

As 2011 general elections approaches, scores of political heavyweights including the former governor of Rivers State Dr. Peter Odili appear frenetically jostling for the coveted number one seat in Nigeria, the Presidency.

To this effect, Odili who was smartly hoodwinked into believing that he was the anointed replacement for the former President Olusegun Obasanjo by the same Obasanjo during the last 2007 Presidential campaign, *Beam Checks* gathered is currently alleged to be involved in some subterranean moves with other Southern and Northern political bigwigs to forestall any attempt by the incumbent President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua towards seeking re-election in 2011.

Having been denied by Obasanjo, there are indications however that Odili seemingly perceives the 2011 Presidential contest as an opportunity to fight President Yar'Adua as a way of paying back Obasanjo in his own coin having installed Yar'Adua as a political protégée in his (Odili's) place.

This is why Odili now sees the teaming up with some prominent Northern and Southern political elements as a boost to this onerous political ambition.

Series of clandestine and nocturnal political meetings in this regard are said to have been held.

In the same boat with Odili in this mission are such politicians like Mr. Donald Duke, former Governor of Cross River State, Obong Victor Attah, former Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Asiwaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu, former Governor of Lagos State and a lot of retired army generals and civilian political bigwigs from the North.

A source close to the group disclosed to *Beam Checks* "that all along Yar'Adua's political intention was to relinquish power after his first tenure, but having seen that it might have been a postulation based on quick sand and is fast slipping off, we have decided to reappraise our plans, that is why you are seeing all these sudden political gang ups".

The group, not being favoured in anyway since the emergence of Yar'Adua is already looking at Yar'Adua's tenure as a lost four years. Contracts have not been attracted by them, they cannot easily reach the President, of course he is not doing their bidding nor can they expect in the near future a change to this scenario.

Meanwhile, Odili appears not to have a strong

2011 Elections:

Odili, Others Plot Against Yar'Adua

political home front considering his last minute renegeing on the political understanding between him and his political son Rt. Hon Chibuike Amaechi who many see as not being vindictive as he is really not after Odili.

His many sins at home in Rivers State now stand in his face against any plan by him to return home and strategize and for that his new found friends who

pursue the same interest are wont to be his best bed fellows in this desperate bid to stop Yar'Adua.

While Yar'Adua may not be worried and perturbed by whatever political stratagem this political think tanks may employ to stop him come 2011 as he is only concerned in seeing that his 7-Point Agenda is logically and conclusively pursued, Odili and his ilk may soon discover that if the plot is

simply to stop Yar'Adua and not to find ways of improving the lot of the Nigerian masses, the same lot that befell him after he denied Amaechi like Judas denied Christ would still befall him.

Quite alright, it is clear that he is seeking political relevance again.

But before anyone would want to make himself relevant, his antecedents would definitely count. Those who would want to take the same political flight with him may likely discover what he did to Amaechi, how he denied him when it mattered most and because of that, may become wary of his political friendship.

As a matter of fact, the political party that would midwife this plot may still remain uncertain though AC and ANPP spring up as possibilities.

Nevertheless, if Odili will succeed in this game where several Northern elements eye the same seat, then he should be prepared to sink and swim as no one fights a political battle without a consolidated home front nor will wining be made easier when he is struggling to make himself relevant again.



Odili



Yar'Adua



Tinubu

Darkness Looms: PHCN To Shut Down Operations

...as work to rule begins tomorrow

Stories By
Paschal Agbada & Wilson Uchendu

recycling old hands in and around the sector.

In this phase of their allegation of government's unseriousness in changing things for the better, the union noted that workers were sacked in the past for non-performance but still such people after a while found their ways back to the system.

For the union, they said "such people will definitely not be productive at the long run". According to some of the workers, "the management is only interested in deceiving the government to make money and we have written severally to the president but he has refused to grant us audience.

If a person was sacked from a lower position, for inefficiency and is later recalled and given a higher responsibility, what sense does it make?

The union equally requested for the immediate release of the power probe and an accelerated implementation of recommendations their in.

"We want them to bring out the report which they

The waning confidence amongst settlers, investors and tourists in the Niger Delta is to be beefed up and buoyed as government intends to check in earnest the inflow of arms and ammunitions into the zone.

Obong Ufot Ekaette, Minister of Niger Delta Affairs while disclosing this also hinted that the Ledum Mitee committee's report on Niger Delta development amongst others was part of a grand report submitted to a special committee vested with the responsibility of producing a white paper on the issue.

The minister further stated the readiness of his ministry to swing into implementation of all the accepted recommendations once the expected White Paper was approved

In a frank manner, the minister who appeared visibly worried concerning the issue of proliferation of arms in the region said the federal government is seriously seeking the revitalization of the Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy (GGESS) meeting as a result of its significance in providing solution to energy crisis.

