

FROM THE STATES

**Release Detained Activists Now
...AC Tells Gov. Sylva**

The Bayelsa State Chapter of the Action Congress (AC) has appealed to the Vice-President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan to wade into the political crisis in the state so as to save the state from further disintegration.

This appeal came at the weekend as a result of arrest and detention of persons termed "the Yenagoa Four".

The four, who are known fierce critics of Gov. Timipre Sylva of Bayelsa State are Frank Ohmu, Famous Daunemughan, Alex Aleibiri, and Don Stowey.

They were accused of possession of illegal fire-arms and had since been charged with treasonable felony against the Bayelsa State Government.

The Action Congress therefore appealed to well-meaning Nigerians including the Vice-President to intervene and save the state from further embarrassment.

AC said: "Following the continued detention and trial of the four activists the situation should be cleared before the proposed visit of Mr. President". The political Party equally posited that "the Vice-President should prevail on

BAYELSA

the governor and the accused to settle out of court and reduce the noticeable tension in the state". The court has fixed June 25 for hearing of the accused persons cases.



Gov. Sylva

**Alleged Embezzlement:
Reps Gives Chief Whip Clean
Bill Of Health**

The House of Representatives as the weekend in a curious manner passed a vote of confidence on the Chief Whip, Hon. Emeka Ihedioha over alleged embezzlement of funds leveled against him.

In a statement which was titled "Vote of Confidence on Leadership of Rt. Hon. Emeka Ihedioha, Chief Whip of the House of Representatives and Chairman of South East Caucus" was signed by 35 legislators from the zone.

In the statement the lawmakers stated: "We the members of the South East caucus in the House of Representatives do hereby resolve and affirm that the allegations of the mismanagement of the funds against the Chief Whip are baseless and an orchestrated campaign by a

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few persons in the House".

It would be recalled that the Chairman, House Committee on Information and National Orientation, Hon. Dino Melaye who is at the forefront of the accusations had alleged that the Chief Whip who chaired the Adhoc Committee that supervised the celebration of 10 years of democracy by the House had embezzled the fund mapped out for that event.

But the Chief Whip had insisted on his transparency and vowed to give an account of every kobo spent on the celebration galore by the House when it resumes plenary sessions today.

**LGA Election Tribunal
Commences Sitting Today**

NASARAWA

The Local Government Chairmanship/councilorship elections petitions Tribunal of Nasarawa State sitting in Akwanga will start entertaining the petitions at its disposal today.

The Chief Registrar of the state's High Court Mr. Daniel Adeck in a statement issued at the weekend said that the commencement of the tribunal has been approved by the state's chief Judge, Justice Ahmed Ubangari.

It was widely reported by the media that the Tribunal chaired by Justice Esther Daku was on

June 3 besieged by angry youths. The attack took place as the tribunal members were putting their actions in order in the case involving the chairman of Nasarawa North LGA, Stanley Buba of the Peoples' Democratic Party, PDP.

The statement stressed that the approval came as a result of the assurances by the police to adequately protect lives and properties at the Akwanga Chief Magistrate's Court venue of the Tribunal sittings.

**150 Tri-cabs To The
Rescue In Imo:
To Replace Okada**

Stories by Paschal Agbada and Wilson Uchendu

IMO

In the bid to relieve the hardship occasioned by the ban on 'okada', - commercial motorcycle operators, the Imo State Government has purchased 150 tri-cabs for the purpose of conveying passengers in the city.

The tri-cabs were strictly distributed to former 'okada' riders in the city but with enough training impacted on them as to enhance their management of the vehicles.

Distributing the tri-cabs Mrs. Dorathy Iroha, who is the chairman of the committee on the Ban of okada said that: the cabs were brought both to ease sufferings in the city and to compliment all other efforts made by government to cushion the effects of the ban of 'okada'.

According to her, the Imo State government took care of 50% of the bills for the tri-cabs as a way of subsidizing the cost for the users while monthly the operators would be returning N20,000.

Unlike most other cities, the committee chairman Mrs. Iroha, a retired police officer warned that the tri-cabs, buses and other means of transport provided and subsidized by Imo State government should not be used for any 'drop' conveyance of people rather, they are meant for mass transportation of committees.



Gov. Imoke

**River Niger: Dredging
Committee Set Up**

The Delta State Government has put plans in motion to set up a committee that will be mandated to handle all challenges that may come up with the impending dredging of Niger River.

The Governor, Emmanuel Uchuaghan stated this in Warri while receiving a delegation from the national inland waterways. Chief Uchuaghan also intimated that the committee whose responsibilities would include liaising with communities and Federal Transport Ministry on security issues would be headed by a former Deputy Governor, Chief Benjamin Elue.

While praising President Umar Musa Yar'Adua for bankrolling the project Uchuaghan said that his government would ensure the success of the project while being ready to assist in any way.

Meanwhile according to the leader of the group Mrs. Ezenwa Chinwe from the inland waterways, dredging of the River Niger is bound to stretch as far as 572km of navigable waterways and would span 152 communities.

Mrs. Ezenwa stressed while in the state that they had come to the state specifically to secure a landing port site and to be guaranteed of security details that may crop up in the course of the project.

**HIV/AIDS: NACA Should
Collaborate With SACA**

~ Imoke

CROSS RIVER

Steadfast collaboration between the National Action Committee Against AIDS (NACA) and its counterpart in the state SACA has been advocated for more effective combating of the HIV/AIDS pandemic by the Cross River State Governor, Liyel Imoke.

The governor stated this in Calabar while receiving the Director General, National Action Committee Against AIDS (NACA) Professor John Idoko before the commencement of a meeting on enhancing the Nigeria Response (ENR) team.

Liyel Imoke stressed that solving the challenges arising from the Aids scourge would warrant an integrated and comprehensive programme that would immensely impact on the people by reducing its prevalence.

The governor expressed his gratitude to Idoko for putting Cross River State in

his scheme of things especially as it relates to the scourge without yet a cure. He pointed out that his state would be ever ready to partner with Idoko and his team in NACA to ensure success.

He thus advocated for "more coordination between NACA and SACA and budget should not only be made available to SACA but also to NGOs for the fight against AIDS to be successful. SACA needs support because it is critical to the state".

In his own speech, Prof. Idoko emphasized his programme intention to change the SNR programme established in 1987. According to him, there is more to be done as the Millennium Development Goals are structured towards halting or reversing the rate of prevalence of the disease in Nigeria.