

THE 9TH NIGERIAN SENATE CELEBRATES 2 YEARS OF LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

In spite of the challenges the country faces which have been described as the path to sustained nationhood, Nigeria still moves forward albeit not in its desired speed. But, as the nation celebrates nearly 22 years of unbroken democratic journey, its National assembly, a legislative, independent and second arm of government, also marches forward in visibility, works and impact.

The **9th National Senate**, the upper level of the nation's National Assembly, comprising distinguished senators under the leadership of President of the Senate, **Dr. Ahmad Lawan** reels out its achievements as it celebrates two years of untiring efforts and pursuits for national unity and continuity.

Amidst mounting insecurity, secessionist agitations, kidnapping and terrorism, economic hiccups, high cost of commodities, unemployment and other troubles threatening citizenry comfort and national existence; the **9th National Assembly** of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, a bicameral legislature (inaugurated on 11 June 2019 and which will run its course until 11 June 2023) pride itself in active legislation and effective representation.



With in 2 years the Nigerian Senate :

- Passed 58 Bills out of the 742 bills introduced at the two chambers of the National Assembly since its inauguration in June 2019. 355 out of the remaining 742 bills have also gone through first reading, while 175 have gone through second reading and referred to relevant committees for ongoing legislative business.
- Achieved full budget implementation in 2020 and restored the nation annual national budget to the January-December cycle.
- Passed Eleven bills that cut across all sectors and touch most areas of needs in the lives of our citizens referred by the House of Representatives for concurrence
- Developed a comprehensive 'Legislative Agenda' to guide and enhance its constitutional mandates of lawmaking, representation and oversight.
- Passed the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) after nearly 20 years of failed attempts.
- Re-assures of its consideration on the report of its Committee on the amendment of the 1999 Constitution as a way to move the nation forward.
- Assures of commitment to passing the Electoral Reform bill as quickly as possible and working to ensure that national security, economy and better governance are guaranteed at all times.

As we join efforts to support the Nigerian **9th National Assembly** to move the nation forward in leaps and bounds, we urge all parliamentarians to remain keepers of their legislative oaths, and make their constituencies and constituents progressive consideration an all-time priority. **ANN**

Congratulations Distinguished Senators.

HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA IN NIGERIA

MARKS 2021 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA IN ABUJA



H.E. Abhay Thakur delivering his remarks

ANIM Boss Mr Ogunlade with High Commissioner, Mr. Thakur

India is a great and respected nation with diverse and enviable development contributions to humanity and societal improvements. The country is also broadly celebrated for her welfare and wellness promotions; and, one of her global gifts now widely practiced for health and relaxation benefits is Yoga. The many gains of Yoga cannot be over-emphasized and its continued promotions by UN and other global health practitioners are steps in the right direction that should be constantly encouraged.

Towards this and in commemoration of the **International Day of Yoga**, the Indian Embassy in Abuja, a leading foreign mission in the country reputed for many growth and progressive strides, marked the 7th Edition of the IDY in Abuja. The event held at the Mission premises amidst strict compliance of COVID-19 protocols attracted Diplomatic Dignitaries, Government Representatives, Friends Of The Embassy, Indians Living in Nigeria, Business Executives, Members of Media and other Health Enthusiasts. This year's edition also featured diverse body exercises and mind-meditation practices with instructors on stage to lead participants in different Yoga sessions..

The elated Chief Host, the High Commissioner of India to Nigeria and the Mission staff were fully on ground to received guests arriving. Delivering his speech, *His Excellency, Mr. Abhay Thakur*, thanked the participants, host nation (Federal Government), partners/sponsors and team members for the success of this year programme. He also used the occasion to convey Prime Minister Modi's letter highlighting the global importance of Yoga to the mind and body. Representatives of the Nigerian Ministers of Youth and Sports and Health were around and gave noteworthy remarks.

