

**Aregbesola Isn't Founder  
Of 'The Osun  
Progressives'  
- Sola Fasure**



**Page 2**

**CSO Seeks Osun  
Govt's Attention To  
Curb Flooding  
In Osogbo  
Community**

**Page 5**

**Effective, Efficient  
Management  
Needed To Salvage  
APC In Osun  
- Adelowo Adebisi,  
TOP Chairman**



**Page 7**

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**FARE HIKE:**

**Return Omoluabi Scholar Buses**

- *OCSC Asks Oyetola To Dedicate Buses For Public Transport*
- *Move To Lessen Commuters' Plight*

**Kolapo Azeez**



**T**HE Osun Civil Societies Coalition (OCSC) has asked Governor Adegboyega Oyetola to bring back Omoluabi Scholar buses to be used for commercial transport in Osogbo, the capital of the State of Osun.

According to the OCSC, bringing back the Omoluabi scholar buses is a necessary step, following the increment in the transportation fare by mini-bus commercial transporters in the state capital.

The Omoluabi scholar buses were procured by the Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola-led administration, meant to convey public school students to their various schools across the state.

But the buses have been abandoned and are currently parked at the premises of the State Ministry of Works and Transportation.

However, the Osun civil societies said the buses should be put on the road to cushion the effects of the increment in transport fare by the mini-bus drivers in the state.

The group, in a press statement made available to OSUN DEFENDER yesterday, said utilising the

•Some of the abandoned Omoluabi Scholar Buses parked at the premises of the Ministry of Works and Transport, Government Secretariat, Abere. Photo: Olushola Aderinto

•Continued on Page 2

**Osun APC Is Playing With Power** **Back Page**

**Return Omoluabi Scholar Buses**



•(R-L) Sheikh Habeebullah Oko-Iya-Eleko, Sheikh Maruf Ishola, Mr. Gbenga Aregbesola, Chairman, The Osun Progressives TOP, Revd. Lowo Adebiji, Caretaker Secretary, Osun APC, Hon. Rasaq Salinsile, Sen. Mudashiru Hussain, Director General, Oranmiyan, Mr. Sadiq Olajide and Executive Secretary, Awolowo Centre for Philosophy and Ideology, Com. Tope Mustapha at the special prayer session organised by the centre to mark the 64th Birthday of the Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola.

•Continued from Page 1

buses for public transport system will break the monopoly of the private sector operators in the transport industry and end the current culture of impunity.

The group said: "We remember that the State Government procured Omoluabi Scholar buses during the immediate past

administration of Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola and that the Federal Government of Nigeria during the regime of President Goodluck Jonathan gave some buses to states to cushion the effects of fuel price increase in 2012.

"The buses should be put to use with immediate effect with proper supervision by relevant

stakeholders like representatives of the government, civil societies and relevant private sector operators."

Condemning the increment in the transport fare by the mini bus drivers, the group said: "We believe that this act of impunity will bring untold hardship to the generality of residents of the state,

some of who earn below N10,000 a month with families of about six."

The press statement is jointly signed by Comrades Waheed Lawal, Bello Adebayo, Waheed Saka, Mrs. Lola Wey and Emmanuel Olowu.

The mini-bus commercial drivers had increased the price per drop from N50 to N100.

**Aregbesola Isn't Founder Of 'The Osun Progressives' - Sola Fasure**

Sodiq Yusuf

**N**IGERIA'S Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, is not the founder of 'The Osun Progressives' (TOP), a caucus of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the State of Osun.

Aregbesola's Media Adviser, Mr. Sola Fasure, stated this while featuring on Gold FM's current affairs programme in Ilesa, on Tuesday.

According to Fasure, TOP was founded by individuals and stakeholders within the APC, stating that his principal is not part of the people that established the group.

Fasure said freedom of association is fundamental and constitutional, which is the basis of democratic process.

He said members of TOP have strong enough reasons to form an association within the APC.

Fasure clarified that TOP members made Aregbesola the Chairman of its Board of Trustees, charging party leaders to work towards the unity of the APC to record success in forthcoming elections in the state.

He said, "We are in democratic system. Politics is not a do-or-die affair. But what we need at this moment is party cohesion. We can have unity in diversity within the party."

"There are various tendencies within APC and those tendencies still exist. The President came from Congress of Progressive Change and that

tendency is still there. There is new PDP and our own tendency is the ACN. All these tendencies are still there, but we are all united for the success of the party in elections.

"I believe that our leaders will work towards the greater unity of the party."

"Aregbesola did not found The Osun Progressives. They are individuals who feel they have strong enough reason to form an association within the party and Aregbesola was

made the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and he accepted and gave the support.

"The group made their position very clear; they said that the Alliance for Democracy AD, at a point, because of the absence of internal democracy and discontent among party members in the Governorship Elections in 2003 to the Peoples Democratic Party.

"The progressive party is in power for the third consecutive term in Osun and TOP

members fear that the APC is also going the way of AD and they have moral duty to actually stop that breach, so that APC will not go the same way of AD."

Reacting to the destruction of a billboard erected by the Caretaker Secretary of the APC, Hon Rasaq Salinsile, to congratulate Aregbesola on his 64th birthday in Osogbo, Fasure said it is unfortunate that some people could carry out such attack on mere bill-

**Orisunmbare Traders Besiege IBEDC Office Over Estimated Billing**

By Yusuf Oketola

**B**USINESS activities were paralysed for over two hours at the office of the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IBEDC), Station Road, Osogbo, State of Osun yesterday, as shop owners at Orisunmbare besieged the place to register their displeasure over high rate of electricity tariff and estimated bills, otherwise known as 'crazy bill', being issued to the complex.

The Chairman of the Orisunmbare Shopping Complex, Alhaji Ibrahim Khalid, said shop owners at the complex needed to protest the crazy bill being given to them by the IBEDC because they could no longer foot the exorbitant bills.

Khalid, who spoke with OSUN DEFENDER during the protest said:

"Our members could no longer bear the high electricity tariff by IBEDC. That is why we needed to embark on this protest. We are no longer interested in their electricity supply.

