

NUC Leads Federal Varsities To Budget Defence

The Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission (NUC), Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR, FNAL, last Wednesday, led vice chancellors of Federal Universities to appear before the National Assembly Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Representatives Committee on Education to defend their budget proposal for 2020.

In defending the NUC's budget first, Prof. Rasheed stated that the roles and responsibilities of the Commission had continued to expand with the supervision of 172 universities made up of 45 Federal universities, (which include the two additional Federal Universities of Agriculture, Zuru, Niger State and Federal University of Medical Sciences, Otukpo, Benue State, though yet to fully become operational), 48 State

and 79 Private universities. The commission also has about 104 affiliate institutions as members of the wider Nigerian University

and monitoring exercises in the Nigerian University System (NUS). He explained that in the current fiscal year, NUC's budget



Chairman Senate Committee on Tertiary Education and TETFund, Senator Baba Ahmed Kaita with House Committee Chair on Tertiary Institutions and Services, Hon. Aminu Suleiman Fagge at the Public Hearing

System (NUS), under its purview.

He stated that the major component of NUC's capital was spent on hiring Professors in the universities for Accreditation of programmes

receipt from its capital and overhead allocations had been quite low, with the performance based on the releases put at 50 per cent for Overhead Costs and the Personnel Costs 72 per cent and up-to-date since the salaries payment come through the

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Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS).

Presenting the entire budget outlay of the NUS, the Executive Secretary highlighted that the budgeting which was based on the envelope system had been making universities and the three Inter-University Centres (IUCs) budget performance restrictive.

He noted that the peculiar challenge of universities and allied institutions had not been addressed in every budget cycle of the federation, thereby not allowing the system have as much as was required to take care of its needs.

He added that the issue was worsened by the delay factor in releasing budgets while in most cases the budgets were not even released. For instance, Professor Rasheed told joint Committee

allocation for 2019, while NUC which appeared a little luckier got 19 per cent so far.

Development levy or service charge as these monies were used to provide municipal services to



Cross section of distinguished Senators at the Budget Defence

The lull in capital releases had stifled the capacities of the universities to generate useful research and commercialise same as electricity which was needed had continued to swallow a major part of the university's resources. What

students and the university community. While agreeing on the need for financial audit, he requested the Committee to first understand the nitty-gritty of the said fund and decide later on what to call the IGR.

To address these challenges, NUC hoped to have a retreat with universities where issues of alternative funding would be explored as well as the need to promote the ideals of Triple Helix, which advocate academia, government and industry linkage in order to facilitate the patents and use of research products of the universities.

Commenting on the NUS budget, the Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVC) and Vice-Chancellor, Bayero University



Cross Section of Honorable Members, Federal House of Representatives at the Budget Defence

that the universities had only received 10 per cent of their entire

was regarded as IGR, he stressed might be redefined as



Kano, Professor Yahuza Bello, stressed in line with the presentation of the Executive Secretary that the NUS was fraught with common challenges including, inadequate funds due to envelope system, lack of understanding of the term 'IGR of universities' in government circle. Elaborating on the

skipped.

In their separate remarks on the budget, the Chairman Senate Committee on Tertiary Education and TETFund, Senator Baba Ahmed Kaita raised issues on the level of IGR utilisation by universities especially on why they should

given to it to deliver, as the nation desired to return back to the January-December Budget Cycle. He, however, agreed with the NUC and the universities that a follow-up meeting would be required to deepen discussions on issues of IGR and how to make research outputs relevant to the economy.



Executive Secretary NUC, Prof. Abubakar A. Rasheed (Middle), DPA, Ibrahim Usman Yakasai (2nd left) and DFA Mr. Sam Onazi (3rd right) VC, FG Gusau, Prof. Magaji Garba (1st left); VC, BUK and Chairman, CVC, Prof. Muhammad Y. Bello (2nd right).

funding, he said, most universities were allocated as low as N100million as capital budgets, with actual releases itself erratic.

