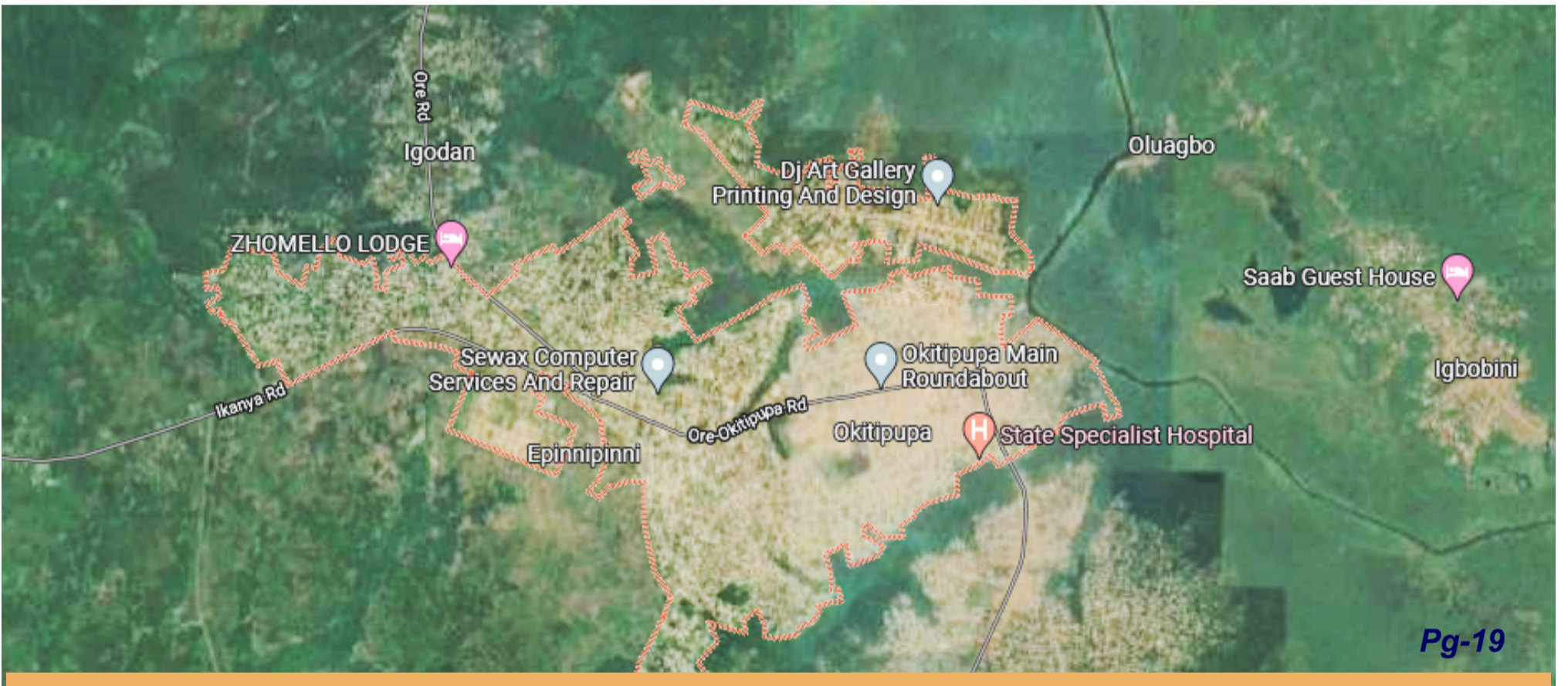




GOVT NEEDS TO DO MORE IN IKALELAND - AKEREMALE



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EDDY FLOATS SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME IN HONOUR OF HIS WIFE, OLUFEMI



Igbotako indigenes to tackle Ondo State Government on status of Rebuja throne



Will anything change in the 2023 elections?

BITTER PILLS
by Bolu John Folayan



Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, PhD OFR, (Part 1)

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MATTERS ARISING

Mo ki dede ikale, ilaje, apoi,
arogbo tule tokoo!

How are you coping with times? I don't want to say the times are hard because as you read this some people are commissioning new houses and launching new cars while others are looking for their one-square meal! The important thing is that we must not give up the struggle.

Finally, we were able to get an interview with the distinguished community leader, retired commissioner of police, Yomi Akeremale. We were about to do the interview several weeks ago and he lost somebody close and we had to reschedule. I thank my indefatigable Abuja Bureau Chief Bayo Jimoh for his persistence. We serve you the interview in this edition.

Barrister Akeremale is a committed Ikale development activist. The man simply loves anything Ikale. My first meeting with him was over 15 years ago when he was DPO Idimu, Lagos. During his service as DPO I was like a defacto DPO.

Anyone who had police issue I would just give a call and introduce myself as Editor of *Ikale News*. That was all. He always assisted even until years later when we physically met.

In Abuja his house was "hostel" for Ikale people irrespective of where they were from. Once you speak Ikale dialect, you are in. We are proud to know Ikale has people like him and we will continue to reach out for them and celebrate them.

We are entering the peak of the political season. We are doing the best we can to enlighten to our people. We are planning interviews with all contestants. We want them to tell us what they have in stock for the people. I overheard a politician say that those contesting for assembly at local and national levels cannot do anything for the community

but to just line their own pockets. That's not correct. Go to Kebbi State and see Senator NaAllah has transformed his community. Come to Yewa West and see Senator Olamilekan Yayi Adeola has been doing in Ogun State using his Lagos West slot (he is not even elected Ogun West Senator yet).

I had a long discussion with Dr. Sola Jimoh contesting for Ondo State House of Assembly during the primary elections this year. And we shared rich ideas on what he can do if he wins. Its about ideas and exposure.

A lawmaker who has influence and ideas will do a lot for the society. But those who from obscured locations would only admire the outstanding ones.

People like ID Kekemeke and Kuku, even Dino Melaye made their names as law makers. And with those names they were able to do a lot.

So, let us elect those who can deliver the goods as we prepare for the big one: The governorship election.

A lot of people have been asking me the Ikale Central Orgnizaionthat I promised to revamp. Hmmm, I am kuku on it. I have been consulting. This Ikale News job is strictly community service and we have to also do something to eat.

It is a project that solo effort will not accomplish. But by November end, I would have finished my consultation and move to action. Certainly, there is no going back on the project. If ICO is not "revampable" we form another body to actualize our goals. What we want is a body that unites all Ikales; that serves as the mouth piece of Ikale people; that develops a masterplan for our strategic development that the government at all levels, NGOs, philanthropists etc can tap from.

We floated two events early when we started Ikale News: a quiz and competitions in honour of late Aye community leader, late Chief Fadani and late socialite and Philanthropist, Asiwaju Benson Akindeju. We could not get off the ground as nobody applied online. This was the real picture I needed to know that education is in shambles in Ikale. Imagine! Some of my team members advised me to do it in analogue form instead of online. But I disagreed. If a secondary school student of the 21st Century cannot open an email address or does not have an email address, forget!

I am however thinking of doing something on sports – may table tennis champion for kids - of in honour of Asiwaju Benson soon by the special grace of God. If we do education and it fails, we can try sports. What we will not do is Yahoo-Yahoo or "Illegal ni Board abi Big road"

We have cancelled Ikale Awards planned for this year because of the political season. There is no way we can do it now without giving it political coloration, and we don't want that. It has never been and will never be. Lets hope for 2023 by His grace. Until next edition, *a ka hedo o*.



Bolu John Folayan, PhD
Publisher

OPINION

ASUU, Buhari And His Cocky Education Minister'

There have been several rhetorical questions on this page – from whether President Muhammadu Buhari would be able to make history to if there would indeed be some redemption songs for the president who has barely nine months and nine days to return to Daura or Kaduna. Verily, verily there is a sense in which one can read some writings on the walls and conclude that the lanky General can't make history anymore. He never listened to the lyrics of all redemption songs renditions for the past seven years and three months.

All I have to say now is a recourse to my February 18, 2018 reflection on “Thank God, Buhari Won 2015 Election” (<https://guardian.ng/opinion/thank-god-buhari-won-2015-election/>) without which the nation would have been engrossed in a mourning and lamentation over the best president Nigeria never had. All we have to say as a people now is 'Thank you Lord for averting a disaster foretold by directing the steps of the then President Goodluck Jonathan to accept defeat unconditionally in 2015.

As I was saying, now we have seen through the Buhari's much vaunted capacity, integrity, tenacity via the oratory and sophistry he has used to deal with banditry alone. We have seen how far he has managed fundamental objectives including 'security and welfare of the people' as the primary purpose of government he has led these past seven years.

All we can do now is to remind our leader some of the inconvenient truths he ignored at his take-off point. One of the truths he kept in the grave has been the quality of his cabinet he was allowed to make for more than six months in 2015. This isn't a piece to deconstruct that cabinet making at this time.

There is a time for everything. There is indeed a time for progress report. But a question we will ask him about his cabinet at this time is why he chose an

accountant turned journalist Malam Adamu Adamu as his minister to manage a complex and complicated sector, Education at this time. What can the nation recall as the focal point of the administration's achievement in the areas of education, which is 'the only source of labour that builds a nation' as Tunji Olaopa, a retired federal permanent secretary and professor puts it in a recent book, titled, 'The labour of our heroes...'

Yes, it isn't a time to assess the Buhari's executive council of the federation (2015-2023). But in view of what has been happening to tertiary education in the world's most populous black nation, in the last seven months when all public universities have shut down, and our children in those universities have been at home and their teachers have endured hunger and thirst, is our president proud of the 'effectiveness and efficiency' of his minister of education whose statements have so far been toxic in this current ASUU-FG crisis?

Why hasn't the President been personally involved in this negotiation even through the Vice President, a professor of law who was at the University of Lagos? How did the president feel when he read or heard about the Minister of Education's outrageous message to the university students to sue the striking lecturers for wasting their time?

What should we the parents of these hapless children do to the minister (Adamu) for the seven years the locusts have eaten out of education in his feeble and lazy hands? When should we the parents and voters sue the President who has continued to keep this minister in charge of Education of this great nation? The last time we heard from the minister on this crisis was when he walked out on student leaders who met him and reminded him of his responsibility to them.

What did the President tell the Minister

INSIDE STUFF

With Oloja Martins



when he watched the video coverage of Adamu's walk-out on the students? What did the President do when another Minister denigrated the ASUU members recently at the inauguration of the APC presidential candidate's campaign officers where the Minister, Festus Keyamo, (SAN) was quoted as saying, 'let's discuss more serious things, ASUU's case isn't a serious thing'? How does the president want the world to regard him as the leader of 'the richest' and most populous African nation that would allow its public universities to be closed for more than six months?

Even if the university teachers have crossed any redline, whose responsibility is it to call them together as the father of the nation? What kind of leader would allow higher education teachers to be treated shabbily like this? Should we understand the current complacency of the Buhari's government towards education to mean that the President doesn't have good people around to tell him the truth about the implications of his inaction and the attitude of his education minister at such a time as this? Why would a leader tell university teachers to go to hell and they should go hungry for seven months without pay and they would like to seek rapprochement with them and the parents of the students Adamu is challenging to sue their teachers?

Again, where is Nigeria's National Assembly at this critical time? Why are our representatives just concerned about the next election without caring a hoot about the next generation of leaders? Are the suffering and malnourished students of today not going to be the leaders of tomorrow? How many of the more than two hundred million people would have

OPINION

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the resources to send their children to good schools abroad as our leaders are apparently doing today? Are our leaders aware that most of our university lecturers in science and technology schools are relocating abroad in search of greener pastures? Does the education minister tell the president and some Labour Ministry's arrogant negotiators that most serious nations, especially some in Nordic countries pay teachers better than other public officers because they believe that only qualified and satisfied teachers can produce better graduates?

