



JUNE EDITION VOL. 12. 2021

NIDCOM

NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA COMMISSION



Anniversary

DIASPORA NEWSLETTER



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THE NATIONAL DIASPORA DAY CELEBRATION: BEYOND REUNION OF NIGERIANS

By: Gabriel Odu



Hon. ABIKE DABIRI-EREWA
CHAIRMAN / CEO
NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA COMMISSION

According to The World Bank and Price Water Coopers (PWC), these home remittances serve as economic buffers and safety nets to families for: school fees, feeding, hospital bills and many other support systems. Meanwhile, a chunk of the remittances are channelled into real estate and commercial businesses. Another reason, why Nigerians in the Diaspora should be celebrated, is the fact that many Nigerians living abroad are top level professionals in cutting edge technologies, medicine, engineering, energy, sports, entertainment, media, law, logistics and services, among others. These achievers have been celebrated globally by their countries of sojourn. This, naturally should be replicated by their country of birth; a sure way for national integration and development. Still on the matter of National Diaspora Day Celebration. It also provides a platform for networking, re-union and stocking-taking.

As a mark of honour to Nigerians living abroad, the Federal Government of Nigeria has designated July 25, every year as the National Diaspora Day. The inaugural Diaspora Day Celebration took place on July 25, 2005. So far, out of the 16 years of its establishment, 14 editions have been organised and celebrated. Now, the newly established Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), under the Chairmanship of Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa has organised and celebrated two editions. These were held in 2019 (physically marked) and 2020 (by webinar due to COVID-19), and NiDCOM is set to host its third edition on July 25, 2021; being the 15th edition in a series of its 16 years of establishment.

Why celebrate the Diaspora? Why a special day for the Diaspora? These are pertinent questions agitating the minds of some Nigerians especially those at home. With an estimated demography of about 17 million Nigerians living outside the sovereign boundaries of Nigeria, sending home remittances of about \$25 billion US dollars annually. It becomes obvious that this segment of Nigerians deserve recognition and celebration and should not be ignored. It is also worthy of note that these home remittances are over 83 per cent of the National budget and 6.1 per cent of the Nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

It serves as an opportunity for government to engage Nigerians more constructively- be it at macro-economic level or in organised private sector for meaningful national impact and development. Meanwhile, the July 25, 2021 National Diaspora Day Celebration has as its theme: "DIASPORA INTEGRATION FOR NATIONAL PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ". The idea is to anchor on the levers of peace to accelerate Diaspora engagement for national growth and development as no nation succeeds in an atmosphere anchored on bitterness, as well as, hatred and divisive tendencies. Key presenters to discuss the theme are: 1. Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations, Dr Amina Mohammed 2. President, African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina 3. Chief of Staff to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Prof. Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, CON. A special feature is the celebrity interview with Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director General, World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The National Diaspora Day Celebration 2021 has a special attraction: the presentation of the National Diaspora Policy, adopted and ratified, by the Federal Executive Council (FEC). Of note, is a special segment dedicated to 2nd and 3rd generation of Nigerian Diaspora as a way of fast tracking the reconnection process with the homeland.

The NDD provides an excellent opportunity for the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), to rev its noble strides in the last two years of its establishment. The National Diaspora Day since the coming on board of NiDCOM, is no longer a talk-show but an action-packed show with practical deliverables. Thanks to the ebullient leadership of Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa a.k.a, Lady Diaspora. Nigerians in Diaspora have identified specific projects in Nigeria

and are very well engaged in: Health sector (world-class hospitals are being built), Education (schools are being built), Real Estates (houses are being built), Agribusiness (farms and ranches being made), Sports and Entertainment (sport academies and stadia being built), Media (constant and consistent engagement with Diaspora Nigerians) through information-sharing on programmes and projects of government at National and sub-National levels.

CONSTITUTION REVIEW: DIASPORA VOTING CATALYST FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

By Omolabake Omoniyi



Do you know that about one hundred and nineteen countries in the world conducts Diaspora Voting? As Nigeria moves towards the 2023 General Elections, questions are still being asked by Nigerians in Diaspora on how long they would be allowed to realize and exercise their constitutional rights in their country of origin. To this end, The Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in diaspora commission (NiDCOM), Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, led other Diasporans to canvass for the rights of Nigerians living abroad on Diaspora Voting at the National Public Hearing on further alteration to the Provisions of the 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Dabiri-Erewa emphasized, the need for Nigeria to follow suit, as the Nigerian Diaspora cannot afford to be left out given their humongous contributions to the Nigerian economy.

Prince Ade Omole, Chairman Nigerian Diaspora Voting Council in his presentation before the committee, explained that the Diaspora Voting Bill which has passed second reading in the

National Assembly is seeking to amend Section 77 and 117 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to allow Nigerians in the Diaspora participate in electoral process. Omole further said that the entire Nigerian Capital (stock) budget is \$20 billion and the budget of Nigeria is between \$30 to \$32 billion dollars, adding that Nigerians in the Diaspora remit about that amount of money to the economy.