"They should disconnect us. We cannot bear it anymore. So, when we get to their office today, they told us that they will discuss the issue at the management level and get back to us.

"We have about 400 lock-up shops here in the complex, including the extensions. The IBEDC brings about N550, 000 to N600, 000 estimated bills per month. Some are even paying for what they do not use while some are not even coming to open their shops and they are required to pay.

"We have been complaining about this same issue for over two years and nothing was done about it by the IBEDC. We have discussed with the General Manager today and he promised to take action on it".

Also speaking with OSUN DEFENDER, a legal practitioner, Mr. Daud Ajetunmobi, who also owns a shop at the shopping complex, said, "What prompted us to take the decision of this protest is based on what we have been experiencing in the last four months. We have been experiencing what we could describe as crazy estimated bills.

board. He said the destruction of the billboard was obviously carried out by hoodlums, adding that the law enforcement agencies have started investigations into the matter.

Fasure said: "The destruction is the work of hoodlums. Whoever does that automatically carries tag of a hoodlum. I believe law enforcement agencies are working to get to the root of the matter. It is act of vandalism.

"The position of the law now as per the decision of National Electricity Regulatory Council (NERC) is that every consumer must be metered and the estimated bill should stop. But, IBEDC still continues doing that.

"So, they are not working towards what the law says. Two months ago, we were there to express our grievances and they promised that it is going to be rectified. This place does not contain only market men and women. We also have professionals like legal practitioners, medical doctors and political appointees as well.

"Our major demand is that they should rectify the crazy estimated bill, and we should be metered. We have had arrangement with them later today".

When contacted, the Regional Communications Officer, Osun Region of the IBEDC, Mrs. Kikelomo Owoeye, said owners of shops at Orisunmbare Shopping Complex came to make complaint at their and not a protest.

According to Owoeye, the aggrieved people were addressed by the Business Manager of the IBEDC, who assured them that something would be done on their complaint.

**Symbol's Quote**

"Our children must also be taught the virtues of hard work, chivalry, endurance, civic obligation, respect to elders, self-reliance, generosity, tolerance and good neighbourliness. Negative values like dependency, parasitism and begging should be frowned upon and discouraged among children. These are the building blocks of a foundation for a successful and responsible adulthood."

Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola



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# Editorial

## The Search For Peaceful Coexistence

Centuries on from the declaration of independence, the stated aim of the United States contained in a preamble to its constitution continues to be the quest for an ever perfect union. This is a position shared by all diverse post colonial states fused together by circumstances which in some cases they never wanted nor asked for. It is not always of course a post colonial issue, even Scotland centuries after the Act of Union with England might still ask for a second independence, same applies to Catalonia in Spain and Lombardy in Italy. Vladimir Illich Lenin, founder of the Soviet Union writing "On The National Question" did not envisage the new entity lasting up to sixty years.

At the heart of it all, we have the question of harmonious coexistence amongst national entities with their own history, distinct norms and traditions. The reconciliation of contradictions into a harmonious entity is what is often referred to as the national question. The question has to be resolved.

Pent up emotions have spilled over into the public hearings on the National Assembly's proposed alterations into the seemingly contentious 1999 constitution. The phrase seemingly contentious to describe the 1999 constitution is used advisedly. For unlike the 1963 Republican Constitution, it does not have the beatification of having being sanctified by a national plebiscite. For this reason, the preface of "We the people of Nigeria..." has been a subject of debate going as far as questioning its legitimacy.

Areas of discord leading to disaffection are what the present exercise has to clarify. The absence of a national consensus is obvious. For example, the Delta State Governor, Ifeanyi Okowa, has called for a brand new constitution instead of alterations because of the lacunas in the present constitution. Leading lawyer, Afe Babalola goes further arguing that the current constitution is leading Nigeria into extinc-

*"We believe that the purpose of this generation should be to create the consensus to get back to the spirit of peaceful coexistence which the founding nationalists representing diverse nationalities agreed in the various constitutional conferences leading up to independence"*

tion. In contradistinction, there is a school of thought echoed by Senator Ekweremadu that a brand new constitution will lead to anarchy.

What is clear is that the current exercise does not have the luxury of becoming a talk shop. A consensus must be forged within a national agreement to implement it. Since the ill advised abrogation of the federalist 1963 constitution by the unification decree of 1966, the country has paid a debilitating price for the absence of a national consensus around a federal framework. A comparative analysis of the costs and benefits of the development process pre and post 1966 will be thought provoking and sobering. For it is unequivocal that the ushering in of a cooperative federal structure starting with the enactment of the MacPherson Constitution in 1951 has been beneficial to the purpose of sustainable development.

We believe that the purpose of this generation should be to create the consensus to get back to the spirit of peaceful coexistence which the founding nationalists representing diverse nationalities agreed in the various constitutional conferences leading up to independence. The country cannot continue forever in the present situation of perennial underachievement in what is universally acknowledged as a make or break decade. The present discord should not be an avenue for discord but for national reawakening.

## Tribute

BY  
**Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola**

### General Ibrahim Attahiru And 10 Others: Colossal Loss To The Nation

The news of the death of the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Ibrahim Attahiru, and 10 others in a plane crash on Friday, May 21, 2021 was a dark arrow struck in the heart of the nation, throwing the nation into mourning. I am personally devastated and filled with unspeakable grief.

General Attahiru led the army at a time of great security challenges. We had great hopes upon his appointment that he would make a huge impact in addressing the challenges. He hit the ground running and was already covering the ground when death struck. This is a huge blow to the nation.

General Attahiru was a vibrant and intrepid warrior; a

*"General Attahiru was a vibrant and intrepid warrior; a gallant soldier, a soldier's soldier who epitomised the Nigerian Army in professionalism, brilliance, gallantry, chivalry and patriotism"*



gallant soldier, a soldier's soldier who epitomised the Nigerian Army in professionalism, brilliance, gallantry, chivalry and patriotism. He headed several army commands with excellence and distinction before his appointment as army chief.

They all died in service of the nation, paying the supreme sacrifice, as true soldiers, for the security, peace and tranquillity of the nation. They will be remembered in the pantheons of patriots who gave their lives for us. Their death will not be in vain.