Aren't they aware that in the United States, which is still proud of its exceptionalism on all fronts, public officers including policy makers are still concerned about the fact that their American children (students) are well outside the top-ten international student rankings in reading, science and mathematics apart from the nation's position of leadership on everything from the economy to the military to issues of moral authority? They (Americans) are beginning to argue that their rating "will continue to plummet unless we take dramatic action..."

Michelle Rhee, a former chancellor of Washington D.C., public schools from 2007-2010, now a driving force behind American education reform, has already written a classic on this development, titled, 'Radical: Fighting To Put Students First'. The founder and CEO of 'StudentsFirst' has drawn attention to the fact that although the United States is well known as a world leader in innovation, boasting of brilliant thinkers and trendsetting companies, yet there is a fact that, that status is at grave risk because American children are getting outside the top-ten international student ranking.

The power behind Samsung, a global brand is South Korea, with a population of 51.3 million. They have more than Samsung to export to the world because

of the power that quality education that they take seriously has given them. They are among top-five countries with excellence in Research and Development (R&D) funding in global context. That is their power. You can make the same claim of Singapore. The economic power of Singapore isn't tied to any extractive industry. It is only linked to their intellectual power. Yes their brainpower through education quality their legend, Lee Kuan Yew bequeathed to them. There are more examples of these powerful countries.

How many times shall we write that there is a nexus between the economic power of South Africa and the quality of its universities? It is not by accident that the best university in Africa in all global ratings is the University of Cape Town. Is it not also true that of the top ten universities in Africa, most of the times, six to eight are in South Africa? What we are saying isn't about setting up technical universities, agriculture universities, medical sciences universities, maritime universities, police and army universities that are underfunded and ill-equipped. This isn't about the number of graduates in the country. It is about the quality of the graduates. It is about the capacity of the graduates to solve 21st century's challenges in this age of the high-tech, digital disrupters.

This is why the Buhari government should note that although we are helpless now about what his administration has made of Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) through education and health policy thrust, posterity will remember him as the leader who allowed insurgents called Boko Haram campaigners (anti-education campaigners) to destroy even foundation of education in his northern Nigeria and he did nothing for eight years to resolve the crisis of tertiary education he inherited.

And so after May 29, 2023, we will remember to recall him and his education minister to account for what happened to higher education quality, the main weapon we need to resolve all other

problems in the country. Even if we are helpless, we will continue to recall that he also promised to solve the ASUU crisis he blasted his successor for when he was campaigning in 2015. He actually noted that his predecessor was quite irresponsible for failure to solve that same ASUU problem while wasting money in other areas including too many jets in the presidential fleet and leakage in oil revenue, unbridled fuel subsidy, among other wasters.

The Buhari administration should be told that we will continue to repeat the story I have told many times here about what any powers need to destroy any country. Yes, a south African teacher has said that you don't need any atomic bomb to destroy any country. According to the teacher, all you need to do for the collapse of any country is destroying its education standards.

The following words posted by a teacher at the entrance gate of a South African university sums up where the Nigerian leader and his education minister are leading us: 'Destroying any nation does not require the use of atomic bombs or the use of long-range missiles. It only requires lowering the quality of education and allowing cheating in the examinations by the students.'

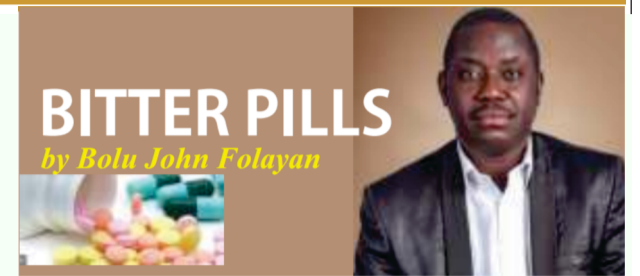
The result is that: Patients die at the hands of doctors. Buildings collapse at the hands of engineers. Money is lost at the hands of economists and accountants. Humanity dies at the hands of religious scholars. Justice is lost at the hands of judges. Because, "The collapse of education is the collapse of the nation..."

And here is the conclusion of the whole matter: President Buhari should immediately direct his Education Minister, Adamu to swallow his pride and vanity and resolve the ASUU-FG avoidable conflict now or never. It has become a symbol of suffering and shame to the Buhari administration, which will in the end be blamed for collapse of public universities in Nigeria.

###

BITTER PILLS

Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, PhD OFR, (Part 1)



T rue to the name of this column, Bitterpills, I am dropping really bitter pills this month.

I remember my days a little kid in Igbotako. Anytime, I had malaria, my mom would get really bitter “agbo” and police me to drink it. Dad, who played quack doctor like most headmasters of those days, would now bring his injection if I did not pick up on time. There was the one they called Ten Hour Quick Action. I have not seen anything more bitter in my life. But the good thing in all of these was that I would get healed and resume my restlessness as a kid, after taking them. Here I am in my 50s, to the glory of God! The thing about bitter pills is that they are bitter in the mouth, but at the end you are happy you took the pills.

The pills I want us to swallow this month is **Jimoh Ibrahim**, the Senatorial Candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC) for Ondo South in February National Assembly elections.

Jimoh Ibrahim means so many things to so many different persons. To some people, he is a hero, business wizard or genius, philanthropist, astute politician and business mogul. To some others, he is a bully; selfish, arrogant successful dude. Everyone has right to his or her opinions – right or wrong. Some hold these views out of personal relationship they have had with Ibrahim; some from what they heard people say about him and yet others out of pure envy. In this piece, I am expressing mine. My opinion here is not out of envy and he knows. We were friends before he made his first one million naira and we were friends when he made his first billion and several billions. While our friendship

lasted, it has been mutually beneficial and though I felt he did not do as much as he should for me as a close friend that I was extremely loyal to, I have no regrets whatsoever, over the relationship we had. When I use the word “friend” here, I meant FRIEND, not associate, acquaintance, or hangers on. I don't have to explain more than that. This matter of SENATE is larger than Bolu or Ibrahim. It is even bigger than Ikale, not to talk of Igbotako. We must look at it dispassionately.

Before I go into the Senatorial matter, let us tackle some issues about Jimoh Ibrahim's persona. Really, what offence did Jimoh Ibrahim commit? Why do so many people don't like to hear his name? Most importantly, those saying they won't vote for him in the Senatorial Election, what is their grouse? That is a nice point to start this discourse.

Honestly, Jimoh Ibrahim did not commit offences against people or the society. Many people felt did not do so much to help people in the society. And that he is too proud. May be, yes. In reality, much of this is reputational issue. He has really bad sides like any human, but he has his good sides too. Which side is bad or good depends on your relationship with him and in what capacity. But let us count how many Ikale did for others as much as Jimoh Ibrahim. There was a time Ibrahim was the Chief Launcher of every Ikale Town Day. There was a time he gave out scholarships in hundreds. There was a time he contributed to church building launchings of scores of churches. He singlehandedly provided the entire furniture in Igbotako Catholic Church. He erected a one storey building in his alma mater ICGS, Igbotako and equipped it. He bought cars for at least a dozen people that I know. etc. Nobody can accuse Ibrahim rightly, of not doing. You can only accuse him of not doing

enough, and that is very relative thinking.

Don't get me wrong o. Ibrahim can and should have done more. But for someone who never used our quota to get anything, but who got all that he got by dint of hardwork, this can't be a reason for not voting him to represent us at the Senate! There are people who had much more and did nothing for people and society in Ikale and they got what they got using out slot.

So, let us forget sentiments and analyze Ibrahim's candidacy for senate dispassionately. What quality of candidate do we need for our next Senator? Bench warmer or someone who will go to Senate and make a difference for us? Somebody who can leverage even with Mr. President and get something out of him for our community? Somebody who can float a scholarship scheme worth N100 million for our students yearly and would seem like spending N100,000? I can go on!

Yes, it is a low for him not helping his siblings as he should. But '*Ori bibe ee soogun efori*'. I know he needs to work on that. All that needs to be done is to give him the orientation. It takes two to tago. *O ba ni, ee ti baje*. The problem has been people who should call him aside and tell him the truth don't. They go to him to line their pockets or seek favours. I just wonder. I am talking of people highly-placed o...who have nothing to lose telling him the truth.

We are products of our upbringing to a large extent. I wish Ibrahim sees things the way people like us see things but it's not so. He can be a difficult person but he is grossly misunderstood. For instance, he finds it difficult to understand why he needs to beg people to vote for him to be in the Senate. He is convinced that if he gets there, he will benefit from power and

BITTER PILL

continuation of Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, PhD OFR, (Part 1)

prestige but the society will benefit more. So he cannot beg. But that's not the way to do politics. If you really want to help people you can stoop low.

Senate is something that can really benefit our society! Look, if Jimoh Ibrahim loses this Senatorial Seat, he can tell the President (if Tinubu wins) the Ministry he wants as minister. Governor Akeredolu will support his nomination to be minister (if he wants). And when he becomes minister, people will now be blaming him for not doing projects for the community. Because he won't if he loses this election. He may not go for a ministerial appointment and go for a plum appointment like Ambassador to the US or UK. Trust Ibrahim for that. Unless Atiku wins, Ibrahim has everything to himself in the current political climate. He has learnt from his political indiscretion and will go for the broke all the way, this time.

We cannot have someone like Jimoh Ibrahim *ja fi eenone* (and say we don't have somebody). Oh, remove sentiments, please. With due respect to Distinguished Hon Agboola Ajayi who is also a formidable candidate, Jimoh will represent us like no other Senator in Ondo South. We (the people) are the ones to engage him and support him. Yes, he is selfish. Can be rude. Has not supported people very well. So how many people have really supported him too? He has not done well in some areas but that is not enough to say someone of his pedigree should not be given this opportunity to be our senator in Ondo South.

I have not discussed or talked with him in several years now. But people have been calling me to ask of my view and I have not minced words in saying Ibrahim will do outstandingly well as Ondo South Senator, if elected. Let me tell you why, and if you don't agree with me, it is well. After all, it is your right! My arguments:

1. Voting should not always be on political party basis. If it were so, Muhammadu Buhari and Barack Obama would not have been presidents. I am going all the way for the two Jimohs (Akinsola for OSHA) and Ibrahim for Senate because they are solidly competent. That they are from Igbotako is irrelevant. PDP or APC is not the issue here, for me. Only politicians should think like that, not voters and the masses.
2. Ibrahim is not rich. He is wealthy. I believe he will go to Senate to serve. You don't have them often. There was a time I flew with him in his aircraft to Ghana, we wrote in a motorcade to where we lodged, from the Accra Airport Presidential Lounge. We ate pupuru as lunch on board the aircraft o. He has over a dozen houses in Lekki, about same number in Abuja and properties in Dubai and London. If we engage him rightly, we will use his office as Senator to help to develop our community. He is not going there to look for money, even though *owo kii to olowo* as we say.
3. Ibrahim truly loves Ikaleland. I know that. By that I mean the Old Okitipupa Division. And I know why he is not doing as he should for the community. If we engage him right, he will CHANGE. He is an elder and community leader now, not a boy that he was when he became a billionaire.
4. Ibrahim has the pedigree to do well in Senate. He is bold and blunt. He won't be lost in the crowd. When he went to collect his nomination form, he took pictures with Tinubu, APC national chairman, the President, House of Reps president. Do you need a *Woli* to tell you he will be influential in the National Assembly? And what do you really need to succeed in that place? Influence! As a first-



term, he will chair plum committees. You need that to be able to help your people. Someone building a whole university in his hometown will not attract projects to his district? Was it because land was cheap that he sited his university in Igbotako?

