

**ENDING BAD GOVERNANCE:
THE ABIA BLUEPRINT AND
THE ALEX OTTI EXAMPLE**

**SOUTH EAST DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION: RT HON BEN KALU'S
MASTERSTROKE**

The **BEAM**

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PDP EXIT?

I DON'T RUN AWAY FROM FIGHTS - Wike



RIVERS CRISES: REVEALING GOV FUBARA'S FLIP-SIDE ON THE PEACE INTERVENTION OF PRESIDENT TINUBU

APP is Fubara's front for LG election

RIVERS ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, RT HON AMAEWHULE & 26 LAWMAKERS PARTICIPATE IN PDP CONGRESS

...REVALIDATE THEIR WARD MEMBERSHIP PROFILES

Rt. Hon. Martins Chike Amaewhule and 26 lawmakers, alongside eminent stalwarts of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), last weekend, participated in the party's congress and subsequently, revalidated their membership profiles.

The routine obligatory requirement, is contrary to the presumptive speculations surrounding the alleged defection of 27 lawmakers to the All Progressives Congress party (APC).

Their participation in the ward congress as well as revalidation of their membership status, confirms the position of the courts of competent jurisdiction, bringing to a closure all issues, speculations and unsubstantiated assumptions, being peddled traditional meddlesome interlopers, stoking the embers of crisis in Rivers State.

It would be recalled that on June 10th, 2024, a Port Harcourt High Court, Rivers State, Presided over by His Lordship, Honourable Justice Okogbule Gbasam, had declared that Rt. Hon Martins Chike Amaewhule, the Speaker of the Rivers State House of Assembly and 26 other parliamentarians, are still bona fide members of the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

In his judgement, His Lordship, Justice Okogbule Gbasam, held that, "the claimants failed to prove that the Speaker of the Rivers State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Martins Chike Amaewhule and the other 26 lawmakers, had defected to the All

Progressives Congress (APC).

According to Justice Okogbule Gbasam, "defection cannot be established, through newspaper publications, radio announcements or online publications as tendered by the claimants".

Justice Gbasam, further held that, "the membership in a party is only proven by being listed on its register or by a membership card and such members, must fulfill all requirements of their membership

Kayode Omotosho, had set the records straight in what eminent Nigerian jurists and judicial experts, have come to describe a very brilliantly intelligent and water-tight judgment, when he declared that there has never been any contention, over the speakership status of Rt. Hon Martins Chike Amaewhule as well as the membership of the 26 lawmakers. He also declared that the self acclaimed Speaker, Edison



Members of Rivers State House of Assembly led by Martins Amaewhule

in the party".

Justice Gbasam, consequently ruled that, " the 27 lawmakers, have not lost their seats, adding that the Rivers State Government, is bound to obey all laws passed by the Assembly, under the speakership of Rt. Hon. Martins Chike Amaewhule ".

Similarly, a Federal High Court in Abuja, presided over by His Lordship, Hon Justice James

Ehie was never known to any law and therefore every action taken by him including the passage of the Budget 2024 as "null and void".

Again, the Court of Appeal in Abuja, in its very detailed and most comprehensive 95- paged judgement, delivered on July 4th, 2024, whose certified true copy was obtained by reporters, refused to grant the reliefs sought by Hon. Victor Oko -Jumbo and others.

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Specifically, the three -member panel in a unanimous decision turned down the request by Hon Victor Oko-Jumbo, seeking a declaration from the trial court that with effect from December 13, 2023, that the 27 lawmakers, lacked the legality, to function or carry out any legislative duty schedules, according to their prayers, "having lost their seats by reason of defection to the All Progressives Congress party, as pronounced by one Hon Edison Ehie".

It is left to see how the opponents of the 27 Lawmakers intend to prove their case against them as they have now publicly been proven to be bonafide members of the PDP with the just concluded Ward Congresses.



Martins Amaewhule

At the Ward 1 of Obio-Akpor LGA where the Speaker of the State Assembly, Rt. Hon. Martins Amaewhule arrived amidst a tumultuous crowd, it was another homecoming as the leadership of the Party reaffirmed their confidence in him for having led them courageously over the years. Speaking to party faithful, the Ward Chairman and Secretary thanked the Speaker for his leadership strides and for being a diehard supporter of the leader of the party in the State, Chief Nyesom Wike, the immediate former Governor and currently, the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory.

In the same vein, the other 26 lawmakers also participated in the congress at their different Wards.

PDP GOVS LOSE AS NWC HANDS WIKE RIVERS CONTROL

The Minister of Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, has solidified his position in the Peoples Democratic Party leadership crisis as the National Working Committee endorsed the Rivers State congresses.

Wike's loyalists within the PDP NWC not only secured the approval but also postponed the National Executive Committee meeting, originally set for September 26, to October 24, which could have overturned the decision.

The PDP NWC, led by acting National Chairman Umar Damagum, made this decision during a meeting at the party's national headquarters, Wadata Plaza, in Abuja on Thursday.

The NWC meeting had been delayed for the past three weeks amid rising tension within the party, especially between former Rivers State governor Wike and the PDP Governors Forum over the status of Rivers State party congresses.

The political conflict between

Wike and current Rivers State Governor, Siminalayi Fubara, escalated on August 24 when PDP governors publicly backed Fubara.

PDP governors called for a review of the Rivers State Congresses and affirmed Fubara's role as the leader of the PDP in the state.

This support for Fubara enraged Wike, who on August 31 threatened to create chaos in the governors' states if they did not refrain from interfering in Rivers State matters.

A senior NWC member, speaking anonymously due to lack of authorisation, revealed that the approval of the Rivers and other state congresses was granted, and the NEC meeting had been rescheduled to October 24.

The NEC meeting, originally set for August to address burning issues, including Damagum's replacement, was first moved to September 26 because some members were travelling to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage. It has now

been rescheduled to October 24.

The source stated, "They have achieved their aim. Wike has again defeated the PDP governors as the NWC approved the Rivers and other states' congresses. There was nothing a few NWC members who were against it could do other than allow them to have their way. As it stands, only the NEC can overturn it to suit the governors' demands.

"The Rivers State Congresses and those of other states were approved by the NWC. A few states where issues were identified were stepped down. For example, in Kogi, the Chairman and Deputy were not approved due to anomalies.

"Only the NEC can overturn the NWC's decision on Rivers and other states. However, the NEC meeting, originally slated for September 26, has been postponed to October 24, which may not hold on that date. As it stands, Wike has defeated the Bauchi State Governor Bala Mohammed-led PDP Governors Forum."

The crisis within the main opposition party, PDP, seems likely not ending in earnest with the recent moves by some governors of the party led by Gov Bala Mohammed to wane and whittle down the influence of the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Chief Nyesom Wike on the party structure in Rivers State.

Recall that Wike and his political godson and successor, Gov Siminilayi Fubara have fallen out less than two months after Fubara's electoral victory and successful inauguration which Wike is known to have contributed not less than 99% to his nomination as PDP candidate and eventual victory. The unexpected fight has torn apart the once envied political structure of Wike in the state.

Presently, there is one state executive led by the former Deputy Chairman, Aaron Chukwuemeka who was elected recently as the State Chairman of the party but a faction of the party in alignment with some rudderless and stranded members of APC have formed what is known as the "Simplified Movement" an acronym for the Sim supporters across party lines. Surprisingly, Gov Sim Fubara and his supporters were absent from the recent revalidation of membership exercise and the congresses of the PDP in the state. It was gathered that he tried to stop the Congresses through a State High Court which had given an injunction through an *ex parte* order, against the party. But the supporters of Wike had gone ahead with the revalidation exercise and Congresses with the active support of the National leadership of the party led by its acting National Chairman, Umar Damagum and National Secretary, Sam Anyanwu, as well as the party's National Working Committee.

Having lost the plot to take over the structure from Wike, Fubara resorted to his colleagues in the PDP Governors' Forum after a failed bid to get the support of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The Governors had during a solidarity visit to Fubara expressed their support for him to take over the leadership of the PDP in the state. According to Bala Mohammed, the Governors of the respective PDP states are the natural leaders of the party. He reminded the party that when Wike was the Governor, he was the leader and as such Fubara ought to be the next leader with Wike's exit as Governor. This move by Bala and some others of



PDP EXIT? I DON'T RUN AWAY FROM FIGHTS -Wike

course did not go down with Wike who felt betrayed by some of the Governors with whom he had a good relationship and according to him, he had been of help to most of them in the past.

During his speech at the state Congress of the party in Portharcourt, Wike had responded to the comments by some of the Governors in his party. His reaction was received with applause by PDP members and the delegates present. He warned that any attempt by any of the Governors in support of Fubara to take over the structure of the party in Rivers State would attract "fire" in their own states. He said, *"I pity those governors because I will put fire in their states. When God has given you peace, you say you don't want peace - anything you see you take,"*

This statement, though figuratively, sparked off conversation in the media as many of those who already had political scores to settle with Wike condemned his choice of words and they did not waste time to respond to what they termed physical threats.