Participants who joined The NIDCOM Boss via zoom from all continents of the world for the Public Hearing by the Nigerian Senate include: Dr Pemus Eweama--Chairperson of Nigerian Association of Western Australia, and Mr. Ayo Akinfe--CANUK, United Kingdom. Others were Prince Ben Okoli -- NICASA President, South Africa, Dr Yetunde Omede-- Rep Women, USA., Amb. Edward Sarki--DG Diaspora Group, Gombe State, Wale Adesanya-- Nigerian-Canadian Business Network and Abiodun Odunuga-- France and Youth. Other presenters are Dr. James Iyore-- Nigerian Physician Advocacy Group, Obed Monago--Chairman, NIDO Americas, Engr. Nazeer Alhassan-- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Dr. Abba Elgujja-- Infection Control Unit, King Khaled University Hospital, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia all expressed their desire to participate in the electioneering process in Nigeria, and called for an amendment to the Constitution to make Diaspora voting a reality.

NATIONAL DIASPORA POLICY: A Step Towards Quality Implementation

By Khadija Shehu Bamalli



Following the ratification of the National Diaspora Policy by the Federal Executive Council, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) has been keen on a successful implementation of this holistic policy. Towards achieving this, a training for some staff of the Commission on Project Management was facilitated in collaboration with EU-IOM, with the theme: Project Management; Key To Policy Implementation. The training which aims to build staff capacity towards efficient implementation of the policy was held on 4th to 6th June, 2021 at Sawalino Hotel, keffi, Nasarawa State.

Ms. Elizabeth Poage, the representative of Chief of Mission IOM, in her welcome address, re-emphasised the need for strategic implementation of the policy while noting that a policy without implementation is of no benefit. The programme was declared open with a remark by Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), who was represented by Mrs Victoria Adeosun, NiDCOM Director of Administration.

On Day One of the programme, Mr Amos Ojo, trained the participants on Project Management, Project Cycle Management, key Qualities of a good project and Key project Documents after which an evaluation was conducted before the closing. Day Two was anchored by Mr. Joshua Awolaye and centred on the topics; Theory of Change and how it can be used to track change throughout the project cycle, Monitoring and Evaluation in Project Cycle and Logical Framework.

The programme came to an end with a review of the previous day after which Mr Kolawale Olugbemi facilitated interactive sessions on Financial Management, Understanding basic financial management concepts and processes, Developing competence in budgeting and financial reporting, Compliance and financial control in promoting Value for Money (VFM) and Complaint expenditures. The three-day training further proves that the adoption of the National Diaspora Policy is a great achievement and a highly commendable feat for the Commission. The training was very practical and in-line with the Policy, mission, vision and objectives of the Commission.

JUNE 12: STAKEHOLDERS CANVASS FOR MORE PARTICIPATION OF DIASPORANS IN NATION BUILDING

By Abughidyer Doosughun

In commemoration of the 2021 Democracy Day celebrations in Nigeria, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) held a two-hour webinar session in conjunction with the Nigeria-American Public Affairs Committee (NAPAC) and the Nigerian Think-Thank Group, to set the road map for the participation of Nigerian Diaspora in nation building. A resounding commendation was given to the President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration on the declaration of June 12, as Democracy Day.

The election was acclaimed the freest democratic process in Nigeria's political history and won by MKO Abiola on June 12, 1993 though annulled by the Gen. Ibrahim Babangida Military-led Administration. It is on this standpoint that a cross section of Stakeholders across the globe have called for more inclusion and participation of Nigerians in the Diaspora in the democratic process in Nigeria. At the webinar, a former British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr Paul Arkwright in his speech commended President Muhammadu Buhari for being on the path of democratic progress with a lot of improvement in the years to come.

Arkwright, who was one of the panelists, however listed four areas of improvement to include: increase in representation of women and youth in democratic process in Nigeria, reduction in take home pay of the National Assembly and political office holders, reduction in the influence of money in politics and adequate representation of all ethnic groups, especially the minority groups in the electoral and democratic process. Commending the role of NiDCOM so far, the envoy emphasised the role of the Nigerians in the Diaspora and their contributions to national development, stressing that they must be involved in the democratic process.



Contributing to the discussion, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, the Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) said the Commission will continue to engage the diaspora, particularly women and youth, stressing that the recently approved diaspora policy provides a holistic map for constructive diaspora engagement. She echoed the need for diaspora voting, adding that the issue was exhaustively tabled at the recent Public hearing on Constitutional amendment. The NiDCOM boss also advised Nigerians living abroad to speak well about their country, Nigeria and join hands with the government to contribute their quota to national development.

In another contribution, Dr Veronica Ufoghure, Chair of NAPAC stressed the need to lift Nigeria up, and participate actively in the electoral process as being done in the US and other European countries. She, however, listed eight areas of interventions which include security, conversation, misinformation, trade, wired fraud and corruption, election process participation, I.T expertise and creation of a Global Nigerian Diaspora Think-Thank group, among others.

In addition, one of the children of late Chief MKO Abiola and winner of June 12, 1993 Presidential Election, Abdulmumin Abiola, reiterated the fact that Nigeria is a great country and everyone must participate in the democratic process.

Abiola, who clad in his father's June 12 insignia dress, thanked President Muhammadu Buhari for recognising June 12 as Democracy Day after 25 years of the annulled election, urging Nigerians not only to participate in the democratic process but to also hold the leaders accountable. Mr Bayo Adedosu, a resident in Canada, stressed the need for Nigerians to show patriotism, while calling on leaders to be accountable.