5. Jimoh is a lawyer. A PhD. Being a lawyer is additional advantage to being a lawmaker.

I have taken this stand because of one reason: I want development in my Ikaleland. Ibrahim has his lows as a natural human being. No one can accuse him of being fraudulent on his way to the top. That someone refuses to help others is his only "sin" but I don't think it is enough reason to throw this opportunity away. He too has seen that those he should have helped and he did not help are doing very well! *Olorun nii gbe ni ga*. But when God blesses us, we must help others with passion. He is changing and he has really done quite a lot.

A Senator can do so much for the community o, if we elect the right senator. Leave the politicians to stick to their political parties. For the non-politicians, vote for personalities. Vote for the person who has the capacity to make a difference. Forgive whatever political wrongs Ibrahim may have done in the past. Let us focus on this rare opportunity.

I have distanced myself from him and will continue to so that I will be free to talk to him the way I want and should. *Ee bo mi (he does not feed me)*. We should all get together and support him and tell him to his face all that he needs to do for Ikale. God has blessed him to do it and he must do it. Helping others is a general disease in Ikale, not a Jimoh Ibrahim thing. It is not enough ground not to support his candidacy.

God bless Ikale, Ilaje, Apoi and Ijaw Arogbo land.

(Join me for Part 2 in next edition)

OPINION

Random Talks With Dayo Williams

Will anything change in the 2023 elections?

Dayo Williams

Readers beware! It's important to place this disclaimer lest my article is misconstrued as a prophetic and declarative statement on the outcome of the 2023 presidential election.

Disclaimer done and dusted. I say that I am no seer nor do I have the powers of a clairvoyant to profess with the candour of a magistrate what is to come in the 2023 general elections. In clear terms, this write-up is no prophecy.

However, with my years of reading the political tea leaf almost accurately and using certain observable socio-political parameters peculiar to our electoral history to predict the outcomes of elections, I can say with a certain amount of confidence that nothing radical from the current order will happen in the 2023 presidential election.

Per the 2023 presidential election in which 18 political parties are participating in the election, either the candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC)-Asiwaju Bola Tinubu - or that of the main opposition party, Atiku Abubakar, of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) will emerge as the winner of the election.

For now, it is too early to call who will win between Tinubu and Atiku, two political veterans who have been operating in our political firmament for close to three decades. However, as the

election inches closer to D-Day, I shall again interrogate the parameters and variables that shape our elections and their outcomes and then make a categorical call on who the winner will be God's willing.

In the interim though, if the poll is conducted today by the umpire, Tinubu of the APC will win handsomely. He will win because the APC will go into the election more united with fewer internal wranglings to contend with than the PDP whose candidate is still struggling to quench a raging inferno threatening menacingly to consume the party with no lasting solution on the horizon. And time is thinning out on him to resolve the seemingly irreconcilable differences between his own faction of the party with that of Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State, who is leading a formidable faction of the party.

I'm sorry to burst the bubble of those who are already giddy about the possibility of a 'third force' upstaging the status quo - PDP and APC- that their excitement is premised on a forlorn hope that has no place in reality.

The third force is currently being led by Peter Obi, the accidental presidential candidate of the Labour Party stands no chance of causing any disruption in the contest in 2023. The word accidental here is no disrespect to the former governor of Anambra State; it is to properly contextualise how he emerged as the candidate of the party having realised he



stood no chance of winning the ticket of the PDP, a party with structures and tentacles in all the 774 local government areas of the country.

In any case, Obi does not represent a new order which is actually what Nigeria and Nigerians need for a radical resetting of the country. He is part and parcel of the existing political system that has held down the country for over two decades now. A third force that's capable of triggering a tectonic shift in the country's leadership can only be led by an outsider who has no connection - remote or immediate - with the current parasitic political class.

Until his recent detour to the Labour Party, he was a chieftain of the PDP, a party accused of ruining the country for the sixteen years it spent in power! So, what has changed between 2019 when he was the vice presidential candidate of the PDP and now? Any Damascus experience for the dramatic U-turn? We may be waiting for Godot for no answer will come from the candidate of the third force who will come third in the election.

Those who are discerning enough to interrogate governance will easily agree that he did nothing spectacular in governance - infrastructural development and human capital development - during his eight-year rule as the governor of Anambra State. The stats are there for anyone to burrow

OPINION

continuation of Random Talks With Dayo Williams

through and make informed decisions and not the hearsays and effusive write-ups on social media to deceive the gullible and uncritical lot shouting 'Obident' everywhere.

In most democracies of the world, it's the candidates of the established and well-rooted parties that often win in major electoral contests. Donald Trump would have lost the 2016 American presidential election if he had run as an independent candidate. It is the same way Barack Obama would have lost in 2008 if he had chosen to run outside the duo of the orthodox parties - the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Candidates running on the platforms of fringe parties in national elections rarely make headway. The well-rounded

parties exist primarily to mobilise their members and supporters to vote for their candidates. They design winning strategies, oil their structures and take care of logistics down to the last person in the hood. This is where structures matter in winning an election.

And in the rare cases where an exception occurs against the aforementioned, the new party is always a coalition of some existing parties with structures and tentacles across the country. The recent election in Italy is a worthy reference in this regard. The coalition of far-right parties and platforms known as the 'Brothers of Italy' was able to defeat the incumbent party in power.

An example closer home was how the APC emerged: a coalition of legacy parties such as the ACN, CPC, ANPP, a faction of the PDP and a faction of APGA. Had those

parties not merged to form the APC, there was no way Muhammadu Buhari would have defeated President Goodluck Jonathan in the 2015 election no matter how popular or acceptable he was in some parts of the country then. What am I saying in essence? Home or abroad, the art and science of electoral politics hardly change. They follow the same pattern.

The long and short of this is that the 2023 presidential election will be a two-horse race: between the APC and the PDP. It's crystal clear enough for those who are not banking on false hope of the possibility of a third force creating a positive disruption in the election. Traditional voters seldom change their electoral behaviour in an election cycle. This has been tested and tested several times and it seems immutable.



NEWS

Eddy floats scholarship scheme in honour of his wife, Olufemi

By Tosin Temiloluwa

Retired professor of the University of Lagos, Eddy Omolehinwa has instituted yearly scholarships worth N2million in honour of his wife, Olufemi Omolehinwa.

The community activist announced the move during a courtesy visit on him by *Ikale News* publisher, Dr. Bolu John Folayan paid him courtesy last month in his Magodo GRA residence in Lagos. The first Igodan-born scholar, who is Nigeria's first professor of public sector accounting, said the Olufemi Omolehinwa Educational Foundation was only way he could immortalize his beloved wife who passed on few years ago.

"She was with me in thick and thin. We met in Okitipupa when I just began my academic career and she suddenly left me when I was about retiring after giving everything she had for me," he regretted.

Professor Eddy described the scholarship as "very small" but hoped that his friends and children would expand it in due course.

"Education is key if we want Ikale to rapidly develop. Our young ones need to be supported in these difficult times regarding their education," he said.

The Foundation will award 10 scholarships each worth N200,000 yearly to Ikale born undergraduates. The Foundation, made up of eminent Nigerians will soon advertise "Call for Applications" stating details required from applicants, but one slot each has been reserved for Ilutitun and Igodan applicants as wild card winners, being home towns of Olufemi Omolehinwa and Eddy Omolehinwa respectively. Other eight winners can come from anywhere in Ikale on merit, including Igodan and Ilutitun.

Dr. Folayan explained that his visit was part of his consultation towards the

reactivation of Ikale Central Organization.

"I am going round our elders to get their inputs. We cannot not exist without having an apex group that is non-political to guide our development as a people in Ikale. So I am visiting thought leaders in Ikalaland of which you are one. I have had discussions with Dr A.A. Akingba. I plan to visit others including our traditional rulers and leaders of community associations so that we can revive or reform our Think Tank that can serve as the face of Ikale people." The publisher said.

Professor commended the *Ikale News* publisher for all he has been doing to contribute to the development of Ikalaland, especially through journalism.

"I commend you on your devotion to Ikale development. I pledge my support at all times. We the more elderly can serve in the board of advisers. But please vibrant persons like you and those younger than you. All over the world now, it is young people who lead. And we have such vibrant people in Ikalaland." He charged.



Eddy and wife

INTERVIEW**GOVT NEEDS TO DO MORE
IN IKALELAND - AKEREMALE**

A retired Commissioner of Police, Lawyer and former Nasarawa State Commissioner of Police, Barrister Abayomi Akeremale talks to 'Bayo Jimoh about his career, Ikale development, and how he is faring in retirement.

You retired from the Nigeria Police Force after 34 years in service. How has retirement been so far?

My retirement has been very pleasant. "Ikale ji se epami le di ongbeni" you have to prepare for the rainy day. I developed myself and prepared for the rainy day. I wasn't just in the police, I was also thinking of the retirement plan as you can see today I'm back to my law practice.

What attracted you to the Nigerian Police Force?

It was an Igbo man that made me joined the police. It was during my NYSC year that I met him in Benue state. He has a brother who was Cadet ASP and was serving in Makurdi. He encouraged me to join the police I told him I don't like police. I told him police lacks reputation and citizens don't like them he told me to discard what people are saying and that police is a noble profession. So I grudgingly filled the completed the form and return it him. After my service year, I returned to Ondo state and I decided to take a job as a teacher, unfortunately, my brother was in-charge of teachers posting I told I would prefer somewhere close to the state capital so I can have access to information when it's time for civil service recruitment exercise so I was posted to Anglican Grammar School, Igbra-Oke. Just three months into my teaching career I had my name in the radio to report to police service



Commission in Lagos I met my brother he encouraged me to go when I told him I don't like police work. Eventually, I reported to Lagos out of the seventeen they took just seven of us for cadet ASP. When I got to Lokoja and I discover that I have to join another bus to Jos, I was thinking of going back, eventually I joined the bus to Jos and I did my one year training. After one year, the posting was announced I was posted to Cross-river state I said "me dey Igbara-Oke jeje, I never cross Ore before" laugh.

How was the experience when you got to Calabar?

I started my career and I was fortunate to work under Chief Odu who was very magnanimous. He married Oladuni Odu who is a Princess from my town. He asked me if I know Akindele family I said yes so he was very happy with me.

When I told him I'm married and my family is in Igbara-Oke in Ondo state he gave a lorry to pack belongings.

At what point in your carrier did you decide to study law?

It was a woman that gave me the opportunity to read law when I was the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Idimu in Lagos state. She was a lecturer at Lagos state University. She was in the faculty of Education. She came to the station to report a case of stolen machine at Ikeja I and my men was able to recover some of the stolen items. So one of these days, we were talking and she said why can't you read law? I said law? I told her I once applied to University of Calabar in 1983 but I didn't get the admission, so I'm not longer interested. I told her Etim Inyang became Inspector General of Police and started his career as a Constable, I told her I was not going to study law, with all

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Akeremale

these “wahala” in the job I don’t have time for another six years for evening law. So she left. The next day she visited my office she came with the application forms and asked me to complete it. I told her I was not ready for law she insisted. So, I grudgingly filled the form and gave it to her.

Few weeks later, she told me the admission list was out and I asked her did you submit my application? She said yes so I went to Lagos State University to check for my name, When I got there, I saw Engineers, Medical Doctors, PhD holders so I said to myself; all these prominent personalities want to study law? So, I decided let me make an attempt.

Being an Officer, DPO in Idimu and a law student, how was the experience?