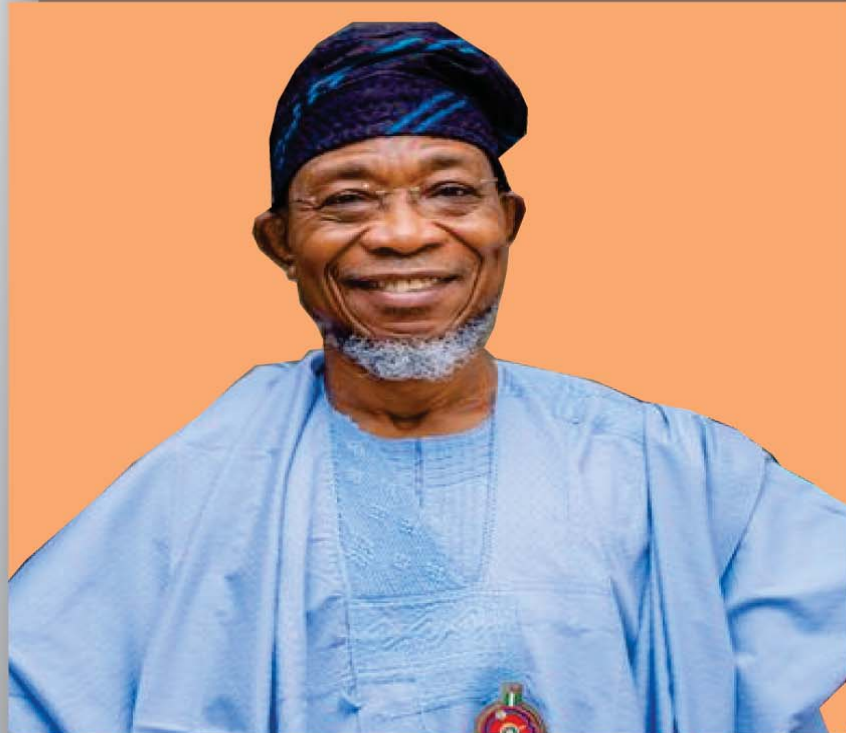
It is my sincere hope that the armed forces will emerge from this blow stronger, focussed and more determined to crush every security challenge buffeting the nation.

On behalf of my wife and associates, I offer the deepest condolences to their families, Defence Headquarters and President Muhammadu Buhari. I pray that God will comfort them, give them his peace and the fortitude to bear this colossal loss.

May God grant their souls repose and comfort in their next estate. Ameen.

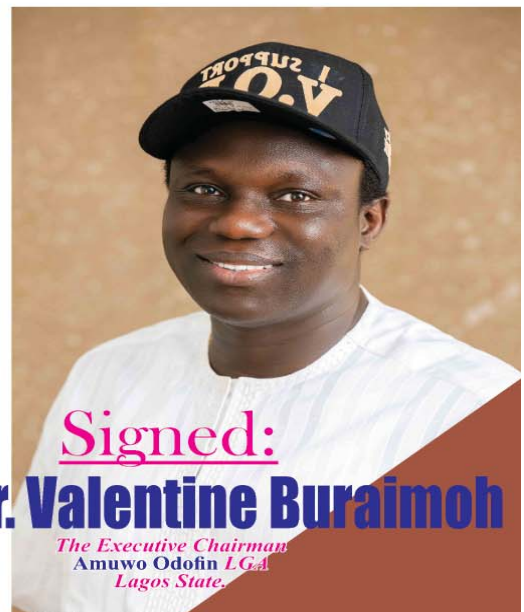
*\*Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, Minister of Interior, Federal Republic of Nigeria, May 22, 2021*

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As the wine goes older, the sweeter the exotic taste, likewise for our leader, Your exemplary leadership is a delight to follow over the years.

**CONGRATULATIONS SIR  
AND HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



**Signed:**  
**Engr. Dr. Valentine Buraimoh**

*The Executive Chairman  
Amuwo Odofin LGA  
Lagos State.*



# JDFPMC Empowers 20 Youths On Vocations

By Idowu Idris

**N**O fewer than 20 youths have been set up on their various vocations by the Justice Development and Peace Makers' Centre of the Catholic Diocese, Osogbo, State of Osun.

JDFPMC presented start-up tools to the youths on Tuesday, being the final day of the organisation's empowerment programme.

Different tools were given to the youths, who were selected beneficiaries of the empowerment initiative, according to their areas of specialisation.

Among the tools given were laptops, baking ovens, sewing machines, make-up tools, et cetera.

According to the Assistant Coordinator of the JDFPMC, Rev. Stephen Okrumeh, the beneficiary youths, who are from different religions, states of origin and tribes were all selected based on their interests.

Okrumeh also said that the beneficiaries were given the start-up tools as part of the organisation's effort to empower youths with the aim of eradicating poverty and reduce crime rate among youths in the country.

He said: "This programme actually closes the initiative the year 2020, in which we have empowered 400 youths, and the 20 beneficiaries today have learnt different skills and today we are sending them to the

world to go and showcase it.

"In actual fact, all the beneficiaries are not only Christians; we have Muslims among them, meanwhile this is a faith-based organisation which is not biased by any religion."

Okrumeh added that the JDFPMC will follow-up and continue to give its support to the beneficiaries of the empowerment programme. And there are also plans in place to do more this year.

Wife of the Deputy

Governor of the State of Osun, Mrs. Oyefunke Alabi, thanked the JDFPMC for the empowerment programme and admonished the youths to be focused on their various vocations and maintain their integrity.

Addressing the

youths, Alabi said: "Start from that small beginning, be focused, maintain integrity, believe in yourself, do not allow any impairment to shape you, never give up, God has not given up on you, so never give up on yourself."



•The Interior Minister, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola in company of his wife, Alhaja Sherifat Aregbesola, in a group photograph with some of his aides during his 64th Birthday celebrations at his Lagos residence, recently.

# 'Aregbesola The Awolowo Of Our Generation'

By Kazeem Badmus

**A** Non-Governmental Organisation, Awolowo Centre for Philosophy and Ideology, has described the immediate past governor of the State of Osun and incumbent Minister Rauf Aregbesola, as someone who possesses all the attributes of late Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

The Executive Secretary of the organisation, Mr. Tope Mustapha, gave the description on Tuesday in Osogbo, the state capital, at a prayer session to mark Aregbesola's 64th birthday.

