

# UNIPORT Signs MoU With NNPC On Biofuel Research

As part of efforts by authorities of the University to forge a symbiotic relationship between the Institution and the Industry in fostering research aimed at tackle developmental challenges facing the country, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) in bio-fuel research *reports Obinna Nwodin*

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Corpers Sweep  
Presidential  
Awards.  
Details  
next week  
-Editor

## UNIPORT Weekly

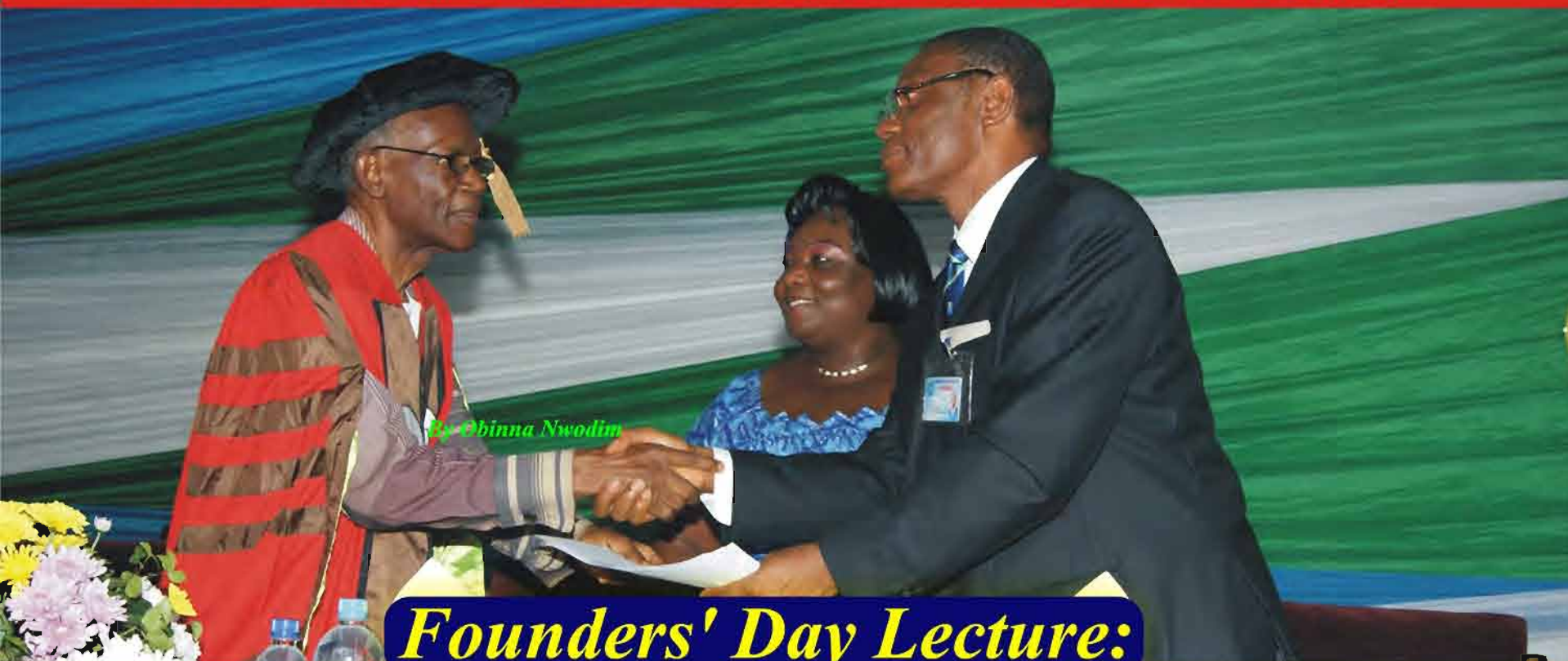
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### Founders' Day Lecture:

## Alagoa Tasks Stakeholders On Dev Of UNIPORT

### ...V-C Names New Emeritus Professors

*By Humphrey Ogu*

In a bid to facilitate the fulfilment of the vision of the Founding Fathers of the University, and take the Institution to greater heights, foremost Historian and Emeritus Professor Ebiegberi Alagoa has

called for concerted efforts from stakeholders to achieve the aims for which the University was established.

Professor Alagoa, who made the call while delivering the 1<sup>st</sup> Founders' Day Lecture titled: "UNIPORT in Review" at the Ebitimi Banigo

Auditorium last Thursday, acknowledged the enormity of the task of taking the University to the lofty heights dreamt of by its Founding Fathers, urging staff, students, Alumni, friends of the University, public-spirited individuals

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# As ASUU Returns To Work

By Williams Wodi

The nation is facing a dark dilemma in its critical educational sector at the moment. December, 2011 and January, 2012, will go down in history as the season of strikes in Nigeria. The country was divided along shadowy ideological lines that had very little to do with genuine national interest or the welfare of its downtrodden masses. Between December last year and January this year, hatred and mutual suspicion were the most prevalent national emotions. Effective and focused leadership were essential commodities in rare supply in and out of government.

