

*Merry Christmas,
Prosperous New Year to Our
Esteemed Readers,
Minorities all Over the World*



OGONI STAR

VOICE OF NIGER DELTA PEOPLE

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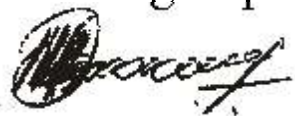
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MOSOP REFUTATION OF A PUBLICATION/ADVERTISEMENT IN THE MOONLIGHT NEWSPAPER OF DECEMBER 1-7, 2009, PAGE 10, CAPTIONED "AN OPEN LETTER TO GOVERNOR CHIBUIKE ROTIMI AMAECHI OF RIVERS STATE".

PRESS RELEASE

MOSOP attention has been drawn to the above advertisement/publication purported to have been sponsored and placed in the paper by us. We have resolved as follows to let the public know our stands:-

- That the publication/advertisement was not published or advertised by MOSOP in its entity and did not have our mandate to do so.
- That the said publication/advertisement does not bear MOSOP logo or address to mark MOSOP identity.
- That none of the originators or signatories are members of the present MOSOP executives or MOSOP per say.
- That MOSOP election goes through stages: A minimum period of three months and maximum of six months to create room for everybody to participate. The last MOSOP executives was dissolved on the 14th June, 2008 and election committee set up. After the observation of all MOSOP constitutional procedures/requirements for election, the election proper began on 12-19th December, 2008, a period of six months from chapter, kingdom, and national levels and not one week claimed in the publication by Mr. Goodluck Tegaloo Diigbo and his cohort.
- That MOSOP constitution provides that any person interested in participating in the election must be an active member with at least two years payment of his/her dues. It is important to state that Mr. Goodluck Tegaloo Diigbo is not qualified to contest any MOSOP election in 2009, since he returned to the country in 2008 from U.S.A.
- That the Governor and his Government should ignore the purported apology from Ogoni people since, Goodluck Tegaloo Diigbo and his cohort did not have the mandate of the people.
- That from our observation, Goodluck Tegaloo Diigbo and his cohorts are miscreants and are the brain behind the illegal operation of RADIO TEYORKS station that is broadcasting anti-government activities based on the fact that the government threatened to arrest him and his cohort, if their activities created ungovernable situation in the state.
- That the government should keep watchful eyes on him and his cohort before any breakdown of laws and MOSOP should not be held responsible, since he is not part of us and represent himself, in every name, nature and description.
- That MOSOP is at the ready to partner with the government in the execution of any meaningful projects that will better the life of its citizenry.



MR. MOSES DAMGBOR
(MOSOP Secretary General)

V.P Jonathan, Niger Delta Governors, Frontline Activists, Others to Attend 2010 Ogoni Day

The Ogoni people, the 2010 Ogoni Day planning committee shows that representatives of most vocal ethnic nationalities and their organisations and civil society organisations are being expected in Ogoni on January 4. Several solidarity messages, mostly from friends of the Ogonis and associates of non-violent struggle have been received. This historic event has the grace to be chaired by a distinguished son of Rivers State and one of the most dependable peoples representatives in the National Assembly, Chief Andrew Uchendu, His Royal Majesty King G.N.K Giniwa will serve as the Royal Father at the event. Similarly, as a royal and highly esteemed event in Ogoni, the 20th anniversary of the birth of MOSOP will be graced by very eminent Royal fathers, professionals, ministers of God, Chairmen of Councils, and others who have made positive marks in the lives of people.

Authoritatively, Ogoni Star has confirmed the dignified attendance of the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, who also is an illustrious son of the South-South Zone of the Niger Delta region.

Also, the Ogoni People will be highly honoured with the presence of the host Governor, Rt. Hon. Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, the Edo State Governor, Comrade Adams Oshiomole, Governors of other Niger Delta States, Senators and other members of the National and State Assemblies.

Already, the inexhaustive list of intending participants and dignitar-

ies as received by tropes from Ikwerre ethnicity, Ijaw nationality, Ibibio ethnic nationality, and the Ishekiris nationalities have rolled out their drums in preparation for the Ogoni event on January 4 in Bori.

Several solidarity messages, mostly from friends of the Ogonis and associates of non-violent struggle have been received.

The International community is not left out as most International organisations have sent in their solidarity speeches while some have chosen to be present. They include, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation, UNPO, International Federation of Ogoni People, INTERFOP of USA, Ogoni people in diaspora, etc.

Meanwhile, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, MOSOP has lined up interesting activities for the event.

MOSOP has stated that the event will be used in commemorating the anniversary of the birth of the Movement and the Ogoni Struggle, which undoubtedly

has not only officials are people have become a beacon expected to lead remained consistent and resolute of hope to the the tour.

Again, the even in the events of the odds, intimidations, threats to life and killings of their leaders and the ordinary people of the area.

Interestingly, of Ogoni how far is the struggle and recent development in Ogoni and those outside the shores of Ogoni that affect the lives of the people of Ogoniland.

Meanwhile, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, MOSOP is inviting all friends of the Ogonis, associates and lovers of the struggle for justice and freedom, rights organisations, pressure and labour groups and minorities all over the world to come and join them in commemorating 20 years of non-violent struggle and the celebration of the 18th Ogoni Day on January 4, 2010.

It would be recalled that over 300,000 Ogoni people on January 4, 1993 took to the streets in Ogoni on a non-violent march, protesting years of oppression and suppression by the government of Nigeria in slick alliance with the oil multinationals that operated in Ogoniland.

