

IDA NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF IGARRA DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Second Edition Vol. 1 No2.



IDA hands over solar lighting system to Igarra General Hospital.

It all began on 20th November, 2023, when Elder P. K. Moses passed by the Igarra General Hospital and found a pervading darkness at the hospital. He branched to the hospital and did a video which he posted on the IDA platform. Members were very angry with what they saw. It was estimated that N5 million will give the hospital solar light. At 11pm, Arc. Paul Alaba Lawani started the "Lighting Up Igarra General Hospital with Solar Electricity" fund raising campaign on the IDA WhatsApp platform. Three days later, the fund had surpassed the target through an anonymous donation of N3 million. From then on, Elder Moses and his technical team worked tirelessly on the solar lighting project.

The solar lighting project was successfully completed and handed over on 12th December, 2023. The handing over ceremony took place at the Hospital Board

Room. Present at the occasion were: the IDA President, Dr. Dele Yaya; the Medical Director Dr. Bello Rhema Eruanga; Dr. Victor Apeji; the Matron, Mrs. Abubakar and staff of the hospital. On the IDA side we had Elder P. K. Moses, Paulson Alaba Lawani, Azebani J. S. Obende, Mrs. Bose Tom, Mrs. Nancy K. Yaya, Miss Osuashi Otaru and other members of the community. The NTA crew covered the ceremony.

In his address, the IDA President thanked God Almighty for the feat. He then requested that the Government of Governor Godwin Obaseki should immediately upgrade the Igarra General Hospital to the status of a teaching hospital. He also requested that the urgent needs identified by the Healthcare Sub Committee of the IDA Sustainable Development Programme Planning Committee such as the water supply system, doctor's quarter, access road, power supply, dysfunctional equipment and instruments, Igarra

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ADVERTISING RATES:

For goodwill message/ advert on the newsletter, the slots are:

1. Backcover (full page) 20,000
2. Inside back cover 15,000
3. Full page (inside) 10,000
4. Centre-spread 25,000
5. Half page 5,000

About this edition

This second edition of the IDA Newsletter is quite exciting. It reports some of the remarkable achievements made since the current Executive was inaugurated: the handing over of solar lighting system to the General Hospital, Igarra; the birth of IDA Newsletter; installation of 80 solar street lights; etc. The two launching done within the period are well reported. This edition itemises some of the celebrations reported on the IDA WhatsApp Platform, gives the Diary of Events, and splashes photos on the Photo Page.

We begin the serialisation of the reviewed IDA Constitution with the sections on the qualifications and functions of the IDA President and Vice President. Well written articles on various topics are presented: role of diasporas; promoting unity in the community; potentials of mining, agriculture and tourism; urban farming; etc. There is a book review for the first time. The indigenous Igarra foods and soups were listed. We intend to discuss recipe one by one in subsequent editions.

The news pages cover the giant strides being taken by the proposed Adeche Momoh University and the Akoko Edo Local Government Council boss. There is an interview with the young Grand Chief Imam of Akoko Edo. More columns will be introduced in subsequent editions. We are still looking forward to contributions of articles, stories, adverts, reports, etc.

Happy reading.

Dr. Dele O. Yaya
Editor-in-Chief
January 2024

Extracts from IDA 2023 annual progress report

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the first annual progress report since the current IDA executive took over on 20th August, 2023. This report covers the period August to 31st December, 2023.

2.0 ACHIEVEMENTS

In the period under review, the Association was able to record the following achievements:

1. Successful inauguration, handing over and swearing in of a new Executive Committee at a ceremony held at Dabom Hotel, Igarra on 20th August, 2023.
2. Setting up a 61-member IDA Sustainable Development Programme Planning Committee to prepare a 7-year 2024-2030 Development Plan for Igarra that the Association will implement.
3. Setting up a 40-member Consultative Committee.
4. Review of the IDA Constitution.
5. Paying congratulatory visits to the newly elected LGA Chairman of Akoko Edo Local Government, Barr. Tajudeen Alade Suleiman and the newly Consecrated Bishop of Akoko Edo Diocese, Rt. Rev. Ebenezer Omeiza Saiki.
6. Enquiry visit to the Igarra Branch Manager of BEDC Electricity PLC by IDA Delegation.
7. Introducing online registration of members.
8. Ensuring decorum in the IDA platform.
9. Publishing the maiden edition of the IDA Newsletter and successfully launching it.
10. Writing letter to His Excellency Governor Godwin Obaseki on the rehabilitation of the

damaged Igarra township roads with pictures and videos attached.

11. Submission of the SDPP Sub Committee Reports.
12. Installation of multi-million naira solar lighting system at Igarra General Hospital.
13. Installation of 80 solar street lights facilitated by Prince Clem Agba, former Hon. Minister of State for National Planning and Budget.
14. Filling vacant positions of IDA Welfare Officer and Provost Marshall with Mrs Eunice Obajaja and Charles Damisa respectively.
15. Constructing a befitting Signboard for the IDA Secretariat.
16. Compiling an authentic list of online registration and each member's annual dues payment from 2016 to 31st December, 2023.
17. Improvement in the collection of members annual dues and regular updates on payment of dues and donations.

3.0 ONLINE REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT OF DUES

An analysis of the online registration and annual dues payment from inception in 2016 to 31st December, 2023 is reported below:

1. 361 persons are currently on IDA Platform as at 11th January, 2024.
2. 192 have so far done the online registration as at 8th January, 2024
3. 270 members have so far registered and/or paid at least one year's annual dues.
4. 90 persons on the IDA Platform did not do online registration and have never paid even one

Continued on page 5

Igarra General Hospital solar lighting project

continued from page 1

security, fencing, staff shortage, perimeter fencing should be given urgent attention, noting that the IDA is willing and ready to partner with stakeholders in addressing these challenges. He added: "For every donor project, ownership and buy-in is critical. The challenge facing projects like these is making them remain in good serviceable condition during their life time."

The Medical Director of the Hospital, Dr. Bello in his remarks stated that in his career, he had never seen a community that value and cherish its General Hospital like

Solar Power Supply donated by Igarra Development Association Igarra (IDA) to General Hospital Igarra, Edo State."

In his advice to the staff of the Hospital on the appropriate use of the solar lighting system, Elder Moses explained that the surfaces of the solar panels will need to be cleaned regularly especially during this harmattan period. He emphasized that the system must be used for lighting only and not for heavy equipment such as pressing iron, boiling ring or kettle, etc. He advised the Hospital to select a staff that will be trained to maintain the system. He also noted that the existing solar installation in the

reduced the expenditure. The balance from the fund generated from the solar project will be used for the reticulation of water from the borehole to the hospital. The next project will be the rehabilitation of the Igarra General Hospital Doctor's Residence.

The Igarra General Hospital is very dear to our people. That is why the IDA has, from inception, taken the hospital and healthcare as its pet project. The Association has at various times donated to the Igarra General Hospital: a 15 KVA generating set, a multi-million Naira Anaesthetic equipment, and an Ambulance, apart from getting NYSC Medical Health Professionals



the Igarra community. He then enumerated the various assistance the Hospital had received from the IDA and other bodies. He thanked the IDA for its continuous support and commitment to the Hospital. The Resident Doctor, Dr. Victor Apeji was very happy for the successful delivery of the project and assured that this gesture will improve the services of the hospital to the community. The Matron similarly expressed her joy and requested that a Nursing School be sited in Igarra to supply the critically needed personnel. A Letter of Appreciation dated 12th December, 2023 from the Edo State Health Management Board was written to the IDA to "express our profound gratitude in appreciation for the

hospital dedicated to the Laboratory needed repair and could be made to serve far more than its current capacity, adding that IDA was prepared to assist if the NGO that installed it would permit.