In the midst of all the avoidable turmoil, there were very few statesmen to be looked up to; even fewer men (and women) of honour and integrity to be followed. Most of our leaders are insensitive and lack a binding link to the common folks in the street. The nation remains in search of leaders who have an unshakable commitment to the rights and welfare of the people. The eight week-old "indefinite strike" declared by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), dealt a near mortal blow to an already fledgling educational system that a dedicated Minister and her equally animated Minister of State vowed to return to the path of quality on assumption of office. The impact on the system is like a car crash.

The ominous strike; which totally paralysed academic activities in the nation's public universities, commenced on December 4, 2011, following several threats by ASUU. Without dress rehearsals, the teachers unceremoniously walked out of their classrooms. Believing that it was the 'normal' strike action that Government promptly nipped in the bud, students lingered around their school premises for awhile; only to come to the shocking realisation that they were in it for the long haul. The hapless students later were compelled to *occupy* their parents' homes for eight straight weeks! ASUU only *suspended* the strike penultimate Thursday to general relief.

While the darkness lingered on the educational front, President Goodluck Jonathan's unsolicited New Year gift of a geometrical increase in the pump price of Premium Motor Oil (PMS), consigned the worrisome ASUU strike to the backwoods. The *oil* protest tested the will and survival instinct of the nation to the hilt. Some of the protesters in Kaduna even added a comic relief to the tragedy when they threatened to check out of Nigeria on account of the anticipated hardship to be inflicted by the sudden removal of the mirage called subsidy from a product that touches everything in the country. Remember *Andrew*?

At some point, it appeared as if the ASUU strike would never end. It, therefore, came as a huge relief, when the National Executive Council of ASUU



Prof. Ukachukwu Awuzie, ASUU, National President

suspended the killing strike action which lasted for 58 uninterrupted days! The end of the strike does not however, portend an end to the crises of confidence rocking the educational sector that is critical to personal and national development. This is because the contentious 2009 Agreement between the Federal Government and ASUU which will, by the way, be due for renegotiation this June, has the potential to return ASUU to the trenches.

Would the parties that are just coming out of an acrimonious negotiation process which resulted in the suspension of the strike have the interest and energy to reconvene for chapter two of the Agreement? Would we wake up in June to face a resumption of the suspended strike action? Periodic review of the Agreement is meant to assess the impact of the various intervention packages on education, evaluation of the implementation process, and fine-tuning of the document to make it relevant as part of efforts aimed at attaining global benchmarks for the Nigerian university system. The Agreement which dates back to 2001 was due for review in 2004 if there was a sense of urgency amongst the negotiators. The exercise commenced only in 2007; even then, it dragged on till 2009 when the acrimonious Agreement was finally signed.

The reluctance by Government to fully implement the Agreement resulted in several warning strikes that culminated in the just-suspended strike action. Today, a comatose educational sector is the shameful trophy we have to show the world in this age of knowledge. The nine per cent budgetary allocation to the sector in 2012 is a crying testimony of the priority rating of education in Nigeria. The dark dilemma facing the educational sector today is how to ensure that what is appropriated is fully utilised to improve facilities and capacity-building in the universities. According to Pai Obanya, there is a huge world of difference between throwing money at education and actually investing in the sector. If even the paltry sums that are appropriated are not properly utilised, then it would be near impossible to redeem education in Nigeria.

As ASUU members return to their classrooms and laboratories, Government should make concerted efforts to abide by the terms of the Agreement it reached with the Union in such a manner that does not disrupt university education in the country anymore. An educational system that is subjected to periodic disruption is a blight on the collective conscience of the nation. There is no virtue in running an educational system that cannot produce the right manpower to run its affairs in an age when knowledge is fast replacing material resources as the true wealth of nations. ASUU also would need to be more creative in its future use of strike action as a weapon of choice in the struggle to save the educational sector. Someone had suggested inclusion of strikes in the academic calendar as a monument to years of neglect that has resulted in the inevitable strike actions that have so far become part of the educational system.

Let all parties resolve that the nation must emerge from the latest strike with a renewed sense of total commitment, collaboration and continuity in the decision-making process by the FG and the ASUU leadership. On both sides, we need honest, devoted and thoroughly capable partners who are committed to the survival of the system. Trust is the essential building block for successful industrial engagement and personal relationships. Government should plug all areas of waste in the utilisation of its allocations to education, while the leadership of ASUU should ensure that its members ply their trade as do their counterparts in other parts of the world. They would, of course, require an enabling operational environment to give of their very best to the system.

The latest *Webometric* ranking of universities in the world has proved, once more, that there is quite a lot to fix in the educational sector in Nigeria. In a recent statement, an Israeli envoy to Nigeria told the Minister of State for Education, Chief Nyesom Wike that "the only thing standing between Israel and total annihilation is education". Now that we are going in the opposite direction, I hope that we are not headed for total annihilation. To achieve the educational sector of our dream, those in charge of policy thrust must be persistent, consistent, and forward-looking, by focusing attention on full implementation of all protocols aimed at returning quality to our educational system within a minimum timeline. That is the way forward. Let us welcome back ASUU members to their classroom in the hope that they would be motivated to stay there this time around.

