

# **JUNE 2006 MAJOR HEADLINES**

## **- National Assembly passes Electoral Bill**

The two chambers of the National Assembly, at separate sessions, passed the Electoral Bill 2006, on the 31 of May 2006, which set campaign-spending limit for a presidential candidate at N500million.

The bill entitled: “A Bill for an Act to Regulate the Conduct of Elections in Federal, State and Local Governments, and the Registration of Voters and Matters Connected therewith, 2006 (Harmonized)”, it also empowers the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to fix the dates, and order of 2007 general elections.

The new Electoral Act prohibits the use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) “for the time being” and provided for an open ballot system at the elections. **ThisDay**, Thursday, June 01, 2006 page 1/4

## **Obasanjo signs Electoral Act**

The President has signed the Electoral Act, 2006 says the Special Adviser on National Assembly matters, Senator Florence Ita Giwa. The new law which would provide the platform for next year’s elections limits election expenses of parties and candidates, ban the use of electronic voting machines, allows the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) a free hand to set dates and sequence of elections and provides sterner penalties for poll offences.

Ita Giwa statement came barely 24 hours after the House of Representatives had threatened to over-ride Obasanjo’s veto should he refused to sign the harmonized bill passed by the two chambers sixteen days earlier. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 16, 2006 pg1/2

## **- INEC seeks separate security agency for polls**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has made a proposal to the Legislative and Executives, requesting for a separate security agency during the 2007 polls this means that the Police and other conventional security agencies may play a minimal role in the conduct of the 2007 general elections. The INEC Chairman Prof. Iwu presented this request to the House of Representatives Speaker Alhaji Aminu Bello Masari.

However, In spite of criticism by stakeholders of the election timetable, INEC insist that it is acting within the law says INEC’s Director of Public Affairs, Mr. Segun Adeogun.

Reacting to the Movement 2007 Lawmakers who opposed the timing of April 7 to 28 2007, INEC says “we are still with the law and we know what we are doing”. Saying the commission is still within section 132 (2) of the 1999 Constitution. **Daily Trust**, Wednesday, June 07, 2006 pg 35 / **The Guardian**, Friday, June 09, 2006 pg 3

## **- INEC May Emboss Photos on Ballot Papers**

A unique innovation may be introduced into the 2007 electoral process as the Independent National electoral Commission (INEC) is planning to emboss the photographs political parties candidates on ballot papers in a bid to check electoral malpractices. Unlike ballot papers used in the 1999 and 2003 elections that only bore the names and logos of the political parties without the names of the candidates. This INEC said would prevent the reoccurrence of the Anambra State's scenario where those who contested the 2003 senatorial election on the platform of the People Democratic Party (PDP) had their names replaced and their victory giving to other members of the party who were not fielded in the election.

Should this idea sail through; it will be difficult for any political party to change the list of candidates that emerge from their primaries once their names have been submitted to INEC. It will also become compulsory for political parties to have their primaries well on time to enable INEC order printing of ballot papers, which will have the photographs of their candidates, embossed on them. This will enable electorates to vote know and vote the candidates and not just the parties.

Meanwhile, in a later development, new Electoral Commissioners have been sworn in by the Chairman of INEC Prof. Maurice Iwu on Tuesday, June 13, 2006 to represent the various states of the Federation. The chairman also charged them to be steadfast in the face of the challenges of the coming election. ThisDay, Wednesday, June 14, 2006 pg 1/4

## **- I'm ready to lay down my life for 2007 polls- iwu tells party leaders**

INEC Chairman, Maurice has reassured Nigerians of free and fair elections in 2007 even if it involves laying down his life to ensure electoral credibility. Iwu stated this on Wednesday, June 7 at Abuja during a meeting with representatives of the 37 political parties against the backdrop of threat to his life.

He raised alarm that there had been threats on his life from some quarters owing to his commitment to ensure credibility in the forthcoming general elections. He told party chieftains that the present INEC has zero tolerance for political violence as the newly passed electoral bill has empowered it to prosecute culprits. He reinstated that INEC has dropped the idea of using electronic voting machine (EVM), in 2007 elections but said the electronics voting system which involves tamper proof voters cards would be provided as well as rapid transmission of election results.

In a later development, the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Prof. Maurice Iwu, on Monday, June 12, defended the commission's timetable for the 2007 general elections.

