



Integrity Matters

Name, Nail, Shame and Shun Corrupt Leaders Anywhere, Everywhere

MONTHLY DIGEST OF COALITION AGAINST CORRUPT LEADERS (CACOL) FEBRUARY 2014 VOL. 1 NO 11

The battle for Nigeria's political space entered a dangerous bend last Wednesday as President Goodluck Jonathan came under a fresh attack. This time, it was a bombshell from his mentor and a former President, General Olusegun Obasanjo. The cannon from the former Head of States, actually rattled the political landscape and in fact, cleared the fog of the Nelson Mandela's celebration from our political firmament. The Balogun of Owu, Abeokuta, Ogun state, in what looked like a call for a general uprising, took his time to pen what he felt to be Jonathan's failings. In an 18-page letter to the President, titled: Before it is too late, Obasanjo accused him, among other things, of not honouring his words and taking actions calculated at destroying Nigeria. In the letter, Obasanjo accused the President of pursuing "selfish personal and political interests based on advice from his "self-centred aides."

"Nigeria is bleeding and the hemorrhage must be stopped," Obasanjo lamented. He went ahead to declare that "Jonathan had betrayed God and Nigerians," who voted him into power. Obasanjo further alleged that Jonathan had not only placed more than 1, 000 Nigerians on a political watch list, he had succeeded in destroying the ruling People's Democratic Party and polarised Nigeria along regional and religious lines.

Since its release, opinions have been sharply divided on Obasanjo's war epistle, while Nigerians are also anxious to hear from Jonathan on these issues generally regarded as germane to the future of the country. Not a few Nigerians also believe that Obasanjo is also guilty of the same offence. National Publicity Secretary, Afenifere, Yinka Odumakin, said Obasanjo was as guilty as Jonathan as he did worst things than President Jonathan when he was in power.

"Nigerians should be wary of Obasanjo whenever he said something; it is either he is trying to settle scores, even though Jonathan is facing challenges," he said. Odumakin who described the letter as a coup manifesto, urged Nigerians not to allow Obasanjo to deceive them with his frank talks as

MUCH ADO ABOUT A LETTER

whatever he did "is self-serving but that does not mean Jonathan should not address corruption."

Convener, Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders, CACOL, Comrade Debo Adeniran said Obasanjo's letter is like that of a pot calling kettle black.

"It is unfortunate that it is now that Obasanjo sees the fight against corruption as waning. In his days, he frustrated the fight against corruption.

"The ICPC under Obasanjo was underfunded. The EFCC under him was used to suppress the voice of political enemies. Obasanjo came to power with less than N20,000 and left power as a multi-billionaire," he said.

According to him, "Obasanjo has no moral right to criticise Jonathan even though things are bad with this government. He should keep quiet and allow people with integrity to talk."

A member of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Ipoola Omisore, said Obasanjo only expressed his frustrations in the letter to Jonathan.

"Obasanjo has no moral right to condemn Jonathan. Jonathan was a docile Deputy Governor in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, when Obasanjo used him to displace the then Governor Diepreye Alamieyeseigha and also used him to defeat Atiku by pairing him with the late Umaru Yar'Adua against the PDP's choice of Donald Duke and Peter Odili.

"You remember this same Obasanjo backed Shagari against Obafemi Awolowo. He has been giving us presidents we do not want and the result is what Nigeria has become today," he said. Omisore further stressed that every sin he accused Jonathan of committing, he also committed during his era as President.

"During Obasanjo's time, he never forgave anybody, he played god, he wanted third term, he seized federal allocation to Lagos, he used the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, against his perceived enemies and many



Fmr. President Olusegun Obasanjo

more," Omisore said, adding that he did what he did because he witnessed the recent encomiums poured on late Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

"If Nigeria should collapse today, Obasanjo should be blamed. I just pray he quits politics quickly and repents so that he does not pay for his sins," Omisore said. Famous Lagos lawyer, Femi Falana described Obasanjo's latest posture as hypocritical, saying President Jonathan is a very good student of Obasanjo's school of politics.