## Works Dept Appeals On Hazard Allowance



Jubrin Inede, Ag. Director Works & Services

Staff of the Works and Services Department have made a passionate plea to Management to redress what they described as "omission of Works and Services Technical staffers from payment of Hazard Allowance", which they said was already being paid to deserving personnel in the University.

A strongly-worded letter of appeal addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka, said that Works and Services Department had previously received the hazard allowance before it was stopped, disclosing that an annual Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) financial package, comprising safety equipment and allied tools was once enjoyed by affected staff in the line of duty.

Reminding Management that Maintenance staff of the Department faced gave occupational hazards in the performance of their daily functions, they solicited "retrospective inclusion of Works and Services technical staff in the already paid hazard allowances".

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Artists from the Institute of Arts and Culture (Arts Village) thrilled the audience with a spectacular adaptation and stage performance of one of Elechi Amadi's famous novels, *The Concubine*, directed by Ovunda Ihunwo at *The Crab*, Delta Park last Thursday as part of activities marking the maiden edition of Founders' Day celebration of the University.

The novel which was adapted for stage by Imo Edward centres on Ihuoma as the heroine and *femme fatale*, who by sheer coincidence of predestination was married to a jealous sea-god that struck his human rivals dead through

## Artsville Troupe Thrills Audience To Mark Founders' Day

By Otiakor Samuel

mysterious circumstances, a sorry situation, which claimed the lives of Emenike, Madume and Ekwueme.

The artistic prowess woven into the play, in addition to the blazing musical effects provided by *Eregbu Cultural Dance* of Omigwe, Aluu, enlivened spectators as the

University Community led by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka, got a fulfilled day from an original tragic fiction which ironically turned hilarious as a stage adaptation.

Speaking

after the performance, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ajienka, commended the Director of *Arts Village*, Professor Julie Okoh, the artistes and the Aluu cultural group for what he described as a fantastic presentation, stating that the University was proud of the Institute. He reiterated that the Arts would continue to enjoy prominence in his Administration as was the case in the good old days when going to the theatre was an indispensable component of Campus life.

In their separate goodwill messages, former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Don Baridam and the Novelist, Dr Elechi Amadi, acknowledged that the piece was perfectly adapted and staged, commending the Troupe for the diligent artistic recreation of the novel. "You all know that *The Concubine* is a long story, but the way you compressed it into the play is an art itself," Amadi remarked.

Earlier in her address, Director of the Institute, Professor Okoh, welcomed guests to the first performance for the year, disclosing that the choice of *The Concubine* was informed by the fact that it was written by an indigenous writer, who was instrumental to the founding of the University. She promised that the Institute would continue to roll out thrilling performances for the development of the arts in the University.



Author of *The Concubine*, Dr Amadi with cast at *The CRAB*, (inset) Prof Okoh, Director, Arts Village

## NYSC Briefs Prospective Corps Members

By Mercy Don-Baridam

Acting Dean, Student Affairs, Department, Dr Matthew Wegwu, in partnership with officials of the Rivers State National Youth Service Corp (NYSC), last Tuesday, organised a forum to prepare prospective Corp members on how to have a successful service year.

Addressing the 2012 Batch A Corps members, Dr Wegwu advised them to abide by the rules and regulations of the scheme and ensure they remain worthy ambassadors of the university anywhere they may find themselves. He revealed that the NYSC scheme influenced his life positively, and charged them to key into the scheme by serving their fatherland with diligence and sense of patriotism.

Earlier in her speech, Chief Inspector in the Inspectorate Division of NYSC in Rivers State, Mrs Ben Ushie, stressed the need for the service: "The policy of NYSC states that students of Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics have to do the one year compulsory national service and to do this, participants need to be enlightened on what the scheme is all about and what to expect in camp and place of primary assignment".

Listing the objectives of the scheme, Mrs Ushie said it is to inculcate discipline and raise the moral tone of the Nigerian youth, integrate participants to foster greater national unity by posting them to areas away from their geographical location and also expose Corp members to different culture and lifestyle of their host communities.

Mrs Ushie emphasised the importance of Call-Up Letters, as an important document for every intending Corp member. "When coming to the Camp, come along with your computer print out, original copies of your documents, eight passports, a statement of results duly signed and the last Identity Card from your University" she advised them.

She charged the students to be self-reliant and exhibit the NYSC Motto; *Dedication and Selflessness* in every activity, stressing that members are expected to discharge their duties with service and humility.

She explained the criteria on which Corpers are mobilized for the scheme, criteria for eligibility and guidelines to follow before proceeding to the Camp.