According to him, Aregbesola is a politician that believes and follows everything Awolowo stood for, adding that he is someone worthy of celebrating for his immense transformation of the State of Osun.

He said: "For the past seven years, we have been looking for someone who has the attributes of Awolowo and we came into conclusion that Aregbesola is the only one who has all the traits of Awolowo.

"He is the Awolowo of our generation and he is someone we should be celebrating for what he has done for the people of the State of Osun.

"Aregbesola gave Osun modern outlook and he is the best governor to have governed this state. Osun has never had a governor like him".

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**ISHIAQ ABDULRAHMON OLADIMEJI**

That I was formerly known and addressed as BELLO ABDULRAHMON OLADIMEJI now wish to be known and addressed as ISHIAQ ABDULRAHMON OLADIMEJI.

All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

**ADEKUNLE MISITURA OSENI**

That I was formerly known and addressed as MISITURA ADEKUNLE now wish to be known and addressed as ADEKUNLE MISITURA OSENI.

All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

# CSO Seeks Osun Govt's Attention In Curbing Flooding In Osogbo Community

Sodiq Yusuf

**R**ESIDENTS of Koju Foam Community, along Osogbo/Ikirun road in Osogbo, capital of the State of Osun, have appealed

to the State Government to find a lasting solution to flooding problem in the area, occasioned by the drainage constructed on the expressway.

The residents said as a result of the drainage

constructed on the Osogbo/Ikirun road, runoff water from both sides of Biket Junction and Powerline Area get diverted with resultant high torrents of erosion.

According to the residents, the contractor rather than maintaining a wide drainage channel from the main road down to Koju Foam community reduced the width and quality of the drainage.

The Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NiMet) had predicted an above normal rainfall for 2021.

After several pleas for government intervention, a Civil Society Organisation, Urban Alert on Monday, wrote to the state ministries of Works and Environment to drive home the people's demands.

Findings by OSUN DEFENDER revealed that the Osun Commissioner for Works, Engr. Remi Omowaye and his team visited the community in February, with a promise to come to the aid of the residents of the area, but nothing is yet to be done since then.

The letter, dated May 24, 2021 reads, "We wish to formally inform you of the life-threatening

situation at Koju Foam Community, Osogbo, Osun State. The community, situated off Osogbo-Ikirun road, is facing a huge threat of flood, caused by the poorly constructed drainage channel of the Osogbo-Ikirun road.

"As it is presently, residents are in fear of being swept away by the huge volume of water directed at this community from this main road into the tiny stream in the community.

"As a ministry saddled with the responsibility of constructing roads and drainage channels, we request the following information on this issue; What is your ministry is doing to salvage the situation? Looking at NiMet 2021 Rainfall predictions, when will this problem be fixed? What effort is your ministry putting in place to curb road contractors from doing substandard jobs when directing runoff water into streams?"

"We believe in the effectiveness of the government, especially, when it concerns the safety of the populace and we hope the ministry under your watch will take the bull by the horns by swiftly addressing this," Urban Alert stated.

# 5 Remanded Over Violent Clashes In Ede

By Yusuf Oketola

**F**IVE persons who were allegedly connected with the recent clashes between the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN) and Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in Ede, State of Osun have been remanded in Ilesa Correctional Centre.

The suspects, Tunde Sulaimon, Quawiyu Akinloye, Taofeeq Saka, Sadiq Alatise, Saheed Raimi, were arraigned before an Osogbo magistrate's court during a Special Sitting Inspection of Police Cells at the State Police Headquarters in Osogbo on Tuesday.

They were arraigned on charges bordering on murder, conspiracy and conduct likely to breach the public peace.

According to Police Prosecutor, Inspector Elisha Olusegun, the

suspects were arrested in connection with the recent clashes between the Vigilante and OPC in Ede town where two persons were killed.

Olusegun said investigations were still ongoing, as four more suspects were yet to be arrested, praying the court to give the Police more time to conclude their investigations.

The prosecutor said the fight between the two groups was based on some controversies surrounding one Rasheed, notoriously known as Oko-Ilu, who has been terrorising Ede.

He said the OPC members were accusing the leader of the VGN of shielding Oko-Ilu from being arrested by the Police.

However, defence counsel, Mr. Mathew Omolade, told the court that the accused persons

were innocent.

Omolade disclosed that it was Rasheed Oko-Ilu who on the eve of last Eid-el-fitr went to attack the leader of the OPC group, who is popularly known as Docky.

He opined that Docky and his boys resisted the attack but some of his properties were razed down.

The defence counsel added that after the incident, one of the defendants, a member of VGN was going on his motorcycle and was attacked by some members of the OPC before some of his members came to his aid.

In his ruling, the Presiding Magistrate, Dr. Olusegun Ayilara, gave the Police 10 days to conclude their investigations.

Ayilara thereafter remanded the accused persons in Police custody.

**I**N the Name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

The Peace and Salutations of Allah Be upon Prophet Muhammad, His household, the Sahabah and those who follow His Sunnah till the last Day; the Day when Money and Children will be valueless.

Salaam Alaykum Warahmatullah, Wabarakaatuhu.

Praise to Allah (S.W.T.) Who has guided us to this felicity, never could we have found



## Remembrance Of Allah

### The Worship Of Allah

Allah (S.W.T.) says in the Glorious Quran, "To Allah do belong the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him goes back every affair (for decision). Then worship Him and put your trust in Him. And your Lord is not unmindful of aught that you do." (Quran 11: 123)

In an Hadith, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was reported thus: Narrated by Abdullahi (May Allah be pleased with him), "When the verse - "Those who believe and mix not their belief with wrong," was revealed, the Muslims felt it very hard on them and said, "O Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) who amongst us does not do wrong to himself?" He replied, "The Verse does not mean this. But that (wrong) means to associate others in worship to Allah. Don't you listen to what Luqman said to his son when he was advising him? O my son! "Join not others in worship with Allah; verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed." (Sahih Bukhari).