Two Ijaw leaders, Pa Edwin Clark and Chief Rufus Ada-George had written to President Tinubu urging him to either sack Wike or get him to be drilled by the DSS. They alleged that Wike's "threat" was capable of creating crisis in other states. But in a quick response, Wike's former Chief of Staff and presently the Director General of NOSDRA, Emeka Woke dismissed the position of the elder statesmen. He said what Wike meant was for the governors to respect boundaries as any attempt to subvert the will of the larger PDP members in Rivers State through the

instrumentality of some of the Governors would attract a counter action in their various PDP states. Woke described the attempt to smear Wike as the underlying plots of some "ethnic avengers" who rather than speak truth to power and seek genuine reconciliation between Wike and Fubara are only interested in getting Wike out of the way in order to make room for the pro Atiku supporters in the state to deliver the state to Atiku in the event of another election. The NOSDRA boss who also aligned with the position of Tony Okocha, the Caretaker Chairman of APC in the state said that it is preposterous for anyone to refer to Wike's choice of the word "fire" to mean physical fire when it is clear that Wike only meant it in local parlance of equal reaction.

While Wike's position on the issue is even more daring as he reiterated his readiness to confront any of the PDP Governors who without considering the provisions of the Party Constitution and the law tries to pull the rug of his feet. Responding to a question on a national television, he said, "Forum, who came out to read a communiqué with his colleagues that they were going to make sure their brother, their friend in Rivers State take over the structure, and it doesn't matter whether it is illegal or legal.

"And I'm sitting as the Minister of the FCT from that state? You look at it that I am nobody in that state and you make that statement? And you think I should fold my hands because you say you're a governor, which I was never before? You look at me and tell me that and expect me to fold my hands? And you think everything is

well?" He said he has no regrets saying what he said.

Meanwhile, some political observers say that with the crisis in the party, it is likely that the problem that it faced in the last presidential election is likely to happen again, even worse as the two groups within the party at the centre have been at dagger dawn. It is obvious that Bala Mohammed of Bauchi state who was once an ally of Wike is leading the Atiku group. He also responded to Wike saying that nobody can put fire in his state as there is enough water to quench it. This is also another figurative statement proving Wike right is his assertion. He also revealed his personal relationship with Wike irrespective of their perceived disagreements on the issue of Rivers State. He tweeted on X, "While I maintain a strong personal relationship with the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike I emphasized that leadership decisions are guided by responsibility and the collective good, not by personal affiliations."

It's obvious that Bala may only be playing a political part as the Chairman of the PDP Governors Forum.

While Fubara and his group have perfected plans to use the platform of the APP in the state for the planned local government elections, barring any injunction or judgement of the Federal High Court, Abuja in a suit filed by Tony Okocha of the APC, many believe that it is futile for Bala to continue to fight for Fubara to take over the structure of the party. It is not yet clear if the embattled Rivers Governor will remain in the PDP to run for a second term if he survives the plot against him. Others also believe that Wike who has a large grip on the Rivers APC structure through the instrumentality of the party leadership that offered him a Ministerial position, may eventually dump the PDP for the APC, if Fubara succeeds to be handed over the structure by his colleague governors. But in a media chat recently, when confronted on the possibility of leaving the PDP, Wike said, "Leave the party for who? I will not leave. I will rather remain there and fight it out. I don't run away from fights."

In a significant step towards reconciliation, the Board of Trustees (BoT) of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) convened privately with Federal Capital Territory Minister Nyesom

Wike on Tuesday. This meeting occurs against a backdrop of rising tensions between Wike and Rivers State Governor Siminalayi Fubara, particularly over control of the party's structure in the state.

Wike has publicly stated his refusal to support Fubara politically, placing him at the heart of controversy within the PDP. Recently, party governors branded Wike a "mole," a claim he strongly refutes.

Amid the internal discord, acting National Chairman Illya Umar Damagum has transferred control of the party's structure in Rivers State to Wike, acknowledging the congresses organized by his supporters. This move has sparked questions, as it challenges the conventional political hierarchy in Nigeria, where state governors are generally regarded as the leaders of their parties.

As a result, Wike emerges as the leader of the PDP in Rivers State, further complicating the party's political landscape as various factions compete for power. The outcomes of the BoT meeting are yet to be determined, but they suggest a possible reconciliation in the PDP's internal power dynamics as it strives for unity amidst ongoing challenges.

TINUBU APPOINTS AMACHREE AS DIRECTOR ENERGY SECURITY

President Bola Tinubu has appointed Honourable Ojukaye Flag Amachree as the new Director of Energy Security in the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).

The Energy Security Directorate, a newly created unit in ONSA, is tasked with coordinating policies, protecting critical infrastructure, managing data, providing security coordination, offering risk advisory services, and building strategic alliances within Nigeria's energy sector.

In a statement released by ONSA's Head of Strategic Communications, Zakari Mijinyawa, the appointment was described as part of the government's broader commitment to ensuring a stable, sustainable, and secure energy supply for the country.

The statement highlighted that this move underscores President

Tinubu's focus on bolstering energy security and addressing supply chain issues.

"In his new role, Amachree will oversee key national energy security initiatives aimed at enhancing energy security, as well as strengthen community participation in safeguarding Nigeria's energy resources to support short and long-term energy sustainability," the statement read.

Amachree will work closely with various stakeholders, including government ministries, security agencies, energy sector regulators, international partners, and community leaders, to implement solutions to Nigeria's energy challenges.

The statement further noted that Amachree, who holds degrees in Management and is an alumnus of the Lagos Business School, is well-positioned to lead this critical unit.



Ojukaye Flag Amachree

"The National Security Adviser, Malam Nuhu Ribadu, congratulates Hon. Flag Amachree on this appointment," Mijinyawa added.



Gov. Fubara

In the heart of the oil-rich region of Rivers State, Nigeria, a crisis of unprecedented proportions has gripped the land, threatening the peace and stability that the region has long struggled to maintain. Against this backdrop, the actions and reactions of key political figures have come under intense scrutiny, none more so than Governor Fubara, whose stance on the peace intervention efforts of President Tinubu has sparked controversy and divided public opinion.

President Tinubu's peace intervention, aimed at quelling the escalating tensions and violence in Rivers State, was heralded as a beacon of hope in a time of darkness. With his reputation as a seasoned statesman and mediator, President Tinubu's involvement was seen by many as a positive step towards resolving the crisis and restoring normalcy to the embattled region.

However, Governor Fubara's response to President Tinubu's intervention has raised eyebrows and elicited criticism from various quarters. Known for his strong-willed and sometimes controversial approach to governance, Governor Fubara's flip-side on the peace initiative has left many wondering about his true intentions and motivations in the face of such a dire situation.

While some see Governor Fubara's skepticism towards President Tinubu's intervention as a sign of his commitment to upholding the sovereignty and integrity of the state, others view it as a calculated move to maintain his grip on power and influence in the midst of chaos and uncertainty. The governor's reluctance to fully embrace the peace process has fueled speculation and conjecture, further complicating an already volatile situation.

As the crisis in Rivers State deepens and the stakes continue to rise, the role of Governor Fubara in shaping the outcome of President Tinubu's peace intervention cannot be understated. Whether his flip-side on the peace initiative will ultimately yield positive results or exacerbate the existing tensions remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: the people of Rivers State are looking to their leaders for guidance, wisdom, and above

all, a commitment to the greater good.

In the coming days and weeks, as events unfold and decisions are made, the true impact of Governor Fubara's stance on the peace intervention of President Tinubu will become increasingly apparent.

A synopsis of the recent political crisis will give readers a broader perspective on the sudden unexpected transformation of a Governor from a peaceful figure turned to an aggressive player.

In a whirlwind of political events, Governor Fubara's rapid shift from a perceived peacemaker to an unexpected aggressor has left many observers questioning the intricacies of power dynamics and loyalty in the realm of politics. What began as a promising tenure marred by whispers of desperation and betrayal has now unfolded into a tale of shattered alliances and conflicting ambitions.

Just two months into his governorship, Siminialaye Fubara, once hailed as the quiet protege of former Governor Wike, started exhibiting signs of a politician determined to assert his independence and carve his own path. The narrative of a man underestimated by his godfather, who failed to anticipate the depths of his protege's ambition and strategic acumen, began to take shape.

Having ascended to political prominence on the pillars of Wike's support and mentorship, Fubara's transformation into a formidable force in Rivers State's political landscape has been nothing short of dramatic. With a newfound ferocity, he embarked on a mission to dismantle the very structures that had propelled him to power, leaving in his wake a trail of broken relationships and betrayed loyalties.