DSA, Dr Wegwu



Mrs Ushie



Cross section of prospective Corps Members

# UNIORT Signs MoU With NNPC On Biofuel Research



R-L: DVC (R&D), Prof Willie-Abbey signing the MoU with Engineer Nelson Oyudo of NNPC

*Cont'd from p1*

Speaking at the event, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajenka, expressed hope that by signing the MOU, experts from the NNPC Research and Development Unit and the University would jointly deploy their expertise and facilities in the two Institutions to address the needs of the Corporation and the Oil and Gas Industry, including the International oil Companies (IOC) in such areas as Petroleum Geosciences, Oil and Gas Exploration and Production, Petroleum Refining and Petrochemical Technology, Offshore Technology, Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development.

Professor Ajenka, who was represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (Research and Development), Professor Bene Wille-Abbey, assured the NNPC that the skills, experience, knowledge and manpower developed from the collaborative effort would be tailored towards conducting a wholly Nigerian research in selected areas of need in the petroleum industry and also development of technologies and products from the joint effort.

In his address, Group Executive Director, Exploration and Technical, Engineer Billy Agha, expressed optimism that the Unit and UNIORT would utilize the opportunity to advance bio-fuel research through commercialization, and large-scale production, adding that the joint research will focus on how to provide new fuels that would bring about energy independence, development of novel technologies for bio-fuel and production of 'green' and readily available fuels for the economic development of Nigeria. He hoped that the collaboration would breed some of Nigeria's best bio-fuel scientists that can introduce the product the marketplace.

Also speaking, Group General Manager, Research and Development, Engineer Nelson Oyudo, said that signing of the MoU marked the beginning of serious commitment and

cooperation between the two institutions with regards to establishment of the framework and principles under which the parties would collaborate to achieve the goals of the MoU, expressing hope that the collaboration would

bring together the academia and industry research experts into a consortium of intellectual strength and expertise in bio-fuel research and development.

Facilitator of the collaboration, Dr. Samuel Ofodile, said that the emergent partnership would afford the two institutions a platform to utilize their resources to tackle the challenges that face the petroleum Industry.

Also speaking, pioneer Group General Manager Research and Development, Dr Eugene Ibe, who stated that the event was a dream come true, hoped that such collaboration would enhance capacity in the industry.

Present at the event were General Manager, Exploration and Production, Engineer Benjamin, Ogbagbena, General Manager, Refining and Petrochemical, Engineer Basil Ezeanekwe, Manager, Technical Services, Engineer Olufemi Adeyemi, Manager, Process and Catalysis, Dr. Obiora Okeke, amongst others.

Also present were Director, Centre for Research Management, Professor Onyewuchi Akaranta, Professor Godwin Igwe, Director, Refining and Petrochemicals, Institute of Petroleum Studies, Professor Ebenezer Okonkwo, Deputy Director, UNIORT Technology Park, Dr Sunday Ikiensikimama, who represented the Director, Institute of Petroleum Studies (IPS).

## We Are Working To Convert Waste To Wealth

By Mercy Don-Baridam

**A**cting Director, Campus Environmental Beautification and Sanitation Unit (CEBAS), Dr Prince Mmom, has unveiled plans to create a sub-unit that would be responsible for waste disposal and recovery.

Dr Mmom made the disclosure while exchanging views with *UNIORT Weekly*, in his office, penultimate Tuesday, stating that part of the objective of the Unit is to beautify the Campus and its environs through planting of ornamental plants and flowers, maintenance of parks and gardens in the University and also through, regular disposal of waste and litters, as well as general sanitation within the Campus.

The Acting Director also disclosed that the Unit would partner Arati Biotech in Lagos to recycle waste, disposal of plastics, metals and nylons, explaining that when fully on board the Unit would convert waste to wealth through recovery, recycling, and re-use waste.

According to him, a sub-unit would be created to train workers on how to recycle waste and convert it to wealth. "We intend expanding our coast from looking at the areas of waste recycling, and study it at the professional level, he said, noting that the best way to recycle waste is to sort it at source".

Dr Mmom further revealed that the Unit also intends to produce different cellophane bags for household use in the University Community, where they can dispose metals, nylons and plastics. He noted that while recycling the waste, they would also partner the University Bottling Plant and Faculty of Agriculture to produce fertilizers from organic waste.

The Acting Director, who called on staff and students to change their lukewarm attitude to the environment by assisting the Unit actualize its goals, observed that environmental sanitation is everybody's business, advising staff and students

### -CEBAS Director

to see themselves as stewards of the environment and care for it.

The Acting Director appealed to Management to assist the Unit in providing two refuse disposal trucks. "We don't have any functional truck because the old ones have broken down and also the population of people around the Campus is increasing, so waste is also on the increase", Dr Mmom said, promising that his Unit was fully alive to its statutory responsibilities.



