

Edo advances clean energy drive with new gas company

OLUWATOLA FAWEHINMI

The Edo State Government has set up Edo Green Energy Limited to be run as a private sector-facing entity that will engage in the commercialization of gas in the State.

Commissioner of Mining and Energy, Hon. Enaholo

● sets target to convert 60% of vehicles to run on CNG

Ojiefoh, who said this in a chat with journalists, said the company will lead in the extraction, processing, storage, and sales of gas in the State.

"The Company will sell gas as Liquefied Natural Gas or we convert and sell it as Compressed Nat-

ural Gas (CNG). Already we have a group of investors," Ojiefoh said.

"Our plan is to convert 60% of vehicles in Edo to run on CNG. The idea is to significantly reduce the cost of transportation in the State. NIPCO is already working on this. But the new

company is coming to work with existing filling stations to do conversions. This will be done by working with an existing Independent Petroleum Marketing Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) team. They already have fuel stations across the State.

"We will then have CNG stations across the senatorial districts of the State. We are not stopping at vehicles; we want to ensure that we convert all commercial tricycles operating in the State. Instead of buying fuel for N20,000, you will have to buy

N5,000 worth of fuel," he said.

The Commissioner said the CNG innovation runs on an automated system, which ensures that once the fuel is finished, it automatically switches to gas.

"We also want to ensure that we also convert generators to CNG. We want everyone in Edo to use clean energy," he said.

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...that the people may know

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**NSA says
Binance
manager fled
Nigeria using
smuggled
passport**

—Pg 2

FG invites Gumi for questioning over comments on bandits' activities

EDWARD OSEGHE

The Federal Government through its security agencies has invited controversial Kaduna-based Islamic cleric, Ahmad Gumi for questioning.

Gumi was invited for questioning over his comments on the activities of bandits in the country.

The minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, stated this while addressing journalists at the State House, Abuja, on Monday.

In recent years, Gumi has gained prominence for his comments on the activities of bandits.

He has been pictured with some bandits on many occasions.

The cleric reportedly offered to dialogue with bandits who abducted students from the Government Secondary and LEA Primary schools, in the Kuriga community under Chikun LGA in Kaduna.

The bandits attacked the community on March 7 and took away 137 schoolchildren and a teacher.

On Sunday, Uba Sani, the governor of Kaduna, announced the release of the school children.

The minister said the federal government did not pay ransom

● ...says no ransom was paid to secure release of Kaduna schoolchildren

to secure the release of the Kuriga schoolchildren, adding there is a zero-tolerance policy towards negotiating with bandits.

Gumi also accused the federal government of framing up its enemies by tagging them as terrorism financiers in his reaction to the identities of 15 entities released by the Nigerian Finan-

cial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) for alleged terrorism.

Some groups have also called on security agencies to arrest Gumi over what they described as the cleric's alleged ties with terrorist groups.

Speaking on the development, the information minister said the security agencies will

do their work if they feel that the statements made by Gumi are "reckless".

"The government will stop at nothing to get any kind of information that is required to solve our problems. The security agencies are up and doing," Idris said.

"Sheik Gumi and any other individual are not above the law,

if he has suggestions that are good enough and that are constructive enough for the security agencies to take, they will take

"But if they think that he is also making some statements that appear to be reckless, he will also be reprimanded.

"There is nobody above the law.

Let me put it here. And I'm aware that he has also been a guest of security agencies to answer questions.

"When you make remarks, especially those that border on our national security it is incumbent on our national security to think further, and they are doing just that, no one is above the law."



FOOD SECURITY:

Chairman, Edo State House of Assembly Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (right), Hon. Kaycee Osamwonyi, presenting the report of his committee to the Clerk of the House, Alhaji Yahaya Omogbai.

**Edo, LAPO
seal deal to
empower,
support small
businesses in
18 LGAs**

—Pg 2

The Nigerian
Observer

Space for sale

NEWS

NSA says Binance manager fled Nigeria using smuggled passport

EDWARD OSEGHE

The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) has confirmed the escape of Nadeem Anjarwalla, the Binance regional manager for Africa.

A statement by Zakari Mijinyawa, head of strategic communication at ONSA, said "preliminary investigation shows that Mr. Anjarwalla fled Nigeria using a smuggled passport".

"The personnel responsible for the custody of the suspect have been arrested, and a thorough investigation is ongoing to unravel the circumstances that led to his escape from lawful detention," the statement reads.

Anjarwalla, Binance's Africa regional manager, escaped from custody on March 22, 2024, from an Abuja guest house, where he and his colleague, Tigran Gambaryan, were detained for alleged tax evasion.

Anjarwalla was said to have escaped after guards on duty led him to a nearby mosque for prayers in the spirit of the ongoing Ramadan fast.