Since this initial activity, the Ogoni

January 4 every year which marks the day of indigenous peoples of the world has since then in Ogoni been celebrated as an 'Ogoni Day'. It would be recalled also that the Ogoni National Merit Award, which was initiated in 2003 by MOSOP has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to several persons, young and old in and outside Ogoni. Some of the beneficiaries include, the late Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni Martyrs, known as Ogoni 13, the late Senior Advocate of the Masses, Chief Gani Fawehinmi (SAN), Femi Falana, Anita Roddick of Bodyshop International and many others whose contributions to the Ogoni struggle for justice and development have been selfless and significant.

Students urge FG to include Human Rights Education in School Curriculum

Secondary Schools Students have called on the Federal Government of Nigeria to make human rights education part of school curriculum especially for those in primary and secondary schools which are the foundations for building a culture of respect for human rights in the country

This was part of a two-day Capacity-Building Workshop on Human Rights Advocacy for Secondary School Students held on the 27th -28th November, 2009 at the Mega Class Hotel, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The workshop which was organized as part of MOSOP

human rights programme, was attended by over fifty student representatives from secondary schools across the state including the media and other stakeholders interested in discussions directed at human rights promotion and protection in the Niger Delta in particular and the country at large.

The purpose of the workshop was amongst others to; build the capacity of the students on human rights

instruments and its application in the Niger Delta; Explore Advocacy Strategies for Human Rights Promotion and protection in the Niger Delta and particularly in the schools; Explore the various strategies for human rights clubs in schools to advocate for the application of the Human Rights Principles by oil companies, governments and communities; Agree on the modalities for government at all levels in the country and particularly schools to incorporate human rights principles in their various programmes; and to Develop mechanisms for human rights clubs in secondary schools to create more awareness and

publicity about their activities and programmes.

At the end of the workshop, participants called for more involvement of students and youths in educational policy planning and management.

The communiqué which was signed by Wamene Sampson, President Human Rights Club, CSS, RIVPOLY, BORI; KenSaro Fyface Alumni, Human Rights Club, GSS, Elekahia, Port Harcourt; and Banabip Baridoo, Member, Human Rights Club, B.M.GS, Bori, also urged the government to create an enabling environment for the respect and safeguard of human rights in the country.

They stressed the need for government to adopt a human rights approach in its response to the current economic meltdown so that human rights will not be derogated.

The stakeholders decried the situation where the ruling elites acted as though human rights was not necessary and therefore called on the media to join in the campaign to create awareness about human rights issues in the country

They further expressed their sincere appreciation to the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Cordaid for supporting such a workshop.

Ogonis in Diaspora Laud Commemoration of Ogoni Martyrs Day at Home, Italia

International Federation of Ogoni People, INTERFOP, has sent messages of felicitations to kinsmen in Italy and at home, Ogoni, on the historic celebration of ultimate sacrifice of the Ogoni fallen heroes and heroines on November 10, 2009.

In its commendation letter, Interfop said "we see your celebration of this event in Italy as another milestone in advancing the Ogoni cause on the global landscape, hence our excitement and pride for your debut. It's our hope and belief that the spirit which goaded you in this noble direction will grow stronger among you for greater exploits for our Ogoni nation.

"Your celebration in Italy this year is quite in congruence and resonates with the present state, general spirit and enthusiasm for our struggle.

"Back home in Ogoniland the celebration was like no other one before. The people were ecstatic in their joy for the occasion. The message delivered by MOSOP President, Mr. Ledum Mitee was as solemn as it was invigorating. The Ogoni struggle for justice in every genre of our endeavor is re-echoed. The little voice of Ogoni has become the loudest voice and storm hanging over the Nigerian nation".

INTERFOP noted that the world has noticed and applauded our non-violence approach and unwavering resolve. Ogoni is standing tall all over the globe. And the reason we're standing this tall is because we stand on unequivocal and undeniable truth. An 18th century German philosopher described three stages a truth undergoes: The first stage is ridicule- the truth spoken by Ogoni has been ridiculed; opposed- our truth has been opposed by the Nigerian authorities and pessimistic neighbors; finally, accepted as self-evident.

According to Michael Porp-Kokoh, President of INTERFOP, "today the truth spoken by Ogoni is being accepted the world all over as self-evident. Our case is defining the legal and

environmental relationship between oil companies and host communities in the twenty first century. It has become the very conscience of minority human rights. Ogonis could not be more proud of this feat.

"Permit me to take a brief moment to introduce INTERFOP to the Ogoni community in Italy. Interfop is a registered non-governmental, not-for-profit organization with headquarters in the United States of America. Interfop was founded to advance the course of peace and unity among Ogoni citizenry as one global family wherever they may find themselves. This is besides the pursuit of economic, environmental and political justice for our people who have been marginalized and oppressed by successive administrations in Nigeria.

"It is evident today that Ogonis are dispersed and can be found on almost every continent of planet earth. With this globalization of Ogonis comes the fraternal need and challenge for us as a people to maintain and sustain our proud heritage. This necessitates creating the fundamental and necessary nexus of inter-geographical brotherhood. And it satisfies one major clause among the objectives of our organization. It's believed that such relationship will commensally and ultimately benefit our people in diverse ways.

The International Federation of Ogoni People is an independent organization whose core values are *service*, *justice* and *integrity*. It has a full array of objectives and programs tailored to promote better relationships, information sharing and enlightenment for all Ogoni people. Although Interfop is different and independent from other Ogoni organizations, it seeks to corroborate with other credible groups and voices in advancing the common good of the Ogoni people whenever the need arises. While MOSOP is conceded the oldest standing and strongest voice advocating for the emancipation of our people and land, Interfop pledges to serve as a new

dimensional alternative and complementary voice, yet seeking the same end point in our strive for total emancipation. It has been observed that such a multi-faceted approach by other ethnic groups work tremendously as it lends credence to the bigger and ultimate picture of our collective pursuit and national ethos.