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President Tinubu



Nyesom Wike

The climax of this power struggle came to a head when Fubara, in a bold move, sought the intervention of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu to mediate the escalating tensions between him and his former mentor. The President's 8-point Resolution, a hard-won agreement signed by all parties involved, was heralded as a beacon of hope for peace and reconciliation in the region.

Despite outward displays of acceptance and commitment to the peace accord, underlying tensions simmered beneath the surface. Criticisms from Fubara's supporters, who decried the constitutionality of the document in addressing complex legal disputes within the State House of Assembly, added fuel to the already raging political fire. The looming specter of impeachment threats against the governor further underscored the fragility of the peace agreement and the enduring legacy of discord in Rivers State's political landscape.

As Governor Fubara navigates the treacherous waters of power and ambition, his journey from a perceived peacemaker to a controversial figure serves as a cautionary tale of the complexities inherent in political leadership and the enduring tensions between loyalty, ambition, and the pursuit of power.

Following the fragile peace deal and his defiant stance in upholding the peace document he signed, Governor Sim Fubara delivered a resolute state broadcast that resonated with Nigerians, garnering

widespread approval and admiration from the public. Despite facing criticism from detractors, he stood firm in his commitment to peace, even suggesting that he was willing to resign from office if necessary, drawing praise and support from the majority of the populace.

In the aftermath of the peace agreement, Fubara's image in the state underwent a remarkable transformation. Once perceived as the subdued victim of political strife, he emerged as a symbol of defiance and a rallying point for those who had clashed with his former mentor, Governor Wike. His purported silence and gentle demeanor, once viewed as signs of oppression, now appeared as calculated tactics to manipulate public perception and cast himself as the righteous underdog in the political arena.

However, this facade of pacifism soon gave way to a more aggressive and confrontational persona as Fubara shed his disguise and revealed his true intentions. The veil of secrecy surrounding his relationships was lifted, exposing a web of betrayals and hidden agendas. Disregarding his earlier pledges of peace and cooperation, he openly defied the terms of the peace pact and brazenly challenged anyone who dared to cross him, invoking his heritage as a proud Ijaw son from the esteemed war canoe house of Opobo.

With the ominous proclamation of "Jungle don Mature," a local proverb signaling readiness for conflict, Fubara signaled a shift towards a more combative

stance, unleashing a torrent of provocative statements and threats. The once-promising figure of reconciliation now stood at the forefront of escalating tensions, embodying the very discord he had initially sought to quell.

As Governor Fubara's transformation unfolds before a watching nation, his journey from a perceived peacemaker to a divisive figure serves as a cautionary tale of the thin line between diplomacy and aggression in the turbulent world of politics. The echoes of war drums grow louder, signaling a turbulent chapter ahead in the political landscape of Rivers State.

As the political landscape in Rivers State continues to unravel, the fallout from Governor Fubara's defiance of the peace resolution brokered by President Bola Tinubu has cast a shadow over the President's once unassailable fatherly role. Fubara's bold rejection of the peace accord as unconstitutional and a mere facade to manipulate his adversaries has not only strained his relationship with the President but also undermined Tinubu's authority as a peacemaker.

President Tinubu, who had earnestly pursued a peaceful resolution to the escalating tensions in Rivers State, now finds himself at a crossroads. With Fubara openly challenging his authority and dismissing his efforts as deceptive, the prospect of another round of intervention appears increasingly elusive. The Governor's brazen disregard for the President's mediation efforts has not only complicated the political landscape but also raised doubts about the efficacy of future peace initiatives in the region.

As Fubara asserts his independence and asserts his autonomy from external influences, the President faces a formidable challenge in navigating the aftermath of the Governor's defiance. The once-promising vision of reconciliation and peace now stands in jeopardy, overshadowed by the specter of discord and resistance.

The road ahead for President Tinubu is fraught with uncertainty as he grapples with the implications of Fubara's actions and the erosion of his authority as a mediator. The dream of a peaceful resolution in Rivers State now appears more distant than ever, as the Governor's defiance sets a troubling precedent for future diplomatic efforts in the region.

In the face of mounting challenges and a Governor determined to chart his own course, President Tinubu must now confront the harsh reality of a political landscape marred by discord and defiance. The fallout from Fubara's actions serves as a stark reminder of the complexities and pitfalls inherent in the pursuit of peace with a seemingly volatile and unpredictable person.

A synopsis of the recent political crisis will give readers a broader perspective on how a Governor who was once seen as "peaceful" turned to become the real aggressor while maintaining a "victim's" voice.

Barely two months after his inauguration as Governor, the seemingly quiet political son and best choice of ex Governor Wike began to show signs of a desperate politician eager to buy his freedom from a godfather who failed to understudy the through nature of a man he considered too naive, loyal and

unambitious. It is often said that the true test of loyal and humility is when power, money and fame are bequeathed to a man once considered simple and with a quiet demeanor.

Siminialaye Fubara who rose to political prominence on the structure and strength of Nyesom Wike has suddenly become ferocious and is going for the jugular of the man whom he once called Father, Leader and boss! He began by seeking to build his own political structure while pulling down everything and everyone who fought with every drop of sweat to change his status from a professional civil servant to the number one citizen of a powerful oil and gas rich state like Rivers.

The dagger thrown at the political heart of his benefactor and his supporters reached a crescendo where he sought the intervention of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu. It was a tough road to peace with the President's 8-point Resolution which the parties involved signed. The Governor went on to accept the political document and promised to implement to the letter in the spirit of peace and reconciliation. While many of his kinsmen screamed blue murder on grounds that the document was unconstitutional in dealing with constitutional issues as the retinue of court cases between that rocked the State House of Assembly as well as the impeachment threats against the governor.

In his state broadcast after the fragile peace deal, Sim Fubara poohpoohed those who condemned his decision to abide by the peace document which he signed alongside others. He said nothing was too much to do for peace to reign, including resigning from office. He got the nod of Nigerians and public applause of majority of the reading public. In the state, he became the toast of the moment and a rallying point for most of those who had been on a collision path with Wike, his erstwhile Master.

Fubara's silence and quiet demeanor was only a smokescreen to deceive unsuspecting supporters and make them see him as the oppressed victim while rubbing tar on his supposed aggressors. Nevertheless, his movie role did not last long as he began to show signs of a masquerade who just got unveiled. His supposed silence and peaceful nature began to wane as he revealed the real face of the man behind the mask.

A deluge of war drums, threats and obvious betrayal. The secrecy of relationships were now laid bare. He discontented his earlier peace pact and reneged on his promise before the President. Fubara dared anyone to challenge him and he would not waste any minute to unleash the dragon in him as a well-bred Ijaw son- a scion of the war canoe house of Opobo. His latest chant of "Jungle don Mature" which is a local proverb for being battle ready. Since then, it's been one statement or the other.

The worst hit would be President Bola Tinubu whose fatherly role has been thrown to the mud. It's obvious the Governor has chosen to be his own man without any apologies to the President whose peace resolution he described as unconstitutional and only a decoy to deceive his opponents.

Is the President ready for another round of intervention having been dragged for suing for a peaceful resolution? This is going to be a tall dream.

ASAWANA: A MISUSED CHANT OF WAR

The Ijaw nation, celebrated for its bravery, resilience, and rich cultural heritage, has produced remarkable leaders who have significantly influenced Nigerian history. From the legendary King Jaja of Opobo to contemporary statesmen and warriors, the Ijaw spirit has long served as a symbol of hope and strength. However, this proud spirit appears to be diminishing, facing challenges from the unwarranted chanting of "Asawana."

Traditionally, Asawana is a war cry used during times of conflict or celebration. Unfortunately, it has recently been adopted by some within the Ijaw community as a means to voice discontent and express ingratitude. This trend is concerning, as it jeopardizes the Ijaw nation's esteemed reputation for organized gratitude and respect toward leaders who have steadfastly supported them.

The Ijaw people have been fortunate to have visionary leaders dedicated to their advancement. Figures like King Jaja of Opobo, who fought against British colonialism, and Alfred Diette-Spiff, the first Military Governor of Rivers State, paved the way for greater political participation. Melford Okilo was a pioneering politician who championed Ijaw interests in the Nigerian legislature. Alabo Graham Douglas and Tam David-West worked tirelessly for Ijaw unity and environmental justice, respectively. Courageous warriors like Marshall Harry and Isaac Adaka Boro fought for rights and self-determination, while Pa Dapper Briye was instrumental in the creation of Rivers State. Additionally, Tompolo, DSP Alamieyeseigha, Goodluck Jonathan, Inatimi Rufus Spiff, and Karibi White have all made significant contributions to the Ijaw cause and the broader Nigerian landscape.