He said despite criticisms against the timetable, the general elections would hold in April as scheduled. He said there was nothing wrong with the fixed dates for the elections as the constitution stipulated that the poll should hold not more than 60 days and not less

than 30 days to the expiration of the tenure of incumbent office holders. **Daily Trust**, Thursday, June 08, 2006 pg 2 / **The Punch**, Tuesday, June 13, 2006 pg 7

#### **- Catholic Secretariat faults INEC Election Timetable for 2007**

The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria has faulted the announced timetable for the 2007 general election. This was contained in statement by its Director of Social Communication of the secretariat, Rev. Fr. Felix Femi Ajakaye, stating that the timetable falls within Easter period for Christians. **The Guardian**, Sunday, June 4, 2006 page 36

#### **- Fear grips INEC as FG sacks 13 Commissioners**

Fear has gripped the leadership as well as top management cadre of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), following the gale of sack that has swept off thirteen of its Resident Electoral Commissioners (REC), across the federation for some untoward practices during the 2003 general elections.

The sack of the thirteen commissioners was communicated to the National Chairman of INEC Prof. Maurice Iwu via a letter from the office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Uffot Ekaette.

The commissioners involved are those of Ekiti State, FCT, Niger State, Ebonyi State, Jigawa State, Kebbi State, Kwara State, Katsina State, Plateau State, Osun State, Zamfara State, Kaduna State and Nasarawa State. The Federal Government has picked replacements.

The Citizen's Popular Party (CPP), has condemned President Obasanjo's dismissal of the 13 Residential Electoral Commissioner (REC) over their implication in the brazen manipulation of the 2003 polls in favor of the incumbent executives and top politicians in the county.

Maxi Okwu the party's National Chairman noted the importance of RECs in the electoral process, and said the action was coming late and wondered why no electoral official has been prosecuted since 2003. **Daily Trust**, Tuesday, June 06, 2006 page 5 / **ThisDay**, Tuesday, June 6, 2006 page 5 /

#### **- FEC Approves N223m for e-voters' Register**

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved N223million for the pilot scheme of the Electronic Voters' Register.

Minister for Information and National Orientation, Frank Nweke Jnr. Who said this added that the Register would not be used for the 2007 elections, but would rather go a long way in helping to check the challenges Nigeria faces in managing elections. **ThisDay**, Thursday, June 01, 2006 page 3

### **- 2007: Presidential Candidate to Face EFCC Screening – Ribadu**

The Chairman of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Mallam Nuhu Ribadu has stated that presidential candidates for next year's elections will be investigated to ensure that only those with clean past vie for the nation's top job. This he said during an interview with the Voice of America (VOA) on Wednesday, May 31, 2006.

Meanwhile, the statement by the Chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Prof. Maurice Iwu that EFCC will screen the candidates submitted to it by political parties has continued to receive criticism as the leader of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) caucus in the House of Representatives, Hon. Wumi Bewaji has said the declaration by Prof. Maurice Iwu that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and some security agencies would screen candidates is a demonstration of his ignorance of the provision of the new Electoral Act.

Faulting the INEC Chairman, Hon Bewaji said under the new Act, only the High Court of a state can disqualify a candidate whose name has been submitted to the commission by his political party. Hence the law has no provision for EFCC screening. *ThisDay*, Tuesday, June 20, 2006 pg 2 / **ThisDay**, Thursday, June 01, 2006 page 5

### **- Lawmakers want presidential, governorship polls last**

Senators and members of the House of Representatives yesterday asked the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to sequence next years elections in a way that presidential and governorship elections would e held last.

The reasons the lawmakers gave was that if polls for the two executive offices are held first, then the result would be a bandwagon effect “which led to the collapse of the second republic”.

The lawmakers faulted INEC's election timetable of holding polls between April 7 and 28 of 2007, saying little room is given for possible presidential run-offs. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 02, 2006 page 5

### **- AD, ACD, Others to unite against PDP**

Opposition to the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has been strengthened as the national mobilization committees of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), Southwest, met in Lagos on Thursday, June 1, 2006 with a resolve to work and dislodge PDP from power next year.

