



ASEYORI ✓
CONFIRMED

AKETI

WE LOST AN INCREDIBLE VOICE!

● **Jimoh Ibrahim** commiserates with Tinubu, Ondo, APC, Akeredolu's family & associates

Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN
Former Governor of Ondo State

DEAR Aketi,

Egbon, the last few months before your departure assured me you are in heaven by now.

Yes, Aketi, you left at a time our state, Southwest and Nigeria needed you most.

The vacuum you left behind is too big to fill; the vacancy of incremental innovative governance, pride of command and incredible overflow of legitimacy.

Through sheer initiative, courage and strong commitment to principles, you restored hope into the state of hopelessness in our geo-political zone.

We were hit by a blow of fate when you bade farewell.

Oyo and Ekiti states took three days off from government schedules to mourn your departure.

Owo, your cradle, was in gloom for days.

Nigeria's 109 senators observed a moment of silence for you during plenary. It was a solemn oc-

casation when Senata President Godswill Akpabio betrayed emotion.

Yes, your adorable Betty lost courage and wept uncontrollably openly at the airport when she finally received your remains in Lagos from Germany.

Then I was in Ibadan to pay my condolence message, I saw the children. They were seized by nostalgia when they said goodbye to a beloved father.

Your 'girls' and your sister, Toyin, were uncontrollably in tears. They lost a father who fought for justice and redress for the oppressed.

The search for replacement has commenced.

Be assured of my incredible success at the poll. Thank God, no naira will change to a coat of many colours, and there is petrol. It is a simple case of Emilokan).

If you have a choice to return the next life, please, return to Ondo State!

Egbon e sun re o!

Senator Jimoh Ibrahim **PhD. Modern War, CFR**

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EDITORIAL PAGE

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Agbiiiii ooma Ikale o!**Agbiiiii ooma Apoi o!!****Agbiiiii ooma Arogbo o!!!****Ki jo y'a mu da?****Eniii...dandan!!!!!!**

My compatriots, I greet you all for witnessing another New Year. My prayer is that the Year will bring worth great things in our lives and families in the mighty name of Jesus.

Politics have been our major stories in the past several months. The reason is obvious: as a community newspaper, our core interest is development of our beloved Ikaleland. The best way to develop Ikaleland is to get hold of political power at local, state and national level as the case may be!

Politics is contest for power, interest, and resources. It is so logical. And the implications are very practical. When our son, Chief Olu Akinfosile (CON) of blessed memory became a Federal Minister, he gave us the road that we have communally named Olu Akinfosile Road. Before that road was constructed it took minimum of two days to transit from Ikale to Lagos. We had to go via Itebu Manuwa to the Creeks to the Lagoon and land in Ebute Ero, Lagos.

The road practically exposed us. Of course Akinfosile brought telecommunications and employed scores of our people. We have had other sons of Ikale occupy various political positions and many of them have done very well. A few of them have been very woeful in office. But by and large, political participation has been improving our well-being steadily.

I cannot but mention Olusegun Agagu of blessed memory in this regard. Nigerians have short memories but I am an exception in that regard. Agagu brought massive development to Ikale land. He did all roads linking our towns and villages. He tarred the Iju Odo - Omotoso road for the first time ever. He tarred the Igbotako-Ilado road for the first time

ever. He had awarded the Igbotako-Ode Aye road which his successor cancelled. He linked Ikoya- Oloto road with bitumen for the first time. As minister, he facilitated the Olowo-Irele, Ome Ajagba-Agadagba road. Agagu did township roads in Okitipupa and Ijue Odo. I wish I could play the videos of Okitipupa township road before his intervention.

It was a terrible mess! That is what you get when you push to control political power. The beautiful thing about Agagu was that he did not develop Ikaleland at the expense of other communities in Ondo State. Before he established the Ondo State University of Science and Technology which Aketi renamed after him (thank you again Aketi),

Agagu ensured that he got courses at Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba accredited from 20 per cent to 100 per cent. No course existing in AAUA was duplicated in OSUSTECH. We all know what happened to OSUSTECH when power was seized from Agagu. Thank you again Aketi. OSUSTECH is gradually stimulating the Ikale economy. Investments are coming up around that University.

So, as a community newspaper, we are very interested in politics. And in the tradition of reputable newspapers in developed climes, we endorse candidates at higher levels. We officially have endorsed Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim for Governor because we believe he has what it takes to develop our beloved state. See reasons provided by the publisher elsewhere in this edition please.

Again, as it is the tradition when a newspaper endorses a contestant, we do not run down or write down opponents of the candidate that we endorse. Endorsement only means that we throw our weight behind the particular candidate to let people see why they should support the candidate. *Ikale News* is still available for all other contestants across all political parties. We are

professionals in this business and we uphold the ethics of our profession which is about reporting "all sides" and making available our platform for other contestants to communicate with our people and readers.

Not all lovers and readers of *Ikale News* are APC. In fact, not all of them are Ikale. We recently took a dive into our readership metric and found that more than 20 per cent of our readers are actually Ilaje! Our editorial board has therefore decided that the minimum content we should be having for Ilaje matters and stories should be at least 25 per cent. We are working on that. This means that Ilaje, Apoi, Ikale and Arogbo are still one! I was pleasantly surprised when my editor gave me the stats (which I published in our February edition – which you can still read at ikalenews.com).

We encourage all our people to show utmost decorum in this political transition period in Ondo State. The office of governor has been conceded to Ondo South by both the PDP and the APC technically. I know that is Labour Party (LP) will present a candidate, it would come from the Southern Senatorial District. We must be grateful to the other two senatorial districts for their magnanimity by developing the entire state when we get hold of power. It is primitive and barbaric to be pulling down one another's posters and billboard.

So, the contestants should speak to their thugs. This is Ondo South. We are one. Only one person will be crowned governor. As you read this, God knows that person. Because we are mortals and are limited in many things, we do not know what God knows. We have to wait till next month after the primaries to know whom God has favoured in this race. It is all about grace and favour. All the candidates we are presenting in Ondo South are quality citizens that will make Ondo State proud.

At the end of the exercise we congratulate one another and work very hard to develop Ondo State

EDITORIAL PAGE

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Unveiling the Unruly: The Misconduct of Governor Ayedatiwa's Political Backers *

In recent events surrounding the political terrain, Governor Lucky Ayedatiwa finds himself at a crucial juncture where leadership and responsibility are paramount. Allegations have surfaced concerning the misconduct of some of his political loyalists, who purportedly mobilized hoodlums to vandalize billboards of political opponents and harass supporters of other aspirants during a visit by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to Ondo State. Such actions, driven by desperation, are not only condemnable but also undermine the democratic process and tarnish the reputation of governance.

The Aseyori family and political movement strongly condemn this gross misconduct of Governor Ayedatiwa's supporters in its entirety. It is expected of Mr Governor to take decisive action to address and condemn such behavior, as it not only undermines democracy but also reflects poorly on his leadership.

As the elected leader of the state, Governor Ayedatiwa carries the weight of ensuring that politics remains a realm of healthy competition, free from intimidation and violence. His silence on the actions of his supporters could be interpreted as tacit approval, which is detrimental to the principles of fair play and justice. Therefore, it is sacrosanct for Governor Ayedatiwa to step forward and unequivocally condemn the misconduct of his followers.

Firstly, condoning such behavior sets a dangerous precedent for future political engagements. If allowed to go unchecked, it creates an environment where individuals believe they can act with impunity in pursuit of their political agenda. This not only erodes trust in the electoral process but also breeds a culture of fear and intimidation among the populace.

Secondly, Governor Ayedatiwa has a moral obligation to uphold the values of democracy and respect for opposing viewpoints. By failing to reprimand his supporters for their actions, he risks being seen as complicit in their

wrongdoing. Leadership is not just about wielding power; it's about setting an example and holding oneself and others accountable for their actions.

In conclusion, it is quite disheartening that Governor Lucky Ayedatiwa cannot demonstrate strong leadership by condoning the misconduct of his political loyalists. This is not just about political expediency; it's about upholding the integrity of the democratic process and fostering a climate of respect and civility in the political landscape. This obviously reflects poorly on his leadership and also risks destabilizing the social fabric of the state. As citizens, we look to our leaders to set the tone for responsible governance which Mr Governor has apparently failed to live up to.

***Odofin Oluwafemi* (C-Banking)**

Akure, Ondo State

Dear Editor,

DR PAUL AKINTELURE: OUR SYMBOL OF RENEWED HOPE

No patriotic Ondo State person would be happy with the current situation of the state, knowing that the state expected to be moving forward was is not only static but also is now moving back with some old immoral practices known to be eroded and now being introduced to the state.

Political violence is alien to Ondo State. The state that ought to be in motion is not moving forward as expected and this is attracting the attention of every patriotic People of Ondo state, Ours is not to complain but to proffer solution by telling the people that we have a proficient man who is capable and competent to lead the state successfully through the introduction of modern administrative styles that will fast-track the State to be in the right position.

We present to you Dr. Paul Akintelure (DPA), a symbol of hope for Ondo State and best candidate for All Progressive Congress owing to the following reasons; DPA is among the founding members of the party in the state, he knows those who have suffered for the party but inequality hinders from using their skills for the progress of the party and the State at large.

DPA knows where the shoe pinches. He is a man who wasn't born with a silver spoon yet toiled and struggled to stardom knowing what it takes to bring succor to the people when in position of power.

DPA is a neutral person. DPA has not be found in any mess. A man who maintains his integrity is not only capable to lead but also possess the qualities of altruistic leadership that Ondo State needs right now.

DPA is a man of people. The quality of maintaining People and their differences is one of the greatest qualities a leader need.

DPA is a fresh man. DPA has not amassed wealth from public purse nor held any position before so he is free from any form of allegations, a fresh mind like him is the hope of Ondo State.

DPA is well equipped and prepared for the task. DPA has thousands of achievable blueprints that will transform Ondo state. With DPA, Ondo state resources will be used for Ondo State People and to equally develop Ondo state.

DPA's good relationship with Presidency is one sure way the state can get all she wants as it set paths on infrastructural developmental reforms. With the quality Relationship between the Governor and Mr. President. If Dr. Paul Akintelure becomes the Governor of Ondo state, Ondo state will attract the attention of the Presidency and won't be last in the list of importance.

Many other things distinguished Dr. Paul Akintelure as a hope for the people of Ondo state and hope of APC in winning the incoming Gubernatorial Election.

Dr. Paul Akintelure is a symbol of hope, a man with stable mindset and a man who believe firmly in Renewed Hope. Let give Ondo state best gift by supporting the Dr. Paul Akintelure for Governor.

We call on All Progressive Congress Members

All Progressive Congress National leaders
All Progressive Congress State leaders
All Progressive Congress Local Government leaders

All Ondo State People to support Dr. Paul Akintelure and build up Ondo state together

Dele Giwa

DPA Media Team

Akure, Ondo State

BITTER PILLS

IS MIMIKO COMING TO APC?

When Governor Rotimi Akeredolu passed on late last year (God bless his soul), a former governor of Ondo State, Dr. Rahman Olusegun Mimiko was one of the early sympathizers. He did it in an unusual way, however. He gathered the commissioners and political appointees who served with him when he was governor and they paid a “condolence visit” to the Acting Governor (as he was then), Mr. Lucky Aiyedatiwa.

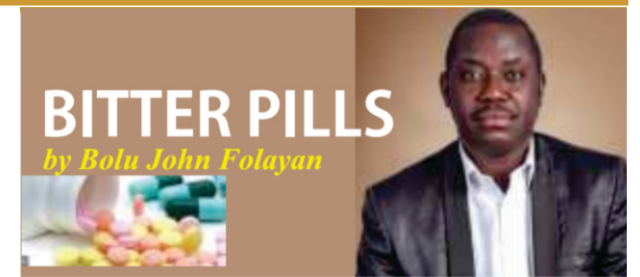
I thought that visit should be to the Betty (wife of) or Jide and any member of the family of the late Akeredolu. I would not know if later he did pay a similar visit to the family of the deceased. I left it at that until I noticed that most of appointees that Governor Aiyedatiwa has made so

far have one form of relationship or political association or the other with the legendary Iroko.

When President Tinubu paid courtesy visit to Afenifere leader, Pa Fasoranti recently, Mimiko was lurking in the elder statesman's house, waiting to welcome the Jagaban! I wondered in what capacity the Iroko was waiting for the Jagaban – as elder statesman, PDP chieftain or former governor of the state?

Those were what informed the headline of this piece: Is Mimiko coming to the All Progressive Congress, APC in Ondo State?

Did you just say it is impossible? That he had issues with President Bola Tinubu who assisted him unarguably to unseat



Governor Olusegun Agagu but who later told Tinubu that “in Ondo State we do not have a godfather but God the Father?”

Then, you don't know the enigma called Dr. Rahman Oluwasegun Mimiko. So, let me tell you briefly about the loquacious politician called Segun Mimiko, a.k.a. “Iroko”

Iroko started politics in the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife (then University of Ife) when he was a medical student. His passion and political wizardry endeared him to thousands of students and he was very popular on campus. Soon after graduation, he continued his political activism and this connected with leading political groups during the Babangida political transition era. He joined the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and made the cabinet list in the old Ondo State (incorporating today's Ekiti state.). Governor Bamidele Olumilua was governor and Iroko was in the cabinet with the likes of Dr. Olusegun Agagu (deputy governor) and Chief Wole Olanipekun (SAN). Iroko was one of the youngest commissioners and he did well.

Flip to 1999. Iroko made the cabinet again when Chief Ade Adefarati became governor under the Alliance for Democracy (AD). Dr. Agagu pitched his tent with the People's Democratic Party (PDP) which produced Olusegun Obasanjo as president, despite flopping at the polls in the entire South West. Agagu became aviation minister (and later power and steel minister).