Dr. Mmom



**380<sup>TH</sup> Extra-Ordinary Senate Meeting****Senate Approves New Academic Calendar****...Appointment Of Associate Deans SGS, New Centres Too***By Ohiinna Nwodin*

**S**enate at its 380<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Meeting held last Wednesday, approved a new Academic Calendar for the 2011/2012 session. The new Calendar stipulates that Fresh students are expected to arrive on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, while returning students are to arrive on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2012. First Semester Lectures would commence from Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> February to Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2012. The new Calendar further indicates that from Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> June to Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 would be used for revision, while First Semester Examinations would begin on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2012. The Second Semester would commence on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2012 and end on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2012.

For the 2011 Sandwich Programme, Fresh and

new School of Science Laboratory Technology presented by the Dean, Faculty of Science, Professor Oamen Abumere. This is to enable the new School conform to the guidelines set by the National Universities Commission (NUC) on accreditation.

Senate also considered the 10th Report of the Senate Appeals Committee on Certificate Verification by its Chairman, Professor Eugene Onyeike. It also considered a presentation by the Director, Exchange and Linkages Unit, Professor Johnny Otaigbe, who briefed Senate on the vision, mission and functions of ELPU.

Professor Otaigbe also enumerated the achievements of the Unit, which included local and foreign partnerships, as well as other on-going activities. He highlighted some challenges

*Senate in session**Pix: H. Alu*

Returning Students are expected to arrive on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2012, while lectures would begin on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2012. Examinations for all Sandwich students would take place between 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2012 and Saturday, October, 2012.

Senate also ratified the appointment of two Associate Deans for the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). The two appointees are: Professor Gregory Awiri who would be responsible for Graduate programmes in the Faculties of Science and Engineering and Professor Martin Ifeancha, who would oversee the Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences, Education and Management Sciences in the SGS.

Senate also approved the setting up of a Centre for Logistics and Transport Science, as well as the Bamanga Tukur Centre for International Trade and Development. The Centre for Logistics and Transport is to offer Post-graduate Diploma, Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees while the Bamanga Tukur Centre would offer Master's Degree in International Trade and Development.

The Extra-Ordinary Senate session also approved an administrative structure for the

facing the Unit to include provision of Internet facilities and services, funding, regular constant power supply, development of career progression for staff, official vehicle, location of building, and cooperation from relevant schedule officers to facilitate linkages.

Senate also approved the appointment of External Examiners for the Department of Religious and Cultural Studies in the Faculties of Humanities, School of Science Laboratory Technology, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Department of Animal and Environmental Biology, Department of Computer Science in the Faculty of Science and Department of Finance and Banking in the Faculty of Management Sciences, as well as Faculty of Pharmacy.

It considered and approved results for Regular and Part-Time Programmes from the Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences, Science, Management Sciences, Engineering, Agriculture, Education, College of Health Sciences, Institute of Petroleum Studies (IPS), as well as School of Graduate Studies. It directed that the salaries of Lecturers, who failed to turn in their results to the Academic Office for consideration, should be stopped.

**CampusMetro****Syder Emerges SSANU Chairman***By Mercy Don-Baridam*

**A** new Executive Council has been elected to run the affairs of the UNIPORT Branch of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU). At a keenly-contested election held last Thursday at the School of Basic Studies Auditorium, Mr. Syder Bikume emerged winner, polling 197 votes to defeat three other contestants for the position of Branch Chairman.

Other members elected are Mr Bennard Chukwu, Vice-Chairman, Mr Nicholas Assali, Secretary, Mrs Gift Kamalo, Assistant Secretary, while Mrs Edith Enyi was elected Treasurer. The results also indicated that Mrs Diepreye Ekine was elected as Financial Secretary, Mr Nutee Nigeria was elected Public Relations Officer, Mr Monday Nwideduh, Trustee while Mr. Abel Ejiowhor was elected Ex-Officio member.

Speaking to *UNIPORT Weekly* after the election, the new Chairman, Mr. Bikume thanked members for the confidence reposed in him and members of his Team by SSANU, assuring them that he would deliver on his campaign promises to reposition the Union.

Syder also commended his opponents in the contest for making the election very competitive, promising that he would tap wealth of experience in efforts aimed at moving the union to greater height during his leadership.

He called for support from SSANU members to enable the new Executive serves them with greater commitment, assuring all stakeholders that his tenure would be anchored on transparency, accountability and consultation.

The result of the election brought to an end weeks of political build-up to the election. Chairman of the Electoral Committee, Mr Roland Wabali had thanked voters for the maturity they exhibited during the process, stressing that it was the level of maturity that made the exercise hitch free. Other members of the Electoral Committee were Dr (Mrs) Dakoru Charles-Granville, Mr Orlu Moses, Mr. Baridoo Ledor, while Mrs Ihechi Jack served as Secretary.

*New SSANU Chairman, Mr Bikume*

# Alagoa Tasks Stakeholders On Dev Of UNIPORT



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and groups to contribute to the actualization of those dreams.

"I wish to assure the current leaders of the University that the Founding Fathers faced all the problems that they now contend with. The founders did not have an easy ride. They faced the grave challenge of orchestrated media campaign to oust the Vice-Chancellor on the grounds that the administration was not sympathetic to local interest and did not admit a large enough number of local students. There were constant challenges to supply electricity and water, provide accommodation for staff and students," he noted

"University of Port Harcourt has advanced mightily in terms of infrastructure, but the rate of advancement in number of students and staff means that the pressures you face now may still be as acute as those we faced in the early days," Alagoa said, stressing the need for intensified effort to fulfil the vision of the founding fathers.

