



NIGERIA NEWSLETTER

Inside this issue:

SAGEM Opens Shop in Nigeria	2
ECOWAS Passports Ready	2
Nigeria Forms Free Trade Zone	3
Anyaku Heads WWFN Body	3
Nigerian Peacekeepers for Burundi	4
Nigerian Wins Miss World	4



President Olusegun Obasanjo and President George W. Bush.

President Olusegun Obasanjo presenting an address during his visit to Washington.

NIGERIA HAS DONE WELL DESPITE MILITARY RULE - UN

The latest United Nation's Common Country Assessment (CCA), has said that in spite of years of military rule, Nigeria has produced a large educated elite, a lively and free press, a courageous civil service and a functioning bureaucracy. The Country Assessment further stated that the country had remained peaceful in a sub - region and continent

characterised by political violence and civil wars.



The United Nations Headquarters

GOVERNMENT SELLS 51% NITEL EQUITY

The Federal government through the Bureau of Public Enterprise has taken a major step by selling off its major stake in the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL). The consortium, Investors International London Limited (IILL), won the bid for a majority share in NITEL with a bid price of \$1.317 billion (N140 billion) IILL consortium beat its two competitors, Telnet which posted \$1.310 billion and Newtel consortium which offered \$1.070 billion at the opening of the financial bids for

NITEL in Abuja. Telnet has been declared the reserve bidder. The proceedings were broadcast live on radio and television. The new owners of NITEL are expected under the terms of sale to deploy 1.4 million fixed telephone lines in Nigeria over the next five years, to add to the existing 400,000–500,000 land– lines and 1.5 million mobile lines. The Nigeria Telecommunications Limited also owns one of the three licences for digital mobile networks sold by auction in January.

NIGERIANS IN FRANCE HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE – ENVOY



Ambassador of Nigeria to France,
Mr. Edward. A. Aina, fwc.

The Ambassador of Nigeria to France, Mr Edward A. Aina, has said that the Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation Europe, France chapter (NIDOE/F), inaugurated on 26th May 2001, has a very important role to play in sensitising Nigerians of their role in national development. In a recent press interview, he said that the Organisation, which is made up of Nigerian pro-

fessionals resident in France, must draw from its rich reservoir of intellectual and human resources to chart out practical programmes that will enable them to participate in the socio-economic advancement and sound governance of Nigeria. The Envoy said that Nigeria must be poised to face the challenges of the 21st century and no Nigerian should be left behind.

SAGEM OPENS SHOP IN NIGERIA

The French GSM mobile service phone manufacturer, SAGEM, has opened two Information Technology Service Centres in Lagos to provide solutions to various mobile phone products with its modern facilities. With a population of over 120 million, Nigeria offers a great opportunity for companies wishing to invest in the telecommunications sector.

CHINA TO ESTABLISH DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE

The Minister of Health, Professor Alphonso Nwosu, has said that a multi-million naira diagnostic technique promotion centre is to be established in Nigeria next year. The centre will be sited at the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research

Yaba, Lagos and it will be run by the Chinese government enterprise, Beijing Cotec New Technology. China has also agreed to collaborate with Nigeria on an exchange of programmes as well as an exchange of personnel for the eradication of malaria.

ECOWAS PASSPORTS READY

The passports of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are ready for issuance. The ECOWAS Heads of State have given approval for the issuance of the passports which fall into three categories, namely, diplomatic, service and ordinary.



ECOWAS Logo

NIGERIA PLANS TRANS-SAHARA GAS PROJECT



A Typical Gas Plant

A trans-Sahara gas pipeline project between Nigeria and Algeria is being fashioned out. High-level negotiations between the officials of the two countries and the World Bank have commenced. The project will

start in Nigeria, pass through Niger and Algeria to Spain. It will cover a distance of 4,000 kilometers. Nigeria and Algeria are both members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), producing 1.911 million and 741,000 barrels of crude oil respectively. It is estimated that the Lagos-Algiers pipeline project will cost about \$7.5 billion.

