



Nwanne di na mba

ICF NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

We are here again with another issue of our Newsletter looking you straight in the face. The last one months has been, for me, been one of conks and pats.

Expectedly, most of the pats gently landed on my back as complimentary taps and expressions of affection from mainly ICF members and members of our society who simply viewed the arrival of ICF Newsletter as an awesome development.

As for the conks, they expectedly came banging from multiple directions. Some were thunderously dangerous, some were mildly soothing, some came in the form of masqueraded jokes delivered around beer-drinking circles; and others were politely delivered from "well-

wishers" who strongly felt that the acronym "ICF" constitutes the worst brand-name any good-headed persons should ever use for a project like this one.

I respect your views and appreciate the critical mindedness with which you welcomed the arrival of the Newsletter. Thank you!

In Ralph Emerson's words, "for everything you have missed, you have gained something else, and for everything you gain, you lose something else." I hope you believe in the wisdom hidden in those words?

The newsletter is produced by the Public Relations Department of the Igbo Contact Forum e.V. and therefore has been designed to reflect

this -the brand "ICF" qualifies its origin, and it will be best that this be appreciated, or at least, respected -until there is need for further changes.

The Newsletter is for all, hence, all people and persons are encouraged to send in articles and opinions that can help raise healthy dialogues or debates within our very broad community.

To all contributors in this issue of the Newsletter, "thanks for your efforts." To the general public, please "always know that a civil reaction to the content of this Newsletter is welcomed."

CHIGBY

NIGERIANS PROTEST LIBYA'S PLAN TO EXECUTE 220 NIGERIANS

Nigerians all over the world have reacted to alleged plans by the Libya plans to execute 220 Nigerians for immigration violations. To save the Nigerian from death, Nigerians in the diaspora have therefore asked the country embassy in Libya as well as the federal government to intervene saying that already, 30 have been executed by the Libyan authorities.

They have also sent out email accounts of Nigerian embassy officials in Libya for people to force the embassy to intervene. Already, Sudanese embassy officials are aid to have protested to Libya against the execution of their citizens. Nigerian government is yet to act.

Reports came yesterday that by today, over 220 illegal immigrants in Libya mostly Nigerians may be executed. It said that out of this number, 30 were allegedly executed in the early hours of Thursday in the prison yard in Tripoli, the Libyan capital.

Among the Nigerian illegal immigrants awaiting execution in Libya is a 37-year-old Benedict Ukoma Jude from Imo State

who was arrested along with other Nigerians for entering the country without valid documents.

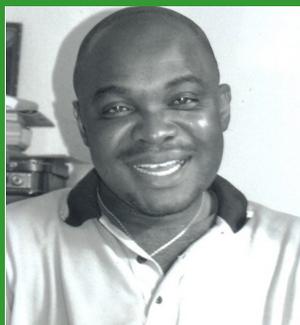
The arrested Nigerians are said to be kept separately from other nationals from Ghana, Niger, Cameroon, Algeria and Mali just as the Nigerians are said to being dehumanized before their alleged execution. An official of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja however was said to have reported that the Nigerian government was not aware of such development.

But the Benedict Ukoma Jude who spoke from his prison cell in Libya said most Nigerian illegal immigrants were arrested in the desert

while trying to cross to Europe. Benedict, denied being involved in any criminal activity in Libya, adding that the illegal aliens were arraigned before a court after the arrest, and that the charges against them were read to them in the language they could not understand while the judicial officers feigned not to understand English.

He alleged that the Libyan authorities have been killing illegal aliens in batches since last week, stressing that the remaining prisoners would be executed tomorrow as over 10 Nigerians were among those executed Thursday.

By Uduma Kalu
Vanguard Nig. Newspaper, 8.8.2009

HARD-TALK**INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRMAN OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNITY E.V.**

Mr. Michael Emina

Q: Thanks for accepting to speak to us, who are you really? Tell us about yourself.

A: I am Michael Emina and I am the current Chairman of Nigerian Community, Bayern, Germany e.V.

Q: Why are you referred to in some quarters as “Mike Benin” instead of Mike Emina? What is the origin of this type of identity?

A: I speak the Bini language fairly well, may

be that explains why people call me Miki Bini, its ok, I grew up in that part of Nigeria and I am very proud of my childhood. I think the Binis are great folks.