"The area of academic excellence was arguably our best foot forward. This was the area in which we received the greatest amount of recognition and appreciation," he noted with pride.

Also speaking, Minister of State for Education, Hon Nyesom Wike, who is an *Alumnus* of the University, expressed willingness to support the Institution to attain enviable heights, promising to facilitate the endowment of a Chair in Social Science for the late Professor Claude Ake and another in Literature in honour of the late Dr Obi Wali, both of who made phenomenal contributions to the development of their respective disciplines.

The Minister, who disclosed that he is proud to associate with his *Alma Mater*, said that "when the Vice-Chancellor told me that there is need to have a Faculty of Law in this University, I said Mr Vice-Chancellor, go and apply for intervention. He did that and it was approved. I told him that the next time I come to the University, will be the foundation-laying ceremony of that Faculty building."

Meanwhile, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka, who lauded the Guest Lecturer for raising a number of crucial issues, informed the audience that University Library has been named after the pioneer Vice-Chancellor, Professor Donald Ekong, while the late Professor Claude Ake has a Hostel in his name. He announced the appointment of Professors Otonti Nduka, Nimi Briggs, Emmanuel Anosike, and Samuel Okiwelu as Emeritus Professors.

He commended the Governor of Rivers State, Rotimi Amaechi for building the *Saro Wiwa English House* and Hon Wike for his numerous support to the University, charging other Alumni to emulate them.

Earlier in his opening remark, Chairman of the occasion, Dr Elechi Amadi, recalled that he was a Permanent Secretary in Rivers State about 1977/78, when a Federal Government team came in

search of land to site the University, stating that Choba was favoured because of its proximity to Port Harcourt, highway and availability of an unencumbered land.

The Elder statesman noted that between 1999, when he delivered a Convocation Lecture in the University and now a lot of improvements have been recorded, citing the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital and the Library as new projects. He, however, noted that a lot more need to be done, emphasizing the need for the University to make good use of the opportunity provided by the emergence of two Alumni as President and Minister of State for Education respectively.

The Lecture which drew participants from the Academia, Government, Industry and the Alumni, also had in attendance, the second Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Silvanus Cookey, as well as the fifth and sixth successors, Professors Nimi Briggs and Don Baridam, who gave goodwill messages. They expressed joy at the progress made by the University, promising to contribute more when the need arises.

The event also featured presentation of awards and customized mufflers to deserving academics, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Presidential Award winners and goodwill messages from, Professors Otonti Nduka; Alphonsus Anusiem; President, University of Port Harcourt Alumni Association, Mr Samuel Iyoyo, who spoke through the Rivers State Branch Chairman, Engr Sampson Ngerebara; Nye-Nwe-Ali, Choba, Eze Roland Okocha amongst others.

## Transporters, Students, Parley On Intra-Campus Fares

By Otikor Samuel

A compromise was yet to be reached between the Student Union and transport operators in respect of intra-campus shuttle fares in the University which shot up amidst the controversial fuel subsidy removal by the Federal Government last January. While transporters were proposing a reduction from the current N50 to N40 (Choba to UNIPARK) and N40 to N30 (Delta to UNIPARK), the executive of Student Union insisted that it should be reverted to the original N30 and N20 for Choba and Delta Parks, respectively.

In a telephone interview with UNIPORT Weekly last Wednesday, President of the Student Union, Rhino Owthorkire, said that the position of the students was a reversion to the old price, not a reduction as canvassed by the transporters. He however, disclosed that negotiations were ongoing to put an end to the lingering issue.

Meanwhile, speaking in an earlier interview, a leader of the transporters, Mr. Chimezie Nnadozie, had appealed

for understanding from commuters in the University Community, disclosing that the present increment was the first since 2004 when buses were enlisted in the transport scheme of the University.

Mr. Nnadozie, who was Director of Transport for the 1999 /2000 Student Union Executive stated that, "What we are actually doing is evacuation. In the morning, we

bring students to the Campus for their lectures and go back empty. In the evening, we also take them back and leave empty. So, as we fixed N30 from Delta to UNIPARK for instance, the true situation is that we are only gaining N15 while the other N15 covers the empty bus back to the Delta Park," he explained.

"The margin on other pressing demands has been increasing tremendously, yet we did not increase our fare. We should please give the drivers a little allowance to grow along other members of society," he pleaded, stating that maintenance cost, cost of vehicle spare parts, as well as prices of staple food are on the rise.

"The slight adjustments were necessary for better service delivery to clients. We need to provide a new set of buses, meet up emerging trends, as well as tackle personal demands," he continued, arguing that the income they are generating from their operations was not sufficient to meet the current market demands.