The committee is made up of the Alliance for Democracy (AD), Advance Congress of Democrats (ADC), Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), Turaki Vanguard, and Buhari Organization. The groups are still on the verge of concluding a merger talk, which will

eventually throw up a mega party that will give the ruling PDP a challenge. **The Guardian**, Friday, June 02, 2006 pg 3

#### **- AREWA Youth jettisoned quest for a Northern Presidency**

Northern youths have called on their elders to jettison the quest for a northern president for 2007 election. They said instead the people should support a candidate from the South-south. The youths have endorsed the Governor of Akwa Ibom State Victor Attah as their choice for Presidency come 2007 and urged the North to support Attah, noting that he has the qualities required to step into Obasanjo's shoes.

Similarly, the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in the 19 Northern States decried the clamor for rotational presidency on the ground that it violates the provisions of the 1999 Constitution.

A group the Forum of Northern Muslim Clerics has expressed support for the south-south geo-political zone in its quest to produce the nation's president in 2007. As another group the South-East Youth Coalition (SEYOC) called on security agents to investigate the statement credited to the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) National Secretary, Col Hammed Ali (rtd) over the ongoing debate on the zone to produce the next president.

Ali was quoted to have said there would be chaos in the country if the North did not get back power in 2007. **The Guardian**, Tuesday, June 20, 2006 pg 6 **The Guardian**, Monday, June 05, 2006 page 4

#### **- 2007: Katsina ANPP Senators at war over guber ticket**

Two Senators from the All Nigeria People Party (ANPP) in Katsina State, Senators Mahmud Kanti Bello representing Daura Senatorial federal constituency and Abu Ibrahim representing Funtua federal constituency engaging each other in a battle over who picks the party's gubernatorial ticket in 2007. The duo have recently been involved in verbal insults on each other. **Daily Trust**, Tuesday, June 06, 2006 page 29

#### **- Attah, Markarfi, Mu'azu, Odili Battle for PDP Ticket**

At least four of the 27 Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governors at a meeting of the party governors' forum in Abuja on Wednesday, May 31, 2006, signified their intention to vie for the nation's presidency in next year's general elections.

The governors, Obong victor Attah (Akwa Ibom), Alhaji Ahmed Makarfi (Kaduna), Dr. Peter Odili (Rivers), and Alhaji Adamu Mu'azu (Bauchi), reportedly told their colleagues that they would be stepping into president Olusegun's shoes in 2007. The meeting was said to be held at the instance of President Olusegun Obasanjo to look at the possibility of nominating one of them to replace him come 2007. **ThisDay**, Thursday, June 01, 2006 page 1/4

### **- ANPP, PDP rejects merger rumor**

The Leadership of All Nigeria People's Party has described as false the story that ANPP may join the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). In a statement signed by its National Public Secretary, Abdul Azeez Mamudu Lapai, said the whole story is untrue and lacks any iota of credibility.

In the same vain, the Peoples Democratic Party PDP in Kano on Monday, June 5 debunked the allegations that the party has began merger talks with its counterpart the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP). **Daily Trust**, Tuesday, June 06, 2006 pg 38.

### **- Rallies in S'South cities for 2007 President**

A wave of rallies swept through some cities of Niger-Delta area on Monday, June 5, 2006, with the organizers calling for a South-south president next year. The protest took place in Calabar, Port Harcourt, and Asaba, the capitals of Cross Rivers, Rivers and Delta States.

The South-south Peoples Assembly (SSPA) organized the rallies in Calabar and Port Harcourt. "On the Calabar declaration we stand" was the rallying cry of the protesters in the Cross Rivers State capital, who formerly submitted their letters of request to the state chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Mr. Soni Abang. They reemphasized the unanimity of purpose and commitment of the people of the South-south to take the presidency of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2007." **The Guardian**, Tuesday, June 06, 2006 page 1/2

### **- 2007: A Woman Declares for Presidency**

Mrs. Sarah Jubril has become the first female politician to join in the presidential race come 2007 under the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The aspirant had contested the presidency under the platform of the Progressive Action Congress (PAC), in 2003.

In a statement, Mrs. Sarah Jubril said she is on a "a take over mission for the restoration of Nigeria unity, dignity, honor, discipline, values, image, stability and developmental progress". **Daily Trust**, Tuesday, June 6, 2006 pg 2

### **- Gowon Opposes return of ex-rulers to politics**

Former Head of State, Gen. Yakubu Gown (rtd.). On Tuesday, June 6, 2006 cautioned against the return of former military rulers to the leadership of the country. He also advice Nigerians to look beyond ethnic and geo-political affiliations in electing their next President.

