

Osun lecturers' pension fund: Omisore tasks EFCC to probe Aregbesola

Omisore is notorious for telling lies — APC

OLUWOLE IGE - OSOGBO

THE gubernatorial flag-bearer of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Osun State, Iyiola Omisore, over the weekend, tasked the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to immediately probe Governor Rauf Aregbesola over alleged

non-remittance of contributory pension deductions of academic and non academic staffers in the state owned tertiary institutions.

He said this has become imperative to save the future of the workers, who he said had embarked on almost four months industrial action over the matter and others demands, which the state government had failed

to address.

Students of higher institutions in Osun State had stormed the streets of Osogbo, in a protest last Thursday, halting socio-economic activities for some hours, to denounce the debacle over the prolonged strike action by their lecturers.

Omisore, in a statement issued by his Director of Media and Strategy, Prince Di-

ran Odeyemi, decried what he termed gross insensitivity of Governor Aregbesola to the plights of the lecturers, which truncated academic activities for almost four months.

According to him, "it is only an illiterate governor that would allow the closure of four tertiary institutions in the state for about four months without attending to

the agitations of the workers."

"The demands and agitations of the striking workers of the institutions are genuine, legitimate and just. It is criminal on the part of the governor to deduct the 7.5 per cent of the workers' salary for Monthly Pension Contributions as established by the Federal Government without remittance to the Pension Fund Administrators' (PFA) account for about 20 months," Omisore asserted.

Reacting over the PDP's call on EFCC to probe Aregbesola, APC's Director of Publicity, Research and Strategy, in Osun, Kunle Oyatomi, said "Omisore has become notorious for telling lies about Osun. So much so that some PDP members themselves are becoming embarrassed that most people no longer see this man as a witness of truth on Osun matters."

"Everything Omisore has said about the teachers' strike in Osun is false. He told similar heaps of lies about Osun debt until the PDP-led Federal Government confirmed that Omisore is not a witness of truth. As he lied about debt so he is lying about teachers' pension," he remarked.

The gubernatorial hopeful also condemned non-implementation of 65 years retirement age for the academic staffers as gazetted by the Federal Government and implemented by all institutions in the country except in Osun State.

Omisore added that it is only somebody who had never seen the four walls of a university that could be insensitive to the yearnings of educators in the state.

He challenged the governor to give detail accounts of what he has done with the lecturers' pensions running to about N20 billion.

He also urged parents and guardians in the state to prevail upon the insensitivity of Governor Aregbesola on the legitimate demands of the striking tertiary institutions' workers.

It will be recalled that academic activities have been paralysed in the four tertiary institutions in Osun State: Osun State Polytechnic, Iree; Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke; Osun State Colleges of Education, Ilesa and Ila-Orangun, as a result of industrial action embarked upon by lecturers and non-teaching staff of the institutions over non-remittance of their monthly Contributory Pension deductions to the Pension Managers since about 20 months ago, and non-implementation of 65 years retirement age of the academic staffers of the institutions.

Insecurity: NICO engages traditional rulers

COLLINS NNABUIFE - ABUJA

FOLLOWING the recent insecurity in Nigeria, the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO) has gathered traditional leaders across the country to discuss on the way forward.

Speaking during a live press conference on a radio programme in Abuja, Executive Secretary of NICO, Dr Barclays Ayakoroma, stated that, in view of the responsibility the traditional rulers were saddled with, it was imperative for them to be continuously engaged to keep them abreast with the demands.

According to him, the conference, which is the second edition slated for 26 and 27 May, 2014, in Kaduna, will be an opportunity for the royal fathers to cross-fertilise ideas on how best to administer their domains.

"Agreed, there may be some traditional rulers who are engaged in politics, business and some don't even stay in their domains. But, that underscores the importance of the conference. It will present opportunity for royal fathers from different zones of the country to cross-fertilise ideas.

Speaking on the non-recognition of traditional rulers by the constitution, Ayakoroma said that NICO as an institution had made a memo proposing a constitutional role for the traditional rulers.

