



# LABOUR

## NLC tackles Amosun over threat to disgrace members

Stories by Mustapha Suleiman

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has chided the Governor of Ogun State, Ibikunle Amosun, over a statement credited to him in which he threatened to disgrace its leadership for insisting to embark on a protest on Tuesday in the state.

NLC President Ayuba Wabba in a statement, Friday, said the governor's threats will not deter it from defending the interest of workers in Ogun State whose rights, he claimed, the governor has been trampling upon.

Wabba accused the governor of non-

remittance of statutory deductions from workers' salaries for pensions, cooperative, 'Ileys', Christmas etc. over a period of 105 months.

He also accused the governor of non-utilization of the last tranche of the Paris Club refund for the payment of gratuity for both state and local government workers since 2013, despite signing a collective agreement with organized labour in the state.

Wabba further accused the governor of refusing to pay workers at the Tai Solarin College of Education their salary arrears that accumulated for the past 10 years and now grossed to a financial liability

of about N9 billion, alleging that the governor sacked the chairman of the NLC from his employment for standing firm in the defense of the rights of workers in the state.

"The issues we have highlighted are too grievous to be swept under the carpet, therefore, the decision of the 12th National Delegates Conference of the NLC to confront and engage Governor Amosun will be carried out to the letter on Tuesday.

"Our confidence stems from the protection and guarantees provided by Section 40 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution which gives workers and indeed all Nigerians the freedom to

peaceful assembly and protest.

"All that the law requires us to do is to inform the police and relevant security agencies. This we have done. We are ready to peacefully protest the grievous mistreatment by our workers in the hands of Governor Ibikunle Amosun on 5th March 2019," Wabba said.

He said it was unfortunate that a sitting governor and a former senator like Amosun could descend into violent utterances in order to cow workers, adding that he would be held personally responsible for any harm that comes to any worker during its protest scheduled for Tuesday.



President of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Ayuba Wabba (3rd right) with the new members of the union after his election at ITUC 4th World Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark.

## ILO harps on decent jobs

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has urged government and other employers of labour across the world to strive to provide not just jobs but decent jobs in order to place human society on the path of progress.

Damian Grimshaw, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director of Research made this call in a report.

He noted that over 700 million people are living in extreme or moderate poverty despite having employment, attributing it to high level of poor working conditions millions of workers across the world faced.

According to Grimshaw, a report of the International Labour Organization's World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO): Trends 2019 report, stated that despite the minimal 4.5 per cent of the working age population are unemployed in Africa while 60 per cent are employed, the number of people living under poverty line in the continent is enormous.

"Poor quality employment is the main issue for global labour markets, with millions of people forced to accept inadequate working conditions, especially in Africa.

"WESO: Trend 2019 shows that a majority of the 3.3 billion people employed globally in 2018 had inadequate economic security, material well-being and equality of opportunity.

"Progress in reducing unemployment globally is not being matched by improvements in the quality of work," ILO said, quoting WESO Trends 2019

report.

Following this new revelation, ILO decried the persistent number of major deficits in decent work, and warned that, "with the current rate of progress attaining the goal of decent work for all, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8, seems unrealistic for many countries."

Commenting on the alarming declining rate of decent jobs, Deborah Greenfield, ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy Issue said, "SDG 8 is not just about full employment but the quality of that employment. Equality and decent work are two of the pillars underpinning sustainable development.

Grimshaw said, "Being in employment does not always guarantee a decent living. For instance, a full 700 million people are living in extreme or moderate poverty despite having employment."

Among the issues highlighted is the lack of progress in closing the gender gap in labour force participation.

The ILO also said, "Only 48 per cent of women are in the labour force, compared to 75 per cent of men. Women also make up far more of the potential, underutilized, labour force. Another issue is the persistence of informal employment, with a staggering 2 billion workers - 61 per cent of the world's workforce - categorized as such. Also of concern is that more than one in five young people (under 25) are not in employment, education or training, compromising their future employment prospects," the report stated.

## Abia NDE coordinator tasks youth on skills acquisition

The Coordinator, National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Abia, Mrs Buchi Ojei, has urged youths to embrace skills acquisition as a viable option to white collar jobs.

Ojei gave the advice on Friday at the closing ceremony of the NDE Cosmetology training programme held at Asaga, Ohafia, Abia.