It was well-known that Obasanjo wanted to ensure the PDP captured the South West and he used Agagu as arrow-head, pushing him to contest for governor of the state. Agagu was able to recruit grassroots politician, Mimiko barely weeks to the election. Mimiko ported to PDP and emerged as Secretary to the State Government under Agagu as governor.

I do not know the details of the deal between Agagu and the Iroko but what we heard was that Agagu promised not to run for a second term. This claim was denied by Agagu severally. But it was clear to Agagu



Dr. Olusegun “Iroko” Mimiko (right) with Senator Iyiola Omisore, waiting at Pa Reuben Fasoranti's house in Akure for President Bola Tinubu's visit recently.

BITTER PILLS

that Mimiko had ambition to be governor. So, Agagu made tactical moves to clip the political wings of the Ondo City born medical doctor. But in a twist of political wizardry difficult to explain (because Obasanjo trusted Agagu to indescribable levels), Obasanjo appointed Mimiko as Housing Minister. The Iroko thereafter became unstoppable. Give Iroko a meter of political niche, he would turn it to a kilometer in minutes. Iroko was able to build formidable opposition against Agagu.

Despite Agagu's sterling performance in office (he is generally referred to as the best governor to ever govern Ondo State), Agagu was booted out of power with the help of the judiciary. I just said it that if you give Iroko a metre, he would make it a kilometer. Yes, he was able to build on his goodwill and expanded his political fortress as governor.

With a hitherto unknown Labour Party he governed Ondo State for eight solid years. When contesting for second term, he fought the candidate of the political field marshal, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Mr. Rotimi Akeredolu and defeated him. He had boasted that Ondo State was not Lagos, where one person would call the shots. He won a second term in office.

Let us leave his performance in office for another day so that we do not lose concentration in this discourse.

Against the political tradition in Ondo State of power rotation, Governor Mimiko sponsored a candidate from Ondo Senatorial District (where he too is from). By this time he had crawled back to the PDP. This move was swiftly resisted by the stakeholders. Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim who had been reassured of the ticket by Mimiko and even the then president, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, was among such stakeholders. Ibrahim, a lawyer, chose the courts as battle ground to frustrate Mimiko's deft move. How could someone who did not believe in "godfather" now have a "godson"? Why should he disrupt the political understanding that has stabilized Ondo State politics for decades? The legal battle contributed immensely into paving way for Rotimi Akeredolu to win in his second attempt at the office, against Mimiko's annointed godson.

Since then, the Iroko of Ondo politics has waned in political power. He joined the Zenith Labour Party (ZLP), and then returned to the PDP. He has not been able to reproduce the magic which endeared him to youths especially, across the state. In fact, he could not deliver Ondo East and West to Abubakar Atiku in the last presidential elections (although pundits attributed this to his personal feud with Atiku). Before then, he didn't control the grassroots as he used to do.

But ignore Iroko at your peril! He is a deft politician who knows how to make strategic moves. Pundits are saying he is coming back to the APC. Of course, he would prefer Ondo South to spend four years only in office, hence he would go for Governor Aiyedatiwa.

This is an opinion article (not an interview), so I am not in position to ask him if this rumour is true or not. But I know that Iroko is not a politician that can be pushed over in Ondo State.

"I suspect he may be angling to come back to APC, without using the main door. I suspect that he may choose to enter the party of the moment by throwing his support for incumbent governor of the state, Mr. Lucky Aiyedatiwa. But that is if Lucky is lucky to win the April governorship primaries of the party. "

But will he leave the PDP again? Already being a factional leader in the PDP (Wike-group) means that Wike could easily help him take his second leg out the PDP for him to step into APC.

Those who think the fear of Mimiko is the beginning of political wisdom in Ondo State are doing everything they can to block this political enigma from coming to the APC. If he could beat Obasanjo, beat Agagu, beat the Jagaban, you have to give him his due credit as a political engineer.

As we approach the peak of politics to elect a governor for Ondo State in November, keep a tab on the Iroko. The political climate in Ondo State is very unique. The LP, PDP and APC have been peopled by the same sets of people one way or the other. Personalities are therefore very important

in the unfolding equations, though APC is obviously the party beat.

Now, we enter the 100-meter dash

With the formal declarations of Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, Chief Olusola Oke (SAN), Chief Sola Ebiseeni and Hon Yomi Sheba of their interests to run for governor of Ondo State, we are getting close to the 100-meter dash on the governorship election in Ondo State, come November.

Both the PDP and APC will conduct their primary elections next month (April) and then we shall fully enter the dash.

The 100-meter dash can be very interesting! I remember when I was at Manuwa Memorial Grammar School, Iju-Odo, it used to be so during our athletic meetings, especially during the 200-meter race. We had first-class athletes such as Grace Ebukunyo (of blessed memory), Idowu Balogun (Balo Pupa), Iranlowo Balogun (Balo Didun), Deji Akinnubi, Jawando and many others. They would start the race as a pack or herd until the bend at the end of the first 100, then Balo Pupa and Ebukunyo would shoot out suddenly and their lead would become unassailable till the end. The political scenario is taking a similar look.

In the APC, all the contestants are formidable: Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, Dr. Paul Akintelure, Mr. Wale Akinterinwa, Gov. Lucky Aiyedatiwa and Chief Olusola Oke lead the pack. We cannot write off incumbent rep member for Okitipupa/Irele Federal Constituency, Omoba Jimi Odimayo and Mayowa Akinfolarin in the race within the APC as well.

The PDP, as usual, is picking up late. But those who know how the party does its things know that that is not a sign of weakness at all. So far, Ilaje grassroots politician, Chief Sola Ebiseeni (a former local government chairman and former commissioner in the state) and former rep and ex-liaison officer for Ondo State in Abuja, Hon Abayomi Sheba have declared their intentions to run.

It is interesting to note that that all the candidates (in both parties) are from the Ondo South Senatorial District. That tells anybody who cares to listen that in Ondo State politics, zoning is very important, though it may not be a written rule.

That's how far I will like to go about the first 100 meters in this 200-meter race. After April, I will return to give live commentary about the red-hot race, which promises to be tension-soaked.

COVER



Politicians close ranks to host President Tinubu, give Aketi a befitting burial

By Samuel Olaniyan (Acting Editor)

The political heat waves blowing across the rank and file of the All Progressive Congress (APC) Ondo State since late year subsided for a week in February as top gladiators in the gubernatorial race and their supporters embarked on a “cease fire” to welcome President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and give a befitting burial to the deceased governor of the state, the late Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu.

Unlike the political salvos being thrown at one another, the various leaders and their groups diverted their energies towards proving to the visiting president that “they were more on ground” politically. In fact, some groups took unsolicited photographs with the visiting president as “proofs” that their leader is the preferred candidate of Mr. President.

Some PDP leaders led by former governor Olusegun Mimiko also was sighted among those waiting to receive the president who missed the official funeral ceremonies a week earlier due to state functions.

In the final transition ceremonies of the ebullient late governor before the president visited, the top contestants and their supporters all comported themselves – from service of songs held at Ibadan, Christian Wake in Akure and final funeral service at Owo. They all expected Mr. President to attend the funeral service and lined

up the major roads leading to Owo with bill board and carnivals mounted by their supporters but at the peak of the preparations to receive the president, thugs suddenly descended on the bill boards of Chief Olusola Oke, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim and Mr. Wale Akinterinwa.

In two separate statements by Wale Akinterinwa Campaign Organisation and Olusola Oke Campaign Organisation signed by Segun Ajiboye and Courage Oladele respectively, the groups appealed to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to prevail on Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa to call his supporters to order to desist from attacking supporters of other governorship aspirants. Both statements were made available to newsmen on Friday in Akure, Ondo State capital. The groups made the call following violent attacks on supporters of both aspirants and destruction of billboards of the governorship aspirants by alleged supporters of Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa on Wednesday at Akure Airport during the visit of President Tinubu to the state.

According to Akinterinwa group's statement, “As expected, the good people of Ondo state, particularly the peaceful members of our great party, the All Progressives Congress *APC), trooped out to welcome the president, who is the leader of the party and father of the nation.. “The people were joined by party leaders, party members. In an effort to give our leader a rousing

welcome to the state, the different gubernatorial aspirants vying on the platform of APC mobilised their supporters to receive Mr President at the airport.

“The atmosphere was carnival-like. But that was until what ordinarily was planned to be a rousing welcome and celebration of the visit of Mr President was turned to a theater of violence and bloody attack on APC members and supporters of other gubernatorial aspirants by thugs sponsored and fully armed by Hon Lucky Ayedatiwa, the governor of Ondo State.” Oke Campaign Organisation in its statement alleged that “What was supposed to be a rousing welcome and celebration of the visit of Mr President was turned to a theater of violence and bloody attack on our supporters and other APC members who were waiting for the arrival of the president.”

Both camping organisations indicted a member of Nigeria Union of Transport Workers (NURTW) as the leader of the thugs that attacked them and destroyed the billboards of their aspirants at the junction of the Airport with dangerous weapons including firearms. According to the statements, “The well-orchestrated and executed attacks were carried out by some well-known thugs as well as members of the NURTW loyal to the governor of Ondo state, led by one Mr Eniba. The thugs, who brazenly

COVER

Politicians close ranks to host President Tinubu, give Aketi a befitting burial (continued)

fired gun shots into the air to cause confusion, went on a destruction spree as they attacked property, while billboards of other gubernatorial aspirants were defaced, pull down or outrightly destroyed.

“Party members perceived to be loyal to all gubernatorial aspirants save for Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa sustained varied and diverse degree injuries resulting from the attacks unleashed on them. T-Shirts, faze caps and other insignia wore by members of the targeted aspirants were torn to shreds.

“The thugs who carried out the orchestrated attacks were armed with all sorts of dangerous weapons. It is sad to note that many of our supporters with deep cuts are in the hospitals receiving treatments at the moment. It is, however, surprising that no aspirant other than the governor was spared of the attacks.”

Calling on President Tinubu, the Akinterinwa's group said: “We, therefore, call on Mr President and the national chairman of the APC to prevail on Mr Governor to halt the use of thugs to advance his political interest. The field is wide enough for everyone to operate “Also, we urge all security agencies to not only to be on red alert against future occurrence but also ensure that those who carried out these dastardly attacks are apprehended and brought to books to serve as deterrent to others who may be emboldened by this barbaric act.”

Oke's group also said: “It is in the light of the above and the need to call the attention of Mr Governor to the shameful and undemocratic actions of these elements who wore vests and caps with his photograph and name to attack my supporters that we need to address you, the gentlemen of the press.”

Meanwhile, Governor Aiyedatiwa has distanced himself from group of persons who perpetrated the attacks. The governor condemned the acts of lawlessness “in strong terms” and promised to deal severely according to those caught in the nefarious acts, reassuring the citizens of the state of freedom to their freedoms of association.

Governor, Aiyedatiwa, offered heartfelt tributes to his predecessor, and former boss, Arakunrin Akeredolu, SAN, CON, during the Commendation Service held at the Ondo State Sports Stadium in Akure. The event marked a significant moment in the continuation of burial activities for the former governor.

He acknowledged the indelible marks left by the late leader in the annals of Ondo State and the nation.

Said he, "Aketi, you came, you served, and you left great marks in the sand of times. And as we gather here today to pay our respect to the gone



leader, I ask you to look at the remains of the man who asked not what Ondo State can do for him but what he could do for Ondo State.”

The governor stressed that Aketi proffered solutions that guaranteed peace in the state. “He not only talked, he walked his talk. He advocated for a new thinking, a new action, and a new direction. He took these risks against bigger powers whose might is determinate and final,” Governor Aiyedatiwa stated.

In attendance at the lying-in-state and commendation service were dignitaries such as the governors of Kwara and Bayelsa states, former Ondo state governor Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, deputy governors of Ekiti and Sokoto states, the Minister of State for Youths, Mr. Ayo Olawande, and family members of the late governor led by his wife, Betty Akeredolu.

The event was a solemn occasion, marked by respect and admiration for the legacy of late Governor Akeredolu, a leader who left an indelible impact on Ondo State and beyond but as soon as the former governor was rested, the political bickering and campaigns resumed with higher energy.

The governor announced his intention to run for governor within 24 hours after the burial

(suggesting that he had been waiting for Aketi to be buried before making the official declaration), even though before then, his foot soldiers had been deployed to the nooks and crannies of the state to wet the ground for his entry.

Governor Aiyedatiwa declared that “no one would like to be governor for one year” hence his intention to run for another four years.

The declaration was immediately punctured by the Ondo South People's Movement who described the governor's intention to run as “selfish and at best self-centred”. According to the group, in a statement signed by its Public Relations Officer, Adewale Obebe, “other ethnic groups have conceded the ticket to Ondo South to run for a possible eight years but Mr. Aiyedatiwa knows that he cannot run for more than four years as governor as he cannot be sworn in more than twice as governor, having been already sworn in already as governor.”

“We can only describe this move by the governor as act of ingratitude to the APC, to other senatorial districts and generality of Ondo State citizens. It is selfish and at best self-centred” The statement concluded.

Those in support of the governor however countered that their principal would go ahead

because “he is the only formidable candidate than can win the election.” They said “no one is guaranteed eight years as a governor as the OSPM claimed in its statement.

A few days after the political fireworks, strongman of Ondo politics, Chief Olusola Oke officially declared that it had joined the race. Oke's entry immediately changed the political climate. First, he is popular across the state, having contested twice before for governor of the state. Secondly, he is from Ilaje, same place Aiyedatiwa hails from and experts predict that his entry would decimate Governor Aiyedatiwa's votes remarkably.

Some political watchers claimed that Oke might eventually throw his support for Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim in exchange for Ibrahim's support for Oke to replace him in the Senate. *Ikale News* could not confirm this speculation from both the Oke and Jimoh Ibrahim campaign offices.

A chieftain of the APC in Okeigbo who does not want his name published told *Ikale News*: “We have reminded Oke that if he supports Mr. Aiyedatiwa in this scenario, it means he is ready to retire from politics. The man will be there for five years. Oke cannot neither be governor again and he cannot be senator. We cannot give governor and senator to Ilaje, even if Jimoh serves out his term there. So, he will be politically finished. And we know he will easily beat the governor in Ilaje and Ese Odo.”