He also urged Nigerians to defend democracy by ensuring that there is a smooth political transition from one democratically elected president to another. **The Guardian**, Wednesday, June 07, 2006 back page

### **- Consolidate your Statesmanship, Kalu Urges Obasanjo**

Governor Orji Uzor Kalu of Abia State, has urged president Obasanjo to consolidate his image of statesmanship in Nigeria and the world over by ensuring a free and fair election in 2007 while speaking on an SABC News programme, 60 Minutes, monitored in South Africa, said despite the third term issue, Obasanjo is still a respected leader the world over.

He said all he needed to do to enshrine his name in the annals of world statesmen is to re-enact his 1979 feat by ensuring a peaceful civilian-to-civilian hand-over process in 2007. **ThisDay**, Wednesday, June 07, 2006 pg 12

### **- 2007: Northern senators insist on power shift**

Senators from the 19 Northern states of the Federation on Wednesday, June 7 appealed to politicians from the South to concede the presidency to the North in 2007 as a reciprocal gesture to the concession given to them in 1999. Northern politicians deliberately held back their interest in the presidency in 1999 to allow for power shift to the south in elections that brought president Obasanjo into office they said.

There was said to be an informal understanding for a Northern to succeed Obasanjo in elections due for next year, but recent political events indicate that this pledge is being threatened. The Lawmaker under the auspices of the Northern Senators Forum rose from a one-hour meeting on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 insisting that the 1999 unwritten agreement must be respected.

The governor of Kwara State and the Chairman of the Northern Governor's Forum, Dr. Bukola Saraki has said there is no going back on demands by the north to assume power in 2007, and warned his kinsmen to be diplomatic and democratic about the agitation. **Daily Trust**, Thursday, June 08, 2006 pg 41

### **- Zoning Unconstitutional, says Umar**

Former Military Governor of old Kaduna State and convener of Movement for Unity and Progress, Colonel Abubakar Umar (rtd.), said agitations by some politicians for power shift was not only unconstitutional, but a symptom of a 'dangerous scheme' by the agitators.

The former governor who said this in a statement, warned Nigerians to be wary of the group of politicians who were presently campaigning with a slogan of "it is our turn", as they might not have any justifiable drive other than greed. **ThisDay**, Thursday, June 01, 2006 page 1/4

### **- 2007: Women Group Canvasses South-south Presidency**

Mothers of the Niger-Delta, a non-governmental organization has added its voice to the call for South-south Presidency come 2007. This is contained in a statement released in Port Harcourt by the body and signed by its Co-Coordinator, Mrs. Igoniwari Tamuno, said the resolve to support the South-south agitation for Presidency was informed by the need for Nigeria to consider the socio-political and economic plights of Niger-Deltans and have recourse to equity, justice and fairness in deciding who leads the country from May, 2007.

It said there are competent and tested leaders in the zone to make the country proud, the same way their resources have served Nigeria well. ThisDay, Thursday, June 08, 2006 pg 8

#### **- S'East Governors meets, insist on Igbo Presidency**

Governors of the five states of the Southeast in a meeting held on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 insisted that it was the turn of the zone to produce the country's president in 2007. The governors also expressed concern about the failure of the constitutional amendment bill and asked the National Assembly to revisit the issue with a view to addressing other fundamental issues in it which were thrown out with the tenure elongation.

Some of the issues discussed are additional state and local governments in the South-East. The Guardian, Thursday, June 08, 2006 pg 1/2

#### **- PRESIDENCY: Intrigues at PDP Governors' meeting**

*Gana, Egwu, Udenwa join race*

A web of interests made it impossible for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governors to conclude their search for possible successor to President Olusegun Obasanjo on Thursday, June 8.

The governors could not produce a short list of presidential contenders as requested by the President because of lack of consensus from zones that the top job had been ceded to the North, South-south and South-east.

