**News**

INEC’s Timetable For Gen. Elections Worries Oyetola’s Camp

**Our Reporter**

**T**

**he** timetable issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for the conduct of the 2023 general elections has thrown Governor Adegboyega Oyetola’s camp of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the State of Osun into confusion, findings have revealed.

Investigations by **OSUN DEFENDER** revealed that the Governor’s camp, known as IleriOluwa, is not comfortable with the deadline set by INEC for the submission of name of candidates for the National Assembly and State Assembly elections.

INEC had in February this year adjusted timetable for the 2023 general election, following the signing of the amended Electoral Act by President Muhammadu Buhari.

According to the timetable, political parties and candidates contesting for Presidential and National Assembly elections are to submit their nomination forms to INEC via its online portal between “9.00am on Friday 10th June 2022 to 6.00pm on Friday 17th June 2022”.

All parties and candidates contesting for governorship and State Assembly elections are also expected to submit their nomination forms via same process between “9.00am on Friday 1st July 2022 to 6.00pm on Friday 15th July 2022.”

The governorship election in the State of Osun will hold on July 16, 2022.

According to sources in the Government House, the timetable has unsettled the Oyetola’s camp, as its leadership considered it a threat to the victory of the governor at the poll.

**OSUN DEFENDER** gathered that top echelon of the Oyetola’s camp who are cutting shut in the party, had concluded plan not to return some members of the National and State Assemblies on the ground that they are loyal to the Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola.

The Oyetola’s camp had assumed that primary elections for the national and state assemblies candidates would be held after the July 16 governorship election, believing that it would be an opportunity to ‘wield the big stick on recalcitrant lawmakers’ who refused to abandon Aregbesola.

One of the sources in the Government House said: “Before the new timetable came out, the IleriOluwa leadership had concluded plan to deal with some serving lawmakers who are believed loyal to Aregbesola. They had believed that the primaries for national and state assemblies would be held after the governorship election, so that they would be free to do whatever they like after Oyetola might have won the election.

“But with the new timetable that states that all the parties and candidates for the general elections must submit their nomination forms between “July 1, 2022 to July 15, 2022, the IleriOluwa caucus are now confused, considering the expected backlash of their planned action.”

In a chat with **OSUN DEFENDER** yesterday, one of the field players of the IleriOluwa group confided in the medium that about eight state lawmakers had been penciled down to be denied return ticket to the assembly.

The Oyetola loyalist who prayed not to be named, also said one of the APC senators in the state will not be returned because of his refusal to severe his relationship with Aregbesola.

He, however, did not disclose the names and constituencies of the state lawmakers who the Governor’s camp plan to denied return tickets.

But he said he was not sure if the IleriOluwa leadership will go ahead with the plan, going by the new timetable.

He said: “INEC seems to be frustrating the plan to deal with these lawmakers. How? Our thought was that the primaries would come after Governor Oyetola might have secured his second term by winning the July 16 election. But the primaries are coming before the governor’s election.

“The implication is that a person you denied ticket is at liberty to either work or not for the governor’s reelection. That is the reality. Even if we have one or two of people that want to work, they will not be happy and that may affect the outcome of the election. There is confusion on how to manage the national and state assemblies primaries.

“The Governor and his political strategists are trying to maintain a delicate balance. They don’t want to return some lawmakers who are loyalists of Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola and they are also considering the implication of denying a grassroot politician ticket few weeks to the governorship election.”

However, **OSUN DEFENDER** gathered that some members of Governor Oyetola’s cabinet are interested in contesting the party’s ticket for national and state assemblies in their various constituencies.

It was gathered that the Oyetola’s cabinet members with either national or state assembly ambition are influencing the Osun APC leadership to call for the postponement of the primaries till after Oyetola’s second term election.

The medium learnt that the leadership of the APC in the state had written the national secretariat of the party to approach INEC for possible postponement of the national and state assemblies primaries in the State of Osun.

According to sources, the APC leadership in a letter reportedly signed by some party executive, some lawmakers and state functionaries, told the national secretariat that conducting the primaries before July 16 governorship election will negatively affect the chance of the APC at the poll.

The APC leadership asked the national secretariat to request for a grace to conduct the national and state assemblies primaries two weeks after the Osun governorship election.

Osun 2022: CSO Vows To Expose Perpetrators Of Electoral Fraud At Poll

**Yusuf Oketola**

**T**

**he** Civil Society Committee for Anti-Fraud Election Security (CISCAES) has said that it will expose anyone found culpable in an attempt to or commit electoral malpractices ahead of the July 16, 2022 governorship election in the State of Osun.

The convener of the group, Comrade Kennedy Iyere stated this on Monday while addressing newsmen shortly after a summit organised by the CISCAES to sensitise members of the public on election matters in Osogbo.

Iyere stressed that the summit was targeted towards ensuring that the governorship election is used as a yardstick for the 2023 general election and for other states.

He stated that the CSO would do everything in its capacity to expose those who want to meddle with the Osun election on the basis of godfatherism and press for sanctions against them from appropriate authorities.

Iyere said: “We hold this summit because we actually want to address some threats to having a credible electoral outcome in Osun come July. And having deliberated on this for having a credible election in Osun State as a reference case for a credible 2023 outcome, we have resolved on the following:

“That the challenge usually encountered in the use of bivas by INEC should be proactively addressed. We saw it happened in Anambra State where so many people were disenfranchised because of lack of functionality of bivas.