While the Aiyedatiwa groups lambast Oke, Akinterinwa and Ibrahim for not being favourites of The Presidency and cannot win, some groups suspected to the PDP members issued a statement to remind the public that there was a petition on perjury against the governor. The group in flashed across the social media a petition which has gone viral across the state.

The publication was a reply to earlier petition and was written by the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department Abuja, was dated 19th February, 2024. It was addressed to Juryman Associates Chambers, Ajah, Eti-Osa Lagos and in the letter, the police confirmed that Mr. Aiyedatiwa did not attend Ikosi High School, Ketu as he allegedly claimed in a petition he had filed with INEC but that Mr. Aiyedatiwa actually sat for exam at the School. The police authorities said it would seek legal advice on the matter.

In a swift reaction, the Aiyedatiwa support group described the petition as “non-issue” and that it is the handiwork of the governor's detractors.

Meanwhile, Mr. Peace maker, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim has maintained graveyard silence on the developments, choosing to face his ward-to-ward campaigns at which he empowers party leaders and youths. Though he played a prominent role in resolving the political logjam in the state following the severe health of the former governor and the

resultant political altercations leading to attempts to impeach Mr. Aiyedatiwa, then deputy governor, the Senator has chosen to face his campaigns squarely.

Senator Ibrahim visited Ijare ward 1 & 2, Igbaroke ward 1 & 2, Ekemefa ward, Ero/ Ebuji/ Mariwo ward, Isharun/ Erigi ward, Ipokun/ Ibule ward, and Ilaromokin ward 1&2, making substantial strides in these communities.

Accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Modupe Jimoh, who hails from Ondo state, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim addressed grassroots politicians in the local government, emphasizing his commitment to personally support 600,000 party leaders and members in the state instead of investing in posters and billboards that are susceptible to weather damage.

He stated, “My 203 wards tour aims to empower APC leaders who have dedicated years of service to the party, fortifying them for future elections in Ondo state.”

Expressing confidence in securing the party ticket by April, Senator Ibrahim highlighted his readiness to transform the state using an empirical approach based on real-world data and results. “I will use evidence-based approaches to study and interpret data, monitoring the trends of complex problems in the state to understand their nature,” he declared.

Senator Tayo Alasoadura, the chairman of Aseyori in Ondo State, welcomed the 370 grassroots politicians after significant empowerment and dubbed Senator Jimoh Ibrahim as the aspirant to beat in the upcoming primaries.

Alasoadura, who served as DG for Agagu and Aketti campaigns, affirmed his support, stating, “He is the only aspirant that can use his knowledge to turn our natural resources into prosperity.”

The 203 wards consultation tour drew the support of prominent figures, including a clergy member, Prophet Akindele Akomolafe Siloman, who prophesied a landslide victory for Jimoh Ibrahim in both the primary and main elections. Siloman asserted, “Take it or leave it, Jimoh Ibrahim is the next governor of Ondo state.”

Another strong contender to the APC ticket, Mr. Wale Akinterinwa is also garnering support among women and youths. In a recent gathering, the APC Youth Leaders in Ileoluji/Okeigbo unequivocally expressed their support for Wale Akinterinwa's gubernatorial aspiration in Ondo State. Aderibigbe Tokunbo, the Youth Leader of Ward 6, clarified that neither he nor his executives were involved in any protest against this endorsement. He emphasized that any protest in their local government without their

involvement is considered null and void.

Several other youth leaders from different wards echoed their support for Akinterinwa, citing his dedication to youth empowerment and assistance to those in need. Olasesin Omotayo, Youth Leader in Ward 7, stated, “We are for a meeting because we are hearing some rumors but our MHR is still our leader here. No leader is against our MHR here.”

Segun Ojo, Youth Leader in Ward 8, praised Akinterinwa as a good man and urged youths to support him, emphasizing the importance of refraining from thuggery during elections. Oladeji Taiwo, Youth Leader in Ward 9, shared a personal experience, highlighting Akinterinwa's support during his wedding and declaring him as the incoming Governor.

Gbadebo Abayomi, the Public Relations Officer of Ward 10, acknowledged Akinterinwa's fatherly support, expressing gratitude and a resolve to follow him. Adeleke Taofiq, Youth Leader in Ward 10, commended Akinterinwa for his support to their MHR and pledged to work for him.

Wole Faniyi, the Secretary of APC in Ileoluji/Okeigbo Local Government, affirmed Akinterinwa's leadership, stating that he is the closest gubernatorial aspirant to them in the local government.

Hon. Festus Adefiranye, at the event endorsed Wale Akinterinwa's gubernatorial aspiration, describing him as a fantastic leader with the necessary experience in Ondo State politics. He urged party leaders to campaign for their chosen candidates without rancor and encouraged members to remain loyal to the party structure.

Meanwhile, the Dr. Paul Akintelure (DPA) campaign group has said its local government meetings with party leaders and members would continue through March, 2024.

In a statement signed by DPA's Media Coordinator, the group said Dr. Akintelure is the favourite being the most qualified candidate for the job, going by his integrity and dedicated service.

“One thing APC National leaders will look into before than can endorse any candidate in Ondo State is unity. The current political crises in the state is not good with national leadership. Dr. Akintelure has the edge in terms of bringing together people after the primary.

“Dr. Akintelure was among those who built the party in the state and this is one of the reasons leaders across the state believe in him.” The statement added.

COVER



PDP rallies support to beat APC

By Samuel Olaniyan (Acting Editor)

After months in the lull dressing their wounds after losing the presidential elections to APC, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Ondo State is warming back to serious politicking.

Top-notch members of the party across the state met last week in Akure to draw battleline with the All Progressive Congress (APC) for the governorship election coming up in November, according to recently released guidelines of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Knowing that its numbers had depleted in the last few years due to mass cross-carpeting to the APC, the leadership of the party is determined to have a rancor-free primary election process, unlike what is happening in the APC where thugs supporting a particular candidate were instigating tension and violence.

Ikale News reliably learnt that the party's leadership summoned its governorship aspirants to face its state working committee to establish their seriousness for the contest. Members of the Ondo State House Assembly who belong to the party were also invited to the meeting.

Speaking to the media post-meeting, Chief Sola Ebiseeni, a prominent aspirant, highlighted the party's commitment to fostering a conflict-free primary. He emphasized that party leaders are actively guiding the process to achieve a consensus, aiming for the collective endorsement of all aspirants to support the chosen candidate.

"Our leaders are steering the course for a consensus without discord, seeking the participation of every aspirant to garner unified backing for the agreed-upon candidate. Our ultimate goal is to present a candidate who will enjoy widespread support," stated Chief Sola Ebiseeni.

He further asserted that, in due course, the PDP

will unveil a candidate around whom all members can rally. This candidate, as envisioned, will not only command recognition from the opposition but also demonstrate the capability to effectively govern Ondo State.

The meeting boasted the presence of key figures, including Chief Sola Ebiseeni, ex-governor Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, a former reps member, Prince Mike Omogbehin, alongside members of the state working committee, former state chairman Chief Dairo, former state chairman Hon Ebenezer Alabi, former chief of staff to the governor Dr. Kola Ademujimi, Dr. Bode Iwaloye, former State Chairman Engr. Clement Faboyede, members of the PDP in the State House Assembly, and various other influential leaders.

A leading aspirant from Ikale, Irele-born journalist and lawyer, Hon Abayomi Sheba also attended the meeting. He however declined to speak to our reporter on details of the meeting, asking our reporter to join him in Ode-Irele when he would formally announce his intention to run.

Aspiring candidates vying for the primary election for the governorship poll expressed optimism that they would beat the APC in the election.

"Ondo State is different. The PDP has always been strong in the state and it won't surprise those who understand the politics of the state when the PDP ability to triumph in the governorship election.

"This is the only state in the South West where the LP, PDP and APC has done at least two terms each at the governorship level and the personalities in those three parties are the same. They are the same set of people not spirits. So nobody should get carried away that the other parties are dead in the state," a chieftain of the party told *Ikale News* in a exclusive interview.

Kennedy Peretei, the Publicity Secretary of PDP, after a parley with aspirants, the second in the past three weeks affirmed that "all the aspirants were in

high spirits and gave firm commitment to supporting whoever emerges as the flag bearer of the party."

Governorship aspirants present at the interactive session included H.E Agboola Ajayi, Chief Olusola Ebiseeni, Engr. Adeolu Akinwunmi, Prince John Mafo, Otunba Benson Akingboye (OBA), Hon. Sheba Abayomi, and Arebuwa Bosun.

Acting State Chairman Basorun Tola Alabere conveyed the party's intent for a consensus arrangement in selecting a standard-bearer. However, in the event of any impasse, the party is prepared to organize a free, fair, and transparent primary to determine the PDP's candidate for the governorship race.

Kennedy Peretei, the Publicity Secretary of PDP, conveyed the aspirants' sentiments in a statement, stating, "All the aspirants were in high spirits and gave firm commitment to supporting whoever emerges as the flag bearer of the party."

Governorship aspirants present at the interactive session included Hon. Sheba Abayomi, Arebuwa Bosun, Hon Agboola Ajayi, Chief Olusola Ebiseeni, Engr. Adeolu Akinwunmi, Prince John Mafo, Otunba Benson Akingboye (OBA). All of them are from Ondo South Senatorial District, affirming predictions by bookmakers that both PDP and APC would pick their governorship candidates from the southern senatorial district. Those from Ikale are Sheba, Arebuwa and Akingboye. Ajayi is Apoi and the rest are Ilaje.

Acting State Chairman Basorun Tola Alabere hinted journalists that the party might pick its governorship and deputy governorship candidates by consensus in order to reduce divisions and wastage of resources. However, however said that in the event of any impasse, the party had prepared to organize a free, fair, and transparent primary to determine the PDP's candidate for the governorship primaries.

SPECIAL REPORTS ON ONDO GUBER ASPIRANTS

Jimoh Ibrahim gets more endorsements, set to clinch APC ticket

As the race for the All Progressive Congress (APC) ticket for the governorship become more intense following the entry of two big-wigs in the race – Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa and Chief Olusola Oke, the billionaire Senator representing Ondo South continues to harvest more endorsements from party leaders, community leaders and youth activists.

The latest endorsements are from Ilaje-born grassroots strategist, Dr. Banji Okunomo, Not Too Young to Rule Organization, former speaker of Ondo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Oloyelogun Bamidele David, and Afenifere leader, Pa Reuben Fasoranti.

The Not Too Young to Rule, a non-governmental organization with offices in each of the six geo-political zones of the country held a congress at the Royal Birds Hotel Akure to unveil Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim (CFR) as its preferred governorship candidate.

Spokesman for the group, Mr. Henry Akintelure said the choice of Dr. Ibrahim was purely on merit as he possesses excellent credentials needed to harness the resources of the state and develop its people.

“We cannot have a formidable candidate in the class of Dr. Ibrahim and fail to rally support for him. We are non-governmental organization and we mobilize for a candidate that we believe can deliver the goods to the masses.

The era of following people who have nothing to offer the massive youths and senior citizens of our beloved state is gone. We are not waiting for November. The job starts with the primaries, holding next month and we are confident that Jimoh Ibrahim will win the ticket.” He emphasized.

In another development, Rt. Hon. (Prophet) Oleyelogun Bamidele David, former Speaker of the Ondo State House of Assembly, wants the public to disregard recent news linking him to the endorsement of incumbent Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa and reaffirmed his endorsement of Jimoh Ibrahim for the coveted office.

Reacting to rumours going round that he had endorsed Mr. Aiyedatiwa, the grassroots politician explained that he only led a delegation of former Speakers, on an official visit to the governor to seek sponsorship for the Conference of Former Speakers Forum held in Adamawa State. He explained that the issue of an endorsement for the governor did not take place and could not have taken place at the forum

The statement added: “It’s imperative for the public to note that Rt. Hon. Oleyelogun has officially endorsed Senator Jimoh Folorunso Ibrahim for the Governorship of Ondo State in the 2024 elections. Firm in the belief that once an aspirant is endorsed, there is no turning back, he stands firmly behind Sen. Jimoh Ibrahim.

Sen. (Dr.) Jimoh Folorunso Ibrahim, OFR, CFR,

emerges as the sole candidate in Rt. Hon. Oleyelogun's consideration for the Ondo State governorship race. Recognizing Sen. Jimoh “Ibrahim's wealth of experience, astute business sense, and philanthropic endeavors, Rt. Hon. Oleyelogun believes in his charisma and capability to lead Ondo State to the next level.

“Rt. Hon. Oleyelogun's loyalty and total commitment to his late principal, Aketi, are unwavering. Given these considerations, he has decided to work with Sen. Jimoh Ibrahim to support his long-term ambition of becoming the first citizen of the state.

Also last month, elder statesman and undisputed leader of the Pan-Yoruba socio-political group, Pa Reuben Fasoranti, prayed for the success of Dr. Ibrahim in his bid to seek the APC ticket and further going to win the governorship election.

Observers noted that in Yoruba culture, the passionate prayers said by the elder was a solid endorsement as such prayers would not be said by him for any other candidate.

“It is a formal endorsement. He also prayed for Tinubu and he won. You do not pray for someone you do not support to win a race,” a top member of the Aseyori Group, the empowerment forum of the Jimoh Ibrahim for Governorship Campaign Group told *Ikale News*.



Jimoh Ibrahim

PHOTO NEWS

ENI TI A FE: Ondo State Elders, Obas and Clergies are praying fro Jimoh Ibrahim to govern Ondo State. Join the train...Top, Elder Statesman and Corporate mogul, Otunba Oladunni and bottom, placing his hand on Dr. JI,, Pa Reuben Fasoranti, Afenifere leader.