Mr Tony Isama lauded President Muhammadu Buhari's massive strides in infrastructural development while calling for collaboration among the numerous diaspora groups.

Other speakers Mr Audu Maikori, Dr Nelson Aloya, Mr Bolaji Lewis and Mr Stephen Akinfodu gave their appreciation to the Buhari administration's recognition of June 12, as Democracy Day and urged Nigerians in Diaspora to leverage their influence, time and resources to contribute to the growth and development of the country. It was agreed at the platform that Nigeria is home to everyone whether you are home or abroad, the development process of this nation is a collective responsibility so everyone must join hands together to achieve this goal.

UFC'S KAMARU USMAN TO BUILD AN ACADEMY IN NIGERIA

By Khadija Shehu Bamalli

The greatest thing about home is in it being where the heart lies. Kamaru Usman (aka, the Nigerian Nightmare), Nigeria's Ambassador and multi-decked Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) fighter, made known, his plans to give back to the country, by setting up a sporting academy during his visit to the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) in Abuja. Usman, who has been away from Nigeria for over a decade, expressed much joy and happiness for being at home once again.

The international sports celebrity, who was born in Auchi, stated his intention of setting up an academy to train Nigerian youths on his expertise: kick-boxing, boxing and mixed martial arts. He encouraged youths to work hard, while noting that no impossibility is insurmountable if believed. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, the Chairman/CEO, NiDCOM, who received him said his homecoming, brings a message of hope, to signify Nigeria's unity in diversity.

She described him as a kind-hearted Champion, who wants to empower the youths of Nigeria, in the area of sports while calling on other Nigerian Diaspora to follow Usman's noble example, in contributing to the country's development, in their various capacities. The NiDCOM Boss also stated that the Commission is ever ready to assist him towards implementing his vision. "This is indeed a boost to the future of sports in Nigeria", NiDCOM Boss said.



DRUG REHABILITATION /ADVOCACY: NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA PLEDGE THEIR SUPPORT.

By: Bridget Temtsen



In recent years there has been an increase in number of drug abuse cases in Nigeria. Drug abuse can be described as the excessive use of psychoactive drugs such as alcohol, pain medications, or illegal drugs. Drug abuse is a huge issue that has been difficult to address for many years, particularly among youths. As we all know, drug abuse is not only harmful to one's health but also has negative impact on the society. As such, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) are teaming up to encourage some Nigerians who have indicated interest to build more rehabilitation centres in Nigeria in order to combat the alarming rise in drug abuse.

The Chairman/CEO of NIDCOM, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa made this known when she paid a courtesy visit to Brigadier General Muhammad Buba Marwa, Chairman of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in his office in Abuja. During the visit, Hon Dabiri-Erewa stated that with the alarming rate of drug abuse in the country, some Nigerians in the Diaspora have shown interest in building rehabilitation centres across the country but their major challenge she said is land and a lot of them are even willing to offer free counselling services.

The visit to NDLEA has become necessary, according to the NIDCOM boss in the light of Zainab Aliyu's case, which was heard on May 14, 2019 in Saudi Arabia when Zainab was allegedly accused of drug trafficking and consequently sentenced to death but through the intervention of President Muhammadu Buhari, facilitated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, NIDCOM, Zainab Aliyu and Ibrahim Ibrahim were set free.

The intriguing thing here is that judgement on the matter is yet to be adjudicated giving room for those culpable walking about freely without hindrance. Dabiri-Erewa added that "the culprits have been apprehended but they are walking about freely. It has been two years and nothing has been done. "Zainab Aliyu who was present at the visit with her sister appreciated the intervention of President Muhammad Buhari in her case and also pleaded for justice, "my case has been in court for over two years and some months now. All I want is justice for me and other victims like me", she said. The Chairman, NDLEA, Brigadier Buba Marwa who commended NiDCOM for its excellent public image and accomplishments within a short period, revealed his interest in the case and assured that his office will not relent until justice is served. Brigadier General Marwa gave assurances that the airports are now more strict and efforts have been intensified in the airports to safeguard innocent citizens and reduce drug related incidence.

Marwa also welcomed NiDCOM's initiative where by Diaspora Nigerians are willing and ready to embark on sensitization and counselling against drug use, abuse and trafficking especially by young adults and the building of more rehabilitation centres across the country. The NDLEA Boss stated further that more rehabilitation centres are needed, "as we seize and prosecute, we should also consider those who abuse substances and find ways to rehabilitate them", he said.

NiDCOM Boss commends DOWA, a diaspora youth NGO

By: Deborah Tochukwu Anaelechi

The youths undeniably make up the larger percentage of the society: places of worship, the workplace, the academia, and even in a country. A youth according to the United Nations, is a young person that "falls into the age bracket of 15-24 years of age" but the National Youth Policy of Nigeria pegs the youth age bracket between 18-35 years, without any prejudice to other standards as set by member Countries.

This explanation tend to vary due to geographical, economic, political, biological, and socio-cultural factors, as some older adults claim to be 'young at heart'. But that's a debate for another day. The online census site, worldometer records the global population as 7.9 billion. Based on census given, a study from the UNFPA, puts it that, "today's generation of young people is absolutely massive: Some 1.8 billion people are between ages 10 and 24. Most of them live in developing countries, often comprising a huge proportion of the population... Around 175 million young people in low-income countries cannot read a full sentence. Among those aged 15-24, some 500 million live on less than \$2 a day, and over 73 million are unemployed..."