This project is unique in very many respects. From the spontaneous manner it was conceived, to the generous funding by members of the Igarra Development Association, and meticulous and transparent execution of the project, we see that nothing can stop us if as a collective we are committed to sponsoring and executing projects that will lift up our community. The items were got at dealers price which drastically

(including Doctors and Pharmacists) to complement the General Hospital staffing. It also organized free eye test and surgery for the inhabitants of Igarra and has given out 1000 eye glasses. In September/October 2023, the Healthcare Sub Committee of the IDA Sustainable Development Programme Planning Committee embarked on the following projects: installation of two anaesthetic machines, ceiling mount operating theatre lamp, big and small suction machines, two mobile operating theatre lamps, big and small autoclave machines, and filling of two big and three small cylinders with oxygen.

IDA Newsletter comes on stream.

Each medium has its advantages and limitations. To reach the various segments of our target audience, we need a mix of media. In realization of this, the IDA Executive approved the production of the print copy of the newsletter. On 22nd October, 2023, five hundred copies of the newsletter were delivered by the printer. At the first meeting of the IDA Newsletter Editorial Board at the IDA Secretariat, Igarra, the printed copies were unveiled. Board members were elated and wished it will be sustained. It was decided that the newsletter be launched virtually. While it is intended that

On 5th November, 2023, the virtual launching of the newsletter took place on the IDA Whats-App Platform. Members were excited and sent their good will messages. Comments included: “laudable, sign of good things to come”; “a great initiative borne out of a purposeful leadership”; “this is stupendous milestone achievement”; “taking Igarra to a new dawn”; “very innovative and will positively impact in creating awareness about the activities of IDA and Igarra generally”; “communication is a move towards development, this light will not be deemed, but glow”; “what a good start! Impressive! Well done”; and “great initiative. I hope it will be sustained and used as a medium to preach unity and promote progress”.

President noted that doing launching virtually had its challenges. He explained that the newsletter will be a veritable instrument for awareness creation, mobilizing support, seeking funding, publicizing IDA activities, receiving feedback, carrying out advocacy, promoting values, products and services as well as promoting the peace, progress and overall development of Igarra. According to him, “as is common



The launching kicked off on 5th November 2023 and continued indefinitely. The response was simply amazing. As at 9th December, 2023, the sum of N1,315,000 had been realized. The IDA Exco and Editorial Board wish to thank most sincerely all who donated to this project. Donors are assured that the fund will be judiciously utilized and the accounts rendered accordingly.



IDA 2023 Annual progress report *continued from page 2*

- 73 have paid at least one year's annual dues but have not done online registration.
- 16 members are financially cleared up to 2023. The analysis by year of joining IDA is as follows: 2023 (8), 2022 (2), 2021 (1), 2020 (1), 2019 (1), 2018 (1), 2017 (1), 2016 (1).

3 members have paid for 2024.

251 members are owing at least one year's fees.

The breakdown: 51 owe 1 year, 25 owe 2 years, 33 owe 3 years, 24 owe 4 years, 29 owe 5 years, 39 owe 6 years, 38 owe 7 years and 12 owe 8 years.

If the 251 paid their outstanding dues as at 31st December 2023, it will amount to N12,944,000 (twelve million, nine hundred and forty-four thousand naira only). We encourage members to pay their current and outstanding dues.

4.0 CHALLENGES

The major challenges facing the Association are:

- Delay by some members in doing the online membership registration that commenced on 24th September, 2023. There are still many persons in the IDA WhatsApp group that have not done the online registration. We want to plead with them to do so without delay.
- Also we need to embark on serious membership drive. Having just about 200 active members when we are targeting 1,000 is not encouraging. Every member must take it as a challenge to bring in more members.
- Payment of annual dues has greatly improved within the period. However the backlog of N12,944,000 (twelve million, nine hundred and forty-four thousand

naira only) needs to be addressed.

4. The delay in change of signatories led to the use of two members bank accounts for the launchings and fund raising. We are happy to note that we are now at the final stage of effecting the change.

5. Nearly all the Sub Committees of the Sustainable Development Programme Planning Committee have submitted their Report. Implementation can pose a huge challenge unless concerted effort is made. We must see the execution of the Plan as a collective responsibility.

5.0 COMMENDATION

Worthy of commendation is the high sense of patriotism displayed in the two occasions that we had to do fund raising. On each of it, we performed beyond expectation. The Executive is particularly grateful for this show of confidence and commitment to change the narrative. On our part, we will not disappoint the Association and its members.

Also to be praised is the high level of commitment shown by the Chairmen, Vice Chair persons and Members of the 2024-2030 IDA Sustainable Development Programme Planning Committee and Sub Committees. They displayed a very high sense of responsibility and produced a workable roadmap for addressing the pressing challenges facing our fatherland. The critical challenge is how to implement the recommendations so as to achieve the Igarra that we want.

We also want to put on record the valuable contributions of the Board of Trustees and the Consultative Committee. The current IDA Executive has within the period under review also put in its best.

The mere conviviality and

comaraderie in the IDA WhatsApp group gladdens our heart. The warmth with which we receive news of promotions, birthdays, awards, and other celebration by members is most commendable and should continue. Indeed the decorum exercised in the various debates that come up from time to time is highly commendable. Let us keep it up.

Above all, we thank God Almighty for the peace, progress and security that was achieved in 2023. We pray that 2024 will be a far more successful year. Amen.

Dr. Dele Yaya, President, Igarra Development Association (IDA)

ETUNO PLEDGE

Maa juvo kurachi Ki Anuno nvi
Etuno, Irekura oni Oshomoshi si
ireyeani
Dosio tuebeba ini akakana irekura
boo
Maa ze kinm vamisa, onimvasi
Ireshani tuebeba funi izim tuo ani
Oshomoshi yim ukata
Onim vasi misa ye Etuno
Dimrazafo
Ki seni Etuno me mi
Oshomoshi zamka beri aza enesi
oninovid
Etuno anvi irekura ami
Iniubani Oshomoshi Oiza-oiza
Enworo
Onovavi yi Anetuno boo
Ammi

ETUNO ANTHEM

Etunoami: Etunoami
Etunoawu
Etunoawu
Etunoeyiboo
Etunoeyiboo
Anavodavuvobe
Diyasiotuebeba Boo, Irekura
Onoshomoshi Sireyeani
Dosiotuebeba
Ini Akakanirekura Boo

80 solar street lights installed across Igarra

During a visit to his bosom friend, Chief Edi Lawani on 19th August, 2023, during the Irepa/Aba Festival, the former Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Hon. Prince Clem Agba, intimated the audience that received him that he had facilitated some projects in the 2023 Federal Government Budget for Akoko Edo and Edo North. Since he was no longer there, he hoped that the projects appropriated would see the light of day.

Provision and installation of 80 solar



street lights was one of the projects. It was successfully completed on 16th December, 2023. The IDA ensured that they were not concentrated in one location but was spread across Igarra. Elder P. K. Moses, working on behalf of IDA, assisted in keeping custody of the items before installation. He also made available his truck to take them round to the spots which included: Alh. Kadiri Nasiru Road (formerly Technical College Road); Tomato Junction to Afekhai Street Junction; Bokeshimi Street linking Chief A. A. Amune Road (formerly Okpe Road) with Auchi-Ibillo Express Way; a section of Momodu Ajayi Road at Ozuwo; and Oveze Street, Off Igarra-Auchi Road

to Dabom Hotel. This was a great achievement. It was executed in record time. We are most grateful to the Federal Government, Prince Clem Agba, Chief Edi Lawani and Elder P. K. Moses for the successful execution of this project.

