

N12tr projects abandoned nationwide, survey reveals

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

ABANDONED capital projects worth about N12 trillion currently litter the nooks and crannies of Nigeria, according to a survey. It noted that the South-South zone has 1,755 projects amounting to N2.1trillion followed by the North-Central with N630 billion possess 1,844 projects. The North-East zone with 466 projects, accounts for N98 billion.

According to the Chartered Institute of Project Management of Nigeria, there are approximately 56, 000 abandoned government projects nationwide, valued at

• Professionals accused of aiding practice

the humongous N12 trillion.

According to spread, South-East hosts 15,000 projects, South-West, 10,000; South-South, 11,000; North-West, 6,000; North-Central, 7,000; North-East, 5,000 and Abuja, 2,000.

Norably among the unfortunate projects is monorail project in Rivers State, designed to cover 12 kilometres at the cost of N50 billion. Sadly, it was abandoned at the point of 2.6 kilometres when the former governor completed his second tenure in office.

Other abandoned projects in seven states include Minna Airport City awarded at the cost of \$600 million; Minna's five-star Hotel - N19.6 billion, Abia International Hotel, which needed N6 billion to come on stream. There is also the \$25 million expanded Jos Main Market, which also needed N5 billion for rebuilding.

Bayelsa Hotel needs N13.9 billion; Ibom Tropicana seeks N33 billion, Ibom Specialist Hospital (completed but shut down) wants N41 billion.

Decrying the large-scale abandoned projects in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), President of the Nigerian Institution of Architects (NIA), Tonye Oliver Braide, termed the development a national calamity that needed immediate action.

Braide, who lamented some of the projects were still at foundational stages despite gulping billions of naira, blamed professionals who cooked up reports to get paid.

According to him, there exists connivance

between the professionals and politicians during payment for these unfinished works.

In 2010, former President Goodluck Jonathan inaugurated the 20-man Ibrahim Bunu-led Presidential Projects Assessment Committee to, among other things, take inventory of all Federal Government projects, assess level of funding and completion status.

The committee, in its report submitted on June 2, 2011, unearthed 11,886 ongoing projects worth N7.78 trillion, which government had paid N2.696 trillion to contractors,

leaving a balance of about N5 trillion.

The panel blamed mass failure of public projects over the years on corruption, inadequate budgetary provisions, poor project conceptualisation and institutional weakness.

But Braide urged professionals to ensure that projects were started and completed.

To the President of Nigeria Institutions of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS), Mrs. Mercy Torkwase Iyortyer, professional bodies should assist government in ensuring that abandoned projects were identified and completed.



Minister of State for Health, Dr. Osagie Ehanire (left); Executive Director, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHC-DA), Dr. Faisal Shuaib and Ambassador of European Union (EU) to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Kentil Karlsson; during the commissioning and handing over of EU sign works and supplies in Abuja — at the weekend.

PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI

Seme-Krake border for inauguration in December

From **Oludare Richards**, Seme, Benin Republic

THE Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) says the Seme/Krake post bordering Nigeria and Benin Republic is to be commissioned December this year.

Chair of the Joint Committee on Infrastructure and Industrial Development/Agriculture, Environment, Water Resources and Rural Development, Kebba K. Barrow, made the disclosure during a visit to the border by the ECOWAS Parliament.

Barrow, who doubles as member of the National Assembly of The Gambia, noted that the Joint Border Post (JBP) project, earlier scheduled for commissioning in March 2017, is one of three regional JBP programmes of the ECOWAS Commission.

Others are Nope JBP (Ghana/Togo) with construction works completed and the Procurement and Installation of Equipment (in progress) scheduled for operation by December this year also.

He explained that there was going to be equal representation of personnel at the facility.

Why forfeiture of deposits over BVN shouldn't be allowed

•Group seeks to be joined in suit

From **Bridget Anochia**, Abuja

THE Incorporated Trustees of Total Support for Rule of Law and Justice Initiative has faulted moves by the Federal Government to obtain a court order for the permanent forfeiture of all deposits in all of the nation's 19 commercial banks without Bank Verification Number (BVN).

The group, which has already approached the Federal High Court, Abuja to be joined as defendant in a suit filed by the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami (SAN), against the commercial banks, said it wants to speak for and defend the interest of some Nigerians, who may

not have obtained their BVN based on some prevailing reasons beyond their control.

The group, in the motion filed by Chukwudi Igwe on its behalf, told the court that if the permanent forfeiture order was allowed, it may affect accounts previously owned by deceased persons who may not be able to appear to show cause why the proceeds should not be permanently forfeited to the Federal Government.

Other persons that may be affected by the order, according to the group, are those who may not have the finances to appear before the court for the purposes of showing cause why government should not take over money.

Youths are victims of graft, misrule, says Obasanjo

From **Sam Oluwalana**, Ibadan

THE Nigerian youths have been described as the usual victims of the misconduct of corrupt leaders in the country.

The vulnerable members of the society also pay for the sins they do not commit due to bad governance and corruption in our society.

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo, who made these assertions at the weekend in Ibadan, Oyo State capital, during the 2017 yearly public lecture of Dorcas Oke Hope Alive (DOHAL) Initiative, also added that the effect of corruption in Nigeria

was being shouldered by the over-burdened youths, people he described as vulnerable and defenceless.

Dorcas is the late teenage daughter of the founder of the Sword of the Spirit Ministries, Bishop Wale Oke, who died in 2011 when she was administered with an adulterated drug.

The foundation, which was founded in her memory by her parents, honoured Obasanjo, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, chairman of the occasion, Afe Babalola, Oyo State Governor Abiola Ajimobi and the Chief Medical Director of the University College Hospital (UCH),

Ibadan, Prof. Temitope Alinge, with DOHAL Ambassador of Hope.

Obasanjo noted that Dorcas' death was a direct result of corruption in Nigeria's health sector.

According to him, the youths in Nigeria now believe that the easiest way to get rich is to get government job.

He said: "The evil of men in authority has made living in the world very challenging for all but particularly for young people.

"Young people are the worst victims of social ills such as corruption and bad leadership, which seem to characterise our world today.

"A former American pres-

ident once said that when older men declare war, it is the youths that must fight and die. The youths substantially bear the brunt of the misconduct and misbehaviour of the elders.

"They pay for the sins they do not commit. While I am not saying that older men commit all the evil deeds of the world, it is important to stress that young people, because of their vulnerability and dependence on the decisions of older people, are always the majority to bear the brunt of bad leadership, bad decisions, bad families, bad society, bad politics, policies and governance."