It's our hope that someday justice will be done to our demands not only because they're legitimate but also as divine recompense for the enormous sacrifice that has been made by both great and small. The night may be long and intimidating; but day light will surely come. When such a glorious morning dawns there'll be a limit to our agitation. However, with Ogonis now found in different parts of the globe, the need to stay connected will remain valid, transcending our immediate anticipation. This is one of the visions of International Federation of the Ogoni People.

To deliver on this laudable and timeless objective, the board of trustees of Interfop is presently working on a proposal to hold an Ogoni International Youth conference for Ogoni youths in the summer of 2010. If we have success with this proposal, it will be an epoch-making event as Ogoni youths from all over will have the opportunity to meet under one roof and socialize with one another as one people. Saying this however should not be seen as preempting in any manner, the confidential work of the great committee charged with this responsibility.

Interfop has a website that is undergoing major reconstruction at this time to enhance and accommodate emerging needs. It is therefore not available to outside viewing at this time. As soon as the reconstruction complete, we will send out emails to the effect.

Again, please accept our hearty congratulations on your great gathering for Ogoni freedom in far-away Italia.

UNEP Identifies 350 Contaminated Sites in Ogoni

By Mike Odiegwu

The United Nations Environment Programme said it had identified 350 contaminated environmental sites in the four local government areas of Ogoni, Rivers State.

The four local government areas that make up the Ogoniland are Eleme, Gokana, Tai and Khana.

The Coordinator, UNEP, Mr. Mike Cowing, who disclosed this when the governor of the state, Rt. Hon. Rotimi Amaechi, paid official visit to Ogoni communities recently, said the sites were polluted by oil spills.

The UN environmental experts were invited in 2006 during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo to assess the degree of

environmental damage done to the communities by oil exploration.

This was after Ogoni people had sacked the major oil producing firm, Shell Petroleum Development Company, from their communities for alleged environmental degradation and insensitivity prompting federal government's invitation of UNEP.

Cowing said the organisation had spent over three years consulting with all the stakeholders adding that UNEP was set to begin cleaning of all the identified degraded sites.

He said the first phase of the cleaning exercise would involve a comprehensive

study of all the affected sites and that it would be carried out with the highest international standard.

According to him, the data generated from the study would be used as a building block for a comprehensive cleaning and remediation of spills in Ogoniland.

Already, he said the agency had set up four offices in the four local government areas and had employed about 25 persons from the local communities to assist in the cleaning project.

He added that the agency would partner with the Rivers State Polytechnic, the Rivers State University of Science and Technology and the University of Port Harcourt to implement the project.

Amnesty is Failing, Falana, Others Tell FG

By John Ameh

The President of the West African Bar Association, Mr. Femi Falana, and the Secretary-General of the United Niger Delta Energy Development Security Strategy, Mr. Tony Uranta, recently urged the Federal Government to implement the recommendations of the Ledum Mitee-led Technical Committee on the Niger Delta or risk the failure of the amnesty programme.

They spoke in Abuja at a roundtable on "Post Amnesty and the challenges of national security" organised by a group of lawmakers in the House of Representatives known as The Initiatives.

At the event, which was chaired by a former national chairman of the All Nigeria Peoples Party, Chief Don Etiebet, Falana said the amnesty programme was a "sham." He said the Yar'Adua administration was deceiving itself by believing that the programme was a success.

Falana said that former militants who dropped their arms for promises of better life were already protesting in the region.

He said, "The amnesty programme is on the verge of collapse. Two things happened that it has come to this level - one, it was not well cut out but it is never too late. But since the ex-militants are now protesting, we urge the Federal Government to act fast."

Secondly, he said he was asking the government to urgently implement the Mitee committee's recommendations for lasting peace to return to the Niger Delta.

On Yar'Adua's health, the lawyer advised the National Assembly to ensure a proper transfer of power to Jonathan in line with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution.

Also speaking, Uranta alleged that the government embarked on the amnesty

programme because it wanted Nigeria to host the FIFA U-17 World Cup at all cost.

He said, "The amnesty failed because we rushed into it. We rushed into it because we wanted to host the FIFA U-17 World Cup, which we lost in Abuja.

"Now, the government has made seven promises and none of them has been fulfilled. The amnesty has to be put into law; that is why we are calling on President Yar'Adua to send the document to the National Assembly."

Another speaker, Ann Kio-Briggs of the Ijaw National Assembly, observed that none of the promises made by the President had been fulfilled.

At the event, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. Dimeji Bankole, explained that the National Assembly passed the N352.8bn supplementary budget sent by Yar'Adua in October in order to fast-track the amnesty programme.

Court Trashes Diigbo's Suit

A High Court sitting in Bori, Rivers State has dismissed a suit filed by Mr. Goodluck Diigbo, against the authentic MOSOP executive led by Mr. Ledum Mitee.

Chronology of the Matter:

The obvious spate of enquiries following news of the happenings in Court last Thursday has made it imperative to report accurately, as much as possible, the course of the proceedings of Suit No. BHC/36/2009 between GOODLUCK DIIGBO and LEDUM MITEE. In the said suit filed on **28th April 2009**, Goodluck Diigbo as Claimant is asking for the following relief:

1. A declaration that the Claimant is the President of MOSOP;
2. A declaration that the Claimant scored the majority of lawful votes as president in the MOSOP election conducted between 10th - 15th April 2009;
3. An order of perpetual injunction restraining the Defendant, his agent, and or preventing from further parading, acting, representing and or holding out himself as the president of MOSOP.