Celebrations on IDA Whatsapp Platform.

The IDA Whats-App Platform has been the main medium of communication amongst members. It is a testimony to the ingenuity of the founders. Not only is the platform a medium of communication of vital information to members, it also serves as a means of enlightenment to members. A lot of debates and arguments go on regularly there. Even launchings go on. We want to briefly highlight some of the celebrations announced on the platform between October and December, 2023.

Birthdays

- * 2nd Oct. 2023 50th Birthday Anniversary of Engr. Ayo Omeiza Okomayin (son of Chief Mike Okomayin).
- * 6th Nov. 2023 Birthday Anniversary of Dr. Dele Yaya, IDA President
- * 30th Nov. 2023 Birthday Anniversary of Chief Peter Enikan Okelanwo
- * 10th Dec. 2023 80th Birthday Anniversary of Prof. S. Bamidele Sanni and launching of his book.
- * 26th Dec. 2023 Birthday Anniversary of Elder P. K. Moses

Appointments

- * 16th Oct. 2023 Prof. Ezekiel Asemah

appointed Ag. Vice Chancellor, Glorious Vision University, Ogwa, Edo State. He is a Professor of Public Relations and Advertising.

- * 8th Dec. 2023 Monsignor Anselm Pendo Lawani appointed 5th Bishop of Ilorin Catholic Diocese. Consecration holds on 2nd Feb. 2024 at Ilorin
- * 23rd Dec. 2023 Dr. Omewun Ibrahim appointed Professor
- * 23rd Dec. 2023 Dr. Femi Daniel appointed Ag. Provost, Federal College of Education, Okene.

Training

- * 9th Dec. 2023 Mining Investment Training at Dabom Hotel, Igarra.

Awards

- * 13th Nov. 2023 Chief Edi Lawani gets Award as a Pathfinder in Event Production & Management.
- * 9th Dec. 2023 Dr. Lawal Jim-Saiki bags Ph. D.

Promotions

- * 14th Dec. 2023 Sandra Ometere Ukonga promoted to Comptroller cadre at the Nigerian Immigration Service
- * 21st Dec. 2023 Moses Kehinde Alao promoted Asst. Commandant General at Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp

Wedding

- * 16th Dec. 20243 Belinda Alfonse wedded Nmeme, son of Sir. and Lady Dupe Ojo.

IDA diary of events: 1st October to 31st December, 2023.

S/N	DATE	ACTIVITY
1.	Tues. 10 th Oct. 2023	Maiden Edition of IDA Newsletter published. Revised edition released 13 th Oct. 2023.
2.	Wed. 15 th Oct. 2023	Reviewed IDA Constitution presented at IDA Whatsapp Platform for final approval and ratification.
3.	Fri. 18 th Oct. 2023	Letter to His Excellency Gov. Godwin Obaseki on Rehabilitation of Damaged Igarra Township Roads.
4.	Wed. 22 nd Oct. 2023	500 print copies of IDA Newsletter delivered.
5.	Fri. 24 th Oct. 2023	1st Meeting of IDA Newsletter Editorial Board.
6.	Thur. 30 th Oct. 2023	SDPP Sub Committees begin to submit their Reports. On 4 th Jan. 2023, the Summary of Challenges Identified and Recommendations Made by the SDPP Sub Committees were posted
7.	Sun. 5 th Nov. 2023	Virtual Launching of IDA Newsletter on IDA Whatsapp Group Platform
8.	Tues. 12 th Dec. 2023	Handing Over of Solar Lighting Project to Igarra General Hospital
9.	Sat. 16 th Dec. 2023	Installation of 80 Solar Street Lights Completed
10.	Wed. 20 th Dec. 2023	Vacancy for IDA Welfare Officer and Provost Marshal filled with Charles Damisa and Mrs. Eunice Obajaja respectively.

Legend of Kukuruku Hills and other stories

(Extracts from review of Onize Edith Aiyede's Kukuruku Girls: Tales of My Childhood)

By: Michael Jimoh, THE WILL

In her late thirties to early forties, Ms. Aiyede tells her story through the eyes of a youngster and not as an adult. It is just perfect because writing as an adult would have resulted in an unbalanced publication. For one, an adult may be prone to unnecessary embellishments. But from the very first chapter of the story to the last, the author lays it bare for readers, the good and the bad, warts and all.

Take the author's encounter with a stubborn goat which she recounts in Chapter Two. Of course, anyone who has had a run in with domestic animals in rural areas will readily identify with Aiyede's story. Undisturbed by predators, goats get to throw their weight around sometimes, merrily scooping mouthfuls of grains left to dry on the ground, grabbing yam tubers when your back is turned. Under such circumstances, confrontations between humans and beast become inevitable. The author had more than enough with Aya the evil goat.

On one occasion, looking to revenging a past misdeed by the author, Aya waited until one day she was in the convenience. Assuming the classical bovine charge, the goat rammed the author from behind straight on her mess.

What is remarkable about Kukuruku Girl is the sense of rusticity readers feel all through: the swim in the village river, fetching water from the local spring and encountering reptiles and fish you were forbidden to kill.

Some of them were near tragic incidents. As she tells it, the author had gone to swim with some of her friends and relations. Her older sister was almost insultingly washed away by a fast-flowing current.

As expected, there is a chapter devoted to Kukuruku Hills, how she survived adventures there. "I lived the most adventurous part of my childhood away from my parents and siblings," Ms. Aiyede confesses. "Mud houses were

"hide and seek in caves, rock climbing" she was fond of.

This is what Ms. Aiyede has availed readers, a close look at some of the incidents she personally went through in her younger years. As such, it should read as a bio. Instead, the author offers us a rich tapestry of her lived experiences in short, captivating stories.

Being a woman, you could also say she is a myth buster, questioning some of the cultural practices and beliefs common with the people of Igarra. For instance, why are women barred from watching night masquerades but not the ones who display in the daytime? She even probes further: why are adults always right and children wrong even though it is sometimes blindingly obvious that adults themselves really do not know it all?

Those are questions readers are bound to find unsettling in Kukuruku Girl but no answers to. Nearly 200-pages long, the collection comes complete with translations of Igarra words and usages into English, for easy understanding by non-native readers.

Wowed by the publication, a reviewer has described Kukuruku Girl as a "candid delivery of experiences which were fun and tragic at some point while revealing other aspects which were mischievous and humbling."

Culled from

<https://thewillnews.com/legend-of-kukuruku-hills-other-stories/>

April 17, 2022



built at the foot of the hills. I remember looking long at them and scared they might fall and crush the buildings and every unlucky being in them. But that never happened, still hasn't, and probably never will."

Fascinating as the decrepit structures were to the author, it was the hills that caught and riveted her attention most. In time, friends started calling her "rock monkey" because of the

IDA gets welfare officer and provost marshal

The reviewed IDA Constitution provides for 4 new positions in the Executive Committee. These are: Assistant General Secretary, Welfare Officer, Provost Marshal, and Ex-Officio Members (immediate Past President and General Secretary).

The Assistant General Secretary is to perform the function of the General Secretary in an acting capacity in the absence of the General Secretary and assist the General Secretary in the performance of his function and in the administration of the Association. The Welfare Officer shall be responsible for the general welfare of members of the Association. The Provost

Marshal shall be responsible for maintaining discipline amongst members at both physical and virtual meetings as well as the Association's Platforms, and any other duties that may be assigned by the President from time to time.