### Remembrance Of Allah

Allah (S.W.T.) says, "O you who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own." (Quran 63:9).

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was reported by Abu Darda (May Allah be pleased with him) to have said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your deed; and the purest of them with your Master, and the highest of them in your ranks, and what is better for you than spending gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks, and they strike your necks?" They said: "Of course." He said: The remembrance of Allah (Most High).

Then Mu'adh bin Jabal (May Allah be pleased with him) said: "There is nothing that brings more salvation from the punishment of Allah than remembrance of Allah.(Jami' Tirmidhi).

### Humility

Allah (S.W.T.) says: "And remember it was said to them, 'Dwell in this town and eat therein as you wish, but say the word of humility. And enter the gate in a posture of humility. We shall forgive you your faults, We shall increase (the portion of) those who do good.'" (Quran 7: 161) "Has not the

guidance, had it not been for the Guidance of Allah.

Ramadan has come and gone. But it is pertinent to remind ourselves that the end of Ramadan should not be the end of our service and remembrance of Almighty Allah (S.W.T.). These are part of the duties imposed on us all the time as Muslims (whether in or out of Ramadan).

### Obedience To Allah

Allah (S.W.T.) says in the glorious Quran: "And obey Allah and the Apostle that you may obtain mercy." (Quran 3:132).

"All who obey Allah and the Apostle are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of the Prophets (who teach), the Sincere (lovers of Truth), the Witnesses (who testify), and the Righteous (who do good). Ah! What a beautiful fellowship." (Quran 4: 69)

"So obey Allah, and obey His Apostle. But if you turn back, the duty of Our Apostle is but to proclaim (the Message) clearly and openly." (Quran 64:12).

On this commandment of Allah (S.W.T.), the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was reported in the following Hadiths thus:

"Abdullah bin Mas'ud (May Allah be pleased with him), reported the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) as saying: "Listening and obedience are binding on a Muslim, whether he likes or dislikes, so long as he is not commanded for disobedience (to Allah). If he is commanded to disobey (to Allah), no listening and obedience are binding (on him)." (Sunan Abu Dawud).

In another hadith narrated by Zaid bin Arqam (May Allah be pleased with him). "We used to speak while in prayer. One of us used to speak to his brother (while in prayer) about his need, till the verse was revealed - "Guard strictly the (five obligatory) prayers, especially the middle prayer and stand before Allah with obedience." Then we were ordered not to speak while praying. (Sahih Bukhari).

## Opinion

# Who Is The Next Olufon Of Ifon-Oroluland?

**R**ECENTLY, Oba Al-Marouf Adekunle Magbagbeola, Olumoyero II, the 34th Olufon of Ifon-Oroluland, Orolu Local Government Area, State of Osun, passed on to glory to join his great ancestors, thereby leaving vacant the First-Class Chieftaincy stool of Olufon. In his condolence message, Governor Adegboye-ga Oyetola of the State of Osun clearly approximates general feelings when he described the passage of the late Olufon as a "colossal loss, not only to the state, but to Nigeria as a whole," and of his legacies, as someone "whose contributions to cultural identity, national unity, peace and progress of Osun and Nigeria as a whole won't be forgotten."

To be sure, Ifon-Orolu is an ancient Yoruba Kingdom, founded by Olufon, the only son of Obatala, who founded Ile-Ife. Olufon Aladikun Oloaso Akogun Erufeje Adugbo was the first recorded Olufon in history (1488 - 1521 A.D). The stool of Olufon is, therefore, a First-Class stool with a beaded crown right from inception and through the eras of the Western Region, the old Oyo State, and up till now,

when our part of the nation is known as the State of Osun. Also, Olufon is the permanent Chairman of Irepodun/Orolu Traditional Council, and Deputy Chairman, Osun State Council of Obas. According to Samuel Johnson in his authoritative book, "The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate," not many Yoruba communities can claim beaded crowns for their traditional stools as not all of them can claim ancestral migration from Ile-Ife, the fountain head of divine kinship in all Yoruba-speaking communities. Clearly, the foregoing underscores the preeminence of the Olufon stool, and why the question of who the next Olufon may be is very crucial at the moment.

As we continue to mourn the passage of our late amiable Oba, princes from different Kuling Houses in the community have begun to make open and subtle jostling for the stool, thereby creating a sort of apprehension in the community. It is in these prevailing circumstances, therefore, that I have thought it fit to put some issues into their proper

perspectives. As I do not intend this to be a legal analysis, I shall strictly restrict myself to statement of facts only. First, it must be clarified that the process of selecting an Oba is both traditional and statutory, and each is important and complementary to the other. Traditionally, each community has recognised ruling houses from among which nominations may proceed to fill a vacant chieftaincy stool. Thus, it is the customary duty of the certified kingmakers from that community to select a candidate from the relevant ruling house or houses. In the modern time where Ifa oracle is no longer the sole determinant, the selection process can become complicated where a prescribed rotation process has been distorted or compromised.

Statutorily, it is the duty of the State Government to declare a recognised chieftaincy stool vacant. In the present case of Olufon stool, the Government of the State of Osun is yet to do that and it is hoped it will do so soon. After such a declaration, the State Government will then issue a letter requesting the next ruling house or houses, which candidate(s)

must have been ascertained and affirmed by the Kingmakers, to present their nomination(s) for scrutiny and approval by the State Government. Meanwhile, the Governor may only approve nominations that have been made in accordance with the provisions of an extant Chieftaincy Declaration. But the question of which Chieftaincy Declaration is extant or operative concerning the Olufon stool has become a subject of controversies and court litigations in recent times.

At present, there are at least two controversial Chieftaincy Declarations: the 1979 and 1988 Declarations, both made pursuant to the Chiefs' Law of Oyo State (still applicable in the State of Osun). While the 1979 Declaration recognises five (5) independent ruling houses (Moronfolu, Olumoyero, Oduolu, Orisatoyinbo, Oluyeyin), the 1988 Declaration groups the same five ruling houses into two namely: Olaojo (Moronfolu & Oduolu) and Orisafi (Orisatoyinbo, Olumoyero, Oluyeyin). Although the re-grouping by the 1988 Declaration appears superfluous as an attempt to draw a distinction between a six

time arrived for the believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and the Truth which has been revealed (to them), and that they should not become like those to whom was given revelation aforetime, but long ages passed over them and their hearts grew hard? For many among them are rebellious transgressors." (Quran 57: 16).