POLITICAL UPDATE

Olusola Oke, Aiyedatiwa battle for Ilaje votes



Chief Olusola Oke (SAN), a former governorship candidate in Ondo State, has boldly asserted that if granted the ticket of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in the upcoming primaries, the party would face minimal opposition in the main poll.

Former national legal adviser of the PDP, Chief Olusola Oke, exuded confidence, stating that all political parties in the state would rally behind him, ensuring a massive return. He made these assertions while officially declaring his candidacy for the November governorship election under the APC banner.

In his declaration, Chief Oke emphasized the need for visionary leadership, direction, and a profound sense of commitment in the state's governance. He stressed that his candidacy is not about filling a gap but serving the people with purpose.

The legal luminary underscored the urgency for a resilient and proactive leader, stating, "The state needs a dogged and government fighter with a mission, direction, and vision who will be able to change the narrative of our dear state."

Expressing his confidence in securing the party ticket, Chief Oke boldly proclaimed, "I am aware that if given the party ticket

today, there would be no opposition parties in Ondo State."

Highlighting the state's current challenges, he articulated the importance of the government leveraging opportunities to tap into mineral resources, fostering employment, reducing criminality, and generating income for the people. Chief Olusola Oke expressed his concern, noting, "So the state is in its total state of collapse."

As Chief Oke officially enters the gubernatorial race, his assertions set the stage for a potentially transformative campaign and the prospect of a united front if he secures the APC ticket. The political landscape in Ondo State awaits the unfolding dynamics of this declaration.

Meanwhile, incumbent governor, Mr. Lucky Aiyedatiwa has taken the battle to Oke, in their native Ilajeland.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo State officially announced his candidacy for the November 16, 2024 governorship election in the state. The All Progressives Congress (APC) Governorship primary is slated for April.

Having succeeded his late principal, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, who was laid to rest on Friday in Owo, Governor Aiyedatiwa

expressed his aspiration to contest and secure another term in alignment with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

In an interview with TVC News, Governor Aiyedatiwa affirmed his intent, stating, "Definitely, I will be running because I am already a sitting governor, and let me say this that nobody wants to be governor for one year. Give me what the constitution allows me to do, at least let me have a chance also running for one more term as it were."

Responding to queries about any crisis with the late Akeredolu, the governor clarified that there were no issues or face-offs with his former principal. He attributed the perceived crises in the state last year to a few individuals driven by personal ambition, emphasizing that it was a political maneuver as elections approached.

Setting the record straight, Governor Aiyedatiwa stated, "Let me put this straight for the record's sake, I never had issues with my former principal; there was no time we had a face-off, there was no time we had an issue that demanded that I have to make up with him."

Addressing an open letter from five members of the House of Representatives from Ondo State to the president, Governor Aiyedatiwa dismissed it as individual opinions fueled by personal ambitions. He pointed out their affiliations with specific aspirants and their roles in supporting particular candidates, labeling their stance as unprogressive and highlighting the party's response that there was no crisis within the APC.

He has visited his Obe Nla home town since launching his campaign having a stop-over in Igbokoda, the gateway to Ilaje Waterside which promises to be the centre of intense battle for votes.

While Oke and Jimoh Ibrahim have enjoyed tremendous goodwill of Ilaje, Apoi and Arogbo people in the last several years (by being chieftains of the PDP/APC and being current senator respectively), it is expected that the entry of Mr. Aiyedatiwa, a son of the soil also, means competition for votes in these communities would be stiff. The winner would likely be the candidate who have better spread across the state, especially in Central and North Senatorial Districts.

The foregoing is not without regard for Aketi's former finance commissioner, Mr. Wale Akinterinwa who as good followership in some parts of the central senatorial district.

NEWS

National Universities Commission, Royal Fathers Hail Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim



The National Universities Commission (NUC) has given kudos to business mogul and philanthropist, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim on the quality of infrastructure in his university located in his home town, Igbotako, Ondo state.

The commendation was trailed by prayers and endorsement by royal fathers in the community as well, who hail the Senator as an illustrious son of the soil who is determined to impact positively on the community.

In a landmark event, the NUC conducted an official visit to scrutinize the facilities and offerings of Fortune University in Igbotako, Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, established by Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim, a renowned business mogul and Senator representing Ondo South Senatorial District,

The head of delegation noted with awe the state of the art facilities and noted that many universities in Nigeria that are five to ten years old do not have such facilities. "To see that you have all these in place before even admitting students, shows that you are determined to make the university world-class.

In his short response, the proprietor of the university, Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim stressed that the best legacy anyone can bequeath his or her community is education.

"I attended some of the best universities in Nigeria, the Great Ife (University of

Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University). When you attend Ife, you would know that Chief Obafemi Awolowo knew what he wanted to do by establishing that university. I proceeded from there to world class universities such as Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, etc. I cannot come home and do what is not in that class. Therefore, the University of Fortune aims to redefine education with a focus on entrepreneurship, research, innovation, and global social impact. That is even indicated by its name," he said to a resounding ovation.

Dr. Ibrahim, in his address, highlighted the institution's commitment to delivering quality education and emphasized its unique mission to contribute positively to society.

Expressing his dedication to philanthropy, Dr. Ibrahim assured the gathered royal fathers, who were announced as members of the governing council that Fortune University would not operate as a profit-making institution. He pledged to allocate a substantial portion of his businesses' profits to humanitarian causes, underlining his commitment to community development.

With 127 completed buildings and facilities meeting international standards, the university reflects Dr. Ibrahim's vision of creating a world-class institution. The proposed extension of faculties and departments to neighboring towns aims to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded education to students. The facilities has water works, auditoria and lecture theatres, sport centre, nursery and primary school, secondary school, chapel, administrative blocks all linked with first-grade roads

marked with culverts.

Dr. Ibrahim said he remains committed to making the university of very quality standard, saying it is his personal philosophy to do anything he does very well. *Ikale News* learnt that the university will take off with business, science, law, social science and humanities courses very soon.

"The university already has radio station licence which will be used as part of training facilities for its communication students in addition to using it for community development." A source close to the University management told *Ikale News*.

The university being the first private university in the entire Ondo South Senatorial District is designed to serve the interest of the entire district and is designed to benefit the entire communities, not just Igbotako.

"A university is a community on its own. When you go to Oxford University, for instance, you will see that it is a whole town on its own. A university is international. People will attend this university from all over Nigeria and it is compulsory to have foreign students," the Coordinator of the University told *Ikale News*

The NUC delegation, commended Fortune University's facilities and the cooperative spirit of the host community. Noting the university's superior infrastructure compared to many licensed institutions, the Chairman expressed optimism about swift approval of the university's license.

Royal leaders, including Oba Gbadebo, Bajowa, the Rebuja of Osoro Kingdom, expressed gratitude and anticipation for the positive impact of Fortune University on the region. The Oniju of Iju Odo Kingdom, Oba Festus Olumoyegun, deemed the university an answer to two decades of prayers for Osoro Kingdom.

The ceremony, held on the university's premises, drew significant attention, with over 10 royal fathers, representatives from traditional institutions, and influential figures in academia and politics present.

As the inspection concluded, traditional prayers led by Rebuja of Osoro were offered for Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, CFR, recognizing his significant contributions to education and community development. The university's impending advertisement on CNN signifies a new chapter in its journey toward global recognition.

The ceremony, held on the university's premises, was attended by over 300 guests, with over 10 royal fathers, representatives from traditional institutions, and influential figures in academia and politics topping the list.

PHOTOSPEAK

The Not Too Young to Rule Organization, a national youth coalition for youth empowerment, recently endorsed Senator Jimoh Ibrahim for Governor of Ondo State. Below are photographs taken at the ceremony held at Riyal Bird Hotel, Akure



State Coordinator. Mr. Henry Akintelure. Addressing guests at the ceremony



OPINION

INSIDE STUFF

With Oloja Martins



Restating Significance Of Oronsaye Panel Report



As I wrote here on Sunday May 10, 2020, the report of the 2012 Presidential Committee on Restructuring and Rationalisation of Federal Government

Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies also known as the Oronsaye Panel Report, is a significant public document, which neither time nor event can obliterate from my memory as a document-minded journalist. I would like to restate without hesitation that if the Tinubu administration can handle current recourse to the report well, it can actually be a game changer as I have written several times on the

document. Below is an excerpt from what I wrote on the report in 2020 as part of agenda setting for the Buhari administration.

'I would like to declare with all sense of responsibility that if the Jonathan administration that set up the committee had implemented the organic recommendations in the report, that would have begun the process of transforming the public service in Nigeria. Doubtless, the cost of governance, which has become a huge burden for the Buhari administration would have been part of our history. Hold your breath, even ASUU members would have been proud members of Nigeria's

academic community. I mean tertiary education and indeed the university administration generally too would have been made easier and more productive. The report reveals that a larger percentage of official budget to the tertiary institutions is spent on non-academic activities and non-academic staff.

It is still a mystery how some forces of darkness around the Jonathan administration distracted him from this remarkable, yes well researched document with relevant data on 'reinventing the public sector in Nigeria'.

OPINION

INSIDE STUFF
With Oloja Martins


This is a time to interview former President Jonathan to speak to the mystery of his simplicity that led to the docility, which paralysed him from implementing the two important documents - that would have made him a hero of democracy beyond accepting defeat in 2015. I am talking of the 2012 'Oronsaye Panel Report' and the 2014 'National Conference Report'.

Let me add this here: those who aspire to lead Nigeria out of the present darkness should look for the organic report and study it. It is full of details for serious minded technocrats who would like to study 'The trouble with the public service in Nigeria'. There is no bombast in the document. It is a masterpiece by those who believe that indeed facts are sacred. Such patriots who would like to be part of rebuilding the 'Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army' called Nigeria, should study this report. Don't mind analysts who have not seen the report...'

This is one of the benefits of the Hurricane Covid-19, that has triggered recourse to the rejected stone that has become a cornerstone: the Oronsaye Panel's Report. I just want to sensitise public-spirited people who may have been discouraged about the Buhari administration. Sorry, this is not a time of despair. Not is it a time of lamentation, which I have always declared here is not a strategy to deal with any challenges. It is a time to think of what to do to help our President Buhari, lest we will all suffer consequences of collapse of the public sector. Don't get it twisted, corruption fight can't be won unless the public sector is rejigged to deal with the monster that has diminished Nigeria's stature. This is not the first time that I have dealt with the important document here. I mention this regularly on different platforms including the

famous Journalists Hangout on TVC...

Specifically, on April 28, and May 5, 2019, in a serialised article here titled Buhari, Governors and Cabinets of Significance (182), I dwelt extensively on this document, which would have been a difference maker in Buhari administration. Lest we forget, the first part of the articles appeared on April 28 while the president was prepared to travel to the UK where it was speculated he would work on his cabinet list. It was indeed a paradox of development that our President actually did exactly the opposite of what was suggested when he increased the number of ministries and cost of governance.

President Tinubu should be watchful

I noted then, *... This is the right time to encourage our leaders at all levels, notably the president, the governors and national assembly leaders who are on the verge of dissolving old cabinets, advisory boards and making new ones to consider the time and the season that are shaping our destiny in the country at the moment.

Elections are over. It is time for governance. So, from the office of the citizen should flow constructive suggestions on how to evaluate the effects of the rains that have been

beating us since 1999 generally and specifically since 2015. It may not be a time to share blames. But our leaders should not entertain sycophants at this time. They should be prepared to listen to some voices of wisdom, which an ancient word says is the principal thing. That word says if you are blessed with wisdom, that power (of wisdom) will promote you in any office you occupy and that same power from above will decorate you 'with ornament of grace'. That is why leaders need to ask for wisdom, which is different from knowledge or high intelligence quotient. Young readers need to note this distinction...

The consequences of the quality of presidential and gubernatorial bureaucracies appointed four years ago have been visible. The implications of the quality of security and intelligence chiefs, chief executives of agencies and others procured in 2015, too have been glaring. The consequences of the quality and quantity of the executive councils of the federation and the states (cabinets) since 2015 have been reflecting in so many indices and the way the citizens and indeed the world have perceived us. As I noted the other day here, 'it is a period of consequences'. Whatever our leaders sowed into their appointments since 2015, we have been reaping. Some of our fathers have sown and eaten sour grapes and so their children's teeth have been set on edge...

I also added then:

We can begin process of rebuilding our broken walls too by suggesting to the president wherever he is making his appointments. The simple suggestion is that he should this time consider a cabinet of significance to the country. The cabinet he made in

OPINION

INSIDE STUFF*With Oloja Martins*

2015 was with due respect what Benjamin Disraeli once described as 'a cabinet of mediocrities'. One is not too sure even the president has been proud of his (2015-2019) cabinet - that has not been remarkable, anyway. I hope people are aware that those of us in the newsroom have to sometimes use Google to find the names of some ministers and heads of agencies of this government. They have neither been prominent, nor significant. This is not peculiar to Abuja alone. We are quick to fire some regular shots at Abuja only, without considering the fact that there are other 37 centres of the peripheries and 774 local government councils in the federation.

Here was the clincher then on Oronsaye Panel Report:... If the party system were working, there would be reflection of the ruling party's programmes in most parts of the country. But we are developing our own peculiar democracy without an ideological road map known as manifestos. That is why I would like to recommend

immediately that the president's good men should dust up the abandoned Steve Oronsaye Panel Report.

It is one of the best documents that I have read and kept as a public service journalist. It can be dispassionately studied as a policy document by any good government. The 2012 'Presidential Committee on Reforms of Government Agencies' Report' can be adopted to restructure the public sector for efficiency and development. There should be no argument about the profile of Chairman of the panel that wrote that significant document. The 800-page report submitted to President Goodluck Jonathan in April 2012, is a classic on efficiency, prudence and lean government at all levels. It is not about Oronsaye. It is about the content of the

document - that can be used to transform public service. For instance, the panel recommended the reduction of statutory agencies of government from 263 to 161. Besides, the Oronsaye panel did not see any reason why NTA, FRCN and VOA should be separate entities with three directors-general and three boards of directors. The panel would like the three media outfits to be merged and headed by one director general as it is with the BBC, U.K and SABC, South Africa, etc.