The Chairman of the Nigerian In Diaspora Commission, Mrs. Abike Dabiri-Erewa was among the dignitaries and participated in all the sessions. Invitees were also treated to rich Indian delicacies and drinks. *Acclaim Nigeria International Magazine* was there and covered the event. **ANN**

Speech By The High Commission Of India H.E Mr. Abhay Thakur

At The International Day Of Yoga (Abuja, 19 June 2021)

H.E. Mr. Sunday Dare, Hon'ble Minister of Youth & Sports Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, ably represented by Mr. Abumere Akhidenor, Director, Special Duties of the Federal Ministry of Youth & Sports Development,

H.E. Dr. Osagie Ehanire, Hon'ble Minister of Health of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, ably represented by Hajiya Zainab Sharif, Director/ Head of Department, Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicines (TCAM), Federal Ministry of Health,

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, SSA to the President on Foreign Affairs & Diaspora and CEO NiDCOM,

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and their gracious Spouses, Heads of Indian Community Organizations,

Senior Officers of the High Commission, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Media,

Namaste and Good morning. Let me begin by thanking all the distinguished guests for joining us today morning and making the 7th International Day of Yoga a grand success. This year's International Day of Yoga is being held under the shadow of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The theme of this year's Yoga Day "Yoga for Wellness" is especially relevant. In his letter to His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari, and select world leaders, on the occasion, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi has said, and I quote "Yoga has many benefits for the body as well as the mind. Despite all the efforts and precautions, Covid-19 may infect any person. However, a strong immune system can aid in the fight against it. Yoga can help build that immunity, for instance, through breathing exercises that strengthen the lungs. At the same time, across the world, millions of people have been forced to stay indoors for months. This has taken a toll on their mental health as well. Regular practice of Yoga can also help them recover." Prime Minister Modi continues that "Yoga has an inherent power to connect. Yoga is good for community, immunity, and unity. The theme of International Day of Yoga celebrations this year reflects the concern for the good health and well-being of people across the globe. It is an endeavour to ensure that we focus on fitness as well as wellness."

2. In partnership with Africa, Government of India will be holding an International Conference on 21-22 June 2021, focussing on universal wellbeing and commonalities between indigenous knowledge system of Africa and ancient Yoga traditions of India. The theme of the conference will be 'Ubuntu and Yoga'. We believe that by bringing the two ancient and powerful cultures of India and Africa together, we will build upon and further refine our respective traditional cures for modern health hazards like Covid, diabetes and mental health, and serve the health needs of our large populations at an affordable cost.

3. Today I would like to thank the Federal Government of the Republic of Nigeria for its support to the International Yoga Day celebrations. The Ministry of Sports had graciously made available the MK Abiola stadium for this event, like they did two years ago in 2019, but owing to prevailing conditions, we decided to hold the event with a relatively smaller number of friends and well wishers in the Mission premises.

I am particularly grateful that the Representative of the Hon'ble Sports Minister has joined us today. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Health, which has been our steadfast partner for promoting and sharing experience of traditional medicine and wellness in Nigeria. I thank the leading Indian Ayurveda and herbal products company, Dabur, for promoting and indigenizing traditional products of both India and Africa, in Nigeria. I thank SkipperSeil, which is as much an Indian as a Nigerian company, well established in the power sector for decades, for sponsoring the Yoga T-shirts and mats. I thank our Yoga Masters, Mr. Akshay Jain and Mr. Basant Ram who have conducted the yoga protocol today. As always, the support of the Indian Cultural Association, Abuja has been invaluable. And I would be amiss if I do not mention my own Mission team members, who have worked diligently to put together today's event and make it success.

4. In conclusion, and to ensure that the underlying ideas for today's event are not lost due to the language barrier, let me reiterate that Yoga means to join or to unite, Ayurveda means the science of life, Namaste means I bow to you, and Ubuntu is the African philosophy of humanity towards all. The Covid-19 pandemic has once again shown to us that all of humanity will either swim together or sink together. Today is a day when we rededicate ourselves to sharing and uniting in each other's joys and sorrows, and to finding sustainable solutions to our problems. And, in a lighter vein, also spreading this message on social media not by tweeting, but by "Kooing", on the Indian App "Koo", which is the sound of the sweetest of the Indian birds, the Koyal or the Indian nightingale.