Q: These days, we seem to be seeing more of you as a peace-maker than as a “warrior”, please tell us, what’s happening?

A: May be I am getting old. I certainly am more tolerant now, that is, accepting people the way they are or may be I am just now accepting the fact that everybody cannot be equally knowledgeable. To have what I want, I now tend to do what it takes.

Q: As the president of the Nigerian Community e.V., why did you choose to go into leadership? What manifesto are you operating on at the moment?

A: Actually, I find myself more and more inclined to helping and doing things for my fellow Nigerians, some of us need a little

care. My Manifesto is a very simple one, UNITY, we should hold more together in order to overcome some of our problems.

Q: Somehow there exist the impressions that there are outside influences that are negatively impacting on some of our Nigerian regional organizations, hence making such organizations deviate from the positive objectives on which they were original founded?

A: Yes! There exist among us, people who want to tear us apart by feeding right into our weaknesses, it may have helped their social standing in the past. They preach division in the worst ways possible. Look at our Rev. Fr. Gerald, he advised the other day, in his Igbo Catholic Church, that members should belong to two groups, the ICF or his Igbo church. But may be, the Reverend Father failed to realize that members of his church are not all Igbos.

continues on page 3

SPEAKING OUT**BEING FEMALE IN NIGERIA**

Which Nigerian woman has not suffered the psychological trauma, mild or harsh, of being treated as a second class citizen every day of her life, many times by men younger or of clearly less intelligence than herself? A man who drives badly is denigrated for driving like a woman, and a woman who does is told that she does so for no other reason but her being female. Phrases such as “*ōri aku*”, an Igbo concept, are used with much fondness by Igbos and non-Igbos alike.

Yoruba sayings to suggest that a bad child belongs to the mother while the bad belongs to the father have likewise been embraced by the rest of the country as facts. Of course, other facts of life include the undisputed rules that girls and women in a family are the cooks, cleaners and launderers of the men of their family as well as their own male friends and associates.

A woman without a husband in Yorubaland is said not to have a crown on her head. In short, her head is unadorned and inferior, and her contributions to her society are not

taken seriously. This, of course, was borrowed from some of our religions, which first of all inspire women to be subordinate to men, and men to subjugate women. Even the most sophisticated and cosmopolitan pastors are guilty of going on about what Christian women and girls are wearing and not wearing, while men basically wear what they please.

Whatever good religion has done in this country, it has not been in the area of propagating gender respect. In our big cities such as Lagos, women of marriageable age are required to have husbands before they can be rented houses to, for which they are ready and willing to pay full rents. Landlords in these cases are often women who have either themselves built houses or inherited real estate. Here, we are not speaking about violence against women in their various and uncolourful ramifications.

In the main, and most unfortunately, we simply bear it with a good natured grin at the very best; or in many cases even join the perpetrators. We have failed to protect our-

selves, let alone our sisters in gender. And there was every danger of things continuing just in that manner until recently, when spouse of writer Elechi Amadi was given the condition, in her bid to get a new Nigerian international passport issued to her, of getting a letter of consent written for her husband.

Dr. Priye Iyalla Amadi has since sued, and got justice for us all in a landmark judgment given by G.K. Olotu of the Federal High Court in Port Harcourt. All of a sudden, issues such as this that are considered mere irritations will be seen for what they really are—the greatest power game of all time. The NIS has not categorically condemned their obnoxious and repugnant practice but when they do, let them also take into consideration that a single mother or female guardian ought also to be able to obtain a travel passport for her ward without a letter of consent from anyone...

By Morenike Taire
Vanguard Newspaper, June 18, 2009

INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRMAN OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNITY E.V.

Q: You attended the ICF general meeting of August, what was your motive, why and what did you achieve by taking such action?

A: I attended the ICF August meeting as a form of solidarity for our IGBO brothers and sisters. The ICF was passing through turbulent times because some STRONG MEN intended to tear her apart. I hope that I was able to drive home the point that the strength of the IGBOs lies in their ability to move and do business in every part of the world. If every Nigerian does what IGBOS do, there would be no sectarian killings as witnessed in Nigeria today.

Q: At the said ICF meeting, you called on the ICF members to forget about your "image" and cooperate with you and the Nigerian Community. What exactly do you mean? What exactly is with your image?