A constitutional lawyer, Professor Itsay Sagay expressed fear for the future of the country. Northern politicians also blame Obasanjo for deliberately propping up the Late Umaru Yar'Adua, in 2007 considered to be too unhealthy for the rigour of the office. Yar'Adua later died in office, paying way for President Jonathan, his erstwhile deputy.

By 2011, he had changed his mind on Jonathan. According to Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, in his book, Accidental civil servant, Obasanjo had initially preferred a Buhari presidency before a last-minute change of mind. "He also wants to be the super hero and a god to be worshipped forever. The moment you want to be your own man, you run into trouble with him," a PDP member in Lagos told the magazine last week.

Highly placed sources in Abuja and Lagos claimed that the current plot is hinged on the desire of the former president to come back to relevance by getting a more pliant candidate for the presidency in 2015

During the last Democracy day on May 29, 2013, Obasanjo snubbed the ceremony in Abuja for Sule Lamido's event in Jigawa, where he eulogised the governor as a potential presidential material. Lamido is one of the G7 governors currently stirring the crisis in PDP.

Analysts equally pointed to several Obasanjo's undemocratic tendencies during his tenure. Governors

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A VOICE AGAINST LEGALIZATION OF CORRUPTION

Whatever anyone might think or say, I am of the opinion that corruption is the biggest threat to the survival of this country called Nigeria. The law of the land abhors corruption. A lot of people have openly spoken against it, but yet quite a few are prepared to lead the fight against the menace, albeit, genuinely. The government in recognition of the need to fight the menace established two anti-corruption agencies, the ICPC and EFCC to lead the war against corruption by investigating and prosecuting persons found to have cooked the book one way or the other. How well the agencies have performed in the discharge of their duties is not the issue for discuss here today, but the attempt by some persons in the parliament to legalize corruption using the instrument of law.

I'm talking here about the Bill passed through Second Reading on the floor of the House of Representatives two weeks ago seeking to make it legal for certain categories of public office holders to legally operate foreign account. Under the extant Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act (2004), it is criminal for a public officer to operate a bank account outside Nigeria.

But the Bill titled "An Act to amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act Cap, C15 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, to provide for the leave of the Bureau to be obtained for any public officer to maintain or operate a bank account outside Nigeria, and for other matters connected therewith," was sponsored by Hon. Bamidele Faparusi (APC, Ekiti), seeks to reverse the most cogent part of the 2004 Act. Ironically, I am also from Ekiti State...phew!

The controversial bill was consolidated with other bills to read: "A bill for an act to amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, Cap. 15 LFN, 2004 so as to make the leave of the bureau necessary for a public officer to maintain or operate a bank account outside Nigeria and other related matters; a bill for an act to amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act by deleting proviso to Section 3, deleting Section 18(1) and enacting an amended Section 81(2); and a bill for an act to amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, Cap. C15 Laws of the federation of Nigeria 2004 so as to make accessible assets and liabilities declared by public office holders and other matters connected therein.

The two other consolidated Bills were sponsored by Hon. Oluchi Ibeji (PDP-Abia) and Hon. Emmanuel Jime (PDP-Benue). The principal bill seeks amongst other things to amend paragraph 3, part 1 of the Fifth schedule of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which is impair material with the section which this bill seeks to amend.

When the bill was up for debate, Faparusi leading the debate noted that the provisions of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act is meant to ensure that public servants comply with the public morality and accountability and to discourage them from the "culture of graft, greed, materialism, ill-gotten wealth and conflict of interest in the performance of public duty." He however observed that the provisions of the law as it relates to the prohibition of foreign accounts by public officers in Nigeria

as provided in section 7 has only been observed in breach owing to the obvious implacability of the law.

In his argument he said: "The purport of the law is to discourage the laundering of money and fraud by public officers. But it is public knowledge that nobody would use his bank account to launder money, instead proxies and cronies have become ready instruments for such purpose." He, however, shocked me to the marrow when he as a "doctor" prescribed decapitation as remedy for headache.

