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“Uplift the people, project the nation” SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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ABIA'S Season of Celebrations



@ ABIA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

&

100 DAYS IN OFFICE

OF DR. ALEX CHIOMA OTTI



B.E.T GRAPHICS

Michael Okpara University Of Agriculture, Umudike

P.M.B 7267 UMUHIA, ABIA STATE NIGERIA

Office of the Vice Chancellor



Congratulations on

YOUR FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE AND ABIA STATE AT 32

I am writing on behalf of the Council, Senate, Staff and Students of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike to extend our heartfelt congratulations on your successful first 100 days in office as the Executive Governor of Abia State. It is with immense pride and joy that we join in celebrating this remarkable milestone in your leadership journey. Your dedication, vision, and commitment to the development of our beloved state have not gone unnoticed.

In these 100 days, your leadership has already begun to leave a positive imprint on Abia State.

Your strategic initiatives, focus on good governance, and efforts to foster growth across various sectors are truly commendable. Your relentless pursuit of excellence and your passion for uplifting the lives of the citizens of Abia State have set a strong foundation for the progress we anticipate in the years to come. Moreover, as Abia State marks its 32nd anniversary, we are reminded of the strides we have taken as a state and the potentials that lie ahead. Your leadership comes at an auspicious period in our history, and we are confident that your administration will continue to guide us towards greater achievements and prosperity.

At Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, we are committed to contributing to the development of Abia State through education, research, and community engagement. We believe that under your visionary leadership, the State will continue to provide an enabling environment for educational institutions like ours to flourish and make meaningful contributions to society.

As we celebrate Abia State at 32 and your successful first 100 days in office, we express our unwavering support for your administration's efforts to create a brighter future for all Abians. We look forward to collaborating closely with your government to advance the educational and socio-economic landscape of the State.

Once again, congratulations, Your Excellency, and may your tenure be marked by unprecedented progress, unity, and prosperity for Abia State and its people.

We wish you well.


Prof. Maduebibisi
Ofo Iwe, CFS
 Vice Chancellor



ALEX OTTI_{OFr}
 Governor, Abia State



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Forum

With

Jones Nnamma Ike



A citizen's prayer

One of the major prayer points for many people who seek spiritual upliftment is an unceasing celebration in their lives. Celebrations especially the type that put smiles on the faces of people is a spiritual gift. God wants people to be happy. Smiles are of God. However, this spiritual gift ceased from the face of many Abians in the times past because of governance failure

Yes, in the immediate past years, governance structures and processes were organized in ways that increased the poverty rate and the misery index in the state as indices from the Federal Bureau of Statistics clearly showed. As the poverty and misery index increased, genuine celebration of progress as a people declined and the land became that of despair.

In that decadent period of the immediate past, businesses folded and took flight, workers went home at the end of the month without pay, young graduates looked elsewhere for jobs and pensioners could not be certain when they will get their next pay. Despair and anxiety took over the faces of several of these once proud people of the Igbo stock.

But thank God for little mercies.

As this despair enveloped the state, it generated an anti-thesis in a struggle to liberate the state from the iron grip of the dark forces who were bent on holding her hostage. This struggle finally ended on the 22nd of April, when its leading light Dr. Alex Chioma Otti was declared the winner of the April 18th governorship election in the State. The wild jubulations that erupted both locally, nationally, and globally all attested to the relief that all well-meaning people heaved upon that historic win.

The Holy book in Ecclesiastics tells us there is a season for everything. Those years of despair were a season in its own right. A new season has sprouted in Abia State. The new season came into being with the inauguration of Dr. Alex Otti into office as the governor of Abia State. An objective analysis of the performance of the Otti administration as was published in the last edition of the National Ambassador clearly indicates that the new government is doing very well in all realms of governance. It is resetting the tools of governance and thereby setting the stage for an unprecedented level of prosperity in the state.

The 32nd birthday anniversary coincided with the 100 days in office of the Alex Otti administration. It is the first government that could be genuinely called a people's own, if we are to take into account all the troubles that the people of the area endured over the years to have a government that they could really call their own.

That alone is a big achievement and calls for the clinking of the glasses. Yes, it calls for celebrations. The achievement of a people's government is a fundamental one. The enthronement of a democratic government that will have the character of an organic one between the government and the governed is not an easy one, especially when viewed within the parameters of third world politics where the institutions of democracy are often weak and the electoral system most often flawed.

The 32nd birthday anniversary of Abia State is the first of such celebration after the historic liberation. The anniversary came against a new governance structure that is determined to retool and reset the button of governance structure in the State. It is this background that justifies the celebration of the 32nd birthday anniversary of the State like no other. The occasion also calls for unceasing prayers for the progress of the State and the stability of the new government. The State government had itself led the charge in this celebration through a week long activities that were all carefully choreographed to inspire hope and confidence amongst the civil populace.

Such activities included the visits of the First Lady of the State to orphanages across the three senatorial zones, free medical services, cultural activities, a novelty match between the



Commissioner for Trade and Commerce Mazi Mike Akpara, his Wife (left) and others during their thanksgiving ceremony

executive arm of government and the legislature arm, Friday worship by Moslems, Christian prayers and an inspirational state broadcast by the Governor as well as a Public Lecture that was delivered by no less a personality than the revered former Minister of Education, Dr. Oby Ezekwesili who talked on the topic 'Resetting the button'.

One remarkable feature of the week long activity organized by the State Government is that it was devoid of the mundanity, the profanity and the mediocrity that was usually associated with such celebrations in the past. On the other hand. These recent celebrations reflected the serious character of the present government. As for the civil society in the state, the stock taking activity afforded them the opportunity of taking a second look at the positive things that are routinely taking shape.

Since the ascension of the Dr. Alex Otti's led administration, there is no aspect of governance processes in the State that has been overlooked. Both the Birthday Anniversary and the 100 Days in Office were celebrated in the season of plenty, the "Igbo New Year Calendar", which is now generally referred to as the Igbo New Yam Festival or "Iri Ji Festival".

It will be apt to say that these sessions have seen the state been somehow enveloped in an orgy of celebrations within this past few week. The celebrations were heralded by the "August mass return of the Igbo Women". These year's triple season celebrations had one singular characteristic that emerged. It is a season in which the people celebrated with a renewed

confidence and hope in their future. It was the first in several years that the State public sector workers will be celebrating with their salaries firmly entrenched in their bank pockets. It was also the first time that they will be celebrating with the full confidence that the fate of their State was in the firm hands of able managers who came into office through the instrumentality of their votes.

Indeed, the State wide celebrations have been underscored by a certain level of positivity and increasing ownership of the government by the people. No governmental leaders could wish for more.

The season of celebrations was not restricted to the state or communities but also involved corporate organizations and individuals who had reasons to thank God for little mercies. The Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture had on 29th August celebrated the Founders Day, their 30th birthday anniversary and the maiden Dr. Michael Iheonukara Lecture Series.

Dr. Chimezie Ukaegbu the Hon Commissioner for Trade and Investments also thanked God for his miraculous escape from the hands of assassins when his convoy was attacked in Aba. Within the same period His Excellency the Deputy Governor of the State Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu and his brother dedicated their Children to God. There was also Mazi Mike Akpara who had good reasons to thank God for surviving a ghastly motor accident.

In reminiscing on the subject matter of celebrations. One fact is quite obvious, most celebrations come after overcoming challenges. Yes, there will always be challenges but I have since mastered the art of overcoming it through my most valuable verse in the Holy Bible which I have always found very useful in such circumstance and it is Psalm chapter 23 vs 4-6. Thus, it goes starting with verse 4. year, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5. thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

And so, as the Christian faith enjoins us all, let the celebrations not cease in both our private and public lives. Let the current hope and positive attitudes as well as the organic relationship between the governed and the government continue to be the portion of our people both now and in future in Jesus Name.

It is the first government that could be genuinely called a people's own, if we are to take into account all the troubles that the people of the area endured over the years to have a government that they could really call their own

SPECIAL Edition 100

DAYS IN OFFICE CELEBRATION

We urge you to maximize our low advert rate, and discount, we are offering to our advertisers and clients to celebrate the hundred days in office of our governor **Dr Alex Chioma Otti (OFR)**



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**GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA
 ABIA STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (ASUBEB)**



A Congratulatory Message
ON THE 32ND YEARS OF THE CREATION OF ABIA STATE AND FIRST 100 DAYS OF GOVERNOR ALEX OTTI ON THE SADDLE

It is with profound gratitude to God Almighty that the management and staff of Abia State Universal Basic Education Board (ASUBEB), felicitate with the Government and People of Abia as the state clocks 32 years of its creation.

We have certainly not got to the dreams of our founding fathers, but with resolve and implicit trust in God, we will surely get there someday.

Also, we felicitate with the People's Governor-Dr Alex Chioma Otti as he marks his first 100 eventful days in office as the Executive Governor of Abia State. We are aware that the decay caused in Abia State is mountainous, yet we have the confident assurance that the various steps taken so far and apparatuses put together by your Government are sure and clear statements that you are on a rescue and rebuilding mission in Abia.

We of the ASUBEB FAMILY hereby assure you that you can find in us willing hands and hearts toward the achievement of your heart desires in the governance of Abia State!

More Power on your Elbow! **signed**

Barr Chidozie Ndaji
 Acting Executive Chairman ASUBEB, Umuahia.

GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA
ABIA STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
Headquarters: KM 3 Umuhia - Okigwe Road, PM B 7935 Umuhia, Abia
E-mail: abiateadp@gmail.com Cable/ Telegram: ABIADEP

Goodwill Message



His Excellency,
Gov. ALEX OTTI OFR
(Executive Governor, Abia State)



Automated Solar Dryer at Abia ADP for drying agricultural produce for exports



Nursery section just planted with improved seeds against 2024

The Programme Manager, Management and staff of Abia State Agricultural Development Programme heartily Congratulate our chosen and ebullient agricultural friendly Governor, His Excellency Dr. Alex Chioma Otti OFR on the successful and eventful 100 days in office.

We rejoice with His Excellency on His remarkable achievements in Infrastructural Development, Security, Civil Service Reforms and prompt Payment of Workers Salaries.

We in Abia State Agricultural Development Programme are proud to be associated with His Excellency and we aligned ourselves to his vision to eliminated hunger and poverty, enhance food security and create wealth through increased agricultural productivity, improving the skills of Abia farmers through specialized training, provision of inputs, Modern and low cost of agricultural facilities

Your Excellency. May God in His reassuring words grant you divine wisdom, good health and the grace for greater exploits In the years ahead.

Long Live His Excellency
Long Live Abia ADP
Long Live Abia State



Mrs Nnenna Udumma Uche
Ag Programme Manager

ABIA NEWSPAPERS & PUBLISHING CORPORATION (ANPC)

Publishers of **NATIONAL Ambassador**
"Uplift the people, project the nation"

Congratulatory MESSAGE



We, the Management and Staff of Abia Newspapers and Publishing Corporation, publishers of the renowned **National Ambassador** Newspaper, heartily felicitate with our amiable and God fearing Governor of Abia State Dr. Alex Chioma Otti (OFR) on his 100 days in office.