It is gratifying to report that on 20th December, 2023 the vacancies for Welfare Officer, Provost Marshal, and Ex-Officio Member were filled with Mrs. Eunice Obajaja, Charles Damisa and Azebani Mike Ukana. They have since joined the IDA Executive Committee. They are welcome on board.

Know Your IDA Constitution

The Office of the President and Vice President

A. THE PRESIDENT

The President shall:

1. Be an indigene of Igarra in Akoko-Edo Local Government of Edo State.
2. Be a person who is vast in the knowledge of developmental issues hence of immense benefit to Igarra Development Association.
3. Have undergone a formal education of at least Higher National Diploma or its equivalent in a recognized Higher Institution in Nigeria or Abroad.
4. Be able to communicate in Igarra (Etuno) language.
5. Have a good report.
6. Must have been a dues paying member, of the association, not less than 5 years preceding his nomination for election as president.

Functions And Duties:

1. Oversee the daily affairs of the Association and ensure that all members of the Association work assiduously for the fulfillment of the vision of the Association.
2. Ensure that this Constitution is given due regard in all actions taken in the Association.
3. Supervise the affairs of the Association and ensure the appropriate resolution of all prevailing issues and challenges.
4. Give annual report to the house during Annual General Meetings. Chair all Executive Committee Meetings, and any other meeting where he is a member.
5. Be the primary spokesman of the Association and may delegate same to the Publicity Secretary or any other Executive Committee Member as he deems fit..
6. Be a signatory to the Bank Account of the Association.

7. Appoint appropriately qualified persons to various Committee positions that exist or may be created in the Association from time to time.
8. Have power to take immediate action in the event of any emergency.

B. VICE PRESIDENT:

Qualification:

The Vice President shall have same qualifications required for the office of the president as specified above.

Functions and Duties:

1. Perform the function of the President in an acting capacity in the absence of the President.
2. Assist the President in the performance of his function and in the administration of the Association.
3. Perform such other functions and duties as may be assigned to him/her by the President.

TO BE CONTINUED

IDA 2024-2030 Igarra development plan is our collective responsibility.

The IDA Sustainable Development Programme Planning Sub Committees have submitted their reports. From the Challenges identified and recommendations made, we can see that the tasks to be executed are enormous. We need collective action to successfully bring about the Igarra we want.

Although the plans were developed by the IDA, we all have roles to play

in achieving them. Governments (Local, State or Federal), Traditional Institutions, Religious Bodies, NGOs, businesses, individuals and other stakeholders all have responsibilities to carry out.

IGARRA DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (IDA)

The IDA Implementation Committees are expected to:

1. Study the recommendations of turn around strategies with a

view to drawing action plans that clarify and prioritize the tasks to be done, determine who to do them, give deadlines for doing them and prepare budgets.

2. Carry out awareness and enlightenment campaigns and do advocacy in their area of responsibility.
3. Conduct research (needs assessment, feasibility studies, inventory taking, market

- surveys, etc) to generate data and make proposals for IDA and other stakeholders.
- Engage (liaise, contact, collaborate and synergise) with other stakeholders to execute the various programmes and projects recommended.
 - Take ownership and maintain new or existing projects on behalf of the community where requested or where the need arises.
 - Monitor and evaluate new and proposed projects with a view to filling gaps and making up for deficiencies.
 - Mobilise funds for its programmes and projects in liaison with IDA Resource Mobilisation Committee.
 - Empower, train and support the people in every way it can.
 - Employ any other strategies that will enable the Committee to achieve its mandate.
 - Promote the highest level of best practices in all its transactions and engagements.

GOVERNMENTS (LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL)

- Implement aspects of the IDA 2024-2030 Development Plan that needs government attention.
- Engage IDA (seek its input, carry her along, collaborate) in their development programmes, projects and plans.
- Provide IDA with useful information (documents, regulations, feasibility studies, proposals and plans, etc) that will help her in meeting her mandate.
- Develop, rehabilitate and manage its infrastructure and assets in Igarra.
- Provide its services efficiently and effectively.

NGOs / RELIGIOUS BODIES / TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Identify aspects of the IDA 2024-2030 Development Plan that is relevant to their mandate.
- Engage with IDA in its programmes and plans.
- Embark on Community Social

Responsibility in their area of influence.

- Advocate for progress and development in their area of mandate.

INDIVIDUALS IDA MEMBERS

- Pay annual dues as at when due and clear all outstanding dues.
- Make donations and contributions when requested.
- Take up projects and programmes that they are capable of executing.
- Support IDA advocacy and enlightenment/awareness programmes.
- Make suggestions and proposal for IDA progress.
- Point out openings and opportunities that members and the IDA can exploit.
- Promote the unity and progress of IDA and Igarra.

NON-IDA MEMBERS

Items 2 to 7 excluding No. 1

Indigenous Igarra Foods and Soups

Foods:

- Iya - pounded yam
- Apapa (types) - moin moin
- Uka - maize/cassava flour
- Eza (types) - beans
- Isheshe - pigeon pea
- Ikiza - beans
- Eba (Eva) from cassava
- Omumu - ground fried maize
- Irenwa - pumpkin
- Evina - yam
- Abaza - cocoyam
- Ainota - cassava
- Ogede obani - plantain
- Ishemshem - potatoes
- Oduba - banana porridge
- Evinenyenyi - water yam

Fruits/Nuts/Vegetable

- Oromi - orange
- Evusha - ducanut
- Mangoro - mango
- Iguava - guava

- Akataripo, Oregedeiyivo - pineapple
- Irewanibo - pawpaw
- Ezu - black currant
- Oromi oweyi - tangerine
- Ogede oweyi - banana
- Ekushaye - groundnut
- Atafu - palm kernel
- Atafu'onova - coconut
- Apurusha - walnut

Soups (Epe):

- Apepere - ogbono
- Ipapara - mellon
- Ishapa -
- Uzi - bitter leaves
- Ebatu - garden egg
- Ipewu -
- Epefu - okra
- Izifa - mint leaf
- Ireru - saint leaf
- Epe apoko - stew
- Oyoyo - ewedu

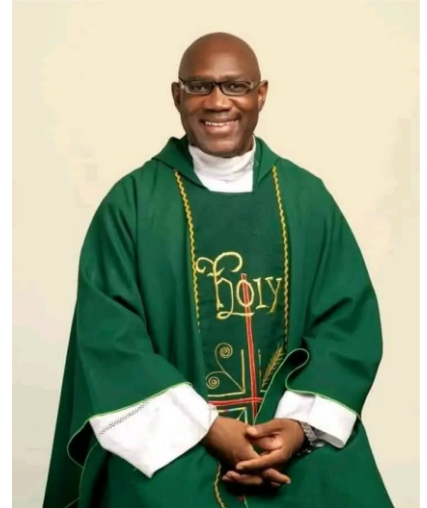
- Epeza - beans soup
- Epe'avirenwa - pumpkin soup
- Ebankoro -



50th Birthday of Engr. Ayo Omeiza Okomayin



Pope Francis Appoints Mosignor Amselm Pendo Lawani New Bishop of Ilorin



Prof. S. Bamidele Sanni celebrated his 80th Birthday Anniversary and launching of his book on 10th Dec. 2023.