We will agree that youths have been influential in matters that concern a nation; agents to steer growth or subversion. We have seen youths act as voice for the voiceless; trailblazers in different careers. In addition, it has also been recognised how such raw force if driven to the darkside can wreck havoc, chaos and fear among people, especially in recent times. The Nigerian Diaspora with over 17 million people, just like other communities, have a larger fraction of people belonging to the youths. Though most of them have no iota of any connection to their ancestral homes, these set of generations, however, have in one way lived up to (if not surpassed) the number of achievements of those before them. It is in this stride, that in their individual communities in the Diaspora, try to trace the dots that navigate them homewards, or have a bit of connection to their ancestry through various platforms.

One of such is the Doing Good Work in Africa (DOWA) NGO. The DOWA NGO, is a non-profit initiative geared towards connecting students in the United States to African-based entities focused on providing scalable solutions to commonplace challenges. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), gave a commendation to the diaspora youth NGO, for supporting students and impacting future growth in Africa.

The encomium was detailed in a statement issued in Abuja by the Commission's Head of Media, Public Relations and Protocols Unit, Mr. Abdur-Rahman Balogun, to mark the first year of the group. Dabiri-Erewa described the thoughtful action of DOWA as timely and a critical tool for development of Africa as a whole, which she said: "Brain gain is a necessity for the development of Africa. This type of effort will go a long way in making tremendous impacts in the development of our youths in the diaspora". "For placing 27 students on internship and conducting several educational webinars with over 400 attendees from over 17 countries within a year of its establishment, your efforts is hereby applauded", she added.

The Nigerian youths, home and abroad, is just as important to all of us, as anything. Indeed, if directed well, they have a lot to offer not just for Nigeria but the world. The likes of Junior Steve Ezeonu, Jessica O. Matthews, Anthony Joshua, Kamaru Usman, Ann-Marie Imafidon, John Boyega, just to mention but a few, are Nigerian youths in Nigeria, making a mark of excellence in their fields of endeavour.

Thankfully, some organisations have recognised the youth and are strategising how best to engage them for nation-building.

Kindly allow me to recall in June, the Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation, Europe (NiDOE) had flagged off its Diaspora Youth Inclusion Programme. The webinar event was geared towards getting Nigerian youths in the Diaspora, particularly resident in parts of Europe, involved in the activities of Nigeria's development, using their intellectual, material and human resources. We need many more like these that can empower the Nigerian youth, at home and in the Diaspora, for greater deeds to uphold Nigeria's dignity. NiDCOM, which is a predominantly youth-friendly Commission, believes in the power of the Nigerian youth, especially the Nigerian youth in the Diaspora.

In that stance, it plans to have a full-on youth engagement meeting with second and third generations in the Diaspora, to understand them, listen to their concerns and drive them to see ways they could connect with Nigeria and its policies for nation-building. Permit me to end with this quote by the Indian Activist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Kailash Satyarthi: "The power of youth is the common wealth for the entire world. The faces of young people are the faces of our past, present and the future. No segment in the world can match with the power, idealism, enthusiasm and courage of the young people".

17 MILLION NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA: NIDCOM LAUNCHES DIASPORA DATA MAPPING PORTAL

By Gabriel Odu

With an estimated population of about 17 Million Nigerians in the Diaspora and an Annual Remittances of about 25 billion dollars, no doubt, the Nigerian Diaspora is an economic demographic that cannot be ignored in National Development. Riding on the standpoint of purposeful leadership, dynamism and dedication displayed by the Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, NiDCOM, Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa has inaugurated a holistic and realistic data Portal and Registry of Nigerians in the Diaspora in Abuja.

Inaugurating the Diaspora Mapping Portal, the Minister of State, Foreign Affairs and Supervising Minister to NiDCOM, Amb. Zubairu Dada, stated emphatically that the Portal will enhance Diaspora participation in demographic and national planning as well as budgeting purposes at all levels of governance. Amb. Dada maintained that it is a thing of pride and urged every Nigerian in the Diaspora to get on board and be registered as one of the critical tools of purposeful engagement, encouragement and enablement of the Diaspora community for national development which is in line with the vision, mission and mandate of NiDCOM.

The Chairman/CEO of the Commission, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, stressed that the event was to create awareness and develop a collaborative agenda for the development of a credible data base of Nigerians in the Diaspora. According to her, "it was necessary to set up a reliable and scalable data base of the Nigerian Diaspora to provide for engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in the Policies, Project and Programmes of the Nigerian government at all levels.

Dabiri-Erewa further asserted that in 2020, the Commission started the establishment of data mapping sites which served, as the foremost capturing platform for raw data in over 10 countries and it is expected that at least 20 countries will be captured in 2021.

The NiDCOM Boss, gave assurance that the Commission is investing in high-tech mechanisms such as AI systems and advanced data analytic systems in order to recognise and bring Nigerian Diaspora together. Mr. Franz Celestin, the Chief of Mission, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), also stated that the launch of the data mapping platform is a historical moment for the Commission, the Nigerian Diaspora and the country. Celestin maintained that this will bring potentials, encourage Diaspora to invest, identify the socio-demographic spread and economic profile of its Diaspora. He encouraged Nigerians in the Diaspora to make optimum use of this great opportunity.