“Whatever problem that is wrong with the bivas as a technology or a technological device has to be fixed before the Ekiti election. Ekiti election is going to serve as the last point of reference in terms of testing the efficiency of the bivas. If it fails in Ekiti, we shall massively mobilise against INEC for that inefficiency.

“Also, vote buying, like we have heard reliably, is now criminalised, we want to push for purnitive measures being imposed on anyone that is indicted or convicted for perpetuating the crime or offence of vote buying at any venue of elections.

“The civil society will no longer tolerate such impunity where people will consciously violate the law and nothing will be done. That is how you know people are entrenched and if we don’t challenge the *status quo*, it will continue to persist.

“We have also resolved that godfatherism is a threat to the youth. It should be discouraged and those who would want to meddled with the Ekiti and Osun election on the basis of godfatherism, we shall do all that we have within us to expose them and be able to press for sanction against them from the appropriate quarters or channels.

Speaking at the event, the Chairman of Osun Civil Societies Coalition (OCSC) Comrade Waheed Lawal, noted that the problem of electoral fraud is designed by political leaders to continue manipulating elections in their favour.

Lawal decried lack of freedom by election observers and monitoring teams to move closer to INEC officials to see what is going on at polling unit by security agents, saying such is a challenge that must also be addressed.

He urged youth in the state to participate in politics and not to be used for election violence during the forthcoming governorship election.

Police Extortion, Harassment Continues In Osun

***•We Were Made To Pay $504, N40, 000 - Cyprus Returnee, Student***

**Ismaeel Uthman**

**B**

**arely** six weeks after **OSUN DEFENDER** published an investigative report on how some policemen were extorting youths in the State of Osun, there have been fresh reported cases of extortions, harassments and threats by men of Nigeria Police Force, Osun Command.

Victims of the police extortion had taken to their twitter handles to narrate how they were allegedly extorted and harassed by the policemen, especially officers of the Prompt Response Unit (PRU).

Investigations revealed that majority of the PRU officers were members of the disbanded Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS).

Two victims of the reported fresh cases accused the policemen of extorting them of a sum of $504 and N40,000 at different time on Gbongan/Ibadan Road.

One of the victims, a Cyprus-based Nigerian, Ifeoluwa Lawal, posted on his twitter account @St\_hiffy, on April 4, 2022 that he was extorted by some policemen on Gbongan/Osogbo road.

Lawal said he had visited his grandparents with his family and was returning to Abeokuta, Ogun State, when a policeman stopped his car around the Sekona Grammar School, Ede.

He explained that another policeman took his phone and saw a screenshot of a crypto transaction he recently had.

The victim said the cops accused him of being an Internet fraudster and threatened to hand him over to the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC).

According to Lawal, the policemen later demanded for $2,000 as a bribe.

Lawal said: “I came back to Nigeria February and yesterday I was extorted of $504(292k) from the Nigerian police (Force Intelligence Bureau) along Osogbo road. They stopped us, me, dad and two of my brothers, collected our phones and vehicle particulars.

“They searched through and saw Binance app on my phone with $800usd in it which is for the payment of my school fee in Cyprus. I was to send the usd to my friend in Cyprus to help change to euro€ so he can pay on my behalf.

“They threatened to kill and jail us and drove us for like 2 hours all around the express road. I managed to snap their number plate. Twitter people please help me recover my school fee.”

However, **OSUN DEFENDER** who was monitoring the trend of the tweets observed that the Police Complain Unit commented on the tweet and promised to investigate the matter.

On April 4, 2022, Lawal posted again on his tweeter handle saying: “Guys, I appreciate you all for the support and also the authorities that got involved, PPRO Osun State & OC SIB of the same department that extorted me have asked us to come to Osogbo tomorrow, we’d be there and hopefully I get refunded.”

Around 9:42pm on Tuesday, Lawal tweeted that the police has refunded his money. He tweeted: I Got My Money Back!!! Thank you so much tweetfam. The Police are not bad at all, just that the bad heads amongst them making things difficult, hope the law and God change the bad heads to good. The Nigerian government also need to do better for the police, they need help. Once again thank you to everyone.”

He appreciated the Police Complaint Unit, the Police Public Relations Officer, Osun Command, Mrs. Yemisi Opalola and the OC State Investigative Bureau for their efforts on the matter.

When contacted, Opalola confirmed the incident, saying the accused police officers have been identified and facing disciplinary action.

Opalola said: “We have identified the officers and they are currently facing disciplinary action. They have also refunded the money they collected from the victim.

“I am using this medium to reiterate that the police under the leadership of CP Wale Olokode will not tolerate unprofessional behaviour, indiscipline from any of the officers. I want to urge members of the public to also channel their genuine complaints against any policeman to the office of the PPRO.”

Narrating his ordeal, another victim of the police extortion, Mr. Lateef Oyewole, a Computer Science Student of Federal Polytechnic, Ede, said some policemen forced him to transfer a sum of N40,000 to an account when he was stopped along Gbongan/Osogbo road on March 28, 2022.

Oyewole, in a reply to Lawal’s tweet, said he was travelling to Osogbo when the commercial bus conveying him was stopped before Gbongan and he was asked to alight from the bus.

He said: On the 28th of March, 2022. I was travelling to Osogbo and they (police) stop my bus, then searched my bag seized my phone and told me to unlock it. I refused at first but I later did after they threatened me. They told the driver to leave me and be going. The driver begged them but he later left when they did not listen to him.