He filed the said suit with a motion for an ex parte injunction to restrain the Defendant "from being sworn in as the President of MOSOP until the motion on Notice is heard."

The basis of the application for injunction was the deposition in paragraph 8 of his supporting Affidavit "that information available to me shows that the defendant intends to forcefully swear in himself as president on **28th April, 2009** contrary to the wish of Ogoni people."

The application ex parte was heard on the **29th of April**, and the judge granted him the following orders:

1. That the Defendant/Respondent is hereby restrained from being sworn in as president of MOSOP until the hearing of the Motion on Notice.
2. That this order shall be served before 6 pm today and the matter is returnable on 5th May 2009."

Instead of serving the processes on the defendant as ordered by the court the Claimant went on a publication spree, even misrepresenting the terms of the order that he has secured an order restraining the defendant from parading himself as MOSOP President. Following the publicity, the defendant applied to the court for

on the application of the defendant.

MOSOP's Information Officer, Bari-ara Kpalap, while reacting to the

certified copies of the processes and on the 5th of May when the matter came up, counsel for him (the defendant-Ledum Mitee) appeared under protest and successfully moved the court to discharge the orders which were wrongfully obtained and spent by operation of law. On 2nd of June, the defendant filed his statement of defence together with a Motion to dismiss the action for want of jurisdiction and that the claim does not disclose any reasonable cause of action. The bases of the motion to dismiss were:

1. That the condition precedent for the survival of the suit namely- failure of the Claimant to file with the writ of summons and the statement of claim the list of his witnesses and their written statements on oath in compliance with the mandatory provisions of the High Court Rules;
2. That the statement of claim does not disclose any reasonable cause of action in that even if the allegations therein were taken as proven the Claimant cannot still win, especially in the light of the fatal contradictions therein whereby in paragraph 12 the claimant stated that at the alleged elections, he scored 40 votes as against defendant's 1 vote, whilst in paragraph 12 of the same statement of claim he said he scored 6034 votes as against defendant's 41 and yet in his deposition he stated that he scored 6074 votes as against defendant's 77.

On the 3rd of June when the court bailiff served the motion and the statement of defence on the claimant's counsel, he refused to sign for it and the bailiff in accordance with the law dropped it on the lawyer and swore to an affidavit of service. On the 16th when the case came up, the court did not sit and the matter stood adjourned to the 18th of June.

On the 18th of June, when the matter was called, the lawyers to the Claimant argued that the defendant had not been served and as such ought not to be in court, that he had filed a motion for substituted service since according to him, the defendant was evading service. Defence counsel cited several authorities to support the proposition that the essence of service is to secure defendant's attendance and response to

the allegations against him in court and where the defendant has appeared in court there was no need to further insist on proof of service. The court agreed with the defendant's counsel's submission and struck out the motion for substituted service and ruled that defendant was properly in court and would be heard on the motion to dismiss.

As the court was ready to hear the motion to dismiss the action, the Claimant's counsel said they had not been served but the court's records showed otherwise. However, the court took the view that they should be given another chance and asked that they be and was served with motions in court and the matter adjourned to Monday 29th June for argument on the preliminary point of law to dismiss the action.

As the parties filed ought of court, Goodluck surrounded by a group of thugs, walked up to Fegalo Mitee, and threatened that he would deal with him and ordered his boys to deal with him and bring his (Fegalo's) camera to him. They then descended on Fegalo beat him and several others including the Secretary-General of MOSOP, Mr. Moses Dangbor, Chief Monday Miidom from Lewe, and several others including women who wore the MOSOP cloth. They were proceeding into the court hall where Ledum Mitee and other lawyers were holed up, forcing the judge to run into chambers for cover and the timely locking of the court doors prevented a further assault on the inner chambers of the citadel of justice that they had approached for 'justice' (even though Goodluck's lawyers had stated in open court that they were not in court to win the case).

The police were called in and Goodluck and the hoodlums ran away but the police managed to arrest 4 of them who were later transferred to the SIIB. There was nothing like a fight as most of those who came in support of Ledum were women and elderly men and chiefs, including Chiefs Apere, Gbarakoro etc. Indeed it was our timely intervention by sending the JTF to Kaani that saved the situation from degenerating into a renewed Kaani 1 and 2 conflict when news got to Kaani 1 that Chief Apere had been beaten.

judgment, described it as a step in the right direction.

Kpalap said, "MOSOP hopes that since judgment has been given by the legal arbiter whom he (Diigbo) had run to, he will stop his penchant for trouble, including other unconstitutional pursuits."

The MOSOP official also called on all on all those who may have been

deceived by Diigbo's brazen falsehood to unite with the authentic MOSOP under Mitee to enhance a focused and united front in confronting their collective challenges.

He noted that since the tasks ahead are enormous in view of emerging developments, the Ogoni People cannot afford to compromise her efforts through disunity and infantile in-fighting.

The MOSOP information officer also

commended the executive Governor of Rivers State, Rt. Hon. Rotimi Amaechi over his disposition to maintaining peace in the Ogoni area.

He said the Governor's admonition and warning issued to Diigbo over actions capable of breaking the peace in not only Ogoni but the state at large was in the right direction.