A: Unfortunately, there have been some Nigerians who would go to any length to force others to adopt their sort of mentality. You see, I have zero tolerance for drugs, so such people have called me all sorts of names, they have called me at some point, "police informant" because I openly criticized the current trend of some of us who have relocated to prisons for selling drugs. But they cannot shape my thought, if they have something negative about my person, it is because of their insecurities and not mine.

Q: What advice or "word of encouragement" do you have for Nigerians in Bayern in particular and Germany in general?

A: We Nigerians should try to be wise and collectively address our problems, even if it might not concern us directly. If one Nige-

rian fails, every Nigerian have failed.

Q: Any advice for the ICF Newsletter?

A: The ICF Newsletter is a very laudable thing and in my considered opinion, it should move away from its local identity and identify itself with Nigerians and indeed Africans at large. The ICF Newsletter should be aware that there people who might hijack the good intention of its founders and begin to project as an Igbo Newsletter.

Q: Oh thank you Mr. President, we hope you will respond to our invitation for future interviews.

A: It is my pleasure and I will always be responsive to your invitations at any time. Best of luck!

Do you have a burning issue in your mind and want to speak out? Contact us for an interview.

A PAN-AFRICAN PERSONALITY

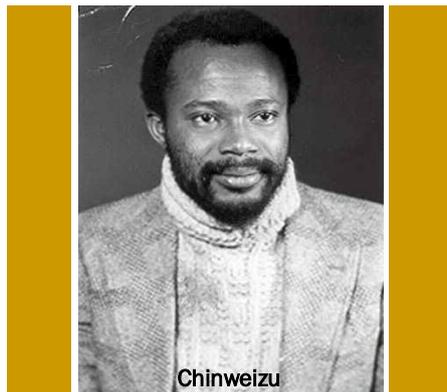
CHINWEIZU

Chinweizu is a Nigerian critic, poet, journalist and foremost pan-African Philosopher. He dumped his surname, Ibekwe, as a teenager, and chose to simply identify himself as Chinweizu. He is a native of Eluama, Ikuwuato in Abia State (Nigeria) and was educated at Government College, Afikpo. He later attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and was influenced by the philosophy of a black arts movement while studying in America during the civil rights era. He later enrolled for a Ph.D. at the State University of New York, SUNY, Buffalo. He had a disagreement with his PhD dissertation committee and walked away with his manuscript, which he got published as "The West and the Rest of Us: White Predators, Black Slavers, and the African Elite" by New York based Random House in 1975. He took the book to SUNY, Buffalo, where he demanded, and was promptly awarded, his Ph.D. in 1976, one year after he had published the dissertation. The book was highly acclaimed and cited within the field of radical political economy of the 1970s and 1980s.

He returned to Nigeria by the early 1980s, working over the years as a columnist for various newspapers in the country and also

creating a visible platform to promote a Pan African consciousness. In Nigeria, he became a literary critic, attacking what he saw as the elitism of some Nigerian authors.

Today, Chinweizu is an institutionally unaffiliated Afrocentric scholar. A historian and cultural critic, his books include *The West and the Rest of Us* (1975), *Invocations and Admonitions* (1986); *Decolonizing the African Mind* (1987); *Voices from Twentieth-century Africa* (1988); *Anatomy of Female Power* (1990). He is also a co-author of *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature* (1980). His pamphlets include *The Black World and the Nobel* (1987); and *Decolonization or Reparation?* (1994). He lives in Lagos, Nigeria.



To read Chinweizu's articles online, please visit:

www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/chinweizu/index.php and www.africanwithin.com/chinweizu/chinweizu.htm

"The central objective in decolonizing the African mind is to overthrow the authority which alien traditions exercise over the African. This demands the dismantling of 'western' supremacist beliefs, and the structures which uphold them, in every area of African life. It must be stressed, however, that decolonization does not mean ignorance of foreign traditions; it simply means denial of their authority and withdrawal of allegiance from them."