They checked my phone and said I am into fraud, they threatened to take me to EFCC office in Ibadan. Later, they asked me to open my bank app and I did. They said I should bring 300k (N300,000) before they could release me, and I said I could not find that kind of amount, they later reduced it to 50k (N50,000).

“They had seen a balance of 40k (N40,000) in my bank app. They asked me to call people to lend me 10k (N10,000) to balance the N50,000 they requested. Thay asked me to enter their car (not their patrol van but a car with no plate number), they were all putting on police uniform with police tag, name and Ak47 riffle. After waiting for the 10k and I could not get it, they asked me to send the 40k and they drop me off at Gbongan.”

Oyewole posted the receipt of the N40,000 he was allegedly forced to transfer into an account on his tweeter handle. The name on the recipient account is Timileyin Amobi Oloyede, Polaris Bank.

Another resident of the state, Mr. Damilare Adebowale, who commented on the tweets, also accused some policemen of threatening to kill him when the car conveying him was stopped along Ibadan/Ikire road.

Adebowale posted on his tweeter handle on Monday, saying: “Last week, I was going to Ibadan from Osogbo. I met them (policemen) along Ikire. They stopped our car, luckily I wasn’t the one driving. They searched our car and told me to come down.

“One of the officers told me to unlock my phone I told him I won’t. The next he said was that I should look around to see if there’s any building. He told me he is a SARS officer that shot a guy dead in Ede, that people know him as radical. He said I am lucky I was not the one driving. My aunt had to beg before he could let us go.”

One of the tweeter users who commented on the tweets said: “Gbongan/Osogbo (especially after Sekona) Road is now a hot cake. The stop and search of phone on that road is like a toll gate… hold up like 1hr before your phone is thoroughly search. we have entered problems in Nigeria for real oh.

“Even if you are in a commercial bus, all of you will come down for thorough search one by one. what for? ...that’s where they are making their own money in day light robbery.”

Residents Calls For Operational Review Of Private Hospitals In Osun

**Yusuf Oketola**

**S**

**ome** residents of the State of Osun have called on the government to review the *modus operandi* of some private hospitals and clinics in the state to curb their excesses.

According to the residents, the government needs to address the menace of quackery, over-billing of patients, offensive attitudes of nurse and auxiliary staffs who often shout down patients in private hospitals.

They also urged the state government to tackle lack of adherence to hygienic protocols in line with global standard and non-availability of an in-house doctors that will stand in for the ‘business-minded hospital owners’ who are keeping two jobs.

**OSUN DEFENDER** gathered that most private hospitals in the state are owned by Doctors who are still in government service.

In an interview with the medium yesterday, a resident of Ikirun, headquarters of Ifelodun Local Government, Kolawole Okunola, said he lost a cousin, Sadeeq Abolubo, as a result of nonavailability of doctors in three different hospitals he was taken to.

According to Okunola, Abolubo was involved in an accident at Alamisi Junction, Ikirun, last week Monday and was rejected in three different private hospitals he was taken to on the excuse that the competent doctor to handle the injury he sustained was unavailable.

He stated that while the victim was going through excruciating pain, he was later admitted after much persuasion by a clinic where he stayed overnight without doctor’s attention, leaving the poor boy at the mercy of some nurses who apparently were not experienced to treat him.

Okunola said: “As much as possible, folks must keep themselves safely away from avoidable accident that may requires the services of these low-grade clinics that we called hospital manned by those who pay little premiums on human lives.

“It is not a secret that nearly all the private hospitals we have here are owned by those who are still in government service, the reason why you will hardly find any doctor-owners at their desk until after closing hours, leaving the place in the hand of apprentice nurses.

“There was an accident at Alamisi Junction last Monday which involved one, Sadeeq Abolubo who was a cousin. He was rescued alive and conscious despite severity of that deadly collision.

“In the moment of critical emergency, rescuers had rushed Sadeeq to three different hospitals where he was rejected on the excuse that doctors who are competent to handle such intensive injury were unavailable.

“While Sadeeq was going through an excruciating pain amidst rejection, he was later admitted after much persuasion by a clinic where he stayed overnight without doctor’s attention, leaving the poor boy at the mercy of the clueless nurses who kept fitting drips as if he was poisoned.

“By Tuesday, when no doctor showed up still at the clinic to attend to the victim and the one they called on phone refused to answer calls, the apprehensive reIations decided to move him to another hospital in Iragbiji where N10,000 was taken as deposit for doing nothing.

“Frustrated and fearful of losing Sadeeq, decision was reached again to take him to a relatively standard hospital at Ororuwo where the personnel were demanding N300,000 on the stern condition that N70,000 deposit would have to be made before Sadeeq could be attended to.

“Even in that new facility with its fancy building and grandiose set-up, you would think those who work there knows what to do besides charging exorbitant fees in an emergency case like that.

“It was disappointing enough that such a relatively equipped facility could be speculating, rather testing Sadeeq for abdominal pain complained of at the lower end to know where injury lies. The doctor there recommended surgery on the assumption that it was internal bleeding that could cause the pain which would have to be evacuated.

“Sadly, Sadeeq succumbed to death before surgery could be carried out at the hospital. Perhaps, when the pain that wracked his body and internal organs became unbearable.

“Hospital around here in Ikirun, my view, operate in sharp contrast to that age-long professionalism and oath that medical experts are foresworn.”