Rather than produce a shortlist, the number of contenders has increased with more governors and Obasanjo's Political Adviser, Pro Jerry Gana, Governor Abdullahi Adamu (Nasarawa), Achike Udenwa (Imo), and Sam Egwue (Ebonyi). Joining the list of contenders. ThisDay, Friday, June 09, 2006 pg1/2

#### **- PDP calls emergency NEC meeting**

*Atiku, IBB group deny link to Lar faction*

The Vice President Atiku Abubakar and former military President General Ibrahim Babangida have denied any link with Lar's faction of the People Democratic Party (PDP), as the party's National Executive Committee are about to meet for a meeting come this week to take decisive action against the alleged dissidents.



The media Consultant to the Vice President, Mallam Garba Shehu has described the rumor linking the vice president with other political parties as baseless and untrue. And in like manner, the Secretary General of Project 2007, Gen. Idris Garba (rtd.), said that IBB is still a bonafide member of the PDP would not embark on actions that will discredit the party.

The former Military President Gen. Ibrahim Babangida says he is still in the presidential race, and speaking through his spokes man, the Secretary General of Project 2007, Gen. Idris Garba (rtd), he said the fayose lead panel is not a democratic body that is why he has refused to submit his name to the panel but insisted he still in the race under the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). **Daily Trust**, Monday, June 12, 2006 pg 1/4

#### **- Power must shift to the South**

*Southern senators says*

The Southern Senators Forum has described as unfair the bid for power shift to the Northern while reiterating that power must remain in the south for Progress and development of the country.

In a statement read by the Chairman of the forum, Sen. Ifeanyin Ararume, on Friday, June 9, said it is against the principle of natural justice, equity and fairness for those who ruled the country in the past to continue to jostle for another opportunity to rule again. He said the South-south and the Southeast should be allowed to produce the next president of Nigeria so as to curtail the violence in the Niger-Delta. **Daily Trust**, Monday, June 12, 2006 pg 44

#### **- PDP crisis deepens faction plans court action**

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Solomon Lar's faction that emerged last week is set to go to court to challenge the sealing of its secretariat in Abuja by security agents.

The former deputy national chairman of PDP in the North, who is also one of the leaders of the new group, Alhaji Ibrahim Bafana, said the group would challenge the action of the police because there was a court judgment that empowered the faction to operate. **The Guardian**, Monday, June 12, 2006 front page

#### **- Six parties, groups begin merger talks**

A mega party made up of six major opposition political grouping may emerge by the end of the June. The new amalgam of opposition under the aegis of United Democratic Alliance (UDA) is on verge of bringing the Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), the People Redemption Party (PRP), the Progressive Party Alliance (PPA), the Alliance for

Democracy (AD), a faction of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), known as The Buhari Organization (TBO) as well as The Atiku Abubakar Movement (TAAM).

Already, a committee saddle with the responsibilities of getting member of these organization to buy the ideas of a mega party and fine-tune arrangements for its formation has been set up to traverse the length and breadth of the country. **The Guardian**, Monday, June 12, 2006 back pg.

#### **- Senate Passes Bill on School of Democratic Studies**

The Nigerian Democracy received another boost on Thursday, June 8, 2006 when the senate passed a bill for the establishment of a Institute of Democratic Studies (IDS) to conduct quality academic and professional training and advocacy on democratic governance.

This followed the acceptance of the report of Senator Felix Ibru led-committee on Establishment and Public Service by the legislative chamber of the National Assembly. **The Guardian**, Friday, June 9, 2006 pg 5

#### **- June 12: Na'Abba, Osoba, others Canvass Free polls**

This year's anniversary of the annulment of the June 12, 1993 election believed to have been won by Late Chief MKO Abiola was marked on June 12, 2006 with a call by some eminent Nigerians for free and fair polls.

At a public lecture with the theme: "Redefining Nigeria's Political Destiny, eminent Nigerians including former speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Ghali Na'Abba, former Governor of Ogun State, Chief Olusegun Osoba, former Director General of the Center of Democratic Studies (CDC), Prof. Omo Omoruyi and the Senate Whip, Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, were among political leaders who canvassed for a free, fair and credible elections. **ThisDay**, Tuesday, June 13, 2006 front pg

#### **- I did not disown PDP faction: Lar**

The pioneer National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Solomon Lar has debunked reports that he disowned a faction of the party whose formation was announced on Friday, June 9.