In his explanation said that the law as it is today does not contemplate this development and to tackle it, there is need to make for such public officer, who hitherto maintains and operate a foreign account and has cause to hold same, to get leave of the Bureau to continue to use such accounts, adding that "this would be an improvement from the practice of requiring a public office holder to close any foreign account so held by reason of the office now occupied.

"The instant law, as it is today, does not contemplate this development and to tackle it, there is need to make for such public officer, who hitherto maintains and operate a foreign account and has cause to hold same, to get leave of the Bureau to continue to use such accounts. This would be an improvement from the practice of requiring a public office holder to close any foreign account so held by reason of the office now occupied.

"This development would give the Bureau some teeth to bite, based on the fact that it would be able to prosecute any defaulter and seek the imposition of sanctions in line with section 23 of the Act relying on the said public office holder's decline to make proper declaration to the Bureau" he argued.

In his contribution to his Bill, Jime who shared same sentiment with Faparusi though he argued that "the Principal aim of asset declaration/disclosure by public officials is tailored towards combating corruption; enhancing and building public confidence and legitimacy in government processes; and engineering transparency in its dealings, in the eyes of the public and the international community at large", he stated.

The intention of the piece of legislation, according to him, is to amend section 3(c) of the Code of Conduct Act, 2004 to :Retain and make accessible to any Nigerian citizen within 14 days, the assets and liabilities declared by any serving or past public office holder, via any medium as he or she may wish upon agreement with the Bureau and to bear the charges thereof."

According to him: "The importance of making more accessible assets and liabilities of public office holders to make governance more open has found expression in many countries of the world, a better example through public disclosure of assets as exemplified in Latin American countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile etc."

But some members expressed reservations, fearing that the proposal would simply give public officers a license to stash more government funds in private accounts overseas. Leading the group of antagonists to the Bill the Deputy House Leader, Leo Ogor, held the view that the bill 'stands logic on its head.'

He noted further: "This amendment can actually encourage corruption rather than reduce it. Why not say public officers

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NIGERIA FACES QUESTIONS OVER 'MISSING' OIL MONEY

Nigeria is facing questions about where billions of dollars in oil money is going, amid suspicions of fraud and it being syphoned off to fund election campaigns.

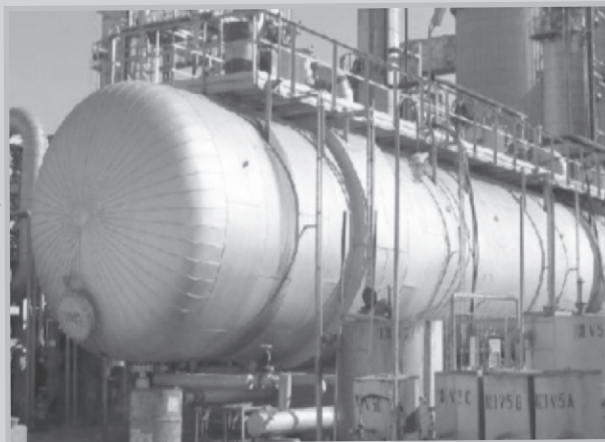
The issue has been rumbling on since September, when the governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria accused the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation of withholding \$49.8 billion in oil revenue.

Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, who steps down as central bank chief in the coming months, later revised his figures down to \$12 billion, sparking claims of political pressure. But this week he again claimed that the state-run NNPC owed the central bank money — this time \$20 billion from the \$67 billion earned from oil between January 2012 and July 2013.

“It is now up to NNPC... to produce the proof that the \$20 billion unremitted either did not belong to the federation or was legally and constitutionally spent,” he told a parliamentary committee. Nigeria produces about two million barrels of oil per day, and crude exports account for about 80 percent of government revenue. Government figures indicated it earned some \$49 billion in export revenue in 2012, down from \$54 billion the previous year. Some of the funds go into a rainy-day fund, called the Excess Crude Account (ECA), to ensure the government budget is financed in case world oil prices fall sharply. Last year, as global oil prices held above \$100 per barrel, revenue above a benchmark of \$79 per barrel set by the government and lawmakers went into the fund. According to the latest central bank figures, the ECA held \$11.5 billion at

the end of 2012, but this had dropped to \$2.5 billion in January this year. The reduction comes at the same time as a decrease in foreign reserves. Last May they stood at \$48 billion but are now at about \$42.7 billion, according to CBN data.