Another resident of Osogbo, Mrs. Oyinkansola Opebiyi, noted that the sharp practices in many private hospitals suggest that there is no regulation for their operations.

According to Opebiyi, majority of the private hospitals are operating far below the medical standard, saying some of them set their own operational procedure as against universal one for the care and treatment of the people

Opebiyi urged the state government on the need to put all measures in place to track private hospitals owners who are keeping two jobs to the detriment of the people.

Salinsile To Osun APC Members: Be Steadfast, The Victory To Come Will Be Sweeter

**Ismaeel Uthman**

**T**

**he** factional Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the State of Osun, Hon. Rasaq Salinsile, has urged members of the party, particularly the loyalists of the Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, to be steadfast and hope for the best.

Salinsile, in his Ramadan message made available to **OSUN DEFENDER** yesterday, congratulated Muslim faithful for this year Ramadan, urging them to use the season to pray for Nigeria, Osun, APC and Aregbesola.

He called on the people of the state to show kindness and love, give charity and repent from their sins as preached by Ramadan.

The factional APC Chairman said: “The Holy Month of Ramadan is here again. I congratulate every Muslim faithful in the State of Osun, particularly those who are members of my party, the All Progressives CONGRESS (APC) on the blessed month of Ramadan.

“The Holy Month of Ramadan comes with multiple blessings for those who observe the fast with required attitude. It is a month that preaches repentance, forgiveness, steadfastness, kindness, charity, love and self-restraints.

“We all need to show kindness, help the needy, feed the poor and give out charity during this period and beyond.

“I urge members of the APC, the loyalists of the Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola in particular, to be steadfast in the face of the current political turbulence. The victory to come will be sweeter, like the joy every Muslim has when breaking the fast.

“The current situation in Osun APC is like a fasting day. When the day breaks during the fasting period, it always looks like the dusk will not come; sometimes, the day may be longer in our observation, but the dusk will always come no matter how long the day is. Let us all consider this period as our fasting day, the time to break is near and our joy shall know no bound.

“We should all use this Ramadan season to pray for Nigeria – for its development and progress, delivery from insecurity and other arrays of challenges. We should also pray for our dear state, Osun, and for the APC. Our party needs prayer at this critical time. I urge members of the party to also pray for Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, for Allah to continue protecting him from all evil of His creatures.

“I pray that this Ramadan enlighten our souls. May Allah bless us with the chance to repent for our sins and grant us mercy!”

Osun Muslim Group Protests Revocation Of Allotted Railway Land

**Kazeem Badmus**

**A**

 Muslim group, Osun Coalition of Muslims for Justice, on Tuesday, protested alleged attempt by the Area Manager of Railway Property Management Company Limited, Mr. Innocent Agbaji and a Pastor, Solomon Bukola, to hijack a piece of land that the railway corporation allocated to it for use as Eid Prayer ground.

A letter dated February 22, 2022 and addressed to one Mr. Lateef Oriade, revealed that the corporation, through Agbaji, had issued six months notice of revocation to the Muslim community through Oriade.

The letter, Titled: “Six Months Notice of Revocation on Railway Land Between Km 296 +5-6 Poles, GB – DLG Section, Bush Side, Osogbo, Osun State,” read, “With reference to the above subject matter, your occupation of Railway land has become a threat of life to the staff of the Nigerian Railway Corporation, Staff of the Nigerian Railway Police, Osogbo Division, as well as staff of Railway Property Management Co. Ltd.

“Also, it has been reported to the management of your incessant disagreement with Railway Property Management Co. Ltd as regards occupation/allocation of Railway land by other temporary allottee within the same location, thereby challenging your landlord with reference to series of cases reported at the Nigerian Police, Zone 11, Osun State Capital Territory Development Agency etc, violating the terms and conditions governing Nigerian Railway Corporation land.

“It’s in the light of the above that I am directed to notify you of a six month revocation notice from the date of this letter. Therefore, you are requested to make the land free of debris, remove any temporary attachment to the land.”

Speaking during the protest on the railway setback at Oke-Onitea area of Osogbo, the group’s lawyer, Qaasim Odedeji, accused Agbaji of colluding with Bukola to dispossess the Muslim community of the piece of land which was allocated to it in 2015.

The protesting Muslims who carried placards with different inscriptions, alleged that Bukola, a pastor, was already making plans to build some structures on the railway setback, saying the land was allocated to them temporarily by the Nigerian Railway Corporation but Agbaji has been making efforts to send them parking.

 He said: “We are here to inform you about a dangerous attempt of some people in collaboration with the officials of the Nigeria Railway Corporation Osogbo under the leadership of one Mr. Innocent Agbaji to convert a piece of land already granted to the Muslim Community for use as a Muslim prayer ground for the use of Pastor Solomon.

“It needs to be stated that, in 2015, the Nigeria Railway Corporation granted the Muslim Community of Bushrah Mosque No.9, Oriade Anifowoshe Street, Oke-Onitea Area, Osogbo a piece of land for their use as Muslim Eid Prayer ground with only a condition that no permanent structure should be built on it.

“Since then, the Muslim community has continued the use of the land for the purpose for which it was granted and abiding with the condition attached. However surprisingly, and in an attempt capable of causing serious religious unrest, some people in collaboration with the officials of the Nigeria Railway Corporation are using clandestine and illegal means for their pecuniary interest, are trying to hijack the piece of land from the Muslim community and give same to one Pastor Bukola Solomon who is known to have encroached on many other piece of lands around Oke-Onitea, Railway setback, Osogbo building permanent structures on them.