May the good God Almighty grant you all it takes to deliver on your campaign promises to the glory of God and the good people of Abia State and humanity in general. Long live his Excellency our Executive Governor.

Long live Abia State.

Long live Nigeria.

Once more, Congratulations Sir.



Hon. Jones Ike
GW Editor-in-Chief

NATIONAL Ambassador
"Uplift the people, project the nation" SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION
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First 100 days of positive direction in governance

In appraising the first 100 days in office of our visionary Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, we are looking at not so much on the physical aspects of his efforts in terms of projects, but the psychological aspects of his activities on the people-what we may call the imponderable of Governance.

In the above respect so far, the lives of all Abians of goodwill are being imbued with renewed hope and confidence that governance can be responsible for the yearnings of the people. Governor Otti has demonstrated that Government can be veritable as well as responsible machinery that does not have to rely on touts to get its programmes and policies implemented.

He has stopped forthwith the use of touts in collecting flying and other revenues in the state, sharing of our scarce common resources among a few privileged political classes, thereby arresting the retrogression the state had been plunged into in the past 24 years. The new administration has rekindled hope of a government interested in rebuilding the state.

The Otti's Administration has demonstrated visible support to locally made products thereby demonstrating his patriotism and commitment to promoting Nigerian industries and fostering economic growth within the state.

The on-going construction and rehabilitation of numerous roads in the state, especially in Umuahia and Aba is a signal of his broad vision in the area of road construction.

Governor Otti has also undertaken the procurement of numerous security vans for Operation Crush, a security initiative designed to tackle crime and the equipping of the three general hospitals across the three senatorial zones in the state is also laudable.

This administration is striving to establish a strong revenue base to boost the state revenue.

The proposed six-lane carriageway from Abia Tower to Isi-gate Umuahia, security in the state.

will enhance the status of Umuahia as a state capital and the introduction of the new digital revenue collection system to curb the menace of touting and double taxation is an eloquent testimony to Otti's vision for a financial base for the state in addition, the on-

going verification of civil servants would help to know the actual number of workers in Government payroll and flush out ghost workers.

Above all, the fact that evidently, Otti has no god-father engenders public confidence and hope in Abians that government would not end up being a conduit pipe for siphoning the resources.

There is no doubt that in the final analysis, Otti's achievements in God's Own State would definitely set the tone for future governance of the state.

It would certainly change the narrative in the unsavory way the state's government business had in the past been conducted.

However, the present circumstances call for patience and greater vigilance on the part of the citizenry in this part of the early progress, calls for prayers.

The 100 days so far has been successful.



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Change of Name

I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Eunice Kalu, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. EUNICE AKUMA UKPAI. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MRS. EUNICE AKUMA UKPAI.

I, formerly known and addressed as Nnah Grace Chizurum, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. OKEREKE GRACE CHIZURUM. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MRS. OKEREKE GRACE CHIZURUM.

I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Eberечи Rebecca Oluoha and Eberечи Rebecca Chisimdi, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. EBERECHI REBECCA CHISIM - NWARIE. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MRS. EBERECHI REBECCA CHISIM - NWARIE.

I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Madu Miracle Ngozi, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. ADIBE MADUABUCHI MIRACLE NGOZI. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MRS. ADIBE MADUABUCHI MIRACLE NGOZI.

I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Ajaero Loveth Chibuzo, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. TREASURE LOVETH BLESSING LAZARUS. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MRS. TREASURE LOVETH BLESSING LAZARUS.

I, formerly known and addressed as Blessing Arunsi Lazarus and Blessing A. Lazarus, now wish to be known and addressed as PRINCE BLESSING LAZARUS. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

PRINCE BLESSING LAZARUS.

I, formally Known and addressed as Offor, Chinedu Eunice, now wish to be known as NWAIKE CHINEDU EUNICE. All documents bearing my former names remain Valid. The general public should please take note.

NWAIKE CHINEDU EUNICE

I, formally Known and addressed as Miss Mercy Ude Erme now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs. NDUKWE MERCY and Ndukwe Mercy Ude and Mercy Ude Erme are same person. All documents bearing my former names remain Valid. The general public should please take note.

NDUKWE MERCY

Reconciliation of Name

Reconciliation of Name

This is to affirm that Ukachi Chibuzo Charles which appear in my Bank Account and Bank Verification Number (BVN) with Fidelity Bank and Ukachi Chibuzo Onuoha which appear in my service name is same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as UKACHI CHIBUZO, CHARLES. All documents bearing my former names remained valid. The Head of Service, Ministry of Health, Fidelity Bank and the general public should please take note.

UKACHI CHIBUZO CHARLES.

Reconciliation of Name

This is to affirm that Samuel Chinedu Patra which was wrongly captured on my National Identity Card and BVN Profile with Access Bank is said to be the Same Person. I now wish to be addressed as SAMUEL CHINEDU GLORY. All documents bearing my former names remain Valid. The general public should please take note.

SAMUEL CHINEDU GLORY

Reconciliation of Name

This is to affirm that Ugwunna Augustus Ofomadu which was wrongly written on my Bank Verification Number (BVN) and Ugwunna Augustus Ufomadu are said to be same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as UGWUNNA AUGUSTUS UFOMADU. All documents bearing my former names remain Valid. The general public should please take note.

UGWUNNA AUGUSTUS UFOMADU.

Reconciliation of Name/Date of Birth

This is to affirm that Sunday Chinonso Stephen and Sunday Chinonso are same person and my correct date of birth is June 1, 1983. I now wish to be known and addressed as SUNDAY CHINONSO. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. Access Bank and the general public should please take note.

SUNDAY CHINONSO.

Reconciliation of Name/Date of Birth

This is to affirm that Emeka Ekeke and Anthony Emeka Ekeke are same person and my correct date of birth is August 27, 1972. I now wish to be known and addressed as ANTHONY EMEKA EKEKE. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. Access Bank and the general public should please take note.

ANTHONY EMEKA EKEKE.

Reconciliation of Name

This is to affirm that Igbokwe Ralph O. and Igbokwe Prince Ralph are same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as IGBOKWE PRINCE RALPH. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

IGBOKWE PRINCE RALPH.

Reconciliation of Name

This is to affirm that Okogbuo Iroakazi Vincent which appeared in My National Identification Number (NIN) and in all my documents and Okogbuo Vincent Iroakazi which appeared in my Bank Verification Number (BVN) are same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as OKOGBUO IROAKAZI VINCENT. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OKOGBUO IROAKAZI VINCENT.



IFAD: ABIA LIFE-ND CELEBRATES WITH GOVERNOR ALEX OTTI ON 100 DAYS OF GOVERNANCE



We, on behalf of Livelihood Improvement Family Enterprises, Niger Delta, (LIFE-ND), heartily congratulate the Executive Governor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Chioma Otti, OFR, on his 100 days of astute pragmatic governance. The Project also rejoices with your Government and the people of Abia as you mark the 32nd anniversary celebration of creation of Abia State in 1991.

Your agenda of "priority to expand the frontiers of opportunities in ways that deepen the traditional entrepreneurial capacities of our people" aligns with the Project's core mandate of job creation and food security on sustainable basis, for the teeming unemployed youths, women headed-households including the physically challenged persons. Currently, the Project has made a remarkable milestone in achieving this objective. LIFE-ND Project is sincerely supportive of your agrarian entrepreneurial revolution policy for the state.

The Project is a creation of the Federal Government, International Fund for Agricultural Development, (IFAD), and Niger Delta Development Commission, (NDDC), to alleviate the miserable poverty status identified in the nine Niger Delta states of the region. Among the six IFAD-sponsored states, Abia has four-commodity comparative advantage of oil palm processing; poultry, rice, cassava productions and processing including various value chains of these commodities. To forestall the objective of establishing major agribusiness entrepreneurs, the Project, under the coordinating prowess of Uchenna Rowland Onyeizu, Ph.D, has empowered 2,364 beneficiaries on different value chains of agro business enterprises in 100 communities across 10 selected Local Government Areas of the state, most of whom are currently employers of labour in their personal capacities in various communities, having ripple effect of establishing other numerous indirect beneficiaries.

As you tackle the challenges of the state head-on, the entire staff of Abia LIFE-ND pledge their unalloyed support to the state agrarian agenda. We wish your Excellency the divine wisdom to achieving your excellent master plan to revolutionize the state in agricultural sector.

Long Live Abia State! Long Live Your Excellency.



ALEX OTTI^{OFr}
Governor, Abia State



Beneficiaries of Oil palm marketing input



A beneficiary, Mrs Nwaogu Ikpe, with egg products at poultry cluster Umuode Ibie, Isialangwa North LGA, Abia State.



Uchechi Agbai of Niemma Oil Processing Mill, Umuobasiukwu Ozulitem, Bende LGA, Abia State



Beneficiaries of 30 hectares of cassava cluster, Ohambelo Ukwia East LGA, Abia State



Japheth Chukwu at his multiplication rice farm at Ozulitem, Bende LGA, Abia State



Job creation of Agric-tech to boost Agricultural marketing



Uchenna Rowland Onyeizu, Ph.D., CEnv.
State Project Coordinator

GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ABIA STATE ESTATES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (ABSEDA)

Congratulatory
MESSAGE



ALEX OTTI OFR
Governor, Abia State

GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY SECONDARY EDUCATION MGT. BOARD
P.M.B 7248 | Email: semhabia@yahoo.com | Website: www.semhabia.com

Congratulatory Message



The entire Management and Staff of the Secondary Education Management Board warmly and heartily congratulate an exemplary leader, an altruistic personality, a versatile administrator, an intellect of rare breed, economist per excellence and the game changer- Dr. Alex Chioma Otti (OFR) on the occasion of his first 100 days in office as the Executive Governor of Abia State, Nigeria.

Your Excellency, within the last 100 days in office, your remarkable leadership style encapsulated in clear demonstration of your wealth of experience are manifest.

Your strategic vision, well directed proactiveness and sound result oriented dispositions regarding all facets of challenges in governance remain unprecedented. The enviable strides you have taken in giving education pride of place in your scheme of affairs are major and cannot go without monumental and admirable commendation.

Like the literal writer Ngugi Wa thiong'o, you told Abians generally and particularly Secondary School teachers, non-tutorial staff and their pensioners TO WEEP NO MORE by back to back payment of their current and arrears of salaries/ pensions, renovations and building of classroom in our schools across the state.

Your Excellency, it is obvious that you have very positive place in history of our beloved State. We earnestly pray God to grant you more wisdom, good health and sound discerning mind for more historic successes in the days, months and years ahead. Indeed, by the grace of God, our help has come at last.

(Signature)
ONUOHA, D. N.
Public Relation Officer
(For the Executive Secretary)

The Management and the entire staff of Abia State Estate Development Agency (ABSEDA) heartily felicitate with HIS EXCELLENCY DR. ALEX CHIOMA OTTI (OFR) THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA on the occasion of the celebration of Abia State at (32) and one hundred days in Office. We at ABSEDA are delighted to join numerous ABIANS, the entire people across Nigeria and beyond in wishing you happy celebrations on this auspicious occasion.