I am aware most government agencies' heads then compromised the White Paper Committee - to remain as entities. And president Jonathan was careless about this remarkable document that would have reformed the public sector significantly before 2015.

The reason for a specific reference to Oronsaye Report is that this is not a time for big government. It is not a time for more ministries and agencies, especially as revenue has been dwindling and oil remains a major source of revenue for all the states and local governments.

Meanwhile, there have been dark hints that the president would likely expand his cabinet in line with the promise he made to members and officials of his political party the All Progressives Congress (APC) in October 2017, during the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of the Party. He had then disclosed his intention to expand his cabinet. "Apart from appointing one minister from each of the 36 states as enshrined in the constitution, the president would also pick one person from each of the six geo-political zones in the country," one of the sources had hinted. The source added that more ministries would be created and others split in

line with the exigencies of the moment. The plan in the new cabinet, it was

learnt, would also enable the president accommodate some governors who lost their second term bids and senior party faithful who couldn't secure seats in the National Assembly.

This is a time to encourage the president to consider the absurdity of allocating more than 70 per cent of the national budget to recurrent expenditure just for public servants and political office holders. This is a time for his party officials to put heads together on prudent management of the nation's resources. The president needs to cut costs by merging ministries, agencies and even embassies we don't need. He needs to talk of Nigeria first, not party men first. That is the significant commitment that has made Donald Trump to be both prominent and significant as a leader in America and indeed the world today despite all the bashings by the opposition and the powerful media. He says he will do all that is needed to fight the opposition and indeed the trading partners just to put America first.

So, President Tinubu should be watchful: there are still corrupt public servants who sabotaged the implementation of the remarkable report from Jonathan, through Buhari to the present. Here is the thing, the report is although stale, the essentials of the content can be used to reset the public service that isn't serving public interest at this time. It shouldn't be about reduction of cost of governance alone, it should also be about efficiency of the public service and the education sector.

POLITICAL NEWS



PDP fixes date for Ondo guber primary, releases timetable

The Peoples Democratic Party National Working Committee has fixed Thursday April 25 for the governorship primary in Ondo State for the emergency of its candidate

This is the highpoint of the schedule of activities released by the PDP NEC ahead of the Ondo State governorship election.

The Independent National Electoral Commission had set November 16, 2024, as the scheduled date for the Ondo State Governorship election. The schedule, signed by the PDP National Organising Secretary, Umar Bature, was displayed on Monday on a notice board at the party's national headquarters, Wadata Plaza, in Abuja.

According to the timetable, the party's congress where its governorship

candidate will emerge will be held on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

In the schedule of events, the interactive meeting between critical stakeholders and the National Working Committee is scheduled for March 5, 2024.

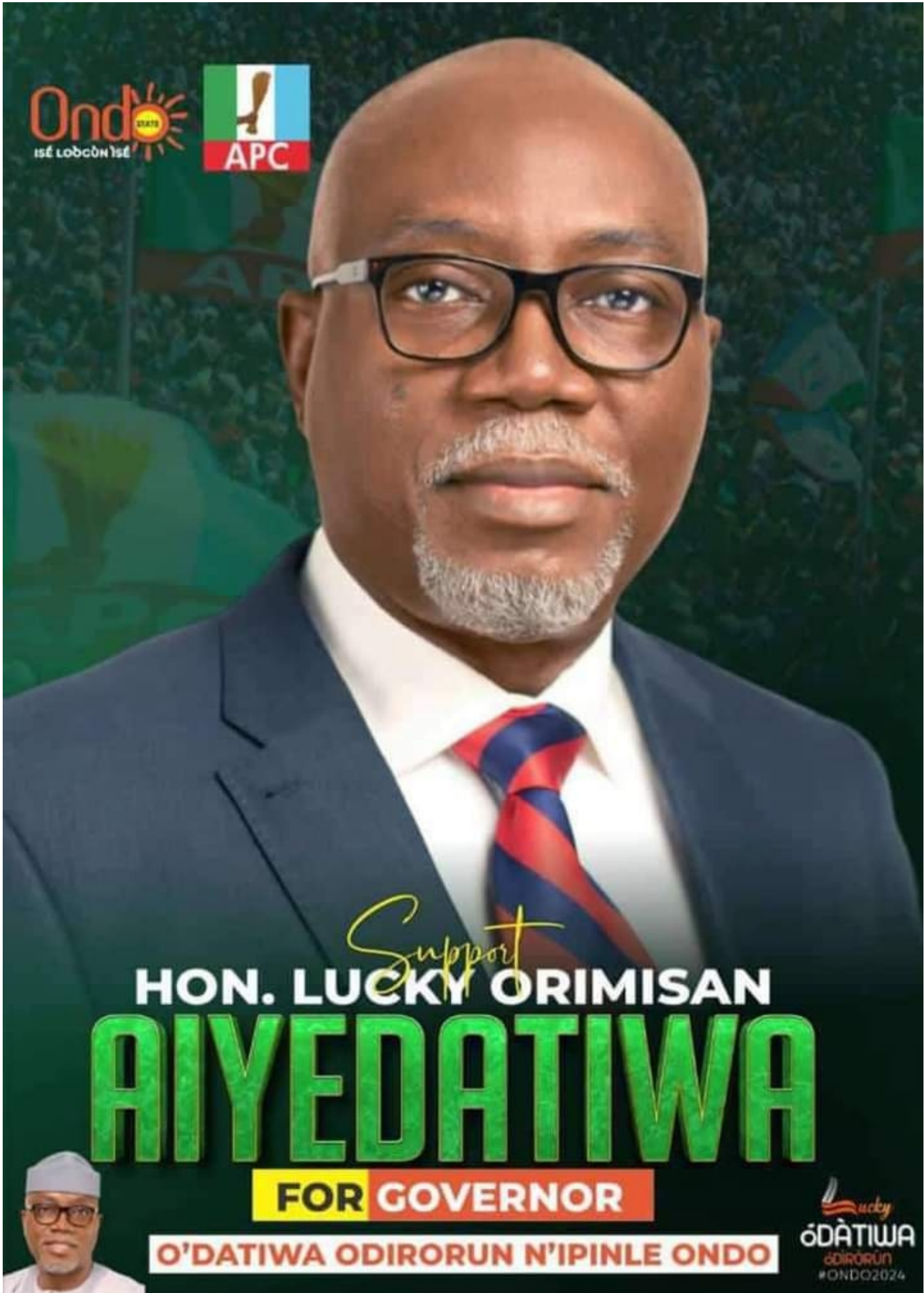
"The sale of expression of interest, nomination forms, and Ad-hoc forms is slated for March 7 – March 21. March 25 is the deadline for submitting a completed expression of interest and Ad-hoc forms," the timetable partly stated.

As outlined in the PDP timetable, governorship aspirants will undergo screening at the party's National Secretariat in Abuja on March 27. The screening reports are scheduled to be submitted on March 29.

The party also scheduled the appeals on the screening exercise for April 2, 2024. The ward Congress to elect 3-man Ad-hoc Ward Delegates will take place between April 6 – April 7, with the ward Congress appeals scheduled for April 10.

The guideline also indicates that the certification of the deputy governorship candidate by the NWC of the party will occur on May 9, while May 20 is the deadline for submitting the name of the governorship candidate to the Independent National Electoral Commission.

According to the timetable, the final date for withdrawal and replacement of candidates is June 10.



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IKALE KIDS

Importance of names in Ikale Culture

Hello kids,

Let me apologize for my prolonged absence from this column. It was due to hectic schedules. I hope you are all fine and that you were able to practice one or two of the moonlight games we have been sharing with you in the past few editions of *Ikale News*. I like to hear from you on this and you can even send your photographs playing the games, to the Editor. I will gladly publish them here.

In this edition, I want to discuss the importance of name in Ikale Culture, which of course, is an extension of Yoruba Culture.

Yoruba people value names so much and this shows in the names they give their children. These names always conjure deep meanings unlike many names of people of Western and other cultures. I am sorry to say some names are just meaningless! That is the reason a Yoruba proverb says “Ile laa wo, ki a to s'omo loruko”. It means you can know the details of where a child comes from through the name that child bears. Names are important to Ikale people.

There are four basic reasons while a child is named in Ikale culture:

- For *differentiation*. If we do not have different names, it will be impossible to distinguish people in the society or even people at home. So, if you need Child A or B, or C, you would not be able to know which is which
- For *identification*. For instance, if A commits an offence, you can state “A” committed the offence, no “B”. Identification can also mean indicating the kind of family or town that child is from. For

instance, when you hear typical Ikale names, you clearly know this person must be from Ikale. For example, the name “Ayejunikanwa” – you easily know this is a name from Ikale or Ondo State. Some names indicate that the child is from royal family, hence Adebayo or Adenike. Some parents use naming of their children to also express their personal philosophies of life. Example is “Ayejunikanwa” meaning no one can live in the world alone.

It emphasizes the need to accommodate other people in life. A family which worships god of iron (ogun) can name the child “Ogunsola” (god of iron brings wealth) while a Christian family can name a child “Oluwatayo” (God is enough source of joy)

- As a form of *Prayer* or *Prophecy*. Yoruba (and Ikale) believe “oruko maa n roni” (The name you bear reflects who will become). For example, the paramount ruler of Osooroland, the Rebuja, was named “Gbadebo” by his parents. Olanrewaju – my wealth keeps progressing, is another name of prayer.
- To record *history* or *circumstances* surrounding that child. Yoruba call some of these names “oruko amutorun wa” (the child brought from heaven...literarily “natural name”). A family may have had four girls and then have a boy. That you can be named “Morounkeji” or “Oladimeji” both of which mean “I have a partner”.



Deaconess Omotayo Folayan

Next edition, I will talk about the difficulty of pronouncing Ikale names and what can be done about it. I am not Ikale. I am Egba, married to Ikale. But I love the Ikale language. One of the things I love about the language is in the name Ikale people name their children. But I discovered that some of the names are corrupted due to difficulty of retaining the Ikale dialects in them or the names are called the opposite meaning due to inability to spell the names in Ikale dialect. For instance, the name “Ayelemi” ought to be spelt “Ayelemi”.

When it is spelt, “Ayelemi”, the opposite of the meaning is communicated! What can be done about this? Join me in the next edition. Meanwhile, let me give you an assignment. Find out the meanings of the following Ikale names and state which category it falls in the four kinds of Ikale names I discussed in this column.

- Olamiposi
- Omapelolola
- Bosuwo
- Bolude
- Oluwaremilekun
- Ayomikun
- Olubukonla
- Bajowa
- Ojajuni
- Ayekomogbon
- Mosunmola
- Folakemi
- Omogbehin
- Adekunle
- Ifaniyi

Till next, edition, be good Ikale boys and girls.

**Leadership, Experience,
Values means something!**

SUPPORT
FOR DR. PAUL AKINTELURE
FOR GOVERNOR 2024
O N D O STATE



HOPE 2024



Happy new month of March! As we step into this new month, may it be filled with abundant blessings, progress, and unity for all of us in Ondo State. Together, let's strive towards a brighter future, anchored in hope, determination, and service to our beloved state. Wishing you all a month filled with joy, success, and fulfillment. Let's march forward together towards a better Ondo State! - Dr. Paul Akintelure, Ondo State Governorship Aspirant

PHOTO NEWS

**ETERNAL LEGACIES OF DR JIMOH IBRAHIM:
Students Hostel, University of Fortune, Igbotako, Ondo State.**



PHOTO NEWS

Inauguration of Ondo South political unit managers in Igbotako recently by Jimoh Ibrahim's Aseyori Group



POLITICS

2024: New agenda setting, Best time to have Olusola Oke as Ondo Governor



Achieftain of the All Progressives Congress APC and Ondo State governorship hopeful, Chief Olusola Alexander Oke, has declared that he is determined to set a new agenda that will centralize all inclusive government for the good people of the sunshine state.

Oke made this assertion on Saturday at a function during the burial ceremony of the mother of Apostle Ayodele in Igbokoda the headquarters of Ilaje local government area of the state.

The erudite politician was given a rousing welcome by the people of the area where he appreciated the people in no small measure for their love towards him.

"I'm overwhelmed by your rousing applauds in welcoming me today"

"I've never for once disappointed you and I will not take the opportunity for granted for a minute"

"I've always remained in touch with you, our bond is organic and my commitment is to expand the space to improve your lots so that we will together enhance humanity," Oke said.

He further stated that "the new agenda, using uncommon grit to manage our common resources and wealth, will surely assist in making the dream of becoming a successful state a reality"

"I am determined to set a new agenda that will centralize on all inclusive government in the State"

"we shall use our wealth of experience and determination of purpose to drive the state to an enviable capacity, making it a cynosure of all eyes"

Oke, who hails from Ilaje local government area of the state, said all is set for him to take the state to the next level of richness and greatness if given the chance to govern the state.

CHIEF OLUSOLA OKE, THIS IS YOUR BEST TIME TO OCCUPY ALAGBAKA HOUSE. Sola Olatunji.

1. In the next few days, the man of the moment, the political jaganut, with political structure across the wards, constituencies, and senatorial districts of Ondo State for years, Chief Olusola Oke, will be

unveiled, barring any last-minute changes.

2. We know that he has been consulting for a while now, and we also know that politics is a serious business. He needs to sustain his affinity with the grassroots and secure a strong buy-in of the sons and daughters of Ondo State in this project. I can say categorically that if the feedback we are getting from the political landscape of Ondo State is anything to go by, everyone is excited that finally finally, the big masquerade will be unveiled to pursue his political aspiration of becoming the governor of Ondo State after the expiration of Aketi/ Lucky tenure.

3. We can also say it without mincing words that his official entrance into the governorship race with APC primary coming up in April, which is next month, will certainly change the political temperature of the state.