 “We, therefore, want to call on all stakeholders and lovers of peace to call Mr. Innocent Agbaji and his friend Pastor Bukola Solomon to order in the interest of peace,”

When contacted, Agbaji said that the land was allocated to one Lateef Oriade (on behalf of the Muslim community) and Bukola by his predecessor.

He confirmed that he revoked the land owing to threat of life to the staff of the Nigerian Railway Corporation.

In his own reaction, Pastor Bukola confirmed that he is one of the allotees of the railway land but debunked allegation that he was planning to erect structure on it.

Bukola said, “I am one of the people that the railway setback was allotted to. It’s not true that I want to build on the land. Why should I do that when I know it’s a temporary allocation of which the Railway Corporation has the right to revoke at any time. All these allegations are not true.”

ADP Substitutes Deputy Guber Candidate

**Sodiq Yusuf**

**T**

**he** Action Democratic Party (ADP) has substituted its deputy governorship candidate for the July 16, 2022 gubernatorial election in the State of Osun.

The party substituted Mr. Adegboyega Muritala who was elected on March 10, 2022 as deputy governorship candidate, for Mrs. Sewande Agbaje.

Muritala resigned his candidature at a meeting held at the party’s secretariat in Osogbo, on Wednesday and he was subsequently replaced by Agbaje.

The meeting had in attendance, the governorship candidate of the ADP, Mr Kehinde Atanda, officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the party Chairman, Toye Ola-Akinola and members of the party.

Muritala promised to work for the success of the party during the governorship election.

Both Atanda and Agbaje, the governorship and deputy governorship candidate of the ADP respectively, urged the party faithful to work for the success of the party in the July 16 election, saying ADP is the only party that can put smiles on the faces of Osun people with massive employment and decent working and living condition.

Osun 2022: Lasun Yussuff Is LP Guber Candidate, Warns Against Rigging

**Yusuf Oketola**

**F**

**ormer** Deputy Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Lasun Yussuff has defected to the Labour Party.

The party has subsequently handed over the gubernatorial ticket of the party to Yussuff to contest the July 16, 2022 governorship election in the state.

Speaking with newsmen yesterday at the NUJ Press Centre, Osogbo, Yussuff warned politicians against rigging future elections in the country.

According to Yussuff, any politician thinking of rigging election in Nigeria is a dumb.

The former deputy speaker stated that the aftermath of the #EndSARS protest has shown politicians to either do the right thing or be consumed.

He stressed that the #EndSARS protest has already prepared a template for free and fair election in the country, noting that anyone planning to rig election just want to destroy Nigeria.

Yussuff said: “Today marks a good turning point in my political career for the fact that I have always been aspiring to be governor of Osun state. I have tried twice in my formal party, the All Progressives Congress.

“But today, Labour Party is giving me the opportunity of that platform and for that single honour, I will be eternally grateful to them for giving me the opportunity to come and run as the candidate of the party for the 2022 governorship election in Osun.

“Let me sound a note of warning; any politician in Nigeria that is still thinking of rigging election, in spite of the #EndSARS protest is a dumb.

“The #EndSARS protest has shown us that you either do the right thing or be consumed. My first belief is that no sane person will be planning for election in Nigeria, including the July 16, 2022 election in Osun and be planning for rigging. That politician is dumb and is doomed.

“I am so sure that the aftermath of #EndSARS has already prepared a free and fair election unless we want to destroy Nigeria and when it comes to free and fair election, we know ourselves”.

When asked about the choice of Labour Party, the former deputy speaker said: “My incline in life is towards the poor and if you study my political career very well, the persecution I have been having is because I think towards the poor. If I gravitate towards the rich, I will always be their son because they know who I am.

“I have the capacity and the intelligence to run for any office. If you gravitate towards the rich, you are no likely to think towards the poor. I chose labour party because I have inclination for the poor.

“I am very confident that Osun people will ensure my victory to be the next governor of the state.”

It would be recalled that Yussuff had resigned his membership of the All Progressives Congress (APC) on Friday, March 25, 2022.

Ooni To Establish Film Village In Ile-Ife

**Kazeem Badmus**

**T**

**he** Ooni of Ile-Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, is set to establish a full-fledged film village in the ancient city.

This was made known by the Chief Executive Officer of Adire Oodua Textile Hub and Executive Producer of the Ladire TV series, Princess Ronke Ademiluyi, on Tuesday.

Ademiluyi made the disclosure while delivering her welcome address at the premiere of ‘LADIRE’; a Television Series coined to promote the traditional Tie & Die (Adire) industry in furtherance of his promotion of the inherited Africa culture.

She revealed that the initiative is a product of the Ooni’s continuous quest for youth development and capacity building.

A statement by Otunba Moses Olafare, the Director, Media & Public Affairs, Ooni’s Palace, quoting Ademiluyi reads, “Ladire was conceptualised by the Ooni to see how to do more for the youths through the entertainment industry while we promote the trade and skills of tie & die.

“I am glad that our fathers, mothers, and others who came here to watch the premiere today showed love and support, and our partner, Mr Adeleye Fabusoro of Rare Edge Media was able to turn the concept of the Ooni to a 60 episodes TV series showing now on Africa Magic Yoruba.”