NIGERIA FORMS FREE TRADE ZONE

Part of a fast track programme initiated by President Olusegun Obasanjo to forge integration among the people of the Continent by fostering smoother economic relations by the different governments, has been realised with the establishment of a free trade zone by Nigeria and six other West African countries. The countries in



Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

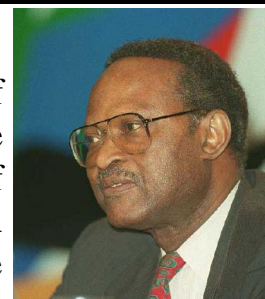
the zone are, Benin Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. With this programme, persons, goods and services originating from the member countries will no longer attract tariff. Already, multiple checkpoints on the highways linking members of the Economic Community of West African States have been dismantled.

PRESIDENTIAL CREW TO ACQUIRE TERRORISM PREVENTION SKILLS

As a fall-out from the September 11th 2001 attacks on the United States of America, all pilots and crew members of Nigeria's Presidential Air Fleet (PAF), are to be trained in the detection and prevention of terrorism aboard aircrafts. Strict security measures have always guided the operations of the Presidential Air Fleet, which has over 400 personnel.

ANYAOKU HEADS WWFN BODY

Erstwhile Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, has been named the new international President of the Board of Trustees of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWFN). Chief Anyaoku takes office in January 2002 as successor to Professor Ruud Lubbers. Past Presidents of WWFN include Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands (1961-76) and Prince Philip of Great Britain (1981-96).



Chief Emeka Anyaoku

NIGERIAN PEACEKEEPERS TO GO TO BURUNDI

President Olusegun Obasanjo's special envoy on conflict resolution, Ambassador Ralph Uwechue, has stated that Nigeria will deploy a 1,000-man peacekeeping contingent to Burundi in December 2001 to assist in preventing ethnic violence in that troubled region. South Africa is sending a similar strength, while Ghana and Senegal are also sending troops. Fighting between Burundi's Hutu majority and the minority Tutsi-dominated army has killed around 200,000 people since 1993 and has driven over one million people from their homes.

IGE WINS SEAT ON UN BODY

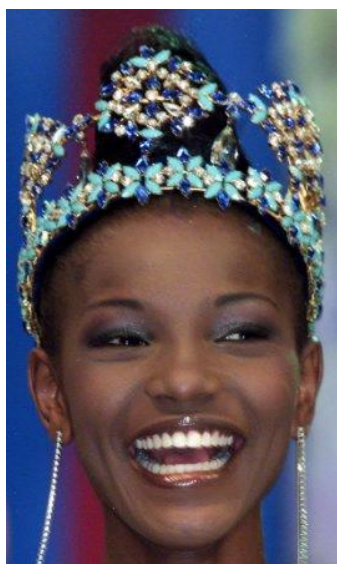


Chief Bola Ige in a Pensive Mood

The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Chief Bola Ige, has been elected to take a seat on the United Nations International Law Commission in New York. Members of the Commission are elected by

the United Nations General Assembly for a five-year term. The Commission is made up of persons of recognised competence in international law, with the function of promoting the development of international law and its codification. Chief Ige takes up the new appointment in January 2002.

NIGERIAN WINS MISS WORLD BEAUTY PAGEANT



The Beautiful Face of a Queen, Agbani Darego - Miss World

An 18-year-old Nigerian undergraduate of mathematics and computer science, Agbani Darego, has won the Miss World beauty contest. Darego who beat 93 other contestants, won the crown to become the first black African woman to win the coveted crown since the annual event was established 50 years ago. The Federal Government through the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Professor Jerry Gana, congratulated the queen, saying that her victory was a source of pride not only to Nigerians, but also to all Africans. Darego is the current holder of the title of the Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria. Her dream is

to raise money for less privileged children all over the world so that they can have a better future.



New Miss World Being Congratulated.