He is believed to have flown out of Abuja using a Middle Eastern airline, but how he got on an international flight despite his British passport, was unknown.



ONSA said, "Upon receiving this report, this office took immediate steps, in conjunction with relevant security agencies, MDAs, as well as the international community, to apprehend the suspect".

"Security agencies are working with Interpol for an international arrest warrant on the suspect.

"Recall that the Federal Government of Nigeria, like other governments around the world, has been investigating money laundering and terrorism financing transactions perpetrated on the Binance currency exchange platform.

"Until his escape, Nadeem Anjarwalla, who holds British and Kenyan nationalities and serving as Binance's Africa regional manager, was being tried by Nigerian courts.

"The suspect escaped while under a 14-day remand order by a court in Nigeria. He was scheduled to appear before the court again on 4 April 2024.

"We urge the Nigerian public and the international community to provide whatever information they have that can assist law enforcement agencies to apprehend the suspect," the statement added.

Recall that on February 28, two of Binance's top executives, Anjarwalla, a 37-year-old British-Kenyan and Binance's regional manager for Africa, and Tigran Gambaryan, a 39-year-old US citizen and Binance's head of financial crime compliance, were detained by Nigerian authorities for weeks.

Anjarwalla and Gambaryan



had flown into Nigeria but had their passports seized by ONSA.

On March 12, Anjarwalla was transferred to a local hospital after he fell ill while in detention in Nigeria.

Following the arrest of the two executives as part of a broader clampdown on crypto platforms, a Federal high court in Abuja ordered Binance Holdings Limited to provide the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) with the comprehensive data or information of all persons from Nigeria trading on its platform.

Binance has also been accused of evading tax, failing to register with the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and currency speculation.

The Federal Government had requested at least \$10 billion as retribution from Binance for profiting from "its illegal transactions" in Nigeria.

Bayo Onanuga, the special adviser on information and strategy to President Bola Tinubu, who had disclosed this in an interview with the BBC, said the cryptocurrency platform was causing massive losses by "fixing exchange rates".

Stakeholders rally in Maiduguri to combat effect of climate change on farmers

NAOMI EWANSIHA

A coalition of experts, policy-makers, and environmental advocates, led by Malam Abubakar Suleiman, the General Manager of the Borno State Environmental Protection Agency (BOSEPA), convened in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, to confront the escalating threat of climate change on farmers.

The urgency of the situation was emphasized by Malam Abubakar Suleiman, who highlighted the stark reality of increasingly harsh weather conditions in Borno State, adding that "It is a global challenge, and we can feel it in Borno."

The assembly delineated a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change and foster sustainable development.

Central to the deliberation was the unveiling of the Borno State Climate Change Action Plan, a meticulously crafted blueprint aimed at steering the state towards resilience and adaptation. However, Malam Abubakar Suleiman cautioned that the success of this endeavor hinges crucially on the active involvement and cooperation of the public, particularly local communities.

Reiterating this, Dr. Gabriel Akeh, the Environmental Dean of the School of Environmental Technology at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, stressed the imperative of addressing the

affordability and accessibility of alternative energy sources.

He elucidated: "We are looking at affordability and access to combat climate change. This will discourage people from cutting trees because trees act as sinks for the carbon dioxide released into the air whenever we cut one."

Moreover, the detrimental health impacts of reliance on polluting fuels, such as firewood and charcoal, were highlighted, particularly women who are disproportionately exposed to harmful smoke emissions.

Unicoo Kalu, the Advocacy and Communication Officer for the Borno Climate Change Programme, elucidated the multifaceted approach of the programme, encompassing capacity-building initiatives for state officials and grassroots interventions. He delineated the programme's components, including the formulation of a robust Climate Change Action Plan, the establishment of community resilience groups, and the development of climate-resilient agricultural practices.

With resolve, stakeholders vowed to intensify awareness campaigns and mobilize resources to implement the newly devised action plan. The forum concluded with a unified commitment to combat climate change, safeguard the environment, and secure a sustainable future for Borno State and its inhabitants.

Edo, LAPO seal deal to empower, support small businesses in 18 LGAs

CHIDERA DUMBIRI

The Edo State Government has entered into a partnership with LAPO Microfinance Bank to empower and support small businesses in the 18 local councils of the State.

The Secretary to the Edo State Government, Osarodion Ogie Esq., signed the agreement on behalf of the state government, on Monday, at the Government House, Benin City, the Edo State capital.

While noting the future impact of the new deal, Ogie said micro finance schemes, all over the world, are the engine room of the economy.

He said, "I congratulate the board, Edojobs and LAPO Microfinance Bank and appeal to all beneficiaries to make use of the loan facilities that will be given as it's not a grant and should

be put into good use.