Allocations of Overheads to universities were also done by the federal government not on the basis of the case presented by each institution, as they get slightly in the region of N100 million, which was not enough to settle huge monthly electricity bill and other utilities. The CVC Chair lamented that matters were even worse in the area of releases as some months were usually

have the powers that appropriate and spend the revenue generated.

He also harped on the need for the academia to challenge themselves to other viable alternative sources of funding to address the research needs of the industry and society other than agonising on it.

The House Committee Chair on Tertiary Institutions and Services, Hon. Aminu Suleiman Fagge said the Joint team was working within a set deadline

The Joint Committee said that while it was not averse to genuine demand to upscale allocations of universities due to their peculiar nature, it was however demanding for Forensic Audit of IGR of universities to ascertain the funding gap and determine how to allocate same.

At the presentation were Vice-Chancellors of all the Federal Universities, some registrars and their Bursars as well as the Chief Executives of the IUCs and their finance officers.



The Executive Secretary was accompanied by the Directors of

Ibrahim Yakasai. Others present were the Deputy Directors of

Treasury Division, Mrs Hauwa Amos and Information Division,



Audience at the event

Finance and Accounts, Mr Sam Onazi and Public Affairs, Mal.

Budget, Mr John Abbah,

Mal. Haruna Lawal Ajo.

NUC Committee On Review Of MAUTech Law Submits Report — *Medical College Coming Soon*

The Committee for the review of the law establishing Modibbo Adama University of Technology (MAUTech), Yola, with the view to ascertain the propriety or otherwise of the University introducing medical

This was contained in the report submitted by the Chairman of the eight-man Committee, Professor A.Y Ribadu, last Tuesday, to the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission

The Committee's report, among other issues, indicated that the facilities inspected in the University were sufficient and adequate for the commencement of programmes in the Medical Sciences by the University.



Senator Cliff Ishiaku Abbo; Senator Aisha Dahiru Ahmed ES, NUC, Prof. Abubakar A. Rasheed and Chairman of Committee, Prof. Abdullahi Ribadu

education has submitted its report with far reaching recommendations, including the fact that nothing in its law prohibited the running of a medical college.

(NUC), Professor Abubabakr Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR, FNAL who set up the Committee about two months ago.

It however gave a proviso that the Institution's Governing Council must mobilise requisite resources to commence the building of facilities to





accommodate the College of Medical Sciences to adequately take care of the needs of the Pre-Clinical stage of the programme.

The Committee also highlighted that the Federal Medical College (FMC), Yola had the requisite human and material resources to serve as a Teaching Hospital for the College of Medical Sciences of MAUTech.

Giving insight on the funding implication, the Chairman noted that the estimated resources required was Six Billion, Eight Hundred and Four Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Six thousand, Four hundred and Forty Naira (N6,804,836,440.00) only.

This funds, he said, would upgrade facilities of FMC to a Teaching Hospital, so as to enable it provide relevant services for the training of medical personnel. Similarly on mounting a College of Medicine at MAUTech, he said the estimated cost implication was N10,628,987,693.81.

Another major issue raised was on the need for the authorities of the University to liaise with the authorities of the Federal Ministry of Health for the exchange of letters to facilitate the upgrading of the FMC, Yola to a Teaching Hospital and affiliation to the University to avoid future conflict.

Professor Ribadu stressed that conversion of MAUTech to a conventional University would require a change of name and a

separate establishment Bill as the current Federal Universities of Technology Act, CAP F23 LFN 2004 would no longer suffice in order to accommodate courses of instruction beyond the technology discipline.

The NUC Committee Chairman further explained that FMC, Yola commenced clinical services at its permanent site on the 3rd of July, 2006 and currently boast of a bed capacity of 363; fully

Physiotherapy, Pharmacy and Radio-Diagnosis and also covered Orthopaedics and Traumatology, Ophthalmology, Dentistry and Ear, Nose and Throat (Otorhinolaryngology). He added that FMC, Yola trained about 30 House Officers yearly and has commenced postgraduate residency training in four of the major clinical departments including the Department of Anaesthesia.