She said certificate

qualification had failed the country, adding that the best was to embrace skills that could make one self-reliant and employer of labour.

"People who are working are going into skills acquisition now. The world is going into skills acquisition, so the earlier we embrace it the better.

"I am happy to say that Abia indigenes have

really embraced skills acquisition," she said.

The NDE coordinator said forms had been given to the participants to facilitate loans for them.

"We have a collaboration with the Central Bank of Nigeria. These forms will enable them to access loans and with these loans, they will be able to establish," she said.



### Mutual Benefits Assurance Plc.

#### DELAY IN FILING AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

Mutual Benefits Assurance Plc. (Mutual Benefits Assurance or the Company) wishes to inform its valued shareholders, investing public and key stakeholders that the Company may be unable to meet the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2019, to file the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 in line with the Listing Rules of The Exchange.

As an entity subject to a Primary Government Regulator (National Insurance Commission) and being an Insurance organization, we are affected by the adoption and implementation of IFRS 9 which deals with Financial Instruments and IFRS 4 (as amended) on Insurance Contracts.

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The results will be published as soon as we obtain the approval of the Primary Regulator.

Thank you.

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# Nigerian Importers Paying Highest Freight Rate - NIMASA

BY YUSUF BABALOLA, Lagos

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has raised the alarm that Nigerian importers are paying highest freight rate on import in the world due to dangers attached to Nigerian territorial waters.

According to the director-general of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, this was as a result of false reporting about attacks on the nation's territorial waters. Peterside disclosed this when members of the Shipping Correspondents Association

of Nigeria (SCAN) paid a courtesy visit to the agency over the weekend.

Peterside lamented that Nigeria is slammed with risk surcharge over lumpsum data on maritime crime in the country. The NIMASA director-general, who was represented by the executive director, finance and administration, Bashir Yusuf Jamoh, said while attacks in Gulf of Guinea (GoG) are erroneously considered as attacks on Nigeria territorial waters, sea robberies are mistakenly referred to pirate attacks thereby giving Nigeria false

image in the international communities.

"Someone read out a statistical report that about 88 Piracy attacks are being reported but there are misconception because I just finished my PhD and my area of specialisation is maritime security and what I discovered in the course of my research is that number without time, we lumpsum data on issues of maritime crime. Nigeria and Gulf of Guinea.

Peterside also urged journalists to correctly educate and inform the public about attacks saying crime that occurred in Benin Republic

shouldn't be referred to crime that occur on Nigeria waters. "It's your duty as reporters to ensure you report the issue correctly.

"A situation where a crime happened in Benin Republic or Togo or any part of Ghana, Cameroon and we lump in on Nigeria because we are part of Gulf of Guinea as Nigeria, we will continue to send a very wrong signal to the international communities and as a nation, people will be scared to be around.

"Already, we are paying war premium in terms of insurance and we stand to be

the highest payee of freight all over the world because of the dangers attached to our own territorial waters," he said. Comparing freight rate from America to Ghana, Peterside said Nigeria paid highest freight rate despite same distance.

According to him, the cost of probably freight from America to Ghana which is almost the same distance to Nigeria with that of US to Nigeria, you will find out that Nigeria pay more than Nigeria and at the end, all of us here pay the premium because it ends on the consumer and when we con-

sumes definitely anything we pay in excess will be distributed among the consumers.

"Accurate reporting must be there if you report accurately, we are projecting Nigeria to a very good platform and if we go to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) that is what they will check" he added. Furthermore, the NIMASA boss disclosed what the agency is doing to end pirate attacks in nation's territorial waters saying fast moving platforms were procured to intervene during attacks.

# ABCON Sets N250/\$ Exchange Rate Agenda For PMB

BY JOHN ADENIYI

The Association of Bureaux de Change Operators of Nigeria (ABCON) has set N250 to dollar exchange rate agenda for President Muhammadu Buhari in his second term in office.

ABCON President, Alhaji (Dr) Aminu Gwadabe, who disclosed this to financial journalists in Lagos, said achieving a lower exchange rate for the economy will benefit the common man and lift businesses. The naira exchanges at N362 to dollar at the parallel market and N358 to dollar at the Bureaux De Change (BDC) while the local currency exchanges at N306 to dollar at the official rate.

The ABCON boss also said such lower exchange

rate will improve the transaction volume for BDCs by enabling operators to buy and sell more dollars from their available cashflow.