A group, which called itself founders and leaders of the party, had on Friday announced a parallel National Executive Committee led by Lar to take over the running of the party form the Dr, Ahmadu Ali-led team until a new executive is elected at a national convention this year. This is contrary to a report published on Monday, June 12 that Lar disassociates himself from the faction. **The Punch**, Tuesday, June 13, 2006 pg

#### **- S' South Presidency: Ogoni youths, Dokubo group disagrees**

A major setback to the clamor by the people of the South-south to produce the next president of Nigeria on Monday, June 12 when two groups in the region differed on the matter.

While the Ogoni Youth Council led by Mr. Marvin Yobana tied the return by shell to Ogoni to the South-south presidency, the Asari Dokubo led Niger Delta peoples Salvation Front opposed the idea.

Speaking at the pro-government rally in Port Harcourt, Yobana insisted that it was only a South-south presidency that could contain the Niger-Delta crisis and bring the much-needed development to the region. But Dokubo's NDPSF's Director of Administration, Mark Olise, on Monday, June 12, 2006 dismissed the agitation for a South-south president as a ploy by the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to maintain its grip on power.

Olise stated that prior to this time, South-south was not prepared for the presidency of Nigeria since most of the leaders worked for the default tenure elongation. **The Punch**, Tuesday, June 13, 2006 pg12

### **2007 Presidency Tears Speakers Forum Apart**

Issues of zoning of the Presidency divided the Conference of Speakers of States Houses of Assembly on Tuesday, June 13 as the conference could not agree on the geo-political zone that the nation's top job should be allotted in 2007. At the meeting, all the three zones contending for the job could not reach an agreement as all three zones want the presidency zone to it side. ThisDay, Wednesday, June 14, 2006 pg 1

### **Fire Razes Osun Electoral Commission's Office**

Barely five months to the council elections, an early morning fire gutted part of the Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSSIEC) headquarters, located at Testing Ground Area of Osogbo, the state capital on Thursday, June 15 2006. The fire completely razed a storey building used by two of the electoral commissioners and allegedly destroyed vital document and electoral materials kept in the building, though no life was lost. The commission has however denied that sensitive electoral materials had been destroyed. The Guardian, Friday, June 16, 2006 pg 3

### **- Etiebet Leaves ANPP**

Former National Chairman of the All Nigerians Peoples Party (ANPP), Chief Don Etiebet, has decamped form the party for personal reasons. Sources have it that this could be connected with the agreement by the PDP to get him the governorship of Akwa Ibom State.

Etiebet became embroiled in the ANPP crisis when Governor Attahiru Bafarawa said he could no longer stay in the same party presided over by the former chairman. The former

chairman was expelled Etiebet from the party following accusation that he worked for the third term agenda. Daily Trust, Tuesday, June 20, 2006 pg 1

### **- ANPP, DPP supporters clash in Sokoto**

About ten persons were injured in a violence clash between the supporters of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) and the Democratic Peoples Party (DPP) on Sunday, June 18,2006 in Sokoto.

The incident took place in about five different places in between the hours of 2pm and 5pm. The affected areas are: Sokoto Cinema, Sultan Abubakar Road, Rijiya area, Kofar Atiku and Ahmed Bello Way.

The clash is said the have occurred when supporters of the two parties began removing posters and stickers of aspirants belonging to the opposing parties. Daily Trust, Tuesday, June 20, 2006 pg 3

## **INTERNATIONAL SCENE**

### **Zimbabwe Accuses west of Encouraging Coup**

Zimbabwe's ruling party has accused an international organization of encouraging a military coup against President Robert Mugabe, and vowed to crush any effort to topple the government. The ZANU-PF Information Chief Nathan Shamuyarira said the International Crisis Group (ICG) which last week issued a report saying Zimbabwe was fast becoming a failed state was a font for Mugabe's western critics including Britain and the US.

The Brussels-based ICG, which said it is an independent non-governmental organization, denied all the allegations.

Meanwhile, main opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai has accused Mugabe of neglecting an economic crisis that has seen inflation above 1,000%, soaring unemployment and regular shortage of food, fuel and power. ThisDay, Friday, June 16,2006 pg 45

### **ON THE NEWS**

#### **1. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE TO EMERGE LATEST DEC. 8**

Going by the April 8 date of the general election announced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), all registered political parties will have up to December 8

to submit to the commission the list of their sponsored candidates. This is in accordance to Section 32 (1) of the Electoral Act 2006 of the National Assembly.