I attended the first class which is the use of English and I studied English language at the university of Ibadan one of the best university in Nigeria. When results came out, I had five points. five points? I said to myself “na English them dey take write this law oo” I said let me continue. I continued and struggled until I got to part four and I have been told that “police no dey like somebody wey dey read law oo” when they see you are reading they will try and truncate it, they will post you to place where you won’t be able to read. The first disruption was when I was posted out of Idimu police station where I have spent three years, I was posted to CSP Operations at Ikeja. Then, the next disruption was when there was a change, they posted many people out of Lagos and I was posted to Ogun state. I complained to the then IGP, Musiliu Smith who was a family friend that I was running a program at LASU, he talked to the CPO Ogun state and I was posted to Agbara which is few kilometers to LASU. With just two years left, so I settled down in Agbara

All of sudden, I spent only three months in Agbara I saw signal, I didn’t ask for promotion I was Chief Superintendent of Police. They said I

have been promoted, as what? They said Assistant Commissioner of Police. The force secretary told me all the vacancies in Western region has been filled up, and I have been posted to Ughelli? Where is Ughelli? He said Akeremale Ughelli used to be part of western region, is not far, by the time you drive for five hours I would have arrived at Ughelli in Delta state.

read a lot, I love reading. A month to examination, I took my leave and went back to Lagos. I and my classmates had group discussion. When the result came out I got three points.

I had many challenges during the program, there was a time I had to leave a training in Jos and enter night bus to lagos to write an exam and I passed so eventually, I completed the program.



So, fortunately, the Deputy Commissioner of police in Asaba then was from our place, Adetunyi. So, I spent the night in his house. He said to me why are you always posted to tough places, in Lagos, Idimu was one of the toughest places because of land issues, now they posted you to the most dangerous part in Delta state and they are eleven divisions under you.

The second day, I was showed my office very small cubicle. I settled down and spent three years. With less than a year to finish my program in LASU, my friend was able to make photocopies of his notes and sent to me but that wasn’t sufficient I went to Oleh where the Delta University have their law faculty I met the lecturers and told them to take me in Commercial law, they did, and I also

What would you describe as your toughest posting?

I had my toughest posting during Tafa Balogun reign. My problem with him started when he asked me to forcefully evict one of his tenants who is a medical doctor at Gowon Estate and take his belongings to the roundabout. Then, I was the DPO in-charge of Idimu. He sent one my course mates to me. I asked the man he sent, Oga is a lawyer, he should have gone to court to get injunction to pack the loads and put them in the court and that will be safer. I told him what if they take the photographs of the properties at the roundabout as asked who did it, people will say DPO Idimu will I be bold enough and I say it was Balogun that

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Akeremale

sent me? I said isn't proper. My classmate went back to Balogun and embellished the whole story and told him I questioned his law degree. That was how I entered into trouble in police. Since that time, my posting became haphazard. A week after the incident, a signal came out and my classmate took over as DPO Idimu, he came and I embraced him as my course mate.

Not many police officers retired at the level of Commissioner, how did you feel when you got the promotion?

I feel favored by God. It's only God that can see you through police work because it's one of the most delicate job in Nigeria. Just as an one experienced lawyer who is my very good friend says "Experience is not taught or read in any university but can only be acquired in the school of experience". So I discover that police is another university where intrigues, internal and external dictates the pace. People outside hates you, they only call you when they need something, once you solved their problem, that's the end, no call anymore. So police is a tankless job, is a great sacrifice but I love it because it exposes you to meet the beautiful and the ugly. You see people outside the service are trying to destroy the police by making policies that will alienate the force. There was a time they advised the government that police should not be in the government house rather at the gate. They call them thieves and "say thief na him sabi leg of thief" they associated us with thieves but my mind was telling me I'm not a thief.

If you had not become a police officer, what would you have loved to do?

I would have been a teacher because I love reading and I'm still reading. Recently, I joined the Ikale Progressive Association to do extra moral teaching in all the secondary schools in Ikaleland. Prominent Ikale

sons and daughters also joined us.

Any temptation during your career?

The first temptation I had was on my way to Ondo state to pack my belongings, the sergeant that was attached to me approached me and said "Oga na so we dey do am oo, as we dey go now, we go see those Onitsha people we dey smuggle okirika them go beg us make we help them to Lagos, we go help and they go give us like two thousand Naira we go take am chop" I know examined myself. Chief Odu who was my boss and in-law gave vehicle to Ondo state, how would I now bypass Igbara-Oke and face Lagos something struck me. So I refused. I told him I was not going to Lagos that it was Igbara-Oke they approved for me.

After few kilometers, there was a road block mounted by customs. We were stopped and our vehicle were searched, after searching when they could not find okirika they allowed us to pass.

Imagine if I had okirika, they would have phoned my boss and say one of your vehicle is being used to smuggle okirika and the name of the officer involved is Abayomi Akeremale. That was how I would have been dismissed less than one year in the police. That was the first temptation and I'm going to document it my book. So that was how I passed the first temptation.

How did you spend your first month of retirement?

Because I retired at a tumultuous situation from Nasarawa state as Commissioner of police. What happened in Nasarawa state is a little bit political. They introduced politics into security and try to get me involved so as to destroy me but God didn't allow.

How would you describe the current adjustment in the emolument of police officers?

Some of the measures taken so far are good, some are born out of class struggle, while the condition of some of the officers are bad. However, some drastic things should be done about the entire salaries and pensions of the officers and men of the Nigeria Police Force.

After spending 34 years in the Nigeria Police Force, my pension today is N75,000 and that can hardly buy diesel and fuel my car. My saving grace is that I am a practicing lawyer and that is what is sustaining me today, regrettably, several committees have been set up to review Police Pensions, but none of them has been implemented.

Last year, you and some prominent Ikale sons and daughters had a security summit on the insecurity in Ikaleland, what informed the decision?

It was largely rumored that suspected Fulani people in large numbers have found there way to the Army Barracks at Okitipupa and ready to take over the security apparatus so that was suspicious. So we felt that if that happens, what are we going to do about it. According to Chinua Achebe, "man must not get to to battlefield and be looking for gunpowder" so prepared for self defense and the 1999 constitution recognizes that. So prominent sons and daughters of Ikaleland muted the idea of the summit and I keyed into it. We had so many collaborators like the Ikale World Congress who supported us and the initiative worked.

What's your view about the social and economic development in Ikaleland?

We discover that the reading culture has gone and students are now developing the culture of laziness, nonchalant behavior. They say the idle will likely come to do evil. Also, the government hasn't done enough in-terms of infrastructural development and other social amenities. The government needs to do more for Ikaleland. We have the resources and we should not suffer. All the companies established during Ajasin are dead. It is sad!!

ARCHIVE

Agenda For The Upliftment Of Ikale- Land

Igodan-born Professor of Public Sector Accounting, Eddy Omolehinwa gave this landmark speech. The challenges he threw up are still relevant to the development of Ikale

When I received the invitation for this lecture, I did not need any adviser to tell me that I have no choice but to come. This is because it is a rare opportunity for me to identify with my people Abuja. Even though I have been living in Lagos since 1965 when I started my secondary school, I have never for one day forgotten that I have my roots spread in various parts of Ikaleland. My father was from Igodan-Lisa in Okitipupa Local Government while my mother was from Lumeko, Ode Irele in Irele Local Government. My two grandmothers were from Okitipupa while my wife is 100% Ilutitun. I therefore wish to thank Ikale Progressive Association, Abuja for this opportunity to talk on Agenda For The Upliftment of Ikaleland.

AN OVERVIEW OF IKALE PEOPLE Before going into the subject matter of the day, please kindly permit me to address first of all such questions as: Who are the Ikale people? What are their core values? What roles have some of them played and are still playing in Nigeria? This is necessary because some of the guests here today are not Ikales. Who Are The Ikale People? The Ikale people are sub-Yoruba group who are natives of Okitipupa Local Government and Irele Local government areas of Ondo State. They are also found in Odigbo Local Government of

Ondo State and part of Ogun State. This therefore explains why some Ikale people put Ondo State as State of Origin while some claim Ogun State.

The Core Values of Ikale People

The Ikales are fair minded people who want to do what is right rather than what they are asked to do. They believe religiously in honesty and have no regard for corrupt people. They are ready to make any sacrifice in order to fight any form of injustice. What is

common to most Ikale people is that irrespective of where they work, they want to leave behind a legacy of unquestionable integrity. Examples of such traits as demonstrated by the Ikales are:

- i. Selfless leadership of first republic Minister, Chief Olu Akinfosile who put the interests of his people and the country above his. At the time of his death had 4 virtually nothing to show for his first class public



service except for the Akirosile Road connecting Ijebu-Ode — Ore Road to Ikale land named after him.

- ii. The unwillingness of the Military Governor of Western Nigeria then Navy Captain. Akin Aduwo to hand over the regional university at Ife (now OAU) to the Federal Government in 1975 without carrying along other stakeholders in the region. This led to his removal as Governor within one month of his appointment. He was

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later appointed the Chief of Naval Staff during Shagari's regime.

iii. The fairness demonstrated by Dr. Olusegun Agagu as Governor of Ondo State in resource allocation to every part of the state during his tenure. When the opportunity came for him to cite Ondo State University of Science and Technology in his own part of Ondo South Senatorial District, he never did. Instead he insisted on doing the right thing by citing the university at a more central location to the various stakeholders.

iv. The track records of unquestionable integrity left behind by Mr. H.O. Terebo as Director of Finance and Administration of then State Security Services, (SSS.) Earlier as the State Director of SSS in Rivers State, he handed over to his boss the N8 million brought to him by

politicians during the 1991 River State gubernatorial election. I am aware of this as we used to exchange ideas having come from the same street in our village. (v) The enormous contribution of a foremost Ikale son, Dr. Amos Akingba to the restoration of democracy to Nigeria in 1999 through his active participation in NADECO

The Roles Ikales Have Played And Still Playing in Nigeria

The Ikales have played significant roles in various fields of human endeavour. Apart from the ones already highlighted, a few other ones that have played or are still playing some roles at Abuja here are:

1. The man appointed to coordinate the movement of federal capital from Lagos to Abuja is an Ikale man — General (Rtd) OluBajowa.
2. The only Nigerian to have occupied both positions of Chairman Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Accountant General of the

Federation is an Ikaleman — Mr. J. K. Naiyeju.

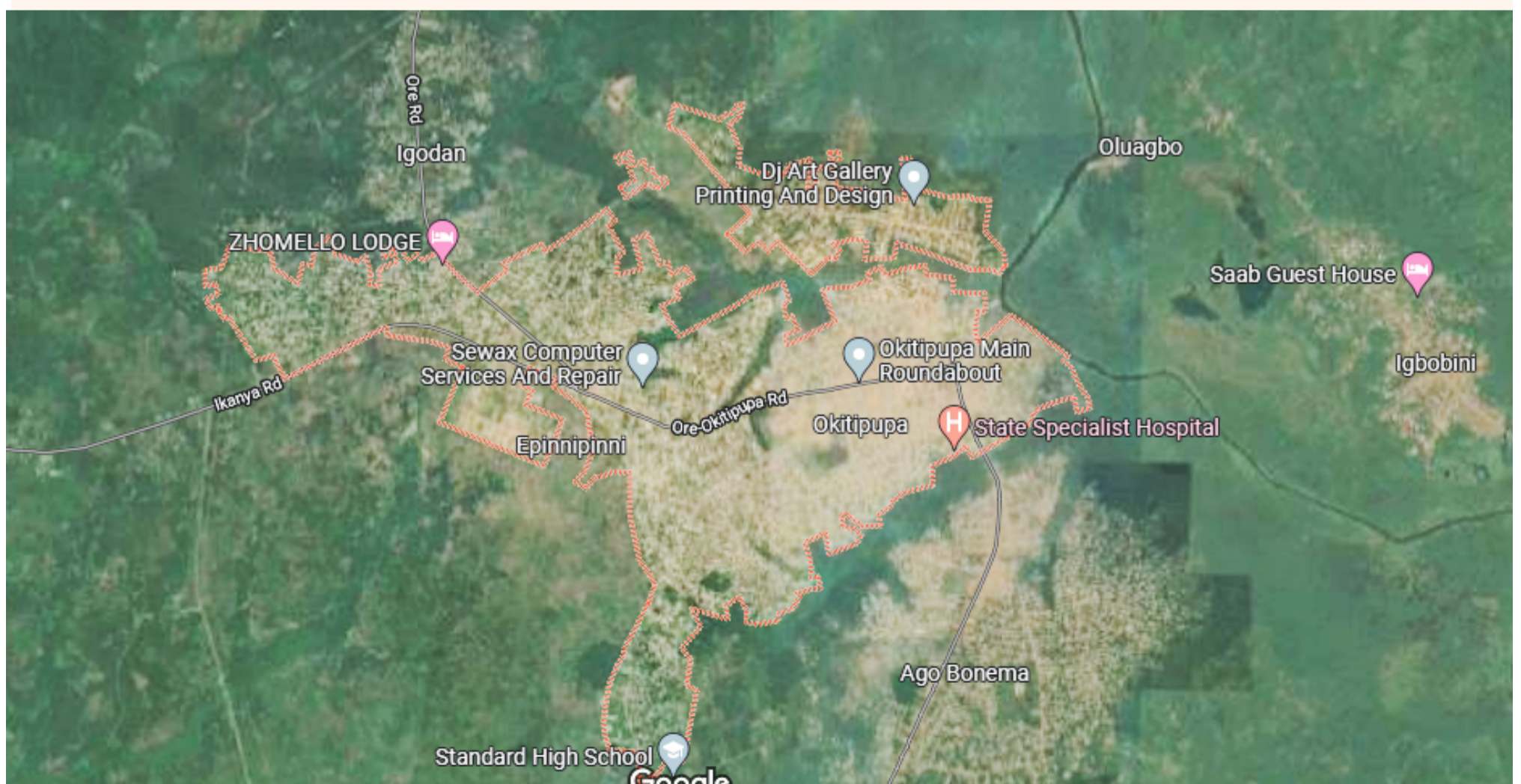
3. The first Director General of Debt Management Office who later became Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Finance, Barrister Akin Arikawe.