Receiving the report, Professor Rasheed commended the Committee for being thorough



Sen. Abbo, Sen. Aisha Prof. Rasheed and Prof. Ribadu displaying the Report on the Review of MAUTech Law

furnished with state-of-the-art equipment in the theatres, laboratories, radio-diagnosis, Special Care Baby Unit, Intensive Care Unit and Central Sterile Supply Department.

It also provided Clinical Services in the major specialties of Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics and Obstetrics & Gynecology (O&G), which, he said, were backed up by support services such as Laboratory,

on its assignment and timely submission of same, stated that NUC had always been committed to ensuring the expansion of access to University education in Nigeria, especially medicine.

He noted that the conversion of MAUTech to a conventional and non-restrictive University would enable the institution run more programmes thereby increasing access to university



education in the region that had been affected by insurgency. He added that the commencement of medical programme in the University would be of immense benefit to the state and the its people.

Professor Rasheed, called on other universities with similar problems to approach the Commission, stressing that the NUC was committed to advancing the course of university education in the country.

He described as worrisome that many students desire to study medical sciences but had no access due to limited spaces and as a result, they seek opportunities to study abroad, thereby placing financial burdens on their parents and the nation's economy.

The Executive Secretary also congratulated the Senators from Adamawa State for their passion and steam that led to the process of converting the university and consequent proposal to mount the medical programme.

He, however, informed the Senators that the name change meant that there would be an amendment of the Act establishing the University to accommodate the new changes.

The Senator, representing Adamawa Central Senatorial District, Senator Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed, in her brief remark, called on the management of the NUC and the Honourable Minister of Education to

expedite action on the report submitted by the Committee so as to enable the University meet up its plan to commence the medical programme within the next academic session.

She disclosed that the Bill to change the status of the University had already passed first reading at the floor of the Senate, explaining that all necessary measures would be

Learning, Dr. Esther Olamide Adesina; Human Resources, Mr. Boniface C. Odum; Public Affairs, Mr. Ibrahim Yakasai and Deputy Director, Information, Haruna Lawal Ajo.

In the Committee were the Vice-Chancellor of MAUTech, Professor A.L. Tukur; Chief Medical Director, FMC, Yola, Professor A.M. Abubakar; NUC Directors of Planning Dr. Noel.



Front row group photograph of Sen. Abbo, Sen. Aisha Prof. Rasheed and Prof. Ribadu

taken to ensure that the proposed Bill was passed into Law.

Also at the meeting was the Senator representing Adamawa North, Senator Cliff Ishiaku Abbo.

Present were the NUC's Deputy Executive Secretary (Academics), Dr. Suleiman Ramon- Yusuf; Open and E-

B. Saliu; Finance and Accounts, Mr. Sam Onazi as well as Accreditation, Dr. (Mrs). Maryam Sali. Others were NUC Deputy Director, Resource Verification, Mr. A.M. Girei Member/ Secretary and Chief Legal Officer, Barr. P.A. Eruaga.



NUC Interacts with Skyline Pro-Chancellor on Governance

On the invitation of the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Pro-chancellor of the Skyline University Kano (SUN) was in the commission last week to discuss the misunderstanding which arose between the SUN and its mentor institution, the Bayero University Kano.

Receiving the Pro-chancellor, Professor Rasheed charged him on the need for Skyline University to provide quality education, up-to-date and modern facilities with qualified teaching staff and to work closely with Bayero University, Kano (BUK), as its mentoring institution.

Represented by the Deputy Executive Secretary, Academics, Dr. Suleiman Babatunde Ramon-Yusuf, the Executive Secretary stated that enrolment in private universities had not been encouraging based on statistics available to the NUC.

He, however, noted that some parents were still willing to enroll their children in private universities despite the huge tuition fees, with the expectations that it would provide them quality education.

The NUC scribe said that the Commission had always encouraged genuine investors, both locally and internationally, interested in advancing institution.

university education to establish

private universities, especially in the area of science and technology. He said that it was a good marketing strategy and quality graduates would attract the best of students thereby providing employment for the graduates of the institution.