Promising to keep on serving with utmost commitment to satisfy the average students, Nnadozie said, "We have been serving well and we are ever ready to serve. We will continue to dutifully discharge our task to ensure that every interest is judiciously represented."

Collaborating his view, Chairman, Transport Committee of the Student Union, Madumere Iyke, agreed that there was a need for both parties to slightly shift grounds for peace to reign. According to him, even though his committee was vested with the responsibility to ensure favourable transport system on Campus, he would want to discharge such function with a human face.

"The issue of increasing fare started last August before the sudden increase in the pump price of fuel, but we argued that it should not be effected then. Inasmuch as we are protecting the interest of the students, we should not subscribe to a situation of robbing Peter to pay Paul. The transporters pass through difficulties to maintain their vehicles and meet up other demands, so we slightly adjusted the fare in the interest of all," Adhoc Committee Chairman said.

He called on Management to complement the situation at hand by putting in place palliative measures to ameliorate the hardship occasioned by the rise in transport, disclosing that the Student Union was making effort to woo the Rivers State Government into redressing the situation.



Mr. Nnadozie



## GUIDEPOST

## APPOINTMENT

**Dr C. Orluwene**, Department of Chemical Pathology, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences, Acting Head of Department. Effective date: November 21, 2011 to November 21, 2013

## ADJUNCT APPOINTMENT

**Professor R Ezenbodor-Akwagbe**, Department of Nursing, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences, granted Appointment as Adjunct Professor.

## SABBATICAL LEAVE

**Professor Femi Shaka**, Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, granted *Sabbatical Leave* tenable at Lagos State University. Effective date: December 6, 2011 to December 5, 2012.

**Professor Felicia Eke**, Department Paediatrics, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, granted *Sabbatical Leave* tenable at Abia State University. Effective date: February 3, 2012 to February 2, 2013.

## CONTRACT APPOINTMENT

**Dr Helen Ollor**, Department of Tourism & Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, offered *Contract Appointment* as Lecturer II. Effective date:

## PENSIONABLE APPOINTMENT

**Mr Sorleloodum Bukue**, Department of Tourism & Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, offered Pensionable Appointment.

83<sup>rd</sup> INAUGURAL LECTURE

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Inaugural Lecture has been scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. The Lecture titled: "*Educational Assessment: A Sine quo non*", will be delivered by Professor Reginald Ukwuije of the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education. Time is 3: 00 p.m.

## CHANGE OF NAME

**Miss Joy Chiruo Oti**: *Miss Joy Oti* of the Institute of Agricultural Research and Development now wishes to be known, called and addressed as *Miss Joy Chiruo Oti*. All documents bearing her former name remain valid.

## FIRST UNIPORT RESEARCH FAIR: Call for Papers

The first UNIPORT Research Fair now holds between 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2012. Researchers and academia are invited to submit abstracts and briefs of their research and innovation. Exhibitors should submit a brief (not more than 500 words). All submissions (in CD) and inquiries should be directed to:

Research Fair Secretariat, School of Graduate Studies, University of Port Harcourt. Email: [research.fair@uniport.edu.ng](mailto:research.fair@uniport.edu.ng); Phone: 08124155812

Contact: Professor Gregory Awwiri

## HEALTH ALERT

Lassa Fever epidemic is everywhere. Kill all rats in your home. Cover all foods. Ensure highest level of hygiene. Avoid cooked food outside. It is an emergency!

## BRIEFS FROM OTHER VARSITIES

## CROWTHER VARSITY SHUT OVER PROTEST

Authorities of the Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, have shut the institution indefinitely following a protest by the students who reacted to the death of one Elvis Paul, a Third Year student of Computer Science at the institution's Health Centre. The protesters blamed the death on the poor infrastructure at the Centre.

## ACHIEVERS' VARSITY GRADUATES 104 PIONEER STUDENTS

About 104 pioneer students of the Achievers' University, Owo, Ondo State, have graduated from the institution. A 23 year-old graduate of Biochemistry, Ms Oladunni Ahmed emerged the Best Graduating Student with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 4.97 on a five-point scale. Her elder brother, Olumide, 27, graduated the same day in the Department of Microbiology with a CGPA of 4.86 emerging the third Best Graduating Student.



Prof Ruqayyatu Rufa'i, Minister of Education

## DON RESIGNS OVER COMPLICITY IN OPINION SURVEY IN HONG KONG

Zhao Xinsu has resigned as Dean, School of Communications at Hong Kong's Baptist University after the institution became embroiled in political controversy over a public opinion survey he conducted in January. The resignation is an indication of the sensitivity of independent public polling in China.

The former Dean conducted the political opinion survey on the popularity of candidates for Hong Kong's Chief Executive Post. He resigned after allegedly releasing some details to Hong Kong media before all the opinions had been processed. The preliminary findings of the poll appeared to favour one candidate over another in what was currently an unusually close race for the top position.

"What started as a concern for democracy and academic freedom in Hong Kong has evolved into a power struggle within office. I hope my resignation will help to end all this," Zhao said in a letter released by the university on 6 February.