4. Also, I know if loyalty, humility, capacity, popularity, and track records are preconditions set by the leadership of APC to determine who succeeds Aketi/ Lucky in the next few months, I can say unequivocally that the direct primary election slated April 24th will be an easy ride for Chief Olusola Oke.

POLITICS

Ondo State APC Governorship Primary Election 2024, Time To Be Patriotic.

By Otunba Sola Olatunji



1. Barring any last-minute changes, the primary election of APC should come up in April this year. Whoever will be flying the flag of the party for the governorship race in the state will emerge.
 2. There are arrays of aspirants, jostling to occupy Alagbaka House, when the remaining portion of Aketi/ Aiyedatiwa tenure empires in February 2025.
 3. In view of the power balancing mechanism that has been adopted in the state over the years to guarantee political inclusion and stability, one can say unequivocally that the next governor should emerge from the South Senatorial zone of the state because others have utilised their own chances.
 4. Now that it's the turn of the South Senatorial zone to produce the next governor of Ondo State and the sitting governor ,Lucky Aiyedatiwa is aspiring amongst others???
 5. Lucky Aiyedatiwa declaration on Live Telecast, 23rd February, was significant because it cleared all speculation surrounding his future political aspirations.
 6. But the biggest challenge faced by the South Senatorial zone is the choice of Lucky Aiyedatiwa. Like he said on TV, no one wants to become a governor for one year. While it's within his right to aspire to any public office as he wishes, there is a caveat in our laws that say no governor can be sworn in more than twice, which means if we all rally round Lucky Aiyedatiwa to continue, he can only be a governor for one term only(4 years).
 7. What this means is that the South Senatorial zone would have lost 3 years from their mandatory 8 years. In his interview, he said no one wants to be a governor for 1 year only, and in my view, he is absolutely right.
 8. But the pertinent question here is that will the vibrant and vociferous Southern Senatorial zone people allow Lucky Aiyedatiwa to surcharge them 3 years because of his personal ambition when there are arrays of aspirants from the zone that can do the job? This is the time to put on our thinking caps and rationalise our political decisions objectively.
- If our desires to occupy the public are unleashed prosperity on social landscape of the state and improve the well-being of citizens, this is the time to know that 8 years is greater than 4 years and I doubt if the good people of South Senatorial zone will settle for less.

UKOTO OMA IKALE

Philanthropist Pays Neco Fees For 100 Students In Ode-aye



Pastor Clem Ikuyinminu, Milton Keynes, UK (Donor)

A philanthropist, Pastor Clement Agbola Ikuyinminu, has doled out several millions of naira to the SS 3 students of Baptist Grammar School, Ode-Aye for the 2023/2024 NECO registration. Ikuyinminu who is an old student of the school disclosed that the scholarship was born out of his quest to help the poor and less privileged in the

society and to give back to the community that defined him and gave him his identity.

At the official presentation of the scholarship held on Friday 1st March, 2024, at which the donor was represented by his younger brother, Pastor Ikuyinminu submitted that the scholarship was one of his

philanthropic gestures to give succour to the needy and less-privileged students in the community even as he was going to explore into other ways to contribute to the development of the community. Asked whether the motivation was politics, the donor answered in the negative and submitted rather that the motivation for the 2024 Edition of the scholarship award was the good report he got as to the impressive performances of those outgone students that had earlier got his scholarship.

In their remarks, the Halu of Ode-Aye, HRM Oba Williams Akinlade commended the donor for his good gestures which according to them, would go a long way in encouraging the spirit of scholarship in the community. The event was witnessed by community leaders, PTA Executives of the school, parents of the beneficiaries, teachers and the body of students who came up with several display of cultural dances in appreciation of the donor.



UTOKO OMA IKALE



PHOTO NEWS

Irele Prince, Hon Abayomi Sheba declares Governor... at Ward 2, PDP Secretariat, Ode Irele...



FEATURE

10 Reasons Jimoh Ibrahim should govern Ondo State

By Bolu John Folayan, PhD

There are scores of reasons why the young, the old; the native and visitors; male and female citizens of Ondo State are massively supporting Igbotako-born billionaire, Senator Jimoh Folorunso Ibrahim to become the governor of Ondo State as the state goes to the poll in November this year. Here are the ten solid reasons I think the senator, lawyer, entrepreneur, philanthropist, scholar and politician should govern Ondo State:

1. ABILITY TO CREATE WEALTH

One key index to know someone who will do very well as governor is answering the question: "Can the person create wealth?" Anybody can spend money! Call anybody and give him or her N10 billion monthly allocation and see if he would not spend it all within hours! But ask the person to double the N10 billion in six months, you will know the difference between *kalokalo* and *kolo*. Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Lateef Jakande, Olusegun Agagu and all governors that ever did well had the rare quality of being able to create and grow wealth. They all doubled, then quadrupled the incomes of their states under their leadership. Jakande simply opened up the Lekki area and jacked up land charges to do all the incredible things he did in Lagos. Tinubu introduced creative internal revenue system and recreated wealth and increase Lagos State income five times over.

Agagu started his own strategy long before he became governor by simply using his expertise as a geologist. He had found that some oil-producing areas of Ondo State were wrongly placed in Delta State and he ensured that necessary boundary adjustments were made. That strategic move made Ondo State substantially placed as a solid oil-producing state earning more money from the Federation Account. Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim is a genius when it comes to creating wealth.

What a great talent God gave him! Here is a son of a bricklayer and petty trader who started business as A-level student at Federal School of Arts and Science Ondo, selling hand-outs and who grew his passion to becoming a billionaire at age 30! He is the only aspirant in Ondo State, so far who has highlighted how he would generate income to



L-R, Jimoh Ibrahim for Governor Campsign DG, Senator Tayo Alasoadura, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim taking briefs from President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Networking is important for a Governor to excel.

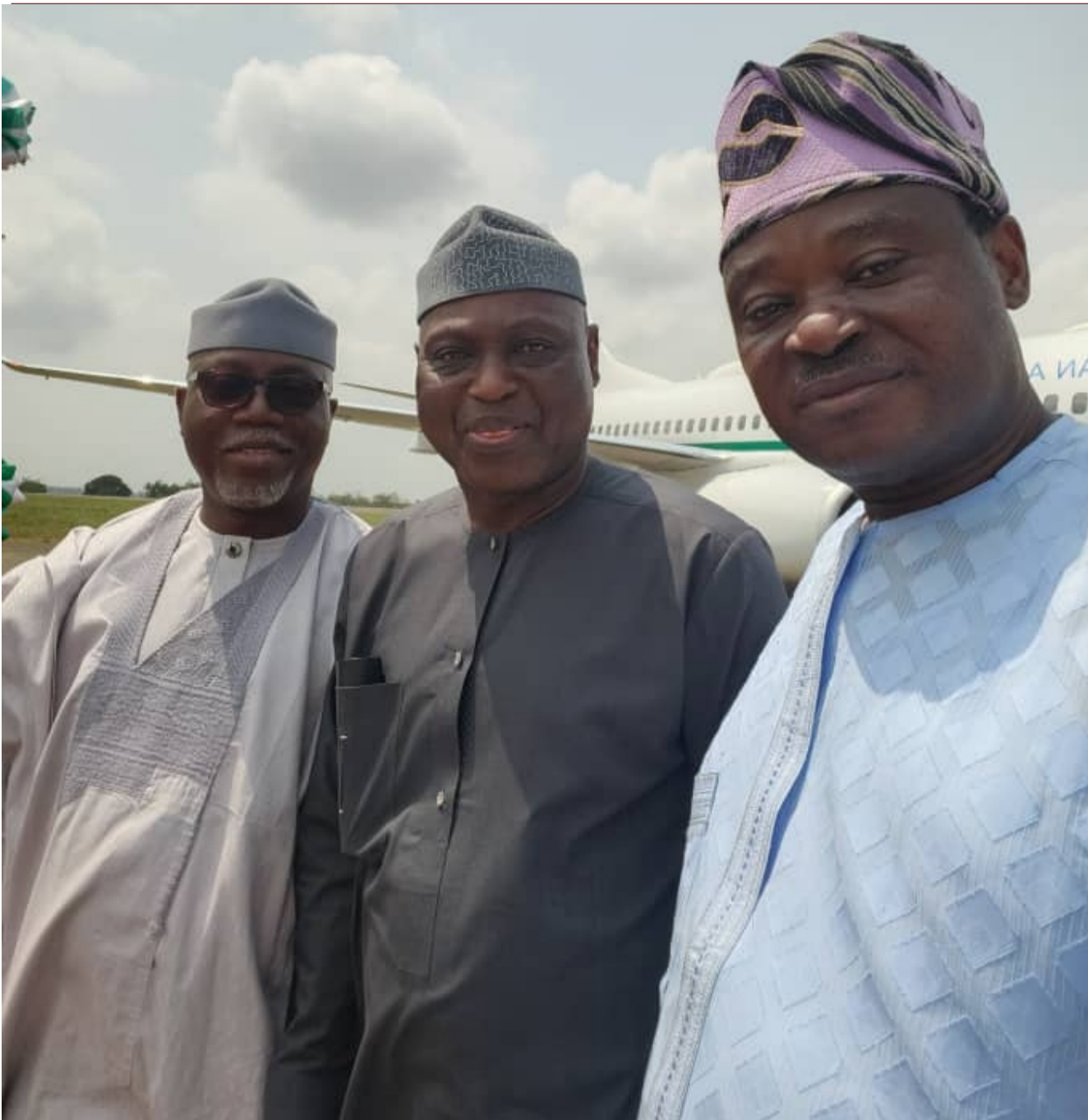
develop the state. That is the crux of the matter. You need money to pay workers, pensioners, build infrastructure, take care of the aged etc. Senator Ibrahim's Bitumen Act has gotten far in the National Assembly. That Act alone would generate billions of dollars for the State in the near future. He has spoken of turning granite hills of Ondo to quarries and liaising with construction companies to use them to build roads. He has spoken of establishing Ondo Oil & Gas in which all local governments would be stakeholders to generate revenue; how our universities and polytechnics would generate income; how local governments would generate incomes; how Ilaje Ese Odo would become the fish basket of Nigeria and how glass production would be brought back, all of these creating massive jobs. Etc.

2. ABILITY TO MANAGE WEALTH

It is one thing to create wealth and yet another thing to grow and manage it. As it is said, "it is difficult getting to the top but more difficult

staying on top." How many people were millionaires or billionaires and were able to sustain the status for over two decades do you know? Dr. Jimoh Ibrahim is a shrewd businessman and entrepreneur who knows how to manage resources.

Many people criticize him for "wasting resources" because of they see his assets seemingly lying idle, but that, in fact, is what stands him out. What you think is "assets" to him are 'wastes' that he is planning to convert to assets. He is an investment expert who uses economic indices to predict asset growth and does not waste his time on unproductive enterprises. He once told me: "See Bolu, why I am different is that I think big and many people think small. Both of us are taking risks, thinking or not thinking. Those taking small risks will not be adversely affected when they don't succeed in the risks they have taken. Me that takes big risks will be more devastatingly affected if I fail. Yet, I prefer to take

FEATURE**10 Reasons Jimoh Ibrahim should govern Ondo State (continued)**

L-R Gov Lucky Ayedatiwa, Gov Biodun Oyebanji of Ekiti State and Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, at Akure Airport recently while waiting for President Bola Tinubu

big risks. I don't take small risks. The small risk taker is afraid, saying 'what if I fail'. Me, the big risk taker do not believe in failure because I take calculated risks. My focus is 'what if I succeed'" Ibrahim believes that if you earn, say, N30k in a month and that salary is increased to N60k monthly and you still find it inadequate, you need to learn how to grow money. No one ever has been able to meet all his or her needs. If you cannot grow what you earn, you can never be self-sufficient. That is the kind of person who can govern a state.

3. PASSION TO DEVELOP THE SOCIETY

This is one of the areas society has been so unfair to Jimoh Ibrahim – not recognizing enough, his contributions to societal development. Here is someone who started giving out scholarships at the age of 25 and established the Jimoh Ibrahim Educational Foundation on his 30th birthday. Hundreds of youths he gave scholarship in Ondo State decades ago, are doing well contributing to the development of the society. In his native Ikaleland, there is hardly any community where he had not served as Chief Launcher during their community days and he donated generously in the past 27 years.

In his Alma matter, Community Grammar School, Igbotako, he built an ultra-modern classroom with modern furnishing. JI believes the most impacting way to develop the people is through political governance. How many people and societies can you touch as a self-made billionaire? You will soon grow bankrupt! The best way to develop the society is to through governance! He has proved he can do this within six months as a Senator representing Ondo South Senatorial District. People wonder why he stresses himself trying to be governor (he is already wealthy) and his answer is that this is the best way he can fulfil his mission of positively developing the society.

4. LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Political leadership goes beyond administration of resources. You have to have demonstrable capacity to secure lives and properties in the state. You must know how to manage people and resolve conflicts. A classic example of Ibrahim's capacity in this regard is how he managed the leadership of Ondo State when late Governor Rotimi Akeredolu (God bless his soul) was very sick. As a serving senator, JI worked behind the

scenes to ensure the state did not slip into anarchy. He started politics at 36 years of age when he vied for governorship of Ondo State under the banner of an unknown political party in the state, All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). He built the party from the scratch and elevated it into reckoning during a period the Alliance for Democracy was a religion in the South West and during which People's Democratic Party controlled the Federal Government. He grew the party from nothing to something before Dr. Olusegun Agagu, whom he revered so much, persuaded him to join forces with him to build the state and he obliged and joined the PDP. Since he joined the APC, he has concentrated more of his energy in building the APC.