Despite this legacy of strong leadership, the recent chanting of Asawana, often accompanied by vitriolic attacks on perceived enemies, has become alarming. This trend undermines unity and cohesion within the Ijaw community, distracts from meaningful discussions about development, creates unnecessary tensions, and disrespects the hard work of those who have fought for the nation's

advancement. Such behavior projects the Ijaw nation as ungrateful and disorganized, which is far from the truth of its historical legacy.

A particularly troubling example of this ingratitude is the recent controversy involving former Governor Nyesom Wike, a leader of the Ikwerre nation who has consistently supported the Ijaws. Wike's efforts, including the support and defense of Governor Siminialayi Fubara an Ijaw son as his successor have been met with unwarranted chants of "Asawana" and criticism instead of shouts of appreciation and gratitude for breaking the jinx in the new Rivers State where the Upland people have consistently producers the Governor since the return to Civil Rule in 1999. It is not in doubt that his preference for Fubara as the candidate of his party and subsequent winner of the election had the overwhelming support of Wike.

Wike's efforts, including the support and defense of Governor Siminialayi Fubara an Ijaw son as his successor have been met with unwarranted chants of "Asawana" and criticism instead of shouts of appreciation and gratitude for breaking the jinx in the new Rivers State where the Upland people have consistently producers the Governor since the return to Civil Rule in 1999.

In the event of a crack in the relationship between Wike and Fubara, the Ijaws known for peaceful existence are expected to mend fences rather than exhibit the war tendencies where there is none.

In a bid to restore the proud Ijaw spirit, it is essential to promote organized gratitude and respect for those who have stood by the community. Encouraging meaningful discussions on development, addressing the root causes of discord, and fostering a culture of appreciation for Ijaw leaders and their achievements are vital steps

forward. The unnecessary chanting of Asawana must cease, making way for peaceful resolutions to conflicts. By honoring its legacy of bravery, resilience, and unity, the Ijaw nation can continue to produce exceptional leaders who will shape the course of Nigerian history. Ijaw leaders of thought should convene an emergency meeting to address the misuse of the chant of "Asawana", as it has become trivial and an all-comers-affairs; a committee should be established to promote Ijaw unity and cohesion without creating the unnecessary tension between the Ijaws and their neighbours of other ethnic stock; community engagement programs should be initiated to foster appreciation for heroes of Ijaw extraction, past and present.

ENDING BAD GOVERNANCE: THE ABIA BLUEPRINT AND THE ALEX OTTI EXAMPLE



GOV. ALEX OTTI

Emerging from the remnants of the old Imo State in 1991, Abia State once bore the illustrious moniker of "God's Own State." Yet, the passage of time witnessed a gradual erosion of its splendor, courtesy of a legacy of lackluster governance. Despite a heritage steeped in the legacy of distinguished leaders such as the inaugural civilian governor, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara, Sir Alvan and S.G. Ikoku, Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe, General Ike Nwachukwu, Rear Admiral Ndubuisi Kanu, Lt. General Onyeabor Azunbuike Ihejirika, Major General Chijioke Kaja, Group Captain Samson Emeka Omerua, Commander Amadi Ikwecheghi, Prof. Joe Irukwu, Prof. Awa Kalu, Dr. Kalu Idika Kalu, Prof. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, High Chief Nnanna Kalu, Senator Orji Uzor Kalu, Dr. Sam Ohuabunwa, Dr. Paul Ogwuma, Dr. Adolphus Wabara and Sir Marc Wabara, Ms Arunmma Oteh, Prof. Nnenna Oti, Mazi

Nnamdi Kalu, Chioma Ajunwa, Prof Ndubuisi Ekeke and numerous others distinguished in different sectors, yet, Abia State found itself grappling with the burden of unfulfilled promises and dreams of its founding fathers.

Envisioned by its founding architects as a bastion of prosperity and progress, Abia State languished amidst a landscape of unmet expectations under successive administrations. The erstwhile vibrant Umuahia, the state's capital, stood as a mere shadow of a capital city and until now, remained a glorified local government while the bustling economic hub of Aba teetered on the



Gov. Otti at the commissioning of Udeagbala Road in Aba

precipice of decayed infrastructure, hoisting the flag of the dirtiest city of Nigeria.

Palpable disillusionment pervaded the populace, leading many to question the veracity of the federal government's monthly disbursements to the state as well as the huge Internally Generated Revenue through multiple taxation and levies on the productive and trade sectors. The image of the state became battered even beyond the shores of Nigeria. To be a citizen or resident of Abia State was to be an anathema!

The cumulative effect of those years, precisely, 24 years, of negligence in governance, ineptitude, lack of political will and crass irresponsibility in driving the political leadership led to a systemic failure in providing modern infrastructure and services and that ushered in the era of kidnapping for ransome epitomised by the then notorious criminal gang led by "Osisi ka Nkwu" who was eventually

crushed by the military might under the then Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Onyeabor Ihejirika. Prior to his arrest and death, he had established a culture of kidnapping as a burgeoning venture with other small scale actors alike. The result a period of dark years during the tenure of Gov. T.A. Orji. It was a season of profligation of debts despite the efforts of Okonjo-Iweala in helping the state write off the already accumulated local and foreign debts. The poor Federal Allocation to the State which is also endowed with Crude Oil was barely enough to pay a bloated Civil Service and service the avaricious thirsts of the political class, no thanks to the indebtedness to almost all the commercial banks in the state, who would deduct monies at source to service the debts of the state.

The entrance of Orji's protege and manfriday, Gov. Okezie Ikpeazu further diminished the already bad situation.

In a watershed moment in 2023, a coalition comprising the clergy, traditional Rulers, and ordinary citizens convened with a resolute resolve through prayers to vanquish the spectre of bad governance that had long haunted Abia State. Galvanized by a collective sense of purpose, they



Abia First Solar Water Fountain Roundabout

harnessed the power of political engagement to effect transformative change. This was the beginning of the People's journey to ending bad and ineffective leadership in the state. It was a masses movement beyond party lines.

In a pivotal electoral decision on March 23, 2023, the people of Abia entrusted their mandate to Dr. Alex Chioma Otti, an experienced banker, a steward renowned for his acumen in organizational leadership and commitment to sustainable development, with a background in financial and fiscal and human resource management.

The triumph of the Abia electorate was underpinned by a series of decisive actions:

- Setting aside political, ethnic, and religious divides in pursuit of a common aspiration for progress
- Leveraging peaceful demonstrations and communal supplications to spotlight their grievances

on a national stage

- Displaying unwavering perseverance in the face of formidable challenges
- Selecting a leader distinguished by a proven record of principled governance and holistic progress

Today, Abia State stands as a testament to the transformative potency of effective governance. The erstwhile beleaguered Aba now revels in uninterrupted power supply, while Umuahia metamorphoses into a contemporary citadel of governance. Infrastructure projects proliferate, and the state's economic vitality burgeons autonomously, emancipated from a reliance on federal largesse. In less than one year, Abia State was placed back on the comity of states and the Governor became the face of true leadership while his government became the symbol of good governance.

The collective decision of the people of the state including those in the Diaspora, to end bad governance and restore the image of the state was a practical protest that yielded results. It was not surprising that in the recent protests that characterized the push for the end of bad governance which has plagued the nation for decades and causing untold hardship for the masses, the people of



One of the roads commissioned by the governor

Abia preferred to sustain the winning streaks of a Governor chosen by the people. The state has had a good share of bad governance but that ended with the election and inauguration of Alex Otti and his deputy, Ikechukwu Emetu. It was a protest through the ballots which was considered the most popular election so far.

While the citizens of Nigeria deserve the right to express their disillusionment with the worsening state of insecurity and food prices amongst others, it is expedient to have a blueprint such as the case of Abia State. There should be no room for violence or the invitation to the Military either to disperse protesters or to take over the reins of power. In a democracy, where there is a will to elect the right people, there could be a change of power and an end to bad governance through the ballots.

The end of an era is the beginning of a new one!



The Director General of the NATIONAL OIL SPILLAGE DETECTION AND RESPONSE AGENCY, (NOSDRA) meets with the Zonal/Field Heads as well as the Directors and Heads of Departments to present their Operational Coverage areas, natural / type of operation (Downstream, Midstream & Upstream); Staff strength and Distribution; Achievements and challenges.



PICTORIAL





Benjamin Kalu

Fifty-five years after the civil war, the lingering effects of the war is still visible among the Igbo. Ndigbo being the worst hit of the civil war, still bears scars from the war, with ongoing displacement, poverty, trauma, environmental degradation, security concerns, infrastructural deficit and marginalization.

At one time or the other, past Nigerian presidents made varying efforts to address the negative effects of the civil war on the Igbo people, but they all left limited impact.

The most striking was the 3R sophistry by General Yakubu Gowon in January 1970. Gowon had assured the world that there would be Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (3R), of the Igbo land, as a result of the war ravages, but 54 years after, the South East has witnessed the direct opposite of the 3Rs, even in exponential proportion.