Speaking on behalf of Ooni, the Sooko Omoniyi of the Source, Kemade Elugbaju, lauded the cast and crew for a job well done, stressing that the production is of international standard.

Elugbaju expressed optimism that all efforts would be made at ensuring the project come to pass.

He said: “What we see in Nollywood and Hollywood is not better than this, what this tells us is that we can go very far if we look inward and this is Kabiyesi’s advocacy since he became the Ooni.

“Look at the costumes, locations and characters, you will agree with me that they tell the stories beyond words of mouth. I give kudos to those involved in this and I call in Nigerians, especially those of the Oodua origin to support this work.

Speaking on behalf of other members of the crew, veteran actor, Pa Peter Fatomilola, thanked the audience for spending time to attend and watch the premiere, noting that what they saw was the tip of the iceberg.

 Fatomilola said: “Measures are currently in place to get this all homes via various viewing channels including the DSTV, YouTube, and many more. When we finally get there, we look forward to seeing your support.”

Osun Muslim Lawyers Holds Ramadan

Programme Tomorrow

**Kazeem Badmus**

**T**

**he** Muslim Lawyers’ Association of Nigeria, (MULAN), State of Osun Chapter, will hold her Annual Ramadan Programme tomorrow (Saturday).

The association, in a release made available to newsmen yesterday by its Publicity Secretary, Alhaji Dawood Ajetunmobi, said the programme will hold at Osogbo City Hall, Olonkoro, Osogbo, by 9.00am prompt.

According to the release, the annual programme will feature two lectures which will be delivered by erudite Islamic scholar, Alhaji Femi Abass, the Head of Media, Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria and Dr. Akeem Bello, a Medical Practitioner in the state.

Abass will speak on “Social Deliquencies in Nigeria: Islam as Panacea”, while Dr. Akeem will engage his audience on “Ramadan in the Era of Pandemics”.

The Chairman of the Ramadan Planning Committee, Barr. A.O Sanusi, while enjoining members of the association and general public to attend the programme with their families, promised that the programme will be spiritually filled.

**Crime**

11 Inmates Regain Freedom From Correctional Centers In Osun

**Yusuf Oketola**

**I**

**n** furtherance of the Federal Government’s policy towards swift dispensation of justice and decongestion of Correctional Centres across the country, the State Government of Osun has released 11 inmates from Ilesa and Ife Correctional Centres.

The Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of the State, Mr Femi Akande led a delegation of the state government to the two Correctional Centres on Tuesday to secure the release of the inmates.

Akande who was represented by the State Solicitor General and Permanent Secretary, Barr. Adekemi Bello, secured the release after the government had offset the required fines on behalf of the inmates.

**OSUN DEFENDER** gathered that the authorities of the both Ilesa and Ile-Ife Correctional Centers had earlier approached the State Government on urgent need to assist some of the inmates in offsetting the fines levied against them.

It was learnt that the inability of the inmates to pay the fines made them to be languishing in the correctional centres for many years.

In his remarks, the Controller of the Nigeria Correctional Service, Osun Command, Mr. Olanrewaju Amoran, commended Governor Adegboyega Oyetola for his magnanimity in setting free the inmates.

Amoran noted that Oyetola’s intervention came at a time when the clarion call across Nigerian federation is for all the Correctional Centres to be decongested of its inmate, who, on many occasions, are kept under lock and key for reasons which should not have warranted their being there.

He advised the 11 freed inmates to see their freedom from the Correctional Centres as another opportunity for them to be of good behaviours in the society, urging them to engage themselves in legitimate businesses that will earn them a good living.

Septuagenarian, One Other Arraigned For Alleged Fraud In Osogbo

**A**

 78-year-old man, Azeez Akintunde, has been arraigned before an Osogbo Magistrate Court for allegedly defrauding a man, Abideen Busari, of a sum of N845,000.

Akintunde, who was arraigned alongside one Taiwo Ajadi (60) before the court on Wednesday, allegedly obtained the sum on the pretence of selling three and half plot of land located beside Osun State University (UNIOSUN) campus, Osogbo to Busari.

According to the charge sheet obtained by **OSUN DEFENDER**, the accused persons committed the offence on August 20, 2021 at No 79, Layiokun Compound, Osogbo.

The alleged offence, according to the police, contravened Sections 516, 419 and 390(9) of the Criminal Code, Cap 34, Vol. II, Laws of Osun State, 2002.

But the accused persons pleaded not guilty to the charges levelled against them.

Defence counsel, T.B Ayodele prayed the court to admit the accused persons to bail on a liberal term, noting that they are presumed innocent until the contrary is proven.

In his ruling, the presiding Magistrate, Abayomi Ajala, admitted the accused persons to bail in sum of N1,000,000 and a surety each.

The case was adjourned till June 6, 2022 for hearing.

