

# NPA and The Agro-Export Initiative of the Federal Government



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## NPA Undertakes Robust Port Infrastructure Renewal



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The **Nigerian Ports Authority** provides professional port operations that meet the present and future needs of our customers.

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## Nigerian Ports Authority

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**T**o actualize our vision of becoming the Maritime logistics hub of choice in West and Central Africa, the current Management of NPA embarked upon a massive upgrade of Ports Infrastructure. The move is seen by many as a worthy initiative.

This edition of the NPT presents a must-read, highlighting the rehabilitation of the Control Towers at the Tincan Island Port and Lagos Port Complex, Apapa along with the provision of two state-of-the-art Tug Boats to enhance efficient service delivery and boost the trade facilitation programme of the Federal Government.

For years, the oil sector has been the main source of revenue for the nation. However, successive governments in Nigeria have made efforts to diversify the Nations' export base from the volatile commodity to Agriculture, so that the country can win its battles against unemployment, insecurity, and high poverty level.

The second lead story in this edition covers the Agro Export initiative of the Federal Government, its impact on our GDP and the laudable efforts of our Management in promoting this initiative.

The NPT crew spoke to various stakeholders like terminal operators, heads of government institutions and CEOs in Maritime industry to explore the contribution of the Agric Sector to the economy.

Additionally, our travelogue captures the Seat of the Caliphate in Sokoto State for your leisure. Furthermore, our sports enthusiasts can enjoy reading about the outstanding performance at the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) 2023 competition, where D' Tigress of Nigeria flew the flag high.

Enjoy!!!



**Josephine Moltok**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



**Successive governments in Nigeria have made efforts to diversify the economy and shift its focus from foreign earnings on the oil-based sector to Agriculture.**

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## À PARTIR DE LA TIMONERIE

Pour concrétiser notre vision de devenir la plaque tournante logistique maritime de choix en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre, la Direction actuelle de NPA (Port Autonome) s'est engagée sur une mise à niveau massive de l'infrastructure portuaire. Le mouvement est vu par beaucoup comme une belle initiative.

Cette édition du TNP est à ne pas manquer, elle met en lumière les réhabilitations des tours de contrôle du port de Tin-can Island et du port de Lagos à Apapa, ainsi que la fourniture de deux remorqueurs à la pointe de la technologie pour améliorer l'efficacité de la prestation de services et encourager le programme de facilitation d'échanges commercial du Gouvernement Fédéral.

Pendant des années, le secteur pétrolier a été la principale source de revenus du pays. Cependant, les gouvernements successifs du Nigeria ont fait des efforts pour diversifier la base d'exportation du pays, des matières premières volatiles à l'agriculture pour que le pays gagne le combat contre le chômage, la précarité, et un niveau de pauvreté élevé.

Le deuxième article principal de cette édition couvre l'initiative de l'agro-exportation du Gouvernement Fédéral, son impact sur notre PIB et les efforts louables de notre Direction dans la promotion de cette initiative.

L'équipe du NPT s'est entretenue avec divers intervenants, comme les exploitants de terminaux, chefs d'institutions gouvernementales et PDG de l'industrie maritime, pour explorer la contribution du secteur agricole à l'économie.

En plus, notre carnet de voyage couvre le siège du khalifat de l'état de Sokoto pour vos loisirs. De plus, nos amoureux du sport pourront en profiter pour lire les prestations exceptionnelles de D' Tigress du Nigeria qui a fait flotté haut le drapeau durant le tournoi de basketball organisé par la Fédération Internationale Basketball en 2023. Amusez-vous!!!



**Josephine Moltok**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



# FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Fellow Stakeholders,

I am greatly delighted and honoured to welcome you to the second half of the year 2023, I salute your dedication, discipline, determination and partnership which culminated in the Authority's highly commendable revenue generation of 191.4 Billion for the first half of the year.

By this sterling performance, we have collectively proven to the government and indeed all stakeholders that we are worthy of every bit of confidence reposed in us as trade facilitators and our mantra of being a National Brand Asset Anchored on Service Excellence is no fluke.

However, it is good to remind ourselves that this superlative performance has also stirred public interest and raised the bar of what the nation expects from us by the end of 2023. We owe it to ourselves and our country to out-perform the previous success.

As a management team, we pledge to remain relentless in our commitment to providing the enabling atmosphere for peak performance. In addition to staff training and re-training which we have intensified recently, we are acquiring and deploying state-of-the-art work tools such as the newly commissioned Control Towers for Lagos Port and TCIP Port complexes, the Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) 80 tons Bollard Pull Boats (which is the first-of-its-kind in Africa), the re-equipment of the Staff Medical Centre and the modernization of Staff Recreational Centre which all happened in the period under review signposts our readiness to provide necessary performance enablers.

As a demonstration of our poise to actualize the ambitious but achievable revenue projection of N500bn (five hundred billion naira) we have set for ourselves by end of 2023, all hands are required to be on deck and focused on finalising financing arrangements for our ports rehabilitation drive.

I also want to mention our commitment towards the conclusion of the digitalisation programme geared towards improvement of efficiency and collaboration with landlocked neighbouring countries like Niger and Chad with whom we have already opened discussions to patronize our ports as hubs for transshipment cargo.

I thank you very much for your sustained support and urge you to keep your eyes on the ball as we soldier on into a year-end that promises to be better than the previous.



**Mohammed Bello Koko**  
MD, NPA

# MESSAGE DU BUREAU DU DIRECTEUR GENERAL

Amis intervenants,

Je suis très heureux et honoré de vous accueillir au second semestre de l'année 2023. Je salue votre dévouement, votre discipline, votre détermination, et le partenariat, qui ont permis à L'Autorité de générer des revenus très louables de l'ordre de 191,4 milliards de nairas pour le premier semestre de l'année.

Suite à notre excellente performance, nous avons collectivement prouvé au gouvernement et en fait à toutes les parties prenantes que nous méritons toute confiance qu'ils placent en nous en tant que facilitateurs commerciaux, et notre mantra d'être un atout de marque national ancré sur l'excellence du service n'est pas un coup de chance.

Cependant, il est bon de se rappeler que cette performance superlative a également suscité l'intérêt du public et a élevé la barre pour ce que la nation attend de nous d'ici fin 2023. Il est de notre devoir et envers notre pays de surpasser nos succès précédents.

L'équipe de la direction, promet de travailler sans relâche dans son engagement à fournir l'atmosphère favorable pour une performance maximale. Outre la formation et le recyclage du personnel, que nous avons intensifiés récemment, nous avons pourvu et déployé des outils de travail de pointe tels que les tours de contrôle nouvellement mises en service pour le Port Autonome de Lagos et du port TCIP, l'Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) Bollard Pull Boats de 80 tonnes (qui est le premier du genre en Afrique), le rééquipement du Centre médical du personnel et la modernisation du centres de loisir du personnel, tout ceci ont eu lieu durant la période en cours, et indique notre bonne volonté à fournir des facilitateurs de performances nécessaires.

Comme marque de notre assurance à atteindre cette projection ambitieuse mais réalisable de revenus de 500 milliards de nairas (cinq cents milliards de nairas) que nous nous sommes fixé d'ici la fin 2023, nous allons centraliser toutes nos efforts et se concentrer sur la finalisation des arrangements de financement pour notre campagne de réhabilitation du port.

Je tiens également à mentionner notre engagement pour la mise en point de la numérisation orientée vers l'efficacité, l'amélioration et la collaboration avec les pays voisins enclavés comme le Niger et Chad, avec qui nous avons déjà entamé des discussions pour qu'ils fréquentent nos ports comme plaques tournantes pour le transbordement des marchandises.

Je vous remercie beaucoup pour votre soutien soutenu et vous exhorte à continuer sur nos objectifs alors que nous avançons vers une fin d'année qui promet d'être mieux que la précédente.





# A NATIONAL BRAND ASSET ANCHORED ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE



The **Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA)** aims to provide professional port operation which meets the current and future needs of our customers.

Applying a proactive and innovative approach in managing the Ports in Nigeria maximises operational efficiencies and provides real value for money to all our stakeholders and port facility users.

- Efficiency - Customer Satisfaction - Safety & Security - Innovation -

## Nigerian Ports Authority

*...To be the Maritime Logistics Hub for Sustainable Port Services in Africa...*

### Our Port Locations:

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# NPA Undertakes Robust Port Infrastructure Renewal

*The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko is currently championing the renewal of infrastructure across the nation's seaports to global standards. In this report, OLUBIYI OMIDIJI and FRIDAY EZE take a look at some of the giant steps taken by the Managing Director as well as where the Federal Government needs to help consolidate on these milestones.*

Stakeholders in the maritime industry who spoke with the NPT in various interviews have given the Managing Director of NPA kudos for repositioning port infrastructure to become the logistics hub in Africa.

The stakeholders said they were happy that the NPA boss is addressing the problems of aging port infrastructure and replacing obsolete equipment.

Speaking with the NPT, the former President, Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents, (ANLCA) Alhaji Shittu

Olayiwola, commended the Managing Director and his management team for fixing the Control Towers at the Lagos Port Complex (LPC) and the Tin-Can Island Port, which were in a decrepit and non-functional state for many years before Bello-Koko assumed office.

Stakeholders, Shittu said that the NPA, under the leadership of Bello Koko took the giant step so that the maritime sector, which has the capacity to contribute immensely to the nation's economy, will not continue





## Nigerian ports are becoming a preferred destination in West Africa



to falter or flounder.

Shittu pointed out that before the recent efforts by Bello-Koko, “the ports were yearning for increased efficiency in order to compete favourably with other ports in the sub-region. Indeed, for several years, it has been adduced that some Nigeria-bound cargo may have found their ways into Ports in neighbouring countries.

This, according to the ANCLA chieftain, “is the direct corollary of dilapidated port infrastructure, long cargo dwell time, poor vessel turnaround time, a long clearing process and port congestion resulting from traffic gridlocks along port access roads.”

Shittu also flayed the budgetary allocations to the ports, which, according to him, “are paltry when compared with other ports in the region”.

“It is based on the deep understanding of the port that makes the current management of the Nigerian Ports Authority under the leadership of Bello-Koko to know that all is not well with our ports; hence, his decision to fix some of the dilapidated infrastructure.

According to Shittu, “the growth in the remittances to the Federation Account by the NPA, growing operational capacity, rehabilitation of port infrastructure, enhanced navigational and security aids are proof that things are changing with Bello-Koko in the saddle.”

Other stakeholders who spoke with the NPT agreed that the port has been recovering cargo previously lost to neighbouring countries following improved infrastructure along the roads leading to the port, effective truck traffic management and ease of cargo movement in and out of the ports.

A maritime lawyer, Mr Muhammed Oluwaseyi, said “Nigerian ports are becoming a preferred destination in West Africa, following the completion of the Lekki deep seaport, rehabilitation of dilapidated port roads, port decongestion and the enforcement of the electronic call-up system that was rolled-out by the current management of the Authority to boost efficiency.

### Port Infrastructure And Its Benefits To Maritime Trade

Port infrastructure refer to the physical facilities, structures, and equipment that enable the loading, unloading, storage, and handling of cargo, passengers, and vessels at a seaport. It includes various components such as berths, quays, piers, docks, container yards, warehouses, cranes, navigation channels, breakwaters, and other supporting facilities. Port infrastructure play a crucial role in facilitating maritime trade and other related activities, making seaports essential gateways for imports and exports.

The importance of good port infrastructure to a country’s maritime trade cannot be overstated. In the first instance, a well-designed port infrastructure allows for the smooth and efficient movement of cargo between ships and land-based transportation, such as trucks and trains. This enhances the speed and reliability of cargo handling operations, reducing turnaround times for vessels and minimizing congestion at the port.

Secondly, a modern and well-equipped port can handle larger vessels and higher cargo volumes, expanding the country’s trade capacity. This attracts more shipping lines and encourages foreign trade partners to utilize the port, promoting economic growth and international trade.

Furthermore, efficient port infrastructure can lead to cost savings for importers and exporters. Reduced waiting times, faster cargo processing, and lower turnaround times for vessels contribute to overall cost efficiency, making goods more competitive in the global



*Port Training Institute,  
Dockyard, Apapa,  
Lagos*

market.

It is also pertinent to note that a good port infrastructure enhances the connectivity between different modes of transportation, such as rail, road, and inland waterways. This integration facilitates the smooth movement of cargo to and from the port, supporting the development of regional trade and logistics networks. As the world tends towards intermodal transport system, this is a potential area for Nigeria's Federal Government to explore in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the country.

It is also common knowledge that ports with robust infrastructure generate employment opportunities directly and indirectly, stimulating economic development in the surrounding areas. Port activities lead to job creation in cargo handling, logistics, warehousing, and other related services that culminate in a multiplier effect on the economy.

Foreign investors are often attracted to Countries with advanced and well-maintained port infrastructure, since reliable and efficient ports are seen as a sign of a conducive business environment, encouraging investment and industrial development in the region. Moreover, Ports serve as critical gateways for goods and people, making the security of port infrastructure vital for a country's overall

national security. Adequate security measures and well-planned infrastructure help prevent illicit activities, such as smuggling and terrorism. This factor also defines a country's level of investor-friendliness, as security of investment remains a paramount consideration for all investors.

Finally, modern port infrastructure can also be designed with sustainability in mind, incorporating eco-friendly practices that reduce the environmental impact of port operations. This includes implementing energy-efficient technologies, reducing emissions, and promoting waste management.

Investing in and maintaining high-quality port infrastructure is, therefore, a critical aspect of a country's overall economic development and global competitiveness.

### **Which is the best port infrastructure in the world?**

Rotherdam Port infrastructure has been elected the best port infrastructure in the world by the World Economic Forum several times. This ranking is mainly due to its modern facilities, the extensive hinterland network and the major investment projects in





Rotterdam.

### Can Nigeria Garner Inspiration From Dutch Ports?

This ranking of Dutch Port is mainly due to its modern facilities, the extensive hinterland network and the major investment projects in Rotterdam.

The Nigerian Ports can learn valuable lessons from the Dutch Ports regarding investments in port infrastructure. One key takeaway is to emphasize modernization, upgrading existing infrastructure, and developing new facilities to accommodate larger vessels and handle increased cargo volumes efficiently. Additionally, developing a strong hinterland network, with well-connected rail and road links, allows for seamless transportation of cargo, reducing logistics costs and improving overall efficiency.

Furthermore, encouraging more public-private partnerships (PPPs) can attract investment, provide access to advanced technologies, and benefit from private stakeholders' expertise in managing various port infrastructure projects. Another crucial aspect is prioritizing sustainable practices, like those pioneered by Dutch Ports, to reduce the ecological footprint, promote energy efficiency, and implement waste management in



**Mohammed Bello Koko**, Managing Director, NPA

line with global sustainability standards.

By adopting these key takeaways, Nigerian Ports can enhance competitiveness, efficiency, and sustainable growth. Moreover, prioritizing strategic planning and long-term investments, along with a customer-centric approach, will attract more business and strengthen customer relationships. Lastly, benchmarking and learning from successful global ports will provide valuable insights for continuous improvement.

### Steps being taken by NPA to improve port infrastructure

In an exclusive interview with the NPT, the Managing Director said the management of the Authority has taken the bold step in rehabilitating the moribund Control Towers as part of their efforts to position our ports for



greater efficiency.

“We wasted no time in mobilising the necessary resources to rehabilitate and equip them with cutting-edge technology to respond to the exigencies of domain awareness and the multiplicity of other functions such as Vessel Traffic Management, Navigation Assistance, Advance Visibility, Safety and Security, Emergency Response, Communication, Resource Management and Disaster Risk Mitigation amongst other crucial functions which a Control Tower enables,” Bello Koko said.

## NPA commissions Control Towers

As part of its drive to further reduce vessel-turn-around time and enhance operational efficiency at the nation’s seaports in Apapa and Tin-Can, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has commissioned the rehabilitated Control Towers at the two Lagos ports.

Speaking during the inauguration, its Managing Director, Mohammed Bello Koko, said the newly renovated Control Towers would improve Vessel Traffic Management, Navigation Assistance, Advance Visibility, Safety and Security, Emergency Response, Communication, Resource Management and Disaster Risk Mitigation amongst others.

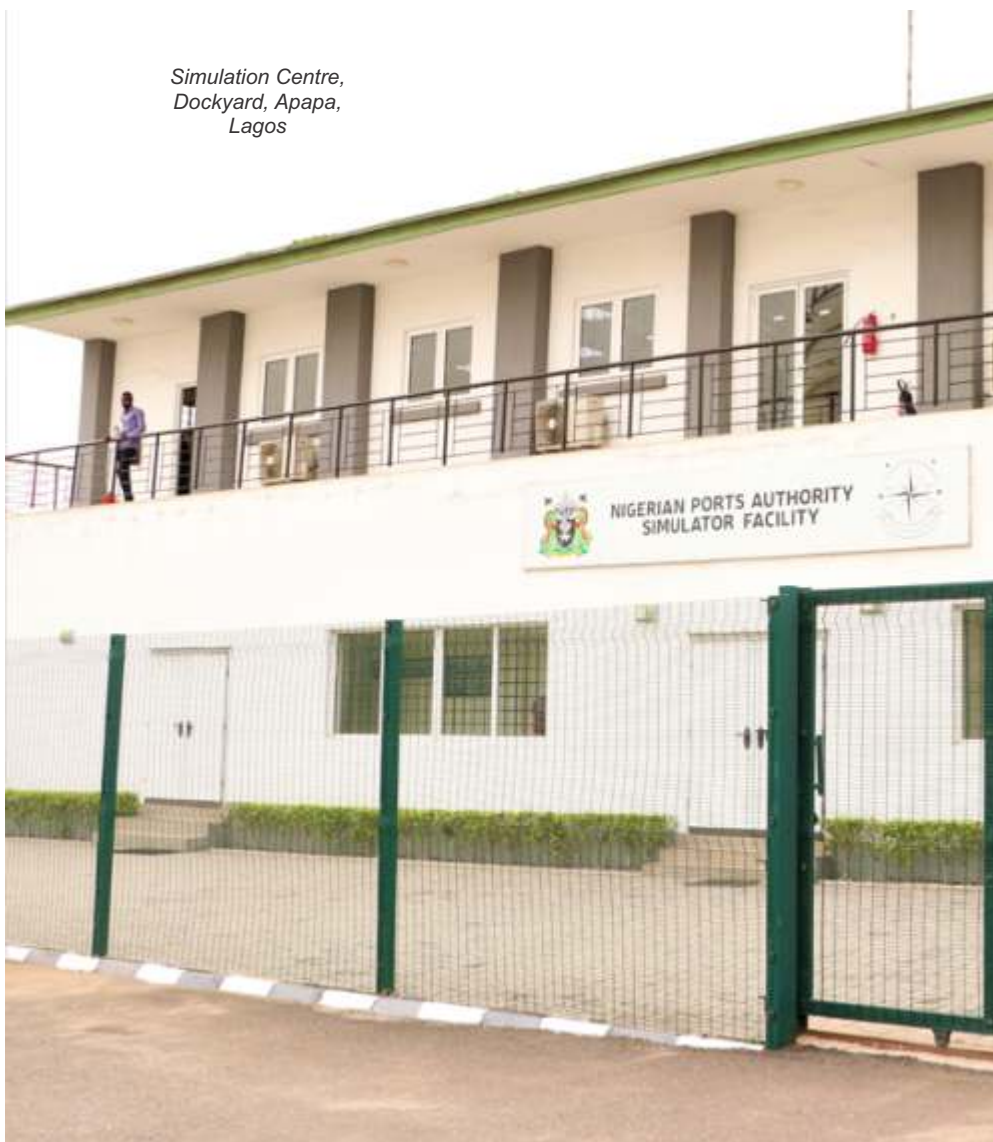
“The commissioning of the Control Tower signposts our unwavering commitment towards improving operational efficiency through aggressive infrastructure and equipment renewal.”

“The multiplicity of functions such as Vessel Traffic Management, Navigation Assistance, Advance Visibility, Safety and Security, Emergency Response, Communication, Resource Management and Disaster Risk Mitigation amongst other crucial functions which a Control Tower enables are the reasons why we placed the equipping of this facility on top priority as a management team.”

“As most of us are aware, safety and security constitute critical operational preconditions necessary for the actualization of our strategic intent of becoming the maritime logistics hub for sustainable port services in Africa, which is why we placed a high priority on putting in place a modern Control Tower of this nature in order to enhance our domain awareness capability.”

He added, “Given the decrepit and non-functional state we met this facility, the decision to invest so much towards making it the state-of-the-art and well-equipped edifice was made taking cognizance of the need to equip our highly cherished and well-trained marine talents with the

*Simulation Centre,  
Dockyard, Apapa,  
Lagos*



right tools and comfort required to deliver efficient services to our stakeholders.”

“Sustainably providing Efficient Port Service in a Safe, Secured, and Customer friendly environment requires that we ensure and assure that we are up to date in terms of skill and equipment, and I will like to assure you that beyond this commissioning today, we are resolved to continually equip and re-equip this facility whilst training and re-training its users to be best-in-class.”

“It would be pertinent to mention that we are in partnership with the Nigerian Navy, to have our signal stations rehabilitated, re-equipped and located near the naval base for improved communication. Also, we are in partnership with NLNG Ship Management Limited to provide VTS that will ensure improved operational efficiency.”

Also speaking, NPA’s Executive Director, Marine and Operations, Onari Brown applauded the renovation of the building. “It is for work and it’s mainly for those on





duty and those who work here”, he says.

#### **NPA commissions Tug Boats to receive transit cargo**

In June this year, as part of its moves to attract transit cargoes from landlocked countries, the NPA commissioned two Bollard Pull Tug Boats ahead of the expected transit cargo at the Lekki Deep Sea Port in Lagos.

Bello Koko disclosed that the inauguration of Bollard Pull Tug Boats would support port security, patrol, surveillance and deliver excellent marine services to operators and stakeholders.

The state-of-the-art tug boats were inaugurated by the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Dr Magdalene Ajani, at the Lagos Ports.

According to the Managing Director, the state-of-the-art

**We are in partnership with NLNG Ship Management Limited to provide VTS that will ensure improved operational efficiency**

vessels were apt, especially with the commencement of operations at the Lekki Deep Seaport.

“I am greatly delighted and honoured to welcome you to this occasion, which is a demonstration of this administration’s resolve to position the Nigerian Ports Authority to respond squarely to the contemporary demands of trade facilitation.”

“Imbued by our corporate aspiration of attaining hub status by more efficiently servicing domestic cargo needs, winning back transit cargo hitherto lost to our maritime neighbours and positioning to cater to the maritime requirements of our landlocked neighbours, we have deployed a three-pronged strategy driven by people, technology, infrastructure and equipment such as the state-of-the-art vessels we are gathered here to commission today.”

This occasion, he said, was “part of the fulfilment of our service charter to provide relevant marine crafts to support port security, patrol, surveillance and most importantly deliver excellent marine services especially with the commencement of operations of Nigeria’s first Deep Seaport, the Lekki Deep Seaport.