4. Out of the 36 current Ministers at Abuja, two of them representing Ondo and 0 un are Ikales.

AGENDA FOR UPLIFTMENT OF IKALELAND

My agenda for upliftment of Ikale land will address just few matters which I believe are crucial for Ikale land. The issues centre on why the Ikales need to work in collaboration with their neighbours especially the Ilajes. The need to address the issues that divide us especially what I prefer to call "oba wahalaship". The consequences of this division are highlighted.

The issue of alleged cases of Ikales that are in positions of authorities to help others but are 1 before discussing education. The need for Ikales to demand for 12, T, Itei- accountability from the state government in view of their bitter experience with not so is



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eNaminet_ Alimiko is highlighted before rounding up with why the Ikales should be actively involved with self-help projects as a way of uplifting Ikale land instead of leaving everything for government. As far as I am concerned, Ikale's potential for greatness will not be realized unless the Ikales work actively in collaboration with their neighbours especially the Ilajes. The Ikales cannot collaborate effectively with the Ilajes if they do not put their own house in order. Our house cannot be put in order when a typical Ikale town can be divided into three factions because three individuals in the town are claiming to be the authentic traditional ruler of the same town.

A good example of a town where we have such factions is Okitipupa where the battle for who is the true Jegun of Idepe, the traditional ruler of Okitipupa has been on for the past 16 years in spite of the fact that a government recognized ruler was installed 14 years ago. To make the matter worse, the various towns and communities are not cooperating as they should because the traditional rulers are involved in supremacy battle. I have been reliably informed that as a result of this battle, our Obas have not met for the last one year.

This has led to our relegating to the background the common problems facing the Ikale people that require urgent attention. The consequences of this are too glaring for all of us to know. Never in the history of Ikaleland has any government shown contempt for Ikale people than the current State government. Governor Mimiko has turned himself into an Emperor that fits very well into the category of elected public officers that Bishop Oyedepo (2011) said "operate consciously or unconsciously with absolute mentality that is answerable to no one, challengeable by no man and accountable to no one"

There is no better way to support this view than by reference to the way he tried to 'uproot' the State University in Okitipupa in order to pave the way for a university in his home town of Ondo. It will be recalled that when Dr. Agagu was elected Governor for the first term he resisted all attempts made by some people for him to cite another university in Ondo Southern Senatorial district. This is because his priority was the development of the existing State University at Akungba. However, during his second term when a decision was eventually taken to put up a University of Science and Technology at Okitipupa following the recommendation of Professor Ilemobade Committee, his administration moved to implement the programme with characteristic swiftness. Agagu's administration planned to put in place all the infrastructure for the university within 12 months. To this end therefore, contracts to the N5 billion were awarded for the construction of the university roads and buildings.

Total amount a sum of N2.50 billion was paid to the contractors as mobilization fees, while the N2.50 billion was paid into the university account. In addition the balance, N1.50 billion was also paid into the university account for equipment furniture and fixture. Out of this N6.5 billion, only, the mobilization fee of billion was utilized for the university. This is because 'Emperor' Mimiko ordered the withdrawal of N4 billion from the university account and diverted the money to other purposes. This is in addition to stopping all capital projects embarked upon by Aizaou in Ondo Senatorial District such as Araromi-Irele road. The area where the Ikales have suffered is the provision of public electricity. Public electricity came to Ikale land for the first time in 1966 at Okitipupa. Instead of our people celebrating the

50th anniversary of electricity, what they are celebrating is total darkness as there is nowhere in Ikale land where people have enjoyed public electricity even for just one minute over the past two years.

The effects of not having electricity on educational, of need to waste economical and social activities are obvious to everybody here so that I do not waste time on them. From our discussion so far it is clear that the agenda for the upliftment of Ikale land must recognize the need for unity among our people. The less united we are, the easier for political leadership to play us around like football and be indifferent to our problems. This is why your Association with the Motto: Unity and Progress has a vital role to play in helping to solve this problem of disunity among our people. You should do this in conjunction with other Ikale Associations especially Ikale Central Organisation.

WHY WE NEED TO COLLABORATE WITH OUR NEIGHBOURS

We need to work with our neighbours especially the Ilajes for many reasons among which is the East - West Coastal Road. According to the literature emerging from the NDDC Board and Management Retreat of 11th to 15th March, 2014, 85.151 km out of the 704 km long road runs from Ondo State to Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos via coastal region of Ogun State. I understand that during the dry season, it is possible to drive on the rough road from Lekki to Araromi (in Ilaje) in under .1 hour. I learnt that a one kilometer Alape bridge in Ilaje was built by Agagu's government which now makes it possible to drive from Araromi to Igbokoda in about 15 minutes even though part of the road is still to be completed.

With Okitipupa only a few minutes away from Igbokoda, the Ikales must be interested in the Coastal road and

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work in collaboration with the Ilajes to ensure that the road is built. The roles such road can play in the upliftment of Ikale land are numerous. By bringing Ikale land closer to Lagos, some businessmen and women would prefer to come there to do business because it is less congested and costs of doing business like land, buildings and wages are cheaper. In addition, the existence of such coastal road is a special incentive for the establishment of a deep sea port in Ilaje with the attendant benefits to the Ilajes and the Ikales.

The road will also facilitate the development of Olokola free trade zone that will definitely provide jobs for our people at home. Such road will surely not be the Ilajes in getting Igbokoda – Igbokoda Zion – Igbekobo road constructed. When this is the travel time between Igbokoda and Igbekobo will only be just 5 minutes link Ikale, Ilaje and Ese-Odo most effectively for trade and commerce.

The dominant individuals, institutions and associations that 'in make things happen such as Ilaje League of Professionals. Both the Ikales and the Ilajes must approach the Minister of state for Niger Delta and the Minister of Finance to tilt the budget for the construction of the coastal road as it affects Ondo to Lagos. However, this must not be at the expense of other stakeholders in Niger Delta region. All we are interested in is to be involved in the construction of East-West Road.

ADDRESSING THE ALLEGATION THAT IKALES IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITIES DO NOT HELP OTHER IKALES

Another issue that is of concern to the Ikales is that our sons and daughters in positions of authority do not cry little to help other Ikales. In addressing this issue, I

will like to ask some questions, what kind of help do we want from them? Is it to bend the rules to accommodate us? Is it the kind of help that they can lawfully give? Did we approach them for assistance at the right time? Is the person seeking help redeemable? I am asking these questions based on my experience when it comes to admissions at University of Lagos. Let me give you just my experience in 2009, the last year that I was the Dean of Faculty of Business Administration, Unilag.

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A Governor Is Not Constitutionally Allowed To Spend State Money Unless Through Appropriation By The State House Of Assembly

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During that year, about 14,000 candidates that scored 200 and above made Accounting in my department their first choice when our quota for admission that year was less than 200. Prior to this year, two of my children came into my department through our Foundation Programme and not through UME. One came in when I was HOD and the other when I was the Dean.

In spite of the fact that it was impossible for me to bring them in through UME, virtually everybody that came in for assistance in that 2009 wanted me to make the impossible 'possible' by admitting his or her child irrespective of his or her marks

In one particular case, a fellow Ikale man who is also related to me, came to my house in his own car. I advised him to let his child try to come in through our Foundation Programme and offered to help him pay half of the fees for the one year course. If the child had come in and performed well in the foundation course, he would have been admitted into 200 level in the following year.

Unfortunately, he was not interested in my alternative solution as all he wanted was for the child to come in through UME even when the child was not among the first 10,000 candidates. However, this is not an argument that our elected officials have not been failing us at the critical time as reflected in the case of the current Speaker of Ondo State House of Assembly who is a fellow Ikale. As we all know, a Governor is not constitutionally allowed to spend state money unless through appropriation by the State House of Assembly. To the extent that the Speaker was sleeping for Nigeria while 'Emperor' Mimiko was busy committing resource complaint is justified. Senate allocation atrocities against her fellow Ikales and other people in our senatorial district this complaint is justified.

The way out is for us to put in place a proper screening mechanism for all those who are aspiring for elective positions. Apart from elective positions, we should have a data base of Ika people that we believe can be of help in their various callings. In approaching them for assistance, we must be willing to follow due process at the right time and for the right demand.

Education here can be no doubt at all that the absence of electricity in Ikale and its environs for more than

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two years has caused considerable damage to the education of our citizens at home. This is why I am calling on all stakeholders in Ikale land to help find solutions to this problem. I will like to remand our traditional and elected leaders that responsibility to our people must be an abiding characteristic which should not be put on and off at convenience.

The problem of electricity must be solved without further delay. In addition, I want to call on individuals and the local government councils to come up with high rewarding incentive schemes to encourage our students to perform very well in the secondary schools and the universities.

IKALES MUST DEMAND GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY FROM STATE GOVERNMENT.

Ikales must demand greater accountability from the state government in view of the unjust treatment it has been receiving from Mimiko's government.

Such accountability will require the state government to publish its accounts showing clearly what it spends for each local government and senatorial district of the state on each programme.

It is through such information that we can know at a glance whether any local government or senatorial district in the state in

marginalized or not in resource allocation. I wish to state categorically that unless we have this kind of proper accounting information, there can be no accountability and without accountability we cannot turn back the tide of corruption and without the tide of corruption being turned back our dear Ondo state stands the risk of being a failed state. This we must not allow to happen

NEED FOR SELF.- HELP DEVELOPMENT OF IKALE LAND:

I will like to conclude this lecture by drawing attention to the need for our people to be involved in self-help projects as development cannot be left to the government alone. A gathering like this or any other feasible one should be used by the Ikales to:

- I. Identity some economic social and services that Ikale land can provide for itself through self-help development projects.
- ii. Find out the factors that influence the choice of the projects identified.
- iii. Identify how the projects can be financed and executed.
- iv. Ascertain the economic impact of these self-help development projects in Ikale land.
- v. Find out how the Ikales in different spheres of life can come together

to provide themselves with some of the essential needs which the government has not been able to provide.