**EDITORIAL**

Foundations And Development

**T**

**he theme for this year’s Obafemi Awolowo lecture, the thirtieth in the series is “Foundations and Development “. Coincidentally, and this could not have been by design, it falls into both the period of Ramadan and the Christian observance of the Lenten season. Both of the dominant religions place emphasis on the moral obligation of giving to help the disadvantaged and those left behind and doing so cheerfully.**

**The Sage Obafemi Awolowo certainly impacted through masterful treatises as well as managerial intervention on the process of development, inserting into it the big D. As it was said of Christopher Wren, the architect of modern London, “if you seek to know what he achieved, just look around you”, captures Awolowo’s path breaking intervention remarkably well.**

**Awolowo clearly sought to repudiate the fatalistic notion that “the poor will always be with us”. He correctly assessed that poverty is largely man-made. For example, in moving a magnificent motion on the floor of the Western Region’s House of Assembly to establish the Cooperative Bank in 1953, the sage pointed out that it was not just about establishing a bank but more about the infusion of capital to modernise agriculture and in the process transit the region’s subsistence farmers into commercial farming and by so doing into prosperity. This position certainly had a positive effect on those who came after him and shared the same school of thought such as Alhaji Lateef Jakande who had an admirable tenure as the governor of Lagos State and Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola who was an innovative exemplar of the development thrust as governor of the State of Osun, amongst others.**

**It is to his eternal credit that he did so before much of the tenor of Development Studies supporting his position were codified and published. Very remarkable far-sighted thinking.**

**We are in agreement that Foundations and Charities have a role to play in the process of development, this should not, however, be mixed up with alms giving. For example, foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation have recorded positive interventions not just through the funding of projects but through the backing of applied research which is then translated into positive beneficial social interventions. Local Foundations should follow the same path. This is necessary at a time when a significant faction of Nigeria’s political establishment have chosen the grotesque alternative of weaponising poverty.**

**We wish the Obafemi Awolowo Foundation a successful outing and give them great plaudits as they keep the flag of progressive thinking and practice very much alive.**

**Review & Outlook**

**BY**

**KANMI**

**ADEMILUYI**

Facing The Future (?)

**D**

**efinitions** matter. Ordinarily, we should be in a political season with upcoming off-season elections in Osun and Ekiti states and what ought to be a pivotal presidential election next year.

This, clearly not the case. What we have in reality looks more like a silly season. With all manner of shenanigans, vacous utterances, side shows the nation’s political establishment are clearly not in the mood to face a daunting future. Daunting is used advisedly, for the grim reality is that the terms - of - trade are clearly against a country whose ruling elite have no roadmap out of a mono - crop economy based on unprocessed non - value addition fossils. With the unexpected twists and turns on the international scene this has already become a problem which will become more pronounced as we go through not just a momentous decade but for Nigeria a make or break one.

It is not hyperbolic to use the expression “make or break”, it represents a grim reality. For a start Nigeria is going into the Africa Trade pact to integrate the economies of the continent pathetically ill - prepared. The economy is uncompetitive with dilapidated antidulivan trade facilitation processes. Even in the year of the lord 1950 or thereabouts what we call “ ports” in Nigeria will look like a contradiction - in - terms. Going into a free trade agreement with such debilitating drawbacks is like taking a sheep to slaughter. The general uncompetitiveness of the economy clearly does not bother the ruling elite. The jostle sometimes sarcastically referred to as “politics” is about drinking from a diminishing trough.

It is the absurdity of patronage client relationship driven political activity that is at the center of the season. Presidential wannabes with humongous funds have no think - tanks or research bureaus working in overdrive to produce rigorously thought out diligently costed programs of reconstruction which is in reality what the country so desperately needs.

A new government will therefore take over in fourteen months time without even a rudimentary, nay perfunctory outline of a medium term economic framework. This is to put it mildly tragic. A country with mass under and unemployment, such a gruesome amount of people locked into structured poverty and birth rates outstripping ephemeral growth rates should be more serious about its predicament.

To hide their crass ineptitude, the handlers of the presidential wannabes are now reselling a discredited “great man theory of history”. The position here is that the great man doesn’t need a program or a roadmap, he just needs to enter Aso Rock and in the words of a former President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt “ there will be a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage “.

This is a fallacy that outstanding figures never believed. Programs matter and Titanic figures such as Obafemi Awolowo, Michael Okpara knew about their critical importance. They were superb administrators because they had diligently prepared for office. They certainly did not enter office as “ great men”. Apart from the body of diligent work done by the Action Group, Awolowo himself had sensibly immersed himself in preparing an economic platform; Michael Okpara as a young thirty three years old medical doctor had put together an economic outline of the prospects of the eastern region befitting of a very astute political economist.

What is ongoing is a recipe for disaster. It is a scam to sell to people an absurdity that a great man with a magic wand will solve existential issues without a programme. It reflects a debilitating reality. As Galileo pleaded in trying to save himself from the wrath of the Pope “woe betide a nation in need of a hero”.

With presidential wannabes prancing around without a program there is very little to be optimistic about.

Observation

Oba Adedokun Abolarin Great Strides On Education For The Poor

**E**

**ducation** is “the thing a person learns by being taught well.” It is “the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.” It is a system of passing knowledge to others and receiving knowledge from others. Once qualitative education is obtained, it cannot be taken away. It, instead, enhances personal development and increases career opportunities for the betterment of the holder and societal development.

Nelson Mandela said: “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.” Any society that gives correct quality education to its citizens, especially from tender age, will be developed in all ramifications with its citizens having higher income, more opportunities in life and living healthier. Education, especially for children, prepares them for uncertain future, creates knowledge, builds confidence and destroys barriers to opportunity; it helps children to appreciate themselves, their ambition and knowledge from early stage. However, every education must teach students skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration. A society where this type of education is given premium will have less crime, improved public health and have greater political and civic engagement; it will propel the young people in the right direction to set goals for personal desire with the society reaping from them. In fact, the relations between an educated society and non-educated society are proportional to civilisation and barbarism respectively.