Your EXECELENCY's developmental strides within this short period of time are unquantifiable and an eloquent testimony of your desire of a better Abia State. We pray that God in his infinite mercy will continue to guide and grant you the Wisdom of Solomon to pilot the affairs of this Great State.

(Signature)
BONIFACE IK. KALU
Director-In-Charge (ABSEDA)

Lead Story

Abia's season of celebrations

By Jones Ike

"To Everything, there is a season, and a time to, every purpose under the heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1

In Igbo cosmology, the month of August is referred to as the season of plenty and celebrations. The Igbo New Year starts from August and is heralded by festivities that stretches into September. In more recent times, the Igbo New Year has come to be known by its dominant festival, the "Iri Ji (New Yam) Festival.

Essentially, the "Iri Ji" (New Yam) festival, is an important component of the cultural festivities marking the new year. It is in this context that one of the experts in Igbo culture and sociology, Mazi Onu Kama Onyioha opines that the Igbo calendar and its subsequent new year is a derivative from the Igbo cosmopolitan world view which the Igbo eight Market days of Eke, Ori, Afor Nkwo, Ekenta, Orienta Afor Nso and Nkwonta originated.

In ancient traditional Igbo Culture, the beginning of the Igbo New Year is referred to as the season of plenty because it follows closely the lean years or the period of planting and hard work.

In traditional Igbo communities, social life revolved around the period of hard work (the planting session) and the period of harvest. The period of harvest is normally ushered in by the festivals heralding the New Year.

In recent times, despite the corrosive effect of westernization on Igbo culture, modern Igbo societies have been able to hold on to this very important aspect of their cultural heritage. The celebration of the Igbo new year has become very popular and widespread amongst Igbo communities, individuals, governments both at home and in the diaspora.

Since cultures are dynamics and always evolving with new elements, there have been an infusion of new elements into such celebrations. One of the most dynamics of such infusion is the mass return of Igbo women to their various communities during the month of August, otherwise known as "The August Mass Return".

This very important gathering of Igbo women during the month of August in their respective communities affords them a unified platform to make robust contributions towards the development of their respective homelands. It not only gives them the opportunity to positively engage with their various communities but also affords them the platform for social interaction and

attendance to family matters.

In Abia State, this season's Igbo New Year Festival was celebrated with a certain peculiarity. It had the advantage of coinciding with the 32nd birthday anniversary of the State as well as the 100 days in office of the Dr. Alex Otti's led administration.

Since the people were still heaving a sigh of relief from its years of misrule and bad governance on account of having been liberated from such on the 22nd day of April 2023 especially within the context of a renaissance in the governance system in the State that was being engineered by the new administration. The people of the area were understandably very pleased to celebrate the Igbo new year with a renewed vigour, enthusiasm and hope.

In fact a hard look at the Abia cultural landscape these past weeks depicts the area as being enveloped in a state wide celebrations both as groups and individuals over the period in question. The state government had itself queued behind the season of celebration when it rolled out the drums to celebrate the 32nd anniversary of the creation of the state in a series of activities that was devoid of the profanity and pettiness associated with such celebrations in the past.

The state organized activities included the visits of the First Lady Mrs. Pricilla Otti to Orphanages across the three senatorial zones in the State, free medical service, cultural activities, a music fiesta for youths and a novelty match between the executive arm of government and the legislative arm as well as worship by Muslims, traditional worshipers and Christians at their various worship centres.

There was an inspirational state broadcast by the state governor. The week-long event climaxed with a public lecture held at the International Conference Centre with the theme "Hitting the Reset Button"

The State governor had declared the event open by urging Abians to join his administration's efforts to engender a new Abia that was devoid of bribery, corruption and other negative tendencies that constitute clogs in the wheel of progress towards the journey for a prosperous state.

Governor Otti also pointed out that his administration was built on faith and confidence reposed on her by the people and added that a lot needs to be put in place to achieve the



HRH, Eze Linus Mbah Nto The Chairman Abia Council of Traditional Rulers performing the traditional IWA Ji ceremony as part of the Iri Iji festival recently.



Wife of the Governor, Mrs Priscilla Otti interacting with some officials during a visit to one of the orphanage homes

Continued on Page 4

Lead Story

season of celebrations



Wife of the Governor, Mrs Priscilla Otti (2nd left) accompanied by other women during one of the Abia Women August Mass Return in the state recently



The Governor, Alex Otti with the Wife Priscilla, during the Abia @32 anniversary celebration in Umuahia recently



Gov Otti with the Enr Minister of State for Solid Minerals, Dr. Uche Ogah, during the Abia @32 anniversary celebration in Umuahia recently



Governor Otti with area father, Charly Boy at the Abia @32 anniversary celebration

According to him in the speech "Good roads, quality health care, standard education, adequate security in our communities and other social service are desired by everyone in every community. However, you will agree with me that none of these will materialize if the citizens do not pay their taxes promptly and correctly"

"No society can achieve development unless it aligns with the outcome it seeks. Demands of societal transformation desired by the people will not materialize where individuals do not pay taxes" Abia will remain what it was unless we resolve to lay standards, he noted.

Governor Otti also told his audience that his administration has led the initiative to return the state to the part of socio-economic growth and development.

The governor used the occasion to launch the Abia State Orientation Agency during which he charged them to take the lead in enlightening the people on their duties for a new prosperous Abia. He equally used the occasion to congratulate Abians both at home and in the diaspora on the 32nd anniversary of the state creation.

The lead speaker of the anniversary lecture, Dr. Oby Ezekwesili (a former Minister of Education) while speaking on the theme of the event said a lot needs to be done to develop and move Abia state to where it ought to be among the county of States.

She pointed out that Abia with a GDP of about 25 billion Dollars has no business being among states with low gross domestic product (GDP), infrastructural deficits, unemployment and other challenges bedeviling the State.

She called on Governor Otti to reset the State from its old ways of doing things by creating the right institutional framework, confront public sector inefficiency, engender economic policies that will enhance productivity, reform tax collection and public procurement systems as well as adopt technology to promote government business.

The former minister equally noted that governor Otti has leadership skills that could launch Abia into a modern State where trade, commerce, security, infrastructural development, ease of doing business and economic rejuvenation would be the order of the day. She added that with the right policies and manpower, Abia has the potentials to be among

the economic world powers if it presses the reset button as well as invest on areas it has comparative advantage.

The gale of celebrations was not restricted to the communities or the government. A lot of individuals in the state also had reasons to thank God for His mercies in their lives.

Prominent amongst these individuals was Dr. Chimezie Ukaegbu, the honorable commissioner for Trade and Investment who narrowly escaped death at the hands of assassins who attacked his convoy on Tuesday 25th July 2023 at the Samek junction in the Ariaria section of Abia.

Two policemen who accompanied him on the official trip were killed during the attack. The thanksgiving service was held at the Methodist Church of Nigeria Amuzukwu Ibeku on August 20th 2023.

The wind of celebrations blew across the Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture, Umudike in the form of a triple celebration when on August 17th they held their Founders Day, 30th Anniversary and a maiden Dr Michael Iheonukara Okpara's Lecture Series.

The train of individual celebrations anchored at Amaekpu Ohafia when His Excellency Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu and his brother dedicated their children to God at the St Anthony Catholic Church Amaekpu Ohafia on.

In the same vein on September 10th 2023 Mazi Mike Akpara the Commissioner for finance who survived a very fatal motor accident during the electioneering campaigns when his vehicle ran into a stationary Trailer Truck has his own thanksgiving. Mazi Akpara underwent series of surgeries both in Nigeria and overseas until he was totally certified fit and healthy by a team of surgeons in the United States where he recently returned from.

He had his own thanksgiving service church service that was held at the Redeemed Christian Church of Nigeria, Government Station layout on September 10th 2023. The reception held at the International Conference Centre Umuahia on same date.

It was indeed been a season of celebrations for a lot of Abians and for the right reasons

By Jones Nnanna Ike with additional reports from Kingsley Ugorji, Kelechi Eme-Ogidi and Charles Ogbonnaya

Pictorial activities of Abia @ 32 anniversary celebration



Gov. Otti with Former Minister of State for Solid Minerals Development Dr. Uche Oguh



Former Minister of Education, Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili delivering a virtual seminar



Gov. Otti and Mazi Sam Oluwabunwa at the event



Gov. Otti and wife, Priscilla, during the anniversary celebration



Cross Section of people at the event



Gov. Otti exchanging greeting with traditional rulers at the event



Mrs. Otti in a warm handshake with renowned musician, Charly Boy



Gov. Otti with Chief C.K Igara The Chairman Labour Party Abia State Chapter



Gov. Otti with renowned musician, Charly Boy



Deputy Gov. Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu and wife, Adaeze at the event



Mrs. Otti in a handshake with a guest



Charly Boy (C) exchanging greetings with the Commissioner for Information Prince Okey Kalu

Pictorial activities of Deputy Governor, Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu's child dedication programme



The Deputy Governor, Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu and brother, coming out for thanksgiving during their children's dedication



Engr Emetu and a friend



Gov. Otti and Wife at the Church service



Engr. Emetu speaking at the dedication of his son



Engr Emetu welcoming Gov Otti and wife to the dedication service



Gov Otti speaking at the dedication Church service



Engr. Emetu during the dedication service

Pictorial activities of Mazi Mike Akpara's thanksgiving service



Mazi Mike Akpara, wife (r) coming to the Altar with their thanksgiving offering



A saxophonist in action during the service



The RCCG Resident Pastor, Pst Vitalis Opara preaching during the service



Friends and relations of Mazi Akpara dancing to the glory of God



Mazi Ogonnia Okereke speaking during the service.



Mrs Akpara extolling God's mercy on the family



Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu & Commissioner for works Mazi Otumchere Oti during the event



The Church Congregation



Hon. Obi Aguocha of the Fed. House of Reps (1st l) at the Church Service



Prince Kanu and other worshippers



The Resident Pastor, Province one 5, Pst Vitalis Opara and other clergies during the service.



Mazi Akpara with the 3 youngsters who saved his life from the ghastly motor accident

Pictorial activities of Mazi Mike Akpara's thanksgiving service



Mazi Akparas, Wife and Pst. Dike



Akpara with relations and friends



Mazi Ugochukwu Okorafor and Some of the guests at Church service



Cross section of the women at the thanksgiving service



Dr. Akpara, wife and a guest



The Church Choir was equally in action



Guests at the reception



Prince Kanu and Abia Newspapers GM, Hon. Jones Nnanna Ike



Another section of guests at the reception



Prayer time for the Akparas



More prayers for the Akparas



The Deputy Speaker, Abia House of Assembly, Hon Augustine Nmerigini (C) and other guests



Pst Opara of RCCG delivering his sermon

Pictorial activities of Mazi Mike Akpara's thanksgiving service



Mrs. Otti exchanging greetings with the wife of the former Secretary to State Government, Mrs Donatus Okorie



Some of the guests at the event



Mazi Akpara receiving a present from Mazi Kingsley Okoro Kanu (Kingmore) The Eze Omenuko Fraternity



Barr. Nwankwo exchanging pleasantries with Mr. Chinedu Okeke the Deputy Chief of Staff to the Gov.