— Chinweizu

INDIGENOUS WISDOM THE KOLA NUT AND THE ALLIGATOR PEPPER

Kola nut (cola) is a fruit from a tree native to the tropical rainforests of Africa, classified in the family Malvaceae and sub-family Sterculioideae (or treated in the separate family Sterculiaceae). It grows on evergreen trees, growing to 20 m tall, with glossy ovoid leaves up to 30 cm long. It has a light-



The kola nut

bitter flavour and contains caffeine. Chewing kola nut can ease hunger pangs, insomnia however, frequent chewing of the kola nut can also lead to stained teeth.

The offering of kola nuts is an important aspect of Igbo ceremonial and ritual life and a sign of hospitality. The eating and sharing of kola nuts are also a symbol of friendship and trust. Kola nuts among the Igbo are thought to have spiritual connotations and are

often found on personal and communal shrines.

THE ALLIGATOR PEPPER

The plants which fruits the alligator pepper is herbaceous, perennials and of the ginger (Zingiberaceae) family native to West African. It is chewed alongside the kola nut as a spice, however, it can be chewed separately, especially



Alligator pepper

during the cold seasons to increase body warmth. It has a cultural significance only when served alongside with the kola nut in Igbo land.

NIGERIA: IMPRESSIONS AN IMPRESSION OF NIGERIA - PART 1

It was a warm beautiful morning when I arrived in Lagos. The first thing that caught my attention was the Airport which blended in perfectly with nature. Everything looked so green, rural and natural, a sight that is hard to find in Europe these days. After getting my luggage and meeting some new friends, I learned a first cultural lesson. Unlike in Europe where one greets a newly introduced person with a handshake, in Igbo Culture you receive a half-a-hug, which makes one feel very welcome and half accepted.

The ride from the airport to my friend's home was exciting. The trees, houses and people, I just couldn't get enough of the new sights. I was eager to explore this controversial country that had been described to me in many different ways. A country I was told was dangerous and unorganized, at the same time I heard how much of a good time I will have wherever I find myself. This danger, I still cannot confirm. "Welcome oyibo" I heard that wherever I went and that's how I felt. What I cannot understand till this day is how Nigerians can show a stranger so much love, but not be able to love their own country the very same way. Even though Lagos seemed interesting and worthy to be explored, I was more than ready to get into the small bus heading to Port Harcourt and look at the rural side of the country.

The fear some people tried to put into me concerning the condition of the roads was unnecessary and to be honest I have driven on worse roads while taking a trip through the southern states of the USA back in 1998. Arkansas was the worst experience.

The only thing that shocked me at first, were the several small business places along the roads. At first I thought those were homes. It pleased me to find out that this was not the case and I was positively surprised when I finally saw a village.

The rural villages I must confirm are treasures of Nigeria and should be treated with care. As a Forestry and Resource Management student, my interest of course was mainly the vegetation. And Nigeria didn't let me down with its high percentage of tree and plant species and diversity.

While walking on the campus of Abia State University I learned that Cashew trees also grow a fruit that can be eaten. There was a tree that fascinated me so much that I had to take one leaf with me back to Germany, I later found out it was the tree with the botanical name "Lophira Lanceolata" popularly called "Okopia" in Igbo and "Iponhon" in Yoruba. I learned that traditionally, this tree is used in the treatment of skin diseases and stomach ache. Today's scientists have discovered that the tree has high potentials

of a renewable energy resource (see African Journal of Biotechnology, vol. 7:3, pp. 308-310). I cannot wait to go back and learn more about the beautiful and fruitful nature of the country. I wish that all young Nigerians who want to adopt the modern high-tech lifestyle of the western world would consider "sustainability" as the most important factor of life just like their ancestors used to do a long time ago.

All Industrial Nations of our planet are facing the same problems which are lack of sustainability and they are working hard to make up for mistakes of the past. Maybe some answers can be found in Nigeria.

Kris Doniga
wrote from Munich

Kris Doniga is a Forestry Science and Resource Management student at the Technical University of Munich. She is a member of the International Society of Tropical Foresters.



SEND IN YOUR OPINIONS

Have you been to Nigeria of recent? Do you have a specific view about Nigeria that you would want to share with our readers? Mould your opinions in an article and e-mail to

The editor
newzinfo@yahoo.com

NEWS FROM NIGERIA

LEGISLATOR ACQUIRES PRIVATE JET • SAYS ITS CHEAPER THAN CARS

After six years as a member of the House of Representatives, Hon. Bala Ibn Na'Allah has made history as the first lawmaker in the country since independence to fly a private jet. He acquired the aircraft recently in the United States of America (USA)...

