee, ee gha koja e.**” The person you would leave behind and you then wait for (to catch up with you) it is better you don't leave that person behind.

**Ikale News:** Yes... it is better you take him or her along with you so that you pace up together.

**Baba Liliken:** You are a very good student. That is it. It really means also that you carry out your responsibility now so that you will not have to make extra effort or waste time doing it later. For example, try to support your siblings now that you should so that their failures in future would not fall back on you.

**Ikale News:** Thank you Baba. One more for this month, and we go...

**Baba Liliken:** **Owo Umale, oun ghen mu ton ada ori e se rin.** The masquerade adjusts his crown by himself. The masquerade is one wearing the crown. He is in the best position to know where the crown does not fit not his assistant or people watching the masquerade. The English equivalent is “The person who has the shoe on knows where it is pinching him”, although that really a translation. They have similar meaning. The Owo umale proverb is saying you are in the best position to turn your life or matter better.

Go and research the meaning of this one. And we will discuss it next “**Oma'ne ee le sidi bebere, j'a ko ireghe hi oma onomue?**” *Wo ma ka hedo o!*