It is when we initiate a feasible and physically identifiable projects in progress that we can be comfortable in approaching the government for assistance.

In addressing this issue, we should agree to have a global Ikale day for every Ikale which should take place at home. The type of Ikale day I have in mind is similar to the one organized by the Ijebus at Ijebu Ode. However, unlike the one of the Ijebus that comes up every year, we may need to modify our own to come up once in two years or every leap year. This is to encourage each of the 17 Ikale kingdoms to have its own day in any year the one for the central Ikale day is not organized. We may decide to rotate the hosting of the Central Ikale days among the towns that are willing able to do so. A focal point in the implementation of this suggestion is the willingness of our traditional rulers to put the interests of the Ikales above their own interests.

Finally, I wish to thank Ikale Progressives Association, Abuja for giving me the platform to address you today. May God help you and all of us to find accelerated solutions to the elongating problems of our land.

FEATURE

IKALE KIDS

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CHARACTER

How are you and your studies?

Last time we discussed the importance of good character. We explained the need for us to have the following characters that you will find valuable as you grow up. These are , passion, respect,,fairness, humility,honesty and obedience above all others. I hope you were able to pick these characters and have started making use of them. I also told you the story of The snake and the Farmer and how the marabout bird became bald.

Today, I want to tell you a story about the Tortoise and the monkey and like I always say you must pick lessons from it that will help you as you grow up.

The Tortoise and the Monkey :

Story, story, story,

Long time ago , the Tortoise and the monkey were friends, so one day the monkey was going out and passed by the Tortoise house, they exchanged greetings



and later the Tortoise prayed for the monkey that God will not allow him to be implicated , "may God deliver us from every battle of implication o." .But instead of the monkey to say Amen, he proudly said what kind of prayer was that, I dont fight with people, I go on my way carefully , i mind my business so how will i be implicated. "You better look or think of better prayer points my dear friend", so he went on his way.

The answer the monkey gave did not go down well with the Tortoise ,he thought in his mind , "this my friend monkey is too proud and I'm going to teach him a lesson that he will never forget in his life".

Days after days he was thinking of way to harm the monkey to teach him a lesson because of his response to the prayer he prayed the last time. So he eventually got an idea. He bought plenty of bean cake and soaked it in honey, and was eating it . He purposely passed through the tiger's house and was eating it as he went, he greeted the tiger , the Tiger then asked what he was eating that he was even happy about. So he gave the bean cake he had soaked in the honey to the , tiger , the tiger asked where he got such a sweet food from. I have never tasted such sweet food before, the tiger told the Tortoise.

Do you care to go and get it if I tell you , the Tortoise responded. Of course , it's so sweet and I love it, replied the tiger. Well , this is the monkey's feces , but it's not easy to get and he will be reluctant to give you unless you blow him mercilessly in the stomach that is when he will be able to excrete it. Henhen !!!, that is strange o,the tiger said. That was what i did to get these, please have

these three, more, I will get more for myself again tomorrow .The tiger promised he was going right away. So the tortoise went away satisfied and happy his mission will soon be accomplished.

The tiger went to the monkey's house and begged him to excrete the sweet faeces . The monkey was surprised and told the tiger he did not understand him , how can my faeces be sweet. It's not possible. After much persuasion and petting and the monkey did not answer him, the tiger then remembered what the Tortoise said that it was not easy and that unless He blew the monkey hard on the stomach for it to come out , so the tiger gave the monkey the beating of his life , the monkey cried and begged the tiger, the tiger continued until the monkey's tummy was troubled and the



Deaconess Omotayo Folayan

monkey excreted hot faeces, the tiger tasted it but it was not sweet , he continued beating the monkey until he could not excrete again.

"Su didun, oya su didun" "defecate sweet faeces, common, defecate sweet faeces". The stomach was hot and there was no more strength in the monkey , so the tiger left him half dead and went away.

Days later after the monkey had recovered, he was passing by the Tortoise house , immediately the Tortoise greeted the monkey he was just saying amin, amin meaning Amen, amen . The Tortoise wanted to mock him , he now prayed the prayer again.

May God never allow us to be implicated o, Immediately the monkey shouted amin, amin, and since that day anytime the monkey comes across any one he will be shouting amin, amin..

That is the end of our story today. I hope you have been able to pick one or two lessons.

Lessons: We should not be arrogant or proud in all our doings, either in words or attitudes. Don't be full of yourself , even if you dont do evil to anyone, some people just hate for just no cause. Even your blessings, or because of your achievements, or people loving you can make them hate you and plan evil for you. Prayer is never too much and no prayer is useless or not necessary.

From the Tortoise side, it is not good to pay evil or avenge for yourself. Believe God who will always avenge for you . And moreover it is not compulsory for people to see things from your own way everytime.

Never fight for yourself or prove a point one way or the other sooner or later the truth will be revealed.

From the Tiger's side, longer throat is not good, be content with what you have and if anyone give you something be satisfied with it and dont ask for more.

Till next month keep being good children, help, your parents, be good to your siblings. Remember if you do good , God is there, if you do bad God is there whatever you do God is there always watching. God bless you. Bye.

NEWS

Igbotako indigenes to tackle Ondo State Government on status of Rebuja throne

Indigenes of the ancient town of Igbotako is rallying round to ensure the town is not disadvantaged in the wake of new obaship positions recently approved by the Ondo State Government.

Last month the Ondo State upgraded numerous Obas to first class status and gazette new ones. The development means there are new kings within Osooro Kingdom where the Rebuja of Osooro is the paramount ruler.

A concerned youth, Orimisan Adelokiki floated a movement to consult widely if it would be necessary for Igbotako the present seat of the Rebuja and that if that is desirable on how it would be done.

More than 100 eminent sons and daughters of the town have joined the movement, which currently at the consultation stage.

Orimisan told *Ikale News* in an interview: "Our objective is very clear or simple. Ilutitun has an Oba. Iju Odo has an Oba. Erekiti has an Oba. Iju Oke has an Oba. So where is Rebuja's territory? And is it not necessary for Igbotako to have Oba. And it that happens what happens to the Rebuja dynasty and Osooro Kingdom now and in the future."

According to the young activist, the history of Osooro is unique in Ikaleland and it cannot be denied that Osooro was founded by brothers who were princes. He states further that the recent approvals by Ondo State Government has fundamental implications on Igbotako in particular and Osooro in general.

Eminent Igbotako indigenes such as Chief S.O. Akinnurun, Chief Paddy Arikawe, president of clubs and societies as well as professionals in Nigeria and the Diaspora from the town

are being consulted. Already, The Rebuja of Osooro, Oba Gbadebo Bajowa has been informed of this development.

One of the dangerous matters arising from the recent developments in Osooro land is that the lineage and territory of Osooro as a Kingdom is unwittingly being destroyed and government needs to be properly counseled.

Said an Igbotako born historian and lawyer: "With the new developments for instance, tell me the ruling houses of Osooro Kingdom and how succession to the throne will emerge. Will the next Rebuja come from Igbotako, Ilutitun, or Iju Odo and from which ruling house? And how does that affect existing Obas who legitimate kings over their kingdoms?"

The lawyer, who wants to remain anonymous advised well-meaning sons and daughters of Igbotako to rise to the occasion before it is too late.



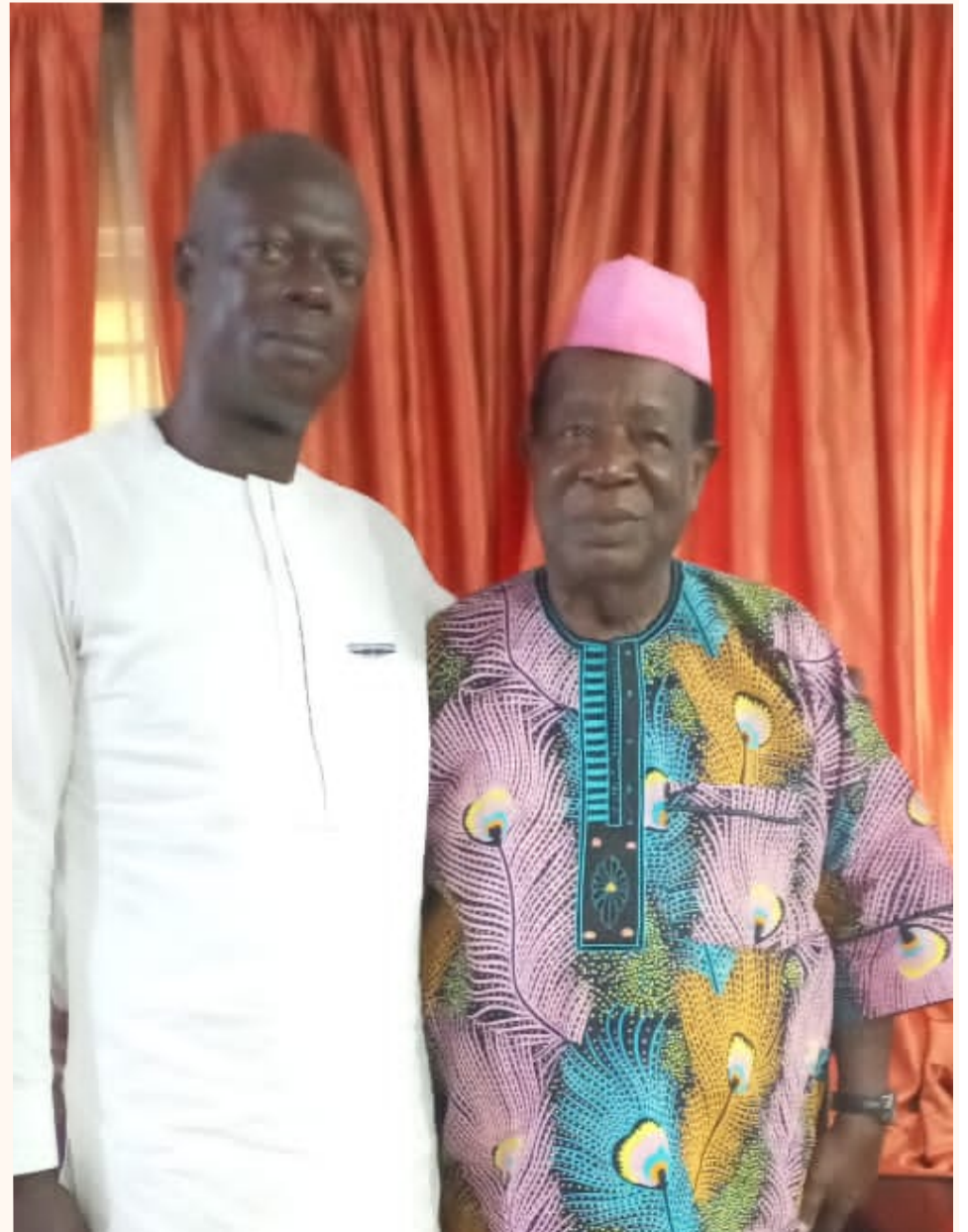
Meeting with General Olu Bajowa

PHOTO NEWS**Igbotako Indigenes Consult On Status Of Rebuja**

Meeting with DCP Bode Ojajuni, (4th from right)



Orimisan with Baba Paddy



Hon Alaba Otekaye with Father of Igbotako, the legendary Chief Paddy Arikawe in Sagamu during consultations

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Tradition Festivals In Ikaleland

Each tribe in Nigeria and indeed in Yorubaland has its own observable festivals. Ikaleland is not an exception. Several traditional festivals are celebrated at some specific time, for specific purposes. Such festival are Iwo festival, ojoey- J'usu festival, eje festival, ere/okute festival, Ogun festival Eta'dun festival etc. some of this festivals will be discussed in this in full details in this chapter.

IWO FESTIVAL

This is a festival has been in existence for hundreds of years. The genesis or the historical background of Iwo festival cannot easily be traced since it is an age-long festival.