Professor Rasheed stressed on the need for Skyline University to seek partnership and collaboration with experienced

ready to work with the management of skyline university and provide the required support in every aspect to enable the institution flourish.

The Executive Secretary advised the University officials to follow the academic briefs and master plan strictly as they prepare to move to their permanent site. NUC, he stressed, would continue to guide them and give them the



DES, NUC, Dr. Ramon Yusuf (right) Pro-Chancellor, Skyline University, Mr. Nitin Anand (Middle) and Mr. Abubakar Sadiq Iman (left)

institutions and exhibit openness in its dealings with both staff and students.

He reiterated the need for the University to work with BUK, as its mentoring university in order to cement mutual trust and respect between both institutions.

He said that Skyline University must see BUK as a big brother and assured that NUC was

necessary attention needed to actualize its lofty dreams and visions. On the area of staffing, he urged them not to be shy but to always approach BUK, to draw from its pool of experienced staff.

In his remarks, the Pro-Chancellor, Mr. Anand said that his team was happy to have come to Nigeria to establish a university. He noted that Skyline University was able to take-off



successfully because they followed the advice given to them by the Executive Secretary of NUC and his professional staff.

He informed the Commission that the University had commenced full academic programmes with eight faculties and admitted its first set of students. The University would soon start to admit the second batch of students. He also disclosed that the Skyline already had its

they want to graduate students who would be able to create jobs upon graduation was currently going on at the institutions permanent site.

He assured the Executive Secretary that an Entrepreneurship Centre would be created to aid students to be self sufficient, while its students would be taught the art of public speaking.

was planning to offer them by partnering with teaching hospitals.

Mr. Anand was accompanied by one of the University's Directors, Mr. Abubakar Sadiq Imani.

At the meeting were the NUC Deputy Executive Secretary, Administration, Dr. Gidado Bello Kumo, as well as the Directors in the Directorate of Public Affairs, Ibrahim Usman Yakasai; Directorate of Distance, Open and



Dr. Yusuf and Mr. Anand (5th and 6th right) in a group photograph

Quality Assurance Department in place, with a lot of other new systems and procedures. The Institution also recruited experienced staff all over the world because it intended to move at a very fast pace and would soon come up with five additional faculties.

Mr. Anand told the Executive Secretary that part of its work force included expatriate lecturers from India and the Philippines because they insisted it must have an international outlook. Mr. Anand stressed that

In addition to that, he said that the Vice-Chancellor of Skyline

University was working on Community Services for children in Orphanage homes, feeding and giving out clothes to them. The institution had also been focusing on research, in order to gain institutional ranking both in Africa and at the world stage.

The university according to him, requested for NUC's guidance in the areas of Basic Science, Nursing and Physiotherapy as the University

e-Learning, Dr. Olamide Esther Adesina; Directorate of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship, Mrs. Constance Goddy-Nnadi; Directorate of Human Resources, Mr. Boniface C. Odum.

Others were the Acting Directors of Directorate of Inspection and Monitoring, Agnes Bangbala; Directorate of Research, Innovation and Information Technology, Alh. L.M Farouk; Directorate of Students, Mrs. Lauretta Achor as well as Deputy Director, Information, Mr. Haruna Lawal Ajo.



Crescent Graduates 412, 33 First Class At 11th Convocation Ceremony

Crescent University, Abeokuta, last week held its 11th Convocation ceremony at the university's convocation hall with a total of 412 graduands, out of which 33 had First Class.

In his speech, the Founder and Proprietor of the university, Justice Bola Abduljabaar Ajibola expressed delight that despite

While congratulating the graduands, he enjoined them not to deviate from the tradition of their predecessors by continuing to be good ambassadors of the university in their various careers and endeavours. He expressed profound appreciation to all stakeholders

programmes leading to full accreditation. We shall continue in our quest to computerise all academic activities thereby, making the university a 21st century-compliant in all ramifications”.