This was corroborated by the representative of the European Union Elena Zezelidou who commended NiDCOM's dedication and commitment to ensuring Diaspora Portal is launched as well as the ratification of The National Diaspora Policy by the Federal Executive Council. Meanwhile, The Head of Technology, Transfer and Innovation (TTI) Department, (NiDCOM) Hon. Abdulrahman Terab, remarked that the platform is specially designed to be user-friendly, with seamless questions, aimed at sorting, marking and analysing data use to make sense of the future. In the meantime, Nigerians in Diaspora can log on to www.nidcom.gov.ng/registry to access the portal. As at time of inauguration, about a Hundred Nigerians in the Diaspora have registered.

DID YOU KNOW?

By: Maryam Kehinde Abdulazeez.

1. The Ebute Metta Station, known as the Mobolaji Johnson Station, is the largest railway station in West Africa with a holding capacity of 6000 passengers.
2. The 156km Lagos—Ibadan standard gauge railway line in Lagos is the first double-track standard gauge rail in West Africa.
3. Octopuses have three (3) hearts, Nine (9) brains and Blue blood.
4. President Muhammadu Buhari has been named winner of the 2021 Great Builder Super Prize for Trophée Babacar Ndiaye, taking over from Abdel Fattah al-Sissi of Egypt, who won the 2020 prize.
5. Amina Mohammed has been re-appointed as the United Nations (UN) deputy Secretary-General in June, 2021.

Source: Google, BioGeoPlanet, Patriots'Daily

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Some of the highlights of NiDCOM achievements and activities from May 2019 to June 2021

By: Maryam Kehinde Abdulazeez.

• May 2019:-

1. Establishment of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission.
2. The Senate confirmed the appointment of Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa as pioneer Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM).
3. The Chairman/CEO led a delegation of stakeholders to Diaspora Leaders' Conference in New York

• June 2019:-

4. NIDCOM Chairman/CEO led other management staff on advocacy meeting with stakeholders such as International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Health, Education, International Labour Organisation, Association of Bureau de Change Operators of Nigeria among several others to see how collaboration with the commission will enhance better opportunities for the Nigerians abroad.
5. Validation of Diaspora Policy by all stakeholders in Abuja.
6. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa participated in the 25th anniversary of Association of Nigeria Physicians in the Americas (ANPA).

• July 2019:-

7. NIDCOM organised the first ever National Diaspora Day as a Commission with the theme: The power of the Nigerian diaspora for national development"
 8. Consolidation of the declaration of July 25th every year, by the Federal Government of Nigeria as "National Diaspora Day".
- August 2019:-
9. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa led top management staff on another intervention visits to some Embassies and High Commissions in Nigeria especially countries where the rights of Nigerians were violated.

• September 2019:-

10. Following xenophobic attacks on some Nigerians in South Africa, NIDCOM joined other stakeholders to facilitate their evacuation from South Africa to Nigeria.
11. Relaunch of the monthly Diaspora Newsletter

• October 2019:-

12. NIDCOM organised a week-long diaspora festival "Door of Return " activities in Badagry.

• November 2019:-

13. Thirty (30) minutes weekly package on NTA International called "The Diaspora" and other Media outlets flagged off.
14. NIDCOM signed an MOU with SMEDAN and BOI.
15. The Commission organised the second Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit (NDIS) in Abuja.
16. NIDCOM facilitated a scholarship for a returnee mother of four, Esther Iyoha, through the kind gesture of NDE and NIDCOM.
17. NIDCOM received donations from individuals and groups towards resettlement of some Nigerian returnees.
18. NIDCOM rescued two stranded Nigerians from Bosnia Herzegovina Border camp.

• **December 2019:-**

19. The first ever Nigeria/Saudi Investment Forum which was facilitated by Nigeria born-Saudi Arabia based Al-Yaro brothers in conjunction with NiDCOM took place in Abuja and attracted over 50 corporate and portfolio investors. •

• **January 2020:-**

20. Launching of NiDCOM mobile application. •

• **February 2020:-**

21. Inauguration of State Diaspora focal Point Officers in 33 out of the 36 states of the Federation including FCT.

• **March 2020:-**

22. Induction training for members of Staff; Nigerians in Diaspora Commission.

22. The APC-UK donated some Covid-19 medical equipment to the Commission. •

• **April 2020:-**

23. Artificial Intelligence Abike App was launched.

• **July 2020:-**

24. Association of Nigerians Physicians in Americas (ANPA), NiDO America's and NiDO China donated N48 million worth of COVID -19 items to the Presidential Task force on COVID-19 in Nigeria through NiDCOM.

25. NiDCOM had its first virtual National Diaspora Day with over 3000 participants all over the world.

• **AUGUST 2020:-**

26. A total number of 2,933 Stranded Nigerians were evacuated from UAE back to the country .

27. NiDCOM demands justice for a young Nigerian student, Khalid Bello, killed in Northern Cyprus.

28. NiDCOM signed an MOU with Nigeria Diaspora Summit Initiative on Diaspora Investment in Abuja.

• **September 2020:-**

28. NiDCOM initiated a webinar conference to address the concerns of Nigerians travelling back to Nigeria during the COVID -19.