In a similar move, General Olusegun Obasanjo,

SOUTH EAST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: RT HON BEN KALU'S MASTERSTROKE

established the South East Development Initiative (SEDI), to address regional development challenges, but the challenges still persisted.

Alhaji Shehu Shagari made a corresponding effort in his launching of the Presidential Task Force on Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, for the sole purpose of addressing the civil war's effects, but the impact was small scaled, due to his short tenure in office.

Other efforts by Gen Ibrahim Babangida, spanned across the introduction of the National Commission for Refugees, Displaced Persons and Rehabilitation to confront the plight of war-affected communities.

Gen Sabi Abacha, came up with the National Council on Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, while President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, launched the Presidential Committee on Dialogue and Peace in the Niger Delta, which included initiatives for the South East. He also established the Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, to promote education in the region.

President Muhammadu Buhari in his own dimension to tackle the region's infrastructure deficit, began the construction of the second Niger bridge, the Enugu-Port Harcourt Expressway and also, formed the Presidential Committee on South East Initiative (PCSEI), to handle the regional development challenges.

While these attempts were aimed to grapple with the negative effects of the civil war, they have been criticized for being inadequate, slow-paced or politicized. The South East region still demands

sustained attention and investment to fully handle the effects of the civil war. These were the pitfalls of past efforts to reposition the region.

None of the struggles by past national leaders could actualize the setting up of a South East Development Commission (SEDC), that will solely tackle head on the numerous challenges facing Ndigbo from education, healthcare, marginalization, security, infrastructure, and others.

Several Igbo leaders had equally attempted to bring the South East Development Commission Bill to Law, but Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu's efforts remained phenomenon.

Let me quickly give an overview of the actions of some of our Igbo representatives in actualizing this course, so you could appreciate better, the leadership excellence of the current Deputy

Wike's efforts, including the support and defense of Governor Siminialayi Fubara an Ijaw son as his successor have been met with unwarranted chants of "Asawana" and criticism instead of shouts of appreciation and gratitude for breaking the jinx in the new Rivers State where the Upland people have consistently producers the Governor since the return to Civil Rule in 1999.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Senator Ike Ekweremadu in 2015, sponsored a Bill similar to the SEDC, but it didn't pass the second reading. Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe in 2017, introduced a Bill, but it stalled, due to lack of support. Governor Dave Umahi in 2018, advocated for a South East Development Commission, but his efforts were met with limited success. In 2019, the Ohanaeze Ndigbo, the highest socio-cultural organization in Igbo land, went a step higher in pushing for the actualization of SEDC, but it did not gain traction.

Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu in 2020, rewrote history, by successfully sponsoring the SEDC Bill which passed the second reading and eventually passed into Law in 2024. This can only be likened to GRACE.

Interestingly, the passage of the South East Development Commission Bill to Law marks a

significant milestone in the quest for a regional development and growth. The groundbreaking legislation sponsored by the indefatigable number 6 citizen of the country, is a testament to his unwavering commitment to the welfare and progress of the region. The combination of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Deputy Speaker, Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu, broke the over 54-year jinx with the SEDC Law.

President Tinubu has shown a major departure from the Buhari's regime, by signing the SEDC Bill into Law. This further shows his intention about the development of the South East region and his believe in building the nation in the fulcrum of fairness, equity and unity, hence his commitment to ensuring equitable development, inclusive governance, and the provision of qualitative services to all Nigerians, no matter where they reside, while knitting more tightly together the national fabric.

Like the North East Development Commission (NEDC), which brought tremendous transformation in the North East, especially on the area of humanitarian support (where Internally Displaced Persons and victims of insurgency were aided), education/healthcare support (schools and healthcare facilities are being built and upgraded), economic empowerment; through skills training, entrepreneurship support and job creations and initiatives.

Environmental remediation of areas in the region suffering ecological issue, pollution, among other interventions, the South East Development Commission will facilitate the development of critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges and public buildings in the South East region. The commission can implement policies and programs to boost economic growth, create jobs, and provide access to credit facilities for entrepreneurs and small businesses. Under education and healthcare, the SEDC can invest in education and healthcare infrastructure, improving access to quality education and medical care.

SEDC will address environmental degradation by cleaning up pollution, rehabilitating damaged ecosystems, and promoting sustainable practices. The commission will ensure Ndigbo has a stronger voice in national politics and decision-making processes.

It can promote and preserve Igbo language and culture, collaborating with security agencies to address insecurity challenges in the region, manage special intervention funds to address specific regional challenges.

The South East Development Commission can foster economic integration and cooperation among southeastern states, addressing historical injustices and lingering issues from the civil war, such as, rehabilitation of war-affected areas and compensation for victims.

While past efforts to reintegrate the Igbo people



met minimal result, the SEDC which covers the five eastern states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo, would go a long way to assuage the feelings of the Igbo with respect to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of roads, houses and other infrastructural damages suffered by the region, as well as, tackle ecological problems and other related environmental or development challenges in the region.

However, by addressing these issues, the SEDC would help to bridge the developmental gap, promote economic growth, and improve the overall well-being of Ndigbo.

The key point of discussion is that the South East Development Commission, stands out from previous initiatives, as it incorporates vital elements that guarantee its long-term viability and success, such as:

- **Legislative Backing:** The commission is legislatively backed, giving it a strong legal foundation and authority to operate.
- **Structured approach:** SEDC has a clear structure, mandate, and funding mechanism, ensuring a systematic approach to development.
- **Regional focus:** The commission is specifically focused on the South East region, addressing its unique challenges and needs.
- **Inclusive representation:** It has a board comprising representatives from each South East state, ensuring diverse perspectives and regional buy-in.
- **Comprehensive scope:** The commission's mandate covers various aspects, including infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic development.
- **Sustained commitment:** SEDC is designed to be a long-term initiative, ensuring consistent effort and progress.
- **Community engagement:** It encourages community participation and ownership, fostering grassroots support and inclusivity.
- **Accountability mechanisms:** It has built-in accountability mechanisms, ensuring transparency and effective use of resources.

Though past efforts, while well-intentioned, often lacked one or more of these elements, limiting their impact and sustainability. The SEDC law addresses these gaps, providing a robust framework for meaningful reintegration and development.

At this juncture, it won't be out of place if I say that Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu is not playing politics of rice and wrappers, but diving into the mainstream of governance, which goes beyond just touching the lives of an individual or group of people. Myopic critics would seek for mere empowerment for a set of people, but a strategic thinker seeks for lasting avenues that could create endless opportunities for the entire region. He has created a platform for coordinated development, empowering the region to unlock its vast potential. "What no past Igbo leader could ever achieve, Ben Kalu broke the jinx".

He made a historic achievement that can positively impact the lives of millions, leaving a lasting legacy. He prioritized the region's interest over his personal gain and has established a precedent for future leaders to follow, encouraging them to prioritize regional development.

BOK as he is fondly called by friends, has demonstrated foresight and understanding of the needs of his region with an unwavering commitment, which showed dedication and perseverance in pushing for the Bill's passage, despite potential obstacles.

This goes ahead to remind me of the words of Zig Ziglar that says, "With hard work and determination, you can achieve anything you set your mind to".

His suave, assertive, sagacious, outspoken, and visionary dispositions were high points in achieving the South East Development Commission and they remained a very inspiring and veritable source of hope for Ndigbo. "Indeed, Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu is a beacon of hope and a pillar of transformation for the South East region".

The South East Development Commission, a long-awaited initiative decades in the making, was finally brought to fruition by Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu and his team.

FOR FUBARA, IT'S A "TAKE-IT-BACK" PUNCH AGAINST PRESIDENT TINUBU

...Mobilizes Own Protesters, Doles Out Millions of Naira

The primary responsibility of government at all levels is to protect lives and property while balancing citizens' constitutional rights. However, in the interest of safety and security, governments often limit the enforcement of these rights. This delicate balance was put to the test in Rivers State, where a recent protest exposed a matrix of governance, disloyalty, and rebellion.

Despite President Ahmed Bola Tinubu's federal government being open to peaceful protests, it has consistently advised against violent demonstrations, which can be hijacked by malicious elements. In line with this stance, government officials across the country, including state governors and appointees, have worked to minimize the impact of processions and rallies.

However, Rivers State, known for its loyalty to the central government, took a different approach. Governor Fubara allegedly ignored calls from the Federal government to mitigate the risks associated with the protest. Instead, the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Mr. Edison Ehie, mobilized youth groups, including past and present student union leaders, to meet with the Governor, ostensibly to plan a "peaceful" protest.