Gov Otti, wife and Mazi Kingsley Okoro Kanu (Kingmore)



Another cross section of guests at the event



Hon. Nmeregini and a guest exchanging pleasantries



The Governor speaking at the event



Some women that graced the occasion



One of the side attractions at the event



Dr Otti acknowledging cheers from the people



Another section of the guests



Engr Emetu, Hon Nmeregini and a guest



Some of the guests that graced the occasion



Guests being entertained



Arochuku LGA Labour Party Stakeholders at the event



Hon Boniface Ishienyi of Abia House of Assembly

PICTORIAL ACTIVITIES OF DR. CHIMEZIE UKAEGBU'S THANKSGIVING SERVICE AND THE 50TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARIES OF THE WIFE



The celebrants, Dr Chimezie Ukaegbu, Hon. Commissioner for Trade and Investments and wife (3rd and 4th right), Hon Obi Aguocha of the House of Representative (1st Right), Deputy Governor, Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu and a guest cutting the thanksgiving cake



Gov. Oti in a tet-ate with Dr. Ukaegbu while Rep. Aguocha watches with keen interest



Mrs. Priscilla Oti (Left) with The wife of the celebrant, Mrs. Ukaegbu



Gov. Oti and wife, Hon. Aguocha, Hon Nmergini and Dr. and Mrs Ukaegbu



Dr. Ukaegbu, Wife and Prof. Ken Kalu (SSG) at the thanksgiving Church service



The Celebrant Dr. and Mrs Chimezie Ukaegbu

Snapshots

Governor Otti's Road Reconstruction Effort in Abia.

By: Amarachi Uzoukwu



Governor Otti making a speech at the commissioning of cemetery Road

Abia State was for decades known for its very bad road infrastructure.

During those infamous periods both the residents and visitors alike suffered untold hardship because of the bad and pitiable road conditions. The State wore such badge of dishonor for many years. The States bad road nature was most often the subject of mockery and radicle amongst many in the country.

It was not therefor entirely surprising when Dr. Alex Otti, the incumbent Governor of the State on assumption of office on may 29th 2023 listed the provision of quality road infrastructure as one of his priority areas. The Governor seems to be walking his talk with the speed in which he seems to be delivering on quality road infrastructure in the state.

Regular commissioning of roads is now becoming a dominant feature of the Otti's administration.

In the past few weeks, several strategic roads in the commercial city of Aba had witnessed such commissioning. The newly constructed roads are also coming along with appropriate street lights and drainages.

However, the latest of these quality roads that was recently commissioned includes the shalom road / cemetery Road phase 1 and Emelogu road. These roads are very strategic to the commercial activities of Aba as they link two very important markets- The Ezuikwu Market and the Good Morning Market.

Speaking during the commissioning ceremony, Governor Otti reiterated the pivotal role of a good road infrastructure to economic growth and development. The Governor used the

opportunity to re-emphasize his determination to transform Aba in accordance with his campaign promises and maintained that his administration is committed to sustaining the trust bestowed upon him by the people. He also emphasized that Abia's future hinges on the establishment of a robust infrastructure and a conducive environment that supports both social and economic activities. A vision which he said the current administration under his leadership is resolutely committed to achieving.

The Governor also said that his administration has concluded plans to award the full rehabilitation of the age long deplorable Port Harcourt Road Aba, noting that the road is strategic not only to the economic rejuvenation of Aba but to Rivers State and other neighboring States.

During the commissioning of the 1.8km Emeleogu road, the Governor had announced the installation of water fountain at the Centre of the round about in other to further enhance the aesthetics value of the environment. On his own part, the Commissioner of Works Engr. Otumchere Otti urged the beneficiaries of the newly inaugurated roads to reciprocate the governments generosity by maintaining cleanliness and preventing drainage blockages and warned that obstructing roads with vehicle repairs or merchandise would soon be serious offence as legislative measures are being put in place to check compliance.

Several dignitaries at the occasion included the present of the Aba Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (ACCIMA) Chief Jerry Kalu, Market Leaders, Labour Party Leaders, Top government officials and so on.



Governor Otti Commissioning Emelogu Road



Governor Otti with the Traditional Rulers of Aba during the commissioning ceremony



The newly constructed Emelogu Road



Snapshots

Governor Otti's On-going Construction of roads in Abia

1. University Road, Abayi, Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A.
2. Green Avenue, Abayi
3. Udeagabala Road, Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A.
4. Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A.
5. Umuimo Road, Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A.
6. Old Express Road, Aba.
7. Abak Road and adjoining Streets, Aba
8. Queens Street, Aba
9. Jubilee Road, Aba
10. Hospital Road, Aba
11. St. Michael's Road,
12. Pound Road, Aba
13. Constitution Crescent, Aba
14. Park Road, Aba
15. Desilting of Drains in Aba
16. Construction of Port Harcourt Road, Aba
17. Obikabia - Umuene- Aba Road, Obingwa & IsialaNgwa South L.G.
18. Umuikaa - Umuene Road, IsialaNgwa South L.G.A.
19. Bende - Itumbuzo Road, Bende L.G.A.
20. Amuvi - Ndi Okereke - Ozuabam Road, Arochukwu L.G.A.
21. Amuvi - Uburulhie - Okpo Ihechiowa Road, Arochukwu L.G.A.
22. Umuahia - Uzuakoli- Abiriba- Ohafia- Arochukwu, Umuahia North, Bende, Ohafia and Arochukwu L.G.As
23. Ututu - Ewe Road, Arochukwu L.G.A.
24. Ariam - Usaka Ring Road, Ikwuano L.G.A
25. Ahaba - OhuhuIkeala Nsulu - Nchara Oloko Road, IsialaNgwa North & Ikwuano L.G.As
26. Expansion of Ossah - Umuahia Road (from Express Tower - Okpara Square), Umuahia North L.G.A.
27. Leru- Ndiawa- Nkwoagu -Eke- Isuochi- Umuaku Road, Umuunneochi L.G.A
28. Aba - Port Harcourt Expressway
29. Ehi Road, Aba
30. Tenant Road, Aba
31. Railway Crossing-Abba Park, Aba South.

Completed Rehabilitated Roads Project

1. Aba Road, Umuahia
2. Ndume Otuke Road, Umuahia
3. Ikot-Ekpene Road, Umuahia
4. BCA Road Umuahia
5. Secretariat Road, Umuahia
6. Ahiaukwu- Olokororo- Holy Ghost Road, Umuahia South
7. Emelogu Road Aba
8. Shalom Road Aba
9. Cemetery Road Aba



The newly constructed Emelogu Road



The Newly Constructed Cemetery Road Aba



Strides

MOUAU'S triple celebration

By Kelechi Ogidi

On August 17th 2023 the both the staff and students of the Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture Umudike had good reasons to roll out the drums for a triple celebration the of Founders' day, 30th Anniversary and a maiden Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara's lecture series.

The journey of the University started some 30 years ago when on August 27, 1992, the then military president of Nigeria, Rtd Gen Ibrahim Babangida visited Abia state as part of activities marking the first anniversary creation of the State. One of the requests tabled before the President, was the upgrading of the status of the then federal college of Agriculture, Umudike to a full-fledged degree awarding institution. Few months after the visit, the Federal Government, promulgated a decree for the conversion of the College to a full-fledged University status and it was named Federal University of Agriculture, Umudike (FUAU). The announcement opened a new Vista in academic activities in the young state which was experiencing dearth of higher institution. The new state then could only boast of one tertiary institution. On May, 1993, the university opened its gates to her first set of students (86 students) and on 2000 the name was changed to Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU) by the then President Obasanjo Civilian Administration.

It was therefore an opportunity for celebrations as the university rolled out its drum and garlands to celebrate the giant milestones it has attained in its 30 years of existence. This year's



Dr. Alex Otti and his Anambra State Prof. Chukwuma Charles Soludo during the maiden Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara lecture series at MOUAU

celebration of MOUAU's founders' day and anniversary celebrations witnessed a new dimension with the inauguration of a maiden Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara lecture series and the raising of an endowment fund.

The three in one event which took place between the 29th of August and 1st of September, attracted academia's, politicians, religion leaders, traditional rulers, business and other prominent individuals within and outside the state, even from the Diaspora. The Executive Governor of the state, Dr. Alex Otti played the chief Host, while the MOUAU VC, Prof.

Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe was the host. The Executive Governor of Anambra State, Prof. Chukwuma C Soludo was the guest lecturer while the President-General, Ohaneze-Ndigbo, Engr. Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu was the Special Guest of Honour and delivered the keynote address. The former Vice Chancellor, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu Alike

guests and thanked the University Community for thinking it wise to invite an erudite Scholar and an Economist, Prof Chukwuma Charles Soludo as the Anniversary lecturer. The Governor also appreciated the MOUAU VC, for initiating the Dr. Michael Okpara lecture series to Honour and Immortalize the legacies of late Dr. M.I. Okpara, whom he described as a better economist than all the economists of today even though he was a medical doctor. He also said that he is a student of Dr. M.I. Okpara's brand of economics while pledging that his administration will partner with MOUAU to make sure that the institution's mandate of food security is realized. The Governor also promised to issue the University with a Certificate of Occupancy in other to ensure that the institution makes use of their land optimally as well as ensuring that all the lands allocated to the University will no longer be encroached upon by individuals or communities.

The VC of MOUAU, Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe had earlier on in his address went back history lane and noted that the university which started its academic activities in 1993 with about 82 presently has a total student population of 39,078 comprising of 27,750 undergraduates, 4598 post graduates and 6730 part time students.



MOUAU VC Prof. M.O. Iwe, Arch. Bishop Raphael Opoko (Arch. Bishop of Umuahia Arch Diocese, Methodist Church Umuahia and other religious leaders inspecting MOUAU Bread.

(AE-FUNAI), Prof. Chinedum Uzoma, chaired the occasion. There was also a special Goodwill message and address from the Director-General of the World Trade Organization as well as the Representative of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Senator Abubakar Kyari respectively.

The 4 days events witnessed amongst other things, a press conference by the Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Maduwusi Iwe, inspection of ongoing projects within the school premises by the University Management, opening of MOUAU Bakery, presentation of 18 seater bus and training equipment to the Skills Acquisition Center of the MOUAUWA, novelty match, inter-denominational service, home coming of Alumni, award giving, exhibition of agricultural products amongst other events. The Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, who was the Chief Host, in his address, welcomed all the

He admitted that over the past 30 years, the Institution has been making steady progress in academics, human capital development, infrastructure, community service and administration amongst others amidst the numerous challenges confronting the Institution. The triple celebrations by the Institution according to Prof. Iwe "was to reminisce and celebrate the founding of the university, commence a long-awaited aspect of the University's Academic lecture (a public lecture in honour of one of Nigeria's great leaders that symbolized quality leadership, agriculture and entrepreneurship, Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara). The founder's day and maiden Dr. Michael Okpara university lecture series were meant to celebrate the commitment of all.