Belinda Weds Nmeme

The families of Mr. Alfonse (Late) & Mrs. Helen Matungamire of Harare, Zimbabwe and Sir Abiodun & Dame Dupe Ojo of Igarra, Nigeria came together for the wedding of their children on Saturday 16th December, 2023 at Our Saviour's Church, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos. IDA was well represented at this international wedding. We wish the couple a blissful and fruitful married life.



Promoting Igarra Identity



List of Donors at Newsletter & Solar Lighting Launching

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By Stephen Onimisi Obajaja Esq

Igarra: Ties that Bind

(Hello) phenomenon.

The Igarra man has a great affiliation with his homeland. He may journey across seas and mountains. He may make distant lands his new abode but he carries Igarra in his heart always. He will return at every opportunity to commune with the land of his birth during the Easter and Christmas season and at cultural festivals for which the Igarra people are famous. The Igarra man reveres the cultural festivals of "Irepa", "Aba", "Ekuochi", "Echetete", "Aazi" ceremony amongst others.

The Igarra man, wherever he is comes home for the 'Aba' festival, which draws crowds from all over Nigeria, the rest of Africa, Europe, America and Asia. From the four corners of the world will come many Igarra families and their friends and well wishers. The ceremony which is celebrated every Seven years has become a huge tourist attraction and of immense economic benefits to Igarra and its environs. In the same vein, the Igarra man prepares for and participates in the Ekuochi, Echetete, Azi and other festivals with brio and gusto as I wrote elsewhere.

Igarra has rich family, cultural and social ties that should bind us together. The Igarra people freely marry across family and religious divide. We go to the same farms and markets. We drink from the same streams and fountains. We educate our children in the same schools. We live in the same homes and we take ourselves in outside Igarra. We help ourselves across family divide to find our feet in foreign lands. We are nothing but brothers when we step out of Igarra; at least we used to be so!

If all this is so why should the structure of "anda" which should be a great fabric weaving our society together become an albatross wrapped around the neck of the Igarra people especially at home? Why should an otherwise good thing like the "Anda" phenomenon in Igarra divide rather than bind us together? No one chooses the family into which they are born. God in his all knowing grand design places us in families so we can care for and comfort one another in the course of life. If a man did not choose his family why should we then blame him for his family?

As I posited elsewhere what I see from the way Igarra society is structured is that:

"Igarra has all it takes to be a great town, the careful and delicate structures in place is to give the town and its people strong communal base and a sense of public duty. Igarra's sons and daughters have made good progress at home and abroad, their clout permeates all aspects of our national life and human endeavour both in the public and private domain (science, medicine, law, engineering, finance, arts and the social sciences). It is not for want of human resources or persons who can make things work that Igarra remains poor as many of our people are erroneously led to believe. At every material time in history, the Igarra's have always had and will always have such people but this will only translate to common good if the people apply and address their minds to it. Today is the right time; the Igarra people must jettison old praxis, find a new way of doing things".

In the final analysis and whatever we say or do, we must know that we have only one place to call home, whatever heights we attain in life, we can never, ever divest ourselves from Igarra. Let these words of Martin Luther King Jr. be a constant reminder of what you owe yourself, others and Igarra as an Igarra man:

"every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. This is the judgment; life's most persistent and urgent question is what are you doing for others?"

I ask you today, what are you doing for Igarra?

Stephen Onimisi Obajaja Esq, is a dyed in the wool Igarra boy, a Legal Practitioner, a Public Affairs and Policy Analyst.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL MUSEUM (A POTTERY AND BLACKSMITHING MUSEUM) OJAH, AKOKO-EDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE



INTRODUCTION

I, Mr. Daudu Benjamin Obajuobalo, an indigene of Igarra and the pioneer Curator (Head) of the newly established National Museum in Ojah, Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, am pleased to present this cultural institution to the Igarra Development Association. This museum, the first of its kind in Edo-North, holds significant importance for its proximity to Igarra, the local government headquarters.

The establishment of this museum is a result of collaboration between Rt. Hon. Peter Akpatason and the management of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments. It stands as a purpose-built museum highlighting the culture, tradition, technical prowess, and economic contributions of the people of Ojah and Ekpedito to Edo state and the nation at large. Officially commissioned on December 7, 2022, its presence is expected to boost tourism, particularly for the culturally rich Akoko-Edo and Edo-North, which boast numerous heritage sites. This could potentially lead to the recognition of the IREPA/ABA FESTIVAL of Igarra as a World Heritage Festival by UNESCO, with the support of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

LOCATION AND HISTORY OF OJAH

Ojah, where the museum is located, is the fourth largest community in the southern part of Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, approximately 27 kilometers from Igarra. It is nestled among the Afemai (Kukuruku) Hills, bordered by Okpella in the East, Ososo in the North-East, Makeke in the North, and Ojirami to the South-West. Known for its lowlands and uplands, Ojah's fertile soil and abundant clay deposits have made pottery and farming the primary occupations. Like other communities in Akoko-Edo, Ojah boasts



MR. DAUDU BENJAMIN O.
Curator,
NATIONAL MUSEUM, OJAH

a rich cultural heritage, including the Festival of Initiation into Adulthood.

MISSION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MUSEUM

The mission of the National Museum in Ojah is to systematically collect, preserve, study, and interpret both tangible and intangible aspects of Nigeria's cultural heritage for Nigerians and those in the Diaspora. Specifically, the museum aims to preserve and promote the arts, culture, and traditions of Akoko-Edo and Edo-North. This provides an avenue for the exhibition of the cultural identity of every Akoko-Edo/Edo community for study, education, research, and enjoyment by visitors and tourists.

CHALLENGES FACED

As a newly established institution, the National Museum in Ojah faces several challenges that hinder its full functionality, including:

- Mobility for outreach programs
- Access to borehole facilities
- Donation of cultural artifacts for exhibitions
- Construction of shop arcades for youth skill acquisition training
- Establishment of a museum kitchen for traditional cuisine
- Creation of a playing park for picnics
- Media facilities for programs and

- Media facilities for programs and events.

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

Given its status as a non-profit institution and the challenges it faces, the National Museum in Ojah appeals for assistance from communities, organizations, associations, groups, multinationals, individuals, institutions, and governmental agencies. This assistance could come in the form of partnerships, donations (both cash and in kind), volunteer groups (Friends of the Museum), and other forms of support. Such assistance would not only benefit the museum but also promote the cultural richness and heritage of Akoko-Edo on a global scale, potentially boosting economic and industrial activities in the region.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

The museum will host various events and exhibitions, including:

- World Heritage Day (April 18th)
- International Museum Day (May 18th)
- Children's Day Celebration
- Independence Day Celebration
- Holiday Programs
- Sensitization and outreach programs to schools and other institutions

CALL TO ACTION

The management of the National Museum in Ojah urges the community to actively participate in and support the museum's efforts to showcase the region's cultural treasures to the world.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, please contact:

Mr. Daudu Benjamin O.,

Curator: 08036010975

OR

Mr. Mohammed Mutairu A.,

Ethnographer: 07035278883

Email:

ojahmuseum.ncmm@museum.ng

The Role of Diasporas in Achieving Sustainable Development in Igarra

By Dr. Charles Jagun

The Diaspora community has become relevant and accorded important recognition by the Federal Government of Nigeria stemming from the creation of the Diaspora Committees in the National Assembly and the subsequent establishment of the Nigerian Diaspora Commission by the immediate past government, intending to harness the knowledge and cascading impact of the diasporan community in Nigeria development.