"You cannot build people without building institutions," he always says. When the Okitipupa Local Government Council was razed down by rioters, he spent millions of naira to rebuild the council. He helped to construct a befitting secretariat for the APC in the state. More importantly, JI is a bridge builder. He connects the young and old, politicians and non-politicians alike. Though very articulate and principled, he knows that in party politics, you must be a team player. He knows how to pick out leaders in the multitude and develop them. His leadership capacity is a huge asset for him when he becomes the leader of the party as governor of Ondo State. He is not someone who will destroy the party and heat up the polity through leadership incompetence.

5. HIGH-LEVEL NETWORK

You must be highly-connected to be a successful governor in Nigeria. Which door can JI not knock to get something for Ondo State? Is it that of the President, Vice President, Senate President, Speaker of House of Representatives, fellow governors, corporate governors, International business institutions, presidents of other countries? I once flew with him in his private jet to Ghana on a private visit and a motorcade took us from the Presidential Wing of the Accra Airport to where we lodged. When we flew together to Sao Tome & Principe Islands, it was the president of the oil rich island who welcomed us. From Obas to Obis to Emirs, JI has open doors.

It costs JI nothing to bring his fellow billionaires to come invest in Ondo State. He knows what they want and how they think because he too is a billionaire. He has been consultant to several international monetary institutions and knows how to network them to develop our beloved state.

FEATURE**10 Reasons Jimoh Ibrahim should govern Ondo State (continued)****6. HIGH-LEVEL NETWORK**

Jimoh Ibrahim is a billionaire. Recently, the National Universities Commission delegates who visited the University of Fortune that he established in his home town, Igbotako, remarked that some universities that are five to ten years old do not have the infrastructure he already had in place, even as the university has not taken off. Some people even joke that JI would be too expensive for Ondo State to maintain financially – someone who rides a car that costs over N250 million? The truth is that JI's stupendous wealth does not get into his head. He is not coming into government to steal money to build houses.

He built his first house in Igbotako and laid the foundation four houses same day, in Ikotun Egbe, Lagos at 24 years of age as a practicing lawyer. He owns more 15 houses in Victoria Garden City in Lagos and more than 40 plots of land in that estate alone before he marked his 30th birthday. How about his properties in Abuja, London, Dubai and the United States? He is not a person coming to Ondo State to steal resources of the state. He has more than enough for a life time. When he says “Ondo State cannot maintain my status; I have to subsidize”, people say he is proud and arrogant. But that is just the simple truth.

7. INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY

It's not about the nine degrees he has (including three PhDs from first-class universities) that is even the issue here, for me. It is the uncommon quality of Jimoh Ibrahim to analyze and solve problems intellectually that is the issue. An good intellectual believes that every problem or challenge that exists must be systematically diagnosed for that problem or challenge to be resolved. What is the problem? Why does the problem occur or persist? How can the problem be solved? Medical doctors, for example, start solving health issues with diagnosis of the problem.

They don't start by prescribing medications. Once diagnosis is successfully done, solving the problem becomes very easy. He once asked: “Why, for example, are our tertiary institutions in Ondo State not being able to pay their salaries. The universities I attended do not rely on government to pay their salaries! I don't have an answer right now. But I will know why after doing thorough diagnosis and the solutions would come.” Without intellectual capacity, forget it. Your governor would just be dancing around issues if the issues do not consume him or her! An intellectual thinks ahead. Quality thinking! Lateef Jakande did not even attend any university. Yet he introduced free education, eradicated shift system in Lagos secondary schools

the very day he assumed office as governor. He established the Lagos State University! Jakande thought of the metroline and started it. It took an Asiwaju Tinubu protégé, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu 45 years after, to fulfill that vision (recently). It's in intellectual thinking, which JI has in his DNA. “Good thinking, good product”, as the famous Toyota ad once ran.

8. CANDOR

Typical of most Ondo State citizens, JI calls a spade a spade. He is, in fact, too blunt for a politician. Ask many of his political followers: The greatest challenge they have with him is getting him to be “diplomatic”. He would not promise what he is not going to do just to deceive people and have his way. He boasts about his credentials. But when he is wrong, he admits. He believes a leader must confront the brutal fact at all times and that leadership problems in developing countries persist because many politicians think they must lie for people to believe them and vote them in. According to him “You cannot please the average human being; the same people who say 'Adegun' will also say 'Adeogun'. So, find out what is best and just do it.”

I have conducted much research on leadership and found that most successful leaders have candor. The most enduring leaders have candor. Check it out.

9. GREAT STRATEGIST

We are not looking for a good governor in Ondo State. We are looking for *great* governor. We are moving from “good” to “great”. To be that great governor, we need a great strategist. A strategist is someone who thinks about now in the context of a near future. A strategist does not carry his umbrella when he or she sees that the cloud is dark and it might rain. Like the British weather forecaster, he had known several days ahead that it would rain. Jimoh Ibrahim has skills and passion in thinking outside the box. Like a great strategist that he is, he thinks in leaps; never in steps. His reasoning in 2024 is: “Where should Ondo State be in 2035 and what should be done right now for Ondo State to get to that preferred destination?” That is where to start the thinking process, even though he would have served out two terms as governor before 2035! JI does not like to take familiar routes. He takes the most viable routes, which are often not the familiar routes.

10. BEING IN THE RIGHT POLITICAL PARTY

Membership of political party helps in successful governance. At the moment, the APC is being

looked up to by Nigerians (under the leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu) to revamp Nigeria. Jimoh Ibrahim took a wise decision by following the advice of his mentor, Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu to come over to the APC. President Bola Tinubu cannot transform Nigeria alone. He needs able governors that would serve as his arms and legs in the State. He needs someone who can interpret his visions and replicate it at state level, because he (the President) will always take much of the blames and praises for whatever happens in Nigeria. Belonging to the political party that controls the centre is a big asset to a governor that would perform very well in office, with very due respect to other political parties.

I cannot under-emphasize this important requirement. The next phase of President Bola Tinubu's transformation of Nigeria will come handy through the states (just as Obafemi Awolowo did under the Unity Party of Nigeria from 1979-1983 with the LOOBO States – Lagos, Ondo, Ogun, Bendel and Oyo States -) such that there will be synergy across APC states, unlike now that many states are doing as the “spirit of their governors direct”. Asiwaju Tinubu wants to replicate what he did through Fashola, Ambode and Sanwo-Olu in all APC states. Jimoh Ibrahim is an Asiwaju Bola Tinubu protégé. He is already networking with the governors of Ekiti, Ogun and Lagos States, preparatory towards unfolding the Tinubu vision. It really matters who your leader is, because good leaders have great leaders. Ondo State needs a governor who can synergize with the President of the country. Jimoh Ibrahim fits in this regard.

On those Ten Cardinal Points, I urge my fellow citizens of Ondo State to rally round their distinguished citizen, Dr. Jimoh Folorunso Ibrahim, who is fully prepared to transform our beloved state. It starts with APC members giving him the party's ticket in April. Let's do it.

▪ *Dr. Folyan is a strategic communication scholar and publisher of Ikale News, Nigeria's longest running community newspaper.*



FEATURE

Why I want to govern Ondo State - Dr Ohunyeye



Dr. Felix Olamide Ohunyeye is a finance and management expert. He recently retired from the Nigerian Army as a Brigadier General after 36 years of meritorious service. In this encounter with 'Bayo Jimoh, Abuja Bureau Chief, he relives his life as an active serviceman, his love for the military and his intention to become the next Governor of Ondo State.

Excerpts:

General, congratulations on your retirement from the Nigerian military, where you served meritoriously and rose to the post of Brigadier General, which is not a mean feat. If I may ask, what motivated you to join the army in the first place?

Let me thank you for sparing the time to conduct this interview. Now as a youth we believed so much in adventures combined with academics. I was particularly well above average in my studies and while I was in the University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University, I met a crop of young officers - lieutenants, second lieutenants - of the Nigerian Army Signal Corps that came in for advanced programmes in electrical engineering and while you watch them once in a week wear their uniforms, it became very fascinating and attractive and that became a point of focus and attention. To cut long story short, that was the first meeting point with the military and it became the catchy moment that drew me to the Nigerian military. From Ife,

they procured forms for me to write Nigerian Defence Academy exams. I was in year one then, and fortunately I passed the exams and I became commissioned into the Nigerian Army in 1992 after spending five years in the Nigerian Defence Academy.

Well, you seemed to have enjoyed your stay in the army, can you tell us some of the high moments, those moments you'll always remember, memorable moments, notwithstanding that you were a professional officer in the finance department and possibly the low moments, some of those times you wish that they didn't happen?

The service in the military is a very unique service. Unique in the sense that it's a combination of all phases and shades of life. On enrollment to the Nigerian Defence Academy, the five year training is like the camel passing through the eye of a needle. It's an extremely very rigorous and tough procedure. So as a cadet, I often asked myself, especially in the first one to two, three years, that have you taken the right decision, especially if you left the background of a University like Ife, where everything was basically laissez-faire, where your food, as at that time, was practically free, where the social life was at its peak, where you have several of your childhood friends that are studying with you and you can mingle with all manners of people.

Those privileges ceased while you get to the academy because of the calling for complete reshaping or remolding of your personality. The person in the cadet is broken. You are remolded. You are now turned into regimented, disciplined and extremely focused individual. These are very tough moments that no officer will really want to think about. But as tough as those days were, they form the basis of everything you stand for in the military. Now there are several events in the military that cause for plus and for minus. You have periods that you go for difficult exercises, difficult exams, because

FEATURE

Why I want to govern Ondo State - Dr Ohunyeye (continued)

professionally within the armed forces, for you to cross from one stage to the other, from one rank to the other, there are several hurdles you have to cross. I can assure you those hurdles are extremely very demanding and rigorous. However, the system professionally would have prepared you towards those challenges and it's expected that you'll be able to cross them. Where you cannot successfully cross them, there are serious negative implications, and those are very tough moments for officers. Well, having said that, the good moments in the military is countless. You want to talk about the esprit-de-corps, the friendship that you share with your colleagues from different parts of the country. It's highly unparalleled and unequalled in any profession. You take your colleagues as your brothers, you take them as your help mates, you take them as your associates, you take them as comrades. So there is the spirit of togetherness, there is warmth, there is family bonding and several others.

These are very quality moments that you see within the military. Of course, while you progress you cross from one rank or the other through promotions, when you pass your exams, these are very high points that call for serious celebrations and successes. Of course the growth of the family, having your children, bonding with your family, bonding with your colleagues and several others. These are very quality moments that you see within the military. Certainly, the soldier is still a human being. So whatever you see that you enjoy, privileges that make you happy as civilians, as a soldier, those privileges are there. It's just that it's a double layered factor while you battle with the civil issues, you are probably battling with the military ones and these call for a lot of extra caution while you are in service. Even while you are outside the service, it's still the same.

Unfortunately, in the last 10 to 13 years, this nation, our country has come under insurgency and the military have been in the forefront, especially the armed forces for which you were a part and you meritoriously served and retired. Will you say that the role that has been played by the military so far should be commended or otherwise in the sense that up till today insecurity is still thriving in our country?

Well, on a lighter note, I know you won't want me to criticize a system that brought me to this stage. Having said that, I want to let you know that if you look at history closely, if you look at

nations all over the world that had history of resurgence, it has been completely very difficult, if not impossible, to defeat them. Perhaps, maybe Sri Lanka, that had issues with Tamil Tiger insurgents, we can say that largely they have been able to defeat Tamil Tiger but notwithstanding there are still pockets of killings and bombings here and there.

Having said that, the Nigerian military, I can assure you, is one of the best in the world. Not because I am part of it, but you ask me why am I saying that? I say that because we have gone out for operations and courses with other officers from even America, from UK and I can assure you, that our level of development, our training, our competence is always top-notch, always very, very high. Yes, we can say that the military is part of the Nigerian society. The Nigerian nation is passing through a lot. There are several developmental and growth issues that are currently being encountered and the military is not immune or insulated from all these issues. In terms of fighting power, yes, since 2014, we have seen progressive enhancement in the fighting power of the military.

The successive governments have done very well. The military has been re-oriented. They have been re-equipped. The subordination to civil authority has improved and we now know that the military has remained extremely very professional. Yes, Boko Haram in the Northeast, like you have been hearing, has been technically defeated. But like every insurgency or insurgent groups world over, even though they are defeated, they will still have some remnants or resistance that will continue. But I can assure you Boko Haram is almost completely gone and in due course, in a short distance time, the military will stamp them out of this country. There is no doubt that the our military is very, very competent.

There is no doubt that the capacity of the individuals and the capabilities, that is, the war fighting equipment have been strengthened in the last 15 years and I give it to the military and I know that even though I'm not in service that my heart still goes with them and I believe they are doing the right thing, I believe they remain very focused and what we can say is that all round success, whether in terms of North East Boko Haram or North West militancy, insurgency and bandits and other criminalities or even Niger Delta where there is still serious threat against our oil facilities and installations

or even in the South East where we have the separatist groups, that in due course, they will all be stamped out. But what we need to do is to keep supporting the military. Let's identify with them. Let's reason with them. Let's pray for them and they will surely overcome and our nation will be secured.

In January you declared your intention to vie for the governorship seat of Ondo state. Do you think your experience and your exposure as a military officer has prepared you enough for the task of civil governance in this era in Nigeria today?

Let me expressly state that the military profession is a unique profession. Unique in the sense that the intensity of the training, the quality of the training, the complexity of the training prepares an officer for every situation that could arise. You know as a soldier you're going to fight a war when you make a mistake in the war front, you don't live to tell the story. So because of this imperative for perfection, there are designed career optimization programmes right from the day you enter. For example, from Second Lieutenant, we are talking about leadership.

An officer is basically a leader. So the principles of man management: how do you manage your men? How do you provide purposeful leadership at all levels?

Those are the basic things we are taught and as you progress, the training also progresses and you're going to advanced management, you are going to more complex management and thereafter you get to strategic level management. Now this is one line.

While you are doing this, the military also allow you to develop yourself professionally and that is why you see individuals like me having a PhD, being a Chartered Accountant, belonging to several top rated professional bodies because this value is necessary. Let me put it on note that even in advanced world, including Nigeria, most of the government policies you see, most of the strategies you see were developed by military personnel and most of these strategies are now adapted to business.