Na'Allah, a lawyer by profession, who became very popular at the Oputa Panel, qualified as a pilot after undergoing training at the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology in Zaria... Representing Zuru/Fakai/Zakaba/ Dawazagu Federal Constituency of Kebbi State in the House of Representatives, N' Allah recently flew the small aircraft in the company of this writer from Kaduna to Abuja on a day the weather was clement in the morning, but became turbulent in the evening.

Sitting next to him in the cockpit as 'copilot', one marveled as Na'Allah displayed his dexterity in manipulating and navigating the aircraft through the cloudy weather between Kaduna and Abuja. "There is a way the weather will tell you if it is going to be bad. This is one of the beauties of flying," he pointed out before entering the aircraft...

Before jumping into the aircraft for the Abuja trip, he carried out the check, he gauged the pressure level, checked the tyre and the fuel levels, and the journey was underway...

Why should Na'Allah be interested in flying, a risky thing at this stage of his life, even when he had made it as a lawyer and as a politician? He said flying was the best thing that has ever happened to him.

"I am enjoying it more than anything. To fly is the easiest thing to do. I have come to realize it. In fact, if it is possible, I won't mind flying an aircraft from my bedroom to the toilet," he said. The high death toll resulting from crash landing and disappearance of aircraft has not instilled any fear in Na'Allah. He was emphatic that cumulatively, the number of death resulting from road accidents was far higher than that recorded from the air. "Flying is

million times safer than driving on the roads. Unlike the roads where you have mad drivers that can drive you crazy, there is nothing like that on air. "The number of air mishaps is not comparable with the number of auto crashes we record on daily basis on our roads. Do you know that you cannot jump into an aircraft without knowing the weather forecast? You can't hop into the aircraft for a journey without certifying the health status of the aircraft," he explained...

Na'Allah agreed that it might look elitist to own a private jet, but insisted that it was cheaper for him to maintain his small aircraft, than to maintain some cars in his garage. Na'Allah was a car dealer before venturing into politics. "The experience I have gathered since I took delivery of my aircraft showed that it was far, far cheaper to maintain than maintaining my cars. Can you imagine that a return flight from Abuja to Zuru, my village will cost me 50 litres of petrol, whereas, my Jeep will consume over 200 litres?" he queried rhetorically. In terms of time, he explained, by road the same journey will take between seven and eight hours, whereas, it will take one hour, 40 minutes by air. "In Zuru, my village, there is an air strip, don't forget, I am representing the home of generals, not to talk of Kebbi with an Airport. In most cities in Nigeria, there are places to accommodate light aircraft for landing and take off, said Na'Allah.

Still debunking insinuation that acquiring a jet is a display of ostentation in the midst of poverty, Na'Allah said that the cost of servicing his Propellered-CESSNA-172 model was not up to the price of 2008 model of Toyota or Honda products. "To service it after a mandatory 50-hour flight, which is the equivalent of servicing a car, costs less than N50,000. And for maintenance, the retainer-ship fee with Aviation Maintenance Organization [AMO] per annum is about N200,000.

"Precisely, he said that the C-172 air craft manufactured in 1971 and registered with Nigeria's aviation authorities as 5N-BRT cost him about \$48,000 to acquire. For his landing fee at any of the airports in the country, the charge paid is N200, while the three



Hon Bala Ibn Na'Allah in his "very cheap" jet

tyres cost \$182 to replace every three years, depending on the number of successful landing.

"In all, you will see that it is very cheap to maintain this air craft than to maintain the latest car in the market. I am not a Christian, but I understand that the Bible says that 'my people perishes because of lack of knowledge'.

"I think if people know that it is cheaper to acquire and maintain a small air craft like my own, many Nigerians would not hesitate to get one today, than the craze for buying flashy cars, with armed robbers trailing you, not to talk of bad roads and frequent car crash," he said.

The idea of owning a jet and flying it came to the law maker after years of consultancy in Aviation Insurance. And to achieve his aim, Na'Allah enrolled at the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT) in Zaria for training as a non-professional pilot.

He graduated and was certified to fly before he jetted out to South Africa for further training in type rating.