“Our determination to continuously enhance our operational efficiencies accounts for the purchase of these new 80 Ton Bollard Pull Tugboats christened M.T MAIKOKO and M.T DA-OPUKURO

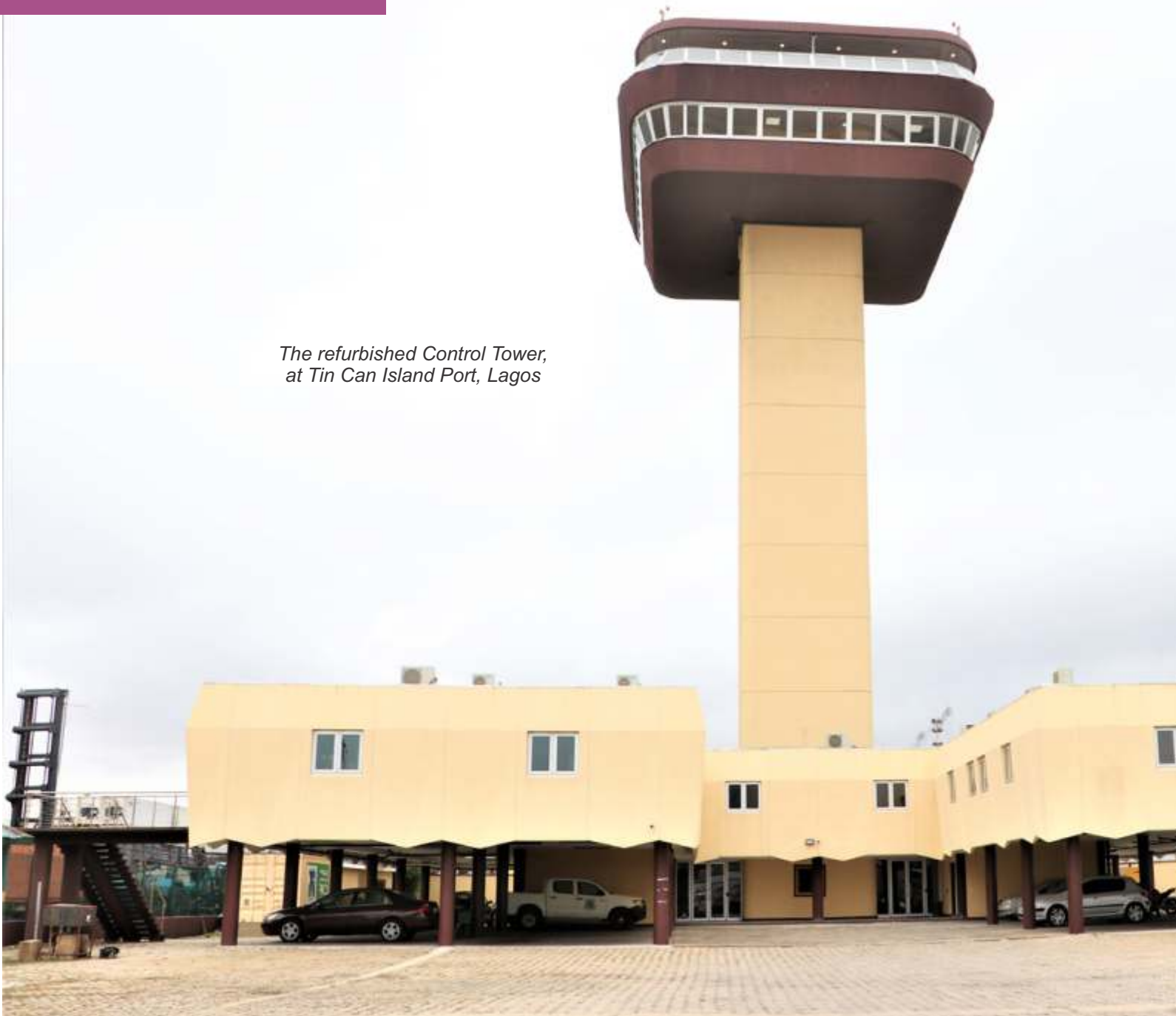
to complement our existing fleet of tugs and recently commissioned Security Patrol Boats (SPBs) and Pilot Cutters deployed to enhance channel security across all our locations.”

He said further: “These neoteric 80-ton tugboats are the first of the 2813 Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) Model in Africa constructed by the world’s leading ship builders (Damen) and they possess exceptional Seakeeping Behaviour, Superb Maneuverability of 360° using the Azimuth Thrusters, fire-fighting capability and Outstanding Towing Characteristics which will enhance the maneuvering of large capacity vessels of 300 Metres LOA and above presently calling at our Ports.”

“In addition to positively affecting the turnaround time of large vessels, their deployment will enable stakeholders to leverage on the concomitant benefits of economies of scale, especially cost savings.”

Bello-Koko pointed out that the deployment of the

*The refurbished Control Tower,  
at Tin Can Island Port, Lagos*



Lekki Deep Seaport as launch pad for transshipment remains unwavering, adding that the inauguration of the tug boats is an attestation to the NPA management's doggedness and commitment to the noble cause.

He assured consignees, concessionaires and other stakeholders of continuous improvement in service delivery from the NPA under his leadership.

On her part, the Permanent Secretary, Dr. Ajani, said the acquisition of the 80 Tons Bollard Pull Tugboats, the first of its kind in Africa, had accentuated the determination of the Federal Ministry of Transportation to boost port operational efficiency.

"My joy derives from the fact that the acquisition of this equipment, amongst many others that are in the works, signposts Nigeria's seriousness to optimise the

opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement to which we are signatory."

"Maximising the comparative advantages that our maritime assets as a littoral nation confer rests heavily on how much we are able to deepen our efficiencies through the deployment of relevant technology and equipment."

While appreciating the efforts of the Bello-Koko led Management the Permanent Secretary said: "I particularly want to commend the NPA Management team for delivering on this project in good time to support the optimisation of the Lekki Deep Seaport. This is the kind of efficiency that the Ministry supports its agencies to entrench in the polity and I am happy that we are making progress."

She pledged the support of her ministry to the NPA and





The significance of a quay wall in port operations cannot be overstated. It serves as the primary interface between the land and water, acting as a critical connection point for maritime activities



other agencies of the Federal Government in terms of inter-agency collaborations in the attainment of the overarching goal of making Nigeria a global reference point of excellence in the facilitation of international trade.

#### Protecting Investment At The Port

In March this year, the Nigerian Ports Authority increased the security layers at Tin-Can Island Ports with the erection of a concrete perimeter fence and the installation of an Automated Access Control Gate to protect the multi-billion dollar investment in the port.

The Managing Director said the fence would ensure that only people that should be in the port had access.

“We can see that Tin Can has been fenced using

concrete walls from the outside. The essence is to secure the port, not just because of safety but also to restrict entrance. Some individuals would just wake up in the morning and want to come into the port with no business in the port.”

He added that by reducing the number of persons and restricting entry into the port, pilfering, theft, thugs and also miscreants would be reduced.

The fence, according to him, “will create an enabling business environment within the port as referred by the International Ship and Port Facility Code (ISPS).”

He added that the fencing of ports would ensure individuals who had no business in the ports were kept out and assured that the usage of Automated Access Control Gates would be enforced.

The NPA boss expressed joy with what he saw at the port, adding that there were fewer people on the port premises compared with what obtained in the past.

#### Fixing Collapsed Quay Wall

Stakeholders and port operators have called on the Federal Government to support the NPA in fixing the collapsed quay wall at the Lagos port to end the diversion of Nigeria-bound cargoes to other ports in the Republic of Benin, Togo and Ghana.

The former Minister of Transportation, Mua’zu Sambo, an engineer, confirmed that the collapsed quay wall at the ports that will cost the NPA millions of dollars to fix.

A quay wall, also known as a wharf or quayside, is a structure built along the waterfront of a port or harbor to provide a docking facility for vessels. It is a solid, vertical or sloping wall made of concrete, steel, or other durable materials, extending from the shoreline into the water. Quay walls typically offer a stable and secure platform where ships can berth for loading and unloading cargo, embarking and disembarking passengers, and carrying out other essential port operations.

The significance of a quay wall in port operations cannot be overstated. It serves as the primary interface between the land and water, acting as a critical connection point for maritime activities. By providing a designated space for vessels to moor, quay walls facilitate efficient and safe cargo handling operations. This ensures quick turnaround times for ships, minimizing delays and reducing the overall time it takes for goods to reach their destination.

Moreover, quay walls are essential for optimizing the utilization of available waterfront space in a port. They allow for orderly berthing of vessels, maximizing the number of ships that can be accommodated simultaneously. This, in turn, increases the port’s capacity to handle larger volumes of cargo and passenger traffic, leading to enhanced trade and economic growth. The stability and strength of quay walls also play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of vessels and personnel during berthing and unberthing procedures, safeguarding against accidents and damage to ships and port

infrastructure. Overall, a well-designed and efficiently operated quay wall is vital for the seamless functioning and success of a modern port facility.

The Nigerian Ports Authority has suffered incidents of collapse of Quay Walls across various seaports in the country. from crumbling of the Mclver Jetty and a section of Shoreline Terminal in Calabar in 2007 and 2018 respectively to the collapse of Rivers Port's Berths 7 and 8 in 2018 and the more recent collapse of a section of Five Star Logistics Terminal in 2019 in Tin Can Island Port. All these incidences have combined to heighten the calls for the rehabilitation of Nigeria's Port infrastructure by maritime stakeholders.

#### Alarm over collapsed quay wall at Tin Can Port

About three years ago, the management of Five Star Logistics Terminal at the Tin Can Island Port Complex raised the alarm over the collapse of the cable ditch along the quay apron of berths 9 and 10 respectively at the terminal.

Five Star Logistics Terminal is the operator of the roll-on/roll-off terminal at the port, where both berths cover 437.03 meters.

Speaking during a tour of the facility in Lagos, its General Manager, Wolfgang Schneider, said the management of the terminal had called the attention of NPA to the issue.

According to him, it is the responsibility of NPA to repair the tower light area to the quay apron in line with the lease agreement.

He said the collapsed portion of the quay apron is taking up commercial space at the terminal, calling for NPA's urgent intervention.

He said: "We are losing a lot of space, which could stack up to 100 containers as a result of this collapsed portion. Any heavy object cannot go along the area because it is very dangerous. The quay wall has to be repaired first before we can fill up the failed portion to make sure that we are not sinking in."

#### What the NPA said:

Bello-Koko said the management had reviewed the decaying parts of the ports. He added that the Authority had started discussing with some lending firms, stressing that the agency did not have the intention to borrow.

"Tin Can Island Port is practically collapsing. We need to focus our budget towards the rehabilitation of those quay walls at the Tin Can Port. We have taken a holistic review of the decaying infrastructure at our ports and have decided that it is very important that we rehabilitate Tin Can and Apapa Ports."

"What we have done is to start talking to lending agencies, even though we don't intend to borrow. We are asking how



**Dr. Magdalene Ajani**

Perm Sec, federal Ministry of Transportation

much money they will invest in the port terminals."

"However, if we go and borrow money to rehabilitate those ports, then what the terminal operators are paying will have to change. The rates will have to go up. If we don't do that, these terminal operators will keep managing those places, and

the ports will keep collapsing. Because of their financial interest, these terminal operators don't want us to re-construct the affected port terminals because that will mean stopping them from operating."

"We have had interest from the World Bank, among others. Surprisingly, it was the World Bank that gave money to the NPA to construct part of the Apapa Port so many years ago. The World Bank has come again to tell us that if we need funding, they will give it to us."

Addressing reporters in Lagos, Bello-Koko said: "The reconstruction of Tin Can Island quay walls is top on the agenda

because it is the Port requiring the most urgent intervention. As most of us are aware, owing to successive decades of neglect, the cost implication for fixing the Port infrastructure deficit far outweighs

the budgetary provision at our disposal.

However, we have explored and identified sustainable Public-Private Partnership funding options which we have put forward to the



**The reconstruction of Tin Can Island quay walls is top on the agenda because it is the Port requiring the most urgent intervention.**



government for necessary approvals.”

“I am glad to inform this distinguished gathering that we are at the conclusive stages of discussion with local and international partners with the requisite financial and technical competence to fund the Tin Can Port reconstruction project. In the meantime, we are fixing what is within our capacity.

Only recently, we inaugurated a state-of-the-art control tower for Tin Can and the Apapa Ports.”

### **Need for US\$800m to fix ports infrastructure**

Stakeholders said with the delay by the management of NPA in getting approval for the \$800 million it needs to fix the dilapidated ports infrastructure across the country, ports condition may worsen as some of the quays might collapse totally and prevent ships from coming to the affected terminals and lead to cargo diversion.

Shittu said the dilapidation of major seaports infrastructure such as Tin Can Island Port and Apapa Port in Lagos, Onne Port in Rivers State and Escravos breakwaters in Warri Port and Calabar Port in Cross River has continued to cause setbacks for trade facilitation and hinder the much-anticipated growth and revenue generation of the Federal Government as shipping companies are now using other ports in the neighbouring countries.

Findings have shown that about 85 per cent of these ports’ infrastructure are over 40 years old and need urgent attention from the Federal Government.

Bello Koko, had, at the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) Europe and Africa Regional meeting this year, also said about \$800 million was needed to rehabilitate these ports’ infrastructure.

He said the loan would be repaid in seven years, adding that it was still being worked out by the relevant government agencies.

If the project would be funded by the NPA, it would reduce its contribution to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) of the Federal Government because of the terms of repayment.

Bello-Koko said further that the rehabilitation would include the digitisation of the ports as port rehabilitation and remedial works were no more effective. He added: “Palliative and remedial works are no more effective. These ports need total rehabilitation. There is also a plan to rehabilitate the Escravos breakwaters in Warri Port.”

### **What ex-Minister Sambo said**

The former Minister, Sambo confirmed the lack of funds as a major reason for the delay in the rehabilitation of the port since he visited them for assessment before he left office.

Then he confirmed that the NPA had commenced talks with Afrexim Bank, which had expressed its readiness, but with conditions that are not insurmountable for the NPA. Similarly, NEXIM Bank and Engineering Construction Plus Financing (ECPF) have indicated interest in the financing options.

“There are certain conditions that Afrexim Bank has put forward. They are three key conditions. I know that two of them are very easy to meet. The third one involves Sovereign Guarantee and the government needs to clear that,” he said.

He said further that a delegation of NPA management had held a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning on the issue.

“We have the quay apron and quay wall problem in Tin Can Island. We have collapsed quay wall problem also at the Onne Port, we have the challenge of breakwaters at Warri Escravos. These are dilapidations that will cost us millions of dollars.”

“We must go through the entire process of public procurement Act as required by law. We have to ensure correct structural designs; the cost is well done and every survey is done whether biometric or hydrological. This must go to the Federal Executive Council. NPA does not have the resources in the hundreds of millions of dollars for it now,” the former Minister said..

### **What importers and clearing agents said**

Importers and clearing agents have raised concerns over losses of container ships destined for the Tin Can Island Ports (TCIP), Lagos to ports of neighbouring countries due to the collapsed quay aprons at the terminal.

The revenue meant for the country, one of the clearing agents, Kolade Aladejobi explained, was being diverted to the ports of neighbouring countries.

Aladejobi expressed concern about the delay in fixing the dilapidated port infrastructure. He urged the incoming administration to address critical infrastructure supporting the economy.

“The two Lagos ports are very crucial to the economy. They generate billions of Naira weekly to the purse of the Federal Government, its agencies like the Customs, NPA, NIMASA, SON, and others at the port,” he added.

Many importers, who spoke with NPT, expressed concern over the decaying infrastructure at the seaport and called for urgent action by the government.

One of the importers, Mr Sunday Godwin, decried the decaying infrastructure in and around the Tin Can Port and urged the Federal Government to fix them to make the port more competitive and attractive for business.

“One of the major challenges importers and clearing agents at the Lagos ports face is the poor condition of the port infrastructure, especially in Tin Can Port,” he said.

He advised that the ports should be run like businesses by the private terminal operators and government agencies supervising them.

“The Federal Government must ensure that the



**Dr. Eugene Nweke**  
Former President NAGAFF



**Mr. Shittu**



**Adewale Adeyanju**  
President General MWUN

seaports are run as institutions by those in position of power and not as a mere appendage of the Federal Government if they must meet the yearnings and aspirations of millions of Nigerians and foreigners doing businesses in our ports," he said.

### **The era of mega carriers**

A former President of NAGAFF, Dr. Eugene Nweke, also expressed concern over the state of the ports.

Nweke, who is also the Head of Research at the Sea Empowerment Research Centre, explained that "ports are vital components in the shipping business and act as physical interchange or middle grounds for the trading community".

He noted further that to utilise the proper ship accommodation, balance floating at anchor and ease the flow of water traffic, a port requires the availability of docks, floats, piers, gangways and other conveniences or support facilities, thereby facilitating the turn-around time of the vessel.

He said ports must be run and controlled as efficient organisations, adding that inefficiencies of the ports will result in costly delays for ship owners who cannot afford it, especially when the daily costs of running a big container ship are so high.

"We are in an era of mega carriers which entails that a port is equipped with the most modern cargo handling facilities to keep productivity at an optimum level," he said.

### **Involve terminal operators**

The Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) stressed the need for the government to get terminal

operators involved in the renovation of port infrastructure through collaboration.

Its President General, Adewale Adeyanju said that his members are not happy; due to poor infrastructure and maintenance at the port.

"I gave part of my job to you on behalf of the government, and where you are making a lot of money, the place is sinking. The NPA and other agencies must wake up and ensure that terminal operators are involved in repairing their terminals, it should not be the government alone.

"Terminal operators should not wait for the government to repair the terminal. There are some tenants that would not wait for landlords to come and repair their homes. Go to their toilet and see what we are saying; so many infrastructure have not been put in place, we have been giving them a lot of benefit of doubt," Adeyanju added.

### **Last line:**

The deplorable condition of port infrastructure has cost Nigeria heavily. It calls for urgent attention if the country will be competitive in maritime business and attain a hub port status in the West and Central African sub-region.

Now is the time to support NPA in developing port infrastructure that meets global best standards.

If this is not done, the Federal Government will not be able to realise the revenue potential of the sector based on the deteriorating port infrastructure that can lead to dwindling ship calls and cargo traffic.

The management of the NPA, is doing everything possible to ensure that the deteriorating state of some of the infrastructure does not affect the port community: the terminal operators, regulatory agencies, government revenue generation drive and trade facilitation by taking bold steps in fixing some of the facilities.

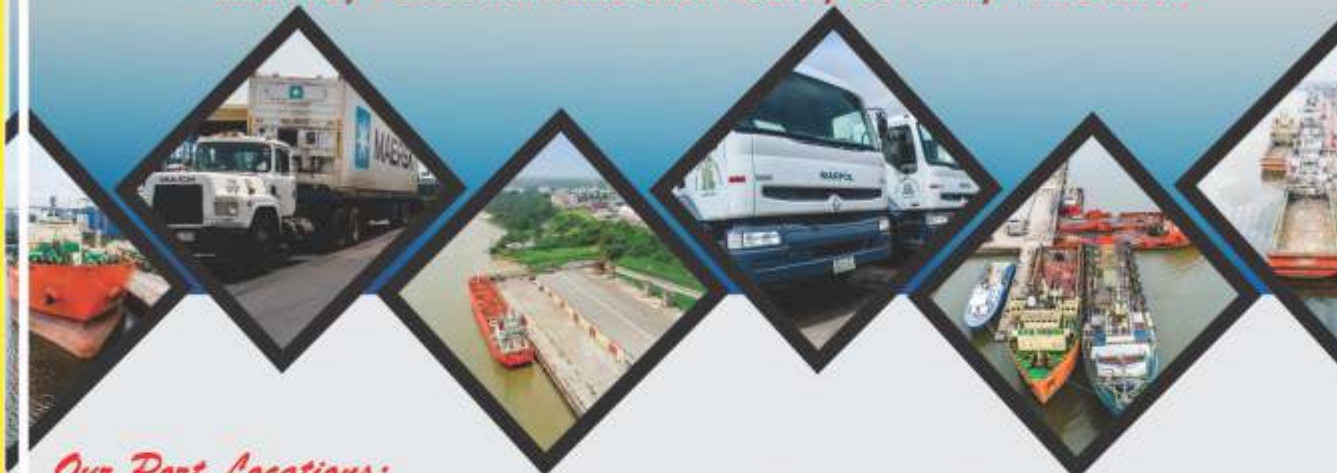




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**- Efficiency - Customer Satisfaction - Safety & Security - Innovation -**



### *Our Port Locations:*

**Lagos Port Complex, Apapa**  
P.M.B. 1021, Apapa Lagos  
Email Address:  
lpcinfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

**Tin Can Island Port**  
P.M.B. 1201, Apapa, Lagos  
Email Address:  
ticipinfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

**Rivers Port, Port-Harcourt**  
Basket House, P.M.B. 5043  
Port-Harcourt - Rivers State  
Email Address:  
riverinfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

**Calabar Port Complex, Calabar**  
New Calabar Port Complex  
P.M.B. 1014 Calabar,  
Cross-River State  
Email Address:  
calabainfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

**Onne Port Complex, Onne**  
Onne Port Complex,  
P.M.B. 6199 Onne,  
Rivers State  
Email Address:  
onneinfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

**Delta Ports, Warri**  
P.M.B. 1054, Warri,  
Delta State  
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deltainfo@nigerianports.gov.ng

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## Infrastructure Is Germane To Port Efficiency And Competitiveness

*The Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko, in this interview with the Editorial Team of Nigerian Ports Today explains the reasons behind his unique drive for the rehabilitation of port infrastructure and how he is repositioning the port to become the logistics hub in West and Central Africa.*



**What informed your port rehabilitation drive?**

As you know, infrastructure is germane to Port efficiency and competitiveness. So, to actualise our strategic intent of being the maritime logistics hub for sustainable port services in Africa, we needed to address the problem of aging port infrastructure and equipment, the positive effect of which is already being felt across the nation's sea ports.

**What was the state of the Control Towers before its rehabilitation by your Management?**

The Control Towers for Lagos and Tin-Can Island Port Complexes were in a decrepit and non-functional state. In keeping with our drive to position our ports for greater efficiency we wasted no time in mobilising the necessary resources. We were able to achieve this by rehabilitating and equipping them with cutting edge technology to respond to the exigencies of domain awareness and the multiplicity of other functions such as Vessel Traffic Management, Navigation Assistance, Advance Visibility, Safety and Security, Emergency Response, Communication, Resource Management and Disaster Risk Mitigation amongst other crucial functions which a control tower enables.

**What arrangement have you put in place to maintain the Control Towers?**

We understand that the sustainability of investments such as this rests heavily on how well we maintain them. We have tasked the user Department under the leadership of the Executive Director Marine & Operations to take frontline ownership of the facility and ensure effective maintenance. I am persuaded they would deliver. This is a clear departure from the past where maintenance responsibility is not clearly spelt out.

**How would the Control Towers improve efficiency in our Ports?**

As inferred in my earlier response, Control Towers enhance our domain awareness capability and that in itself implies that we can control input and output.

**How will these additional crafts enhance revenue generation?**

The acquisition of the craft will in several ways improve and provide efficient marine services, this we have promised our stakeholders and we intend to keep to every letter of that service promised. Note with efficiency comes increased customer satisfaction, and with increased customer satisfaction comes increased patronage and of course increased revenue.

**Do you have the plan to acquire more of such crafts?**

Certainly. We do not intend to rest on this. We



**Our drive towards new port development remains relentless, and our efforts are beginning to crystallise.**

understand that success not improved upon, easily becomes failure. So, we intend to continuously outdo ourselves in terms of efficient service delivery.

**What other areas of port development is the management looking into in the nearest future?**

Our drive towards new port development remains relentless, and our efforts are beginning to crystallise. For instance, apart from the approval already secured for Badagry Deep Seaport, we have also secured approval for Ondo Deep Seaport, Snake Island and Koko Ports, whilst providing technical guidance for other upcoming ports.

**What is the management doing to rehabilitate the collapsing quay walls of the Tin-Can Island Port?**

If you have been following the news, you must have discovered that we are at conclusive stages of securing the necessary approvals for the best financing option for the reconstruction of Tin-Can Island Port Complex. We have undertaken due diligence with reputable local and international institutions with the requisite technical and financial competence to fund, not just the reconstruction of Tin-Can, but all the other ports we have identified infrastructural deficits.



# There's pressure on port facilities — Durowaiye

*In this interview with **Omidiji Olubiyi**, the General Manager, Managing Director's office; Mr Ayo Durowaye, speaks on the current state of port infrastructure and laments the pressure on port facilities.*

### **Generally, what qualifies as port infrastructure?**

Port infrastructure include the facilities that support the arrival and departure of the vessel in a port or a harbour. That includes the breakwater, the Quay apron, and the buoy that guide the arrival of the vessel within the channel. Ports will not exist without the deployment of these important infrastructures and superstructures, because they play a significant role in ensuring that vessels that are arriving receive effective custom services.