Kpalap therefore urged Diigbo to hid to the voice of wisdom, peace and unity.

MOSOP, Group Laud Mitee over Steadfastness, Good Leadership

By Tombari Kote

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Kegbara Dere Chapter and a community based organisation, the Great Gasaa Social Club of Kegbara Dere have thrown their weight in support of the President of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Mr. Ledum Mitee, and also lauded his steadfastness and leadership style.

The Great Gasaa Social Club and MOSOP K-Dere Chapter made their position known during a solidarity visit to the MOSOP president at his country home in K-Dere. In a solidarity message read by the secretary of the Kegbara Dere Chapter of MOSOP, Mr. Ledisi Nnaa and signed by the Chairman of K-Dere chapter of MOSOP Mr. Peace Gboro and Mr. Friday Legbara, the Chairman Great Gasaa Club of K-Dere, the groups said they had embarked on the visit to felicitate with Mr. Ledum Mitee on his various leadership successes despite the great and often deadly obstacles, especially his recent victory at the Law Court over Mr. Goodluck Diigbo over the presidency position of MOSOP.

The groups also recounted the numerous achievements and successes of Mr. Ledum Mitee, which included his election as the first black African, first

Nigerian and the first Ogoniman to Occupy the exalted position of UNPO President, his nomination and subsequent head as the Chairman, Niger Delta technical committee, and his appointment by Governor Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, as a member of the Rivers State Economic Advisory Council among others. The groups which also said they were counting on the MOSOP President for his support in the area of their programmes and activities, also pledged their loyalty and support for his leadership.

In response the MOSOP President, Mr. Ledum Mitee thanked the Gasaa Social Club and MOSOP K-Dere Chapter for the visit, stating that gains of the Ogoni Struggle are now benefiting the entire Niger Delta region as the government is now considering most of the requests made by MOSOP for years now, as a means of resolving the Niger Delta crisis.

He furthered that his stand as the president of MOSOP is not for selfish and personal gains saying every Ogoniman or woman must reckon with MOSOP to benefit from the gains of the struggle.

The MOSOP Leader continued that like before, community elites, youth leaders, religious leaders and traditional rulers must

embark on a campaign to enlightening their followers to adopt the non-violent struggle of MOSOP and encourage their youths to go to school as it is one of the cardinal points of MOSOP to encourage Ogoni son's daughters to be educated and be prepared to carry-on the struggle intellectually.

Also responding on behalf of the Mitee family, Chief Messiah Mitee thanked the MOSOP faithful and Gasaa Social Club of K-Dere for their zeal, determination and continuous support for their son, and the MOSOP leadership. And prayed God to continually guide them in their various endeavours.

On his part, Engr. Fegalo Mitee, also applauded the groups for their doggedness, thanking them for keeping the banner flying even after many who thought Ogoni Struggle was going to be a bazzare were disappointed and had since abandoned the Struggle.

He prayed them never to be discouraged by any saddling situation as it is usually not strange in any rights struggle, but to continually spread the MOSOP message non-violently as it has been commended globally. The groups were led by Chief T.A. Gboro, the adviser to Gasaa Social Club of K-Dere.

Constitution Review: MOSOP Demands Ogoni State, True Federalism

By John Alechenu,
Port Harcourt

Agitators for the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, Mr. Ledum Mitee, presented the case for the creation of Ogoni State. He said the time had come for Nigeria to address the injustices suffered by the Ogoni by creating a state for them.

The President of

Mitee explained that the creation of states in the past was skewed in favour of the nation's larger tribes without a thought for the feelings and aspirations of the minority groups.

He said that true federalism required that the rights of the minorities be

protected alongside that of others.

Mitee said the current arrangement of six geo-political zones merely increased the layers of oppression against the minorities.

Mitee asked that the six geo-political zone structures be scrapped to give room for a truly representative Nigerian

structure.

According to him, "The constitutional amendments that we are asking for are those that we think will address the issues of fundamental political restructuring that will give the minorities a voice and a space in the Nigerian

federation."

The President-General of the Urobo Progressive Union, Senator Felix Ibru, also presented the case for the creation of a state for the Urhobo. Others also called for the creation of an Oil Rivers State from the present Rivers State.

MOSOP ARIZONA U.S.A. Donates Free Exercise Books To Primary, Secondary Schools in Ogoni

As a way of promoting educational development in Ogoni, MOSOP activists resident in the United States of America represented by Chief Dale Victor Nsagane and Mr. Godwin Bari-eeba Ndorbu has donated under the auspices of MOSOP ARIZONA U.S.A. free exercise books to pupils/students of Primary and Secondary Schools in

Ogoni.

The presentation of the free exercise books (over four thousand copies) by the donors took place on 2nd November 2009 at Community Secondary School Kaani in Khana Local Government Area f Rivers State.

Presenting an address on behalf of the donors, Chief A.K.F. Nsagane stated that the two broad aims of arriving

at this gesture are:

1. To inculcate the habit of learning in our school children.
2. To assist parents / guardians in the provision of writing materials to our children.

He charged the pupils / students who are beneficiaries of the gesture to reciprocate by taking their studies seriously and to avoid anti-social behaviour such as

cultism, gangsterism, violence and youth restiveness which are not conducive to learning.

He also charged other prominent sons and daughters of Ogoni emulate the example of our brothers in U.S.A. by assisting communities development in whatever way they could for the overall development of Ogoni.

Speaking at the occasion, REV/DR/ A.N Aeba, maritime field superintendent of The Apostolic Church Rivers / Bayelsa thanked the

donors for the kind gesture. He attributed the backwardness of infrastructural and education development in Ogoni to the failure of Nigerian Rulership to address the legitimate demand of the Ogoni people stated in the Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR).