He stated that as the university entered its second decade of



Prof. Abdullahi Yusuf Ribadu (1st left); Prof. Kamil Omoteso, University of Derby, U.K, Convocation Lecturer (3rd left); Emir of Kazaure and Pro-Chancellor, HRH, Alhaji Najib Hussaini Adamu; Proprietor of the university, Justice Bola Abduljabaar Ajibola (4th left) and Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Adeyemi (5th left)

being a young university of 14 years, Crescent university had remained a steadily progressive institution. He was also elated that many private and public organisations as well as businesses were aware of the high moral and academic standards of the university's graduates.

He expressed gratitude to God that the Alumni were making the university proud, informing that a Computer Science graduate of the university, Mr. Jubril Gawat had been appointed as Senior Special Assistant on Social media to the Governor of Lagos State.

who had contributed in one way or the other to the success of the university.

Presenting the report for the academic session, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ibraheem Gbajabiamila, said that the goal of the university was to continue to expand its academic activities by developing quality programmes and producing quality students.

“We do not compromise quality, therefore, priority is given to ensuring high quality of our

existence, it was putting in place practical, effective and realistic revenue generating initiatives to complement what the university received from the Proprietor. He appealed to well-spirited individuals, philanthropist and organisations to join the league of benefactors for the development of the university, pointing out that no sole Proprietor could adequately fund education.

On the state of facilities, he said that the university had improved on the existing student hostels for different categories and was



committed towards improving on facilities in and around all students' halls of residence to ensure conducive learning environment. He said that the



Prof. Abdullahi Yusuf Ribadu
Representative of the Visitor

university had continued to enhance students' services including provision of butteries and potable water in every hostel, while on health services, the university had been operating a health insurance scheme which allowed for treatments covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) both within and outside the university clinic.

Professor Gbajabiamila further reported that the university was making significant progress in its quest to establish a College of Health Sciences, stating that it had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Federal Medical Centre, Abeokuta which would provide clinical training for the prospective students.

He also said that the proposed Nursing Laboratory building was

nearing completion and that the university had continued to receive donations from past awardees towards constructions of some buildings such as the School of Nursing by Alh. Soboyejo and the Crescent University Parents Forum (CUPF) had also constructed pavements for both the male and female hostels.

Giving an insight on internationalisation and linkages efforts, he said that the university had continued to establish international partnerships and cooperation with universities in various countries notably United Kingdom (UK) and Turkey, to explore collaboration opportunities through staff and students exchanges..

The Vice-Chancellor also

that to checkmate such antisocial practices, erring students were appropriately punished by the disciplinary Committee and Senate of the university.

He appealed to parents and guardians to counsel their wards on the need to be law abiding and focus on their studies while on campus, warning that the university's policy on zero tolerance for examination malpractice, indecent dressing, drug abuse, cultism and other social vices was still in force.

To the graduating students, Professor Gbajabiamila charged them to face the future with confidence, even though challenges were inevitable.

“You may find yourself doing something different from what you have planned. Consider your



Vice-Chancellor, Crescent University, Prof. Ibraheem Gbajabiamila reading his speech while the Registrar, Barr. Zakariyya A. Ajibola (far left) watch

emphasised the need for discipline among students in order to achieve the collective aspirations of the university through non tolerance of antisocial behaviours. He said

degree as a Life jacket, it will keep you afloat. Remember that the only permanency in life is change. Those who resist change resist survival and consequently, living



successfully. I therefore, urge you to confront challenges that may come your way headlong. Success comes only to those to dare”.

Professor Gbajabiamila enjoined the graduands to always remember their alma mater, teachers and mentors, stressing that Crescent university had equipped them to succeed and the

graduates with high academic and moral standards.