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was reported by Abu Hurayrah to have said: "The parable of a Mujahid who strives in the Cause of Allah - and Allah knows best who strives in His Cause - is that of one who fasts, prays Qiyam, focuses with proper humility, bows and prostrates." (Sunan an-Nasa'i).

### Reminder

Brethren, from the above, it is obvious that our responsibilities to Allah (S.W.T.) as His servants are not limited to the Month of Ramadan alone. Our responsibilities as Allah's (S.W.T.) obedient servants extend beyond this month.

We are hereby reminded that for us to consolidate on the gains in Ramadan. It is necessary for us to continue the good work after Ramadan. This will no doubt improve our records before Allah (S.W.T.) and possibly put us among a higher rank. Another Ramadan is eleven months away. Let us not unconsciously wash away the rewards we have accumulated in this Ramadan with acts inconsistent with Allah's (S.W.T.) commands. We should remember that Shaitan, the avowed enemy of the believers, is lurking around to impede our "march" to success.

May Allah (S.W.T.) give us the Grace to worship Him at all times, and also enable us to witness next year's Ramadan.

*\*Sheikh Imam Zakariyah Sarumi is the Grand Imaam of Ipetu-Ijesa.*

ga Oyetola of the State of Osun will avail himself of the best legal and sound "political" advice to navigate the brewing controversies from Ifon-Orolu. To help the Governor navigate the waters successfully and on time, the ruling houses, chiefs, kingmakers, and elites in the community must steer clear of all manipulations and stick to due process of law in the whole process. Filling the vacant stool of Olufon must not be frustrated, manipulated or delayed. In November 2019, it must be recalled, the Supreme Court of Nigeria dethroned Oba Samuel Adebayo-Adegboola, the Eleruwa of Eruwa, Oyo State, on the ground that he was not a member of one of the two ruling houses which turn it was to produce a successor in 1994.

All said, we crave that the next Olufon of Ifon-Oroluland must not only be an embodiment of our cherished cultural values and traditions, he must also be well-educated, enlightened, charismatic, and urbane.

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# Interview

7

## Effective, Efficient Management Needed To Salvage APC In Osun – Adelowo Adebisi, TOP Chairman

**I**t has been a while that you left office as the Chairman of APC in the State of Osun, how has it been for you politically since then?

I thank God for the grace. When I left as the Chairman of the party in 2014, I became a member of Igbimo Agba and we have been working together. I was the Chairman campaign committee for Ijesa- South Federal Constituency in 2018 and I also have an appointment now as a Senior Legislative Adviser to the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives.

**What does your appointment as member of Igbimo Agba mean?**

Well, Igbimo Agba is not a constitutionally recognised body. It is just an Advisory Committee for the party. When I was Chairman of the party, the Igbimo Agba was not functioning as we have it now. The inefficiency and shortcomings of the party leadership leads to the functionality of Igbimo Agba now. I ensured that we had our State Working Committee meetings every month, in which we had resolutions when I was the Chairman. Invariably, we functioned in advisory capacity to the Governor on each policy of government. At the same time, I did summon commissioners to my office then to ask questions about issues on governance because it is the responsibility of the party to give feedback to the government. From the ward, local government, federal constituency, senatorial district to the state level, the party is expected to monitor and serve as feedback mechanism for government programmes and when we get the feedbacks, we coordinate them and advice the government accordingly in order to review performances or for improvement. I thank God for the opportunity He gave me when I was the party chairman that I had a functional effective party management system.

**Are you saying that the present leadership of the party is not up to the task?**

There is a serious inefficiency. The 2018 Governorship Elections (with the performance of the party) is an eye-opener. When I was the Chairman in 2014, we won the Governorship Elections that year with a margin of over 100,000 votes, despite the PDP federal might then. But in 2018 that we had the federal, state and local government might on our side, we won with less than 500 votes. It is very painful and it is a poor performance.

**What do you think was responsible for the poor performance?**

To the glory of God, Aregbesola as the Governor then performed efficiently in infrastructure, education and socio-economic development. He also had very good human relations and was loved by the people. But the party failed to leverage on those things. It is the job of the party to market government programmes and policies to the voters, but the inefficiency of the party resulted to the poor performance in the election. That is the reason why we came about TOP (The Osun Progressives). We want to have effective and efficient party management, we want to have internal democracy; let us have equity, fairness and justice where the members of the party have a say and sense of belonging. That is what we are promoting as far as TOP is concerned. As the Congress of our party is approaching, what we want is a democratically elected executive across board. Even if we are going to have a consensus candidate anywhere, let all the aspirants come out, face the party members and have the commitment and agreement to work together.

**Had there been a time you called the current Caretaker Chairman of APC or the Governor to discuss your concern on the way the party affairs are being handled?**

I was with the Governor over a year ago about this issue of party management and I expressed my fears. I gave him a proposal and I advised him to let us work on the proposal with the hope that if we set up a Strategic Committee, we are going to reduce the widening gap between the executives and the party members. The governor promised to do something

on it and later, Engr. Sola Akinwumi, the Chairman of Igbimo Agba called the party Chairman and I together, asking if there were personal issues between the Chairman and I. And I told him that my expression on the party affairs was not personal. I told him I was not happy about how the party was going and I couldn't just sit down and fold my arms with the way things were. Oyo State remains an example for us. Today, the efforts of late Abiola Ajimobi is incomparable in Oyo state. He performed excellently well but despite that, he lost the elections. So when you are talking about elections, it is not a matter of performance alone. There must be a good party mechanism to sensitise and mobilize the people because it is very necessary. These are the things I discussed with Engr. Akinwumi.

Also, leaders from the nine federal constituencies in the state were invited by Chief Bisi Akande over six months ago. When we got there,

all of us complained about the poor management of the party and he picked one person from each of the constituencies and set up a committee to review our recommendations, but till date, we have not seen light of the recommendations. So as stakeholders, we TOP came together and decided to start work now, instead of waiting till when things will be out of hand.