### **Tell us the present state of port infrastructure in Nigeria**

If we are talking specifically about Nigerian ports, we should understand that some of our ports are very old. Indeed, we have ports that have existed for over 100 years;

like Rivers Port. Therefore, we should know that through wear and tear, a lot of these facilities have worn-out and even those that were built in the 1970s, including Warri, Calabar, Tin-Can ports have spent significant number of years and they have therefore, experienced a lot of deterioration.

If you are to do an appraisal of infrastructures across the port, you will notice that we require efforts to improve them and to renew them. That said, I think there's a deliberate effort by management to look at the state of these facilities and to begin a renewal effort that will support the next phase of development and service delivery by Nigerian Ports. In summary, the Ports, particularly those in Lagos are where we receive a



significant part of cargo in terms of volume. I think Lagos supports between 60 per cent and 65 per cent in terms of volume of cargo that arrives at the country.

**Recently, the management embarked on rehabilitation of Tin Can Island and Apapa Ports. What informed this decision?**

Rehabilitation of Tin-Can and Apapa ports is actually a major project that the current management has embarked upon. I have been around in the Authority for quite a while, and I think this is one of the major rehabilitation work that has taken place on the Control Towers in the Lagos ports. The deliberate approach taken by the management is quite commendable, because management actually deployed not only financial resources, but technical support to ensure that the best was done concerning the control towers.

For a port like ours, the primary means of communicating with vessels outside our shores or those that are approaching our shores is through the Control Towers and the facilities that are there, help our harbour masters to be able to interface with vessels that are approaching our territorial waters and also coming to our port. So, what informed management's effort is to improve service delivery to vessels that are coming into our port and to also increase the competitiveness of our ports among its peers in the sub region. The commendation received by management, particularly from the harbour masters and the port management in both ports, underscores the importance of these facilities. It also provides a transit environment for Pilots that are arriving, so that they can do their work effectively. I believe those are some of the reasons that underline management's focus and determination to improve those facilities. This has been achieved.

**With the Control Towers in place, what are we expecting to see differently in NPA operations?**

What you will see in practical terms, and you can verify this with those in the harbours department, is that it will improve (first) the working environment for harbours personnel, particularly the pilots. Like I said, it provides a transit environment for those that are going to be deployed to service vessels that are arriving. It will also improve communication between the vessels that are arriving and our personnel, particularly those that are monitoring and handling the port control. They are the people that are really communicating with these vessels. It provides an opportunity to monitor more effectively what is happening within the channel, and also to guide vessels arriving on their movement. Therefore, it has a lot of positive implication for the service delivery and efficiency of our port.

**Recently, two tug boats were commissioned by the Managing Director. What do we intend to see with the crafts in place?**

Specifically, two 80-tonne tug boats were recently acquired by the management to service the operation at the Lekki Port. As you are aware, Lekki Deep Sea Port puts Nigerian Ports Authority in pole position now in the



Mr. Ayo Durowaye



**We have ports that have existed for over 100 years**

competitiveness, among ports in the sub-region. So, the deployment of these very expensive tugs is to raise the status of this port, and the ability of Nigerian Ports Authority to berth bigger vessels within the port environment. As you are aware, once these bigger vessels arrive at Lekki, smaller feeders will come to pick some of the cargoes that are dropped, particularly boxes, to places within and outside the immediate port environment. And this has a way of boosting trade and also helping the Nigerian ports to recover a lot of the cargo which it has lost to other ports within the sub-region. Therefore, the equipment will improve our competitiveness. Lekki Port is definitely a

game-changer. The purchase and deployment of these 80-tonne pull-and-pull tugs is a big signal that Nigeria is back in terms of the competitive edge within the sub-region. It's a big milestone; one that we should all be happy about.

**Are there other areas of focus to improve Port Infrastructure?**

When we are talking about port infrastructure, all of these quay walls are some of the major things that you see management focusing on in terms of major infrastructure renewal. Starting with ports in Lagos, Tin-Can is in focus, and then Apapa, with other ports to follow. But more than that, there are a lot of other things that management is doing, Policy-wise; for example, there are series of policy deployments over the last three or four years that management has been doing that is helping to improve the port environment and boost efficiency.



**CHARLES BAMIDELE OKAGA**  
PORT MANAGER  
LAGOS PORT COMPLEX

## Management Repositions The Ports For Operational Efficiency — Okaga

**T**he Port Manager, Lagos Port Complex, Apapa, Mr. Charles Okaga, in this interview, said the management has positioned the ports for operational efficiency based on the newly rehabilitated Control Towers and the attendant positive changes it will bring. Florence Onweagba and Omidiji Olubiyi report.

### What are your thoughts about the recent rehabilitation of the Control Tower?

The recent rehabilitated Control Towers are testament to the commitment of the Management of the Nigerian Ports Authority to position the Ports for operational efficiency. As we all know a Control Tower is the point from which ship traffic in and out of the ports are managed.

Furthermore, they serve as the coordination point from where port control and communication with incoming and outgoing vessels are made. The towers also provide

comfort for shipping as an important facility for guaranteeing safety of navigation through effective communication.

With the installation of state-of-the-art equipment, it boosts the confidence of the international shipping community towards port patronage.

Finally, this has also improved the confidence of our marine officers who now operate in a more comfortable work environment hence at ease for 24 hours service.

### With the commissioning of the Tower, what positive changes are we likely to witness?

We expect to witness better traffic management, improved safety of navigation within the territorial water and improved port productivity through reception of higher draught vessels. Also, we hope to experience sustained trust in our service provision by the international shipping community and reduced occurrences of marine accidents which may arise from poor coordination of traffic along the channel. More importantly quick turnaround of vessels.

### What was the state of the Control Tower before the recent rehabilitation by Management?

The state of the Tower before the rehabilitation could be better described as decrepit. The hostel facility for mariners was completely obsolete and not fit for accommodation. This caused a lot of problems for expedient ship services, by the Pilots and Mooring Men. They have to travel several hours to get to work rather than having a well-equipped hostel for proximity. The elevators were nonfunctional and

unserviceable; the communication equipment were outdated and there were several issues of service delivery failures etc.

### How are you collaborating with other agencies with the tower in place?

Management in its wisdom has appointed a maintenance contractor for management of the facility. The

Authority's role is to ensure adequate supervision of the facility management company for utmost efficiency in its functions.

On the part of the Stakeholders, our advocacy would be for them to treat the facility with a sense of ownership. This way adequate care would be exercised in handling the equipment.

### What is your take on Trade Facilitation with the Control Tower in place?

As highlighted earlier, a functional Control Tower aids trade facilitation through quick turn around time of vessels and serves as a surveillance platform to deter nefarious ship movement along our channels.

This will invariably culminate in increased revenue generation, increased efficiency, and productivity as well as increased safety and security in line with the provisions of relevant International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) instruments.





Capt. Daniel Hosea

## Benefits of the Rehabilitated Control Towers to the Operations of NPA — Capt. Daniel Hosea

Generally, Control Towers contribute to the overall effectiveness and productivity of the seaport, making it more reliable and attractive to shipping companies and stakeholders.

The detailed advantages of a Control Tower are as follow:

**Accommodation:** The Control Tower provides accommodation for all the sections of the marine and harbour operations. This includes the Harbour Master office, Pilot section, radio signal station, Vts station, and mooring and berthing section.

**Enhanced Safety:** A control tower allows for centralised monitoring and coordination of activities within the seaport. It enables real-time tracking of vessel movements, ensuring safe navigation and minimising the risk of collisions or accidents. The tower can provide weather updates, tidal information, and other critical data that can help guide ship movements and improve overall safety.

**Boost Efficient Traffic Management:** With a control tower, port authorities can efficiently manage vessel traffic within the seaport. The tower acts as a nerve centre, coordinating the arrival and departure of ships, optimising berthing schedules, and facilitating smooth movement of vessels in and out of the port. This helps minimise congestion, reduce waiting times, and improve overall operational efficiency.

**Improved Resource Allocation:** A control tower provides a comprehensive view of the seaport's operations, including available berths, cranes, and other resources. This visibility allows port authorities to make informed decisions about resource allocation, ensuring optimal utilisation and reducing idle time. By effectively managing resources, the seaport can enhance productivity and reduce costs.

**Enhanced Emergency Response and Security:** In the event of an emergency or security threat, a control tower becomes a vital command centre. It can quickly communicate and coordinate responses with relevant stakeholders, such as port security, emergency services, and local authorities. The tower's monitoring capabilities enable early detection of potential security breaches or safety hazards, allowing for prompt intervention and mitigating risks.

**Environmental Management:** Control towers can contribute to environmental sustainability in seaports. By monitoring and controlling vessel movements, they can help enforce regulations related to emissions, noise pollution, and other environmental concerns. The tower can facilitate the implementation of eco-friendly practices and ensure compliance with environmental standards, promoting a greener and more sustainable seaport operation.

### Data Analytics and Decision

**Support:** Control towers gather and analyse vast amounts of data related to seaport operations. This data can be used to identify trends, optimise processes, and make informed decisions. By leveraging advanced analytics and modelling techniques, the control tower can provide insights into operational performance, identify bottlenecks, and suggest improvements, leading to enhanced efficiency and competitiveness.

As a whole, the above benefits enhanced turnaround time in berths/ ports because of effective and efficient traffic monitoring, improved safety and security, and boosting Radio/Signalman morale, hereby improving productivity. The range of radio communication is improved because of the height of the Control Tower and radio wave obstructions are reduced.

Also, we enjoy timely tracking of illegal movements into ports as a result of end-to-end visibility without obstruction because of height and radio watch.



# NPA and The Agro-Export Initiative of the Federal Government

By Omidiji Olubiya and Friday Eze

**T**he current Management of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), under the leadership of Muhammed Bello-Koko has embraced the Agro-Export Initiative of the Federal Government to boost International Trade and generate more revenue.

The Initiative is an important programme that is aimed at promoting and supporting the abundant exportation of agricultural produce available across the country.

To give a fillip to the drive, the Nigerian government, in partnership with various international organizations and development partners, has initiated a range of activities aimed at improving the competitiveness of agricultural exports and enhancing the capacity of small-scale farmers and agro businesses to participate in the export market.

One key aspect of the Initiative is the promotion of high-value crops such as cocoa, cashew, sesame seeds, Shea butter, hibiscus and others. These crops have significant export potentials and can generate substantial income for farmers and exporters.

To support the export of these crops, government has invested in infrastructure development, especially road networks and transport facilities. This is in addition to providing technical assistance and training to farmers and exporters.

The Agro-Export Initiative also includes measures to improve the quality and safety of agricultural products, including the implementation of standards and regulations for food safety, hygiene, and quality control. This is important for ensuring that Nigerian agricultural produce meet international standards and can compete in global markets.

The Initiative has the potential to generate substantial income for small-scale farmers and agribusinesses, promote economic growth, and enhance food security.

However, there is still much work to be done to improve the capacity of farmers and exporters, strengthen infrastructure, and overcome trade barriers and challenges in international markets.

The Agro-Export Initiative is open to all individuals and organizations involved in agricultural production, processing, and export. This includes small-scale farmers, agribusinesses, exporters, processors, and traders.





To participate in the Agro-Export Initiative, interested individuals or organizations can register with the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), which is the government agency responsible for promoting and supporting non-oil exports, including agricultural products. The NEPC provides a range of services to members of the Agro-Export Initiative, including market intelligence, product development, quality control, packaging and labelling, export financing, and access to export markets.

Membership in the Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria provides numerous benefits to farmers and agro businesses, including increased access to export markets, technical assistance and capacity-building support, and the opportunity to generate higher income and improve livelihoods. It also supports the overall goal of promoting sustainable agricultural practices and reducing poverty in rural areas.

### Areas of Operation

The Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria is visible in various areas related to agricultural production, processing and

export. Some of the key areas of operation include:

1. **Product development:** The initiative works with farmers and agro businesses to develop new and innovative agricultural products that meet the needs of export markets. This includes identifying high-value crops with export potential and developing new varieties that are more resistant to pests and diseases.

2. **Quality control:** The initiative promotes the implementation of standards and regulations for food safety, hygiene, and quality control to ensure that Nigerian agricultural products meet international standards and can compete in global markets.

3. **Packaging and labelling:** The initiative helps farmers and agro businesses to develop attractive and functional packaging and labelling for their products to enhance their appeal to international buyers.

4. **Logistics:** The initiative works to improve transport and logistics infrastructure, including improving road networks and transport facilities, to facilitate the movement of agricultural products from rural areas to ports for export.

5. **Marketing and promotion:** The initiative provides support for marketing and promotion activities, including trade fairs, exhibitions, and business matchmaking events, to help Nigerian agricultural exporters connect with international buyers and expand their customer base.

6. **Capacity building and training:** The initiative provides technical assistance and capacity-building support to farmers and agro businesses, including training in areas such as product development, quality control, packaging and labelling, logistics, marketing and promotion.

### Collaborating Agencies

Apart from the key roles of the Nigerian Ports Authority, the Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria involves various agencies and organizations, both within Nigeria and internationally. Some of the key agencies and organizations that the initiative collaborates with include:

1. **Nigerian Export Promotion Council:** The NEPC is the government agency responsible for promoting and supporting non-oil exports, including agricultural products. The Agro-Export Initiative collaborates closely with the NEPC to provide a range of services to exporters, including market intelligence, product development, quality control, packaging and labeling, export financing, and access to export markets.

2. **Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The Ministry is responsible for the development of agriculture and rural development in Nigeria. The Agro-Export Initiative collaborates with the Ministry to promote the development of agricultural value chains, increase agricultural productivity, and support the export of agricultural

# INTERVIEW

products.

3. International Trade Centre (ITC): The ITC is a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization that provides technical assistance and capacity-building support to businesses in developing countries to help them access international markets. The Agro-Export Initiative collaborates with the ITC to provide training and technical assistance to farmers and agro businesses in Nigeria to enhance their export readiness.

4. African Development Bank (AfDB): The AfDB is a multilateral development bank that provides financial and technical assistance to countries in Africa. The Agro-Export Initiative collaborates with the AfDB to support the development of infrastructure and value chains in the agricultural sector in Nigeria.

5. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): The IFAD is a specialized agency of the United Nations that provides financial and technical assistance to small-scale farmers and rural communities in developing countries. The Agro-Export Initiative collaborates with IFAD to support small-scale farmers and enhance their capacity to participate in export markets.

The Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria collaborates with a range of agencies and organizations to promote the development of the agricultural sector and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets.

## Present Challenges

The Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria faces several challenges that affect its ability to promote agricultural export and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets. Some of the present challenges include:

1. Inadequate infrastructure: The poor state of infrastructure in Nigeria, including roads, ports, and energy supply, limits the efficient movement of agricultural products from rural areas to ports for export.
2. Limited access to finance: Many farmers and agro businesses in Nigeria lack access to finance, which limits their ability to invest in production, processing, and marketing activities necessary for export trade.
3. Inconsistent government policies: Inconsistent government policies and regulations, especially related to taxes and tariffs, create uncertainty for farmers and agribusinesses and limit their ability to plan and invest in export trade.
4. Quality control issues: Quality control remains a major challenge for Nigerian agricultural products. Failure to meet international standards and regulations for quality control limits the ability of Nigerian agricultural products to compete in global markets.
5. Limited market access: Despite efforts to diversify markets for Nigerian agricultural products, the limited number of export markets and the presence of trade

barriers and competition from other countries remain significant challenges.

6. Climate change and environmental degradation: Climate change and environmental degradation are affecting agricultural productivity and the quality of agricultural products in Nigeria, which limits the ability of farmers and agro businesses to produce high-quality products for export.

These challenges limit the ability of the Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria to promote agricultural export and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets. Efforts are being made by the government and development partners to address these challenges and create an enabling environment for the growth of the agricultural sector in Nigeria.

## Landmarks

The Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria has achieved several landmarks since its inception. Some of the notable landmarks include:

1. Development of export value chains: The initiative has played a critical role in the development of export value chains for various agricultural products in Nigeria, including cocoa, cashew, sesame seeds, and hibiscus.







This has helped to increase the export of these products and generate foreign exchange earnings for the country.

2. Export promotion and market development: The initiative has provided training and technical assistance to farmers and agribusinesses in Nigeria to enhance their export readiness and competitiveness. This has led to increased export of Nigerian agricultural products to international markets and expanded market opportunities for Nigerian farmers and agribusinesses.

3. Development of export infrastructure: The initiative has supported the development of export infrastructure in Nigeria, including the establishment of modern packaging and processing facilities, which has helped to improve the quality and value of Nigerian agricultural products for export.

4. Collaboration with development partners: The initiative involves collaboration with various development partners, including the International Trade Centre (ITC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to farmers and agribusinesses in Nigeria.

5. Policy advocacy: The initiative has advocated

for policies and regulations that promote the growth of the agricultural sector and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets. This has helped to create an enabling environment for agricultural export and investment in the sector.

The Agro-Export Initiative in Nigeria has achieved significant landmarks in promoting agricultural export and enhancing the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets. However, there is still much work to be done to address the challenges facing the sector and achieve sustainable growth in agricultural export trade in Nigeria.

## **Creation of Dedicated Export Processing Terminals—The NPA Initiatives**

The drive by the Federal Government to transit from the oil to the non-oil sector of the economy has increased the focus on the development of the Agro-Sector of the economy both as a way of improving Foreign Exchange inflow into the economy and to ensure food security.

The need to address the hitherto unfriendly export environment led to concern by the Federal Government, following which the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) set as part of its agenda the need to streamline port operation to respond to the demands of trade facilitation.

The idea of establishing Export Processing Terminals by the Nigerian Ports Authority was not only accepted at the highest level of government, but the PEBEC ensured that the relevant government agencies collaborated to birth a new, effective and efficient logistics and documentation procedure for export.

As part of efforts to support government's Agro-Export drive, the Nigerian Ports Authority took steps to improve the logistics surrounding the inflow of export boxes into the Ports, including the loading and shipping of such export cargoes.

As a first step, the Authority approved part of Lilypond facilities as an Export Terminal. This is in addition to the establishment of Export Processing Terminals across Lagos and Ogun states, in collaboration with the Nigerian Export Promotion Council as Technical Partner.

The establishment of the Export Processing Terminals became more compelling following the provision of Presidential Executive Order 001 of 2017 which required the Authority to provide dedicated facilities for export cargoes as a measure towards promoting ease of doing business and trade facilitation.

To kick-start the process and make it highly competitive, a joint newspaper advertorial for Expression of Interest for The Certification of Export Processing Terminals to Service Lagos Port Complex and Tin Can Island Port Complex vide Public Notice No. 4152 by the Nigerian Ports Authority and the Nigerian Export Promotion Council, was released on Monday 26th April 2021 and closed on Monday 24th May, 2021.



*\*Bags of Cashew nuts at the warehouse ready for export*

The central focus of Management action in this regard was to further position the Nigerian Ports Authority as the gateway to the economy, and to play a pivotal role in ensuring export expansion and development through the seaports.

Additionally, Management interest to increase local capacity and participation in Nigerian export business was central both in consideration and certification of the Export Processing Terminals.

The EPTs initiative was also to insulate the export logistics processes from the hinderances to clearance and documentation of cargo for shipment at the main ports, as well as to ensure that the degradation of the value of Nigerian Export due to lengthy logistics procedure and waiting time was eliminated.

A total of 27 facilities were inspected by the approved Inspection Committee comprising of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) and Lagos State Government (for Lagos State Locations only), following which 17 were pre-qualified, out of which only 10 companies met the qualification threshold. Out of these 10, only five are currently operational.

To demonstrate government's commitment at resolving the issues on the creation of specialized export logistics centers, the Federal Government established a dedicated Customs command to coordinate the processing of export cargo at the EPTs from where any cargo cleared for shipment would access the port without interference or hinderance from any government agencies including Customs until the cargo is shipped, except where there is credible intelligence to the contrary.

These EPT facilities are fitted with requisite equipment for weighing, Customs examination, stuffing, storage etc.

Due to the space constraints at the main ports which have exceeded their as-built capacity for cargo handling especially for ports in the Lagos area, the Export Processing Terminals were conceptualized to transfer all handling procedures in the ports to the Export Terminals.

With the provision of Nigeria Customs Export Command and personnel deployed to cover all approved EPTs, any export cargo originating from the EPTs is presumed to have concluded all terminal handling formalities and would only be accessing the port for a seamless loading on to the ship for onward exportation.

The policy is currently at the experimentation phase, and we have witnessed tremendous success which promises a very bright future for ease of export cargo logistics processes.

Aside from the Customs, the CBN plays a crucial role in export documentation process and there is an ongoing collaboration between the CBN and the NPA for an Electronic Data Interchange for documentation validation to ensure a hitch-free processing of export logistics. This ensures that all export cargoes would have met the CBN NXP requirement for Forex declaration and repatriation into the economy.

As a new initiative which may experience some challenges, the NPA is in continuous stakeholders' engagement to allow for further familiarization with the





These facilities are electronically-connected to the central server from where traffic is called up to the ports on space availability basis only.

One of the benefits of this initiative is a drastic drop in the turnaround time of haulage vehicles in the ports of Lagos from an average of 14 days to less than 48 hours.

The introduction of EPTs is therefore NPA's response to the Presidential Executive Order 001 and the complaints of the exporters (particularly agro products exporters) about the degradation of their products before they get to the port of destination. This is due to hectic and lengthy logistics stay at the ports' corridor.

The desire of NPA is to achieve timely and predictable logistics processes for export, as a boost to the economic diversification programme of the Federal Government.

The NPA is not unaware of concerns raised lately. While EPTs are expected to charge for services and use of their facilities as venture capitals, the Authority ensures those charges are not replicated inside the port as the container arrives for shipment.

Indeed an internal review shows that the charges

when juxtaposed with the overall experience of exporters before the deployment of the electronic call-up system when export boxes were held up along the port corridor in the gridlock for days and weeks, pales into insignificance.

There is also a concern about the capacity of the number of export terminals approved to commence operations which the Nigerian Ports Authority is constantly monitoring and will increase the number of EPTs to match the growth in number of export boxes should the need arise.

For emphasis, the spatial distribution of approved EPTs ensures wide coverage and encourages intermodal cargo movement; both through the waterfront using badges and those who prefer the road corridor, thus providing choices for the different categories of exporters.

The reality is however that majority of genuine exporters have expressed a lot of relief with the current policy deployment. Data is also showing gradual increase in numbers which are certain to grow as we find stability.

The NPA is deploying very similar strategy that were used in addressing the gridlock along the port corridor for the EPT project and we are confident that the end result will benefit

policy.

Furthermore, shipping lines have been mandated to establish an electronic interface with the EPTs, with a view to deploying available spaces and boxes to be picked by the particular voyage.

Similarly, the EPTs are mandated to and have all installed weighbridges in line with the prescription of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) for export cargo to have Verified Gross Mass (VGM) certificates.

Noteworthy is the fact that one of the interventions of the Nigerian Ports Authority at resolving the problems of cargo flow in and out of the ports was the introduction of Electronic truck Call-up system (also called 'Eto'). This has ensured orderly arrival of trucks into the ports in the Lagos area through batching and sequencing, using a time belt for the different categories of trucks entering the ports.

This has ensured organised control and regulation of traffic in and out of the ports of Lagos, to mitigate the gridlock experienced at the ports which almost paralyzed socio-economic life in the commercial capital.

In this connection, all haulage movements in and out of the Ports are connected to a central control server to ensure orderly flow of traffic.

The Authority engaged a technical company for deployment of this solution, licensed private satellite car parks, container holding bays and the export terminals.







**\*Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) Headquarters**

genuine Nigerian exporters who were our primary focus when the policy was designed over two years ago.

The fears being expressed are therefore misplaced except that the activities of middle men who have held the Nigerian export community captive over several years, is about to be dismantled.

The integration of the Electronic Call Up system (Eto) and the NPA's insistence that under the EPT regime, call up shall be required for export trucks which will ingress the ports has caused significant changes in the status quo.

This step and the visible and successful collaborative efforts between the Authority and Nigerian Customs Service, which has led to the enforcement of the directives, in addition to the prospects of the integration of the CBN NXP procedures for greater accountability, is sending jitters to middle men and those who have hitherto hijacked an important aspect of the export value chain. They have been operating from non-verifiable locations and have been expecting to be allowed to access the ports from those locations.