It was gathered that each of the leaders of these groups received N300,000 from taxpayers' funds on the first day. A subsequent meeting took place, where Mr. Siminalayi addressed the youths and told them to disregard warnings not to participate in the protest from "enemies of the state." Each attendee received N500,000, totaling N150 million for 300 youths. Various groups received N6 million each to mobilize for the protest, which went ahead despite resistance from the anti-rally orders of the Commissioner of Police in the state.

In what appears to be a shocking revelation, Rivers State Governor, Mr. Siminalayi Fubara, has indicted President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, criticizing his low democratic scorecard and failure to manage the economy and stem the tide of inflation. Governor Fubara threw a jab at President Tinubu while responding to a crowd of protesting youths gathered in front of the Government House in Port Harcourt on August 1, 2024.

Governor Fubara espoused his views, saying, "I



Gov Sim Fubara

am in your protests. The demands are germane. Hardship. Bad governance. Before this government came, the exchange rate was below N300.00, but under this government, it is now N1,600. The cost of living, cost of food, house rent, high cost of medical bills." He continued, "I am thanking you because you are here to demand a better Nigeria. Like I told you yesterday, I already know your problems. Our youth, I know that you are hungry. I agree with you that there is hunger. Before you leave here, I will give you a small thing, at least, to take and buy pure water and bread. Aluta Continue."

The planned protest was hijacked by the Governor and his Chief of Staff to prove a point to the Federal Government that he had the support of the youths. Governor Fubara wants to show that it is time to revenge against President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who he now perceives as his political enemy. During the protest, Governor Fubara acknowledged the success of the protest, confirming he knew it would be non-violent. He aligned with the youths while blaming the federal government for the people's suffering due to failed policies.

RIVERS APC: A STORY OF BETRAYAL...

Continued from back page

Ojukaye Flag Amachree, was seen as a compromise candidate, but Emeka Beke's emergence as party secretary alienated Abe's supporters.

Beke's Election and Polarization

Beke's subsequent election as chairman in 2021 further polarized the party. Abe's group saw Beke as an extension of Amaechi's dominance, while Amaechi's loyalists viewed Beke as though a loyal party man to only Amaechi but a seasoned businessman who will do business with anything.

When all attempts to get the gubernatorial ticket of the APC failed, Magnus Abe left the APC to get the gubernatorial ticket of the SDP while leaving Tony Okocha and Worgu Boms (Former HAG under Amaechi's as Governor) in the APC to continue the campaign for Asiwaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu. There was a rift over who would anchor the Presidential rally of Tinubu in Portharcourt, wherein the Magnus Abe's structure in APC led by Tony Okocha and Austin Wokocha partnered with the Wike's group to block the Amaechi's group from participating in the presidential rally.

The matter was resolved with the intervention of Tien Jackrich and Governor Wike who provided Okocha with the needed funds for the presidential rally. This of course gave Okocha the leverage to act as the leader of APC in support of Tinubu, while Tonye Cole and Emeka Beke were largely inconspicuous. The reason is not far from the fact that Amaechi who trailed behind Tinubu at the presidential primaries had become absent in the Tinubu campaign organisation. It was rumoured that he had asked his supporters during an exclusive caucus meeting to vote for PDP's Atiku, apparently because Wike his arch opponent in the state had pitched his support for Tinubu over what himself and other four governors claimed was a support for a Southern presidential candidate.

After the inauguration of President Tinubu, Victor Giadom, the South South Zonal Vice Chairman of APC and a former strong ally of Amaechi led a number of the APC leadership in the state to pledge their support to Wike though of PDP, who was appointed the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory. A move which earned Victor knocks and kudos in some quarters. Having gotten the support of these party leaders in the state, Wike synergized with the leadership in Abuja and through the instrumentality of the National Chairman of APC, Ganduje, who constituted a Caretaker Committee for the Rivers APC after the sack of Beke and co by the Court, in a case instituted by the former Deputy Chairman to Emeka Beke, Omiete Eferibo.

This gave Okocha and co including Chibike Ikenga and Eric Nwibani to function as the pilots of the party. True to it, Okocha and his men revived the near comatose party and it became a viable voice of opposition in the state while also building a larger support base for Tinubu under the Renewed Hope Family, which is said to be solely funded by Wike.

In a sudden twist of faith, a State High Court in Rivers State under Justice Apiroku delivered a

judgment which sacked the Caretaker Committee and returned Emeka Beke and the duly elected State Committee back to the seat.

Presently, the legal battle is on and so far, the law is on the side of Emeka Beke while the National leadership and the Conference of APC State Chairmen favour the Tony Okocha and co.

But there are still recommended ways to navigate these challenges to revive the party in the state, considering that a third force may emerge before the next General election.

Political Solution:

The National Working Committee and NEC should engage both chairmen and propose a lasting solution.

Neutral Leadership:

Appoint a neutral person as CTC to liaise with both teams and usher in a new executive.

Inclusive Reconciliation:

Invite, Amaechi, Abe, Dakuku, and Tonye Cole, Dawari George, Victor Giadom, Emeka Beke, Tony Okocha, Adrew Uchendu, Wilson Ake, Chidi Wihioaka, Ojukaye, Ikanya, Innocent Barikor, Tien Jackrich, Sokonte Davies, Hon Asita, Isaac Ogbobula, Wogu Boms, etc to a meeting to address the crisis and find common ground.

Appointment:

Offer Beke an appointment and ask him to step down as party leader, alongside Tony Okocha's team. Although that may be a difficult decision considering his lackadaisical role in the Tinubu's victory.

National Intervention:

The president should intervene and prevail upon the party's apex leadership to resolve the crisis.

Truth and Reconciliation:

Establish a team to meet with stakeholders and reveal the truth about the crisis, encouraging reconciliation and forgiveness.

Fresh Congress:

Conduct a fresh congress to elect new executives, ensuring inclusivity and representation for all factions.

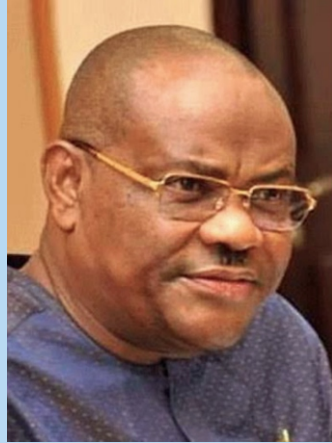
Party Restructuring:

Restructure the party to prevent future crises, ensuring a more democratic and inclusive decision-making process.

The APC in Rivers State stands at a crossroads. The party's survival depends on its ability to reconcile and find a common ground. The recommended solutions offer a pathway to resolution, but require commitment and courage from all stakeholders. Will the APC in Rivers State seize this opportunity to turn the tide and forge a united front, or will the crisis continue to engulf the party? Only time will tell.



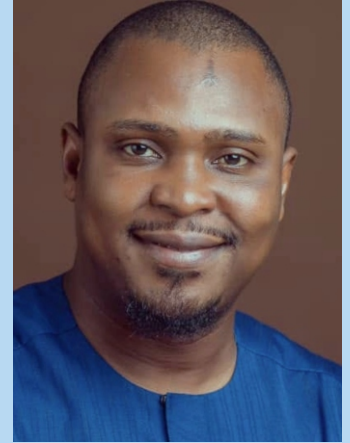
GOV SIM FUBARA



NYESOM WIKE



MARTINS AMAEWHULE



EDISON EHIE

APP IS FUBARA'S FRONT AS HE LOSES GRIP OF PDP

The Rivers State political landscape has been marred by complexity and intrigue, particularly since Dr. Peter Odili's tenure as Governor.

The emergence of Rotimi Amaechi as Governor was largely facilitated by Odili, but their relationship was short-lived as Amaechi sought to establish his own power base, dubbed the "believers team." This team was intended to dismantle Odili's dynasty, but Amaechi's second term bid required reconciling with Odili.

However, this fragile peace was shattered by a political implosion that splintered Amaechi's structure, leading to Nyesom Wike's departure with a faction of the believers team. This power struggle ultimately led to Amaechi's ouster from the PDP, despite his position as Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum.

Fast-forward to the present, Siminialaye Fubara underestimated the intensity of the battle for control. Fubara believed Wike would be easily swayed, but their rift has been fueled by Chief of Staff Edison Ehie, who allegedly seeks to replicate Wike's rise to prominence. Ehie is credited with proposing the use of the Action Peoples Party (APP) as a negotiation platform, sparking concerns about Fubara's intentions.

The APP's role in the local government election has raised questions about Fubara's strategy.

While some view it as a genuine attempt to promote grassroots democracy, others see it as a tactical move to undermine Wike's influence.

Key Players in the Rivers State Political Landscape:

- **Rotimi Amaechi:** Former Speaker, Former Governor and Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum
- **Nyesom Wike:** Incumbent FCT minister, Former Governor and former Chief of Staff to Amaechi
- **Siminialaye Fubara:** Current Governor, seeking to consolidate power
- **Edison Ehie:** Chief of Staff to Fubara, alleged architect of the APP strategy
- **Dr. Peter Odili:** Former Governor, whose influence continues to shape Rivers State politics in one way or the other.