## EUROPE WARNS OVER SLOW RESEARCH REFORM

European Union Research Commissioner, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, has warned that she would "name and shame" member states that fail to speed up reform of research. "With Europe crying out for growth, the European Research Area can't wait any longer," she said.

"We can't continue with a situation where research funding is not always allocated competitively; where positions are not always filled on merit, where researchers can't take their grants across borders, where large parts of Europe are not even in the game, where there is a scandalous waste of female talent and where our brightest and best are leaving, never to return."

Geoghegan-Quinn said she wanted an entirely new ERA partnership, with a stronger role for key

stakeholders, and much tougher monitoring of member states' progress. "I will not hesitate to 'name and shame' those who perform badly against ERA objectives," she said. Her warning came at a Conference in Brussels on 30 January. The European Commission would now decide which issues should be addressed as priorities when finalizing the ERA Framework, to be tabled this June with the aim of completing the European Research Area by 2014.

## MASTERS APPLICATIONS RISE IN SWEDEN

by Jan Petter Myklebust

Applicants for international Masters programmes in Sweden for 2012-13 are up 24% over last year, at 31,223. But this is significantly lower than before Sweden introduced tuition fees for students from outside the European Economic Area. In 2010, 132,000 students applied for more than 500 Masters programmes. Swedish universities now have three strategic objectives: to broaden the number and quality of applicants from Europe who do not have to pay tuition fees; to compete globally for tuition fee-eligible students; and to recruit more Swedish students to the programmes.

One in four applicants for international Masters studies in 2012 do not have to pay tuition fees. The number who had paid the application fee by last week's deadline has increased to 6,182 from 5,061 last year, or 22%. In addition, 834 have paid application fees for single courses, an increase of 14%. Altogether 6,157 have applied for international courses, an increase of 7%.

It is not clear how many international students will be offered a study place, how many will pay the first instalment of the tuition fees by the first deadline of 15 June, how many have applied on the condition that they get a grant either from the Swedish government or a higher education institution to which they have applied, and above all how many will take up their place in August 2012.

-Compiled by Otiakor Samuel

## HEALTH ALERT: NOTIFICATION OF THE OUTBREAK OF LASSA FEVER

Lassa fever is a severe illness caused by a virus and transmitted by rats found in certain parts of Nigeria and some countries in West Africa.

The onset of Lassa Fever is gradual. It starts with fever and by the second or third day of infection, headache, sore throat, pain in the muscles, vomiting diarrhoea and cough may follow.

In severe cases, these symptoms are followed about a week later by bleeding from the nose, mouth and intestinal tract. Convulsion, loss of consciousness and death may also follow. Lassa Fever can be contracted from the excreta of infected rats and through direct contact with blood, urine, faeces and other secretions from the body of a carrier or sufferer.

About 80% of infected persons may show no symptoms of the disease, while 20% may show symptoms of malaria and typhoid fever.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Lassa Fever may be avoided by adopting the following precautionary measures:

- > Disposal of garbage by burning, burying or by dumping, far away from homes.
- > Storage of food items and drinks out of the reach of rats.
- > Maintaining optimum hygiene in homes and students' hostels.
- > Use of traps or rat-poisons to eliminate rats in homes and hostels.
- > Avoiding contact with blood and secretions of sick persons.
- > Regular washing of hands especially after visits to the toilet; and avoiding handshakes as much as possible.

Members of the University community are advised to report any case of fever to the Health Centre, no matter how insignificant they consider the fever to be.

Contact: Dr Ken Anugweje, Director, Health Services Department



# 1st Founders' Day Lecture In Pix

It was reminiscences galore last Thursday when UNI PORT held her maiden founders' day lecture at Ebitimo Banigo Auditorium. Emeritus Professor Ebiegberi Alagoa was a Guest Speaker at the event, where Minister of State Education, Chief Nyesom Wike was Special Guest of Honour

Photos: H. Alu & M. Ekiyor



V-C, Prof Ajenka welcoming Minister of State for Education, Chief Nyesom Wike



R-L: V-C, Prof Ajenka, Prof Alagoa, Minister of State for Education, Nyesom Wike & Prof Otonti Nduka



Chairman of occasion, Dr Elechi Amadi, making a speech



R-L: 2nd V-C, Prof Silvanus Cookey, 5th V-C, Prof Nimi Briggs & 6th V-C, Prof Don Baridam



Guest of Honour, Nyesom Wike, Guest Lecturer, Emeritus Professor Alagoa & Prof Otonti Nduka, exchanging pleasantries



Nyesom Wike flanked V-C, Prof Ajenka, Registrar, Mrs. Matilda Nnodim, Guest lecturer Emeritus Professor Alagoa, Prof Otonti Nduka & other officers of UNI PORT



Distinguished guests & members of UNI PORT Choral Concert rise for Hallelujah Chorus



V-C Prof Ajenka & Registrar, Mrs Nnodim decorating the Special Guest of Honour, Chief Wike