The United States Agency for International Development USAID noted that an engaged Diaspora community drives development and defined the Diaspora as a term of self-identification used by a community of people who live outside a shared country of origin, ancestry, or affinity, but maintain active connections with it. More than 20 million Nigerians (about 10%) of Nigerians are global diaspora members living in every continent. With roots around the world, these communities are uniquely positioned to amplify and sustain Nigeria's growth.

The Nigeria Diasporas play key roles in every sector of Nigeria and have to a large measure helped Nigeria as a nation with the much-needed inflow of foreign exchange, medical experts, entrepreneurs, and academicians to name a few. They are involved in medical missions providing specialized treatments, surgeries, and medical devices to diagnose and treat diseases. Also, they are involved in all sectors of the Nigerian economy including entrepreneurship, modern farming, involvement in value addition in the food chain, IT, manufacturing, etc.

Diaspora remittances to Nigeria based on the last figure indicate an inflow of \$24 billion annually. Certainly, this figure does not reside only in Lagos but is unevenly distributed among states and largely the major cities. This implies that even Diasporas' remittances are contributing to the development of the cities and filtering down to the rural communities to shore up economic activities in those areas which may curb the rural-urban

exodus of youths.

Igarra community is not left out in having their illustrious sons and daughters as part of the vibrant Nigeria Diaspora community making waves in various fields. To name a few, we have Prof. Momoh, a recipient of the American National award; Dr. Tony Akande (Pharmacist and entrepreneur) who once led the Afenmai community in the US; Dr. Rex Ajayi (Urologist); Dr. John Dimowo (Aesthetic physician); Dr. Kingley Jademi (Drug development); and Dr. Charles Jagun (regulatory intelligence) who once led the Igarra community in the US and current leader of Akoko-Edo intelligentsia group to name a few. These Etuno Diasporas have contributed immensely to the development of Igarra in various ways including corporate social responsibility, housing, agriculture, academics, scholarships, security, medical missions, etc., despite the lack of coordination from on ground.

With this insight into the potentials inherent in the Diasporas and in particular with the highly placed Anetunos in the diaspora, Igarra and associated organizations cannot wait for other individuals or groups to develop the community nor the insensitive state government, rather all Etuno stakeholders must be involved and Igarra Diaspora is a ready source to tap from in achieving Igarra sustainable development in terms of business investment, manufacturing and infrastructure as enunciated by Dr. Nasiru Kadiri at a recent Investment Summit in Igarra. As previously indicated, the Igarra Diasporas have made attempts to set the development agenda rolling but often faced a myriad of challenges that have hindered a full-throttle contribution to the lifting of Igarra from the current state of neglect and underdevelopment by successive Edo State Governments to the desired direction of sustainable development. Of note is that despite the uncoordinated approach of the diasporan in making a difference, they have injected millions of dollars

directly and indirectly into all sectors of Igarra life that are visible in Igarra.

Community groups like the Igarra Development Association, Akoko-Edo Forum, Okpameri Development Association, and others are well situated to act as catalysts to harness and coordinate the developmental cash inflow into Igarra and Akoko-Edo by the Diasporas who see Igarra as the commercial and administrative center of the LGA. The members of the Igarra and Akoko-Edo Diasporas communities can be encouraged to be active players in Igarra's sustainable development through confidence building in terms of security, availability of skilled labor, and trust capital. If well harnessed, this approach could be a template for developing a community especially when the people believe the government at various levels has abandoned them.

Finally, to highlight the critical roles the Igarra Diasporas can play in contributing to Igarra development, I write a monthly column about the diaspora community delving into specific sectors of our society and the opportunities for sustainable development by tapping into the resources available among the Diasporas and how the voluntary groups like Igarra Development Association can leverage on this fertile resource to showcase Igarra and Akoko-Edo to the world without waiting at the mercy of the state government that has written Igarra off of its development agenda.



Adeche Momoh University News

The proposed Adeche Momoh University, Igarra is set to commence admission soon. This will be after the final Confirmation Visit by the National Universities Commission (NUC). The University will take off with the following academic programmes:

1. Faculty of Computing & Engineering having as Departments Computing, Electrical and Electronics Engineering and Mechanical & Mechanotrics Engineerng.
2. Faculty of Management & Social Sciences comprising of the Departments of Economics,

as well as Basic Science Unit.

The proposed university has received support so far from Dr. Tony Akande, Prince Adeniyi Saiki, and Pastor Idris Musa. Other prospective partners are Bar. and Mrs. Asishana Okauru and Sir Mitchell Elegbe. The Implementation Committee, including Elder Bar. P. S. Egre, Prof Musa Momoh, Mr Ayo Bankole, Bar. Tijani Ibrahim (Chief Onoguvo1), and the Board of Trustees of the university have worked tirelessly to see the university come to reality. Other supporting members are Mrs. Felicia Momoh, Mrs. Dupe Obaro,

donation. The new Local Government Chairman Bar. Tajudeen Alade visited the site with over 20 Council members who were generally delighted and promised their support and partnership. The promoter's family members, sisters and grandchildren; and the Queen Mother, Mrs Saiki (Adeniyi's mother); and Dr. Tony Akande's mother all visited the facility and offered prayers of dedication and good wishes. They prayed to see the proposed university come to reality soon and thanked their sons at home and abroad for their support.



Political Science, Accounting, Business Management and Sociology.

3. The Law Faculty will have Departments of Private & Property Law and International Law.

So far, the faculties, senate building, library, gatehouse, research center, cafeteria and student activities center and health center and workshops have been built, awaiting equipment and furniture. New world-class architects, who have built state-of-the-art universities in Nigeria, have joined to put the final finishing touch to the kick-off faculties: Law, Computing and Engineering, and Management and Social Sciences

and other well-wishers. They joined in the New Year's dedication to seeing the dream come true. The local churches including The Redeemed Christian Church, Miracle Center Province Headquarters and the St James Cathedral prayed for the proposed university dream to come true.

The proposed university received several visitors during the Christmas/New Year. Barr and Mrs Okauru and about 10 post-graduate and post-doctoral fellows from the US, UK and Nigerian universities visited the campus and committed to supporting the university as lecturers in their different disciplines or in kind and

According to the promoter, 'We are almost there! When God's hands are involved all protocols are suspended.' Let us all join in prayers for AMU.

To support this vision in cash or in kind, please contact: in the USA, Dr Charles Jagun (+1 (919)434-9928) and in Nigeria Prof Musa Momoh (+2348035626917) or directly to the promoter of AMU, Professor James Momoh (+1 (301) 367-9448).

Akoko Edo Local Government Council News

On 26th September, 2023, a delegation of IDA paid the Chairman of Akoko Edo Local Government Area, Bar. Tajudeen Alade Suleiman a congratulatory visit on his success at the Local Government Elections. Since then the IDA has been interested in monitoring his activities especially as it pertains to Igarra development. A number of achievements have been recorded since he came on board on 2nd September, 2023. Some of the achievements include:

* **Improved security:** The Chairman joined the army to foil kidnapping attempts in Sasaro axis in November. He visited the Chairman of Ogori-Magogo LGA to synergise on how to stamp out kidnappers from the bushes. It is hoped that these efforts will be sustained.

* **Improved electricity:** The Chairman visited the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), Okene to find a lasting solution to the epileptic power supply in the LGA. In his remarks, the TCN Manager, Engr Idibanji Isaac, blamed the problems on

inefficiency and internal sabotage by field workers. The Chairman told the manager to go into research and tell him what he must do differently in arriving at regular power supply to Igarra community and its environs.