The section states thus: *“every political party shall not later than 120 days before the date appointed for a general election submit its list of candidates to the commission”*. This is in contrast with the repealed Electoral Act of 2002, which gave political parties the mandate of 60 days before the date, appointed for election to submit their list of candidates. ThisDay, Wednesday, June 21, 2006 pg 1/4

## **2. 2007: ACD faults Iwu on Open-Ballot System**

The Advance Congress of Democrats (ACD) picked holes in the alleged statement credited to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Prof. Maurice Iwu that those clamouring for the adoption of the modified ballot system were those who were convinced that they cannot win elections come 2007.

The party’s position came as a backdrop of a media report that Iwu’s comments expose him as partisan, while urging him (Iwu) to explain how he arrived at the conclusion that those clamouring for the adoption of the modified open ballot cannot win elections. ThisDay, Wednesday, June 21, 2006 pg 6

## **3. AD, ACD, APGA to form mega party next week**

Opposition to the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is expected to be strengthened as Alliance for Democracy (AD), Advance Congress of Democrats (ACD), All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), and a faction of All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) will next week sign a memorandum for the formation of a mega party ahead of 2007 elections. Arrangements have been concluded to announce the new party. The Guardian, Wednesday, June 21, 2006 pg

## **4. INEC, police strategize for 2007 polls today**

Security preparations for the 2007 polls will kick off on Wednesday, June 21 in Abuja as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and senior officers of the Nigerian Police will meet to evolve strategies for the transition programme. The meeting will discuss issues of electoral violence and the role of the police in the conduct of the next general elections.

Iwu emphasized the problems of electoral violence, saying that the memorandum submitted to the National Assembly contains a provision that the commission should be empowered to cancel election that involve any politician or candidate who sponsors or participate in electoral violence. The commission he said should be empowered to prosecute such candidates. The Guardian, Wednesday, June 21, 2006 pg 7

## **5. Okonjo-Iweala, Others Redeployed**

President Olusegun Obasanjo has again shuffled his cabinet, redeploying three and bringing in five new faces on board. In the second cabinet shake up in two months, the president relieved the Minister of Education of her duties Mrs. Nora Chinwe Obajji, and redeployed the Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala to Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also the Minister of Solid Minerals Development Mrs. Obialgeli Ezekwesili is now the Minister of Education and Foreign Affairs Ambassador Olu Adeniji will take charge of Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Minister of state for Finance, Mrs. Nenadi Usman, was upgraded to superintend the Ministry, Minister of State for Education. Grace Ogwuche had been redeployed to the Ministry of Special Duties and Intergovernmental Affairs as a full Minister. The new ministers portfolios has also been announced.

Chief Fani-Kayode would henceforth take charge of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as Minister, Mr. Bala Kaoje (Sports), Mr. Elias Mbam (State for Finance), Mr. Sayyadi Ruma (State for Education), and Salome Jankada (State for Water Resources).

The reasons given by the president is that his administration had been leading a liberation struggle and need to continue to move forward so that we cover substantial distance before the change of baton. Meanwhile, Okonjo-Iweala remained the chairperson of the Economic Management Team and would continue to carry out oversight responsibilities for the nation's external financial institutions and transactions, just as Ezekwesili would continue to oversee the Ministry of Solid Minerals. ThisDay, Thursday, June 22, 2006 pg 4

## **6. Ehindero Gives Conditions for Free Polls**

The Inspector General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Prof. Maurice Iwu that one of the conditions for free polls in 2007 is the timely release of elections timetable and prompt allocation and payment of allowance to men and officers on electoral duties and training of men and officers on electoral duties.

At the meeting, Ehindero stated that sufficient allocation and payment of allowances of policemen on electoral duties would go a long way in ensuring effective and efficient discharge of duties during the 2007 election. He also stated that the Nigeria Police Force had set in motion machinery in training and retraining men and officers of the force on their conducts pre-elections, and post election in 2007 while assuring that his men would not compromise in discharging their duties and ensure that the conduct of free and fair election is not scuttled in 2007. ThisDay, Thursday, June 22, 2006 pg 1/4

## **7. ICPC to Prosecute Electoral Offenders – Ayoola**

Politicians will face greater challenges in 2007 as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 vowed to prosecute any one caught in the coming elections. The Commission's Chairman Justice Emmanuel