Alumni, trustees decry frequent disruption of academic activities at LASU

THE Alumni Association of the Lagos State University (LASU) and its Board of Trustees have decried frequent disruption of academic activities in the institution.

In a communique issued at the end of a meeting of the National Executives of the association, it's Board of Trustees and graduates of LASU working in the university, they urged all parties - government, university authority, staff and student union - to permanently resolve all issues causing crises in the shortest possible time.

In the communique, signed by the Chairman of the Board, Teju Sonoiki, they further advised that far-reaching decision that will have major effect on the university community should be taken without consultation with the Alumni Association.



From left, Bishop Taiwo Adelakun, Pastor (Mrs) Dolapo Adelakun and the guest speaker, Professor Ibikunle Tijani, during the presentation of bursary awards to students in Oyo State, by the Taiwo Adelakun Foundation to mark Bishop Adelakun's birthday anniversary, in Ibadan, on Monday. Photo: Yemi Funso-Oke.

Dangote calls for immediate enforcement of new cement quality standard

DANGOTE Cement Plc, on Monday, hailed the move by the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) to review standardisation of cement in the country towards attaining the highest level of safety in building and construction.

The cement company, at a forum in Lagos, also urged SON to immediately begin the enforcement of the new cement classification and its uses to rid the nation of substandard cement and the attendant incidence of structural failures.

The management of the company made the call during a press briefing held in Lagos to make its position known on the controversies surrounding the new standard review

and the classification of cement type.

Dangote Cement Director, Ekanem Etim, said that the review and the classification was coming too late after the nation and its citizens have been subjected to harrowing experience of loss of lives and property and that the regulatory should spare no further time to enforce the

implementation of the new standard.

According to him, it is only economic saboteurs and profiteers that would kick against the new standard for cement production as other countries of the world have moved up beyond the level and the low grade being canvassed by some of the manufacturers opposed to the new

standard.

The Technical Committee of the SON, which comprised of all stakeholders in the building and construction industry including all cement manufacturers, had in the wake of wide spread protest against the collapse of structures across the country met to review the existing standard.

Call for cancellation of aircraft pre-arrival inspection not in the interest of Nigeria — Airline Chief

SHOLA ADEKOLA - LAGOS

THE Executive chairman of Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), Captain Nogie Meggison, has faulted the

proposal calling on the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) to carry out inspection of aircraft within the country after they have been flown into Nigeria.

Meggison said such bogus proposal may affect the safety and development of the aviation sector as aircraft that do not fit into the NCAA specifications in terms of airworthiness could be smuggled into the country.

He said the usual practice where aircraft safety inspectors from the NCAA travel to the maintenance facility or the manufacturers' facility or country of sale to carry out the necessary check on the aircraft before being flown into Nigeria is better as of aviation today.

He said defects or faults found by NCAA inspectors on any aircraft requiring rectification could be carried out at the seller's or C Check Maintenance Repair Organisation (MRO), before such planes are flown into Nigeria.

nothing that nobody goes to the bank again with a mat to sleep while waiting for payment.

On the reform at the ports, Dikiki noted that it had brought about massive infrastructural development and equipment upgrade as well as huge revenue returns to the government besides improving efficiency.

He thanked the club for nominating him as the inaugural speaker at the Just Friends Club of Nigeria Annual Lecture series which holds June in Abuja.

the executive members of an Abuja-based socio-cultural club, Just Friends Club of Nigeria, led by its President, Mr Jerome Green-Amakwe, who paid him a courtesy visit.

Dikiki, noting that before the reforms in the telecoms sector, there were only 450,000 telephone lines in the country said "but now there are over 126million GSM users in Nigeria."

He added that enormous transformation has also taken place in the banking sector after liberalisation,

126m Nigerians now use GSM — DG BPE

GBOLA SUBAIR - ABUJA

THE various reforms being carried out by the Federal Government have impacted positively on the Nigerian economy and the citizenry as reforms in the telecoms sector alone gave birth to 126 million GSM users in Nigeria.

Before the GSM revolution, Nigeria has a mere 450,000 telephone lines.

Director-General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Mr Benjamin Dikiki, stated this while receiving