According to Obong Ekaette, following the

are attempting to sweep under the carpet. We shall resist any such attempt, noting that, as they put it "tax payers money were used to tour the country, so this report must not be taken for granted in order not to let the efforts put therein come to naught.

Obasanjo's administration had claimed it pumped money into the power sector which is a lie and the (Nduji) Elumelu Committee has proved it, but unfortunately, they are trying to use all at their disposal to kill the report".

Though the union appeared disgusted and helpless at the moment, but Iworima remarked that in the present circumstances and situation that it is only the power of God that can change things saying that it had worked for them once. "During Obasanjo's tenure, we prayed and God stopped him from selling PHCN and Egbin station and we are sure He will answer us this time too by touching the hearts of the management to realize that staff motivation is very important.

Somehow, when Beam Checks approached the management of PHCN the men in authority were vehement in condemning the protest noting that g

most of the issues raised were already receiving attention and wondered the reason for the protest calling it a distraction.

PHCN management later in a news briefing last Friday said it was worried about a prayer session which the union had held while protesting in front of the headquarters. They stated that their main concern was the prayer line where the workers prayed thus "for God's intervention in the high handedness of the management towards the workers.

Quoting the statement "the action which may not be unconnected with the union's expressed grievances on issues which are already receiving attention of PHCN Management was precipitated by initial differences in the ongoing negotiation of staff remuneration package.

"The union and management had since agreed to reconvene and get the negotiation back on track.

"PHCN Management reaffirms its commitment to the actualization and sustenance of the presidential mandate of 6000MW by December 2009 and fully understands the staff welfare must be given priority in order to achieve the mandate.

Management therefore appeals to all PHCN staff and its esteemed customers for understanding while the issues are being resolved".

N' Delta's Unchecked Flow Of Arms: FG Stems The Tide

...as 2011 Elections Approach

development therefore, there will be utmost need he said, to review and restructure the GGESS meeting, considering other topical issues as security, money laundering and environmental protection.

Based on a report from Abuja last week, by the Deputy Director of Public Affairs, Mr. Fidelis Osammor, Ekaette had revealed this when playing host to the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Mr. A.C.A. Vander Wiel, in his office.

Following the report, Wiel had appealed to the Nigerian Government to critically examine the report of the 45-man Technical Committee on Niger Delta regional development and draft a White Paper on the report "because of its importance as the basis for a framework for peace and development in the region".

As a way of persuading and promoting foreign investment in the zone, Ekaette commented that

"Nigeria is methodological in its approach to the issues of the influx of illegal arms and ammunitions as well as oil bunkering" noting that the federal government is seriously persuaded as a result of its obvious implications to restore peace in the Niger Delta so as to attract the firms and organizations that hitherto left the region.

Meanwhile, the minister prevailed on existing investors to make sure they carry out their corporate social responsibilities noting that such could go a long way in checking rising militancy and environmental devastation.

Ekaette assured Mr. Wiel, the Netherlands's envoy of his ministry's preparedness and readiness to work in synergy with the companies in and out side the region to achieve the necessary long-sought for peace in the region.

The Nigerian landscape known for its state of 'Darkness' appear headed for the worst if the threat by workers of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) is anything to go by.

The workers under the aegis of the National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE) in a protest meeting last week threatened hell and brimstone and to ultimately stop power generation and distribution if the management of the company refuses to pay heed to their demands for an upward review of salaries.

Protesting at the organization's headquarters last week 27th of March they said "they met with us and offered to give us five percent, and what we are requesting for is 300 percent. What can five percent amount to considering our meager income.

"They have also said that PHCN is illegal, so we are going to shut down and by the time there is no light in this country, they will realize the illegality they are talking about.

In a news briefing with journalists, the National Organizing Secretary of the Union, Comrade Temple Iworima stated that as peace loving individuals of the country they have elected to seek the face of God on the matter as they were not prepared to incur the wrath of those in authority else they be misunderstood besides, he noted, they were only concerned with demanding what is legitimately their right.

He stated, "we are treated like slaves in this country, we are also the least paid workers in this sector and what we are demanding for is a 300 percent increment on our wages. Our engineers are out there in the field struggling to make the best out of the obsolete equipment available and nobody seems to appreciate this effort".

As he almost tearfully spoke, he stressed further rubbishing the planned target of the current administration which stands at 6000 megawatts of electricity towards the end of this 2009. In his expressed swipe at the administration and the target he stated "the way this people are going who is certain they mean well, they have not even been able to achieve 4000 megawatts by the end of 2009".

Collectively, the workers condemned the inconsistency synonymous with this administration in strict regards to the sector pointing out that the reckless shake-ups and switching of post and positions in the sector do not help matters.

The organization (NUEE) expressed disgust at what it called government negative attitude of