For genuine exporters, while there are temporary teething problems that would soon be overcome, the EPTs represents a major leap and improvement both procedurally and cost wise.

The NPA calls for greater understanding among stakeholders as we push for bringing stability to the logistics surrounding arrival of exports to our ports and shipment of export boxes.

#### **Other specific interventions are:**

1. **Infrastructure development:** The NPA has invested in the development of port infrastructure, including the construction and rehabilitation of berths, jetties, and cargo handling equipment, which has improved the efficiency of cargo handling and facilitated the export of agricultural

products from Nigeria.

#### **2. Streamlined port procedures:**

The NPA has worked to streamline port procedures and reduce the time and cost of cargo clearance, which has helped to improve the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products in international markets.

#### **3. Capacity-building and training:**

The NPA has provided capacity-building and training programs for port personnel, customs officers, and other stakeholders to improve their knowledge and skills in handling agricultural exports and complying with international standards and regulations.

#### **4. Collaboration with stakeholders:**

The NPA has collaborated with various

stakeholders, including the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), and the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), to facilitate the export of agricultural products from Nigeria and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian products in international markets.

5. **Support for export promotion:** The NPA has supported export promotion activities, including the participation of Nigerian exporters in international trade fairs and exhibitions, which has helped to create awareness of Nigerian agricultural products and generate market opportunities for Nigerian farmers and agribusinesses.

Without doubt, the contributions of the Nigerian Ports Authority have been instrumental in the success of the Agro-Export Initiative. These efforts have enhanced the competitiveness of the agricultural produce in the international markets, and facilitated their export from Nigeria.

Significantly, thrust of the NPA's Initiative was the licensing of five export dedicated Terminals late last year. The five terminals are: Diamond Star Port, Terminals Ltd in Ijora, Sundial Global Trade and Service Ltd in Kirikiri, Bellington Cargo Ltd in Okokomaiko and Tenzik Energy Ltd in Kirikiri Lighter Terminal 1.

Presenting the operating licenses to the five operators, the Managing Director of the NPA, Mohammed Bello Koko charged them to support the Authority's efforts in creating the enabling environment that will scale-up Nigeria's export development initiative.

Koko told the operators that, "this initiative signposts the Nigerian Ports Authority's commitment to the implementation of the National Action Plan on Agro-Export and the Federal Government of Nigeria's desire to diversify the national economy from oil export to non-oil export".



# Nigeria Is Witnessing Rise In Agro-Produce Exports To Europe, Asia, Others

By Eugene Agha

In the past, Nigerians have suffered losses over failure to export their farm produce, but that narrative has changed as many agricultural produce now receive a boost with exportation to countries in Europe, America, Asia as well as other African countries. This analysis shows how Nigeria's agro-produce has fared in recent times.

Nigeria's agricultural produce exports in recent years have grown rapidly, with Europe, America and Asia being the major destinations.

The export of agricultural products to these countries now accounts for nearly 80 per cent of Nigeria's total exports.

Agro exports surged to a five-year high in 2022 amid a local production push, according to a report by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

The data shows that a total of N598.2billion worth of agricultural products were exported in 2022, accounting for 18.5 per cent increase when compared to the figure recorded in 2021. This has, in no small measure, pushed the interest of Nigerians into export business.

Interestingly, countries in Europe have become very important markets for Nigerian exporters, thereby making demand for agro export to surge.

The major export markets of Nigeria in Q4, 2022 were Spain, The Netherlands, India, France and Indonesia, according to the NBS Commodity Price Indices and Terms of Trade (Q4 2022) report.

Federal government's efforts targeted at encouraging both production and exports have contributed in no small measure to the sudden surge in shipments to the developed world.

Nigeria's quest to increase its export earnings received a significant boost in the fourth quarter of 2022 with the establishment of the Nigeria Customs Export Processing Command in Ijora, Lagos, with the command becoming a one-stop-shop for agro-export.

According to the NBS report, Nigeria exported N5.76trillion worth of items in 2021 and that increased in the first quarter of 2022 by 23.13 per cent, while imports declined by 0.67 per cent.

An analysis of the NBS Q4 2022 in terms of trade report indicates that the All-Commodity Group Export increased marginally by 0.04 per cent points between November and December 2022. This was majorly due to a decrease in prices of papermaking material; paper and paperboard, articles, live animals; animal products and an increase in the price of wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal and articles.

Some of the top export destinations are Spain, The Netherlands, France, India, and Indonesia. For instance, Nigeria exported major agro-produce to The Netherlands in the last quarter of 2022. It exported



superior quality cocoa beans valued at N43.91 bn and standard quality cocoa beans worth N3.91bn to the Netherlands. Nigeria also exported commodities to Indonesia during the period; they are superior quality cocoa beans (N7.99bn) and standard quality cocoa beans (N1.86bn).

Other items exported are mineral resources, such as lithium ore, manganese ore and zircon sand, to mention few.

From data available, cocoa beans top the list on the export chart, while cashew nuts, sesame seeds, hibiscus flowers, soya beans and ginger followed in that order.

Customs officials affirm that, the Lilypond Export Command, has reduced congestion along the access roads to the port and inside the port terminals, giving space for import containers, and that has given rise to a reduced cost of export business. It has reduced the issue of contract cancellation and the issue of pilfering of cargo has been eliminated.

They also confirmed that, "the Lilypond Export facilities have completely erased the issue of rejection and return of our agro-produce, which is usually caused by delay and lack of requisite phytosanitary certificates"..

To drive more exports, the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Dr Evelyn Ngige, recently announced the launch of the Domestic Trade House in China. This would boost exports to the Asian region.

She said, "I am happy to inform you that the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, has launched a Domestic Warehouse Initiative, which is a one-stop facility or terminal for storage of products, packaging and branding in preparation for ultimate transportation to ports.

"This initiative was set up to eliminate logistics challenges, which our exporters faced. The export warehouses are critical in fostering non-oil trade exports and reducing challenges experienced by exporters."

Dr Ngige further noted that China was deliberate because, through the Export Trading House, the volume of export and feasibility of seeing Nigeria's products and market share with countries will be enhanced.



## Top 10 Agro-Commodities Exported By Nigeria In 2022

### Cocoa beans

Cocoa is a revenue and foreign exchange earner for Nigeria, and the country is the fourth largest grower of the crop with 250,000 metric tonnes, according to data from the International Cocoa Organization.

According to the NBS, the value of superior-quality cocoa beans exported in nine months stood at N119.69 billion, accounting for 27.99 percent of total agricultural exports in the country within the same period.

The commodity was mainly exported to the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Indonesia, the United States, Malaysia, and Canada.

### Sesamum seeds

Nigeria's exportation of sesame seeds from January to September stood at N101.29 billion, accounting for 23.69 percent of the country's total agric exports within the period reviewed.

The country is among the top growers of sesame seeds globally, thus making the seed an important component of Nigeria's diversification plan.

China was the biggest importer of sesame seeds from Nigeria in the period under review. Other export destinations were China, Japan, Vietnam, Turkey, Greece, and Germany.

Sesame seeds could play a vital role in the country's quest to earn substantial dollars as global demand for the crop continues to rise.

### Cashew nuts in shell

The Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) has described Nigeria as a major and growing player in the cashew industry, with a rising market share in global cashew production and an annual average production increase of 5 percent.

The country produces 220,000 to 240,000 tonnes of cashew in the shell, lower when compared to its African peers like Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea Bissau, according to the NEPC.

It exported cashew nuts in shells to the tune of N60.89 billion in the nine-month period, accounting for 14.24 percent of the country's total agric exports within the period reviewed.

### Standard quality cocoa

The total value of standard-quality cocoa exported to Germany, Malaysia, Netherlands, Indonesia, Belgium, and Italy in the nine-month period was N24.15 billion.

The product accounted for 5.65 percent of the total agricultural exports in the country between January and September.

Nigeria's climate supports the production and supply of cocoa beans from October to June. This is a relatively long cocoa production period where 1.4 million hectares of farmland is cultivated. Herewith, the country can always guarantee supply.

### Cashew nuts shelled

Globally, Nigeria ranks among the top countries for sourcing cashew. Nigeria, according to the NEPC, is a leading exporter of premium quality raw cashew nuts, with an average 48 kernel yield out-turn.

Nigeria earned a sum of N16.93 billion from the exportation of cashew nuts shelled between January and

September 2022. It accounted for 3.96 percent of the total agric export value in the period under review.

According to the National Cashew Association of Nigeria, the country earned about N14 billion from the export of cashew in 2021 and is in the process of doubling the annual production of the commodity to 1,000,000 metric tonnes per annum.

Nigeria exported shelled cashew nuts to Vietnam, India, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Nepal within the period considered.

### Desiccated coconuts

Desiccated coconut is the grated and dehydrated coconut meat, usually drier than shredded coconut, and is mainly used in the bakery and confectionery industries.

Desiccated coconuts amounting to N13.86 billion were exported to Vietnam and India in the first six months of 2022, accounting for 3.24 percent of the total agricultural exports in the period. The country did not export the commodity in Q3.

### Ginger, neither crushed nor ground

Ginger valued at N11.32 billion was exported from January to September. Its exports accounted for 2.65 percent of the N427.6 billion total agro-foods exports in the period.

Citing statistics from the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the NEPC said Nigeria accounts for 40 percent of global ginger production, producing almost 523,000 metric tonnes annually.

According to the NBS, ginger is one of Nigeria's main agricultural export products, and it has ranked steadily as the fourth- or fifth-highest.

### Natural cocoa butter

The NEPC has said there is a lot of additional export potential for Nigerian cocoa butter. According to the council, the most promising market would be the Netherlands. Additional export potential is estimated at \$28.2 million up to 2021. Other interesting markets for increasing cocoa butter exports include France, Canada, Turkey and Poland.

Nigeria exported natural cocoa butter to the tune of N11.17 billion from January to September 2022, to Germany, Netherlands, and Estonia, accounting for 2.61 percent of total agricultural exports.

### Other frozen shrimps and prawns

Frozen shrimps and prawns accounted for 2.46 percent of total agricultural exports in the period under review.

Nigeria exported frozen shrimps and prawns at a value of N10.53 billion in the period.

Exported to the Netherlands, France, Belgium, the United States, and the UK, frozen shrimp is an essential ingredient for seafood meals; it can be added to salad, pasta, and other meals.

Other cut flowers and flower buds of kind suitable ornamental purposes fresh, dried, dyed

These were exported in the nine-month period, generating N10.45 billion and accounting for 2.44 percent of total agric exports within the period.

\*Culled from Business Day



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# Agro Export Initiative: Our eyes are on the ball — Onari Brown

*In this interview with NPT Team, the NPA's Executive Director, Marine & Operations speaks on the driving force behind NPA's Non-oil Export Initiative. He says, "We will never be distracted by the naysayers who do not believe in change".*

**What informed the Management's drive on the Agro Export market in Nigeria?**

One thing I will have to say is to amend the question a little. It is not just about NPA Management's thrust about agro export. Nigeria sees the discovery of oil as depending on just that one product. Oil has always been the only export product and over time we have come to realize that the fortunes of oil have started dwindling deep and government at various times have always talked about diversification of the economy.

**Talking about the diversification of the economy, what are the practical steps that have been taken to diversify**

**the economy?**

If you go to several parts of the northern part of this country, even in the southern parts; in some of the states, you will see agro products that are just being wasted and these are products that could be exported to earn more revenue for the country.

Government in its wisdom has looked at the export sector with all its impediments and said "okay while we are talking about diversifying the economy and there are several other sectors, let us put our focus first on the Agro sector and see what we can do in terms of facilitating the exporters."

They cannot talk about export without the Nigerian



Ports Authority, because Nigerian Ports Authority would definitely create a pivotal way. So, it is NPA keying into the focus of government.

We looked at it totally and we feel the obstacles we have in exporting the products are not encouraging to even exporters within the country and we need to take off these impediments; if not totally eliminate them, at least reduce them to the barest minimum and that is why we came up with the idea on this Export Processing Terminals; where we can make attempts to remove the impediments before these products go into the terminals for exports.

**While you were giving a background, you mentioned some impediments. What are those impediments?**

Mostly it is about the processes that exporters have to go through for the considered good to go or be on-board and there are some forms that they have to fill and documentations to carry out before the produce can be okay for exports. There are those from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Customs and others. What we are attempting to do is always make them understand these processes. The EPTs provide the opportunity for exporters to be properly guided on the process of the documentation, so that once they leave those terminals, there is no other obstacle. Another obstacle is leaving warehouses where containers are stuffed and then on the road where they are stopped or even getting into the terminals when their documentation is not complete.

**The NPA licensed five terminals, how did you arrive at these? What were the criteria?**

When the decision was taken to establish processing terminals, we didn't just stop at making a decision. We took steps. There were advertisements published on the dailies sometime in April 2021. We received about twenty-nine applications from people who were interested, we had to evaluate and screen them, and we came up with initially about nineteen. When we talk about criteria, we are looking at the size of the facility that is available. Is it a facility that can at least take in like 75 trucks at a time? And then the place; does it have communications that would be able to communicate with our Eto platform?

There are several things that were put in the advert and we went to the field to look at the state of readiness and paved environment where you can have all these agencies and government placed in the room and be able to take care of the roles they are supposed to play within that same environment.

We looked at all that and finally, we came up with; not just with five, there are also others that were given

provisional license. That is, we are seeing that you are interested and doing something. but you have not been able to meet our standard and expectations so we are giving them time.

But the five are the ones considered as ready to go. They have not just expressed interest, but have also shown capacity to do what is expected of them. There are other four that were given provisional licenses and they are still working. You must be seen working in line with NPA expectations. That is how they got there. If the ones given final approval are not able to meet up with the work expected of them, they can either cancel out-rightly or they are strengthened with the addition of more persons.

**Can you briefly explain what the *modus operandi* will be from these terminals?**

Operationally and by our expectation, they are supposed to be like a one-stop-shop for exports. Wherever they are coming from once they get there, it could be that stuffing is done there. It could be that stuffing has already been done outside of the export processing terminal and what is to be done there is maybe just examination. The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and all necessary relevant agencies of government, agencies approved by government to ensure the export meet standard are all there to examine and then ensure that the products are okay.

From there, the produce move to the Port seamlessly as I have said, so that on the road no Customs Officer is putting them through another round of examination. At the Ports too, no Customs Officer disturbs, knowing that this particular container is coming from an export processing terminal and it should be certain that everything that needs to be done has been done. And then they are also in communication with the shipping lines. They (that is, both terminal operators and shipping lines) know the number of boxes that they can take; and those are the boxes that will be allowed to exit the export processing terminals to the port for onward shipment.

We want to put a stop to a situation where some exporters that are just finding their way on the bridges and even while they are on the bridge and even at the terminal, they are still processing papers. We want to stop all these, we want a situation where these export terminals are in place and they can guide the exporters. The relevant agencies are there and before they leave the terminals, they must be sure that everything has been satisfied, and then they seal and it moves.

**How do you monitor their operation?**

The issue is when we even did the initial evaluation, we had a project delivery team that went to all the sites that we were invited to see and all that. And daily, they are always at this point to see what is happening. When



**Export Processing Terminals are supposed to be like a one-stop-shop for exports.**

we talk about monitoring, it's not just even about NPA. All the government agencies, the Customs, the Quarantine, etc are all there for the same purpose of monitoring and ensuring that standards are met.

NPA is just like the pivotal agency, we are the leaders leading all the other agencies, we are not just looking at boxes. But even the issue of how you treat the exporters that are coming to your terminal.

We are also to ensure that exporters are not ripped-off and you don't put additional burden on them; like when they are exporting outside of the export processing terminals, how much are they spending to get their boxes on the vessel?

We also monitor the charges that are imposed on them. For instance, no export processing terminal is allowed to charge for any service that is not rendered. For a cargo that has been examined; that probably comes there for weighing and all that, you will not charge for examination; you only charge for services rendered at the terminal.

Our desire is to ensure we make it easy for them to export their products, rather than the situation we used to have where boxes are just lying at the terminals for one reason or the other. We are not just monitoring exporters or the export processing terminals, we also monitor what happens even at the terminal in terms of the terminal operator, as well as the shipping lines.

So, the performance will be monitored by using several parameters. Whereas for the ones that are provisional, the standards that are set will always tick off. These are the standards; Have you met these criteria? And then you are good to go. But if you don't meet them within specified period, you could be appropriately sanctioned or terminated. In fact, we are determined to the level that we open it up just to Nigerians. There are also several other foreign interests that are interested in what we are doing. That is to show that it is something acceptable. In terms of monitoring, rest assured that everything is in place to ensure compliance with the desire and focus of the present administration piloted by NPA.

**The five that have been given go ahead to work; do you have a provisional time to review? Maybe you work for three years, you review and so on. Do you have any timeline for them to review?**

They were not given any timeline for review, it is a daily implementation. We have our daily monitors for anything that is not in-line. We tell the terminal operator; you are failing in this area, you are not meeting up in this area. If you do not correct, we will sanction. So, it is not as far as waiting for one year, two

years and allow you to keep doing what is wrong within two years before we evaluate. It's a daily, weekly evaluation.

## How is the management seen in this agro-export initiative by the 'outside world'?

Naysayers initially always reject change and sometimes people do not see the future. They don't see ahead. When people are used to a certain way of doing things, they will always want to stick to that way, even if you are bringing something that is better. For instance, a driver that has been using manual gear, when you give him automatic, it is better for him, it will be easier for him, but sometimes resistance will come.

So, naysayers will always be there. But the issue is that, NPA has tested this in several areas, especially like ETO. We got some levels of resistance but today, they will tell us that the worst of ETO is better than what they were used to. And I will not be surprised if there are naysayers outside or not. But what is our focus? Our eyes will be on the ball. We will not allow ourselves to be distracted by naysayers and those who do not believe in change.

There is room for fine-tuning, but there is no going back on this initiative. Government has seen that NPA is taking the right step and we are getting the support and the backing of government. So, we have the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council.

For people that think it is not proper. I just give them the benefit of the time. I believe that they will all struggle to keep it. Major exporters are talking to us and we are looking at them and also looking for a way to address the situation, we are not just going to proliferate EPTs everywhere for the sake of it, but as the numbers that did not even meet up with our advert in terms of application continues growing, we will expand. We will extend to even other areas. So, it is going to be things that we will replicate in the ports. This is just the pivotal point, the pilot scheme. By the time we perfect it, it will go to the other ports, because export is not just within the Lagos corridor.

## What is the level of collaboration between the NPA and other stakeholders?

When we talk about other stakeholders, there are several agencies of government. But one major government agency that is involved with exports that cannot be taken for granted is the Nigeria Customs Service. They are the greatest partners that we have. Nigeria Customs also saw the need for this; to the extent that they have established an entire Export Command, Nigeria Customs Export Command that is situated at Lillypond. The Nigeria Customs Service has been a good partner to NPA and I commend them for that.



**In terms of monitoring, rest assured that everything is in place to ensure compliance with the desire and focus of the present administration piloted by NPA**



# We have a lot of products that we can export

— Mrs. Ilori



**Mrs. Ilori Olufunke is a Senior Manager and Desk Officer of the Export Processing Terminal (EPT) of the NPA. In this interview, she talks about the whole concept of Export and Authority's initiative at raising the tempo of Nigeria's Export goods.**

## OMIDIJI OLUBIYI AND GBENGA SOYOMI

### What is the role of NPA in this new drive?

Export in Nigeria has a lot of challenges and these challenges can be traced down to delays in exportation. There are some people who are not really getting the specifications right, they don't know what to do. You find somebody that heard that cocoa brings a lot of money when you export it, so they just go get the products from the farmers; bring everything and package it into the container and get them to the Ports. It is when they get to the Ports that they will now realize that there are some specifications, inspections and all that they need to do to be able to get the product across. So they may abandon the products at the port and start running from pillar to post; at the end of the day the goods get bad and they don't meet the target.

It is because of all these difficulties and challenges facing the export business in Nigeria that the Presidency through Executive Order 001, mandated

Nigerian Ports Authority to create export terminals within and around the Ports.

As we all know, as at that time, the ports were filled to capacity, so Nigerian Ports Authority had to look for ways to ensure that these challenges were eradicated and that the goods get to the Port on time and have all the necessary Certifications that they need so that they can be transported to the various countries on time and in good quality. That is where the Nigerian Ports Authority comes in and they are also there to ensure that they manage the movement and transfer of all those export goods into the ports without any hindrance, through effective traffic management, giving the agro produce priority and all the necessary support.

### How did the NPA arrive at the number of Terminals?

Before I tell you the number, let me tell you what the Export Processing Terminals (EPTs) do. After that Executive Order 001 had directed NPA to create the export terminals, NPA realised that there was no space within the Port premises. So private engagements were

made through advertisement. There were a lot of companies that expressed their interests and at the end of the day, 10 of them were given approval and out of these 10, only five have been licensed. They took-off fully on the 2nd of April 2023. The EPTs are created to be a one-stop-shop for exporters to come in with their goods; it houses Customs, Quarantine Services. All the Certification and Inspection agencies that you need for your export products to be approved for export are domiciled in this Export Processing Terminals. Number one is that if you are not informed or you don't know anything about export, you can work with any of these processing terminals to seek their advice, and to be educated to learn more about the processes involved even before you bring any of your goods into the terminals. Secondly, you bring in your products to those that will certify them, for instance, the products you want to export to United State of America might not have the same Certification requirement as that of Europe. All these agencies that are domiciled at the EPTs know what each country requires. So, by the time you go there with your products, they need to know if it's going to the US, they will know the specifications and if it's going to Europe, they will know the specifications. So, if you are ignorant of this, you just end up taking the wrong thing to the market and at the end of the day, it will be rejected. That is why some of Nigerians exports are rejected abroad. These agencies are there to make sure that, that doesn't happen.

Exporters do not have to be running from one office to the other looking for all these agencies; they are already domiciled in the Export Processing Terminals. When the exporters get there, they meet with them; they take samples for whatever examinations they want to carry out. When you pass the test, Customs is also domiciled in this EPT. Customs will be there to witness when the products are being stuffed into the containers, they will be there to seal everything, to make sure that the inspection has been carried out from the scratch. And once the export containers leave the Export Processing Terminal, it goes straight into the port without any hitch.

They are barged in and are called up when their vessels arrive, they are called up to go into the Port; which is the traffic management. We are talking about EPTs so the exporters have products that are of good quality, that are certified and have the specifications of the countries where they are going. So that is what the export processing terminals are all about. There are options for everything, you can re-bag, if you come with lose products you can package them or do anything that you want to do in the terminal before you take them out.

### **What is the Standard Operating Procedure?**

We have a Standard Operating Procedure which they have to abide by and these standard procedures have been given to all the relevant agencies as well as the EPTs for inputs and all. It hasn't reached the final stage yet but it has almost reached; we just need one or two inputs for the



final SOP to come out.

There is a SOP they have to follow strictly to make sure that everything is in place. I told you NPA is in collaboration with other agencies. We are not doing this alone, that is why we have all these agencies domiciled. They are there to monitor if anything is going wrong, they are there to inform us about what is going on and then we hold meetings. We hold operational meetings with these EPTs and the Customs domiciled in those EPTs. We hold meetings every week concerning the operations, the challenges and everything that happens there and also physical inspections.

When we go there we inspect what is going on to see if they are complying with what we want.

### **Has there been any significant improvement in the deployment of the EPTs since inception?**

I won't say we are fully satisfied but there has been an improvement. This is not where we used to be but we have not reached where we are going. We are all working towards it and all hands are on deck to make sure that this Export Processing Terminals work and by the time they work and they do what they are supposed to do the volume of export will increase,





and the acceptability of Nigerian products outside will be higher.

We will be able to compete with our counterparts from different countries unlike the time products from Nigeria instead of being exported from Nigeria will be taken to Benin Republic or any other country. Now that we have this in place, it can now be exported from Nigeria in good quality, at the right time to meet the targets and with the right specifications.

We are not there yet but we are working towards it but I will tell you there has been an improvement from where we are coming from.