Understanding the APP's Role:

- **Negotiation Platform:** Ehie's proposed use of the APP to facilitate dialogue between Fubara and Wike
- **Local Government Election:** The APP's involvement has sparked debate about Fubara's intentions
- **Grassroots Democracy:** Some view the APP as a genuine attempt to promote local participation

The Larger Context:

In every state, the incumbent typically seeks to maintain control. Fubara's liaison with other parties to spread LGA

Chairmanship and Councillorship slots aims to portray him as remaining in the PDP. However, this move has angered many of Fubara's supporters, as the choice of APP and candidate selection contradicts the goal of diminishing Wike's influence.

Speculations also abound that Rotimi Amaechi is unhappy about loyalists collecting councillorship slots from Fubara. As the situation unfolds, one thing is clear: the Rivers State political landscape remains fraught with tension and uncertainty. The outcome of the local government election will likely have far-reaching implications for the state's future.

Implications and Future Directions:

The ongoing power struggle in Rivers State raises important questions about governance, democracy, and the role of political parties. As the situation continues to unfold, stakeholders must prioritize transparency, accountability, and the interests of the Rivers State people.

The APP's role in promoting grassroots democracy or undermining Wike's influence will be closely watched. Fubara's strategy, Ehie's motivations, and Amaechi's stance will shape the future of Rivers State politics.

Stay informed, engage in constructive dialogue, and demand accountability from leaders to ensure a brighter future for Rivers State.

OKONJO-IWEALA SEEKS SECOND TERM AS WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, WTO Director-General, is seeking another four-year term as head of the World Trade Organisation, according to Reuters.

The report said this is following a broad Africa-led push to start the process early, aiming to complete "unfinished business" from her first mandate.

Okonjo-Iweala, 70, a former Nigerian finance minister, made history by becoming the first female and African chief of the 30-year-old trade body in 2021.

"I would like to be part of this chapter of the WTO story and I stand ready to compete for the position," Okonjo-Iweala said on Monday in comments later confirmed by a WTO statement.

"For my second term, I intend to focus on delivering," she added, saying among the priorities were addressing "unfinished business".

These include a deal on ending fisheries subsidies and reaching a breakthrough in global agriculture negotiations, as well as reforming the WTO's hobbled disputes system and decarbonising trade.

Officially, she has until the end of November to decide whether to apply again. But the African-led move to start early, initiated in July before U.S. President Joe Biden withdrew from the election campaign and supported by dozens of countries, was seen as motivated partly by a bid to secure her second term ahead of the U.S. vote in November.

Under WTO consensus rules, that would be possible if nobody else applies and all states accept her.

In 2020, former U.S. President Donald Trump's administration blocked her appointment in a step seen by some as an attack on an organisation he once described as "horrible".

She secured U.S. backing when Biden succeeded Trump in 2021.

Asked whether both she and the WTO could be successful if Trump is elected, she said: "I don't focus on that because I have no



Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

control."

Okonjo-Iweala is one of the few WTO chiefs in the body's history to land global trade deals, including the first part of a global treaty on cutting fishing subsidies agreed in 2022.

But a high-level meeting earlier this year yielded more meagre outcomes: the accession of two new members and a rollover on a deal to hold off from imposing digital tariffs.

Since then some agreements such as a follow-up fishing deal have been blocked most clearly by just one member – India.

Okonjo-Iweala admitted the job was difficult and that geopolitical tensions among its 166 members

was a significant challenge.

"It is tough, you know, very tough. There's no getting away from that. But it's also a job that makes me want to get out of bed in the morning," she told Reuters.

Since the Trump administration blocked judges in Dec. 2019 to the WTO's top adjudications court, leaving it unable to function, the watchdog has had limited scope to constrain the flouting of rules by members.

The policy has continued under Biden, although Washington is engaging on possible reforms which could eventually see some form of review system for disputes eventually revived.

Expert Calls For Early Intervention As Dementia Cases Rise

Psycho-socialist Dotun Ajiboye has raised the alarm over the increasing prevalence of dementia in Nigeria, stressing the need for early intervention to address the growing public health crisis.

Ajiboye stated that early detection would enable persons with dementia to access treatment. According to him, dementia is defined as a syndrome, not a specific disease, explaining that it is characterised by a decline in cognitive function severe enough to interfere with daily life.

He said that dementia was also a general term for the impaired ability to remember, think, or make decisions that interfere with everyday activities.

"Memory loss, communication difficulties, and disorientation are just some of the symptoms people living with dementia experience, and it can be caused by a variety of diseases, including Alzheimer's and vascular dementia," he said. According to him, public education to mitigate the impact of dementia in Nigeria is very important.

FLOODING: TINUBU VOWS TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES DIFFERENTLY

...Assures flood victims of support

President Bola Tinubu has vowed to tackle the challenges of climate change and other environmental issues differently.

Tinubu made this vow in Maiduguri while commiserating with the government and people of Borno state over the recent flooding that left many dead and properties destroyed.

The President, who was received by the state governor, Babagana Zulum and other political stakeholders in the state, made it straight to the palace of the Shehu of Borno, HRH Abubakar Umar Garba, where he commiserated with the monarch.

On his way to the Shehu's palace, the President visited the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Camp where he assured the

flood victims of maximum support by the Federal Government.

Speaking at the Shehu's palace, the President said he had to cut off his scheduled official trip to the United States of America (US) in order to sympathize with the people of Borno over the unfortunate incident.

He said, "I am just here to sympathize with you. I know your palace was overtaken by flood, I have heard the report, My VP gave me details but personally, I know I have to cut off.

"I was going directly to America but to be with you if only for five minutes share the moment. I thank you very much for your leadership for your various prayers, this is one disaster that we must pay attention to, we will help Borno State."

He continued "We as a government, as Nigerian people, we pledge with you that we will help you in the rehabilitation. It is our problem not just your problem; we must share in each other's pains.

"The situation that we find ourselves in the environmental problem, climate change and all of these are what we must tackle differently and we must educate our people."

The Shehu of Borno, in his comments, requested that the President get to the root cause of the flooding.

"My request is one that is find out the root cause of this flooding in address it appropriately so as to avoid future occurrences as 80 per cent has been affected by this disaster.

Federal, States, LGs Shared N3.473trn In Q2 2024 — NEITI

The Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) has announced that the Federation Accounts Allocation Committee (FAAC) disbursed N3.473 trillion to the three tiers of government in the second quarter of 2024.

This reflects an increase of N46.77 billion (1.42%) compared to the first quarter of 2024.

In a statement, NEITI's Assistant Director, Communication and Advocacy, Chris Ochonu, presented the key highlights to show that the Federal Government received N1.102 trillion (33.35% of total allocation), 36 states received N1.337 trillion (40.47%) while the 774 local government councils shared N864.98 billion (26.18%), adding that the nine oil-producing states received N169.26 billion as

derivation share from mineral revenue.

According to the agency, the main revenue-generating agencies were the Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), and Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) through oil/gas royalties, petroleum profit tax, company income tax, VAT, and import/ excise duties.

NEITI urged civil society organisations to strengthen monitoring and tracking of allocations and disbursements to all tiers of government.

The report also highlighted the need for states to diversify revenue sources by taking advantage of solid minerals sector reforms.

Ochonu further listed state-by-state allocations which indicates that Delta State received the largest

share of N137.357 billion, Lagos State received N123.282 billion, Rivers State received N108.104 billion, while Nasarawa, Ebonyi, and Ekiti states received the least, with N24.735 billion and N25.404 billion.

Also, Delta State led the derivation revenue with 40.153%, followed by Bayelsa (38.112%) and Akwa Ibom (36.117%), Rivers State recorded 27.272%, while other oil-producing states had ratios below 20%.

Solid minerals-producing states did not receive derivation revenue due to insufficient revenue generation.

NEITI's quarterly review aims to enhance knowledge, increase awareness, and promote public accountability in managing public finances.



CHELSEA PONDER PRE-JANUARY OSIMHEN OFFER

Their interest in the player has been reignited following his impressive debut for Galatasaray in the Turkish Super Lig. The former Lille striker made an immediate impact, providing an assist in a 5-0 thrashing of Rizespor and setting a new league record with seven shots on goal in a single match this season.

Osimhen's performance showcased his versatility and threat in attack. He completed eight of nine attempted passes, won six out of eight duels, and successfully executed all his dribbling attempts. This display has not gone unnoticed by Chelsea, who are still in the market for a prolific striker.

The London club's pursuit of Osimhen dates back to the summer, when negotiations collapsed in the final hours of the transfer window despite representatives flying to Naples.