FEATURE*Why I want to govern Ondo State - Dr Ohunyeje (continued)*

Everybody's talking about SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis now. You're talking about PESTLE analysis - studies the key external factors - (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental) that influence an organisation and all those things. Those are military strategic tools that are designed to scan the environment.

In case you want to go to battle, you want to know what is happening in the environment, where are your adversaries, your enemies, what are they doing, what is their strength?

That is why these environmental tools are being designed. So if you have reached a strategic level in the military, you have been exposed to them because you are made to take very tough but effective decisions on daily basis and those decisions are centered on the results of rational thinking, not rule of thumb. So the military personnel is well trained, well groomed to take position of leadership, resource management, financial management, man management, and that is just the simple thing about it. So needless to tell you that I have been well groomed and equipped to put in my quota to provide quality, visionary, focused and pragmatic leadership to my state if the people deem it fit to allow me to do it.

Dr, what are your programmes or your agenda for the ordinary man or woman in Ondo state? What do you want to do if you become Governor?

Thank you very much for that question. We have developed a 12-point agenda and the entire paradigm shift that will bring to Ondo State is tagged with the acronym "AGES", where A stands for all around security, absolute security, G for growth and good governance and E for empowerment. Now to achieve the dream of AGES in Ondo state, I have conducted a critical look at the major pillars, areas of growth, which are cardinal pillars of growth within the state and these includes security, education and infrastructure. We have agriculture, and we have healthcare, health services.

Now, let's start with security. In Ondo state, if you had listened carefully, there was this belief that Ondo state had done very well in areas of security and of course, this is where we have to give credit to our beloved late Governor, may God bless him in heaven, Arakurin Rotimi

Akeredolu, who introduced or was one of the people that developed the concept of Amotekun. Indeed, Amotekun has done extremely very well and the outfit is still up to its assigned tasks. They have been able to stamp out all manner of criminalities within Ondo state; of course, there are still a lot of areas to be addressed in respect of Amotekun. Now, with my military background and experience am going to look at the areas of their operational blueprints to see how we can refocus and make it more efficient. We are going to look at the scale of their equipment to make sure that they are sufficient. We are going to look at the training and manpower development. We are going to look at their logistics, especially mobility and these are very crucial things. Other than this, on security, it is very important that I forge a unique collaboration between all the security agencies

within the state. Certainly, being a former military personnel, this will be very easy for me to achieve - Nigeria Police Force, the SSS, the Nigeria Civil Defence Corps and Immigration among others, will have to sit down and come out with a more functional blueprint that will refocus their efforts and improve on functionality. Still on security, there is a compelling need to collaborate with our neighbouring states, so that we can share information. With this, we can block all loopholes through which criminal elements can use to infiltrate the state. So there is a lot to be done in this area.

When you talk about infrastructure, infrastructure underlines all sectors within the state. What infrastructure do I need? If it is road infrastructure,



FEATURE*Why I want to govern Ondo State - Dr Ohunyeye (continued)*

regrettably, you see there is no dual carriage lane that enters Akure the state capital; whether we are coming from Ore to Akure, you are coming from Ilesha to Akure, or from Ekiti to Akure, all those roads are single-laned, and we have to see what model to use. Of course, they will say there is no money, there is no money, but there must be an arrangement for us to build all these roads. If it means getting partnerships and strategic alliances for such roads to be built, we have to look at it. That is if the state resources cannot cover this.

In Abuja, they are thinking about rail lines to link the city. So those things could be introduced within the state. Inter-town rail lines, like Lagos is doing. But of course, we have to weigh the cost and the benefits before decisions are being taken. Having discussed about roads, let us take a look at education. If you go to education, of course, education is a light of any nation and when you look at the development goals by the United Nations, educational development, progressive development is one of the key areas of attention. In Ondo state right now, we need to refocus our attention on education. I remember in those days when you talk about Ondo state, one of the things we pride ourselves with is being one, two and three in order of hierarchy terms of educational development. But right now, it is arguable that this may not be so. We need to go back to the drawing board to look at what we have to do. In this wise, we want to pick the classrooms. Are they conducive? Our students, do they have chairs, benches or tables to sit down on and write? What about the teachers? Do they have the complete teaching facilities? What about the use of IT in the schools? Have we introduced modern IT techniques to drive and aid learning, to multiply learning within our education sector? What about the teachers' training? Are they well trained? Do they have the capacity? Is their remuneration and welfare, good enough? If it is not good enough, these things will have to be addressed. Otherwise, the task of having a well-educated state, may be a mirage and these are essentials that must and certainly will, be accomplished in a short while.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa is the present Governor of Ondo State and he has recently declared to seek a fresh mandate. Don't you think that you embarking on an uphill task in your quest, because as incumbent Governor he is the leader of APC in the state as of today?



In life, there is no uphill task and to make it more clearly defined, the task of ruling a state within the context of the Nigerian polity is simply a function of what the political parties decide. I am a member of the All Progressive Congress. I am a very loyal party man. I believe in the party structure. I believe in leadership. Where the party says they want individuals to come and contest, I have presented myself because that's exactly what the party wants. And I believe it's my right, which the party had guaranteed. If tomorrow my party, APC, says, okay, everybody withdraw, we want to carry Aiyedatiwa as the consensus candidate, it is behoves on me as a loyal party man who believes in hierarchy to obey the instruction. So what we are doing right now is within the ambit of the allowable by our political party. I believe if any other person can win as a governor, certainly I'm equally almost more qualified to be the governor of the state. It is not left for me to determine this. The party and the people are going to vote to determine who is best suited for governing the state.

What is your assessment of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu administration so far?

I will assess the government certainly not as a party man, but rather as a Nigerian and of course, a financial and management expert.

If you want to develop Nigeria, what is the major problem?

Nigeria is currently a consuming nation. What do I mean by that? Production is undermined, it's reduced to the barest minimum and that is a starting point. If we look at the focus of the government, emphasis has been on how do we improve productivity. How do we generate foreign reserve to shore up our balance of payment position? How do we reduce unnecessary consumption? How do we reduce the incidences of unwarranted fuel subsidy that cannot be explained? And lucky enough, our President and our father, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, on 29th May 2023, when he took over, one of the first policy statements he made was the cancellation of the fuel subsidy. And that was the beginning of the economic rise and growth of this nation. Yes, I agree that the people are passing through some hard times in terms of increase in price of fuel, but I can assure you in a very short time, most of these difficulties will go down

FEATURE*Why I want to govern Ondo State - Dr Ohunyeje (continued)*

because there will be sufficient saving to be ploughed to investments that can generate employment, that can generate additional income for the government, that can reduce poverty, that can improve the standard of living, that can make things better for the populace. There is no doubt, if you look at recent reforms in the financial sectors, you look at all round reforms everywhere, there is no doubt that it's certain that in a matter of short time, the condition of living of the people will surely improve. I'm convinced from the economic indices that everything will improve. Even though given now that we have some difficulties, things will surely get better with the government programmes, the plan to bring in mass transit buses that is powered by gas, the recent operationalisation of the Dangote Refinery and of course the expected restart of Port Harcourt and Warri refineries. These are very encouraging things that I can tell you that is going to make life much much better for the people and there is no doubt that the government is going to do very well if you look at the footprint of the economic policies, either micro or macro from what we can see currently.

They say all politics is local. This period you spent in the army, have you been reaching out to constituents, maybe from the community level, to village level, to ward level? What have been your engagements all these years?

Let me tell you and it's not only peculiar to me, every officer in the Army, right from the day you are commissioned as a second lieutenant to the day you are leaving as a general, if God permits, are surely leaders in their communities. On every important issue within those communities you are consulted and I can assure you, you may not have the financial strength to contribute but notwithstanding, there are several areas that you can help your people. There are contacts you can use to get employment for the people. There are contacts you can use to galvanize your friends in the civil sector, to come in and put in their money to support the people. And there are several areas that a leader must show leadership. You are not only serving the country, but you are equally serving your people and that is just the situation for every Nigerian military officer. In my own case, I've engaged with my people in the last 15 to 20 years, in all respects.

We have come in, even with the little, to interface, to give scholarships, no matter how little. We have come in to proffer advice. We have come in to talk to government, to help people to do one thing or the other. We have put in our experience in giving mentorship, to do training and these we have done. Little wonder when I left the service, my people welcomed me back home with a grand reception and it's one of his kind, not common and that is a reflection of what I was to them and how they looked at me of getting involved in their lives throughout my entire service years. And it's quite encouraging. But by and large, I would encourage officers that while they are in service, the call to serve the nation purely, but notwithstanding, they should have a listening ear to their community because in no distant time, they will return back to that home and reintegrated to the community and that would determine what happens to them even for over 20 years or more of their life. So by and large I believe I have interfaced with my people as much as reasonably allowed by the military law, rules and etiquettes and we have done that with every sense of decorum.



FEATURE



Dr. Paul Akintelure bags Anglican Church Award

The Anglican Church of His Glory, Oda Road, Akure, has honored Dr. Paul Akintelure, a distinguished Medical Doctor, Philanthropist, and prominent governorship aspirant in Ondo State,

The ceremony, held on February 24th witnessed the presence of various dignitaries, parishioners, including Dr. R.S. Olojuolawe, Hon. Adefehinti, and Hon. Ibukun Arije.

The award was conferred in acknowledgment of Dr. Akintelure's altruistic service to humanity and significant contributions to the Anglican Church of His Glory, Oda Road, Akure. As a devoted member of the church, Dr. Akintelure consistently showcases a dedication to improving lives through both philanthropy and his expertise as a medical doctor.

In a citation punctuated with resounding ovations, Dr. Akintelure was described as a people-oriented professional who has used his calling and professional to make immeasurable contributions to the development of the state.

The church also commended him for making huge contributions to the development of the church of God in Nigeria.

Having previously served as a deputy Governor candidate in Ondo State, Dr. Akintelure has made notable strides in the political landscape. His ongoing gubernatorial aspirations garner support from diverse quarters, underlining his commitment to public service and the well-being of Ondo State residents.

The Anglican Church of His Glory,

through this award, pays tribute to Dr. Akintelure's remarkable impact on the congregation and the broader community. His enduring dedication to service and commitment to societal betterment stand as an inspiration, reflecting his character and values.

Dr. Akintelure's recognition by the reputable church underscores his unwavering commitment to service, both within the church and society at large. The award serves as a powerful reminder of the significance of selflessness and dedication in the pursuit of a better world for all.

Rt. Hon. Ayo Agbomuserin, a former speaker of the Ondo State House of Assembly and chieftain of the APC, received the award on behalf of Dr. Akintelure.

FEATURE IKALE PROVERBS with Baba Liliken



Ikale News; Baba le o. You gave me an assignment last month.

Baba Liliken: I remember. I asked you to and and research the meaning of the proverb “**Oma'ne ee le sidi bebere, j'a ko ireghe hi oma onomue?**”

Ikale News: I did Baba. The translation literarily is: “you cannot say the buttocks of your baby is slippery and you now put your beads on the buttocks of another person's baby”. This means that your own is your own. You have to support your own whatever happens.

Baba Liliken: Very good. That is the political situation in Nigeria now. Many Yoruba people supported Asiwaju Bola Tinubu not necessarily because of his personal qualities. Some did because of that. But many did because they felt, no matter what, in the Nigerian political situation, they have to support their own. That is what the North has been doing for so many years.

Ikale News: But is that not ethnic politics or nepotism?

Baba Liliken: Call it what you like, that is the reality on ground. It does not mean the person will go there and do the

bidding of his people alone. It is just to follow the principle of equity and loyalty. If you people do not support you, who will.

Ikale News: Ok sir. What do you have for us this month Baba?

Baba Liliken: “**Wo ba erin ni abata, wo yo obe ti; wo ro fo o gbe omi pa'rii?**”.

“You saw a fallen elephant in a marsh and you bring forth a knife to cut it to parts; do you think the elephant drowned?” You are saying things don't come free and that someone must have labored to bring it to pass. An elephant is very rare in Ikale in the first place. To see one is hard. You now see one that is lifeless or almost lifeless, you are saying someone must have killed it.

Ikale News: Baba, I still don't get it. When do you use the proverb and to mean what?

Baba Liliken: Okay, let me give you an example. You parked your Prado Jeep under the tree in in Ajagba. The key is probably on. But nobody is around. Someone now comes around and want to drive it, saying he had seen the Prado there for three days and nobody is taking possession. *Se Toyota*

Prado wa je Okete iyi e ri ni ojojuma? So, you use the proverb to tell somebody to be wary of “awoof” and other free things.

Ikale News: Wow! Baba, wose.

Baba Liliken: The third proverb we shall look at today is “**Yiyo ologbo, ee si fo eru e ba**”. That the cat is tip-toeing does not mean she is afraid.

Ikale News: I have heard that Baba, and I can explain it. It means that one not misinterpret intentions by reading actions. A cat tip-toeing actually does not want the rat to know she (the cat) is near. Rather than being afraid, the cat is actually being clever. You can use the proverb when someone takes you for granted for not outwardly showing out your feelings. For example, someone offends you by lying against you and you still play and laugh with the person. That you are laughing does not mean you are complacent. You are feigning action so that you can catch the person red-handed. It is called paradox or irony in literature.

Baba Liliken: Good! You are now so good in Ikale proverbs

Ikale News: Thank you Baba. One of our fans asked me to request the meaning of the following proverb from you Baba. It says: “**O bi ugba oma, o le dede gban tioro**”. (She has 200 children and put eyelids on all of them.”

Baba Liliken: Actually, that is not an Ikale proverb. It is an idiomatic abo or may I call it “riddles and jokes” The answer to the riddle is “Beans”. I will talk about riddles some other time. A similar one is “he has two hundred children; all of them are witches and wizards. The person is talking about pepper.

Wo ma ka hedo o!