Instead of giving education the priority it deserves through adequate funding among others, the Nigerian ruling elite have continued to launch steady attacks on quality education. They began with commercialisation and privatisation of the schooling system which make quality education acquisition very expensive and out of the reach of the children of the poor. When concerns were raised over this, the ruling elite retorted, “If education is too expensive, try ignorance.” They know that education stimulates economic growth by increasing innovation, productivity and human capital but they do know again that it fosters positive social change that could translate to political participation. While they kill public quality education, they send their sons and daughters to very expensive private schools locally and abroad with very few exceptions. All they want is uneducated people who could be tossed around and would always hang around the rich for stipends; with majority in perpetual poverty and penury while the ruling elite and their immediate families live large.

This is where a rare gem, Oba Adedokun Abolarin, of the Obasolo Ruling House, who has occupied his ancestors’ throne as Orangun of Oke-Ila since December 8, 2006 must be appreciated and celebrated. Oke-Ila Orangun is the capital of Ifedayo Local Government Area in Osun. Through his NGO – Abolarin Aroyinkeye Foundation -Kabiyesi built Abolarin College in Oke-Ila Orangun in a conducive environment for learning and culture. In this college, all the students are in the boarding house and eat quality meals daily. They have access to personal laptops, well equipped library, textbooks and other writing materials, uniforms and school bags. All these are free of charge. The college students are trained with specially designed but regulated curriculum to be independent, entrepreneurs and agriculturists. They do spend one hour daily on the school farm to produce part of the food they consume. Every student in the school speaks English, French and Yoruba languages fluently.

To Oba Adedokun Abolarin, birth, wealth and other accidental conditions should not be the determining condition for child’s access to quality education. Hence, the school is strictly for indigent students in Oke-Ila and Nigeria in general most of who are orphans, who have nobody to sponsor them. These indigent children are drawn from qualifying exams they write to determining those who are prepared to learn and follow up their claims of being indigent as Kabiyesi’s target is to fight poverty through education.

While other Obas of Adedokun Abolarin stature derive joy in marrying many wives and merry making, he has only one wife and derives happiness in sacrificing his time, money to giving a lifetime opportunity to poor people children who would have had no future but condemned to permanent misery, poverty and ultimately, crime. He does not only run free school for children from poor homes, he personally teaches them government. Oba Adedokun Abolarin holds a first degree in Political Science, Master degree in International Relations and a degree in Law, all from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

As I write, some of these children have gained admission into Adeleke University, Ede and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife studying Computer Science, Agricultural Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Microbiology, Mass Communication, History and International relations. Within his little means and commitment, Oba Adedokun Abolarin has broken the recycling chain of poverty in the lives of these children. History will, definitely, be kind to Kabiyesi for he intends to write it.

**STRIKER**

Election And Toxic Politics

**E**

**lections** are integral component of democracy. While best legal brains are nominated, confirmed and appointed to leadership positions in the judiciary at local, state and federal levels, the legislatures and executives must be periodically elected by the consent of the majority adult population in a democracy.

Democracy is not all about elections. Democracy packs a lot, including separations of powers among the judiciary, executive and legislature; political party formations; internal party democratic processes; political campaigns; equality of citizens and the rule of law; presumption of innocence, free hearing and trial; the freedom of the press and fundamental human rights of citizens; and so on. However, election into public offices is a fundamental necessity of democracy, and is usually, for good reasons, more attended to than other issues; perhaps because once the people in public offices do not get their mandate through the consent of the people, all other critical expectations are mortgaged ab initio.

Democratic governance is about popular participation in how the people are governed, in their best interest. It is assumed, therefore, that those who seek to enter politics and get into public offices - elected or appointed - should be keen to listen to the people, fathom their yearnings and aspirations, and ready to serve to deliver dividends that meet those yearnings and aspirations. In Nigeria, it has turned out largely, except for a few exceptions in personality and places, to be a sadly wrong assumption.

Public offices are sought, desperately and violently, for all sorts of reasons except for the public good to the extent that a former president declared elections as a do-or-die affair! How, for the sake of God, can any man/woman wish to better the lots of his/her community and people so desperately as to not mind killing and maiming as many persons as he/she perceives as standing in the way? There are unnumbered unresolved cases of high profile political assassinations and brigandage, the most lamentable and painfully ironic being the killing of a sitting Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation! Not to mention death and maiming of many “unknown civilians” and loss of properties in nameless billions of naira.

President Muhammadu Buhari was quoted in a recent television interview to have said he will keep the identity of his preferred successor close to his chest as he does not want him/her to be eliminated before his/her time. What a damning indictment to a deadly politics and dispiriting pointers to the fact that our elites and politicians have not learnt much either from the past, or of democracy itself. The terrible hangover of protracted military rule – brutal and authoritarian – and the history of monarchy and colonialism combined still weigh heavily on their mentality.

With the unprecedented level of insecurity in the nation, it is no time to add political and electoral violence, which are alien to true democracy. Of course, Fela has characterised ours as demon-crazy (demonstration of craze) with all the toxic meaning anyone is free to read into that. However, time is now for the youth and women, who are the majority players in politics, to have a rethink on the role imposed on them and redefine their own place, goals and actions by themselves. Such paradigm shift and actions are the only hope for a new “politics without bitterness” where elections will not be “a do-or-die affair,” and there will be no fear for an incumbent Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces mentioning a preferred successor for fear of him/her being eliminated before his/her time.