“It's unfortunate that the government has indulged in a spending jamboree without any noticeable improvement in the standard of living of the people,”



said Lagos economist Abolaji Odumesi.

“The ECA is meant to protect Nigeria in the event of price shocks but the purpose for setting the fund aside is now being defeated,” the former banker told AFP.

“Those in government are not thinking of tomorrow. They are not bothered about what becomes of the economy if the ECA dries up and there is drop in the international price of crude.”

Nigeria's influential governors' forum, led by Rotimi Amaechi of the oil-rich Rivers state, has accused the federal government of unilaterally taking money from the a c c o u n t . The group even went to court to challenge Jonathan's withdrawal of \$1 billion for a new Sovereign Wealth Fund, set up to invest the savings from the difference in budgeted and actual oil prices.

Suspicions abound that the money has been used to weaken states controlled by the opposition, which has been boosted by the defection of dozens of members from the ruling party.

Amaechi, who switched from Jonathan's Peoples Democratic Party to the All Progressives Congress last year, has long argued that his state is being short-changed.

For their part, the NNPC and the government say the money has gone to legitimate projects and that oil theft and vandalism have contributed to the reduction in revenues.

There is a widespread consensus that oil-theft, or “bunkering”, is a problem in Nigeria.

Estimates range up to 150,000 barrels per day being stolen, robbing the exchequer of about \$6 billion a year.

Anti-corruption campaigners allege the money may have been diverted to fund the 2015 election campaign, which looks set to be the closest since Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999.

“The Jonathan administration is merely syphoning money to prosecute its re-election agenda,” said Debo Adeniran, of the non-political, non-profit Coalition Against

Culled from PUNCH

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OFFICERS OF THE LAGOS STATE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AGENCY AT THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT AT ALAUSA, ALONG LAGOS-IBADAN EXPRESSWAY



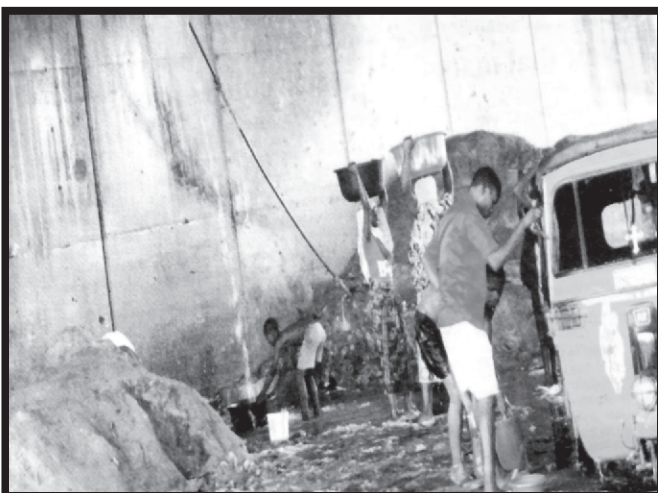
THE IPONRI MARKET AT APONGBO, LAGOS



RESCUE WORKERS PULLING OUT A VEHICLE THAT PLUNGED INTO A RIVER IN IKOTA, AJAH, IN LAGOS



FLOOD AT ILE-EPO BUS STOP ON THE LAGOS-ABEOKUTA EXPRESSWAY



RESIDENTS FETCHING WATER FROM A LEAKING PUBLIC WATER WORKS PIPE UNDER ORILE IGANMU BRIDGE, LAGOS STATE



ONE OF THE STRUCTURES IN LAGOS STATE TEACHING HOSPITAL

LAGOS OPEN PARLIAMENT UPDATE

PHOTO SPEAKS



ONE OF THE ABANDONNED MAJOR ROADS IN THE COMMUNITY OF IJEGUN LAGOS STATE



THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT AT PLEASURE CANAL, IYANA-IPAJA IN LAGOS