• **October 2020:-**

29. NiDCOM Chairman/CEO at a parley with South African high Commissioner called for full implementation of Bi- national Commission .

30. NiDCOM partners NUT on capacity building for Teachers.

31. Second Summit of State Diaspora Focal point officers in Abuja.

• **November 2020:-**

32. NiDCOM collaborated with Counselling and Rehabilitation of Prisoners Initiative (CAROPI), an international NGO, to help innocent Nigerians incarcerated in the Diasporas.

33. Vice President Yemi Osibajo declared open the virtual third Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit Initiative.

• **DECEMBER 2020:-**

34. Dabiri Erewa hailed CBN on its Diaspora friendly new Forex Policy.

• **January 2021:-**

35. NiDCOM Mobile App was launched .

- **Feb. 2021:-**
36. NiDCOM congratulated some Nigerians in the Diaspora who won various elections and appointments across the globe.
- **March 2021:-**
37. NiDCOM joined other stakeholders to evacuate some Nigerians from Saudi Arabia back to Nigeria.
38. Establishment and Launching of Diaspora online Radio called "**The Global Nigerian**".
- **April 2021:-**
40. Ratification of National Diaspora Policy by The Federal Executive Council.
- **May 2021:-**
41. Final public presentation and Launch of the National Diaspora Policy.
42. Successful three-day third Summit of the Focal Point Officers coordinated by NiDCOM in Abuja.
43. Maiden Diaspora Quarterly Lecture.
44. NiDCOM was listed among the 20 outstanding Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government adjudged as performing in the year 2021
- **June 2021:-**
45. The Launch of the Diaspora Data Mapping Portal.
46. IOM facilitated some capacity training to some NiDCOM staff

22 YEAR OLD DIASPORA NIGERIAN, EZEONU WINS CITY COUNCIL RUN OFF ELECTION IN THE USA.

By Violet Nwosu

In many of the Town hall Meetings by President Muhammadu Buhari whenever he travels outside the country, he always reminds Nigerians in Diaspora never to forget three things: to be good ambassadors of Nigeria, to excel in whatever they do and never forget home. There is no doubt that President Muhammadu Buhari's admonition has rubbed off in the case of a 22 year old Steve Ezeonu who won the Grand Prairie City Council run-off election in Texas, United States. A good ambassador indeed.

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/ CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), excited with the good news congratulated Ezeonu, describing the victory as tough but very well-deserved. Ezeonu, a Nigerian-American beat his closest rival in the June run off election with 3,903 votes as against Greg's 3,720. The June local run off election saw the Democrat Ezeonu getting 51.2 percent of the votes as against Greg's 48.8 percent.

In a congratulatory message, Dabiri-Erewa said that Ezeonu has proven that hard work and dedication in whatever you are doing pays, saying that she is not surprised that Ezeonu, at that age, won the election due to his resilience, dedication, hard work and doggedness.

The NiDCOM boss encouraged Nigerians to emulate Ezeonu's feat and strive to excel in their pursuit as hard work is the key to success while urging him to continue to demonstrate the spirit of resilience imbibed in Nigerians. She however advised Ezeonu to fulfill all his electoral promises to the electorate as he has a lot of opportunities ahead of him in future. She thanked the Nigerian community in Texas for giving Ezeonu their maximum support during his campaign. Dabiri-Erewa had, during the campaign, contacted Ezeonu and gave him words of encouragement and support.

MEET A DIASPORAN

By: Bridget Temtsen



Nigeria is blessed with not only talented people, but also people that are hardworking, dedicated, and committed. Especially those Nigerians in the Diaspora who work extremely hard on a daily basis with such commitment and enthusiasm in whatever sector they are in and wherever they are. Dr and Dr (Mrs) Barth Gachomo Shepkong, both from Plateau state in Nigeria, happens to be among those Diasporans making Nigeria proud and promoting good image of the country. Recently, Dr and Dr(Mrs) Shepkong got recognised by the Ohio House of Representatives for being a contributor during the 2021 "Taste of Juneteenth" event.

The Ohio House of Representatives found them worthy of the recognition for their generous service to numerous local organisations and were commended for the catalytic role they play in the business community of Ohio. Let us hear about their experience in the Diaspora and how they have impacted in both their country of host and origin.

Dr. and Dr. (Mrs) Barth and Gachomo Shepkong are both Ph.D. holders and are entrepreneurs. Dr Barth Shepkong has his Ph.D. in Public Policy, and he is a Professor of Cultural Diversity while Dr. (Mrs) Shepkong has her Ph.D. in Public Health. They are both consultants in their fields of expertise. Additionally, they both work passionately in bringing cultural diversity to the Columbus, Ohio market in forms of entertainment through the Columbus African Festival, their fashion line, The Ankara Fashion Place, and now, Food by introducing Fork in Nigeria.

They are proud parents of two lovely boys.

The couple both emigrated to the United States of America to pursue their educational aspirations for over two decades ago. As noted above, the couple are zealous about bringing African cuisine to the mainstream food service industry in America. There is a lot of interest in supporting small family-owned businesses and there is a lot of curiosity for trying something different in this new global market. "Being a food truck, the intention is to bring Nigerian delicacies to local American neighbourhoods. This is a win-win situation in that, we are focused on good citizenry.

While we are promoting and maintaining the image of our country of origin by expanding the taste palettes of our host country; we are simultaneously building the economy.