#### **With the EPT in place, what are their prospects to the GDP of the Country?**

Yes, there are a lot of prospects and for any country to be able to generate enough revenue, exports have to be the major thing. Export has to be higher than import which is the case that we want in Nigeria. We have a lot of products that we can export. We have a lot of things that we can sell, products that are wasting away and getting bad in the farm that should be used to make money.

We can use these things as a good source of

revenue and foreign exchange for the government. There are lots of prospects; by the time the exporters get it right, come to the Exports Processing Terminals and know what to do at the right time, know the right specifications, go out to meet their targets. Once they keep coming like that and those people in various countries are happy with Nigerian goods, there will be higher demand and exporters will now be able to export more and by so doing, more people will go into agriculture and exports, and more money will be generated. Now that petroleum is no longer giving us what we need, we need alternatives and the best alternative that Nigeria can get as of now is in agriculture i.e exportation of agricultural products.

#### **What benefits are herein for the businessmen in Nigeria with the EPT in place?**

Number one, I told you that our EPTs are one-stop options, you don't have to start running from pillar to post. If you don't know what to do, go there first and see clarifications. Let them explain to you what it is that you need to do, then by the time you bring the products those that need to monitor the specifications are there. Those that are to test the products are there also to certify it. By the time they take up their duty and make sure that your export gets to where it is going in top quality and in time and meets your targets. Definitely you will find that it is cheaper and better for you to take your exports through Nigeria than through another country, money to transport it to another country, then before you start engaging in all their processes which will not be as good as ours because we have a one-stop-shop that you can do everything. Theirs might need you to be going from one place to another.

I know that export used to be a difficult business in the past but with this introduction of the EPTs, it has made it much easier and less costly for the exporters, which is what all exporters want. Once you can meet your demand and you can generate your revenue as well as generate revenue for the country in the long run, then what else are you looking for?

#### **As an exporter, why should I patronize EPT?**

Well, I just want to encourage the exporters that they should put in more effort. When they are looking for sources for their product, they should make sure they go to good sources, get good products. I also want to encourage the farmers to put in their best into whatever it is they are cultivating to ensure that it comes out well. When it comes out well, the exporters will go there, get it from there and then do whatever they want to do to get it across. If you present a bad product from the beginning, it has failed. You won't be able to take it to another country. I want to encourage the farmers, the exporters and also relevant government agencies that we are collaborating with them and will not stop until we achieve the aim of getting Nigeria's Agro Export to the peak and also generate more revenue in the process.



Mr. Olantunji Baale

## The essence of Export Processing Terminal is to develop the non-oil sector export

— **Mr Olantunji Baale**, MD Diamond Star Port and Terminals Limited

*In a bid to sustain this new drive, the Management of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) licensed Agro Export Terminals. One of these is the Diamond Star Port and Terminals Limited, whose managing Director; Mr Olantunji Baale, in this interview with NPT, bares it all.*

### What is your business all about?

**Y**es, our business is all about processing export cargoes at our terminal here for onward delivery to the Port Terminal. So, we do quite a lot here. We do stuffing of export cargoes. We also have an online integration with the Shipping Lines and Port Terminals, where we engage information to export cargoes that we are processing here for delivery to the Port Terminals. So we do packaging of export here and the sole purpose is to ensure prompt delivery of export cargoes to the Port Terminals.

### You have been in business for a while. Why is Diamond Star into Agro Export?

Yes, you know that the coming to place of export processing terminal is an initiative of the Nigerian Ports Authority and the intention is to give special attention to the agro-based exports, being the major source of export from Nigeria to other countries. The intention is to give agro-based exports more attention, so that the circle of delivery of export cargoes out of our country will be much faster and exporters can do multiple deliveries of their cargoes seamlessly, without the



delay that is associated with the process.

**Before you ventured into the agro business. How did you see the Agro Business in Nigeria? What is the present state of agro business in Nigeria?**

Agro business in Nigeria or what you call the exportation of Agro commodities in Nigeria, has a long history and it has been a business with so much prospects. Nigeria has been exporting huge metric tonnes of cargoes like Cocoa, Cashew Nuts, Palm Oil, Shea Butter e.t.c. Government has now decided to give this sector more attention; that is why here at our terminal, we have the export command which is a command set up by the Nigeria Customs Service to solely attend to export cargoes for prompt and quick delivery of export cargoes to the port terminals.

This has never happened in the history of export business in Nigeria. As we are here, as a terminal attending to export cargoes, ensuring that they are promptly delivered to the Port Terminals, we also have a One Stop Command, which shows government's new attention to the export business which is to ensure that export business in Nigeria is handled in a seamless manner from the country today.

Hitherto, exporters can not export their cargoes without facing delays that are associated with exports. We have had history of export cargoes being delayed in the process of loading into the vessels. Most of these cargoes are perishable. They are not meant to be in the containers for long; so, in a situation where you have them delivered to the ports and lying in the ports for months, definitely their quality will go bad.

Presently, by the arrangements that have been put in by NPA now, we are assured that export cargoes that are going into the Ports, are those that are ready to be loaded into the vessels that are available by the Shipping Lines and Terminal Operators. It is no longer that export cargoes are being moved into the Ports to be dumped in the Ports.

The essence of the Export Processing Terminal is for a company like Diamond Star to deliver 100 containers of export to the Port daily, those export boxes will be loaded on the vessels, because there is a collaboration between Diamond Star Terminal and Port Terminals. The Shipping Lines provide us with a list of their expected vessels. They give us vessels that will be coming into the country to load export periodically for us to be aware and they also give us a list of containers that they are expecting. When they come here, either as already loaded export cargoes or they are to be loaded here, our duty is to ensure that they are promptly

delivered to the Port Terminals.

There is a Customs Command that will do the needful on those exports; they move straight to the port, to be loaded into the vessel. So that is the idea in a nutshell, for the Export Processing Terminal.

**What areas do you think the Government can come it to render assistance, and what are the challenges you are facing?**

For the Exporting Processing Terminals, what government needs to do is to us the necessary support in terms of finance, because for a project of this nature, you are very much aware that series of equipment would be required. We work with stackers for container loading and this does not come cheap. This comes in millions of dollars, and then we need items like scanners, to scan containers.

We need Forklift, and it is a whole lot of capital investment here. We came into this premises, and the premises was more or less abandoned, and you can see a whole lot of work that we have done here, to make this facility ready and good for the business.

We came in here, into a facility that was water-logged and flooded and you can see the level of pavement that we have built for stacking purposes here, and the renovations that we have done to these facilities, these are investment of billions of Naira as our contributions to export business in Nigeria.

**What is your dream of the Agro Export Business?**

The essence of government creating an Export Processing Terminal is to develop non-oil sector export, because our export has majorly been Oil, the Government is looking at the direction that we need to diversify and also the country needs to have more income from non-oil export, and even our GDP is low because we are an importing nation.

We export far less from our country than import, and attention has always been on imports. Now Government is thinking in the direction of export, so that the country can have more revenue, that is why all these service-related facilities for export are being

set up, to make the business of export simple. You can bring in your cargoes here, and you are just 10 minutes away from the Port, and that is the intention. So, in the next five years, I see a more seamless export business in Nigeria and I can also see that there will be a major increase in the quantity of export, that is leaving our country. There will be a major increase in the quantity, which will translate into more income for the government.

**Bring in your cargoes here, you are just 10 minutes away from the Port**



# BUA Takes Giant Strides on Agric Export

*In this report, Chijioke Ukadike, delves into the remarkable exploits of the BUA Group in agriculture and agro-allied products, showcasing the firm's multifaceted ventures that are set to transform the export landscape in the country.*

**T**he BUA Group, a leading Nigerian conglomerate, has taken a significant stride towards enhancing the export cargo operations at the Rivers Port Complex. The company is poised to become a strong player in the export business.

With its strong focus on agro-industrial production, the BUA Group is rapidly establishing itself as a potential driver for exports, harnessing the immense potential of agricultural products.

BUA Group, the parent company of BUA Ports and Terminals, has emerged as a powerhouse in the Nigerian business landscape. Founded over three decades ago by a

business mogul, Alhaji Abdul Samad Rabiu, the BUA Group has experienced steady growth and diversification, making a significant impact across various sectors. Under the visionary leadership of Alhaji Rabiu, the conglomerate has expanded its operations beyond the Nigeria, earning recognition as a formidable force in the African business sphere.

BUA Group's foray into agriculture and agro-allied products has been marked by resounding success. At the forefront of their endeavours is the Flour RX1 facility, strategically located close to the Rivers Port Complex. This state-of-the-art facility specializes in the production of flour, pasta, and wheat bran,



catering to both domestic and international markets. The commencement of Flour RX2, which is undergoing construction, further underlines BUA Group's commitment to scaling up their agro-industrial capabilities.

Moreover, BUA Group has made significant strides in the sugar industry, establishing a remarkable sugar refinery at the Bundu Free Zone in Port Harcourt. This world-class facility is equipped with cutting-edge technology and adheres to stringent quality standards. With a focus on local production and self-sufficiency, BUA Group's sugar refinery is set to play a vital role in meeting Nigeria's burgeoning sugar demands.

To bolster their export capabilities, the BUA Group has made a strategic investment in acquiring a bulk carrier vessel, 'MV Bundu'. The vessel named 'BUNDU' (IMO: 9273014) is a Bulk Carrier registered under the flag of Panama. It was constructed in 2003, making it approximately 20 years old.

'BUNDU' has a carrying capacity of 16,765 tons Deadweight (DWT) and is reported to have a draught of 5.6 meters. Its length overall (LOA) measures 134.9 meters, while its width spans 23 meters. Understandably, BUA Group's procurement of this massive vessel is chiefly to facilitate efficient evacuation of their export products. BUA Group is capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) to penetrate markets in Senegal, Ghana, Niger, and other countries in West and Central Africa.

The conglomerate's influence extends beyond agriculture. The BUA Group operates cement factories in Edo and Sokoto states, contributing significantly to Nigeria's infrastructure development. In addition, their sugar plantations in Lafajji, Kwara State, and rice milling facility in Kano State are integral to the nation's food security goals. The BUA Group's ongoing development of a salt factory and a Plaster of Paris (POP) production facility further showcases their commitment to diversification and value creation.

Certainly, BUA Group's commitment to expanding and diversifying production output is a direct result of their growing confidence in their collaborations and partnerships with the Nigerian Ports Authority. Notably, BUA Group's subsidiary, BUA Ports and Terminals Company, operates Terminal "B" at Rivers Port. This mutually beneficial partnership has facilitated the smooth importation of raw materials for production and streamlined the process of exporting their products.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that during the maiden working visit of NPA's Executive Director of Engineering and Technical Services, Mr. Ibrahim Abba Umar, to Rivers Port, Port Manager Michael Adamu reiterated the Port Management's dedication to fostering a favourable environment for the growth of port businesses. He highlighted that the proactive



**Alhaji Abdul Samad Rabiu**  
Founder of BUA Group

and highly responsive management approach of Bello-Koko-led Executive Management team had resulted in remarkable transformations at the port. These initiatives encompassed commendable measures aimed at enhancing export operations.

During a recent engagement with officials from Rivers Port, Alhaji Muhammed Labbo, the General Manager of BUA Ports and Terminals, revealed that his company has finalized plans to rehabilitate and strengthen the collapsed section of their terminal. This proactive initiative aims to prepare for the expected rise in port operations and ensure smooth functioning of their facilities.

The BUA Group's remarkable exploits in agriculture and agro-allied products have positioned them as a key player in driving export cargo operations at the Rivers Port Complex. With their extensive range of ventures, from flour production to sugar refining, cement manufacturing to rice milling,

The BUA Group exemplifies the potential for agro-industrial development in Nigeria. As they gear up to capitalize on the AfCFTA and expand their export footprint, BUA Group is primed to contribute significantly to Nigeria's economic growth while playing an active role in regional trade integration. Whatever be the case, maritime observers predict good fortunes and better days ahead for Rivers Port.



Innocent Ogbuji

## What is your Management thrust on Agro Export Initiative?

The management of WACT is keen on agro export and has set up the Container Freight Station (CSF) to support the Federal Government's drive to promote non-oil export. The CFS is part of WACT desire to create value along the logistics chain as the integrator of container logistics whilst prioritizing export of agro commodities of all kinds

## What does Management expect from your terminal by way of operations?

Beyond expectations, WACT's Management is committed to providing robust, safe, secure and world class standard operations in line with the Company's safer, bigger and better ambitions. Management expects operations to make export seamless. There should be greater synergy between stakeholders to remove all bottlenecks that influence seamless operations.

## Why is your organization into Export business?

WACT is a trade facilitator and as part of the logistics chain, WACT promote export of agro products to support the Federal Government in its economic diversification, to balance trade and, to meet customer export needs.

## What has been your challenges facing the sector since you started business?

The challenges facing the agro export include the need for physical examination of export cargoes which leads to delay and damage of the products, poor and/or lack infrastructure – roads, power, storage facilities, rail etc.;

# The non-oil sector has contributed 95.66% to the nation's GDP

— INNOCENT OGBUJI, GM GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLICITY, WACT

*The Head Corporate and Strategic Communications (C&SC) Onne Port Complex, Mrs Barbara Ejemeh Nchey-Achukwu recently held an interview with Mr. Innocent Ogbuji, the General Manager Government Relations and Publicity WACT on the state of Agro export initiative in his facility. Enjoy the chat.*

poor credit availability; poor sensitization of farmers; insecurity leading high rate of freight; multiple taxation; multiplicity of regulatory works; non-automation of export process etc.

## In what way do you think the Agro Export sector can be further boosted by the Regulatory Agencies?

The Government should approve the use of scanning machine to examine all export units, help exporters with a lean process and offer incentives to shipping lines and terminals for the export trade.

Critical infrastructure like power should be fixed, rail and road connectivity from the farms to the ports should be given more attention. In addition, automation of export process will aid in removing human interface and resultant bureaucracy delays in facility trades or interference.

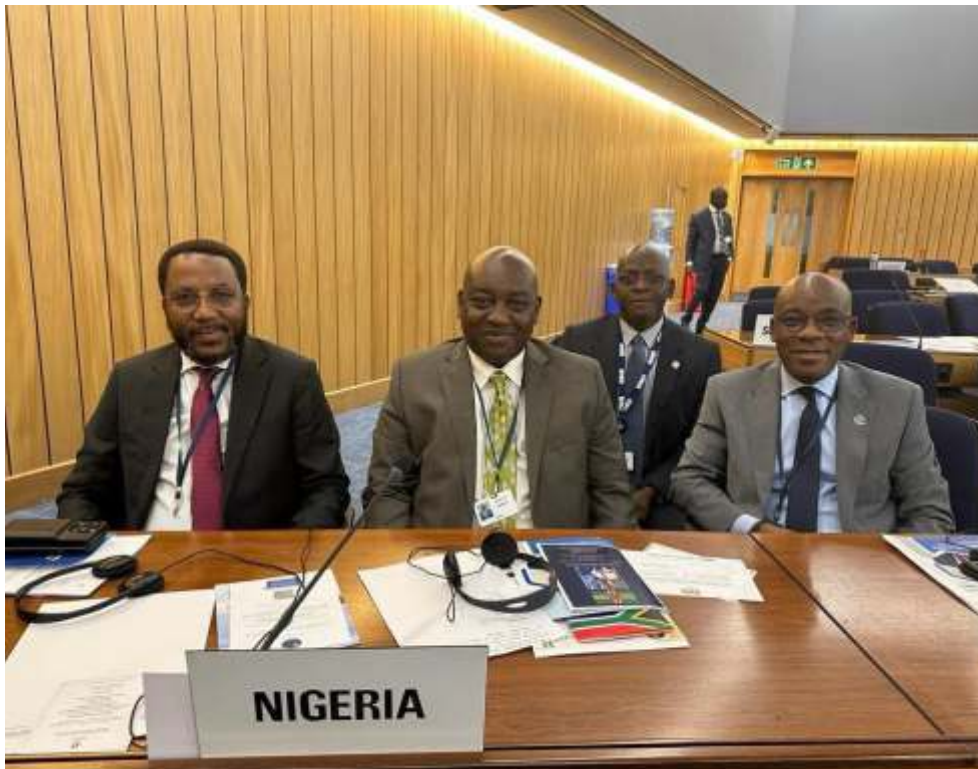
## How would you evaluate the impact of the Agro sector to the growth and development of the nation's GDP?

The non-oil sector has contributed 95.66% to the nation's GDP in the last quarter of 2022, from which Agro sector being the largest positive contributor. It cannot be overemphasized that the Federal government drive to diversify the economy and support agro export has contributed to this growth. A stronger support and incentives on the export of agro commodities will further grow the GDP of the nation.

## How does Government go about maximizing the potentials of the sector in the nearest future in view of the diversification of the nation's economy?

The Federal as well as state governments need to create incentive frameworks, ease of doing business and support the agro industry to further grow the GDP and per capital income of the nation by further creating strategic alliance with foreign countries that need Nigerian produce to enhance the value chain. Further, Processing of agro commodities need to be an intervention area for the country to add value to the commodities ahead of being exported. Another key factor is the storage facilities and warehousing for agro-products. The entire value chain (from the farm to outbound vessel) must be further eased for maximize the potentials of the sector.





## BELLO KOKO AT IMO 2023:

# Assures Council That Trade Facilitation Is on Course at The NPA

BY VICTORIA TARFA

**T**HE Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) Mohammed Bello Koko who is also the 1st vice President of the Ports Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA) has assured the council of the IMO that trade facilitation will remain the thrust of his Management.

Koko gave this assurance at the 129th session of the council of the IMO held from the 17th to 21st of July, 2023 when he spoke on infrastructure development at the Nigerian Ports which saw the rehabilitation of Control Towers with Cutting-edge technology in Lagos Port Complex and the Tin-can Island Port Complex, as well as the acquisition of two (2) First in Africa 80 Ton Bollard Pull Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) Tug Boats amongst other.

Koko said "Infrastructure is germane to Port efficiency and competitiveness" this demonstrates the Nigerian Ports Authority's determination to enhance efficiency at the ports and facilitate Maritime trade with Nigeria, being a signatory to other IMO Regulations

such as the IMO Sulphur Regulation 2020, Ballast Water Management (BWM) Systems amongst others will press to ensure the implementation of the IMO Port resolution.

The 129th council which had at one of its highlights the appointment of Arsenio Antonio Domingues Velasco of the Republic of Panama, as the next Secretary General of the IMO for an initial 4-years term beginning January 2024.

Another highlight at the session was the signing of a memorandum of agreement to collaborate on the implementation of the IMO Port resolution on trade facilitation and ship decarbonisation by the trio of the President of the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) Captain Subramanian, the Managing Director IAPH Mr. Patrick Verhoeven and the outgoing Secretary General of IMO, Mr Kitack Lim.

Furthermore, the IAPH has also agreed to focus on these areas of collaboration, Climate Change, Energy transition, Digital transformation, Trade Facilitation amongst others, and

to press on all its members to comply with the resolutions even if they are non-members of the IMO. Further still this will be binding on all members of the Port Management of West and Central (PMAWCA) an associate of the IAPH wither they are non-members of the IAPH.

The however acknowledges that complying with the IMO Port resolution requires massive investment by Ship owners and Port Authorities in the areas of renewable energy and Port Infrastructure. IMO has said in 2021 that "it will continue expansion of existing capacity building initiative, technology cooperation, technology and transfer."

In addition, the work ahead for Managing Directors of Ports in developing nations will be with many challenges as huge financial investment will be required to realize this resolution and operate in a competitive environment and cooperation with financial institutions will be at the center of the drive





Managing Director (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (R) at the flag off of EssLibra Terminal, the first Export Processing Terminal in Ibeshe-Ikorodu.

## The expectation at our facility is to reduce some of the bottlenecks associated with exportation in Nigeria — *Esslibra*

*NPT recently spoke with Mr Opemipo Dada who is the Business Development Manager of Esslibra and Funsho Olayinka Warehouse Manager on the Agro Export Initiative in Nigeria.*

**W**hat is your Management drive towards Agro export business in Nigeria?  
Agro export business is something that we believe in. My management is a firm believer in increasing the Nigerian agro export markets. Therefore, what we have been doing is that over the years in our capacity, is to help Nigerian exporters, especially agro exporters to get their products out of Nigeria as quickly as possible. For example, one of the things about barging terminal is that, we barge to support complexes and because of what we need to

give our clients, we have been doing many things to complement it.

Recently, we saw the weight break, that is the most recent achievement. We have also built a warehouse for stuffing that allows our clients to come, stuff their consignment in Lagos because we are a holding base. Clients can stuff their consignment and to reduce the amount of time it takes them to ship their consignment out of the country.

**What do you intend to achieve in short and long term in this dispensation?**

Ideally, we have KPIs. Our ideal scenario is that any extra container that gets to our place, any extra goods in our terminal should be in the port complex within seven days, provided all the agents can do everything they can do.



That is all we are trying to do. Then we have a target that there is no reason why we cannot be responsible for moving 10,000 extra containers to the port complex.

**How has it been meeting these expectations, in terms of logistics?**

The expectation is to also reduce some of the bottlenecks that are associated with exportation in Nigeria with the EPT. So, that is why barging is one of the most efficient ways of moving those boxes down to the port for better exportation.

So that they can get to their destinations as soon as possible.

**How has operations been since you started business in the area of logistics, and has there been a signal of optimal increase in your capacity development?**

We thank God for business. It is relatively stable. There has not been an increase as we expected. But, that is also because we are not in the agro-export season at the moment, the season would start soon.

**From a business person's angle, has there been an appreciable impact of agro-business on the nation's economic GDP with your coming to play?**

I feel like the more agro-business we do, the stronger the naira becomes. Because when you export, you bring dollars back into the country. So, with more agro-exports being done, more dollars will be coming back into the country, and we don't have to rely on so much special dollars.

However, I know that it brings more dollars back into the country, which is good for the country. Definitely, it will lead to increase in the GDP of the economy without having to solely depend on oil. It will give room for revenue increase from agriculture.

**How has NPA help to create an enabling environment for people to do business?**

We are grateful for the NPA because they are listening to all our complaints. They guide us through this whole process. We have been enjoying it, to be honest with you; we have a very good relationship with the NPA now.

**What are some of the challenges you are facing in the business?**

For example, the EPP involves many government agencies. So, anything that involves many government agencies, there's bound to be some communication issues and NPA has always been there to help us resolve the such issues. Either by helping us correct SOPs, or by helping us know the right agency to

approach. NPA has just been there for everything.

**In the next five years, what are the policies that you think should be put in place to enhance the agro business in Nigeria?**

I can only talk as somebody that deals with exports. The one thing that they always clamor for is that they are tired of all the levies they pay moving exports between states. I would suggest scrapping such levies, because if you are moving something from Adamawa State down to Lagos, you pay a lot of produce tax, and it doesn't really make sense. If you are exporting to make dollars and then you are still paying produce tax at almost every other state, they are cutting tickets for you. So, it is advisable to slash the levies or to harmonize it.

In addition, we need all the government agencies to synergize, so that it will make it seamless for the exporters, and that they do not complicate all the procedures, all the processes, in terms of moving those boxes down to the port and to their final destinations.

**What is special about doing business with Esslibra?**

We are the most efficient in the industry and we are the most cost sensitive as well. If we give you a cost, we stand by it. We do not look for reason to add to customer's bill. We honor our contracts and we ensure to deliver packages as where and when due.

**How safe are our goods with your company?**

To the glory of God, they are very safe. We are a heavily secured facility. We have private security and we have a good relationship with the Nigerian security services. Our SOP also involves constant monitoring as well. We have many people that are just constantly checking where everything is and monitoring it. Our facility is also covered with CCTV so both day and night the environment are well protected.

**On the last note sir. Can you just give our readers the prospects of agro-business in Nigeria in the next five years, what are the prospects if you were to look at the crystal ball?**

There is a lot of money to be made in the agro markets. Most of the profitable companies in Nigeria are into agro business as well. There is a lot of money to be made, especially when you have a government that wants to back it.

**Any other comments sir, before we round up?**

If the government can actually give their weight behind exports or agro exports, definitely, it is going to make the GDP of Nigeria or the economy to be very strong. So that the country will not solely depend on oil, at least exports are going to serve as a major GDP for Nigeria.