SCENE OF A DEMOLITION AT OKOTA, LAGOS



ABANDONED FOR 15 YEARS: LAWAL STREET AT IYANA IPAJA, AGBADO OKE-ODO, LAGOS



A REFUSE HEAP IN FRONT OF A HOUSE IN OKO-AGBON AREA OF LAGOS



THE BOYS' HOSTEL inset: THE SCATTERED MATTRESS AND PILLOWS OF LAGOS STATE MODEL COLLEGE, OJO, LAGOS

CACOL, OTHERS SLAM GOODLUCK JONATHAN OVER MEDIA CHAT

ANSWERS

The President had stated that he had absolute power to suspend the Governor of Central Bank, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi.

He suspended Sanusi last week over some allegations that the latter claimed he was not aware of.

Jonathan also condemned governor Kashim Shettima of Borno State for saying the Boko Haram terrorists currently waging war in his state were more armed than the Nigerian soldiers, saying he could remove the soldiers from the state for one month to know if the governor would remain in office.

“If governor of Borno feels the military are that useless against Boko Haram, I can pull out the military for one month and see what happens there and after I can send the military back to take charge. The governor should be sensitive in his choice of words. It's unfortunate,” Jonathan had said.

Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, in his reaction, said he expected the President to even show some emotional attachment to the victims of the Boko Haram massacre “I deeply respect the office of the president, but I believe the Commander-In-Chief needs to show some more compassion for the affected families.

The 20 abducted school girls still remain unfound. A word of compassion would have given hope to their families. I'm very sad,” he said on his Twitter handle.

Former Minister of Aviation, Femi Fani-Kayode, said Governor Shettima is only asking for more help and more troops from the Federal Government because hundreds more of his people are being killed and abducted everyday by the Boko Haram “and this is the best response that our President can give to him?”

“Are those being killed and abducted not Nigerians? Would this have been his response if 8000 of his own Ijaw people had been killed in the last three years by a terrorist organisation? May God save and deliver Nigeria,” he said in a post attributed to him on Facebook.

Popular rights activist, Biodun Sowunmi, said that though the President's presentation was better than before, he only ended up drawing himself into more controversies over the sack of Sanusi.

He said the President goofed as he should have declined commenting after being told that Sanusi had gone to court since it would be subjudice.

He also carpeted the President for saying he had the power to suspend Sanusi, because according to him, the only way he could have done that was if Sanusi's professional body derobed him as stipulated in the CBN Act.

Concerning his response on the carnage in Borno, Sowunmi said he was surprised that President Jonathan had refused to visit the scene like it is done by presidents in other climes, but could utter statements threatening the state governor for his own inability to curtail terrorism as the Commander -In-Chief.

“It is the governor who had been visiting the places and he is rightly emotional,” he said describing Jonathan's statement as unfortunate.

Sowunmi, who said he was not defending Sanusi, said the CBN Governor acted in line with the constitution that all monies should be remitted to the federation account first, which the NNPC and other related agencies disregarded.

“What Jonathan did with his responses was to try to divert attention from the missing \$20 billion,” he added.

President of the Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders, CACOL, Debo

Adeniran, supported Sowunmi, adding that the only area the President responded well was on the National Conference in which he said he did not want to preside over a disintegrating country.

“Every other response was half-truth, borne out of arrogance, justification for insolence, watery and untenable,” he said, adding that the President must remember that nobody has absolute powers as he had claimed.

Wondering why it took the President Sanusi's whistle-blowing for him to know that Sanusi had committed some infringements, he said the way the President chastised Shettima was a show of arrogance and ploy to suppress the truth instead of working on what the governor said.

He recalled that the Deputy Governors at the CBN were also indicted but that the President chose to punish only Sanusi, saying the President should also step aside for the corruption scandal that has enveloped his government to be investigated.

“Look at the power project that has gulped over \$16 billion, look at Arumna Oteh of Securities and Exchange Commission, look at Diezani Alison-Madueke and Jonathan is attacking those who blew the whistle leaving those accused of corruption,” he lamented.