We are delighted for such a time as this. This is much needed in Columbus, Ohio and we could not be more thrilled to be part of it. We are delighted to be serving this amazing diverse community.

Our website is www.forkinnigeria.com, and we are also on all the social media platforms @forkinnigeria. There is no place like home! As entrepreneurs, we are always thinking of ways to build our portfolio, however, as philanthropists and social entrepreneurs, we are always looking for ways to give back. We have invested in multiple NGOs such as Pax Amor Initiative, we have also partnered with friends and families on multiple ventures, and we have invested in landed properties in the past. We hope to continue working with people at varying capacities to add value to our country Nigeria in both public and private sectors." they said.



JOLLOF RICE

FOOD CORNER

By Doosughun Abughidyer

Jollof Rice is said to have its origin from the Senegambia region of west Africa, in the ancient Wolof or Jolof Empire, during the 14th-16th centuries. It is considered to be parts of modern-day Senegal, The Gambia, and Mauritania. But most part of west African countries eat rice but no one can beat the Nigerian Signature Jollof Rice.

No party is complete without jollof. Hope staying away from home for a long time hasn't made you forget how to prepare jollof rice? I am talking to my Diaspora Nigerians. Here we go:

INGREDIENTS

1. Vegetable oil
2. Tomatoes (Tin or sachet and fresh tomato purée)
3. Pepper
4. Salt
5. Onions
6. Seasoning Cubes
7. Meat Stock
8. Rice
9. Curry
10. Thyme

METHOD OF PREPARATION

- Parboil your rice and set aside in a sieve.
1. Set a clean dry pot on low heat on fire. Add the vegetable oil and allow to heat up for one minute.

2. Slice the onions into any shape of choice and add up into the heated oil to sautee for three minutes, to give it a slight caramelized texture, (by doing this, it gives the Jollof a sweet aroma). Then pour in the Tomato purée and fry for about four minutes.

3. Add the Ginger and Garlic, already blended and fry along with the Tomato paste for three minutes. If you keep it frying for a long time, it will burn.

4. Pour in the blended peppers and tomatoes. Mix them all up and stir fry for 20 minutes on medium heat, remove excess water and blandness.

5. Add the Thyme, Curry powder and meat Stock. Add a bit of salt and seasoning cubes, to get your desired taste.

6. Pour the parboiled Rice inside the pot and stir, Make sure you stir the Rice properly until you cover each grain of Rice with the sauce. cover it up.

6. Once, the rice comes to a boiling point, reduce the heat to medium-low immediately and continue to cook until the rice is done about 20 to 25 minutes.

NB. You don't want your rice to be marshy, so you regulate the water and don't put plenty of water when cooking it. You can add some water, little by little, till the rice is soft enough. Serve with Fried Chicken, Spicy Grilled Chicken, Grilled Tilapia Fish, plantain, Gizzards or any protein of your choice. Bona appetite!!!

LET'S TALK FASHION : ANKARA

By Omolabake Omoniyi

Nigeria is speedily gaining her grounds in the world of fashion, taking the famous Ankara Fabric to the global market, branding the Nigerian culture, and I am super glad a lot of people especially the western world is beginning to embrace it. Nigerian fashion has grown and there's no doubt that the Ankara fabric is here to stay as it represents Africa's bold and diverse culture.

The Ankara prints, are industrially produced colorful cotton cloths with batik-inspired printing. Normally, the Ankara fabrics are sold in lengths of 12 yards (11m) as full piece or 6 yards (5.5m) as half piece.

Over the years, Ankara is just sown and worn as clothes, most especially for celebrations, but recently creativity has gone outside the box, people now use Ankara to make different accessories, bags and shoes. Now more than ever, the Nigerian fabric is the most sought after, as people around the globe especially celebrities decide to feel a little bit of Nigeria on their skin by wearing Nigerian attire. Most of the time the Ankara style is sown in such a way that it looks like a western clothing but made from Ankara.

TAKE A LOOK AT A FEW CELEBRITIES ROCKING THE NIGERIAN PRINT



RIHANNA

American Artist, rocks Ankara to the white house



MICHELLE OBAMA

Ex US presidents wife, looking gorgeous in Nigerian prints



ANDREW FLEMING

UK Diplomat, Andrew Fleming and his wife rocked Nigerian attires



LADY GAGA

American singer, songwriter, and actress



TOUR NIGERIA: KOGI STATE

By: Rosemary Moribirin



HIS EXCELLENCY
Yahaya Bello
Governor, of Kogi State

Welcome to one of the safest state in Nigeria, Kogi, located in the North-Central part of Nigeria. Kogi State is blessed with human and mineral resources and tourist sights. Kogi State houses 10 other states. The state is also known as the Confluence State that connect two African rivers, Niger and Benue. Kogi State is a key centre of commercial trade in Nigeria with investment opportunities across the 21 Local Government Areas (LGA). There are three main ethnic groups and languages in Kogi: Igala, Ebira, and Okun with others such as Bassa, Ogori Magongo, and Oworo .It will interest you to know that the name “Nigeria” was coined in Lokoja, Kogi State by Flora Shaw in the hill of Mount Patti, the future wife of Baron Lugard, a British colonial administrator, while gazing out at the River Niger. Tourist attractions in Kogi State includes:
Lord Lugard House: The Lugard Rest House is today a mini museum of colonial history, and has been left untouched since Flora and Sir Lord Frederick Lugard left it.