He explained: "Type rating is the training in the category of aircraft you can fly. If you want to fly another category of aircraft, you must undergo fresh training and certified by another pilot, unlike driving just any car so long as you have your driving license."

Economically, he said that it was even wiser and cheaper to invest in air strips than put roads everywhere.

From James Ojo
Daily Sun Newspaper, Nigeria
Monday, June 15, 2009

OUR FUTURE, THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN AND GENERATIONS TO COME IN GERMANY

I strongly believe that a true friend is one who would advise you, encourage you, help you and support you to be better than him/herself, at no cost. I chose to write about the issue of education and knowledge acquisition because if it is well with all of us here, we won't have anything to lose but, on the contrary, a lot to gain.

Nelson Mandela said "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". I am very glad he didn't say money. Didn't the world agree that "knowledge is power"? And I will humbly add that there is only one thing nobody can take away from you and that is your knowledge. The importance of education and acquisition of knowledge cannot be overemphasized. Lee Iacocca, a onetime president of Chrysler Motor Corp. said "Apply yourself. Get all the education you can, but then, by God, do something. Don't just stand there, make it happen". Thank Goodness, we all know that poverty is the mother of crime and revolution.

To all of us who reside here, buttressing the importance of acquiring German language proficiency and education, of which the undisputed inherent advantages are too many to be listed here, including, of course, the ability to help our children with their homework, would tantamount to insulting your well-respected intelligence and I'd be too callous to do that.

Experience has shown that the problem of school-homework-assistance to our kids is the last bus-stop in the need for language proficiency acquisition. The lack of parental assistance in our children's home works is costly, the cost is always big, especially in terms of the future of our children or in terms of our having to work extra hours in order to foot the bills for private lectures from external helps -this fact is almost as constant as the northern star.

Apart from the idea of helping our children with their school homework, one of our major fear is, what happens if I can't get a job after my graduation? Unfortunately, there is no job guarantee on earth unless in a country with zero unemployment rate.

And the simple truth is that every business and every product has risks; you can't get around it. However, Abraham Lincoln said "I shall prepare and be ready and, with luck, one day my chance will come". And his did come after many failed bids to be elected in various posts. Talking about preparedness and chances, I strongly believe that when the opportunity comes, it is either you are ready or not.

The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude. Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing. For purposes of securing the future, education and acquisition of knowledge must not be done in German language. If the language poses a clog in the wheel of your progress, there are other alternatives. It is all about determination and the willingness to survive. Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from an indomitable will.

Some of us might tell me that it is easier to preach about fasting when you have a full stomach. No! That's not the point here but rather to buttress the point that there are ways, techniques and alternatives that could be applied towards getting there. The ability to concentrate and use time and resources very well is everything.

Frankly speaking, lack of time and money is an inevitable part of everyone's problems here. But the truth is that none has more than 24 hours a day and none can have enough of money. It's all about proper apportionment and utilization of capital and resources. For example, if I decide to pursue an English distance study, e.g., in pursuance of Microsoft, Oracle, Lotus, SAP professional certificates, or from a university or a chartered institute, etc. and read/study an average of one hour daily, in a year I must have had 365 hours of study. Alternatively, if I opt to study for three hours, e.g. from 06:00 - 09.00, on any day I'm free and at home, in a year I must have had a 312 hours of study (3 hrs x 2 days (e.g. Saturday and Sunday) x 52 weeks). Aren't you surprised at how much time one could better utilize but is wasted without knowing it?

But a word of caution is worth mentioning here: remember that even in Freetown there is no free lunch. There's always a price to pay. If you want gold you must dig deep. The road to success is hard and, most times, an uphill endeavour. If horses were wishes, beggars would ride. If it were easy, without sacrifice, everyone would have gotten there. A lot of emphasis should be placed on interest, devotion, dedication, discipline and sacrifice. One shouldn't also forget that family planning, shedding one job or the other, burning the midnight oil, being able to cope with minimum comfort, among others, are indispensable prices to pay for success.

My father once told me that the worst kind of blindness is to see and have no vision and I felt insulted but today I carry this piece of advice in my wallet everywhere I go. I strongly believe that he who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life. Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved.