He said a lower exchange rate against the greenback will stabilize the local currency, raise investors' confidence, improve Diaspora remittance flow and entrench fiscal discipline.

Continuing, he said, a stronger Naira will raise Internally Generated Revenue, help in the implementation of the restriction of foreign exchange access to 42 items that can produced locally and improve BDCs capabilities to thrive.

Gwadabe therefore advised the Federal Government to constitute new economic management team and review government's perfor-

mance in the last four years. He added that such review will give room for better performance in the second term of this administration which commences in May 29, 2019.

Gwadabe said the economy is not performing to expectations, and government is expected to re-strategise and review its performance in the last four years and develop concrete actionable strategy for better performance. The All Progressive Congress (APC) candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, emerged the winner of the 2019 presidential election in Nigeria. The incumbent president, who defeated 73 other candidates, scored a total of 15,191,347 votes across 19 states.

Gwadabe said that if gov-

ernment waits till May 29 before setting up a think-tank economic team with functional experience on the economy, security, agriculture and human resource development, it would have wasted tangible time needed for smooth take-off.

He said the committee members should have deep knowledge of the economy, and be ready to access information on how these sectors have worked effectively in other countries in order to deploy similar strategy in the interest of the local economy.

Gwadabe said that by now, government should know where the complaints over its performance in the last four years came from and give priority to tackling unemployment, fixing road infrastructure, creating better investment opportunities for the people and companies as well as strengthening the financial sector, of which BDCs are key players. The ABCON boss said: "It is only when the economy is buoyant, that they people will be able to save, and that provide enough liquidi-

ty for banks to lend and fuel the economy. The other sub-sectors including the bureaux de change sector will equally be positively impacted by a thriving economy".

Gwadabe also advised the Federal Government to be more cautious at borrowing, ensuring that borrowed funds are channeled to projects that will be able to repay the loans. He said government should equally look at the tax system, and block all revenue leakages to generate more funding for the economy.

# Indigo Wins PR, Communication Service Company Award

BY JOHN ADENIYI, Abuja

Integrated Indigo Limited, one of Nigeria's leading full service Public Relations and Event Management Consultancy firm has won the 'West Africa's Best in Class Public Relations and Communication Service Company of the Year 2019' award category at the 2018 West Africa Brands Excellence Awards held at the prestigious Sheraton Hotel and Suites on Thursday, February 28, 2019 in Lagos.

Indigo emerged the winner of the category at the third edition of the annual awards following the verdict of a technical committee's Research Report conducted by the Institute of Brand Management of Nigeria (IBMN) for marketing communication companies operating in West Africa.

Speaking on the award criteria at the presentation ceremony, Registrar/Chief Executive Officer of IBMN, Desmond Esorougwe described the selection of Integrated Indigo Limited as the outcome of rigorous research and findings which placed the

agency ahead of its peers on varying parameters. According to him, Indigo has demonstrated in strong terms the capacity to provide excellent services in PR and communication for different clients on account of its limitless passion to serve the clients, its creativity, relevance in the industry as well as the abundance of talents in its workforce.

Receiving the award, Chief Executive Officer of Integrated Indigo Limited, Bolaji Abimbola expressed profound appreciation to the organizer for the recognition describing it as another significant milestone in the journey of the agency regarded as the fastest growing Public Relations firm in Nigeria.

Abimbola dedicated the award to the clients for providing the opportunity and enabling environment for the agency to thrive promising that it would continue to offer the best initiatives that would not only improve the corporate reputations of their business but also drive revenue.

He also applauded the 'over ready' and client cen-

tric members of the company for always going the extra mile to over deliver on promise and value to the clients and for being that invaluable extension to their communications department.

"We very delighted to have been recognized by no less an important organization such as Institute of Brand Management of Nigeria. It is an attestation to the fact that our works are making huge impacts on the brands we handle for our clients. Ultimately, the appreciation should go to the clients for reposing the trust and confidence in us. As a company, we would continue to deliver exceptional services and value to our clients' businesses" he added.

The award, organized by Institute of Brand Management of Nigeria, is aimed at identifying, recognizing and rewarding companies that apply branding culture and branding management best practices to the analysis, planning, implementation and control of policies, designed to achieve corporate objectives in both profit and non-profit organization in West Africa countries.



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