Prof. Chinedu Nwajiuba (former V.C, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu Alike, Abakaliki), Prof. C.C Solodo (Governor Anambra State), Dr. Alex C. Otti (Gov. Abia State), Prof. M.O Iwe, (VC, MOUAU), Dr. Mrs. Nkechinyere Iwe (president MOUAUWA), and a representative of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security at Dr. M.I Okpara lecture series to celebrate MOUAU's 30th Anniversary and Founders Day.

Strides

MOUAAU'S triple celebration

stakeholders, government, staff, students, alumni and partners who contributed to the growth and development of the university as well as instill in everyone the ideals, leadership models, agricultural and entrepreneurial policies of late Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara".

The Vice Chancellor who described late Dr. M.I. Okpara as a colossus who contributed in no small ways to light up the development, growth and identity of the ordinary Nigerian as a Premier of the Eastern Region. He also stated Dr Okpara led the gallant fight for the creation of Abia state where the university is located. Prof Iwe also disclosed that the university which is sited on 6,465 hectares of land, though presently occupying 1,000ha has started the development of its permanent site and that very soon, the University will be operating in two campuses. He lamented that 30 years after, the university is yet to get its take-off grant from the Federal Government and urged the Federal Government to prioritize the University's take off grant. He also made a case for the recognition of MOUAAU as a Land-Grant university, so that with or without being a university of Agriculture, MOUAAU can accommodate other programmes as is being done Internationally. The 30th anniversary lectured with the theme 'Leadership, Agriculture and Entrepreneurship: the Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara model for National growth and identity' was delivered by the Executive Governor of Anambra State, Prof. Chukeuma Charles Soludo. Prof. Soludo who rephrased the lecture title to 'Our future in our past: Reinvesting Dr. M.I. Okpara's Policy for Entrepreneurship as a model for National Renaissance' extolled the leadership qualities of the late Premier of the old Eastern region describing him as a nationalist and humanist with character who had passion for selfless service as well as servant leadership. He was a policy entrepreneur who saw public governance as a public entrepreneur to ensure job creation, sustainable



The VC MOUAAU Prof. M.O Iwe and other management staff at the event

wealth, employment generation and poverty reduction. Prof. Soludo said that Late Dr M. I. Okpara created the fastest Regional Economy anywhere in the world as the then Eastern Region was growing at an average of 9-10% year in, year out. He said that he came to remind us that we once had a glorious past and that indeed the labours of our hero's past shall never be in vain.

The former CBN Governor noted with dismay that Nigeria is a country whose past seems more glorious than its present, and that for decades, Nigeria keeps developing backwards when compared to countries. He was saddened that Nigeria was in the past a net exporter of agricultural products but ironically the reverse is the case now, as it now imports the same products and getting poorer and poorer everyday.

In proffering solution to Nigeria's backward growth, Soludo opined that we must go back to those fundamental values and understand the centrality of creating a productive rather than a consumption economy. He emphasized that there can be no nation without nationalists noting that our future lies in the vigorous interrogation of our past and that the lives and times of M I Okpara points to shining beacons. He urged every one present to prepare to be another M I Okpara in our little corners and be that change agent we desire to see.

Other Speakers applauded the University for the giant strides it has made since its inception and specifically commended Prof. Iwe for initiating the Dr. M I Okpara lecture Series, describing the late Premier as a leader worthy of emulation. They further advised the present crop of leaders and future ones to incorporate Late Dr. M I Okpara's developmental models into governance for a better and prosperous Nigeria.

The event was concluded with an award ceremony where staff (both past and present) of the University were honoured with Pathfinder, long service awards and so on. Some of the awardees include Prof Onwudike, Prof. P C Ngoka, Dr. Gina Edeoga, Dr. Philip Nto, Prof. Sylvester N. Ibe amongst others.



The VC. Prof. M.O Iwe flanked by VC (Admin) Prof. Elechi Asawulam, and other management staff during the press conference to celebrate MOUAAU @ 30 and founders day

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
ABIA GSM AND COMPONENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION ABA



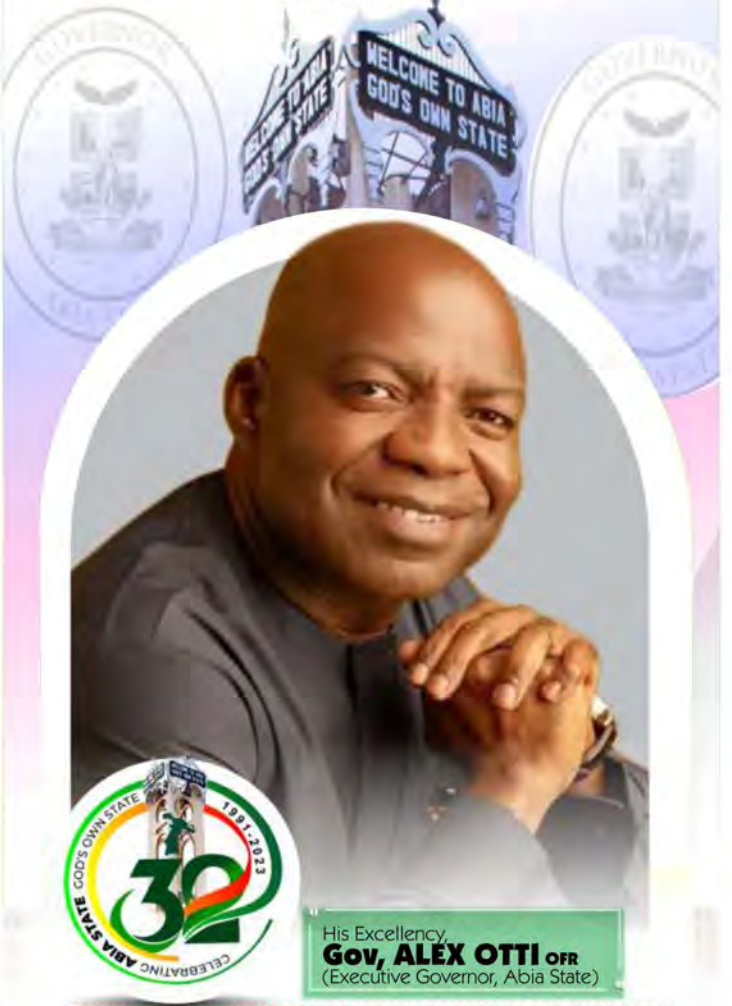
#Abia @32



ENYIMBA STADIUM SHOPPING PLAZA, ABA

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

5th September 2023



His Excellency,
Gov. ALEX OTTI OFR
(Executive Governor, Abia State)



Congratulatory
MESSAGE

The Executives and Traders of Abia GSM and Component Dealers Association Aba most humbly and grateful felicitate with our dear and performing Governor of Abia State **Dr Alex Chioma Otti**, the Hon. Commissioner for Trade , Commerce and Industry

Hon. Dr. Isaac Chimezie Ukaegbu , the good and industrious people of Abia State as Abians celebrate her 32 years of creation .

The GSM and Component Dealers Association will continue to pledge our unalloyed support to the **Dr Alex Chioma Otti's** led administration

May God continue to give our dear Governor the enablement to pioneer the affairs of Abia State .

Signed
NZE GEORGE EZE
Chairman



Congratulatory Message

TO THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ABIA STATE DR. ALEX CHIOMA OTTI (OFR)

We the Executive and the entire members of Enyimba Stadium Shopping Plaza, Aba happily felicitate with our amiable and God fearing Governor of Abia State Dr. Alex Chioma Otti (OFR) on his 100 days in office.

May the good God Almighty grant you all it takes to deliver on your campaign promises to the glory of God and the good people of Abia State and humanity in general.

Long live his Excellency our Executive Governor.
Long live Abia State.
Long live Nigeria.

[Signature]
MAZI NELSON ARIWODO
Chairman

[Signature]
MR OXFORD C. OKORO
Secretary

Culture

It is time for the articulation of a proper cultural policy for the Igbos...*Mazi Onyioha*

Mazi Onu Kama Onyioha is a Sociologist, Cultural Expert and Continental Envoy of the Godian religion. He studied Sociology at the University of North Alabama, Florence Alabama, United State of America (USA) with a special interest on the propagation of Africa Philosophy and Culture (Religion and Culture).

In this interview with a team of the National Ambassador Newspaper Editors Mazi Jones Nnanna Ike, Kingsley Ugorji and Kelechi Eme-Ogidi, Mazi Onyioha takes a look at the Igbo culture, the Igbo festivals and traditional calendar and harps on the need for Abia State Government and the Igbo Nation at large to articulate a clear policy thrust on culture and tourism that will harness the economic and tourism potentials of the region.

Excerpts:

Q: Was there racism when you went to the USA for studies?

Ans: There was much racism. Alabama which is in the region they call south in America is one of the major centres of racism in the United States and elements of that still subsists even till date. We were the ones who battled racism and it was very interesting. When I was there, I noticed that everywhere you go to, people are standing on their racial culture. People of different races define their entire being in terms of their language, religion and ways of life. When I was studying in the United States, I recall a particular incident that brought back to my mind the reality of whom really, I was in the comity of races. I had an argument with my Japanese friend when I threw a jab at him and said 'you Asians are so short and stumpy'. That got him very annoyed and he turned and said 'shut up, African, white man mess you black man stupid'. I felt highly insulted but when we made peace, he went out of his way to explain to me how we allowed white men to colonize our mind and we are almost the white man's slave. When I visited Osaka, Japan, right from the airport, I knew that I came into a culture that is totally different. At the airport, they have the Shinto shrine as they practice Shintoism, all around me, I saw their calligraphers and they were speaking their language. At the end of my stay, I now understood why the Japanese man said to me, "white man mess you black man stupid". Ironically, in Igbo land, in our own land, we speak English, everywhere, you look around, it is just English but it is not bothering us. We have been so colonized in our mind, that we have accepted it as our way of life which is a disaster. Most of us think speaking Igbo in public is not cute. That is wrong. We should be proud to be speaking Igbo than English especially in

this our Igbo homeland.

The Japanese, believe that if God has a son, he would be a Japanese. We have a disaster right now because there is this definition of education that says that education is a course of induction and cultural promotion, an instrument by which individuals are forged to fit squarely into the society as responsible citizens. For us to be actually educated, we need to understand that education has to project and uplift that thing that make us whole (where we get our essence of being).

Q: You have a very deep understanding of the cultural perspective of society, can you say we Igbos have done well with our culture considering the fact that Igbo culture was used Chinua Achebe in his classic novel "Things Fall Apart" to demonstrate to the whole world that the Africans had an integrated culture before the advent European Colonialism into Africa.