He therefore called on Federal Government to create an Ogoni State to accelerate development in the area.

The MOSOP Representative at the occasion Mr. Emmanuel Kara Gbaranor (CP) who conducted the singing of Ogoni National Anthem

charged the pupils / students who are the beneficiaries of the free exercise books to emulate the life style of Ken Saro Wiwa and to support the leadership of MOSOP led by Ledum Mitee, stressing that MOSOP is the only hope for the Ogoni People.

Other dignitaries at the occasion are Engr. Sam N. Deekue, Secretary Khana L.G.A., Mr. Pe-ue Gbaranor, President Kaani Elite. Pst. I. N.N-aabu, Mr. Nkoo Adampe, Brown Ndorbu, Mrs. Comfort Nkeeh, Pst. John Dum Gbaranor, Mr. U.S. Nsagane.

Implementation of TCND Report

Stakeholders Call for Ethnic Nationalities Summit

Not satisfied with the non-issuance of a white paper on the Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta (TCND) by the Federal Government, the Niger Delta Ethnic Nationalities have called for an urgent convocation of an ethnic nationalities summit to discuss the problems of the Niger Delta within the framework of the Report.

At a one-day Niger Delta Ethnic Nationalities Awareness Conference on the Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta [TCND] organised by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People [MOSOP] held in, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State on December, 17, 2009, the stakeholders observed that the failure of the government to issue a white paper on the recommendations has made it difficult to hold Government accountable on its implementation and therefore called on MOSOP to co-ordinate the processes towards the realization of the project.

Similarly, to achieve the vision of a better and greater Niger Delta region, the conference vehemently

condemned the unfair response to the TCND report by the Federal Government and called on Government to issue a white paper on the report without further delay. It similarly called on Niger Delta communities and civil society Organisations (CSOs) to step up action on the implementation of the report.

The conference called on each community based organizations (CBOs) and ethnic groups to sensitize their respective grass roots on the salient aspects of the report and the need for the people to pressure the respective governments towards the implementation of the report.

Conference also appealed to the international community and other ethnic nationalities in the country especially those of the Middle Belt for support in the campaign for the implementation of the TCND report.

Observed that the lack of good governance, especially in terms of management of resources at all levels of government is a major source of escalation of the crisis of under-development in the Niger Delta, the conference

frowned at the under-development of the Niger Delta arising from poor management of resources at all levels of government and called on Government to reform its attitude to enhance sustainable development of the Niger Delta.

The forum observed that the crisis of under-development in the Niger Delta revolves around corruption and bad governance and therefore called on Government to be more committed to stemming corruption in the country including improving the operations and capacity of the anti-corruption agencies.

Conference, while in support of the amnesty/disarmament programme, advised government to listen to constructive suggestions and involve capable hands in the implementation of the post amnesty programme. This follows their observation that the haphazard implementation of the amnesty/disarmament programme has been responsible for experienced protests by former militants.

On their observation that the deplorable condition of

the East/West road is the result of government's non-commitment to its trumpeted promises of executing the road project, the forum called on the government to urgently complete the construction of the East/West road to enhance easy transportation of persons, goods and services in the region.

Conference also called on government to urgently address the issue of environmental degradation and involve Niger Delta nationalities, civil society organizations and community based organizations in the clean up exercise. This was as a result of their observation that the continuous degradation of the environment in the region is a direct consequence of gas flaring and oil spillages arising from reckless operational conduct of the oil industry.

Noting that the Niger Delta representatives at the national level have not done enough to ensure the release of a white paper on the report, Niger Delta nationalities forum further called on Niger Delta representatives at the national level to step up efforts to actualize the

implementation of the TCND report as this will quicken the pace of development of the region.

The conference similarly associated itself with the issues of restructuring of the nation to achieve true and fiscal federalism. This they said was as a result that the non-restructuring of Nigeria has hampered the quest for true and fiscal federalism, which would have enhanced the development of the ethnic nationalities at their own pace.

On the poverty status of Akwa Ibom State, the participants observed that the zero poverty status as contained in the report (page 105) is not a true reflection of the poverty profile of the state and does not reflect the true poverty profile of the state and therefore called on the authorities concerned to correct it accordingly.

Participants also observed discrepancies in execution of basic education programme particularly payment of teachers' salaries and provision of instructional materials and improved condition of service for staffers at that level. The Conference therefore also called on the Cross River

State and governments of other states of the region to improve on the delivery of basic education and the condition of service of staffers at that level.

The forum appealed to government and its agencies to be more responsive to the plights of displaced people of Basskasi, noting the possibility of extinction of displaced people of Bakassi due to the lackadaisical attitude of government agencies to provide succour for them.

Participants also observed that although the federal government is yet to issue a white paper on the TCND report, some governments of the Niger Delta states have already initiated programmes that are in tandem with the recommendations of the report. The conference then commended governments of Niger Delta states that have already initiated programmes based on the recommendations of the TCND, even before the release of the white paper, and called on other governments of the region to follow suit.

The first recorded story about Bethesda was in the bible. It was an assemblage of cripples and perhaps all forms of physically disable people around a miraculous pool which was seasonally steered by some potent force, good spirit of course and who ever crawls in first gets instantly healed. There is always a scramble to be the first and I had imagined how many would have stressfully tumbled over edge; how many had practically lived at the edge to get the most vantage position for this seasonal miracle and I had imagined how many had watched their counterpart walk home fit and able after a successful first man leap. You may share some of my inquisitions about the choice of that particular pool; why the seasonal steer and limit of healing to only the first to enter, irrespective of how many eventually entered. We need not question God for he is all knowing. Today, traffic jams have become bethsida to some group of people.