In appreciation of the beauty of Mount Patti, and its cooling climate, they built the rest house on the mountain top. In front of the house is a statue of the couple holding hands. The house is located perfectly as a surveillance post to overview Lokoja.

Mount Patti: The lush green Mount Patti is 458.3 metres high and located in Lokoja, capital city of Kogi state. It is from here people gaze up at it's magnificence with awe. Located in the confluence of the Rivers Niger and Benue, the area has been inhabited for thousands of years by many ethnic communities and was previously a centre for trade. Lokoja is the first administrative capital of modern day Nigeria.

The Confluence of Rivers Niger and BenueThe River Niger is Africa's third largest and the main river of western Africa. It is over 4180 km long and passes through Guinea, Mali, Niger, Benin and Nigeria. The River Benue is 1,400 km long and a tributary of the Niger River.

The two rivers meet in a colorful Y-shape with the brownish River Niger and green River Benue. It is one of Nigeria's most beautiful natural wonders.

Other include:

- World War Cenotaph
- Ogidi (An African town with formations of Igneous Rock mountains and a traditional art & craft industry) and natural land features hills and terrains that serve as hiking trails.

Office Address: Government House, New Payout, GRA, Lokoja, Kogi State. Facebook Page: Kogi State Diaspora Focal Point Office.+234 818 888 8819.



Kogi State
Diaspora Focal
Point Officer

Hon.
Medinat
Anako

DIARY OF EVENTS

By Samson Elijah Simeon



Chairman/CEO NIDCOM Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa on a courtesy visit to the Chairman National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Gen. Muhammad Buba Marwa in his office, in Abuja.



Hon. Abika Dabiri-Erewa, The Chairman/CEO NIDCOM on a courtesy visit to the new Ambassador of the kingdom of Belgium to Nigeria.



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman/CEO NIDCOM receives UFC's Kamarudeen Usman (aka, Nigerian Nightmare) in her office, in Abuja.



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO NIDCOM on a courtesy visit to Sen. Gbenga Ashafa, Managing Director/CEO Federal Housing Authority in his office in Abuja.

DIARY OF EVENTS

By Samson Elijah Simeon



The Management of Leadership Newspaper Group led by Mr Azubuikwe Ishiekwene receives the Chairman/CEO NIDCOM, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa at the Commissioning of Leadership Podcast Studio in Abuja.



H.E. Geoffrey Onyeama, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs receives in audience the Kenyan High Commissioner to Nigeria, H.E. Wilfred Machage.



H.E. Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister of Foreign Affairs, presents letter of Credence to Ambassador-designate of Nigeria to Republic of Cameroon, Amb. Tukur Yusufu Buratai.



H.E. Amb. Zubairu Dada, Hon. Minister of State For Foreign Affairs inaugurates Data Mapping Portal for Nigerians in Diaspora.

DIARY OF EVENTS

By Samson Elijah Simeon



Members of staff during 10M training on Project Management: Key to policy implementation.



Group presentation during EU-IOM training on Project Management: Key to policy implementation.



Nigerian High Commissioner, Amb. Sarafa Tunji Isola being received by Piriti Patel at the UK Home Office.



A staff making contribution during 10M training on Project Management: Key to policy implementation.



Ongoing session during IOM training on Project Management: Key to policy implementation.

ADVERT RATES FOR DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) has repackaged its Monthly Diaspora Newsletter with juicy and far reaching news for and from our Nigerians in Diaspora. The Newsletter when produced is distributed far and wide to all our stakeholders both within and outside the country through the E-Copy and in colour printed version.

We are therefore pleased to invite you to be one of our sponsors by showcasing your adverts or products at the minimal subsidised amount by the commission.

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As a stakeholder, NIDCOM is delighted to include you in this project. We truly believe that you would provide valuable support for this initiative.

We look forward to a favourable response of patronage from you.

Yours Sincerely,



Abdur-Rahman Balogun
Head, Media, Public Relations
and Protocols Unit (NIDCOM) Abuja.

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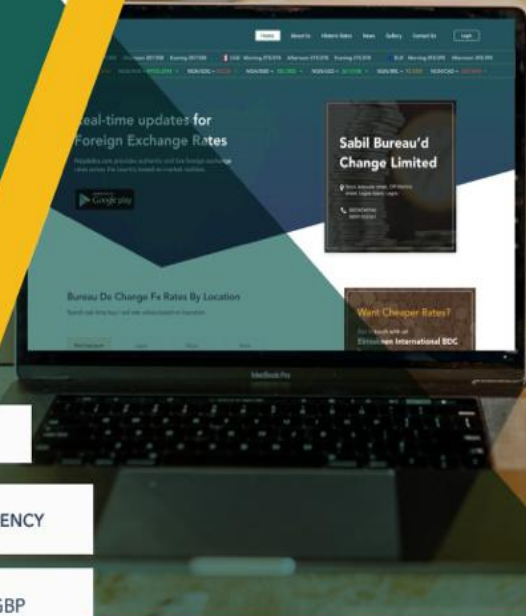
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17 June 2020	465 /468	466 /468.5	467 /469	EURO



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