It is a festival that is begin celebrated to appease the gods and goddesses or the spirit of the rivers. It is also a festival in which everybody believes that the gods and the goddesses or spirit of the rivers around the geographical area where the festival is being celebrated will come out to the town. The concepts involve will be explained shortly.

THE TOWN AND PEOPLE THAT CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL

Iwo festival is very unique in nature. According to history, it is a festival that combines all towns and villages osooroland together. It is also celebrated in other towns like ayeka, ikoya, ome and some part of okitipupa etc. History tells us that ikoya town usually celebrate the festive every year. The under-mentioned town are those that fall under the geographical territory where Iwo festival us been celebrate Ayeka, ikoya, igbotako-osooro, Ome, iititun-osooro, iju-odo, ija-oke, erekiti-Luwoye, Irowa, ugwada, akinfosile, omotosho, Iditala, abusoro, agbetu, ewi town, part of okitipupa, ayetoro, adewinle, o m o w o l e , I l u - I d o g u n , Mobolorunduro,etc.



TIME OF THE CELEBRATION

Customarily, it is normally celebrated around July and August every year. It depend on when the moon is sighted by the priest who are the custodians of the festival. They are called "Logengbas" the moment the moon is sighted (precisely late June or early July), the celebration of Iwo festival is in the offing; the preparation will gradually begin. The preparation begins with the meet of the logengbas, usual on are oba-market date after sighting the moon to carry out divination to determine the day of the festival. This is called mobikale. The time frame of the festive may be in the next 9 days or 18 days or 27 days.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LOGENGBAS

Who are the "logengbas"? Logengbas are the people called "Alaghoros" in short. They are the only authority in all town; i.e. the custodians of powers, laws, rule and regulations guiding the conduct and celebration of Iwo festival.

They are the link or bridge between the god or goddesses (spirits) of the rivers usually called "Oluweri" in ikaleland and the people that reside in the

communities involved. They plan for and direct all the

About three days to the d-day the logengbas will go to igbo-Oro to prepare the ground for "oluweri" and also to clear and clean up the road. Predominantly called ona kogun) i.e. the warrior's road.

The moment the moon is sighted by this group, it is a liberty or license or approval for the oluweris or gods of the rivers to get themselves prepared and ready for the celebration of the festival.

On the third day after the festival, the Longengbas are moved round the town with healing water (Ero). Men are required to dip their hand into it to rub their body while it would be sprinkled on the women body

ACTIVITIES OF OLUWERIS

There are the gods. People believe they come out from the river and stream to cry during the month and the day of the Iwo festival. The moment the moon is sighted by the Logengbas, the spirit or god of the river (oluweris) would come out in the dead of the night between the

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hour of 12:30am and 1.30am to wail once in three days, once this begins, it means that the Iwo festival is on the horizon. But immediately the logengbas have throne kolanut on the ground (m'obi kanle), i.e. announce the day of the festival, the oluweris would start to wail in the midnight everyday for at least one hour, in the process, they would continue to announce the number of days the festival (D-day).

Activities begins in the earnest in the early hour of the day with wailing of the oluweris. This is usually between the hour of 4:30am and 5:30am-this set of oluweris is known as ajilgbana, literarily meaning the early sweepers. The belief is that this type oluweris prepares the ground for the remaining ones on the way.

After a couple of hours, another set of oluweris would come out in large quantity between the hour of 10:30am and 2:30pm to wail. History tells us that the first set will find their way to the center of the town where the Oba, the high chiefs and logengbas would meet them (although not face to face) and appease and pray for the progress of the town. Thereafter the whole town will be agog with the cries of oluweris. by 6:30pm another set of these Oluweris, i.e. the second batch, would come out to cry and continue to pray for the whole town and the would also identify one after the other. They will continue till around 1:30pm in the next day and the festival would end.

FOOD FOR THE FESTIVAL

There are so many types of food being prepared on the day of th festival. It is a matter of choice. But the commonest of the food is pounded yam with okro soup. At least 90% of the celebrants of the festival and other admirers (non-indigenes) would prepare pounded yam with okro soup.

The food is usually prepared between the hours of 6.30am and 9.30am for the

breakfast and for the dinner, it is prepared between the hours of 4.00pm and 5:30pm. While most people would prefer to eat boiled groundnut and walnut as their launch.

THE NORMS OF THE FESTIVAL

In the days of our forefathers, 1920s up to 70s, only the adult men of proven integrity and powerful person in the community would be allowed to come out when the gods of the river are wailing in the town but now things have changed. Mature teenage boys 16 and above are allowed to come out. Children, women and non-indigenes stay indoor throughout the period the Oluweri would be out.

The directive requiring all the children, women and non-indigenes to stay indoor will be passed through drumming, dancing and singing round the town by palace boys. The song goes thus:

Ajoji ku o de (2x)

Oro ba'mi, wa ye o (2x)

Movement especially for children, women and non indigenes are restricted on Iwo festival day. They are not allow to go to the river to fetch water, wearing of shoes, looking at mirror fighting or beating anybody, cursing etc are prohibited on that day. Any food that is on fire when Oluweri is wailing should not be eating by women On no account should anybody switch on any electronic gadget and under no circumstance should any vehicle or cycle etc move on that day. All doors must remain shut when the Oluweris are wailing. Should anybody die within the month, the family must give one big dog to the Logengbas before he or she can be buried. This is used for sacrifice to appease the gods.

ENTERTAINMENT IN IWO FESTIVAL

History has it that in the past, that there was a small object, as small as the stone used to grind pepper. They called it

"Uwen." It is as very heavy. No one can carry it except very powerful men who must not drop it until he reaches the destination.

Magicians use to perform exceptional wonders. Maize seed could be planted, would germinate, mature and ripe for eating on the same day. Also it is on record that a basket were used to fetch water without leaking. Morealso, cock could be made to lay eggs and hen to crow. There are so many entertainments; they vary from town to town.

Nowadays- these are very rare, as the knowledge was not passed on by those who have it to the new generation. On the eve of the festival, people will be gathered at Oba's palace and at different family heads, local drinks are shared, local songs that suit the purpose of Iwo festival will be sung and the people would challenge each other in the war of words, incantations and the practice of abracadabra.

THE PROBLEMS

In she Christendom, people believe that this festival is a means of worshipping idol, gods and goddesses of the rivers. This has generated a lot of controversies to the extent that the matter got to the court of law.

Women, have argued that it is a systematic violation of their rights and freedom of movement. Some of them advocated the abolition of the festival.

While some other people view it that it is not tantamount to idol worshipping but a way of preserving our cultural heritage. They argue that the preservation of our culture should be the utmost concern and priority of every individual. They argued it that deviations from our culture in the recent past has so many negative impacts directly or indirectly on Wale communities. The argument is that we need to appreciate what we have as culture, and jettison foreign culture.

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If the celebration of Iwo festival is a system or means of worshipping another god as some sections of Christians believe, then let us obey the divine call of God from the most high but if the celebration is for the preservation of our culture, then let us appreciate all the good and brilliant initiatives of our forefathers that were bequeathed on our generation.

Finally, since many towns and villages in Ikaleland celebrates Iwo festival, there is bound to be some little differences in the methods adopted by different towns in the celebration of the festival. The above process or analysis was based on our experience in the celebration of Iwo festival in Osooroland.

The way it is celebrated at Idepe or Ayeka is different from how it is being celebrated in Igbotako-Osooro, Iju-Oclo, Ayede, Erekiti, Ilutitun Osooro etc. In Idepe, the Oluweris will only wail on the outskirts of the town (i.e. inside the bush very near the town). And in the town, people, both women and visitors, under age and non-indigenes, vehicles and cycles can move freely unmolested. They can work freely and go about their daily and normal duties without any hindrances.

OJOYE JUSU FESTIVAL

This festival is being celebrated by Irele people and its environs in Ikaleland. It is a festival that is being referred to as celebration of tradition and culture, marking the arrival of new yams. The traditional rulers and chiefs of the concerned towns or communities do this to herald the harvest and eating of new yams.

THE CELEBRANTS

Customarily, it is normally celebrated around August every year. Not all the people of the concerned area are culturally permitted to eat new yam

until the celebration of the new yam festival. It is only the Oba of the town and all the chiefs (Eghare, Ijama, Ojoye) who are forbidden from eating new yam. Every year before the celebration of the festival and in as much as one is a chief of any title, one is prohibited from touching a new yam let alone eating it or eating anything that the new yam is converted into e.g. pounded yam etc. The festival commences on a gradual process with "Eghares" i.e. the Eghares would be the first group of chiefs that would eat the new yam to be followed by "Ojoyes" nine days later. The festival will be given more recognition and people believe that the festival commences fully during the turn of "Ojoyes".

In the eve of the festival i.e. that of "Ojoyes" all the mature men would leave their various houses to converge at a prescribed area preferably at the centre of the town or the shrine (the power house of the town) to pour libations to their ancestors (Ogungun) in order to mirror the future i.e. show the way into the future. While their female counterparts would stay indoors. Whatever they (female chief) have would be offered to Ogungun by opening their doors slightly (not openly) to give out the food to the Ogungun. It is in this particular night (eve) that all the mature female would talk or speak with their ancestors or forefathers and their beloved ones who have gone to the great beyond (dead people). They would ask questions ranging from the circumstances that led to their death, and would request from them some help and any questions whatsoever may be asked from them, and the "Ogungun" would fully supply them with the answers accordingly. During this process, a male voice must not be heard by the Ogungun or else the Ogungun would refuse to talk. Also it is not all the Ogungun that speak; some that only whistle. This only happens when the Ogungun is without children before he/she joined the ancestors. The belief

of our people about Ogungun is that they unlock the way to the future and that they are ever present guardian in the time of need. In Ikale worldview, "Ogungun" is the embodiment of the essence of human existence.

After the day break, the celebration galore starts by eating the new yam by "Ojoyes". Although the celebration does not concern everybody in the town, (it is only celebrated by all the chiefs and Oba) the lovers of culture and traditions and especially the families of the chiefs join them in celebration in order to showcase their love and admiration.

As part of the entertainment of the day, there is a small object called uwen very heavy but small. This will be carried to Igbo-Oro and it must be carried by one person. Based on finding, it was discovered that only rejected one in the society, a less important, unrecognized and a person without future would be called upon to carry this to Igbo-Oro. All the chiefs and some interested persons can follow them to "Igbo-Oro". But on no account should anyone fall down on his way to Igbo-Oro. Also it is an abomination for Uwen to fall down on their way going. Various songs would be sung-songs meant for the purpose and it must be in consecutive order. It is a robust gathering of men, women and children. Ikale culture ticked in the air. The men would wear mainly "buba and sokoto" some will add "agbada" with caps to match. Most of their caps had flying triangular double edges that hang or fold like the flabby ears of a dog. The women and children will also wear traditional costumes. Most of the men (chiefs), women and children usually wear beads and rings. But they are just for aesthetics. Traders, visitors and even passers-by are also part of the celebration. It is usually a big celebration, laced with singing, dancing and merry making. Incantation will be chanted and libation will be poured and the spirit of their

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ancestors (ogungun) will be implored to show the way into the future. On getting to Igbo-Oro, sacrifices and atonement will be made to ogungun (the sacrifice of their forefathers or ancestors). After this, they will come back home and entertainment will follow. There will be enough to eat and drink, gift will exchange hands, paying of ho Joe to their elderly ones etc will take place. These will last for five days. Thereafter, the "Gbogunruns" will celebrate theirs. Five days later, it will be the turn of Oba of the town. The "Alaghoroka", the "Gbojutoros" (those who are custodians of power as regards the power house of the town) are the last to celebrate. During this period of celebrati ula chieftaincy titles will be conferred on people

EJE FESTIVAL

If there is any festival that is popular, well recognized and widely celebrated in Ode-Irele and their environs in Ikaleland, it is "Eje Festival". Indigenes of Ode-Irele and other communities said that there are two major festivals in their communities, they are: Eje festival and the rest. Many people in Ode-Irele prefer it to Christ-mas, New Year celebrations.