**How do you feel about your suspension from Igbimo Agba because of your involvement in TOP?**

My suspension is not surprising. To me it is a sacrifice I want to make. I believe I should stand up for the right thing. You might be in Igbimo Agba and not be functional. I believe if this is a sacrifice that I should make, then it is worth it. The only thing is that I was not given fair hearing. I was not called to defend myself. They just said my being a member of TOP is causing crisis and dividing the party, and they came up with suspension. That is not the right thing to do. Even when you are talking of groups within the party, we have Ileri Oluwa, Oranmiyan and Legacy. Don't forget that Legacy was formed then by the current Caretaker Chairman of the APC in the state, so why the noise about TOP? I believe they should have given me the chance to explain myself and if my reasons were not satisfactory to them, they could suspend me.

Anyway, I think it is not even the suspension or endorsement that matters now. We in Igbimo Agba have not been meeting for the past few months until they sat last Tuesday to announce my suspension. Like the APC Caretaker Secretary rightly said in an interview with your newspaper, there is no life in the party again. No programmes, activities, meetings or

**"My suspension is not surprising. To me it is a sacrifice I want to make. I believe I should stand up for the right thing. You might be in Igbimo Agba and not be functional. I believe if this is a sacrifice that I should make, then it is worth it"**

*Reverend Adelowo Adebisi is a former Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the State of Osun and current Chairman of 'The Osun Progressives' (TOP), a caucus within the ruling party. In this interview with ISMAEEL UTHMAN and KAZEEM BADMUS, he speaks on his suspension from Igbimo Agba, a caucus of elders in the APC, and how to salvage the party from looming danger. Excerpts:*



•Adebisi

seminars. No feedback mechanism. No input from the party to the government.

**It is believed that TOP was formed by former Governor Rauf Aregbesola to frustrate the second term ambition of Governor Adegboyega Oyetola?**

That is a misconception. That is wrong. We stakeholders of the APC came together and looked at how to go about things for the betterment of the party. We formed The Osun Progressives. We contacted Ogbeni and asked if he could be our patron and adviser and he obliged. But the fact remains: 'Is Aregbesola coming back for any elective post in Osun?' So if we are able to review and revive the party, the benefit is for all the members.

**What are the structures or formations of TOP?**

TOP came out within a month and we have all this noise. We have the leadership. State council members and the local government branches are now coming up. You will see the beauty of democracy after the caretaker committee announcement and the constitution of the state board. Most of the people sing-praising Oyetola are just positioning themselves for the board and the local government caretaker appointments. That is why you see endorsement everywhere now; endorsement without proper planning and programmes. I believe if you want to endorse somebody, you must work towards it because if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail. So I think it is a wrong perception to personalise or be sentimental about the existence of TOP.

**How would you advise Governor Adegboyega Oyetola and the party Chairman?**

My advice is for them to let us ensure effective party management where we are going to promote internal democracy. Where there will be fairness, equity, justice and the party leadership will be making a lot of inputs into policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The party should be well-coordinated to ensure the success of our government. Only effective and efficient management of the APC affairs can guarantee the future of the party.

OBSERVATION

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Osun APC Is Playing With Power

IN the run-up to 2007 Gubernatorial Elections in Osun, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, with other progressives worked assiduously to build and nurture a progressive political party that ultimately wrestled power from the Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola-led Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) government. The progressive party - Action Congress (AC) - advocated reforms and change and putting common people first. The party favoured new ideas, policies and tactics that would enhance living and working conditions of the ordinary people. To crown it all, its flagbearer, Ogbeni, rolled out his green book tagged "My Pact with the People of Osun State" wherein a 6-Point Integral Action Plan was articulated.

Although, the PDP manipulated the will of the people who voted it out in the 2007 Governorship Elections, the people's mandate for a progressive party and government was restored by the Federal Court of Appeal sitting in Ibadan, Oyo State capital, after titanic battles for three and a half years. That was on November 26, 2010. The subsequent rollout of these Action Plan totally transformed Osun in Road infrastructure; Education (Opon-Imo, School feeding, and Calisthenics); Youth Empowerment (OYES); Health Living; Support for the aged and rehabilitation programme for the mentally challenged; Social engagement with the people (Gbangba Dekun and Ogbeni Till Daybreak) among several other lofty programmes and policies too numerous to list.

After 8 years of maximum two terms tenure of Ogbeni, some sections of the progressive within the party felt that it was the turn of Osun West to produce the next governor. Although, choice of the party candidate was eventually decided in an open primary where the incumbent Governor emerged, the party was so fragmented that it almost lost to the PDP but for rerun and Supreme Court verdict. Up till now, it is yet to recover as there are allegations ranging from alienation, imposition of candidates, mismanagement of the party affairs and lack of transparency, among others in the so-called progressive party. As constituted at present, APC does not have confidence that it could win any free and fair election in the state. Perhaps, this explains why APC government has refused to conduct elections into Local Government Councils since 5th of February, 2021 when the tenure of the Local Government Executives expired, contrary to Section 7 Subsection 1 of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as amended. Osun APC seems to be losing its progressive flavour and in disarray when the Governorship election is almost a year away.

Above realities are what brought to the fore a progressive section within the party under the platform named - The Osun Progressives (IOP). IOP has come out with its 7-point objectives: 1. To promote internal democracy in the party. 2. To ensure effective and efficient party management. 3. To mobilise, reconcile and network for party development. 4. To promote equity, fairness and justice within the party. 5. To ensure transparency and accountability in the party management. 6. To foster level playing ground, no to imposition of candidates. And 7. To initiate programmes and activities for party development.