Ans: There are three prongs to a people's freedom, each useless without the other. There is the political prong, the economic prong and the cultural prong. The political prong has been achieved as far back as 1960s upon the sweat, blood, tears and incarceration of many Nigerian nationalists and freedom fighters. A lot of people went through hell for us to be able to get this freedom. Now, we are still struggling to stabilize and consolidate it. In the economic prong, we are still struggling with all our advantages of human and natural resources. Then the main one, though the last but not the least, if not the most encompassing is the cultural prong to a people's freedom in which we have done nothing. We have to get our culture on track and all that stuffs and show the world that the Igbos have a culture to celebrate. Culture is a unifying factor in state and nation building, and it is



Mazi Onukama Kalu Onyioha

postulated that any race or people that have no philosophical thought pattern by which it can be identified is regarded as non-existent. So, it is like we give the impression that we do not exist because we do not project our philosophical heritage. There should be a harmonization of the Igbo Fijoku (Ahiajoku, Njoku) New Year Festival/Harvest Festival. The Igbo nation in partnership with relevant stakeholders should institute the Igbo Lunar cycle as the foundation of a New Year Festival in the Igbo nation, Nigeria, Black Africa and its diaspora. The Igbo nation and Nigeria has been celebrating the new year of the European Gregorian calendar and Arab Islamic calendar as though it were ours. Fortunately, we have our original Igbo calendar, authentic for a sustainable new year foundation. Its sustainability is assured

given the fact that the calendar's foundation is derived from the Igbo cosmological world-view from which the Igbo eight days week of Eke, Orié, Afo, Nkwo, Ekenta, Orié, Afonso and Nkwonta originated. The Fijoku New Year Festival usually falls in the August month of the Gregorian calendar. The Igbo nation need to revitalize and unite to build up a cultural identity and parallel affirmation of cultural identities of various clans and ethnic groups.

Q: We are in the season of plenty (harvest), which heralds the new yam festival, which is a very important festival in Igbo land. Have we been able to manage well such a big cultural heritage well?



Traditional rulers praying during the new yam festival

Culture

Time for the articulation of ...

Ans: I will like to point out primarily what we need to understand. People have to be properly educated to even understand what we are doing. This veneration of Yam tuber which is one of the rites in the celebration of the new year has been overflogged. Every year, we are here talking about the new yam and we forget the primary essence of celebration which is the celebration of our new year. There is no race that does not have a new year that they celebrate. So, we have all really allowed the new yam festival to overtake the primary essence of the celebration which is the beginning of the new year. We need to go beyond the symbolism of new yam festival like masquerade prancing up and down, drum beating, varieties of African cuisine to instigate something that has a foundation within our own metaphysics (our own philosophy). After all these, the people will disperse and return to their homes but then the displays represent the easily perishable aspects of a people's culture, scratching merely the surface of the matter. We have not done well in husbanding and managing our rich cultural heritage. The state government has to articulate some kind of cultural policy. There has to be a cultural policy for the state government to adopt and this policy has to be founded on our metaphysics. The rest of the world and almost all races celebrate different new years that are founded on one philosophy or the other, it is not just empty. We cannot sit down and be talking about Yam, yam, yam, you cannot come and attract people from abroad to come here and eat yam. They will not come. We need to articulate a proper cultural policy that will take into consideration the metaphysics of our different cultural festivals all with a view to making it quite attractive for the rest of the world to view as our own unique contribution to the human civilization

Q: The new yam festival is a unique Igbo festival, can you explain in a simpler way, what we are not doing well currently?

Ans: It should be less about Yam but more about celebrating the new year. Every new year falls in the month of August. Since everybody is not in preview of this. It is a knowledge that I am bringing out. The government should be the one out there propagating it. The government should articulate the vision knowing fully well that the competitive spirit will not be there. What I am talking about here is culture, not necessarily religion, even though, our culture is derived from our religion.

Q: Besides the symbolism of yam and masquerades, what are we supposed to be doing that we are not currently doing?

Ans: We should have our new year calendar properly defined, define our new year festivals properly, when defined, you will find out that every other thing will continue to fall into place, we can then talk about tourism and so on. We have not been able to put in place what will draw people to come down here so that our tourist sites



Igbo women showcasing the king of crops-yam during the Iri ji festival

like the Azumini blue river, the caves in Arochukwu etc will become viable. We need to boost tourism visits by developing historic sites in Abia. Other aspects of this cultural policy should include the development of tourism infrastructure and introduction of new technologies in cultural activities.

Q: What should be the essential content of the new year harvest festival that can attract tourists?

Ans: First of all, you know this thing is based on calendar. We have to go back to the Igbo new year calendar, by the time we go back to the calendar, you will find out that alot of our developmental issues will be taken care of because we will be doing

in a week in our calendar. We should work towards adding content to the celebration of the new yam festival. Primarily, it will be a solid serious instrument for the unity of the Igbo nation. We need to increase tourism accessibility to historical cultural sites.

Q: What is your idea of a good cultural policy?

Ans: A good cultural policy should be intellectual in content. It should go beyond bringing people together who jump around masquerades all over the place. These displays represent the easily perishable aspects of a people's culture, scratching merely the surface of the matter. A national cultural policy is generally regarded as an instrument for

particular ethnic cultures. We need to articulate a serious state policy that has to do with putting our culture together purposefully to unite the Igbo nations and achieve development at the end of the day. The envisioned Abia state policy thrust on culture and tourism must recognize the imperative of an intellectually driven cultural/tourism program. Tourism provides economic and employment opportunities. A key component within this envisioned Abia state policy thrust on culture and tourism strategy should be to increase tourism accessibility. ment, then we must really have to do our homework well and get our culture in such a way as to make it attractive. The black diaspora, the African Americans want to connect physically with us but there has to be something, a draw, that brings them here. Our tourism sites, like the Azumini blue river, the caves in Arochukwu etc, would have seen having constant inflows if we had done the right things from time.



War Dancers Performing

things more properly, more like the way the developed nations have handled theirs. This is because over there, everything is based on their calendar. We don't have to be stuck with the western Gregorian calendar, let them do theirs, we do ours. We have 8 days

the promotion of national identity and unity, as well as communication and cooperation among different Nigeria or African cultures, while the federating states' cultural policies stand for the affirmation and development of

There is no race that does not have a new year that they celebrate. So, we have all really allowed the new yam festival to overtake the primary essence of the celebration which is the beginning of the new year.

Culture

Time for the articulation of ...

It is imperative that the State should prioritize its cultural policy thrust, given the incontrovertible fact that every race and culture celebrates a new year festival relevant to their environment and world-view for instance the Jewish lunar calendar new year (Rosh Hashanah), Arab Islamic lunar cycle calendar (Muharram), European Gregorian solar cycle calendar, Indian lunar cycle calendar new year (Vikram Samvat), Chinese lunar calendar new year (Spring Festival) etc. In this vain and having identified the fundamental essence behind the veneration of the new yam as the beginning of a New Year in the Igbo traditional Calendar, the Abia State Government as a cultural policy thrust in partnership with other relevant stakeholders should institute the Igbo Lunar Cycle as the foundation of a New Year Festival for Abia State, the Igbo nation, Nigeria, Black Africa and all blacks in the diaspora. In fact the Fijioke New Year Harvest Festival should be properly organized as a project by the State Government as an annual festival that will assist the tourism sector to meet its stated objectives of expanding its tourism sector. In the United States, there is a yearning desire amongst many black Americans and other diaspora Africans to re-acquaint with their African heritage culturally and economically. This is a factor that is currently fuelling tourism flows in other parts of Africa such as Ghana and South Africa. The irony is that historically many African Americans have Nigerian ancestry as they are discovering using their various

lineage tracing organizations. Many of the blacks in the diaspora hunger to make physical and cultural contact with mother Africa. According to a recent world bank report "Tourism in Africa; "Harnessing Tourism for Improved Growth and Livelihoods" states that African countries can compete with other tourist-rich regions of the world if they can effectively harness and integrate tourism into their economies.

Additionally, the Abia State Government should unite with the Igbo nation and build up an Igbo national cultural identity and parallel affirmation of cultural identities of various clans and ethnic groups

Instigate local and International exposure and patronage of Igbo arts

the education of the present and future generation of our youths through regular conferences, seminars, colloquiums and the mass media.

Q: Let us move away from culture to politics. You are also a political activist. What do you think of 32 years anniversary of Abia and of course the 100 days of in office of Dr. Alex Otti's administration, do you think Abians should be happy celebrating especially considering all that has happened in the past?

Ans: I love that question. When you come to think of it, one of the issues I have raised as the first prong to a people's freedom is political and as I mentioned there, we have achieved it as far back as

that is by the way, I have never believed in the western political system. We were ruling ourselves here comfortably before the Europeans came with their way of government. We had what we call age grade system of government with communism as a guiding national philosophy. In our Igbo Societies we had democratic systems of government that worked for our various sovereign communities. This system worked for our people and guaranteed justice, openness, accountability and transparency in the conduct of public affairs. So, to me, the present system is flawed, there is no magic I expect from it. It does not make sense, first of all, we need to deal with the system that is flawed. The Unitary system we are practicing in Nigeria in the name of democracy is simply suffocating. The system needs some form of structural adjustments. Our people should spearhead the quest for the reform of the Present Nigerian unitary system. We need to do that because our people have a democratic cultural heritage which the present Nigerian unitary system is suffocating

Q: Coming to Abia as a people, how well have we done?

Ans: There are no indices for me to start because Dr. Alex Otti just came in, so where am I going to start saying anything? Maybe I might say I feel a lot of positive reactions, for an instance, at the Isigate, it may be elementary to you but it seems that one big thing has happened at the Isigate, just tarring the place and making it motorable. It is not a rocket science and you just keep wandering why these people did not do this thing, he just came in the other day and sorted that place out and some many other places as well. You wonder what happened to the last administration, that it took them as if they were building space scrappers to the Mars, you don't just understand them. I believe Dr Alex Otti has the requisite qualifications and the character trait to turn things around.



National War Museum Umuahia

and crafts as a source of foreign exchange earnings as well as boost the hospitality and recreational centres in the state

Boost tourism visits by national and international tourists to historic and nature sites in Abia and other Igbo nation states.

* Development of tourism infrastructure and introduction of new technologies in cultural activities.

* Encourage youths, craftsmen and women by creating viable economic vocations in our local communities so as to reduce migratory tendencies to urban areas

* Affirm authentic cultural life, values and cultural needs and expectations of our people

* Establish links between culture and

1960 and we are still struggling to consolidate and stabilize the primary political independence we got from the colonists, the British. You can agree with me that the trajectory has been almost like a disaster up to the present administration we have in place now. But, here in Abia, we pray and pour libation that the new administration itself will bring the change, the whole lot of Abians are seeking because I knew exactly what happened when His Excellency, Dr. Alex Otti won the election. There were jublations everywhere. I am sure, I am very sure, something makes me believe that he will do the right thing. Now,

It is imperative that the state should prioritize its cultural policy thrust, given the incontrovertible fact that every race and culture celebrates a new year festival relevant to their environment and world-view...

Events

Gov Otti's Historic Visit To The Mbakwe's at Avutu Obowo

By: Amarachi Uzoukwu



Recently, Dr Alex Otti the incumbent Governor of Abia State was a guest to Lady Victoria Mbakwe, the 87-year-old widow of Late Dee Sam Onunaka Mbakwe in her country home at Avutu Obowo Imo State. Chief Mbakwe was the first civilian Governor of Old Imo State who is generally acclaimed as one of the best political leaders that has emerged from the Eastern part of the country.