Al Ahli also saw a mega-money offer rejected by the player at the time.

Osimhen's current contract with Napoli, extended in December 2023, includes a release clause between

€120m and €130m. However, with just 18 months remaining on his deal come January, Napoli may be forced to consider offers below this valuation to avoid losing him on a free transfer.

Chelsea's renewed interest comes at a time when Osimhen's price tag is expected to drop. The club are reportedly eager to steal a march on other potential suitors by making an approach before the January window.

However, they are likely to face stiff competition from several elite clubs across Europe and the Middle East.

As the reigning CAF Player of the Year continues to impress in Turkey, Chelsea's management will be weighing their options carefully. With Osimhen's loan at Galatasaray set to run until the end of the season, any potential move would require careful negotiation with all parties involved.

For now, Osimhen remains focused on his performances for Galatasaray, where he aims to help the club defend their Super Lig title.

Chelsea are reportedly considering a move to sign Victor Osimhen before the January transfer window, with the English Premier League club keen to secure the services of the Nigeria striker, according to reports.

The Stamford Bridge giants, who missed out on the Nigeria striker during the summer transfer window, are said to be closely monitoring his situation at Galatasaray, where he is currently playing on loan from Napoli.

A source close to Football Insider revealed that Chelsea are eyeing a potential deal, thanks to a break clause in Osimhen's loan agreement with the Turkish giants.

Boniface can do more - Alonso

Bayer Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso has praised Victor Boniface following his impressive display in their 4-1 victory over Hoffenheim on Saturday.

Reflecting on the road win, the Spaniard emphasised that he expects more from the Nigeria striker, particularly when the team is out of possession.

The 23-year-old forward was instrumental in Die Werkself's commanding win, providing an assist for the opener and netting a brace to open his Bundesliga account for the 2024/25 season.

However, Alonso believes there is still room for improvement in Boniface's game.

"He can and must do more. He knows it, and the team needs it," the Spanish tactician emphasised at the post-match press conference.

Alonso stressed the importance



of Boniface's contribution when Leverkusen are not in possession, indicating that the striker's defensive work is an area that requires attention.

The former Liverpool and Real Madrid midfielder acknowledged Boniface's offensive prowess, noting, "It's always difficult for defenders to

play against him."

The Nigerian's second goal, in particular, was singled out by Alonso as being "very important for the striker's confidence and mood."

Boniface's performance marked a strong return to the team after serving a suspension for unprofessional conduct in his previous league appearance. His Man-of-the-Match display helped the defending champions bounce back from their recent defeat to RB Leipzig, which ended their 35-match unbeaten league run.

The victory at Hoffenheim extended Leverkusen's unbeaten away winning streak in the Bundesliga to 19 games, the second-longest in the division's history. It also propelled the team to fourth place in the league standings with six points, setting a positive tone ahead of their upcoming Champions League campaign.

OSAKA SPLITS FROM COACH

Former world number one Naomi Osaka has parted ways with coach Wim Fissette.

It comes after she admitted to being frustrated with recent results following an early exit from the US Open last month.

The Japanese tennis star began working with the Belgian in 2020 and has had two stints with him.

Osaka, 26, won two of her four Grand Slams - the 2020 US Open and 2021 Australian Open titles - with Fissette in her corner.

"Four years, two Slams and a whole lot of memories. Thanks Wim for being a great coach and an even greater person. Wishing you all the best," Osaka wrote on Instagram.

Fissette rejoined Osaka when she returned to tennis in January following the birth of her daughter in July 2023.

However, Osaka has reached the quarter-finals in only two of the 16 tournaments she has played following her 15 months away, and has not gone past the second round of a Grand Slam.

"It's been a little difficult because obviously I can only gauge how I'm doing by results," she said after exiting the US Open last month.

"I feel faster. I feel better, but I lost in the second round. So it's a little rough.

"I feel like I'm working way harder than I've ever worked in my life, so it needs to turn into something."

Fissette has worked with Kim Clijsters, Simona Halep, Johanna Konta, Angelique Kerber, Victoria Azarenka and others in a celebrated coaching career.



I've been through a lot of pain - Anthony Joshua

Anthony Joshua says he has "been through a lot of pain" over the past two years as he bids to become a three-time world champion against fellow British heavyweight Daniel Dubois on Saturday.

The 34-year-old will take on IBF belt-holder Dubois, 27, in front of a post-war British record 96,000 fans at Wembley Stadium.

Joshua has rebuilt and worked his way back to mandatory challenger position having broken down in tears after losing a second consecutive fight to Oleksandr Usyk in August 2022.

"I've worked hard and been through a lot of pain, and I've worked hard to get better," he told BBC Sport.

"Hopefully those experiences won't happen again because as you saw that night, I don't like losing."

The 2012 Olympic gold medallist is on a four-fight winning streak and brutally knocked out Francis Ngannou in his last outing.

"I think I'm gifted with an ability to fight and compete," Joshua said. "In boxing you're able to read certain tendencies, you're able to read your opponent, so I can always have an eye for that.

"But there's a supreme level that you can take it to. And it's happened over the past eight or 10 months. I've really honed in on those skills."

Joshua and Dubois posed for a face-to-face at Monday's media day in London's stylish Old Billingsgate

venue, with Tower Bridge providing an iconic backdrop, to kick off fight week.

The more experienced Joshua - who will headline a UK stadium fight for the sixth time - relaxed into his press commitments throughout the day.

After a menacing stare-down, Joshua headed towards a crowd and posed for photos, even agreeing to a request for a hug from a fan.

Meanwhile, a pensive Dubois appeared a little eager to get the media formalities out of the way.

It was their first meeting since a news conference in June, when a behind-closed-doors face-off earlier in the day resulted in Joshua threatening to throw a chair at Dubois.

"I was just basically saying 'stay in your lane'. I don't expect respect from him but I'm ready to earn my respect from him," Joshua reflected on the confrontation.

Joshua has the opportunity to join heavyweight legends Muhammad Ali, Lennox Lewis, Evander Holyfield and Vitali Klitschko in becoming a three-time world champion.

The long-awaited fight with Tyson Fury might also be on the horizon, but Joshua is refusing to overlook the hard-hitting Dubois.

"He is a good fighter, a brilliant fighter," Joshua said. "Everyone speaks highly of him. I think they underestimate me as well, so I will go out there and prove how good I am."



Wike



Amaechi



Abe

RIVERS APC:

A STORY OF BETRAYAL, POWER STRUGGLE AND RECONCILIATION

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in Rivers State has been embroiled in a protracted crisis, threatening the party's very existence. This turmoil stems from the 2015 gubernatorial election, but its roots stretch back to the crisis between former President Goodluck Jonathan and Rotimi Amaechi, then Governor of Rivers State.

The Jonathan-Amaechi Crisis

In 2013, President Jonathan and Governor Amaechi's relationship began to fray. Amaechi, then Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum, was seen as a potential threat to Jonathan's 2015 re-election bid. The rift deepened when Amaechi openly criticized Jonathan's administration, leading to a rift within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Nyesom Wike's Emergence

Nyesom Wike, then Minister of State for Education, capitalized on the crisis to further his own political ambitions. Wike, a close ally of Jonathan, began to undermine Amaechi's authority, eventually leading to Amaechi's ouster from the PDP.

Amaechi's Defection and APC Formation

Amaechi joined forces with Bola Tinubu, Muhammadu Buhari, Bukola Saraki, and Atiku Abubakar to form the APC. The party's primary goal was to defeat Jonathan in the 2015 presidential election.

Rivers State APC's Early Successes

Under the leadership of Davies Ibiamu Ikanya, the APC

in Rivers State gained significant traction. Ikanya's strategic leadership helped build a strong party structure, earning the APC a reputation as a viable alternative to the PDP.

The 2015 Gubernatorial Election and Crisis

The APC's gubernatorial primary in 2015 exposed deep divisions within the party. Amaechi's faction chose Dakuku Peterside over Magnus Abe, sparking a rift that would haunt the party for years to come.

Abe's Protest Candidacy

Abe's supporters like Tony Okocha, the then Chief of Staff, Barry Mpigi, Marcus Nleji, Chidi Wihioaka, Allwell Onyeso etc felt betrayed by Amaechi's decision, leading to a protest which was stopped by Amaechi getting people to speak to Abe to return to the Senate. The situation worsened when Amaechi's allies, including his then-Deputy Governor Tele Ikuru, defected to the PDP.

The 2019 Elections and Aftermath

In the 2019 gubernatorial election, Amaechi's faction chose Tonye Cole, a relatively unknown candidate, over Abe. This decision was met with resistance from even Dakuku's supporters, leading to an underground splintering of the party.

Leadership Problems and Congresses

The APC in Rivers State has struggled with leadership issues, starting with the removal of Davies Ibiamu Ikanya as state chairman in 2018. His successor,

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