Shettima Yerima of the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum, simply said: “it would be shameful if President Jonathan can prove that Sanusi soiled his hands while at the CBN, but if at the end of the investigation, he is not found wanting, then the President should be prepared for the anger of the north because he molested their son.”

On Jonathan's reaction to the Borno attack, a Nigerian, Eweje Alli, said: “I saw the interview and was shocked to hear those words coming from the President of a Republic. God help Nigerians.”

Culled from

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A VOICE AGAINST LEGALIZATION OF CORRUPTION

should operate domiciliary accounts in the country?"

Expectedly, the issue was taken up by some other Nigerians who say the danger inherent in allowing such law pass.

The Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders (CACOL) was the first NGO to raise the roof against the Bill. Reacting to the news on behalf of the Coalition, its Executive Chairman, Debo Adeniran flayed the reason adduced by the supporters of the new bill.

He said: "It is not only absurd but unreasonable for our legislators to base the reason for the scrapping of the extant Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, 2004 on non-enforcement. Does it mean that if you cannot enforce any law then you scrap it? This is like cutting off the head because one has headache. It is clear that the problem is not in the law, but its enforcement.

"This new amendment will actually

encourage corruption rather than reduce it. The bill to allow public office holders open and operate foreign bank account will definitely expand corrupt practices to an unimaginable level, thereby worsening the current worrisome massive corrupt practices being perpetrated by the Nigerian politicians.

"Though we know that some public officers still smuggle and open foreign accounts by proxy, but this bill will just be another way to legalize the fleecing of our country's treasury and laundering of the public funds to other countries.

"It is more reasonable to ask public officers to operate domiciliary accounts for the benefit of the country instead of giving them the leeway to stash their stolen loots in some foreign accounts where it would be difficult to trace."

Last Wednesday, Femi Gbajabiamila, leader of the minority in the parliament behaved like someone who might have been talked to by "elders" at home as he raised a point of order seeking the leave of the House to have it reverse itself on the

decision taken in the obnoxious Bill. He was asked by the Speaker, Aminu Tambuwal, to bring the issue up this week in a proper motion so that the parliament can take a second look at its decision which is been faulted left, right and centre by angry Nigerians.

As a Nigerian who has felt and is still feeling the impact of corruption in our system, I want to beg the members of the House to redeem the image of the parliament and reverse the decision on the Bill by killing it. I remember that the parliament recently constituted a committee to look into the series of pro-people laws that have been passed by both chambers of the parliament but yet unassented to by Mr. President, which was a good thing to do.

My worry is that if the lasted law to "legalize stealing" goes through and is forwarded to the presidency for assent, it will likely get express assent because of the benefit to the power that be. Even as the "old law" still subsists I wonder how much of our commonwealth has been secretly laundered. Corruption is synonymous with rape. So shall we now willingly give room to the demented to rape our daughters freely? God forbid.

Culled from Daily Independent

WHEN ACTIVISTS DISAGREE ON EFCC PROSECUTION TECHNIQUE

The ongoing prosecution of Speaker of Lagos State House of Assembly, Adeyemi Ikuforiji and his personal assistant, Oyebode Atoyebi by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has continued to generate differing reactions. Ikuforiji and Atoyebi have been on trial before a Lagos Federal High Court since March 1, 2012 on a 20-count charge bordering on money laundering. The anti-graft commission also alleged that Ikuforiji used his position to misappropriate about N500 million belonging to the legislature. Specifically, the EFCC alleges that the duo conspired between April 2010 and July 2011, to commit an illegal act of accepting cash payments amounting to N273 million from the Assembly, without going through a financial institution, an offences the anti-graft commission says contravened Section 18 (a) of the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act 2011.

Incidentally, since March 1, 2012 when they were first charged before a Federal High Court in Lagos, it has been followed by intrigues and allegations of conspiracy. For a case of such magnitude, many expected that the commission would pursue the prosecution diligently. Rather, the case continued to suffer endless adjournments with trial judge, Justice Okechukwu Okeke who granted the Lagos Speaker bail on self recognition accused the EFCC and the prosecution of "deliberate act" to delay the trial, following which he adjourned indefinitely.