He was represented by NUC Visiting Professor, Abdullahi Yusufu Ribadu who lauded the university for its academic performance especially in the last NUC accreditation exercise where all the eight programmes assessed were given the clean bill. He added that the

Egbaland, HRH. Oba Michael Adedotun Aremu Gbadebo, Okukenu IV, with D. Sc. Public Administration (Honoris Causa); the Olowu of Owo Kingdom, HRH Oba Adegboyega Dosunmu, with D. Sc. Mass Communication (Honoris Causa) and Dr. Abdulrahman Hamad Al-Tamammi, a Saudi Arabian erudite English Scholar and Researcher, with D. Sc. Islamic



Graduands

knowledge acquired was invaluable gift that would never desert them. He pointed out that the university had trained them not to go out and be just job seekers but entrepreneurs and inevitable job creators.

In his speech the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission (NUC), Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed mni, MFR, FNAL, commended the university for its contributions to human capacity and socio-economic development of Nigeria through its unique

outstanding performance meant that the programmes had scored 70% and above in the four core areas of Academic content, Staffing, Facilities and Library including e-library. He further stated that there was more room for improvement even in those programmes that had earned full accreditation status.

The convocation ceremony also featured the conferment of honorary degrees to some distinguished personalities namely; the paramount ruler of

Studies (Honoris Causa).

Earlier, a convocation lecture entitled '*Professional Ethics and Nation Building*' was delivered by Professor Kamil Zakariyya Omoteso, a Nigerian Academic at University of Derby, United Kingdom (UK). He is a Professor of Accounting and Governance and presently serves as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean, College of Business, Law and Social Sciences at the university.



UGC 大學教育資助委員會
University Grants Committee

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1 August 2019

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05 AUG 2019

Dear Consul-General,

Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme

I am delighted to inform you that the Research Grants Council of Hong Kong is launching the Tenth Round of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme (the "Scheme"). The Scheme aims to attract top international students to pursue PhD studies in Hong Kong's world-class research universities. The fellowship provides a monthly stipend of HK\$25,800 (approx. US\$3,300) and a conference and research-related travel allowance of HK\$12,900 (approx. US\$1,700) per year for a period of three years. 250 fellowships will be awarded for PhD studies commencing in the 2020/21 academic year. The deadline for initial application is 2 December 2019.

I have pleasure in enclosing posters and leaflets of the Scheme for your information, and should be much grateful if you would grant assistance in posting or circulating them to interested parties of your university / institution. Electronic versions of the above-mentioned publicity materials are available online for download:

Poster: <http://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/hkpfs/Poster2020-21HKPFS.pdf>

Leaflet: <http://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/hkpfs/Leaflet2020-21HKPFS.pdf>



If you or any interested parties require further information, please feel free to contact us at HKPF@ugc.edu.hk or visit the Scheme's website at www.rgc.edu.hk/hkphd. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Benjamin Wah
Chairman
Research Grants Council

Encls.(2)



NIGERIAN ACADEMY OF LETTERS

COMMUNIQUE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST NIGERIAN ACADEMY OF LETTERS (NAL) CONVOCATION AND INVESTITURE OF NEW FELLOWS, AND SCIENTIFIC SESSION HELD AT THE J.F. ADE.AJAYI AUDITORIUM, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS ON THURSDAY, 8 AUGUST, 2019

PREAMBLE

The Nigerian Academy of Letters (NAL), an autonomous, non-political body of scholars in the humanities, held its 21st Convocation and Investiture of New Fellows, and Scientific Session on Thursday, 8th August, 2019, at the J.F. Ade Ajayi Auditorium, University of Lagos. The theme of the Convocation was "Religion and Morality in a Secular State".

