

Amaechi Wins War Against Militancy

...Graduates 229 Militants Yar'Adua's Men To attend



Defence Minister, Gen Godwin Abbe (Rtd.) And Gov. Amaechi at the PH Airforce Base enroute inspection of ex-militant rehabilitation center in Niger Delta

The Rivers State Government has concluded arrangements to graduate the first batch of its rehabilitated ex-militants.

Come Thursday, September 24th, all roads will lead to Port Harcourt, Rivers State in what is being termed the first rehabilitation exercise of that nature to be organized by any state in the federation.

The Chairman of the Rivers State Social Rehabilitation Committee Chief Albert Horsefall when contacted by newsmen acceded to the ground breaking event. He stressed that the Federal Government has set in notion plans to send a high powered delegation. This delegation *Beam Checks* learnt will be led by the Minister of Defence and Chairman of the Presidential Committee on Amnesty and Disarmament for Militants in the Niger Delta, General Godwin Abbe (Rtd).

A source confirmed to this publication that the Minister during a visit to the Government House in Port Harcourt hinted on the preparedness of the FG to take part in the send forth ceremony.

Our source disclosed that the Federal Government will seriously take part in the graduation ceremony of these rehabilitated ex-cultists and militants.

Quoting our source further, he said "that it is likely the President Alhaji Umar Musa Yar'Adua will be sending his personal representative in the person of the Minister of Defence.

The Defence Minister, Abbe was quoted as saying that if this approach by the Rivers

Paschal Agbada and Wilson Uchendu

State Government is adopted by all other states in the region, the issue of restiveness will be a thing of the past.

The Chairman of the Rivers State Social Rehabilitation Committee and former Director General, State Security Service (SSS) Chief Horsfal emphasized on the strategies used to rehabilitate the youths as fullproof as they majored in farming, carpentry, fashion designing, welding and hairdressing.

Irrespective of these skills-acquisition programmes, the Rivers State Government has gone further in its pronouncement stating that any of the ex-militants interested in furthering his education will be offered scholarship up to the tertiary level.

The former security chieftain was full of enthusiasm that after the send forth ceremony the repentant militants will turn out good and responsible citizens of Nigeria capable of shouldering their responsibilities instead of carrying arms.

The Governor of the State Rt. Hon Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi thus has proved critics wrong as when he took over the leadership of the State he had insisted that there was no negotiation with militants. The latest development remains a pointer to the fact that where there is a will there is a way. He has shown that his thoughts for the militants are even better than what the militants think for themselves, having been the first to introduce rehabilitation to the whole scenario.

RSG Flags Off "Operation Zero Pot Holes" In Port Harcourt

The Rivers State Ministry of Works has formally flagged off "operation zero potholes" in Port Harcourt and its environs.

The exercise is to provide immediate remedial work on bad roads in the state.

Rivers state Commissioner for Works, Hon. Dakuku Peterside said the massive road construction going on in the state is responsible for the pressure on the existing roads hence potholes and gullies.

He said the intervention work will make the road temporarily passable.

The commissioner explained that the heavy rainfall this year was responsible for the delay in the completion of most of the road construction works which he said hopefully will be vigorously pursued in the coming dry season.

By Joe Kalu

He also used the opportunity to disclose that some technical and contractual agreements were the cause of the slow pace of work on some construction road sites and flyovers like the Elioizu and Agip round about flyovers.

He however, appealed to road users and indeed Rivers people to be patient with the state government which he said means well.

Among those present at the ceremony were the permanent secretary and other directors in the ministry.

In another development, the HOPE Democratic Party, HDP has thrown its weight behind the on-going Urban Renewal Programme of the Rivers State Government in Port Harcourt.

The National Chairman of the party

and presidential candidate in the 2007 general elections Chief Ambrose Owuru, told newsmen in Port Harcourt that the demolition of the waterfronts in Port Harcourt was a welcome development.

Chief Owuru however faulted the state government's action of paying compensation only to property owners excluding the tenants.

"My party position is that we, on the face of it will agree with the Urban Renewal Programme of course, that is commendable.

Though we have not been consulted as stakeholders of the state, we might not be abreast with the reasons adduced by the administration, but we believe the government is sincere and means well about the programme".

Commenting on the state of roads in Port Harcourt, the Hope Democratic

Party leader advised the State Government to ensure contracts are awarded to reputable firms.

He noted that such firms should be made to create alternative roads while construction of major roads are going on.

"I think the Government should try to award contracts to reputable firms as a way of solving part of the problem because the experience we had coming into Port Harcourt from the airport was something else", he noted.

He stated further that money was not the problem of the state and was quick to condemn those he noted rush in to commend government unnecessarily in the face of stacking realities "we have the money to do quite a lot and I know the state government is committed to this reality" he submitted.