The immediate past Chairman of APC in Osun, Elder Adebisi Adelowo, who is the leader of the TOP said, "After the registration and revalidation exercise, the next thing is congress of the party. There is need for us to restructure the party in Osun. We came out with 7-point agenda to ensure that we have internal democracy where members will elect the leaders of the party from the ward to Local

Government and at the State. The present APC State Chairman is a very gentle and nice person but lacks the competence to manage the party. He cannot network. There is no State Working Committee Meeting; State Executive Meeting with resolutions seems not to be working. There must be programmes for the party. The party should be able to make inputs to the policies of the government. Nothing is working or functioning in the party as the secretariat is a ghost town. We must, therefore, restructure the party with programmes as the present leadership is not living to its responsibility. There should be a congress where the best, who have the idea on how to manage a party, would be democratically chosen. Every elective position should be contested and that is essence of

*"The party seems to have learnt little and forgotten much about the titanic battle it had with PDP between 2006 and 2010, along with all the untold sacrifices"*

democracy." The above quote is a sincere enough admission of clear realities and a candid expression of determination by a focused caucus within the party to strengthen and reposition it to be formidable enough to win future elections.

Strangely, instead of buckling up and down to adjusting itself to TOP agenda, the party further goes into disarray. It is like a hunter dog that refuses to hearken to the whistle and instruction of the hunter. Instead of listening to the voice of wisdom and readjust, Igbimo Agba Osun - Osun APC Elders Council to which Lowo himself belongs - went for the head of Reverend Adelowo Adebisi, TOP Chairman, by suspending him without giving him an opportunity to fair hearing. The Council went

further to endorse the second term of the incumbent Governor, Adegboyega Oyetola.

While the APC is yet to get healed from the wounds it sustained from the last Governorship Elections, where some sections felt embittered by the zoning arrangement and unlevelled play ground in the conduct of the election primaries, it has refused reconciling and bringing the members back to its fold and compounding it with its policy of alienation and division within the party. It is very clear that internal democracy and progressive oxygen is lacking in the "Progressive APC," a self-annihilating situation that some opportunistic elements within the party oddly want to continue. How this is an asset to the party with election barely 14 months away is difficult to understand.

The party seems to have learnt little and forgotten much about the titanic battle it had with PDP between 2006 and 2010, along with all the untold sacrifices, before it wrestled power from it. Except to the blind or deluded, as things stand, APC has no capacity to win any election against any serious opposition in the State. "Never underestimate your enemy" is a common and wise parlance in battle philosophy. The APC will be hallucinating if it did not notice that the opposition PDP is seriously reconciling its members and organising for future elections. A stitch in time saves nine. If APC is still serious in retaining power in the state, it must change its policy of alienation of its members and supporters, thereby putting an end to all in-house fighting and genuinely embracing all well-intended criticisms and rebuilding efforts. Otherwise, it will only surprise the politically naive if power eventually slips from it.

STRIKER ■ Striker is not the opinion of the Columnist featured above

Democracy Can't Breathe

ACROSS many African countries, all the way back to Nigeria and down to the State of Osun, there is a heavy knee on the neck of democracy, threatening to snuff life out of it in the George Floyd manner. Democracy is on oxygen in Chad and Mali and the anti-democratic cancer is spreading.

It is a shame that Africa had to contend with internal and external forces that are against democracy and her development right from inception of nationhood at the point of exit of her colonisers some 70 years ago till date. At the point of encounter with Europe, a majority of Africans was under one form of monarchy or the other. The inbuilt systems for order, and against tyranny, within those monarchical systems never meant they were anything other than monarchy. Therefore, the transition to "freedom" democracy and the Rule of Law (after the colonist have had their field day and had to leave stylishly or forcibly) was unarguably an imposition, albeit a welcomed one.

Majority of the ruling elite across Africa, and many of the founding fathers, hooked on monarchical majesty and privileges, never fully embraced modernity and democracy. Therefore, many of them quickly colluded as willing tools in the hands of the departed colonial masters (who never meant us well and were only eager to modernise the colonisation) to eliminate the few great leaders of vision who have embraced modernism and were intent on pushing African countries to the height of development. Assassinations and coup d'états were common throughout the 50s,

60s and 70s, where outright apartheid governments were not sustained. Rulership of African countries was always remote-controlled, often at any and all costs, into the hands of willing tools of the West in the then bi-polar world which gave way to American Imperial domination in the unipolar late 20th and 21st centuries.

If we understand this development, it will be easy to comprehend why a majority of our elites, sustained by former colonial powers, has remained uncommitted to modernity and democracy all the while, preferring imperial rules and military dictatorships as they build themselves into monsters, refusing to build strong institutions instead. Being merely stranded with the democratic order of the 21st century in which military rule (a crime against humanity) has gone out of fashion, they nevertheless sustain the strongman modality: godfatherism, mafia and cabal operandi, and all sorts of violent and intimidating "operating system" for what Fela Anikulapo Kuti referred to as "demo-crazy and demonstration of craze."

For the last 70 years though, the above realities did not go without patriotic struggles from the people and their champions among the elites - writers, journalist, musicians, scholars, politicians, artists, students' leaders, legal luminaries, and many more who saw through the imperialising and underdevelopment agenda, and fought heroically, sometime paying the supreme price, in order to keep the liberation fire burning. In Nigeria, the resistance span from the first stone hauled against the slave traders to the recent

#EndSARS and Kaduna NLC protests.

Political parties are one of the strong institutions of Democracy. In the hand of imperial elites, however, they become smokescreens for manipulation of the people by select few who are merely contending bitterly among themselves to be the chief slave drivers. Imposition, lack of internal democracy, monetisation of the polity, electoral frauds, crimes and violence; in simple terms, lack of principle, ideology, transparency - while holding out fancy manifestos and promises to the people - are chief characteristics of party politics across board.

The new generation of patriotic citizens, especially youths, seeking freedom from centuries of elite-based, imperial-controlled governance, anywhere in Africa, Nigeria or State of Osun, must realise that democracy works (as the best form of government on earth) only if the people take ownership of it through principled struggle. As grotesque and bastardised as democracy may become, it remains the only hope, rather than the resort to self-helps of all kinds that have propelled us in just a few years to the edge of catastrophe.

Democracy and Party politics, however deformed, is still a game played according to clearly set out rules. The elites gainfully delight in side-stepping the rules, those who must save democracy from suffocating under their brutal knees only need to insist on playing always according to the rules. Democracy can breathe again, survive, and translate to "Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress" only through principled struggle by the young generation who must embrace it.