* **Grading of internal roads:** Bokeshimi Street off Okpe Road, Amore Avenue, Oshemi Street up to Lawani Street besides the Unity Bank, Monday Sule Road linking Babylon way and Afekhai Street, Anuvu Estate/Adorojeye Road, Alafia Clinic Road, Dr Rex Road among others benefited from grading recently. This brought some relief to the road users. There is urgent need to provide drainage before the rains to forestall a worse situation.

* **Construction of market stalls:** A five-unit block of market stores is undergoing construction by his administration to mitigate accommodation deficit in Igarra market. During an inspection visit, the Chairman used the opportunity to reemphasize the need for those who have encroached on government land to have a rethink and relocate to

enable government carry out more development in the area.

The IDA Newsletter will continue to trail, monitor and report on progress made by Local Government and other stakeholders in Igarra.



Soon, degrees without skills will be useless – JAMB registrar

15th December 2023 By: Tunde Oyekola

The Registrar of the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, Professor Ishaq Oloyede, has urged Nigerian youths to seek demonstrable skills as a means of survival, warning that very soon university degrees would no longer be the sole guarantor in the job market.

Oloyede gave the advice on Thursday while delivering the convocation lecture at the Kwara State University, Malete.

He delivered a lecture, titled: "Learning, Unlearning and Relearning – Prerequisites of the Digital Age."

The JAMB registrar said, "New opportunities will emerge in the high-tech sector and many skills that were not otherwise taught in conventional schools would be needed. Degrees would no longer be the sole guarantors

of jobs but demonstrable skills will.

"In this regard, there won't be meaningful difference between the literates and the illiterates without the cutting-edge skills that are associated with the triad – learning, unlearning and relearning."

Oloyede stressed that: "Those who can learn, unlearn and relearn are the successful ones and those without the mindset that accommodates the triad are bound to perpetually lament."

While noting that today's world was different from the Stone Age, the JAMB registrar noted that: "One of the factors responsible for this change is the totality of what makes the information age, which is still evolving as technology develops rapidly.

"The onus of the responsibility lies on everyone to get prepared for the

challenges of the information age by taking lifelong learning seriously and being willing to change as the circumstances unfold."

The acting Vice Chancellor of KWASU, Prof. Shaykh-Luqman Jimoh, had earlier in his address expressed optimism that the lecture would broaden the horizon of the audience.

"Our educational institutions must become catalysts for transformation, preparing our graduates not just for the challenges of today, but for the rapidly evolving landscape of the digital age," the VC said.

Source:

<https://punchng.com/soon-degrees-without-skills-will-be-useless-jamb-registrar>

The Use and Abuse of Social Media:

The danger of "Yahoo scam" and how to avoid falling victim

Social media has become an integral part of our lives, connecting us with friends, family, and the world around us. However, this powerful tool can also be misused, leading to scams, fraud, and even identity theft. One such scam that has gained notoriety is the "Yahoo scam," also known as the 419 scam or advance-fee scam.

What is Yahoo scam?

The Yahoo scam typically involves a scammer contacting you via email, social media, or text message, claiming to be a wealthy individual or representative of a legitimate organization. They may offer you a large sum of money or other rewards in exchange for your help in transferring funds or receiving goods. However, these promises are always false, and the scammer's goal is to steal your money or personal information.

How to avoid falling victim to the Yahoo scam:

1. Be suspicious of unsolicited messages: If you receive an unexpected email, message, or phone call from someone you don't know, be cautious. Scammers often use fake names, email addresses, and phone numbers to appear legitimate.

2. Check the sender's information:

Before responding to any message, take a moment to verify the sender's information. Look for typos, grammatical errors, or inconsistencies in their story. Legitimate organizations should have professional communication practices.

3. Never provide personal information: Never share sensitive information like your bank account details, social security number, or passwords with someone you don't know and trust. Scammers will use this information to steal your identity or access your finances.

4. Avoid clicking on suspicious links: Scammers often include links in their messages that lead to fake websites or infected files. Clicking on these links can expose your device to malware or redirect you to a phishing page designed to steal your personal information.

5. Verify the legitimacy of the offer: If someone offers you a large sum of money or other rewards with little effort, be skeptical. Legitimate opportunities rarely require upfront payments or personal information.

6. Report scams to the authorities: If you suspect you've been contacted by a scammer, report the incident to the appropriate authorities, such as the

EFCC, the CBN, the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or your local police department. This helps authorities track scams and protect others from falling victim.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE ONLINE:

- * Use strong and unique passwords for your online accounts.
- * Enable two-factor authentication whenever possible.
- * Regularly update your antivirus and anti-malware software.
- * Be mindful of what personal information you share online.
- * Be cautious of clicking on links or opening attachments from unknown senders.
- * If you think you've been scammed, report the incident to the authorities and take steps to protect your identity and finances.

Remember, if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. By being cautious, vigilant, and following these tips, you can help protect yourself from online scams and enjoy the benefits of social media safely.

Source:

<https://obook.ng/2023/12/14/the-use-and-abuse-of-social-media-focus-the-danger-of-yahoo-scam-and-how-to-avoid-falling-victim/>

Mining, Agriculture and Tourism - The Way Forward.

As a visitor to Igarra in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, the first impression you will have is a people living on top of money. Money? Yes! What's your sight? The mountains; the beautiful scenery of lush green grass on the hills; the caves and the vast land for agriculture. These features will sell three ideas to the inquisitive visitor:

1. There must be gold and some precious minerals hidden in this mountain. Already, he is thinking of mining activities.

2. The beautiful scenery of the lush green grass on the hills will surely make this place a heaven for tourism.

3. There must be enough food here considering the vast arable land before us.

The debate on the mind of the reader is what is the low hanging fruit for quick rewards that is void of environmental hazards? To answer this, the question is, is there any worthy venture that is void of risk? No. Ability to manage the resources at your disposal is what makes the difference. Many great economies of the world don't boast of more than

one of these potentials; Singapore is the biggest economy in South-East Asia, she doesn't have any of the three mentioned potentials. So how have they managed their environment and taken their economy above the poverty index? Here in Igarra, Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, we have three of what defines the world's economy and we are handicapped of harnessing them thereby, bringing untold hardship and mortgaging the mind and intellect of our people.

Igarra in Akoko-Edo Local Government is blessed. She is well situated. We have all it takes to be prosperous. She has abundant limestone, Fespa, Bitumen, gravel among other yet to be discovered mineral resources that should place her in the mining industry map of Nigeria. As a fact, the mineral resources in Igarra and other parts of Akoko-Edo are enough to make Akoko-Edo Local Government Area the economic hub of South-South Nigeria.

It has been proven that crops such as watermelon, cucumber, sweet peppers and other varieties that hitherto are considered exotic and not

good for our environment have yielded abundant harvest. So, aside our 'normal' farm staple such as yam, cassava and maize etc. these fruits and others can do very well in Igarra.

The hills in Igarra give it a unique look. Spending Christmas holiday in Igarra will give you same experience like you have in Jos, Plateau State or the winter experience in United States of America.

What more? Charity begins at home. The onus is now on us. Igarra sons and daughters have been outstanding in driving home investment opportunities, and should be encouraged to do more. The fear of witchcraft attack is a myth that has knowledge as the cure.

My last take is this; business should be treated as business and not a family and friends affairs. This has affected previous investment plans in Igarra and it's a bane to any successful business organization.

It's a New Dawn for Igarra! May Igarra Succeed!

Olisa Moses

Coordinator, Akoko-Edo Economic and Investment Summit.