I thank you.

RT. HON FEMI GBAJABIAMILA

INSPIRING NATION-BUILDING PURSUITS



Nigeria is reckoned with among other inspiring feats as a hub of abundant human and natural resources. All over the world the land proudly showcases its sons and daughter as they continue to perform excellently well in their various fields of endeavor, boosting the country's status in global glory and commendability. And, one of the nation's pride, widely acclaimed and revered as a Nation Building Apostle is **O l u f e m i H a k e e m Gbajabiamila**.

Born on the 25th of June 1962 into the family of Lateef and Olufunke Gbajabiamila, Femi Gbajabiamila started his elementary education in Lagos at the Mainland Preparatory School and proceeded to Igboi College, Yaba, Lagos in 1973 for his secondary education.

After completion of his secondary education in Nigeria, he enrolled at the King Williams College, Isle of Man, United Kingdom for his 'A Levels' where he graduated at the top of his class. Upon his return to Nigeria, the young Olufemi was accepted into the University of Lagos, Nigeria for a three-year LLB (Bachelor of Law) degree programme. He graduated with honors in 1983 and proceeded to the Nigerian Law school and was called to the Nigerian bar in 1984.

As a young lawyer, Femi Gbajabiamila started his career with the prestigious law firm of Bentley, Edu and Co, a Lagos based law firm where he distinguished himself as a brilliant legal practitioner. As intellectually adventurous as ever, Femi stepped out on his own and established his own law firm, Femi Gbaja and Co. on Broad Street, Lagos where he was principal partner.

To further his education, Gbajabiamila decided to go back to school, this time in the United States. He attended John Marshall Law School in Atlanta Georgia where he graduated top of his class earning himself a Juris Doctorate.

After passing his Georgia bar exams in 2001 he set up a law firm in Atlanta Georgia where he practiced law until his return to Nigeria. Gbajabiamila had always been actively involved in politics, even in the United States where he actively participated in the election of Bill Campbell who later went on to become Mayor of the city of Atlanta.

Upon his return to Nigeria Gbajabiamila positioned himself in the nation's political affairs through effective representation of his people at the House of Representatives

As an Honourable Member of the House, Femi has proven himself times without numbers as a dependable, diligent and dedicated Representative who is capable of national administration and proper governance. His rise from the floor of the House, brilliance and superlative performance, coupled with his compassionate heart and helping hands have earned him accolades, awards and acclamation among his colleagues and constituents as a man of positive impact.

Now the Speaker of the 9th House of Representatives, Olufemi Gbajabiamila leads with impeccability, focus and love for his country. **ANN**

HAPPY 59th BIRTHDAY.

Congratulations
On your re-appointment as the UN Deputy Secretary-General



AMINA J. MOHAMMED
(Proudly Nigerian)

National Day Anniversary



Italy
June 2



Portugal
June 10



Philippines
June 12



Russia
June 12



Rwanda
July 1



Burundi
July 1



ENDING RAPE IN NIGERIA

Bringing Rapists And Their Enablers To Justice

Calling “a spade a spade” rape is an act of violence which uses sex as a weapon. It is motivated by aggression and the craving to exact power, harass and humiliate. This fiendish act must be placed where it rightfully belong, in the domain of sexual attack and violence against men and women.