Meanwhile, the origin of Eje festival cannot be easily traced. Based on the findings, it can be traced to the advent of slaves trade in Ikaleland. The Irele township and its environs bought some people as slave into their midst to work for them. Owing to the sympathetic nature of (kale people, they regard slaves not only as in the same human race with them but part of their family that must be treated with courtesy. Due to this. Wale people (Irele) gave out their daughter in marriage to these adopted slaves. Years after years. The families began to expand in a geometric manner, many slaves went to settle in other places with their wives and children. The search for economic activities also took some many as far as Ijebu, Ekiti, Hausa and other places in the federation. Many of their children

also got married in these places. These therefore necessitated the need for cohesive force to unite the people and bring them together once in every year. This was what led to the institution of the Eje festival.

Customarily, Eje festival is solely meant for women folk. There is no rite (bubo) that is being performed during this festival. It is just a festival that serves as an avenue or means of bringing virtually their married daughter together. And it is a matter of compulsion for their daughters to come home during this festival from wherever they may

In Ode-Irele where it is being celebrated in full scale, the celebration of the festival commences in the middle of September and ends in early December every year. It must be raining for seven days consecutively without stopping which symbolically represents the name "Eje" meaning "Seven". At Ode-Irele and its environs, it's normally zoned on quarters basis for orderliness, and each family or quarters has the grace of five days for the celebration before it is shifted to another quarter. Customarily and by rule, the festival must commence on a market day for each quarters.

The quarters are at liberty to celebrate it to suit their taste. It is a competition for show of wealth among the celebrants or families. It depends on the level of affluence of every individual or family. Different types of clothes of various styles will be displayed. The flow of "Aso-Oke", lace materials etc, as the celebrants dance round their quarters, coupled with the beautiful "UMALE" masquerades parade the festival could make a first time participant think that here is no other festival anywhere on earth as colourful as this. Indeed, it is an annual festival that promises to lead the people back to the basis, drawing thousands of faithfuls and cultural enthusiasts from different parts of Ikale and Undo State in general. More also, while there are family members that

celebrate by singing and thanking God for making them to re-unite, there are some that employ the services of first class musicians to add colour to the celebration.

Food is usually in surplus. People and friends from other quarters would troop in to join them in the celebration. Traditionally or by convention, pounded yam mostly with Okro or vegetable soup is prepared for the festival throughout the five days. The food would be served to the visitor's neighbours and well-wishers in other quarters, as a show of love and affection.

OKUTE/ERE FESTIVAL

(Idepe and Ode-Aye) 'kale people (both at home and in the Diaspora) cherish meeting one another after a long service time of party. As people would say that "we meet to part and part to meet" — this at times may not be applicable to female or women, who had got married and moved into their matrimonial homes. Most cultural festivals in the Ikale Land are put in place as a means of enhancing unity meet after a long time of party. Okute festival is one of such festivals used to attract Ikale sons and daughters home for cohesion every year. It is a festival that is being celebrated in order to bring together all the married daughters of Idepe/Okutipupa, Ode-Aye and Erinje communities to discuss a common goal and embark on mission.

The festival usually commences around first or second week in March every year. The festival begins by carrying "Okute" (gbe'kute') till when they will drop it (rolute). During this period, no one or organization whatsoever must beat any drum i.e. there must not be any sound of drum throughout those three months.

As the saying goes that "anything that has a beginning must surely have an end" this implies that, the carrying of Okute (gbe'kute) begins the festival

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while dropping it is the beginning of the end of the festival. This is to say that the dropping of the Okute (ro'kute) automatically fixed the real day of the Ere festival. Ere festival would be fixed for the next nine (9) days.

On the eve of the Ere festival, adult daughters and sons and children will dance to the Ogwa (where the Oba and the council of chiefs meet). At that place they must sing two hundred and one (201) songs in a consecutive order. This is done in order to eulogies and pass encomiums on their Ogungun (ancestors) who have been their di-vine guardians from the past and possibly to invoke the (Ogungun) spirit to descend and have share in the jolly of the celebration. But before they finish the singing of the 201 songs, all females and teenagers would be asked to go back to their respective homes because of the spirit of their ancestors (Ogungun) that would come down for the celebration. As soon as they get home, the Ogungun would come down, head straight to their respective homes to visit their daughters whom they had left behind. As it has been discussed earlier in this chapter that Ogungun (ancestral spirits) are assumed to be the guarantors of peace, progress and prosperity, also as ever present living souls who are ready to answer when consulted, so they are held in high esteem.

At midnight, the Ogungun would cry in order to signal their arrival. Meanwhile, on getting to their respective homes or family houses, they would call the names of their daughter(s) three times and the daughter would answer thus: 'me ma e o' I don't know you). The Ogungun would then reply that "0 niba, e ma ba, emi, bae, e pe e ni 0" (i.e person who has father does not know her father, I am your father calling). Thereafter, the Ogungun would pray for her/them. The married daughters of Okitipupafidepe community (where the festi-val is being celebrated) normally prepare meals from their

respec-tive matrimonial homes and gather themselves with their prepared meals in their family houses. Their male counterparts at home and in the Diaspora (brothers and fathers) would also gather at the same venue first to welcome their sisters and daughters and relate together in order to share some experiences. The male (fathers and brothers) would use the opportunity of the gathering to give them some advice on how to discharge their matrimonial responsibilities and domestic chores in their respective matrimonial homes. The opportunity would also be used to teach them marital morals that would sustain their marriages. At the same time, it is an avenue for them to know one another the more and exchange of addresses would be done for the sake of visitations so as to know the well-being of one another.

The food brought by those daughters of the community would be shared among everybody present, and would be eaten together. This serves as a bond of love that binds them together. Different types of dresses would be worn such as "Aso-Oke" "Sanmayan" "Ojawu", high quality Ankara etc. as the celebrants dance round their quarters spraying currency notes on their housewives, paying homage to their Oba and high chiefs coupled with the beautiful "Umale masquerades" paraded for the festival.

It is a very interesting festival that draws thousands of people both far and near for sheer festivities.

In those old days, it was a compulsion for all the married daughters to attend and at least they must spend between three and five days before they could return to their various matrimonial homes. Any daughters found to have contravened this would be sanctioned by her family. This has however changed for a number of reasons including the influence of Christianity and demands of industrial modern society.

ALUMA FESTIVAL (ODE ERINJE)

Aluma literally derived from Ikale dialectical word "Luma" meaning hide. Aluma can then be described according to the submission of the people of Erinje kingdom as a hidden place where people take refuge during crisis.

The history of the festival can be traced to the period when the people migrated from Ado in present refuge around this Aluma River. After sometimes, they began to loose their children to death sudden death indeed. It was this ugly development that compelled the elders then to consult Ifa oracle. The oracle then directed them to embark on a journey along the river. It was this journey that led them to Obon-ode where they discovered sand (land). Then messages were sent back to the elders and the rest people that a place and land where elephant (erin) are abound had been discovered. That was how the name Erinje came to being and how people migrated to the place. Therefore, every year, the elders and Oba usually go back to that Alma area again to pay homage to their ancestors who died when they were still in Aluma; and also to appease the spirits of those ancestors in every November. It was this yearly homage that is referred to today as Aluma Festival

The process of the festival begins with a nine days journey embarked upon to Aluma by the priest, chief and the Oba. It is noted that Ode-Erinje is the only town in the entire Ikaleland that has two-coronated Obas. The first one is the ceremonial Oba that stays in the town with his subjects while the second is the sacrificial Oba restricted to outside the town. The title of ceremonial Oba is called Orungberuwa and Simoko is for the sacrificial Oba. Without Simoko, Aluma festival cannot be celebrated because of his vital roles during the festival. All the chiefs, priests and the Oba would spend nine (9) days at Aluma in appeasing, praying and offering sacrificial items. The activities of these people during their nine-day

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journey are not made public since they are there to talk to the spirits. Meanwhile, the last day (9th day) they would return home and there would be cultural display after the arrival of the chief, priest, and the oba at Obon-ode (river bank). Masquerade would also be paraded by the royal family to welcome the Oba and his chiefs from the hectic journey. After this cultural display, all the Chiefs and Oba would feast together. The feast is usually pounded yam prepared from new yam and this would pave way for the eating of the yam.

What is unique about this town and the festival is that nobody (either young or old) should bring new yam into the town before November every year (before the celebration of the festival). None of the sons and daughters of the town both home and abroad could eat new yam ~"before November. Also, strangers and women are forbidden to go out in the night of the day of the return from Aluma. The ninth day is a day they believe that their ancestors would come down and celebrate with them, praying and greeting their daughter.

Igodan and Okunmo also celebrate this festival.

ERE FESTIVAL (Ode-Erinje)

The Ere festival in Ode Erinje is quite different from the one being celebrated in Idepe and Ode-Aye, which has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

This is a festival celebrated in Ode-Erinje to mark the end of harvesting period and to usher in the new season of planting. It is principally, to celebrate their bumper harvest with their friends and well-wishers.

The name Ere was derived from "Dereje" which means making people to come and dine and celebrate together.

This festival normally takes place in June every year. It involves all sons and daughters of Ode-Erinje, the Kabiyesi and his subjects including the chiefs.

On the eve of the festival, the young and the old, men and women would dance round the town, singing different traditional songs just to sensitize the people and the visitors about the festival. This forum is used to shower encomiums on some people, especially wives who might have done good things or influenced good things into the community or wives who have taken care of their husbands and children very well. The occasion is also used to pass insulting and derogatory words on those who involve themselves in any bad things, the wicked people, people of bad manner, so that they can have a change of heart. The process of dancing round the town is called "Ugbaghare"

The second day, which is the day for the commencement of the festival proper; all the family heads would be with their people in their different quarters to celebrate the festival. Early in the morning, the house wives in different households would prepare a kind of sacrificial food called elo (prepared in form of pounded yam but not as strong as pounded yam and palm oil would be added into it) the family head would collect everything from each household and sprinkle it round the whole quarters.

Since this is done by every quarter, that means no portion of the town would be left untouched.

The preparation of elo and sprinkling it outside is done to appease the gods and ancestral spirit in order for the people of the community to have a bumper harvest in their next harvest season, and also to pray for the progress and development of the town. It is assumed that ogungun (the ancestral spirits) would then come down to eat the sprinkled item, so, on no account should anybody sweep the dirt in

his/her house and throw them outside for the period of five days. The belief is that ogungun are still with them in the town dining and wining together for that period of five days.

Thereafter, the masquerades from all the quarters of the town would come out. The essence of this masquerade is to clean up the land especially the area that might have been defiled. It is assumed that masquerade is a spirit that come from the river and as such they have the power to wipe away all the sicknesses, diseases, sorrow, problems etc. forever. Meanwhile any quarters in the town that refuse to invoke the spirits of their masquerades for any year would be sanctioned, fined and be regarded as quarters that impede progress and development of the town.

The fourth day is the day set aside for their married daughters both home and in the Diaspora to be in their best attire. They are expected to prepare delicious food from their matrimonial homes (in most cases pounded yam) which would be brought to their family home. This is the avenue for re-union of old friends and family member and it serves as an avenue to exchange greetings and pleasantries. The festival ends on the fifth day with Ugbalo. This is the day that everywhere would be swept. All the dirt that might have been packed somewhere in the house, all the remnants of the elo that was sprinkled on the first day would be swept away. Also, it is symbolic act of sweeping away evils in the land. The end of the festival is an indication that the festival is a successful one and the whole town would enjoy a bumper yield in the new harvesting season.