Every first visitor to Port Harcourt and indeed other major cities of Nigeria will surely get agitated and curious at the inexplicable traffic jam and hold up that characterizes our few motor able roads in Nigeria. It is a common feature to see inconvenienced passengers making frantic effort to see beyond the driver or through every available opening, for a clue on the sudden stop on the journey. This curiosity is most times informed by the many inhospitable and uncharitable stories told about Nigeria. Our own journalist most unpatriotically feeds the world with bogus and overblown stories of hostilities, crimes, and corruption in Nigerian cities. These activities are by all moral standard not applaudable but we do also know that Nigeria is not the worst and is certainly undeserving of this continuous labeling. The result is this unnecessary precautions that tourist take on their visit to Nigeria; the curiosity expressed by passengers in a little traffic jam, the general street panic that characterizes every day life in these cities and the disinterest in direct foreign investment in the country.

More often than not, these traffic situations are caused by some man made activities other than the very conventional reasons like potholes; speed breakers; traffic lights and the normal stop and search routine by the police. In curiosity and apprehension, passengers had always peered at the direction of the possible cause and had most times got seriously annoyed to see that traffic traders had caused there additional wait. It is quite normal to get slowed and perhaps stopped by any of the aforementioned conventional traffic hurdles but not by some risk taking street traders who would swamp on the traffic, accosting passengers on every side of the vehicle in a

GenerationNext Agenda

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Street Trading: All Risk No Gain

bid to sell. This city plague had accounted for many vices including avenue to snatch handbags; wallets; jewelries and even cars. It also increases the waiting time since they block the free flow of traffic in cause of sale. And of course, only few have a genuine motive to earn a living by it.

Now our high ways have been converted to a bethsida of some sort where every traffic hold up is exacerbated through the sales activities of teenagers who flank the major streets daily, loitering and praying frantically for traffic jam so that their marketing prowess can be put to test. Sadly, the probability of sales is averagely ten sales to every traffic jam with a vehicular pool of about fifty vehicles. They eventually retire at traffic flow, each counting their gain, near sales, possible knock down and loots. Their propensity to crime is driven further by the frustration of low sale; get rich quick syndromes and the high cost of living in the cities. What ever it is that motivates, if you ask me, is not enough to court that kind of risk. The risk of possible knock down, the risk of learning social vices and the risk of altered psychology about life. It is inarguable the fact that the society is stratified and that living standard varies. The reason we see teenagers hawking under the scorching sun and have goods mocked priced by their mates in air-conditioned cars. It is a survival thing and it is better than stealing, many will tell you.

Recently, my attention was drawn to a pandemonium along the busy Olu Obasanjo Road. At the instance, a lot crossed my mind. It is usually not in lack, what can be adduced to such pandemonium in Port Harcourt. If it is not outright kidnap, it is an attempt on some white folks or some toddler; it

could be cult wrangling between street boys, it could be Obio Akpor boys hustling yearly numerous levies, it could be some "legitimate" harassment and car jack by MOT, it could be one company host community slogging it out over some breached MOU or it could be some bank bullion van and trigger happy cops with authorization to harass the public with sporadic gunfire and reckless speed. All these portend grave danger to life. Therefore, it calls for curiosity to know which is which. I was relieved however to hear that the traffic traders are resenting government directive to quit street trading. To me such reaction is unreasonable and inexcusable, because we have an attitude of undermining government deadlines and when government eventually bites we attribute it to all forms of sentiments drawn on tribal lines.

Considering the enormity of the risk, I have been wishing for the sensitivity of Government or relevant authorities to save the lives of these ones by creating alternative market place for them. Again, it takes two to tangle, they say. If the impulse traffic buyers resist the temptation of buying at traffics by scheduling properly for family shopping, it will also discourage the traffic traders. The desire for a world-class city where life and living is normal must be a collective thing. A city where streets and traffic is designed in a way that traffics do not come in opposite directions, where horn blaring will be used only when it is absolutely necessary, where street cleaning will be done at night under a secured environment devoid of night marauders and the rest citizenry wakes into a day and street free of every filth and dirt and a city where electricity supply will engender optimum all-round productivity and job creation.

The directive to quit traffic trading should be viewed as a life saving gesture by the government. It is important to state however, that alternatives ought to have been provided to justify enforcement of directives. In the absence of such alternative, the hardship sufferable from a week or two of stay at home can breed another set of petty criminals in pilferage, shoplifting and even robbery. We must strike equilibrium between government good intentions for the people and the price they have to pay to benefit from such good intentions. Where such price out weigh the benefit of the intention, such intentions may not be humanly justified even if it is socially and politically necessary. The ultimate reason for governance is the people, therefore the people must be considered in the enforcement of all government directives. Importantly, enforcement should wear a human face to earn the corporation of the potential victims.

Rights Group Demands Reproductive Health Rights

The Network of the Bar, Bench and Police (NBB&P), South-South region has called on Nigerian government to take concrete steps in giving women the opportunity to choose whether or not to have medical abortion in exercise of their reproductive health rights. The NBB&P made this demand on the occasion of year 2009 commemoration of the Global Day of Reproductive Health Rights which was observed on December 2, 2009. In a statement issued by the Regional Secretary of the body, Barrister Cynthia

Onwuka, the group urged the national and state governments to ensure that the lacuna in our health laws are bridged by authorizing that women be given the opportunity to choose whether or not to have medical abortion in cases of sexual assault, rape, incest and where continued pregnancy endangers the mental and physical health

of the mother or the life of the mother or the foetus.