"Microfinance schemes all over the world are the engine room of the economy. These small companies you see around, the number of people they employ is a lot and the government doesn't take note of them. Governor Godwin Obaseki does take note because he is an investment banker. The governor is doing a lot for Edo people."

Earlier, the Chairman of the Advisory Board MSME Fund, Peter Obaseki, who commended the government for its sustained support for small businesses in the State, noted: "This is the mandate of Governor Godwin Obaseki for economic empowerment of small businesses. The difference is on the concessionary interest rate at 9 per cent to enable residents of the State to benefit.

"This is part of the social

transfer scheme to empower residents in Edo State and it must not be an urban phenomenon. It must get to each of the 18 local government areas of the State. Enumeration and disbursement must go to each of the 18 local government areas."

He further stated, "This scheme is not a grant but a loan. It is a concessionary loan and the test of the scheme is the ability to revolve not to be stuck. We will ensure that enumeration, disbursement and refund is completely monitored, ensuring that the funds come back to enable others benefits."

Speaking on behalf of LAPO, the Executive Director, Corporate Services, Gloria Bassey, hailed the state government's commitment to youth development, reassuring sustained partnership with the government.

UN pledges support for NDLEA's fight against drug abuse

CAROLINE AMEH

The United Nations (UN) Deputy Secretary General, Mrs. Amina J Mohammed, assured the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) of unwavering support in its battle against substance abuse and illicit drug trafficking in Nigeria.

During her courtesy visit to the NDLEA headquarters in Abuja, Mrs. Mohammed, accompanied by the UN Resident Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr. Mohamed Malik Fall, expressed the UN's commitment to bolstering the Agency's efforts in combating the complex challenges posed by drug-related crimes.

Addressing the NDLEA Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd), Mrs. Moham-

med reiterated the UN's dedication to enhancing the impact of NDLEA's operations. She emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of drug abuse and trafficking, underscoring the need for collaboration across government sectors to safeguard human dignity.

Commending Marwa's exemplary leadership, Mrs. Mohammed acknowledged NDLEA's pivotal role in safeguarding public health and national security. She praised the Agency's proactive measures in making significant arrests, prosecuting offenders, and destroying illicit drug caches and cannabis farms.

In response, Marwa expressed gratitude for the UN delegation's historic visit, highlighting the urgent need for international support to tackle the pervasive

threats posed by drug abuse and trafficking. He outlined NDLEA's achievements in curbing the drug menace, including arrests, prosecutions, and public awareness campaigns through initiatives like the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA).

Marwa also presented key areas where UN support could bolster NDLEA's efforts, including conducting comprehensive drug use surveys, procuring advanced equipment for destroying drug caches and cannabis farms, and enhancing forensic capabilities.

The visit underscored the collaborative efforts between NDLEA and the UN in addressing one of Nigeria's most pressing challenges, signaling a renewed commitment to combatting drug abuse and trafficking for the betterment of society.



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC DISPLAY EXERCISE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED EXPLORATORY WELL DRILLING IN OREDO EAST FIELD OML 111, OLOGBO, IKPOBA-OKHA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EDO STATE BY NNPC E&P LIMITED.

In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act Cap E12 LFN 2004, which makes it mandatory for proponents of all new major development activities to carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of their proposal project, the Federal Ministry of Environment hereby announces a twenty-one (21) working days Public Notice for information and comments on the draft EIA report submitted by NNPC E&P Limited. The display is for the public to make inputs that shall enable the Ministry take informed decisions on the EIA of the project.

The Display Centers Are:

- Headquarters, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area, Ologbo, Edo State.
- Edo State Ministry of Environment & Sustainability, Benin, Edo State
- Federal Ministry of Environment Office, Benin, Edo State
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Environment House (Brown Building), Independence Way, Central Business District, Abuja-FCT.
- www.ead.gov.ng

Project Description:
The proposed project shall entail the drilling of five (5) appraisal wells (Oredo-East A-E) in Oredo East Field (OML 111) located onshore about 34km Southeast of Benin City, at Ologbo, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area, Edo State. Other activities include; location and site preparation, Mobilization of personnel/equipment's rig up, drilling casing etc. The aim of the project is to evaluate subsurface prospects for commercial amounts of hydrocarbons within the OML 111 block.

Duration of Display:
Date: 27th March – 26th April, 2024.
Time: 8:00am – 4:00pm Daily.

ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT MABUSHI, ABUJA F.C.T OR eia@ead.gov.ng ON OR BEFORE 6TH MAY, 2024.

SIGNED
PERMANENT SECRETARY
FOR: HONOURABLE MINISTER