In attendance were 121 professors from different Nigerian and overseas universities. The President of the Nigerian Academy of Letters Professor Francis Egbokhare, FNAL, presided over the Convocation and investiture of New Fellows and the Vice President, Professor Duro Oni, FNAL presided over the Scientific Session. Thirty-six new members were inducted six new Regular Fellows (Professors Ademola O. Dasylva, Abdulkrasheed Na'Allah, Sunday Enessi, Ifeorna Mabel Onyemelukwe, Albert 'Lekan Oyeleye, and Jim Unah) and two Honorary Fellows Yemi Ogunbiyi, and Mr Olusegun Adeniyi) were admitted into the NAL College of Fellows. Other key dignitaries in attendance were Rt. Hon. Rotimi Amaechi, newly reappointed Minister of Transportation; Prof Rasheed Abubakar, FNAL, the Executive Secretary of National Universities Commission (NUC); Prof. Is'haq Oloyede, FNAL, Registrar of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board and Professor Obiajulu Emejulu, Executive Director of the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN). The vice chancellors included Prof. Oluwatoyin T. Ogundipe, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos; Prof. AbdulRasheed Na'Allah, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja; Professor Eyitope Ogungbenro Ogunbodede, the Vice Chancellor of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; Professor Andrew Haruna, the Vice Chancellor of the Federal University, Gashua and Professor Ozo-Mekuri Ndimele, the Vice Chancellor of Ignatius Ajuru University, Port Harcourt.

The Convocation Lecture titled, "Morality and the state". The Nigerian Experience, was delivered by Professor Emeritus Godwin Sogolo, FNAL. Two well researched papers on the Convocation theme were also presented at the Scientific Session by Professor Akin Alao of the Department of History, of the department of History and Professor Umar H.D. Danfulani of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos. In the course of this presentation, pertinent issues that need the attention of government and the general public were discussed. These formed the basis of the following observations and recommendations.

OBSERVATIONS

At the end of the engaging Convocation Lecture and the stimulating Scientific Session, the following were observed:

1. The Nigerian state seems to pay scant attention to the education of youth on the ethos and the realities of cultural diversity;
2. There is a rapidly growing culture of moral apathy, especially among the Nigerian youth, due to failure of governance at all levels;
3. Poor attention is given to moral education in the national socialisation processes and, this has created





- strained relationships and avoidable social distance between the state and the people;
4. The Nigerian Constitution (Section 15(2)) upholds the idea of a secular state but the document equally contains provisions that undermine this secular character;
 5. The current absence of a distinction between the state and religion in Nigeria was partly created by the British colonial policies which made religion and ethnicity coterminous;
 6. There is the systemic collapse of merit on the altar of religious bigotry and ethnicity, which promotes corruption and insecurity across the nation; and
 7. The clear absence of a national philosophy is largely responsible for the palpable moral decay and cultural disorientation of our youth.
 8. The running of university education in Nigeria has become so complex and difficult because of paucity of funding. Federal Government still pays lip service to funding of education, and it is most unfortunate; and
 9. In recent times, politicians without requisite knowledge of the university system are appointed as Pro-Chancellors. This trend can hardly add value to the running of the University system in Nigeria. .

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above observations, the following recommendations were: made in the course of the Convocation Lecture, the Scientific Session and the ensuing discussions:

1. There is an urgent need for a humanising education that could socialise our youth into Nigerian ethos and diverse cultural values; "
2. Government should put in place policies that would guarantee the preservation of our religious diversity, as well as recover and propagate our waning cultural values, through curriculum review and proper reorientation on core national values;
3. The social distance between the people and the state can OIlly be bridged by a radical value reorientation that is championed by the humanities;
4. There is the need to review relevant sections of the Nigerian Constitution that contradict the secular state status and effectively separate religion from the state;
5. Deliberate efforts should be made to ensure a return to the traditional culture of reward for exemplary acts and punishment of erring conducts;
6. Adherence to merit and professional ethics will significantly ensure that the funds entrusted to public servants are properly utilised for the benefit and common good of all citizens;
7. Government should expedite actions on evolving the needed national philosophy which would provide the framework for sustainable quality control and, peer review of professional ethics and conduct;
8. To fund university education in Nigeria, Federal Government should increase its, budgetary allocation to the education sector to 25% and progressively increase this annually to 40% within three years. The leaderships of universities are also encouraged to be innovative and creative in sourcing for additional alternative and sustainable revenue streams to enable them survive, thrive and compete well internationally; and
9. For effective university administration, Visitors to all universities in Nigeria should give priority to appointing experienced and knowledgeable people in university administration and similar institutions as Pro-Chancellors.

Professor Francis Egbokhare, FNAL
President, Nigeria Academy of Letters (NAL)