Dr Alex Otti has always made known his position of being a successor to the Michael Okpara- Sam Mbakwe heritage of a strong and effective leadership for the Igbo's. He has so far been demonstrating a strong commitment towards such ideal in a most practicable way through resetting and retooling the structures of governance with the ultimate aim of providing good governance in Abia State. Presently the Nigerian media industry is being daily bombarded with several information that oozes out from Abia governmental quarters about its numerous positive activities. This is all thanks to the acute awareness and continuation of the Michael Okpara-Mbakwe good leadership heritage.

It is also within this context that the recent visit of Dr Alex Otti to the Mbakwe's will be properly appreciated.

The Abia state Governor had equally used the opportunity of the visit to called on present and future political leaders to draw inspiration from the former Governor of old Imo state, late Samuel Onunaka Mbakwe who played a pivotal role in advancing the infrastructure and development of the Eastern Region. It will be recalled that The late Chief Sam Mbakwe who served as the Governor of the old Imo State from 1979 to 1983 is widely remembered for his significant contributions to the development and progress of the region.

Governor Otti who was received by the 87-year-old widow of the late political icon Lady Victoria Ahuikpeghe Mbakwe described the late Mbakwe as a political icon who left indelible imprints on the sands of time especially in leadership and development of the Old Imo state and the entire South East Region.

The Governor noted that the late political icon left lasting legacies of development

and progress in the Eastern Region and added that his legacy continues to influence the political landscape of the old Imo State, the entire South East geopolitical zone and beyond.

He emphasized that some of the quality roads built in Aba and other parts of the eastern region during the administration of the late Mbakwe are still standing today.

Otti said; "Dee Sam Mbakwe was our leader, if you go through his record you will understand that he was a great leader, his achievements have not been equaled by anyone and not to talk of surpassing him "If you go through roads in Aba today, you remember when he was Governor of old Imo State, the roads he built several years after him are all still standing till date but the ones which subsequent administrations that came after him built have all disappeared. He showed he was a great leader and did very well in the old Imo which included Abia State".

He thanked God for blessing the deceased widow with long life and good health and assured that he would abide by her advice in offering selfless service to humanity.

Earlier the Widow of the late Sam Mbakwe, Lady Victoria Ahuikpeghe Mbakwe accompanied by his first son Chief Alex Mbakwe while thanking the Governor for the visit, congratulated him on his inauguration as the 5th democratically elected Governor of Abia state.

Lady Mbakwe said the personal visit by Governor Otti depicts the value and importance he places on her husband's leadership of the old Imo State as well as the Mbakwe family and humanity. She prayed God to protect the Governor as he steers the ship of the state to attain the success her husband made while alive. She noted that Governor Alex Otti is the first sitting Governor to personally visit the family for a long time and called on both Abia people and the Igbo's in general to sustain their support for the governor to enable him succeed.

Governor Otti, was accompanied on the visit by the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Barr Ikehukwu Uwana, Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu, First Deputy Chairman of Abia state Council of traditional Rulers, Eze Nelson Nmerengwa among others.



GOV. OTTI PASSIONATE TO PROPEL ASCOHMAT TO A MODEL INSTITUTION -RECTOR.

By: Nwokoma Blessing - ABA

The Governor of Abia State Dr Alex Chioma Otti is desperately passionate about breaking barriers in other to make ASCOHMAT a model citadel of learning both academically, structurally, morally and economically." Mr. Okezie Aloy E. The Rector of the Institution dropped this cheering news to the Institution's community during a town hall meeting held in the school auditorium with the management and staff of the School. He stressed that within the short stay in office of the government of Dr Alex Otti, much remarkable impacts have been made in the school. He opined that the government has shown commitment in very unique and unprecedented ways including fully funding the subvention account, even clearing of the 7 months subvention backlogs owed to the school by the outgone



remained was caused by the past administration in the state. The Rector said that the current administration is set to give the school a new auditorium befitting its status as the oldest Heath College in the State. He also mentioned that plans are on the way to construct a brand-new staff recreation annex.

Responding, Mr. Ndubuisi Ezenwoke from works department appreciated the Rector and Management team for their show of concern and their unrelated efforts in ensuring that the environment of the school is conducive for the staff and students and plead with the management to work assiduously the talk by ensuring that the staff received their wages as at when due as most of them have no other means of livelihood but their salaries.



administration. He also said that the government has given listening ears to the agitation for increase in the money inflow to the school from the government purse.

On the issue of delay in salary payment, the Rector pleaded with the staff to exercise some patience as it is not peculiar with the college rather the governor is trying to get certain things right before moving to clear it. He pledged the administration's commitment to making sure that workers smile on or before the 28 of every month in line with the policy statement of the Governor Dr Alex Otti administration. He also applauded them for their peaceful disposition in the face of hard biting economic situation in the country. The Rector used the opportunity of the Town Hall Meeting to remind them about the achievements of the present government which has translated into timely payment of emoluments while also reiterating that whatever challenges that

Also Mr. Stanley Nwakama of Public Health Department enjoined the management to strengthen communication channels between the management and staff to avoid creating avenue for fake and malicious news from thriving which might create anarchy or confusion in the system. He furthermore pledged the unalloyed commitment of the staff of the department and by extension the entire institution so long as they are being carried along in the scheme of things.

The various unions including NASU, ASUP and departmental heads were fully represented at the town hall meeting.



Special Interview

Attitudinal change: A must for all Abians - Pastor Dike

My name is pastor Dike Nwankwo, the Director General, Abia State Orientation Agency.

Ques: The Abia State Orientation Agency was just set up by the Governor during the state's 32nd Anniversary, Can you tell us the idea behind this?

Ans: His Excellency the Governor, Dr Alex Chioma Otti, told us that even when the state is embarking on massive infrastructural development and pursuing development in many angle, it is important that Abians embrace attitudinal change because without it, whatever one is putting on ground cannot be sustained. So the Abia State Orientation Agency is an agency of the government, saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that Abians begin to do things right, that Abians embrace change, begin to do things the way that can enhance development. For example, the issue of waste management, even if you put all the waste buckets in the world, employ more hands, but if the people do not understand within themselves that cleanliness is next to godliness and they have a duty to keep their environment clean, no matter what the government does in that sector, it will amount to nothing. So that angle of conceptualizing the citizenry, making them to understand that they have a responsibility and obligation in ensuring that all the government does is for their own good and again, the agency is there to bridge the gap of communication. The agency by its structure is positioned to drive information down to the grassroots, because we have presence in the local government, wards/ communities. So the idea is to educate, interpret government policies and programmes to the people so that the people can cue in and buy into what government is doing. That way, it is easier to follow and cooperate with the government and we will have a beautiful result.

Ques: What strategies have your Agency put in place to actualize these lofty functions?

Ans: We have well mapped out strategies in place. The launching of the agency said it all. When we launched the agency, we read out strategies on how to go. For example, in this quarter, we have mapped out programmes that the agency will embark upon. Basically, what we are doing now, is to start from the government itself. By the time we kick start properly, we would start with work ethics, workshop for civil servants. Everyone in Abia state knows that the civil service in the state is not what it should be. It cannot be productive because of the way workers operate. Workers come to work by 10am and close by 2pm. That is unacceptable and we can't get optimum result that way. So, we are trying to embark on a workshop where workers will be thought, trained on productivity and how to engage in their functions to obtain maximum productivity. With this, we are starting from the inside, cleaning the house from the inside before we come outside. That is part of what we have mapped out for this quarter and a whole lot of other campaigns that would be going side by side.

Ques: Are there programmes set up by your agency to champion further the Made in Aba products?

Ans: Yes!! But for now, His Excellency, the Governor, has not put his spotlight in that area, but naturally speaking, we must promote all that we can. Like the Akwete cloth, we need to promote it more. Though we are promoting it already. That is one of the things Abia State can be proud of. It is a campaign that has been on and the agency would take it further, so that people will know that there are areas Abia is good at (comparative advantage) and in terms of clothing, we are number one. In-fact the agency is positioned to announce to Nigeria and the world that Abia is not just number one in alphabetical order, but number one in everything- business, tourism etc. That's why the job is wholistic and massive but we can't take everything at the same time. It can be done bit by bit. The campaign is continuous, it is not going to be a one stop campaign.

Ques: Are there existing structures in the Agency to help deliver on this mandate?

Ans: By the Law that established the agency, it provided for structures, the administrative structure and one thing that is very interesting about the structure is that, it has a local government management committee. Outside the Director General, you have four directors and other members of staff, as well as the management team. Then at the local government level, you have five-man management committee, headed by a coordinator.



Director General Abia State Orientation Agency, Pastor Dike Nwankwo, Kate Okereke during the interview session

The chairman of the traditional rulers council of that local government is a member, the Education Secretary is also a member and the information officer for that local government is equally a member. That is for the LGA. Then for the wards/communities, you have one person per ward, what it means is that, we have 184 persons across the state that are called ward orientation officers. Their job is to ensure that information gets to the various hamlets and compounds in the communities and Local Government Areas. What it means is that, whatever we do at the state headquarters, there are people who drive it across. This is the major reason we made a proposal to the state governor to help us with mobility because it is a mass mobilization agency. You can't be involved in that function without the prerequisites materials needed for the job. Mobility (vehicle) is key in ensuring we achieve our aim. We have a perfect structure that can drive the functions of the agency to the grassroots and also to extract feedback because what happens in most administration is that, there is no feedback mechanism through which government can understand and feel the pulse of the people. This agency has the mechanism to bring back to the government feedbacks, so that government can also check and re-access what they are doing, whether it is in line with what the people want, because it is the government that want to listen to the people that take feedback important. When we get to the grassroots, we feed the government and they take further actions.

Ques: Considering the wide scope of your activities, do you intend to collaborate with other Agencies that can help achieve your goals?

Ans: Like the Governor would always say, no agency is an island. We must collaborate, synergize for results. For example, when we talk about the issue of waste management, we are touching on the environment, we are touching on ASEPA functions and because government is one, the collaboration is very important. For example, we have done a jingle for waste management, that is a good example of collaboration. Even the Ministry of Information, their job is to bring out information for the government and defend the government. Our own job is to take the information brought out and drive it down. So that everybody can understand the information, respond and react to it and then get feedbacks and bring back to the government. We are collaborating with the Ministry of Information, helping them drive their message. From what I have come to realize, every Ministry needs our services, for example, the new Army General in Ohafia, called me that he wants to embark on town hall meetings, so they can speak to the people about security. We are the one that will organize it for him. Bearing in mind the structures we have on ground already; it is easy to get people together for the town hall meeting. To that extent, we are open and properly positioned to assist and to collaborate with any agency of government, to ensure they achieve their set goals, because when they do, the government has succeeded

Question: What should Abians be expecting and what assurance are you giving that this agency will perform differently from what we used to know in the past?

Q All what we are saying is that, we are in a new Abia. That should sink into the consciousness of every Abia citizen.