In fact, when he adjourned the case indefinitely in April this year, the judge noted that; "This matter has suffered series of adjournments all at the instance of prosecution. It is a deliberate attempt by prosecution to disrupt hearing in the case and blackmail this court. I hereby adjourn this case sine die (indefinitely). Whenever the prosecution is ready to diligently handle their case, hearing notices will be issued." Unfortunately, this notice never came before he retired in May.

The Speaker has however been re-arraigned before a new judge, Justice Ibrahim Buba on June 24. The judge not only revoked the earlier bail on argument that he was not bound by the terms of the bail earlier granted to the accused by the former trial judge, he also imposed stiffer bail conditions. The judge initially imposed N5bn bail with two sureties in like sum but it took the intervention of counsel for the accused persons – Messrs Tayo Oyetibo (SAN) and Tunde Akinrimisi – for him to reduce the bail sum to N1billion each with two sureties in like sum for each of the accused. He also said each of the two sets of sureties must swear to an affidavit of means, even as he also gave Ikuforiji and Atoyebi a 48-hour ultimatum to meet the bail conditions or be remanded in prison pending when they would perfect the conditions.

The Speaker was able to perfect his bail conditions within the time-frame and

escaped going to prison, but varying views have continued to trail his prosecution. While some people believe that the trial is in line with the anti corruption crusade of the Federal Government, others think it is politically motivated. For instance, the Speaker's admirers accuse the Lagos State Government of engineering the travails of the Speaker. Specifically, they accuse forces loyal to Governor Babatunde Fashola of being behind the Speaker's ordeal as they argue that the Speaker is being punished for the role he played during the allegations of corruption peddled against the State Governor by a group called, The True Face of Lagos in 2010.

It would be recalled that in January 2010, the True Face of Lagos had made series of corruption allegations against the State Government especially regarding the budgeting processes which it said has not impacted on the lives of the people. It is also recalled that following the allegations, various civil society organisations including the Coalition Against corrupt Leaders (CACOL) put pressure on the Lagos State House of Assembly to not only launch an investigation into the allegations by way of performing its oversight functions, but to also investigate its self since it is part and parcel of the State Government.

However, while the House inquest was ongoing the legislators were ordered to halt their investigation following a suit filed by

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like Joshua Dariye of Plateau, Diepreye Alamieyeseigha of Bayelsa, Ayodele Fayose of Ekiti were removed in orchestrated plots believed to have been fuelled by the former president.

On security and human rights, the analysts contended that Obasanjo did not fare better than Jonathan. Bola Ige, a sitting Attorney General; Marshall Harry, Funso Williams were all high profile unresolved murder under his regime. Odi, a town in Bayelsa and Zaki Biam, a town in Benue state were also leveled by soldiers for offences committed by unknown militants.

While Obasanjo accused Jonathan in his letter of renegeing on agreement not to seek a re-election in 2015, many Nigerians also recalled his failed third term bid. The nation was actually seized by throat as

members of the National Assembly were allegedly induced by the former president to support the tenure elongation bid, before the plot eventually crashed.

President Jonathan has not responded to the letter, but a statement by presidential spokesman, Reuben Abati in Abuja last week however said that while the presidency acknowledged receiving the letter, the president had directed that none of his aides or any government official should join issues with Obasanjo over it.

"The President himself will, at the appropriate time, offer a full personal response to the most reckless, baseless, unjustifiable and indecorous charges levied against him and his

administration by the former Head of States," the spokesman said.

"We however find it highly unbecoming, mischievous and provocative that a letter written by a former Head of States and respected elder statesman to President Jonathan has been deliberately leaked to the mass media in a deplorable effort to impugn the integrity of the President and denigrate his commitment to giving Nigeria the best possible leadership," the statement said.

"While many patriotic, objective and well-meaning Nigerians have already condemned the leaked letter as self-serving, hypocritical, malicious, indecent, and very disrespectful of the highest office in the land, President Jonathan has directed that none of his aides or any government official should join issues with Obasanjo over it."