Ayoola (rtd) stated this at a 3-day workshop on Anti-Corruption and Transparency organized by the Osun State Government in collaboration with the ICPC. ThisDay, Thursday, June 22, 2006 pg 5

## **8. 2007: INEC urged to Audit Parties' Account**

As political activities begins to intensify ahead of the 2007 elections, Independent Advocacy Project (IAP), has called on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to examine and audit the funds and account of political parties and publish them before the election. It also called for the direct funding of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) from the consolidated revenue fund of the federation. ThisDay, Thursday, June 22, 2006 pg 8

### **- Reps summon Iweala, others over INEC funds**

The House of Representatives has summoned the Finance Minister, Dr, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Accountant General of the Federation, Ibrahim Dankwabo and the Director General, Budget Office, Bode Augusto, over discrepancies in the disbursement of first quarter capital votes to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

They are to appear before a House Panel on Tuesday, June 13 to provide answers to the controversial disbursements. The Speaker of the House Alhaji Bello Masari, told the INEC Chairman Prof. Iwu during a courtesy visit to the House. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 09, 2006 pg 2

### **- Obasanjo Urged to reject Electoral Bill**

Conference of Nigeria Political Party, (CNPP) has called on President Obasanjo to reject the electoral bill presently awaiting his assent. The reasons for this CNPP said, the bill is fraught with many contradictions, which render it an unrealistic basis for the coming elections.

It states particularly that the mode of appointing the Resident Electoral Commissioners makes it easy for the executives to manipulate the process. Secondly, the provision of the bill for party funding, CNPP said that it is not fair to assign only 10 per cent of the grant to political parties while the bigger parties share the remaining 90 per cent. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 09, 2006 pg 6

### **- INEC annuls Imo bye-election result**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Imo State has cancelled the result of a bye-election conducted on Saturday, June 4,2006 in the 118 polling units of Isu constituency. The Residence Electoral Commissioner, Eugene Amaju, in a statement on Monday, June 5 said the election in the area were marred with political violence and thuggery.

The state Chairman of the Coalition of Political Parties (CNPP), Vitalis Orikeze Ajumba, in reaction said the action of INEC vindicated their earlier stand on boycotting the election. **The Guardian**, Monday, June 5, 2006 pg 6

#### **- Non-Release of INEC Funds Worries House**

The House of Representatives has expressed worry that the Finance Ministry Headed by Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has withheld allocations meant for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the 2006 Appropriation Act.

Shortly after the passage of the 2006 Electoral Act by the House, its Leader, Alhaji Abdul Ningi, drew attention of the members to what he said was the non-release of funds to INEC ahead of the 2007 elections.

Ningi called on the House to demand explanations from the Minister of Finance on the true state of released made to INEC so that the electoral body would not have any excuses to make for not conducting smooth elections next year.

#### **- Groups tells INEC Chairman to resign**

Turaki Vanguard, a group campaigning for Vice-president Atiku Abubakar's presidency in 2007 has asked the Chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Maurice Iwu, to resign.

This call was made in a statement signed by its national coordinator, Alhaji Nasir Galla and the national director of media affairs and public communications, Chief Eze Chukwue-meka Eze, the group said that the purported timetable for the 2007 general elections released in Calabar by Iwu was neither feasible nor workable. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 02, 2006 page 39

#### **- ANPP: Useni faction joins DPP**

A faction of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), led by Lt. General Jeremiah Useni (rtd.), has formally moved into the newly newly-registered Democratic Peoples Party (DPP), thus ending months of bitter struggle for the control of the ANPP. Useni made this known at a formal national meeting of the executive committee of the ANPP faction. **Daily Trust**, Friday, June 02, 2006 page 1/2

#### **- Southern Senators Divided over Presidency**

*Forum denies bribery allegation*

An unsubstantiated allegation of bribery to endorse the presidential ambition of a governor from the south-south geo-political zone is at the heart of a bitter disagreement among members of the Southern Senators Forum (SSF), as the caucus plans to meet today.



The senators said categorically that they have lost confidence in the present SSF leadership but Chief Ifeanyi Ararume, denied allegations that money went round, insisting that if the minority of Senator from the south do not want to retain the presidency, they should come out and declare their position for the North. **The Guardian**, Tuesday, June 13, 2006 back pg