Ans: All what we are saying is that, we are in a new Abia. That should sink into the consciousness of every Abia citizen. This is important and the reason is that, when you tell yourself you are in a new Abia, it creates in you, the understanding that there is something that was wrong with the old one and you begin to trace what was wrong with the old one. Now, that has helped you to know that there are new ways of doing things. In the new Abia, there is an expectation from the government and as well, expectations from the people. The people are expecting that the government saying it's a new Abia, should be able to do things differently, likewise the government is expecting the citizens to do things differently too.

New Abia is about the campaign of ensuring that the people see that we are in a different scenario, different government and environment. What is this new Government all about? A government that works, a government that pay salaries as at when due, a government that do not rely on propaganda, a government that tells the truth, a government that has the blueprint of development, a government that is ready to make sacrifices and drive development to the grassroots. Our enlightenment campaign is also about a new Abia. A new Abia where people will take responsibility for any function given to them. A new Abia where civil service will be like private sector, being productive and result oriented. A new Abia where investors come without bottlenecks. We once heard how people went abroad to look for investors, that is needless and baseless. When the environment is ripe, investors will come. Put the basic things in place, investors will come. Investors will only come to a place they know they would make profit. Therefore, once the enabling environment is there, they come on their own. We are talking about a new Abia that can give this leverage for investors to troop in to invest. These direct investments can create jobs and that will reduce drastically the unemployment level in our society. That is the new Abia we are talking about. Are you part of it? Some social media critics said the new Abia is a scam. This is simply because they do not understand where we are going to. By the next six months to one year, it will be clear to them that it is not business as usual.

Ques: Do you have the facilities to deliver on your mandate?

Ans: The Government is serious about this Agency and the Governor has demonstrated such seriousness in no small measure. Before now, we did not have an office, but because of the importance of the assignment, the Governor acquired a brand-new property, just for this office to take off. We are grateful to him and we are ready as an Agency to deliver on our set mandate. There are plans by the State Government to provide us with other necessary facilities that will enable us take off properly

Ques: Tell us about some of your challenges?

Ans: We do not want to dwell on our challenges because in any fruitful endeavor, there must be challenges. We do not really see challenges as an issue but convert every challenge as an opportunity. What you may likely see as a challenge is funding. This is a massive project, highly capital intensive. Anything that has to do with the entire state, MDAs, is capital intensive. But we have not come to that point, because we are only starting. We are also looking at other organizations we can partner with, thereby converting challenges to opportunities to drive the message. The state alone cannot drive this project. We call upon good spirited Abians, even those living in diaspora to join in the collaboration. Soon we will release our web address and other social media addresses for those that want to relate with us.

Snapshots



THE FURY OF CLIMATE CHANGE

By: Prince Blessing Lazarus

It is now becoming clear to all discerning members of the human community that climate change is real and that its consequences to both humans and the environment could be quite severe.

This reality was brought nearer home with two environmental disasters that afflicted two North African regions. The first one was an earthquake in Marrakech Morocco while the second was flooding in Derma, Eastern Libya.

The Morocco Earthquake:

The first of such disaster was a magnitude 6.8 earthquake that devastated the Atlas mountain region around Marrakesh Morocco. The earthquake occurred on Friday 8 September, 2023. The earthquake has so far killed more than 3000 people while a lot more such number has been declared missing. Also, thousands of people have been displaced while property worth billions of dollars have been destroyed.

The earthquake which happened around a village 54km south of Marrakesh struck around 11.11pm local time. The earthquake is regarded as the deadliest ever since more than 60 years ago.

Libyan Flood Disaster:

The other environmental disaster that struck another region of the North African Nation of Libya is a flood disaster.

The flood was caused by hurricane strength storm which has been nicknamed Cyclone Daniel. It is now regarded as the deadliest and costliest Mediterranean tropical-like cyclone ever recorded worldwide since cyclone Nargis in 2008. It has also gone into records as the deadliest weather event of 2023 till date.

Floods submerged the Port city of Derna, Eastern Libya washing thousands of people and homes out at sea after two upstream dams burst under the pressure of torrential rains triggered by a hurricane strength storm.

The flood has caused a lot of destruction and ruins in the city of Derna. According to the Libyan Red Crescent, there were 11,300 flooding deaths in Derna on September 10th and more than 10,000 people reportedly missing.

Total burnaza, The Acting Country Director in Libya for the International Medical Corps estimates that around 25% of the city was basically destroyed as a result of the flooding. One discerning reporter categorized the Libyan flood as a climate and infrastructural catastrophe.



Sectoral Glance

Spotlight on Abia Ministry of Sports

By: Our Correspondent

The State Ministry of Sports under the leadership of Sir Nwaobilor Anababa as the Honourable Commissioner has recorded some remarkable achievements since coming into office that includes the following.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth Development has organized and executed International Youth Day celebration in the state in August 2023 themed: "Green Skills for Youths: Towards a sustainable world".

The Ministry has also overseen and supervised the under 18 and under 16 football tournaments organized by the Youth Federation of Nigeria (YSFON) at the final level between Dream Boys Football Club of Bayelsa against New Generation Football Club of Umuahia and Future Stars Football club of Aba against New Generation FC respectively. The ministry, with the support of the Governor, sponsored the Enyimba International Football Club in the 2022/ 2023 Nigerian Premier League Championship (Super 6) to emerge as the winner of the tournament.

The Ministry has also sponsored athletes in the African Para badminton Championship in Kampala, Uganda. The athletes brought

home for the state Four Gold Medals, One Silver Medal and Four Bronze Medals.

Also, in para- powerlifting, the Ministry has recorded huge success as two Athletes of Abia origin contested in the Dubai 2023 Para-powerlifting World Championship (female category) and won two gold medals and 1 silver medal which qualifies one for 2023 Olympics in Paris.

In the area of boxing, the ministry has sponsored a boxer with Abia State Sports Council to participate in the boxing trials organized by the Nigerian Boxing Federation at the National Stadium, Lagos in preparation for 2024 Paris



Sir Nwaobilor Anababa the Hon. Commissioner for Sports



The winning Eyimba Football Club



Gov. Oti, Wife, Deputy Governor with members of Super FALCONS of The Abia Origin

Olympic African Qualifiers Enyimba Stadium Aba etc. holding in Dakar, Senegal.

The Honourable Commissioner for Sports and Youth Development, Sir Anababa has also assured of partnering sports institutions to promote other sports and encourage youth empowerment. These include Wrestling championed by the African Wrestling Champion, Ambassador Osita Offor; Golf championed by the Elites Global Golf Academy and Teqball championed by the Secretary General, Teqball Federation of Nigeria etc.

GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA
ABIA STATE COVID 19 ACTION RECOVERY STIMULUS [FADAMA ,NG-CARES]

Congratulatory
Message

The Management and Staff of Abia State Covid 19 Action Recovery Stimulus [FADAMA ,NG-CARES] heartily felicitates our amiable Governor Dr, Alex Otti on his 100 remarkable and eventful days in office.

Sir, we sincerely appreciate your modest, remarkable and visible achievements within this period of your administration as we remain committed to nursing the growth of the New Abia. We salute your indefatigable transformational spirit geared towards the overall development of Abia State

Amarachi Anyim (Mrs)
Ag. State Project Coordinator.



NATIONAL PALM PRODUCE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (NPPAN)

PALM OIL GOODSHED, UMUOPARA, UMUAHIA



CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

We the Executive and the entire members of National Palm Produce of Nigeria, Goodshed Umuahia happily felicitate with our amiable and God fearing Governor of Abia State Dr. Alex Chioma Otti (OFR) on his 100 days in office.

May the good God Almighty grant you all the wisdom and strength to deliver on your campaign promises to the glory of God and the good people of Abia State and humanity in general. We are solidly behind you sir. Long live his Excellency our Executive Governor. Long live Abia State. Long live Nigeria.

Chimaroke Ukaegbu
Chairman

Ezenwa Enwerem
Secretary



Story

“NATIONAL AMBASSADOR” GETTING BETTER AND BETTER



By: **Mike Iheadindu**

The current story of the National Ambassador, Abia State Government owned media flagship could be metaphorically likened to that of the Agama Lizard in ancient Igbo folklore. The Agama lizard had struggled to climb and reach the peak of the Iroko tree. Once at the top of the tree, he had looked downwards from hence he started and sensing the distance and dept of his effort, he had nodded his head in confidence and averred that if humans did not applaud his effort, he will do so himself.

It is this story of the Agama Lizard that informs this brief “appraisal of the National Ambassador” since the advent of the new administration in Abia State under Gov. Alex Chioma Otti. It is also important to note that the mainstream media flagship suffered the most from the bad governance structure that existed in the state for decades as was succinctly reported in the writeup on its 31st anniversary which was published in the last edition of the “National Ambassador”.

The new administration had enthroned a new management team led by Mazi Jones Nnanna Ike, a veteran journalist, writer, publisher and administrator to take charge and rebuild the newspaper away from the locus years of its

past experience. Since then it has been a record of progress in all its affairs as the leader of the mainstream media organ of the State Government. The following achievements recorded in the Corporation attests to this assertion.

A. Perhaps the most fundamental achievement of the new management could be reckoned as the shifting away of the editorial position of the flagship from the defense of the looters of the state treasury as was the norm in the past to that of objectivity and defense as well as the projection of the fundamental values of a democratic society.

B. Digitalization of the Operation: The complete digitalization of the operation has led to a steady and uninterrupted publication of the online (E-Edition) version of the National Ambassador “The national ambassador online”. The online version has continued to record numerous followers on a continuous basis.

C. Associated with this digitalization process is the creation of a National Ambassador Website (www.nationalambassadorngr.com). News Post/Information on the website is now recognized by google

This giant step is helping the States media

flagship to disseminate all information at its disposal at a much faster rate across the globe.

D. A steady improvement on the hard copy of “National Ambassador”. There has also been a steady effort to improve the publication of the hard copy edition of the State flagship “The National Ambassador” especially as it relates to the writing/content quality, the editorial quality, the design quality and the production quality.

E. Improvements on the circulation figures The overall improvements enumerated above has impacted positively the circulation figures as the demand for the “National Ambassador” publication continues to rise amongst discerning readers who now yearn for more of it.

Another important aspect of this rise in circulation figures is the fact that other relevant agencies like Research Centers, Libraries, Archival Departments gets their complimentary copies free from the Corporation. The idea is to domicile present but relevant information for researchers and the future generation.

Taken all the above into consideration especially as it relates to a very difficult operational environment, we are doing well. Surely, we are getting better and better.

Congratulations CELEBRATING ABIA



EVANSINO HUMANITARIAN FOUNDATION

MOTTO: THE NAME OF THE LORD IS OUR STRONG TOWER



To Provide Social, Educational
And Economic Empowerment
To Women, Youth And Children,
And Embark An Evangelistic
Outreach



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CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

The Board, Management and Staff of Evansino Evansino Foundation, heartily congratulate the Governor of Abia State, Dr Alex Chioma Otti (OFR), on the celebration of Abia @ 32 and his 100 days in office.

We pray that the Almighty God will continuously lead you alright in your rulership of God's own state.



Signed : **Evang. Emmanuel Josiah**
PRESIDENT / FOUNDER
EVANSINO HUMANITARIAN SERVICES