Finally, I would encourage ICF and all other Nigerian organisations in Germany to use their meetings as an avenue where we could invite professionals from all works of life to advise us. For example, professionals like lawyers, accountants, tax consultants, investment bankers, police officers, school administrators, high level workers and administrators from the Munich foreign office, respectable businessmen and proprietors, etc, could be invited to come regularly to advise us and address some of our concerns, fears and aspirations. And I strongly believe that if we do this, we'd have more to gain and nothing to lose.

Mr. Chairman Sydneys
wrote from Munich

Mr. Chairman Sydneys Ozomena Offor, an ICF member from Amucha, Njaba LGA of Imo state,



He is a Graduate in Business

Administration, Certified (Chartered) Management Accountant, Member of the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) London and works with Munich Reinsurance Group, Munich. He is married and has 2 children.

MATTERS ARISING**WAKE-KEEPING OF MR. BABS IFEDIBA'S MOTHER**

In Germany, two things that are unavoidable are probably taxes and death.

Death turned out to be the rallying point for many people on Saturday, 15.08.2009. It was with deep sadness, but with joy and compassion that Mr. Babs Ifediba's well-wishers gathered on that day at the "Bibliothek, Multikulturelle Jugend Zentrum."

It was the gathering for the wake-keeping of his mother, Mrs Jacinta Uduego Ifediba, who died on 03.08.2009 in Nigeria.

At the wake keepings, the entire Igbo Contact Forum, the Nigerian community, colleagues and friends of Mr. Babs Ifediba. It was more like a celebration of the life his mother. The

music of the night played beyond the usual gospel rhythms that are normally associated with Nigerian-type wake-keepings. It served as an occasion for friends and well-wishers to pay their last respect to Mr. and Mrs. Babs Ifediba.

It was an occasion dotted with plenty learning points. Kudos to Rev. Father Augustine Ben Uzundu, of the Nigerian Catholic Community (Munich) who delivered a funeral speech at the occasion, detailing a short life-story of the Ifediba family. The young Rev. Father was able to deliver a very rare fluent oration, swerving from English to the German language effortlessly that all true observers marveled at such dexterity -which is not really very common amongst the Nigerian



Cross-section of people dancing at the event

immigrants in Munich.

On the other hand, it was sad that an occasion of such sort was subjected to bug of poor timing which has eaten deep into the heart of the organization of most Nigerian events in Munich. The wake-keeping billed to start at 15:00 actually began around the 18:00.

We wish to express our deepest condolences and solidarity to the Ifediba families in Nigeria and Germany.

NIGERIA LEAVES BERLIN WITHOUT MEDAL

The 12th World Athletics Championships ended here in Berlin yesterday with Nigeria not being able to change their story since 1999 when they last won medals in the greatest athletics championships.

The best Nigeria did was qualifying for the finals of two events, the 4x400m women and same event for men. The girls placed 6th. USA, Jamaica and Russia won gold, silver and bronze respectively. Britain and Germany placed ahead of Nigeria's Endurance Abinuwa, Joke Odumosu, Josephine Ehigie and Folasade Abugan. The men were last and caught a pitiable sight especially when Amaechi Morten appeared to be running backwards than gaining steps. It was a sad outing for the Solomon

Ogba led Athletics Federation of Nigeria which is only about four months old in office but with a clearer picture of the plunge Nigerian sports has taken. Ogba said here that it would take Nigeria 10 years to get to the level the likes of USA and Jamaica have attained and that his greatest challenge was to stop the slide and work towards improving Nigeria's position.

"Considering the problems we had and the state of athletics in Nigeria, I didn't expect much from our athletes here. The problem was further compounded by injuries and drug cases which we will be addressing strongly," Ogba said as events came to a close yesterday.

Director-General of the Sports commission, Patrick Ekeji said here that the AFN board should even be commended for ensuring that Nigeria

participated, disclosing that the federation was yet to collect the fund meant for the championship

In 1999 in Seville, Spain, Nigeria won silver in 4x400m relay and Francis Obikwelu who later adopted Portuguese nationality won another silver. That was the last time Nigeria climbed the medal rostrum in the world championship.

Berlin put up a classic show in their organization of the events here and the crowd matched what happened in big soccer events. In some cases, the passion surpassed what people experience in world football arena.

Onochie Anibeze (in Berlin)

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