What Promotes Unity in a Community

By Ray Festus Symperr

Unity is an essential element of any successful community. It is the glue that binds people together and helps them to work together towards a common goal. It is important in a community because it does not only help to create a sense of belonging, but encourages collaboration, and promotes a sense of security.

Promoting unity in a community is crucial for the stability, progress and the well-being of a community. It requires a comprehensive and long-term approach involving the traditional and educational institutions, media and individuals.

Among measures that are key to the promotion of unity in a community include:

- (a) Promotion of education that emphasizes civic values, cultural diversity and understanding among different families in the community.

Fostering awareness about the history, traditions and contributions of all members of the community to instill a sense of pride and respect for one's own heritage as well as that of others;

- (b) Ensuring inclusive representation and participation of all segments of the community in the political process which includes fair elections, promoting minority rights and providing equal opportunities for all members of the community to engage in decision-making processes;

- (c) Encouragement of social interactions and activities that bring together people from diverse family backgrounds. This can include cultural engagements, community events and sports tournaments that facilitate interaction, dialogue and mutual understanding;

- (d) Encouraging responsible and unbiased reporting in the media, highlighting positive stories that promote unity and harmony. Counter hate speech, discrimination and propaganda that can fuel

division and hostility;

- (e) Foster a sense of community identity by promoting community symbols, such as *itowoji* fabric in Igarra and other cultural emblems that represent the shared values and aspirations of the community;

- (f) Encourage the people to engage in volunteer activities and community service that promote unity and social cohesion. This can involve projects that address common challenges, such as environmental conservation, disaster response and poverty alleviation; and.

- (g) Positive leadership can also inspire others and set an example for them to follow.

In conclusion, like someone rightly said, "We are only as strong as we are united; and as weak as we are divided", building and maintaining unity in a community is an ongoing process that requires continuous effort, dialogue, and inclusivity. Hence, everyone should take steps for it and inspire others to do the same.

Interview with the Grand Chief Imam of Akoko Edo Local Government Area, Imam Tajudeen Ibn Ibrahim



On 18th July, 2021, history was made in Igarra when a young man in his thirties was turbaned the Grand Chief Imam of Igarra and Akoko Edo Local Government Area. As a topmost religious leader, we sought him out for an interview. The Editor-in-Chief visited him on Thursday 18th January, 2024 in his residence. He did not disappoint. He gave the background to his selection and spoke on how religious leaders can promote peace, unity, security and progress in the community. Happy reading.

Interviewer:

Please let us into the story of how you became the Grand Chief Imam of Akoko Edo at this relatively young age.

Chief Imam:

It gives me joy being in the midst of brothers who share the same language, same values. I pray that Allah will continue to strengthen the leaders of this noble association to take it to greater heights.

My becoming the Grand Chief Imam of Akoko Edo Local Government Area was ordained by God. As Allah will have it, vacuum was created when the former Grand Chief Imam, Alh. Abubakar Musa Olowojoba Ukana died. The three persons who could have succeeded him passed on before him. They are my own father, Alh. Ibrahim Garuba who was his Deputy No 1, Alh. Adamu Onimowo,

the second Deputy, and the Chief Imam of Ugbogbo Central Mosque, Alhaji Ahmed Yaya. So there was a vacuum. I was invited from Abuja and interviewed along with others. Allah selected me and eventually, I was turbaned as the Grand Chief Imam of Igarra and Akoko Edo Local Government Area.

Interviewer:

What role should religious leaders play in fostering peace, unity, security and progress of the community?

Chief Imam:

Peace, unity, security and progress require collaboration. We are in a time in which the world is looking for peace. Not just Igarra, we are looking for peace at all levels- at the Local Government Area, State, National, and Global levels.

To address an issue we need to know the root cause. Peace has been taken away from us because we refused to yield to the instructions of our Maker. God Who created us wants us to live peacefully amongst ourselves. When God created us, He made some rules and regulations to guide our peaceful coexistence on earth.

Allah says in Holy Qur'an:

" O mankind! indeed We have created you from a male and a female (Adam and Eve)and made you into nations and tribes that you

may know one another. Verily, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-aware. " AL-HUJRAAT Chapter:49, Verse:13.

Therefore, we all have a common origin. Yet God gave us different languages. He expects us to intermingle and to be close to Him. Allah tells us that the most honoured is the one who fears God.

How do we achieve peace? We should simply go back to the teachings of the Prophets. Allah assures us that if we abide by his instructions, there will be peace. Allah is not a wicked God. He doesn't want blood shed. As religious leaders, we are to guide our congregation well, and tell them the truth. There is no religion that supports violence. Islam does not support violence, killings, armed robbery, violent divides, along ethnic, tribal, ancestral lineage lines like we are witnessing in Igarra today. Islam is derived from peace- the peace you derive when you wholeheartedly submit to your maker.

If we live by the principles, knowledge, teachings that the Prophets bequeathed to us, there will be peace. We will not be looking for peace where there is no peace.

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Join the Urban Farming Population

By. P. K. Moses

Urban farming is the practice of cultivating crops in the city or residential areas. Traditionally, our largely agrarian forebears had the backyard gardens, called ubazi, in addition to their remote farmlands, where they went for their relatively extensive cropping of major cash and food crops like cocoa, cassava and yams. At the ubazis, they cultivated vegetables like okra, waterleaf, efo, ugu, tomatoes, pepper etc for the family immediate supplies.

As land spaces became tight and unavailable, the ubazis gradually disappeared.

With the ever-increasing population, soaring costs of food items, and increase in knowledge, urban farming has emerged as a new innovation to address these challenges. In Nigeria, and especially with the scare of herdsmen menace and kidnaping, urban farming is becoming a compelling option towards sustaining production of some food crops.

One of the methods of urban farming easily practiced by everybody, young, old, students, working people and retirees is the sack or bag farming. It is a do-it-yourself system, at a minimum to no-cost outlay, requiring just as little as a space for a cement bag, even on a concrete floor. The only essential space requirement is openness to sunlight for the growing plant. A single such sack farm can yield enough green

vegetables such as waterleaf and peppers for a family of four for 6 to 9 months of repeated harvesting, without waiting for the rains. What a fantastic occupation for the retiree or elderly at home and for students that would like to engage in pastime earning venture!

What are the materials needed and how does one start?

Materials Needed

1. One or more empty cement or flour bags
2. Topsoil, preferably loamy soil from a nearby bush or farmland, not roadside sand.
3. Dried cow or chicken manure.
4. Desired seeds, seedlings or plant stems.
6. Water



Procedure

1. Select a suitable location:

Choose a spot that receives sufficient sunlight and offers protection from heavy rain or wind.

2. Clean the grow bag: If using a cement or flour bag, clean it thoroughly to remove any remnants.
3. Mix the soil and manure, in a ratio of 3:1.
4. Fill the bag to at least 18 inches of soil depending on the crop type.
5. Sow the seeds, at least 2 per cement bag, depending on the crop type. Holes could be perforated at the side of the bags and waterleaf stems inserted.
6. Water the mix: Moisten the soil without saturating it. Avoid waterlogging.
7. Secure the bag from free ranging animals that might eat up or destroy the plants.
8. Water the soil regularly and avoid drying up of the plant.
9. Consult for further assistance in case of any issues.

Urban farming is one of the most rewarding pastimes that everyone can engage in, regardless of location or type of residence. With some creativity and ingenuity, people living in storey buildings could as well cultivate vegetables wherever there is sunlight. A sizable plastic container will yield amazing results as well. Replace that flower pot with a pot of lettuce plant.

Students on Excursion to the Green House Farm of Elder P. K. Moses