**We have many people that are just constantly checking where everything is and monitoring it.**



## Onunu, also known as Temiburu

**O**nunu is a beloved dish among the Ijaw people and other communities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It is cherished for its simplicity, versatility, and the way it complements a wide range of traditional soups and stews.

Onunu is typically served as a side dish accompanying various soups and stews that are common in the region. The soft and creamy texture of Onunu provides a delightful contrast to the rich and flavourful Nigerian soups, such as Banga Soup (Ofe Akwu), Egusi Soup, or Ogbono Soup.

The Ijaw people, like many other communities in the Niger Delta, often incorporate fresh seafood into their meals. Therefore, it is not uncommon to find variations of Onunu where some diced or mashed seafood, such as smoked fish or prawns, are added to enhance the flavour and add a touch of indulgence. But for the sake of this article, Onunu would be paired with Peppered Sauce.

### Ingredients:

- 8-10 Ripe plantain
- 1 medium-sized yam tuber
- Salt, to taste
- Water, for boiling
- Palm oil

### Instructions:

1. Peel the plantain and yam tuber and cut them into medium-sized chunks.
2. In a large pot, bring water to a boil and add the yam chunks. Cook until the yam is soft and easily mashed with a fork.
3. While the yam is cooking, place the plantain chunks in a separate pot with enough water to cover them. Cook until the plantains are tender.

4. Drain the water from both the yam and plantain.
5. Using a food processor, mash the cooked yam, plantain, palm oil and salt until they are incorporated to form a smooth consistency.
6. Serve the Onunu while it's still warm.

### Pepper Sauce Ingredients:

- Mixed seafood (Fish, Snail, Prawns, etc.)
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 red bell peppers
- 2 tomatoes
- Scotch bonnet peppers, to taste
- 2 tablespoons palm oil
- 1 cup fish or seafood stock
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- Salt, to taste

### Instructions:

1. Heat the palm oil in a saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add the chopped onion and minced garlic to the pan and sauté until they turn translucent and fragrant.
3. Add the pepper mix and cook for a few minutes until they start to soften.
4. Add spices to the pan. Stir to combine the spices with the pepper mix.
5. Pour in the fish or seafood stock and bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.
6. Carefully add the mixed seafood to the pan, ensuring it is fully submerged in the stew. Cook for about 5-7 minutes until the seafood is cooked through and tender.
7. Taste the stew and adjust the seasoning if needed.
8. Remove the pan from heat and serve.



LEÇON TRENTE- QUATRE  
(LESSON THIRTY-FOUR)

In the last lesson, we studied Time and months of the year in French.

Revision Questions.

How are the following days of the week written in English?

- Lundi
- Mardi
- Mecredi
- Jeudi
- Vendredi
- Samedi
- Dimanche.
- What is the month mars called in English?

In this lesson, we are going to study the seasons of the year and Division of time in French.

Season of The Year

French	English
Le printemps	spring
L"été(m)	summer
L"automne (m)	autumn
L"hiver (m)	winter

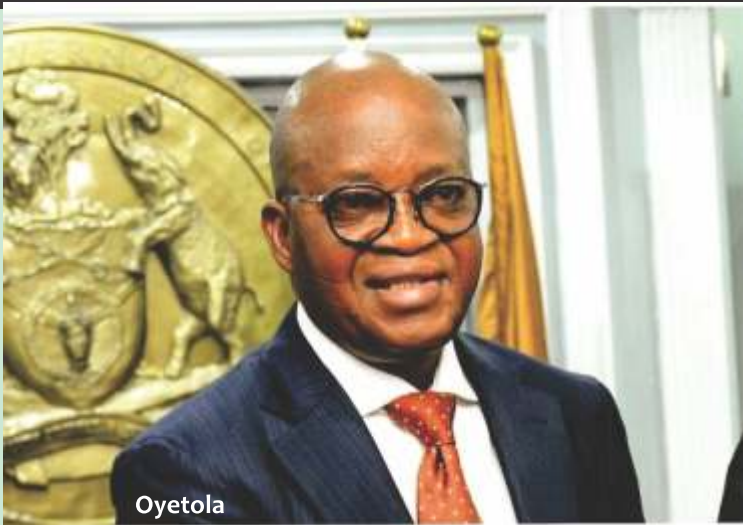
Division of Time

La seconde	second
La minute	minute
L"heure	hour
La demi-heure	half an hour
Le quart d"heure	a quarter of an hour
Le matin, la matinée	morning
L"après-midi (f)	afternoon
Le soir, le soirée	evening
La nuit	night
Le jour, la journée	day
La semaine	week
Le mois	month
La saison	season
L"année (f)	year
Le siècle	century

**NOTE:** We shall look at Expression of Time in our next lesson.

**On se verra la prochaine fois (All the best, See you next lesson)**

Oyetola Takes Over As New Minister of Marine and Blue Economy



Oyetola

BY OMIDIJI OLUBIYI

The Bola Ahmed Tinubu Administration recently constituted its cabinet and appointed Adegboyega Oyetola as Minister of Marine and Blue Economy.

Mr Oyetola a former governor of Osun State would be heading the new ministry, which would include the Nigerian Port Authority, NIMASA and other relevant agencies under the ministry of transportation.

The new helmsman of the nation's maritime sector at his inauguration speech expressed his excitement at the opportunity given to contribute sustainably to the growth and development of the maritime sector and to unlock the immense potential of the blue economy.

According to reports monitored by NPT crew, Oyetola said his appointment comes with “immense duty to our people, our environment and future federation”.

“Together with dedicated staff of the Maritime Industry and in partnership with critical stakeholders from various sectors I am ready to drive positive change, create jobs, protect our marine environment and ensure sustainable prosperity for all.”

Critical stakeholders in the industry while applauding the appointment of Mr Oyetola to office charged him to ensure that he channels his administrative prowess and policies towards maximizing the optimal performance of the Maritime industry against the backdrop of dwindling revenue from oil sector.

The Management of NPA and entire crew of the NPT heartily welcome the Honorable Minister to office.



# L'Autorité portuaire nigériane (NPA) entreprend un renouvellement robuste de l'infrastructure portuaire

*Le directeur général/président directeur général (PDG) de l'Autorité portuaire nigériane (NPA), Muhammed Bello-Koko, défend actuellement le renouvellement de l'infrastructure des ports maritimes du pays conformément aux normes mondiales. Dans ce rapport, Olubiyi Omidiji et Friday Eze examinent certains des pas de géant franchis par le directeur général ainsi que les domaines dans lesquels le gouvernement fédéral doit aider à consolider ces jalons.*

Les parties prenantes de l'industrie maritime qui se sont entretenues avec le "Nigeria Port Today" (NPT) dans diverses interviews ont rendu hommage au directeur général de la NPA pour avoir repositionné l'infrastructure portuaire afin de devenir la plaque tournante logistique en Afrique.

Les parties prenantes se sont réjouies que le patron de la NPA s'attaque aux problèmes de vieillissement des infrastructures portuaires et de remplacement des équipements obsolètes.

S'adressant au NPT, l'ancien président de l'Association des agents des douanes agréés nigériens (ANLCA), Alhaji Shittu Olayiwola, a félicité le directeur général et son

équipe de direction pour avoir réparé les tours de contrôle du complexe portuaire de Lagos (LPC) et du port de Tin-Can Island, qui étaient dans un état décrépit et non fonctionnel pendant de nombreuses années avant que Bello-Koko n'entre en fonction.

Les parties prenantes ainsi que Shittu estiment que le NPA, sous la direction de Bello-Koko, a fait un pas de géant pour que le secteur maritime, qui a la capacité de contribuer énormément à l'économie nationale, ne continue pas à faiblir ou à patauger.

Shittu a souligné qu'avant les efforts récents de Bello-Koko, "les ports aspiraient à une efficacité accrue afin de concurrencer favorablement les autres ports de la





sous-région. En effet, depuis plusieurs années, il a été avancé que certaines cargaisons à destination du Nigeria auraient pu se retrouver dans les pays voisins comme le Bénin, le Togo et le Ghana.

Ceci, selon le chef de l'ANCLA, "est le corollaire direct d'une infrastructure portuaire délabrée, d'un long temps de séjour des cargaisons, d'un mauvais temps de rotation des navires, d'un long processus de dédouanement et de congestion résultant des embouteillages le long des routes d'accès au port".

Shittu a également écorché les allocations budgétaires aux ports, qui, selon lui, "sont dérisoires lorsqu'elles concurrencent favorablement les autres ports de la région".

"C'est grâce à sa connaissance approfondie compréhension du port que la direction actuelle de l'Autorité portuaire nigériane, sous la houlette de Bello-Koko sait que tout ne va pas bien avec nos ports; d'où sa décision de réparer certaines infrastructures délabrées.

Selon Shittu, "la croissance des versements au compte de la Fédération par la NPA, la capacité opérationnelle croissante, la réhabilitation des infrastructures portuaires et l'amélioration des aides à la navigation et à la sécurité sont la preuve que les choses changent avec Bello-Koko en selle".

D'autres parties prenantes qui se sont entretenues avec le NPT ont convenu que le port récupère les cargaisons précédemment perdues au profit des pays voisins grâce à l'amélioration des infrastructures le long des routes menant au port, à la gestion efficace du trafic des camions et à la facilité de mouvement des cargaisons à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur des ports.

Un avocat maritime, M. Muhammed Oluwaseyi, a déclaré que "les ports nigériens sont en train de devenir une destination privilégiée en Afrique de l'Ouest, suite à l'achèvement du port en eau profonde de Lekki, à la réhabilitation des routes portuaires délabrées, à la décongestion des ports et à l'application du système d'appel électronique qui a été déployée par la direction actuelle de l'Autorité pour améliorer l'efficacité.

#### **L'infrastructure portuaire et ses avantages pour le commerce maritime**

L'infrastructure portuaire fait référence aux installations physiques, aux structures et aux équipements qui permettent le chargement, le déchargement, le stockage et la manutention des marchandises, des passagers et des navires dans un port maritime. Ceci inclut divers éléments tels que les postes d'amarrage, les quais, les jetées, les docks, les parcs à conteneurs, les entrepôts, les grues, les canaux de navigation, les brise-lames et d'autres installations de soutien. L'infrastructure portuaire joue un rôle crucial dans la facilitation du commerce maritime et d'autres activités connexes, faisant des ports maritimes des passerelles essentielles pour les importations et les exportations.

L'importance d'une bonne infrastructure portuaire pour le commerce maritime d'un pays ne peut être surestimée. Dans un premier temps, une infrastructure portuaire bien conçue permet un mouvement fluide et efficace des marchandises entre les navires et les transports terrestres, tels que les camions et les trains. Cela améliore la rapidité et la fiabilité des opérations de manutention du fret, réduisant les délais de rotation des navires et minimisant la congestion au port.

Deuxièmement, un port moderne et bien équipé peut accueillir des navires plus gros et des volumes de fret plus importants, augmentant ainsi la capacité commerciale du pays. Cela attire davantage de compagnies maritimes et encourage les partenaires commerciaux étrangers à utiliser le port, favorisant la croissance économique et le commerce international.

En outre, une infrastructure portuaire efficace peut permettre aux importateurs et les exportateurs de réaliser des économies. Des temps d'attente réduits, un traitement plus rapide des cargaisons et des délais de rotation plus courts pour les navires contribuent à la rentabilité globale, rendant les marchandises plus compétitives sur le marché mondial.

Il est également pertinent de noter qu'une bonne infrastructure portuaire améliore la connectivité entre les



différents modes de transport, tels que le rail, la route et les voies navigables intérieures. Cette intégration facilite la circulation des marchandises à destination et en provenance du port, soutenant ainsi le développement du commerce régional et du réseau logistique. Alors que le monde tend vers des systèmes de transport intermodaux, il s'agit d'un domaine potentiel que le gouvernement fédéral du Nigéria doit explorer pour attirer l'investissement direct étranger (IDE) dans le pays.

Il est également de notoriété publique que les ports dotés d'infrastructures robustes génèrent directement et indirectement des opportunités d'emploi, stimulant le développement économique dans les zones environnantes. Les activités portuaires entraînent la création d'emplois dans la manutention du fret, la logistique, l'entreposage et d'autres services connexes qui aboutissent à un effet multiplicateur sur l'économie.

Les investisseurs étrangers sont souvent attirés par les pays dotés d'infrastructures portuaires avancées et bien entretenues, car des ports fiables et efficaces sont considérés comme le signe d'un environnement commercial propice, encourageant les investissements et le développement industriel dans la région. De plus, les ports servent de passerelles essentielles pour les marchandises et les personnes, ce qui rend la sécurité des infrastructures portuaires vitale pour la sécurité

nationale globale d'un pays. Des mesures de sécurité adéquates et une infrastructure bien planifiée aident à prévenir les activités illicites telles que la contrebande et le terrorisme. Ce facteur définit également le niveau de convivialité d'un pays pour les investisseurs, car la sécurité des investissements reste une considération primordiale pour tous les investisseurs.

Enfin, les infrastructures portuaires modernes peuvent également être conçues dans un souci de durabilité, en incorporant des pratiques respectueuses de l'environnement qui réduisent l'impact environnemental des opérations portuaires. Cela comprend la mise en œuvre de technologies écoénergétiques, la réduction des émissions et la promotion de la gestion des déchets.

Investir dans des infrastructures portuaires de haute qualité et les entretenir est donc un aspect essentiel du développement économique global d'un pays et de sa compétitivité mondiale.

## **Quel pays a la meilleure infrastructure portuaire au monde?**

L'infrastructure portuaire de Rotterdam a été élue à plusieurs reprises meilleure infrastructure portuaire du monde par le Forum économique mondial. Ce classement est principalement dû à ses installations modernes, au vaste réseau de l'arrière-pays et aux





grands projets d'investissement à Rotterdam.

#### **Le Nigeria peut-il s'inspirer des ports néerlandais?**

Ce classement des ports néerlandais est principalement dû à ses installations modernes, au vaste réseau de l'arrière-pays et aux grands projets d'investissement à Rotterdam.

Les ports nigériens peuvent tirer de précieuses leçons des ports néerlandais concernant les investissements dans les infrastructures portuaires. L'un des principaux points à retenir est de mettre l'accent sur la modernisation, la mise à niveau des infrastructures existantes et le développement de nouvelles installations pour accueillir des navires plus grands et gérer efficacement des volumes de fret accrus. De plus, le développement d'un solide réseau d'arrière-pays avec des liaisons ferroviaires et routières bien connectées permet un transport continu des marchandises, réduisant les coûts logistiques et améliorant l'efficacité globale.

En outre, encourager davantage de partenariats public-privé (PPP) peut attirer des investissements, donner accès à des technologies de pointe et bénéficier de l'expertise des acteurs privés dans la gestion de divers projets d'infrastructures portuaires. Un autre aspect crucial consiste à donner la priorité aux

pratiques durables, comme celles lancées par Dutch Ports, pour réduire l'empreinte écologique, promouvoir l'efficacité énergétique et mettre en œuvre une gestion des déchets conforme aux normes mondiales de durabilité.

En adoptant ces points clés, les ports nigériens peuvent améliorer la compétitivité, l'efficacité et la croissance durable. De plus, donner la priorité à la planification stratégique et aux investissements à long terme, ainsi qu'une approche centrée sur le client, attirera plus d'affaires et renforcera les relations avec les clients. Enfin, l'analyse comparative et l'apprentissage des ports mondiaux performants fourniront des informations précieuses pour une amélioration continue.

#### **Mesures prises par la NPA pour améliorer l'infrastructure portuaire**

Dans une interview exclusive avec le NPT, le directeur général a déclaré que la direction de l'Autorité a pris la décision audacieuse de réhabiliter les tours de contrôle moribondes dans le cadre de leurs efforts pour positionner nos ports pour une plus grande efficacité.

“Nous n'avons pas perdu de temps pour mobiliser les ressources nécessaires pour les réhabiliter et les doter d'une technologie de pointe pour répondre aux



exigences de connaissance du domaine et à la multiplicité d'autres fonctions telles que la gestion du trafic maritime, l'assistance à la navigation, la visibilité avancée, la sûreté et la sécurité, la réponse d'urgence, la communication, la gestion des ressources et l'atténuation des risques de catastrophe, parmi d'autres fonctions cruciales qu'une tour de contrôle permet », a déclaré Bello-Koko.

## La NPA met en service les tours de contrôle

Dans le cadre de sa volonté de réduire davantage le temps de rotation des navires et d'améliorer l'efficacité opérationnelle des ports maritimes de à Apapa et de Tin-Can, l'**Autorité portuaire nigériane** (NPA) a mis en service la réhabilitation les tours de contrôle des deux ports de Lagos.

Pendant son adresse lors de l'inauguration, son directeur général, Mohammed Bello-Koko, a déclaré que les tours de contrôle récemment rénovées amélioreraient la gestion du trafic maritime, l'assistance à la navigation, la visibilité avancée, la sûreté et la sécurité, l'intervention d'urgence, la communication, la gestion des ressources et l'atténuation des risques de catastrophe, entre autres.

“La mise en service de la tour de contrôle témoigne de notre engagement inébranlable envers l'amélioration de l'efficacité opérationnelle grâce à un renouvellement agressif de l'infrastructure et de l'équipement.”

“La multiplicité des fonctions telles que la gestion du trafic maritime, l'assistance à la navigation, la visibilité avancée, la sûreté et la sécurité, l'intervention d'urgence, la communication, la gestion des ressources et l'atténuation des risques de catastrophe, entre autres fonctions cruciales, qu'une tour de contrôle permet sont les raisons pour lesquelles nous avons placé l'équipement de cette installation en priorité absolue en tant qu'équipe de direction.”

“Comme la plupart d'entre nous le savent, la sûreté et la sécurité constituent des conditions préalables opérationnelles essentielles nécessaires à l'actualisation de notre intention stratégique de devenir la plaque tournante de la logistique maritime pour des services portuaires durables en Afrique, c'est pourquoi nous avons accordé une grande priorité à la mise en place d'un système moderne de tour de contrôle de cette nature afin d'améliorer notre capacité de connaissance du domaine.”

Il a ajouté: “Compte tenu de l'état décrépit et non fonctionnel dans lequel nous avons rencontré cette installation, la décision d'investir autant pour en faire un édifice à la pointe de la technologie et bien équipé a été prise en tenant compte de la nécessité d'équiper notre des talents marins hautement appréciés et bien formés, dotés des bons outils et du confort requis pour fournir des services efficaces à nos parties prenantes.”

“Fournir durablement un service portuaire efficace dans un



environnement sûr, sécurisé et convivial exige que nous nous assurions et garantissons que nous sommes à jour en termes de compétences et d'équipements, et je tiens à vous assurer qu'au-delà de cette mise en service aujourd'hui, nous avons résolu à équiper et à rééquiper en permanence cette installation tout en formant et en recyclant ses utilisateurs pour qu'ils soient les meilleurs de leur catégorie. »

“Il serait pertinent de mentionner que nous sommes en partenariat avec la marine nigériane pour que nos stations de signalisation soient réhabilitées, rééquipées et situées près de la base navale pour une meilleure communication. De plus, nous sommes en partenariat avec NLNG Ship Management Limited pour fournir le VTS qui assurera une meilleure efficacité opérationnelle.”

Prennant également la parole, le directeur exécutif de la NPA, Marine et opérations, Onari Brown, a applaudi la rénovation du bâtiment. “C'est pour le travail, et c'est surtout pour ceux qui sont de service et ceux qui travaillent ici”, dit-il.

## La NPA met en service des remorqueurs pour recevoir les marchandises en transit.

En juin de cette année, dans le cadre de ses efforts pour attirer les cargaisons en transit des pays





perdu au profit de nos voisins maritimes et en nous positionnant pour répondre aux besoins maritimes de nos voisins enclavés, nous avons déployé une stratégie en trois volets guidés par les personnes, la technologie, l'infrastructure et l'équipement, tels que les navires ultramodernes que nous sommes réunis ici pour mettre en service aujourd'hui."

Cette occasion, a-t-il dit, faisait "partie de l'accomplissement de notre charte de service pour fournir des embarcations marines pertinentes pour soutenir la sécurité portuaire, la patrouille, la surveillance et, surtout, fournir d'excellents services maritimes, en particulier avec la mise en service au port en eau profonde de Lekki à Lagos.

"Notre détermination à améliorer continuellement notre efficacité opérationnelle explique l'achat de ces nouveaux remorqueurs Bollard Pull de 80 tonnes baptisés MT MAIKOKO et MT DA-OPUKURO pour compléter notre flotte existante de remorqueurs et récemment mis en service des patrouilleurs de sécurité (SPB) et des pilotes Cutter déployés pour améliorer la sécurité des canaux sur tous nos sites."

Il a ajouté: "Ces remorqueurs néotériques de 80 tonnes sont les premiers du modèle 2813 Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) en Afrique, construits par les principaux constructeurs navals du

monde (Damen), et ils possèdent un comportement de tenue en mer exceptionnel, une superbe maniabilité de 360 ° en utilisant les propulseurs d'azimut, la capacité de lutte contre les incendies et les caractéristiques de remorquage exceptionnelles, qui amélioreront les manœuvres des navires de grande capacité de 300 mètres LOA et plus faisant actuellement escale dans nos ports."

"En plus d'affecter positivement le temps de rotation des grands navires, leur déploiement permettra aux parties prenantes de tirer parti des avantages concomitants des économies d'échelle, en particulier des économies de coûts."

Bello-Koko a souligné que le déploiement au port en eau profonde de Lekki comme rampe de lancement pour le transbordement reste inébranlable, ajoutant que l'inauguration des remorqueurs est une attestation de la détermination et de l'engagement de la direction de la NPA envers la noble cause.

Il a assuré les consignataires, les concessionnaires et les autres parties prenantes de l'amélioration continue de la prestation de services de la NPA sous sa direction.

Pour sa part, la secrétaire permanente, le Dr Ajani, a déclaré que l'acquisition des remorqueurs Bollard Pull de 80 tonnes, les premiers du genre en Afrique, avait accentué la détermination du ministère fédéral des Transports à renforcer l'efficacité opérationnelle du port.

"Ma joie vient du fait que l'acquisition de cet équipement,

enclavés, la NPA a mis en service deux remorqueurs Bollard Pull avant la cargaison en transit prévue au port en eau profonde de Lekki à Lagos.

Bello-Koko a révélé que la mise en service des remorqueurs Bollard Pull soutiendrait la sécurité, la patrouille et la surveillance portuaires et fournirait d'excellents services maritimes aux opérateurs et aux parties prenantes.

Les remorqueurs ultramodernes ont été mis en service par le secrétaire permanent du ministère fédéral des transports, le Dr Magdalene Ajani, dans les ports de Lagos.

Selon le directeur général, les navires ultramodernes étaient adaptés, en particulier avec le début des opérations au port en eau profonde de Lekki à Lagos.

"Je suis très ravi et honoré de vous accueillir à cette occasion, qui est une démonstration de la détermination de cette administration à positionner l'Autorité portuaire nigérienne pour répondre carrément aux exigences contemporaines de la facilitation des échanges."

"Inspirés par notre aspiration d'entreprise à atteindre le statut de plaque tournante en répondant plus efficacement aux besoins de fret intérieurs, en récupérant le fret en transit jusqu'ici



parmi tant d'autres qui sont en cours, indique le sérieux du Nigeria pour optimiser les opportunités de l'accord de la zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECAF) dont nous sommes signataires”.

“La maximisation des avantages comparatifs que confèrent nos atouts maritimes en tant que nation littorale dépend fortement de notre capacité à approfondir notre efficacité grâce au déploiement de technologies et d'équipements pertinents.”

Tout en appréciant les efforts de la direction dirigée par Bello-Koko, le secrétaire permanent a déclaré : “Je tiens particulièrement à féliciter l'équipe de direction de la NPA pour avoir livré ce projet en temps utile pour soutenir l'optimisation du port maritime profond de Lekki. C'est le genre d'efficacité que le ministère aide ses agences à ancrer dans la politique, et je suis heureux que nous fassions des progrès. »

Elle a promis le soutien de son ministère à la NPA et à d'autres agences du gouvernement fédéral en termes de collaborations inter-agences dans la réalisation de l'objectif primordial de faire du Nigeria un point de référence mondial d'excellence dans la facilitation du commerce international.