Bar. Onwuka noted that attaining the goals of the sustainable and human development requires that people are able to exercise control over their reproductive and sexual lives with adequate protection from the law.

She explained that most development issues and concerns plaguing Nigeria and the world at large can be traced to the neglect of reproductive and sexual rights. Such issues, she said include, rape of women and girls, incest; sexual abuse; HIV/Aids; maternal mortality; teenage pregnancy; abandoned children; harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation, feminization of poverty, trafficking in persons to perpetuate commercial sex and population explosion among others.

In her supporting argument, Bar. Onwuka said principle 4' of the ICPD, Cairo (1994) provides that 'Advancing gender equality and equity, and the empowerment of women, and ensuring women's ability to control

their fertility are internationally recognized cornerstones of population and development-related standards and best practices; and the right to have family planning education.

She explained that the right to reproductive health is rooted in the provisions of international and regional human rights instruments protecting life and health. This includes the African Charter on Human & Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and its Optional Protocol among others, which Nigeria is signatory to.

She added that Article 14 of the African Charter, which elaborately provides for the Health and Reproductive Rights of Women, enjoins State Parties to take steps to ensure that women have the right to control their fertility; The right to decide whether to have children, the number of children and the spacing of children.

It also includes the right to choose any method of contraception; The right to self-protection and to be protected against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS; The right to be informed on one's health status and on the health status of one's partner, particularly if affected with sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, in accordance with

internationally recognized standards and best practices; and the right to have family planning education.

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Barrister Onwuka pointed out that the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for the right to life on section 33, however, it has no justifiable provision for the right to health which is a prerequisite to the full enjoyment of the right to life. The Constitution merely commits the government of Nigeria to ensure that there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons'. As a result, reproductive health issues are either totally neglected or inadequately provided for by existing health laws in Nigeria.

Opinion

Niger Delta And Politics Hereafter

But clearly, Yar'Adua's amnesty initiative represents a higher level of political enlightenment on the matter than previously exhibited. It is far better to be seen as a friend of the Niger Delta than as a conquering colonist. Second, it is wiser to reduce the collateral damage of a possible military assault which could further alienate the region and reduce oil output to a level that could make Nigeria untenable. It is also more publicly appealing to embark on advertised infrastructure and social development of the region now ahead of the next election season. Add to it the proposed oil sector reform bill with the sweeteners for the region and you have the makings of a good rehearsal political campaign for 2011. The wisdom in all these could be as follows: The Niger Delta region is solidly PDP, even more so than the core north. The president knows that his northern base is not totally behind his continuation beyond a first term. Even if it was, the trove of cash that he needs to carry the rest of the country along cannot come from impoverished states. Both financially and in terms of key campaign issues, the Niger Delta will play a determining role in the next general election. To a great extent, therefore, the governors of the Niger Delta states have a historic burden. They need to use this opportunity to drive the advantages of the region to maximum advantage for

their people. Beyond their individual political survival, they must seize this moment to extract the greatest benefits and advantages for their peoples.

Even then, there is a need for critical detachments. Let us detach the desperate development needs of the Niger Delta from the exigencies of present day political contest. Let us also detach the interests of the people themselves from the cosy compromises of their elite or the appeasement of selected militants and war lords. If we allow the crisis of development in the Niger Delta to be drowned by the imminent noise of 2011 political succession, we may just be deferring an avoidable apocalypse.

Contd., From last Edition

Seasons' Greetings

MOSOP: A Mass Movement of the Ogoni People



May this special seasons bring
 love in your heart, peace in your
 home, and justice in the world.

MOVEMENT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE OGONI PEOPLE (MOSOP)



MOVEMENT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE OGONI PEOPLE MOSOP



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December 1, 2009

Press Release

HIGH COURT DISMISSES DIIGBO'S SUIT AGAINST MOSOP LEADERSHIP

The Movement of the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) has applauded the judgement of a High Court of Rivers State in the Bori Judicial Division Holden at Bori and presided over by Justice Iyayi-Lamikanra, which today dismissed an action (BHC/36/2009) filed by Mr. Goodluck Diigbo against the leadership of MOSOP. The suit according to the judge was dismissed for want of prosecution by the claimant and based on the application of the defendant.

MOSOP would hope that since judgement has now been given by the legal arbiter whom he (Diigbo) had run to; he would stop his penchant for trouble including other unconstitutional pursuits. Similarly, we would call on all those who may have been deceived by his brazen falsehood to unite with us to enhance a focused and united front in confronting our collective challenges. Since the tasks ahead are enormous in view of emerging developments, the Ogoni people cannot afford to compromise her efforts through disunity and infantile in-fighting.

The apex decision making organ of the organization, the Steering Committee, would in view of this development be meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2009 to review the situation with a view to charting appropriate positive response.

Meanwhile, the Governor of Rivers State, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi has threatened to order the arrest of Mr. Goodluck Diigbo as his actions and activities in Ogoni have posed serious security challenges in the area if he fails to desist from causing conflicts region. He criticized Diigbo's attempt to impose himself on the people when such mandate has not been given to him and thus cause trouble amongst the people. The governor gave the warning whilst interacting with the Ogoni people at a town hall meeting attended by a large crowd and held at Bori, Ogoni on November 27, 2009.

Signed:

Bari-ara Kpalap
 Information Officer