***I Intend To Take Apomu To The World Through Mechanized Farming- Olajide Adeniyi***

**Prince Olajide Adeniyi**; a successful business man, Philanthropist and one of the contestants for the stool of Alapomu of Apomu in Isokan Local Government Area of the State of Osun in this interview with **Moroti Olatujoye** opens up on his life, family and vision for Apomu and the state.

***How has your Life Journey been?***

I started my primary school education in Odeomu which is not far from Apomu, then moved to Ikare for my secondary school education. After my secondary school education, I moved to Lagos where I worked at Nigerian Textile Media.

My journey began from there, leading me to travel to England in 1964 to study printing. I own the first company in Nigeria by a Nigerian to handle colour separation and lamination. I also worked with the Nigerian Army during the Civil War, I was in charge of the importation of belts.

I also started the business of Luxury buses in Nigeria which led to my arrest in Abacha’s regime. Abacha had believed that I was the one responsible for transporting his then political enemies outside Nigeria. I ended up in the same cell with the late MKO Abiola. I was locked up for about 3 months. Abiola later helped with my release when he was released.

I currently handle the printing of UBE books nationwide and own a successful printing company called Prodson.

***Why Do You Think You Deserve The Stool?***

Well, I deserve it first by right. The stool belongs to my family, but it was stolen from us and my family let it go until about 20 years ago when we started to fight for our rights again.

Secondly, I deserve the stool because among other contestants, I am the most qualified, with the best exposure, vision and connections to help build Apomu town.

***How Does The Stool Belong To Your Family?***

I am from the Ayope lineage. Ayope left Ile Ife and moved to Offa and the Apomu which wasn’t named Apomu at the time. Ayope’s wife sells beans soup what we call “Gbegiri” along with other native meals to visitors, travelers and farmers that passed the town.

Omu is another name for Gbegiri and that was how the Apomu was created. As Ayope’s wife’s shop was called Apomu i.e a place where you get all sort of things with Omu.

Ayope was a farmer, hence the reason for his absence when the agreement of a stool came. So the other families took the agreement, signed it and took the stool to themselves.

***Before Now What Have You Done To Impact The Lives Of The People Of Apomu?***

Firstly I helped the town by using my contacts to bring electricity to the town years ago. In addition, I assisted the association of timber farmers when my uncle was alive and helped them import their timber abroad to sell. I also support some of the youths who are interested in education but lack the necessary funds, I assist them with their tuition fees.

***What Is Your Driving Force?***

My intention to help Apomu is not just about the stool, although I think I can do more if I get it. It is passion that drives me to help my people. When I visit my village, I see young men roaming around, running towards my vehicle as I drive in, within minutes of getting to my home, my house is flooded with visitors, and it saddens me. It saddens me that my people are jobless, our youths have no future and are ignorant of the chances that are all around them.

I want to expose my people to the world, to the better things and opportunities. I want them to know that having a motorcycle is not what an Indigene of such a great town should aim to achieve. I want to show them the vision of the world that I have seen, I intend to help them achieve greatness, and honestly passion is the only thing that drives me.

***What Are Your Intentions When You Eventually Get To The Stool?***

I intend to improve the standard of living of the people of Apomu.

I intend to take Apomu to the world and bring to the world, Apomu through mechanized farming. I am already making arrangements with the Ugandan Embassy, as I hope to take some of our farmers there to be trained. After their training, they will return with some experts and help develop our vast lands to healthy farmlands.

While that is ongoing, we would start with little farming, like tomatoes, vegetables, melon, mushroom and the rest, buy machines to preserve them, and send them outside the country to be sold.

This can be achieved in my first year, as these vegetables grow in 3 months. From this we can begin to move to more technical farming like Timber.

Farming is one thing our forefathers were good at, so are we and we have the land to make this successful. So farming would be the first way to help my people, then education. I will continue to support the youths, and with the farmers having an increased income, they’d be able to afford to send their children to school.

***Tell Us About Your Family?***

I have a wife and eight children; five Males and three Females. I have a Matron, a Doctor, an Engineer, a Hotel Management and Hospitality Expert and a Tech Expert as well.

My children are all doing well in their respective areas with some of them living outside the country.

***How Many People Are Contesting For This Stool?***

Presently I only know of two people from my royal house. The other royal family had about three contestants but had a misunderstanding that landed them in court. The judge however banned anyone from their royal house to contest.

***How Did You Know Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola?***

Aregbesola’s mother happens to be from the same town as my Mother. My mother was a Princess in Ikare which was where I had my secondary school education.