### **Protéger les investissements au Port**

En mars de cette année, l'Autorité portuaire nigériane a renforcé les couches de sécurité dans le port de Tin-Can Island avec l'érection d'une clôture périphérique en béton et l'installation d'une porte de contrôle d'accès automatisée pour protéger l'investissement de plusieurs milliards de dollars dans le port.

Le directeur général a déclaré que la clôture garantirait que seules les personnes qui devraient se trouver dans le port y auraient accès.





“Nous pouvons voir que le port de Tin-Can Island a été clôturé à l’aide de murs en béton de l’extérieur. L’essentiel est de sécuriser le port, non seulement pour la sécurité, mais aussi pour restreindre l’entrée. Certaines personnes se réveillaient simplement le matin et voulaient entrer dans le port sans affaires dans le port.”

Il a ajouté qu’en réduisant le nombre de personnes et en restreignant l’entrée dans le port, le pillage, le vol, les voyous et les mécréants seraient réduits.

La clôture, selon lui, “créera un environnement commercial favorable au sein du port, tel que mentionné par le Code international des navires et des installations portuaires (ISPS)”.

Il a ajouté que la clôture des ports garantirait que les personnes qui n’avaient rien à faire dans les ports seraient tenues à l’écart, et il a assuré que l’utilisation de portes de contrôle d’accès automatisées serait

appliquée.

Le patron de la NPA a exprimé sa joie de ce qu’il a vu au port, ajoutant qu’il y avait moins de monde dans les locaux du port par rapport à ce qui s’était passé dans le passé.

## Réparer le mur de quai effondré

Les parties prenantes et les opérateurs portuaires ont appelé le gouvernement fédéral à soutenir la NPA dans la réparation du mur de quai effondré du port de Lagos afin de mettre fin au détournement des cargaisons à destination du Nigeria vers d’autres ports de la République du Bénin, du Togo et du Ghana.

L’ancien ministre des Transports, Mua’zu Sambo, un ingénieur, a confirmé que le mur de quai effondré dans les ports coûtera à la NPA des millions de dollars à réparer.

Un mur de quai, également connu sous le nom de quai ou bord de quai, est une structure construite le long du front de mer d’un port ou d’un port pour fournir une installation d’amarrage pour les navires. Il s’agit d’un mur solide, vertical ou incliné fait de béton, d’acier ou d’autres matériaux durables s’étendant du rivage à l’eau. Les murs de quai offrent généralement une plate-forme stable et sécurisée où les navires peuvent accoster pour charger et décharger des marchandises, embarquer et débarquer des passagers et effectuer d’autres opérations portuaires essentielles.

L’importance d’un mur de quai dans les opérations portuaires ne peut être surestimée. Il sert d’interface principale entre la terre et l’eau, agissant comme un point de connexion essentiel pour les activités maritimes. En fournissant un espace désigné pour l’amarrage des navires, les murs de quai facilitent les opérations de manutention de fret efficaces et sûres. Cela garantit des délais d’exécution rapides pour les navires, minimisant les retards et réduisant le temps total nécessaire aux marchandises pour atteindre leur destination.

De plus, les murs de quai sont essentiels pour optimiser l’utilisation de l’espace riverain disponible dans un port. Ils permettent l’accostage ordonné des navires, maximisant le nombre de navires pouvant être accueillis simultanément. Ceci, à son tour, augmente la capacité du port à gérer de plus grands volumes de trafic de marchandises et de passagers, ce qui entraîne une amélioration du commerce et de la croissance économique. La stabilité et la résistance des murs de quai jouent également un rôle crucial pour assurer la sécurité des navires et du personnel lors des procédures d’accostage et d’appareillage, en protégeant contre les accidents et les dommages aux navires et aux infrastructures portuaires. Dans l’ensemble, un mur de quai bien conçu et exploité efficacement est essentiel au bon fonctionnement et au succès d’une installation portuaire moderne.

L’Autorité portuaire nigériane a subi des incidents liés à l’effondrement des murs de quai dans divers ports maritimes du pays, de l’effondrement de la jetée McIver et d’une section du terminal Shoreline à Calabar en 2007 et 2018, respectivement, à l’effondrement des quais 7 et 8 de Rivers Port en 2018 et à l’effondrement plus récent d’une section du terminal logistique Five Star en 2019 dans le port de Tin-Can Island. Tous ces incidents se sont combinés pour intensifier les appels à la réhabilitation de l’infrastructure portuaire du Nigeria par les acteurs

maritimes.

## **Alarme sur mur de quai effondré au port de Tin-Can Island**

Il y a environ trois ans, la direction du terminal logistique Five Star du complexe portuaire de Tin-Can Island a sonné l'alarme concernant l'effondrement du fossé de câble le long du tablier de quai des postes d'amarrage 9 et 10, respectivement, au terminal.

Five Star Logistics Terminal est l'opérateur du terminal roulier du port, où les deux quais couvrent 437,03 mètres.

S'exprimant lors d'une visite de l'installation à Lagos, son directeur général, Wolfgang Schneider, a déclaré que la direction du terminal avait attiré l'attention de la NPA sur la question.

Selon lui, il est de la responsabilité de NPA de réparer la zone du feu de la tour sur le tablier du quai conformément au contrat de location.

Il a déclaré que la partie effondrée du tablier du quai occupait de l'espace commercial dans le terminal, appelant à l'intervention urgente de la NPA.

Il a déclaré: "Nous perdons beaucoup d'espace, qui pourrait empiler jusqu'à 100 conteneurs à cause de cette partie effondrée. Aucun objet lourd ne peut traverser la zone car c'est très dangereux. Le mur de quai doit d'abord être réparé avant nous pouvons remplir la partie ratée pour nous assurer que nous ne nous enfonçons pas."

## **Ce qu'a dit la NPA**

Bello-Koko a déclaré que la direction avait examiné les parties délabrées des ports. Il a ajouté que l'Autorité avait commencé à discuter d'emprunt avec certaines sociétés de prêt, soulignant que l'agence n'avait pas l'intention d'emprunter.

"Le port de Tin-Can s'effondre pratiquement. Nous devons concentrer notre budget sur la réhabilitation de ces murs de quai au port de Tin-Can. Nous avons procédé à un examen holistique de l'infrastructure en décomposition de nos ports et avons décidé qu'il est très important que nous réhabilitons les ports de Tin-Can et de Apapa."

"Ce que nous avons fait, c'est commencer à parler aux agences de prêt, même si nous n'avons pas l'intention d'emprunter. Nous demandons combien d'argent ils vont investir dans les terminaux portuaires."

"Cependant, si nous allons emprunter de l'argent pour réhabiliter ces ports, alors ce que les opérateurs de terminaux paient devra changer. Les tarifs devront augmenter. Si nous ne le faisons pas, ces opérateurs de terminaux continueront à gérer ces lieux, et les ports continueront de s'effondrer. En raison de leur intérêt financier, ces exploitants de terminaux ne veulent pas que nous reconstruisions les terminaux portuaires concernés, car cela signifierait les empêcher de fonctionner. »

"Nous avons eu l'intérêt de la Banque mondiale, entre autres. Étonnamment, c'est la Banque mondiale qui a donné de l'argent à la NPA pour construire une partie du port d'Apapa il y a tant



**Dr. Magdalene Ajani**

Perm Sec, federal Ministry of Transportation

d'années. La Banque mondiale est revenue nous dire que si nous besoin de financement, ils nous le donneront."

S'adressant aux journalistes à Lagos, Bello-Koko a déclaré: "La reconstruction des murs du quai de Tin-Can Island est en tête de l'ordre du jour, car c'est le port qui nécessite l'intervention la plus urgente. Comme la plupart d'entre nous le savent, en raison de décennies successives de négligence, les implications financières de la résolution du déficit des infrastructures portuaires dépassent de loin les dispositions budgétaires à notre disposition. Cependant, nous avons exploré et identifié des options de financement durables en partenariat public-privé, que nous avons proposées au gouvernement pour les approbations nécessaires.

"Je suis heureux d'informer cette éminente assemblée que nous en sommes aux étapes finales des discussions avec des partenaires locaux et internationaux dotés des compétences financières et techniques requises pour financer le projet de reconstruction du port de Tin-Can. En attendant, nous fixons ce qui est dans notre capacité. Ce n'est que récemment que nous avons inauguré une tour de contrôle ultramoderne pour les ports de Tin-Can et de Apapa."

## **Besoin de 800 million de dollars pour réparer l'infrastructure portuaire**

Les parties prenantes ont déclaré qu'avec le retard de la direction de la NPA à obtenir l'approbation des 800 million de dollars dont elle a besoin pour réparer l'infrastructure portuaire délabrée à travers le pays, l'état des ports pourrait s'aggraver car certains des quais pourraient s'effondrer totalement, empêchant les navires de venir vers les terminaux concernés et entraînant un détournement de fret.

Shittu a déclaré que le délabrement des principales



infrastructures portuaires telles que le port de Tin-Can et le port de Apapa à Lagos, le port d'Onne dans l'État de Rivers, les brise-lames d'Escravos dans le port de Warri et le port de Calabar à Cross River a continué de causer des revers pour la facilitation des échanges et d'entraver le la croissance très attendue et la génération de revenus du gouvernement fédéral, car les compagnies maritimes utilisent désormais d'autres ports dans les pays voisins.

Les résultats ont montré qu'environ 85 % de l'infrastructure de ces ports a plus de 40 ans et nécessite une attention urgente de la part du gouvernement fédéral.

Bello Koko avait, lors de la réunion régionale Europe et Afrique de l'Association internationale des ports et havres (IAPH) cette année, également déclaré qu'environ 800 millions de dollars étaient nécessaires pour réhabiliter l'infrastructure de ces ports.

Il a déclaré que le prêt serait remboursé en sept ans, ajoutant qu'il était toujours en cours d'élaboration par l'agence gouvernementale compétente si le projet serait financé par la NPA, ce qui réduirait sa contribution au Trésor du gouvernement fédéral. Gouvernement en raison des conditions de remboursement.

Bello-Koko a ajouté que la réhabilitation inclurait la numérisation des ports, car la réhabilitation des ports et les travaux de réparation n'étaient plus efficaces. Il a ajouté: "Les travaux palliatifs et correctifs ne sont plus efficaces. Ces ports ont besoin d'une réhabilitation totale. Il existe également un plan pour réhabiliter les brise-lames d'Escravos dans le port de Warri".

#### Ce qu'a dit l'ex-ministre Sambo

L'ancien ministre, Sambo, a confirmé le manque de fonds comme une raison majeure du retard dans la réhabilitation du port puisqu'il leur a rendu visite pour évaluation avant de quitter ses fonctions.

Puis il a confirmé que la NPA avait entamé des pourparlers avec Afrexim Bank, qui avait exprimé sa disponibilité, mais avec des conditions qui n'étaient pas insurmontables pour la NPA. De même, NEXIM Bank et Engineering Construction Plus Financing (ECPF) ont manifesté leur intérêt pour les options de financement.

"Il y a certaines conditions qu'Afrexim Bank a mises en avant. Il y a trois conditions clés. Je sais que deux d'entre elles sont très faciles à remplir. La troisième implique une garantie souveraine, et le gouvernement doit l'autoriser", a-t-il déclaré.

Il a ajouté qu'une délégation de la direction de la NPA avait tenu une réunion avec le secrétaire permanent du ministère fédéral des Finances, du Budget et de la Planification nationale sur la question.

"Nous avons le problème du tablier de quai et du mur de quai sur l'île de Tin Can. Nous avons un problème de mur de quai effondré au port d'Onne, et nous avons le défi des brise-lames à Warri Escravos. Ce sont des délabrements qui nous coûteront des millions de dollars."

"Nous devons passer par l'ensemble du processus de passation des marchés publics comme l'exige la loi. Nous devons garantir des conceptions structurelles correctes; le coût est bien fait et chaque enquête est effectuée, qu'elle soit biométrique ou hydrologique. Cela doit aller au Conseil exécutif fédéral. La NPA n'a pas les ressources de centaines de millions de dollars pour cela maintenant », a déclaré l'ancien ministre.

#### Ce qu'ont dit les importateurs et les agents de dédouanement

Les importateurs et les agents de dédouanement ont fait part de leurs inquiétudes concernant les pertes de porte-conteneurs destinés aux ports de Tin-Can Island (TCIP), Lagos, vers les ports des pays voisins en raison de l'effondrement du tablier du quai au terminal.

Les revenus destinés au pays, a expliqué l'un des agents de compensation, Kolade Aladejobi, étaient détournés vers les ports des pays voisins.

Aladejobi s'est dit préoccupé par le retard dans la réparation de l'infrastructure portuaire délabrée. Il a exhorté la nouvelle administration à s'occuper des infrastructures essentielles soutenant l'économie.

"Les deux ports de Lagos sont très cruciaux pour l'économie. Ils génèrent des milliards de nairas chaque semaine dans la bourse du gouvernement fédéral et de ses agences comme les douanes, la NPA, la NIMASA, la SON et d'autres au port", a-t-il ajouté.

De nombreux importateurs qui se sont entretenus avec le NPT ont exprimé leur inquiétude face à la dégradation des infrastructures du port maritime et ont appelé le gouvernement à une action urgente.

L'un des importateurs, M. Sunday Godwin, a décrié l'infrastructure en décomposition dans et autour du port Tin-Can et a exhorté le gouvernement fédéral à le réparer pour rendre le port plus compétitif et attrayant pour les entreprises.

"L'un des principaux défis auxquels sont confrontés les importateurs et les agents de dédouanement dans les ports de Lagos est le mauvais état des infrastructures portuaires, en particulier dans le port Tin-Can", a-t-il déclaré.

Il a conseillé que les ports soient gérés comme des entreprises par les opérateurs de terminaux privés et les agences gouvernementales qui les supervisent.

"Le gouvernement fédéral doit veiller à ce que les ports maritimes soient gérés comme des institutions par ceux qui occupent des postes de pouvoir et non comme de simples appendices du gouvernement fédéral s'ils veulent répondre aux aspirations et aux aspirations de millions de Nigériens et d'étrangers faisant des affaires dans nos ports", il a dit.

**Les deux ports de Lagos sont très cruciaux pour l'économie. Ils génèrent des milliards de nairas chaque semaine dans la bourse du gouvernement fédéral et de ses agences comme les douanes, la NPA, la NIMASA, la SON et d'autres au port**



**Dr. Eugene Nweke**  
Former President NAGAFF



**Mr. Shittu**



**Adewale Adeyanju**  
President General MWUN

## L'ère des méga transporteurs

Un ancien président de NAGAFF, le Dr Eugene Nweke, a également exprimé sa préoccupation quant à l'état des ports.

Nweke, qui est également responsable de la recherche au Sea Empowerment Research Centre, a expliqué que "les ports sont des éléments vitaux dans le secteur du transport maritime et agissent comme un échange physique ou un terrain d'entente pour la communauté commerciale". Logement des navires, équilibrer le flottement au mouillage et faciliter le flux du trafic maritime, un port nécessite la disponibilité de quais, de flotteurs, de jetées, de passerelles et d'autres commodités ou installations de soutien, facilitant ainsi le temps de rotation du navire.

Il a déclaré que les ports doivent être gérés et contrôlés comme des organisations efficaces, ajoutant que les inefficacités dans les ports entraîneront des retards coûteux pour les propriétaires de navires qui ne peuvent pas se le permettre, en particulier lorsque les coûts quotidiens de gestion d'un grand porte-conteneurs sont si élevés.

"Nous sommes à l'ère des méga-transporteurs, ce qui implique qu'un port soit équipé des installations de manutention de fret les plus modernes pour maintenir la productivité à un niveau optimal", a-t-il déclaré.

## Impliquer les opérateurs de terminaux

Le Syndicat des travailleurs maritimes du Nigeria (MWUN) a souligné la nécessité pour le gouvernement d'impliquer les opérateurs de terminaux dans la rénovation des infrastructures portuaires grâce à la collaboration.

Son président général, Adewale Adeyanju, a déclaré que ses membres n'étaient pas satisfaits en raison de la médiocrité des infrastructures et de l'entretien du port.

"Je vous ai confié une partie de mon travail au nom du gouvernement, et là où vous gagnez beaucoup d'argent, l'endroit s'effondre. La NPA et les autres agences doivent se réveiller et veiller à ce que les opérateurs de terminaux soient impliqués dans la réparation de leurs terminaux; cela ne devrait pas être le gouvernement seul."

"Les exploitants de terminaux ne devraient pas attendre que le gouvernement répare le terminal. Il y a des locataires qui n'attendent pas que les propriétaires viennent réparer leur logement. Allez à leurs toilettes et voyez ce que nous disons, tant d'infrastructures n'ont pas été mises en place que nous leur avons accordé beaucoup de bénéfice du doute", a ajouté Adeyanju.

## Dernière ligne:

L'état déplorable des infrastructures portuaires a coûté cher au Nigeria. Il appelle une attention urgente si le pays veut être compétitif dans les affaires maritimes et atteindre le statut de hub portuaire dans les sous-régions d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre.

Il est maintenant temps de soutenir la NPA dans le développement d'infrastructures portuaires qui répondent aux meilleures normes mondiales.

Si cela n'est pas fait, le gouvernement fédéral ne sera pas en mesure de réaliser le potentiel de revenus du secteur en raison de la détérioration de l'infrastructure portuaire, ce qui peut entraîner une diminution des escales de navires et du trafic de marchandises.

La direction de la NPA fait tout son possible pour s'assurer que la détérioration de l'état de certaines infrastructures n'affecte pas la communauté portuaire, y compris les exploitants de terminaux, les organismes de réglementation, les campagnes gouvernementales de génération de revenus et la facilitation des échanges, en prenant des mesures audacieuses pour réparer certaines installations.





Mr. Lawrence Smith  
Chief Operating Officer, Lekki Port

# The New Tug Boats Provided By NPA Will Promote Our Operations

— Mr Lawrence Smith Chief Operating Officer, Lekki Port

*In this interview with the duo of Omidiji Olubiyi & Fadipe Enitan (NYSC Member), the Chief Operating Officer, Lekki Port; Mr Lawrence Smith speaks on the contributions of the NPA towards operational efficiency with the new tug boats.*

**W**hat has been the relationship between your organisation and the NPA?

Well, I have been fortunate enough to know management of the NPA since 2012 when I was COO for APMT and those relationships have lasted over that period of time and only been reinforced and cemented into better working relationships with the NPA. I cannot express enough gratitude to the NPA for supporting Lekki Port along with advice and technical support with the provision of two tugs that we have now.

**What is the state of the business in your facility?**

First, we have the container terminal area that has been

sub-concessioned to Lekki Freeport Terminal, which is owned by CMACGM, one of the largest shipping lines in the world. So that is up and running. The first vessel came on April 7th which was GSL Alice. Ironically, she is due back in the coming week.

The vessel is actually picking up the first tranche of trans-shipment cargo that was delivered last week and that will be delivered to Cotonou in the early part of next week. We also have three liquid berths that are available for concessions. We are talking to several companies now and we have signed some MOUs with a couple of these companies and we hope to see some work going on there in the coming months and those

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berths will be up and running next year.

We have also had some very interesting inquiries about the bulk terminal and we believe it could be up and running in the next two to three years as well. So exciting times for Lekki Port but not just Lekki Port, the maritime industry itself in Nigeria.

If we get the trans-shipments, it will be the first ever trans-shipment cargo that has ever come through Nigeria and that is an area that we will promote and hopefully we will make some good profits in that area.

In fact, because of the economy of scale with the large ships that come in, it will also attract the destination origin cargo into Nigeria from other parts of West Africa. So, yes, it is really an exciting times to look ahead.

## **What are your immediate expectations with the new crafts in place?**

We are talking to other shipping lines who have expressed an interest, of course, because they can bring in larger vessels into Lekki Port, which reduces their costs.

In short-term, we will look to target certain shipping lines more trans-shipment cargoes. While for Long-term, mid-to-long-term, we will start looking at targeting much larger vessels. With the two tugs that we have now, the 80-tonne Bollard pool tugs, which are the largest ones in Nigeria, we can target those vessels. We can target the 14, 15, 16 to 18,000 TEU vessels because we have the capability in the port through the marine services supplied by the Nigerian Ports Authority to help us accommodate those vessels.

## **How would these newly-acquired crafts enhance operations at your facility?**

Now that we can see them on the marine services jetty, along with the very, experienced towage company that are facilitating the operations, it will improve operations.

These are the largest tugs in Nigeria, maybe in West Africa as well, and they are required to bring in the largest vessels that are on the oceans at the moment.

Without these vessels and tugs, we cannot attract bigger type of vessel. I can confidently say it opens up a lot more potential and opportunities for Lekki Port and the Nigerian industries at large.

## **So what you are saying is that with the tugs in place, we are going to witness improved services?**

Yes, everything has to be in order for ease of business; it is like a symbiotic relationship. Without these tugs, you cannot attract the larger vessels. It is like in Apapa, you have got the 40 and 60 tonne bollard pool tugs. They cannot attract those large vessels. So what these tugs would do is to open up a greater opportunity for the economy and their ability to bring in the larger vessels that we see on the oceans today.



Currently, because of our relationship with the NPA, the delivery of these two tugs from the Lagos apex to us would lead to about four and a half thousand to six and a half thousand TU vessels. Again, as I said, these ones open up greater opportunities with the Lagos free zone as well and the other free zones like the Lekki free zone. Therefore, there are many opportunities for that axis to grow and to impact into the economy.

When we talk about gateway cargo and transshipment cargo, we look at the likes of Niger, Chad, and these landlocked countries that we can be used as a gateway into them as well. I just see that the future for Lekki port and the Nigerian maritime industry will be exciting over the next three to five years and beyond.

When we were about to start business in Lekki port, people were afraid about the issue of evacuation, street evacuation and how to avoid traffic. We can see the improved situation now. Lagos state government is sponsoring the road system, as you know. I am surprised at how quickly the roads is being constructed.

We also have the opportunity of using barges. Some people have this thought process that barging is an inefficient way of moving cargo, but it is not true. I mean you look at Europe, a lot of the northern European countries barge hundreds of thousands, if not millions of TU of cargo around Europe, using the waterways in Europe, Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Antwerp. These are all major transshipment hubs in northern Europe where transshipment is used through the waterways.

What it also does is it takes trucks off the road. It is also





cheaper to move cargo through barging because of the capacity that the barges can handle. We are currently working with NPA, doing a study of the waterways around the whole of Nigeria to see where we can actually barge cargo from, from Lekki port into places potentially like Onitsha and others. So there are lots of opportunities to do this and to take trucks off the road to ease the congestion around the ports that we currently experience.

**You talked about barges and tugs attracting bigger vessels in the port, what more are they likely to do to improve business?**

The tugs themselves have firefighting equipment on them, so they can support if there is an incident in the port. They can also support if there are certain incidents that happen in the basin, they accommodate crews as well. So they are available 24-7 for any unforeseen challenges, we have seen it before, we had a customer that came out of the port pinnacle and we had to use certain tugs there to go and support them when they had a breakdown outside of the port itself.

These tugs are very flexible in supporting the Maritime industry around the port itself, not just to pull vessels but also eases and fastens ways of doing business, it is a great opportunity to have them for the port.

Well, again, we talk about the larger vessels. By doing that, simple mathematics, if you think that a ship of

6,500 TU against a ship of 18,000 TU, you could argue that maybe it is cheaper to bring your cargo on a ship that is three times the size.

I am not saying that calculation is right, but you should be looking at cheaper means, cheaper freight rates from the far East. The whole idea is to bring larger ships in, reduce prices, reduce freight rates to the company, then you and me as consumers, we get cheaper goods in the supermarkets.

It is much more efficient with these larger tugs, they have a quicker opportunity to bring the vessels in. I think from the pilotage to Apapa, or Tin Can, for example, pilotage is about three hours, something like that, two to three hours.