Culled From

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WHEN ACTIVISTS DISAGREE ON EFCC PROSECUTION TECHNIQUE

another group questioning why the legislators were acting on the report of a faceless group. In fact, CACOL had condemned the court verdict halting the Assembly's inquiry, arguing that the State Government must answer to the people who elected it. It urges that the state government should explore the instrument of a State of the State Address to respond to the allegations levelled against it, insisting that the continued silence of the government "shows that our government cares less about what we the people think about how well or otherwise we are governed."

The investigation had exposed Governor Fashola to an impeachment threat from the House of Assembly, even as Speaker Ikuforiji was seen as the arrow head. Some Ikuforiji sympathisers believe that the ongoing prosecution of the Speaker is designed to discredit his image and weaken his political structure in the face of his alleged interest in contesting the governorship of the state in 2015.

However, even as the intrigues continue, the CACOL which is one of the civil society groups that in 2010 agitated that the House of Assembly should not only investigate the allegations of the True Face of Lagos against the State Government but should also probe itself has explained its silence on the allegations and counter allegations trailing the EFCC

prosecution of the Speaker.

In a recent encounter with Daily Independent, Debo Adeniran, Executive Chairman of the group said that after studying the allegations against the Speaker, they found out that the allegations against the Speaker bothered more on failure to follow administrative requirements, rather than core acts of corruption and misappropriation of funds. According to him, the anti-graft agency has so far not been able to establish that there are missing public funds nor have they traced any to the Speaker's private account. He argues that until there it is established that the Speaker transferred public funds into his private account, it will be difficult to establish a case of corruption against him.

Adeniran also argued that there could be some politicking in the case as some people allege, considering that there are several other cases of alleged corruption that are pending. For instance, he says the N39 billion spent on the construction of the cable bridge at Lekki, in Lagos is "an absurd of the highest order" and a drain on the tax payers' money. He said that the amount spent on the cable bridge could have been judiciously used to construct of road somewhere else in the city. He said the construction of bridge which he argues was not approved by the House of Assembly is an act of corruption, adding that if the EFCC were serious about fighting corruption, it would have investigated the petition on the huge

amount spent on the bride and all other over bloated projects preceding that against the Speaker.

"What we discovered in the case against the Speaker is that the charges against him bother on administrative lapses. We believe that there is a little bit politicking in that case. The allegation of N7 billion fraud initially filed against him has been reviewed downwards. How can the EFCC take up the case with dispatch when the allegation against the State Government preceding that of the Speaker has not addressed," he asks. Adeniran also blamed the EFCC for the seeming intrigues that have dogged the case, arguing that the commission should have had all their facts before charging the Speaker to court.

Like the adage says that when two elephants fight, the grass suffers, Adeniran also argues that Lagosians are at the receiving end of whatever intrigues playing out in the EFCC prosecution of the Speaker of the State Assembly. He says that the executive and the legislative arms of government have concentrated so much effort on the matter that the welfare of the people has been relegated.

For Adeniran, the way forward is for the EFCC to insulate its self from politics and prosecute cases of corruption diligently. He also advises that all the actors imbibe democratic values which recognise the people as giving the government its legitimacy, arguing that all the arms of government must be answerable to the people.

Culled from Daily Independent

The Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders (CACOL) was established in August 2007 to exert pressures on anti-graft agencies to investigate and prosecute known corrupt leaders in Nigeria. CACOL also undertakes to sensitize Nigerians to *Name, Nail, Shame and Shun Corrupt Leaders Anywhere, Everywhere* to serve as deterrent that corruption does not pay. CACOL is primarily funded by affiliate and individual members but also seeks support from public-spirited individuals, corporate bodies and donor agencies. This DIGEST is supported by First Faculty Ventures - an organizational development consultancy firm. For further information contact: The Executive Chairman, CACOL, The Humanity Center, 610 Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway, Ijaye-Ojokoro, Lagos, Nigeria. E-mail: cacol@yahoo.com, www.cacol.thehumanitycentre.org. Phone: 01-4736534, 08037194969, 08023226276 Editor: Abimbola Adegoke