While rape is a threat to both males and females, it has become acts mostly targeted against the female gender. Women and girls are more at the receiving end and rate of occurrences them against are at an all time high now. While the offenders seem in control and sexually excited during the act, the victims are usually thrown into lifetime of agonies, their pride and dignity brutally stripped, lives battered, depressed and a feeling of worthless with no one at times to truly turn to,

The country's statistics on rapes are frightening, as more brutal and unimaginable cases of rapes are springing up daily. Now cases are being reported from places of worship, homes, schools, streets, markets, offices and even in marriages. Violators with hedonistic inclinations are on the prowl now more than ever before and no one seemed to be spared from their sadistic invasions. Infants are being sexually assaulted and raped (with some to death) by relatives and strangers alike, Children are regularly falling prey to these demons in sheep clothing called rapists, the old and aged are not left out, and worst still no place is sacred or scary again as rape arena.

These disparaging acts have devastating effects on the survivors and could be described as the beginning of hell on earth for many of them. Many young ladies and children now live in fear as they learn to adhere to new strict rules of 'don't walk at night,' 'don't wear provocative wares,' 'don't talk to strangers,' 'don't walk alone,' 'don't get close to the opposite sex,' report inappropriate observations immediately and so many new Do's and Dont's.

So many things have been said and heard, and questions bothering on rape have been asked times and times again, these include : 'what causes rape?', 'why the sudden increase in rape cases?' “why were they reported later and not when they freshly happened?” All sorts of excuses are also given as reasons for committing the crime: some blame the way ladies dressed as excuses, couples cast blame on their spouses for depriving them sex as reason for committing the crime. An awaiting trial incestuous/rapist father once said the depression caused by the demise of his wife led him to start sleeping with his three young daughters...what a wicked world! As rape incidences are under-reported across the nation, some victims have summoned the courage to voice out their ordeals, while many have decided to let the sleeping dog lay because they can't afford to picture the scene all over again as such incidence takes time to heal and when it does, there is always a scar that cannot be erased, a scar that will not go away. Though many have forgiven but not forgotten. The stigma and trauma of rape can haunt forever contend.

But, despite numerous rape cases reported across the nation, little to nothing has been done to bring many of the perpetrators to book, and this sprouts rage among citizens who have taken it upon themselves through street-street, states and nationwide demonstrations and protests to voice out their displeasures against rape and rapists and seek justice for rape victims. The public outcry on the sluggish actions taken by the Nigeria Police in investigating and prosecuting rape cases and how hospital requests for police reports before treatment of rape victims have led to so many unavoidable deaths is increasing daily. Stories of law enforcing institutions and officials who are meant to protect the citizens has over time been accused of complicity in rape matters abounds and these need to **STOP** if we are to cage the demons and their enablers and send them to where they belong- HELL!

WHAT MUST BE DONE NOW

A compelling need in changing societal attitude on sexual assault against men and women, enforcing existing laws, law reforms, prosecuting culprits, and dealing ruthlessly with rapists (whether the acts were committed now or before) with maximum convictions of jail terms are urgently needed now. Stringent and punitive measures must be put in place, more proactive and pre-emptive actions against rape should be constantly embarked on and more deterrents actions against rapists and would be rapists across the country and globally must be continually enacted and enforced.

Governments at all levels should be alive to their responsibilities and rise with all instruments of governance at disposals to vehemently fight against rape and all conditions enabling it.

Multilateral agencies and institutions should continue to complement efforts of Government of nations leaders to step up the fight against rape and rapists and stem the vulnerabilities of rape victims.

Parents and guardians should continue to engage open conversations and strong relationship with their children and wards. They should guide and educate their children promptly and properly on the dangers of rape and observe their children closely for any form of abuse. They should also observe the kind of home videos, online sites their children visit and influencers they relate with or aspire to emulate.

Importantly also, there should be massive enlightenment and grassroots education and ongoing campaigns on sex education and rape eradication in Nigeria. National Orientation Agency, media, faith based organization, traditional rulers, Non Government Organizations and other related bodies should continually work together to condemn and tackle this blood sucking demon called rape in the country

It is our collective responsibility to duly protect our fellow citizens especially, the Girl-Child, Young Woman, Children, Women and the Aged from sexual predators. Rape kills so we must jointly kill rape rid this devilish infestation out of Africa and other continents of the world. **ANN**