Our pilotage, once it's all up and running efficiently with the aid of the tugs, will probably be somewhere between 45 minutes and an hour. So you can see the whole port is designed with the equipment that is supplied along with the tugs to increase efficiency. Efficiency saves time, saves bunkers, costs etc.

**From your experience as an operations person, how important is infrastructure in any port facility?**

It is probably the most important aspect of port business. Many years ago, I lived and started my career in the ports in Southampton. Most of the ports that we see were built back in the 1960s, and in the 1930s coming on were inner city ports. Apapa port, Southampton port, Le Havre port and New York are all inner city ports. So the port systems were built 80, 90, 100 years ago. They are now defunct, most of what we are seeing today are ports being built in Greenfield sites outside of cities.

Therefore, the infrastructure is built before the port or along with the port, actually to aid the facilitation of evacuation from the port. Because what they do is to study about the capacities, the number of trucks that will be on the road at any given time before they start building.

Also with today's technology, with vehicle booking systems, truck call-up areas, truck parking areas, the whole system is designed to decongest the road system to aid facilitation of trade and have a greater ease for us and the customers to receive their goods in a timely fashion.

**How do we avert a repeat of experience arising from the gridlock in Apapa?**

I do not think anything was done wrong in Apapa. I think it's just a victim of circumstances because it was constructed so long ago. The road system is not designed to take heavy traffic, it's a bit like in the UK. The reference point is the UK. The road systems in the inner cities of the UK are not designed to take the capacity of vehicles that we see today. Because when they were built probably in Victorian times and there were not many cars. Nobody thought in a hundred years' time, every family is going to have more than two cars. So we need to build a system



**Port Infrastructure is probably the most important aspect of port business**

# INTERVIEW

that's going to accommodate three cars.

Again, when the ports were built, a lot of goods were taken out manually. If a ship comes in, it will take three to four weeks to discharge a ship. So the trucks that were taking it out were going out in a more slow fashion, and they were not congesting the roads.

Now you get a ship in that takes four, five, six times as much as these ships and everything is going out of the port virtually immediately that makes the roads congested. I do not think anything was done wrong. It is just nobody had the foresight to look ahead what was going to happen in 40 to 50 years. Now people are looking at Greenfield sites for ports. How do we support it with evacuation? We have a road system that needs to be done. I am looking at the plans for the road system along the coast. It is going to be eight lanes to ease traffic and support the road system. When we get up onto the expressway from Epe to Lekki, it is going to be six lanes. Half of it is now completed.

So there is foresight now going into it, we are talking about having a rail link directly into the port as well. Like in the US, they evacuate 60/70% of their cargo by rail. Again, it is efficient, it reduces costs and it has a cleaner carbon footprint than trucks, which takes about 100 trucks off the road. So it is all about planning and looking ahead to see how we can decongest the roads, but also getting the goods to the marketplace in a timely fashion.

In the UK, for example, and other parts of the world, they have what they call just in time. They use to have the NYK vessels which come in on a Saturday mornings and the cargo discharged that Saturday morning, and on Monday morning, it would be in the manufacturing factory just in time. So if we can replicate some of these processes in Nigeria today, it will reduce costs for storage, transportation etc. and as a customer I will be saving money.

## **What are your views on the current reforms of port rehabilitation under the current management?**

I think there are two or three options when we talk about efficiency. If I can get my cargo to the market quicker, I will be saving money; time is money. We are also in the free zone, we have also got other free zones around us. So if I build my factory in a free zone, I am subject to certain concessions from the government, certain relief on taxation, relief on other areas where if I bring my manufacturing goods into the zone and I manufacture them there, I save a lot of money and international investment will help improve the Nigerian economy.

In addition, it brings about efficiency; we have the automated terminal, and we have marine services with the new tugs that are creating these efficiencies, by aiding larger vessels. Again, we talk about economy of scale, larger vessels, and reduced costs. We have manufacturing sites within the free zone, which are offering concessions on taxation, etc. So yes, there is a lot of good things that are happening in the zone as we see it.

Another area is the Dangote and Pinnacle who support



everything that is happening in Lekki area. There is a potential of the airport coming in as well, believing that it will get better. This will be a catalyst for the Nigerian economy, once we sort out ourselves away from fossil fuels.

## **As we begin to round off, sir, from your experience and your position in the area of operations, what other area do you think NPA being a government regulator can assist to make Lekki Deep Sea Port successful?**

As I stated previously NPA has contributed two tugboats to Lekki that I believe will support and create greater efficiencies. We have pilot cutters in order, we have mooring boats as well which will aid the efficiency of arrival and departures of the vessels.

We have had great support from NPA with the transshipment business which is new, and we have just signed off with NPA regarding the transshipment side of things. Again, the collaboration with the NPA has been excellent, under the guidance of the MD, Mr. Mohammad Bello-Koko, everything has been going in the right direction. Our relationship at operations level with Executive Director, Marine and Operations in NPA,





Mr. Onari-Brown and his team, Captain Jerome, it is been excellent. I cannot fault them at all in the way they have supported Lekki Port in its vision.

NPA's vision align with ours and with the support of Lagos State Government as well. As you know, NPA is a shareholder within the port. They have shown the ability to understand how to be a shareholder and how to be an authority at the same time. Because sometimes there might be a bit of conflict of interest in those areas, but they have been a great support.

Moreover, they are looking at how they can aid us better with administration. They support and guide us with our policies on health and safety, ISPS code, etc. Because they have the experience from the APAPA axis.

We talk to the NPA on a regular base, we probably meet once or twice a month now or virtually every week. Generally, we are always in contact with the NPA, and if we need anything, they are always on hand to help and support.

**Finally, why should I do business with Lekki Deep Sea Port as an investor instead of Benin, Togo or Ghana?**

Good question, there are many layers to these question. First, if a customer taking goods up north and uses Lekki Port, the number of days the ship will

spend will be reduced for a round trip, so the ship will be saving bunkers and money, and the savings will be passed on to the customer.

Again bigger ships coming to Lekki port, they do not need to go into the other ports again because Lekki port receives bigger ships, so If Lekki can get more cargo on the ship it will reduce freight rates and save cost for customers.

However, Lekki port is designed for efficient operations and economy of scale which will be passed on to the customer and then to the consumer. And if we can then build an infrastructure going out from the port, into Nigeria and beyond, it opens up other potential markets for us.

**Any other comment sir?**

I must commend the support NPA has given to Lekki port it has been fantastic. I just see this as a game changer for the Nigerian Maritime sector and it is a piece of history that is happening today and hopefully we can all embrace that whether we be stakeholders, shareholders, operators, media, government, Lekki Port is an economic enabler going forward.

Moreover, I keep saying this, Lekki port is not really in competition with Apapa and Tin Can, and it is there to enhance and embrace what goes on there and to attract a different type of customers into Nigeria.

## NPA Management Intensifies Campaign On Breast Cancer, Hepatitis 'b' And Meningitis

BY OREM ALBERT

In keeping with its corporate objective of prioritizing the health and well-being of workers, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) management has reaffirmed its dedication to heighten efforts in the campaign against Breast Cancer, Hepatitis 'B,' and Meningitis. With a resolute determination, the NPA aims to enhance early detection and prevention measures, ensuring the well-being of its employees remains at the forefront of their initiatives.

The Authority's Managing Director, Mohammed Bello Koko who made this known during the launch of a Breast Cancer, Hepatitis and Meningitis Awareness Campaign, reiterated that a strong and healthy workforce was critical to the accomplishment of the corporate goals and objectives of any organization.

According to Bello Koko, "Management is very serious with promoting the wellbeing of our workforce; taking cognizance of the fact that a healthy team would be more productive and instrumental to the attainment of the lofty aspirations of our establishment."

Speaking further, the Managing Director, who was represented at the programme by the General Manager, Administration, Engr. Ngini Chukwuma stated that breast cancer had remained the most common type of cancer disease globally with well over two million cases recorded as at 2020.

He emphasized that in Nigeria alone, approximately Thirty Thousand cases are diagnosed annually, and tragically, over half of those diagnosed succumb to the disease. Bello Koko further reiterated that as at the time of the event, the number of cancer-related deaths had surpassed half a Million; stressing that available demographic data indicate that over 70% of these deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries, including Nigeria.

In her remarks, the event's facilitator, the General Manager (Medical Services) Dr. Nwokolo Chinwe stated that, "The drive to have an Organization-wide screening program for NPA workforce was primarily birthed by the high incidence of breast cancer in our society which is about 102,000 new cases annually, accounting for 50% of cancer cases in Nigeria and close to 100% of breast cancer cases present at late stages- stages 3 and 4, leading to high

morbidity and mortality apart from being a heavy financial burden to the organization."

"Women aged 40 years and above need to avail themselves the opportunity of getting checked, as early detection is the route to beating the disease; and relatively new employees are urged to get vaccinated for Hepatitis and Meningitis," she said.

Giving some health tips at the occasion, an invited Public Health Consultant, Dr. Kolawole Talabi advised that making healthy lifestyle choices such as regular sleep, eating fruits and vegetable, drinking more water and exercising regularly, would help to regulate hormones and insulin production in the human body, stressing that studies has shown that these healthy lifestyle choices could prevent or control breast cancer diseases.

In the Health Consultant's opinion, "Lifestyle choices impact our health. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, but it is preventable, especially when detected early. However, it is

important to note that mammography is considered the gold standard for breast cancer screening. Additionally, hepatitis vaccination plays a crucial role in preventing liver infections that can lead to liver cancer. Furthermore, meningitis vaccination significantly reduces the risk of contracting the disease and is a cost-effective preventive measure compared to the expenses associated with treatment"

Notable attendees at the event included Madubuike Esther Ugo, the General Manager of Public Private Partnership, Ballah Sarah K., the Assistant General Manager of Corporate & Strategic Communications (C&SC), representing Josephine Moltok, the General Manager of C&SC. Also present was Mrs Abia Bassey (include surname), the Assistant General Manager of Audit, who represented Umar Abubakar, the General Manager of Audit. These esteemed individuals were joined by other distinguished dignitaries.

## NPA Revives Dilapidated Apapa Water Works

**T**he Nigerian Ports Authority Management has brought a relief to the residents of Apapa by reviving the 2.4 million gallons per day Apapa Water Works, which has been moribund since 2012.

Speaking during handover of the revived facility in Apapa recently, the Managing Director of the NPA, Mohammed Bello Koko, said the intervention is part of NPA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the immediate communities.

He said, "Responding to the existential needs of our operating environment is top priority on our corporate social responsibility agenda, and this explains why we gave speedy approval to the request for resuscitation of the Apapa Water Works, which had been moribund since 2012."

This development came on the heels of the rehabilitation of the Accident and Emergency Ward at the Apapa General Hospital and the acquisition and deployment of a first-of-its-kind incinerator in Africa for efficient waste management by the Koko-led administration.

The Managing Director, Lagos State Water Corporation, the Chairperson of Apapa Local Government, Hon. (Mrs.) Idowu Shebanjo, accompanied by the Chairman and officials of the Apapa Residents Association, were full of appreciation to the NPA management. They, however, assured of the proper maintenance of the facility to assure sustainability.



# PM Tincan Congratulates New SSA Exco, Commends Electoral Officers

**T**he Port Manager Tincan Island Port Buba Jibril has appreciated the electoral officials from Onne Port, who moderated the Senior Staff elections which took place last week at the canteen of the Tincan Port complex.

The Port Manager who spoke at a reception organised for the newly elected officials of the Senior Staff in his office at the Tincan Admin office congratulated the election supervisors saying they did a great job conducting a free and fair elections where there was no dissenting voices.

Mallam Buba added that everyone should try to change his/her immediate environment if they cannot change the whole society. He added that changes and improvements should start from our homes to the work places.

Also speaking was the Traffic Manager of Tincan Port Mr Anda who added that so many experienced hands will be retiring from now till the next four years. He therefore suggested to the Union to begin to "groom successors now as they must not all go in a fell swoop as there must be mentorship or else novice would be brought in to do the essential and highly Technical jobs. Anda congratulated the winning team, while believing that they will do well for the staff because of the calibre of people involved.

The newly elected officials include; Tincan Zone 1 incoming executive, Comrade Sylvester Eboiye Chairman, Vice Chairman Comr Adegoke Anthony and Comr Rotimi Holms Secretary among others.

While new executive representing Tincan Zone 2 are Comr Osatohwmen Jerome, vice Chairman Amodu Rafiu and Comr Adjekpovu Michael Tomorrow as Secretary amongst others.

Similarly, the newly posted comptroller of Immigration Service to Tincan Island Port Mohammed Sadiq paid a courtesy call on the Port Manager Tincan Port Mallam Buba Jibril, in his office.

The visiting officer appreciated the Port Manager for recently providing befitting offices for his men at the Agency Building within Tincan Complex. He also requested for further collaborations from the Tincan Management for smoother job performances from his men.

In his response, the Port Manager Tincan Island Port Buba Jibril welcomed the Comptroller and his senior officers to Tincan Island Port.

The PM added that Tincan Port is unique because of its linear location and the fact that it was the one that was sited last among the Nigerian ports.

The Port was a child of necessity which

was built because of the congestion of the Apapa Port during the Cement Armada when barracks were massively built, then vessels would stay for about four months before they would enter the Ports. The need to decongest Apapa port made government to build Tincan in 1975/76.

Management prioritize the issue of security so we built concrete fence to block off miscreants since they always cut off the see-through fence.

The current global economic melt down

as allowed for a low business situation in the Ports.

Lagos alone have over a thousand multinational companies and the Lagos market is unique so it is difficult to divert the vessels to the Eastern part, also note that the importer determines where the cargo goes to. Mallam Buba advised the immigration to manage the newly provided office space, as in the future Management will look into providing additional offices to them.



*Some of the NPA delegation to the PMAWCA conference*

## PMAWCA 2023: NPA Attends Boards Of Directors Meeting In Banjul, Gambia

**T**he NPA Management under the leadership of Bello Koko recently joined other Board of Directors of Port Management of West and Central Africa to deliberate on various issues that are prevalent in moving Association forward at a meeting held in Banjul capital of Gambia.

Notable issues discussed at the 2-day event were strategies towards the improvement of the Ports and Regional partnership by member nations.

The NPT News Crew learnt that meeting which was declared open by the host nations Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr. Ebrima Silah was strictly meant for the Managing Directors of the Six Ports Authorities that are member of the Board. They include Gabon, Nigeria, Guinea, Senegal, Equatorial Guinea and Gambia.

The Board of Directors assessed the results of the 2022 activities which include

the Audit report from the various committees. It further examined the 2023 activities, its budget and draft programme for the 43rd Council.

Participants at the Bi-Annual Event had open discussions on the need to identify common challenges facing activities on all Ports and come up with swift plan in moving the industry forward.

At the end of the deliberations, the Board came up with resolutions for the next meeting scheduled to hold in November 2023 in Nigeria.

The NPA delegation to the conference was led by the Managing Director, Bello Koko represented by the General Manager, Corporate and Strategic Planning, Umar Gamboro.

Also present on the team was the General Manager, Corporate & Strategic Communications, Josephine Moltok.

## NPA Commissions Newly Aquired Vessels

By OMIDIJI OLUBIYI and ERAHKIFU PAUL

**M**anaging Director of Nigerian Ports Authority, Mohammed Bello Koko recently acquired two Bollard Pull Tugboats namely, M.T MAIKOKO and M.T DA-OPUKURO to enhance operational efficiency and attain its vision of being the Maritime hub of Sub-Sahara Africa through improved infrastructure, which are contemporary demand of trade facilitation in world.

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Dr. Magdelene Ajani who unveiled the new vessels said that the government was driven by the need to provide efficient domestic cargo needs, win back transit cargo hitherto lost to neighboring ports.

She further stated that, the-state-of-art vessels acquired goes to show Management determination in improving infrastructure, equipment, support of port security, patrol, surveillance and deliver excellent marine services with emphasis in Nigeria's first Deep Seaport (Lekki Deep Seaport) which recently commenced operations.

Speaking with the NPT crew, Belema Samuel Jumbo the Captain on board the vessel M.T MAIKOKO expressed her joy as captain of the first ever vessel with neoteric 80ton Bollard Pull Tugboats a 2813 Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) Model. It has the capacity to pull and push effectively vessels of over 300meters such as the ULCC and the BLCC the extra large and large carrier in Lekki because it's a Deep Seaport with higher draft.

On the issue of being a female Captain, Belema stated that she has been in the profession for over five years and that women can also do the job very well. As a Marine Seafarer Captain, they are trained to not just drive, but also man-over the vessels without fear. She encouraged females who are interested to join the Maritime industry as there is no discrimination because females are striving in the profession also assuring

the females of gender equality as everyone work for a common goal.

Also expressing excitement was Captain Aderekuba the Chief Officer of M.T DA-OPUKURO as one of the first on board the new acquired vessel. She described DA-OPUKURO vessel as very

strong vessel with ASD ton made by Damen with a Gross tonnage of 371 and Net tonnage one hundred plus tones. Captain Aderekuba rounded off by stating her commitment towards making Lekki Port a great place for Maritime business.



M.T MAIKOKO and M.T DA-OPUKURO

## TINCAN Receives Two Unusually Large Vessels In 60 Days

BY SOLA ADESANWO

**T**HE Port Manager of Tincan Island Jibril Buba has announced that the port received a vessel Mv Great Antwerp that happened to be the largest Roll-on-Roll-off (RoRo) Vessel ever to Visit Nigeria.

Speaking in his office recently while addressing some stakeholders Buba added that MV great Antwerp, which had the Length Over All (LOA) of 250 meters, a beam of 38mtrs brought by Port Terminal Multi-purpose Terminal (PTML), asserted that the successful berthing of the ship is an indication that more of such vessel could successful berth at the port.

Similarly, a couple of weeks ago Tincan Island Port also successfully berthed MSC Maureen (Panama) a 300 meters long container vessel which till now was still the longest vessel to ever call at the port.

The Port Manager TCIP Buba Jubril

giving his opinion at the quayside said the ship was the largest vessel to visit Tincan adding that though there are challenges yet it would not stop the port from doing its day to day operations excellently.

Mallam Buba Jibril added that the arrival of the vessel fetched the government huge foreign exchange and that it is a testament that the port can receive similar or bigger vessels in the future.

Also giving his opinion, The TCIP Harbour Master Capt. Habib Ibrahim said with the arrival of MSC Maureen " they have been able to maximise the potential of the channels since it was the first time they were receiving a vessel of 300 meters in length which is a confirmation that they could still push the limits of the channel and that this has gone a long way to increase investors

Confidence on our competences and would attract more economic value.



# MD NPA Urges Employees To Embrace KPIs Towards Efficient Service Delivery

BY OREM ALBERT

**T**he Management of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has implored all employees to continuously embrace the concept of Key Performance Indicator's (KPIs), which would help in measuring the success of the Organization towards greater efficiency and service delivery.

The Managing Director of the NPA Mohammed Bello said, this would help Managers to quickly understand the level of performance and operations at their domain with a view to changing strategies towards attainment of set targets.

Represented by the Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Aderenle Susanne Adesina at the launch of the KPIs held within the Corporate Courtyard recently, stated that all employees should ensure that they embrace the programme for the benefit of the organization stating that the way staff relate to KPIs have an impact on their long-term health and

viability of an organization towards achieving its vision.

She stressed that KPIs will not only help identify areas that need improvement and simplify decision-making process but will be effective on how it is implemented. Moreover, she added "the KPIs are tools and no matter how sophisticated a tool is, they add no value if they are not used." "Staff are therefore, encouraged to take KPIs seriously for the achievement of NPA's vision and mission".

Speaking at the launch, the Assistant General Manager (Performance and Management) Zainab M. Dantiye said the mandate of the Performance Management Department "is to align employee performance with organization goals and objectives by ensuring accountability at all levels so as to achieve the Authority's vision through continuous reviews of its processes."

She added that, in the previous appraisal exercise, it was discovered that some Divisions, Departments and locations did

not formally have set targets a situation which created bottlenecks in their performance leading to, low scores for employees in high performing Departments and a lack of direction in terms of alignment with the organization's vision and mission.

Zainab concluded by encouraging staff on the need for familiarization of the KPIs documents once it is circulated on either hard or soft copies and support with timely feedback. The highlight of the event was the official launch of the programme and the unveiling of relevant content materials by the Finance chief.

Present at the event were GM Finance, Fawole Adeleke Stephen; GM Administration, Engr. Ngini Chukwuma; GM Tariff & Billing, Engr. (Mrs) Ohagwa Anthonia Chinelo; GM Health, Safety and Environment, Mrs. Khadijat Sheidu-Shabi; GM Corporate & Strategic Communications, Mrs. Maltok Josephine Adar; and many more.

## NPA Generates N191.4billion, Remits N55.7billion In First Half Of 2023

**T**he Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has generated N191.4 billion revenue in the first half of 2023 and remitted N55.7 billion to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF).

The NPA, Managing Director, Mr Mohammed Bello-Koko, stated this in half year report recently in Lagos.

Elucidating on the report, Bello-Koko said that given the existential economic headwinds both at the micro and macro levels, the operational statistics for the first six months were reassuring. He said that the data catalyzed the commendable remittances to the CRF of the Federal Government.

According to him, "viewed within the context of current global economic upheavals which have affected trade volumes in all climes, our current growth trajectory is encouraging and gives us confidence to project a revenue growth of over N500 billion with concomitant increase in remittance to CRF end-of-year 2023, given that shipping activities peak around the second half of the year."

"The smart policy thrust of the new administration which is already throwing up new vistas of growth further lends credence to the feasibility of our projections and gives fillip to our organizational initiative." He said.

Koko added that, "the operationalization of

Lekki Deep Seaport, expected restoration of the service boat management contract, digitalization and intensified tightening of collections mechanisms buoys their confidence to exceed the revenue projection."

NPT crew gathered that the Authority has completed operations on a total number of one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one (1851) vessels for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2023 with a combined Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) of fifty-seven million, eight hundred and seventy thousand and eighty-three (57,870,083). Cargo throughput for the period under review stood at 33,895,784 metric tonnes, whilst container traffic was 707,985 TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units).

In addition, a key indicator of port efficiency, which is the average turn-around-time (TAT) of vessels, stood at 5.16 days. This is an improvement and we have put measures in place to surpass in the second half of 2023.

Bello-Koko said that the authority was poised to transform its projections to actualities. Adding that NPA would focus on finalizing financing arrangements for port rehabilitation drive, conclusion of all digitalization's geared towards improvement of efficiency and collaboration with landlocked neighbouring countries like



MD NPA, Mr Mohammed Bello-Koko

Niger and Chad with whom we have already opened discussions to patronize our ports as hubs for transshipment cargo.

"As a management team, we remain unwavering in our resolve to continuously improve on service excellence, blocking avenues of income leakages. We will also curb waste and tighten collection mechanisms in a bid to surpass stakeholders' expectations and support the national economy," he said.

## COSCO's New Electric Container Ship Hits the Water

**C**hinese Shipping Company COSCO Shipping Development launched their new 700 TEU electric containership.

COSCO launched the 700TEU vessel, dubbed N997, from their Yangzhou shipyard.

The ship will be operated on a river/coastal route using two 900kW main propulsion motors. COSCO states that this ship is the most prominent electric container ship in the world, reducing carbon emissions by roughly 32 tons per day.

The ship contains an intelligence ship platform system, along with a situational awareness system for increase safety.

The vessel is considered a breakthrough in inland river shipping.

COSCO has helped create the China Electrical Ship Innovation Alliance to promote advancements in the field of electric shipping. The group utilizes industry experts from design to battery suppliers to ensure advancement in the field.

## SEA-LNG Coalition Welcomes MSC As Its Latest Member

**M**SC Mediterranean Shipping Company has joined SEA-LNG, the multi-sector industry coalition established to demonstrate the benefits of the LNG pathway as a route to shipping's decarbonization.

In recent years, MSC has made investments in LNG-fuelled vessels in the different sectors it operates. In 2022, it saw its first five newbuilding dual-fuel LNG-capable container vessels in operation. In the cruise sector, it launched MSC World Europa and MSC Euribia, whose maiden voyage was powered by bio-LNG.

MSC said it is committed to maintaining a modern fleet that will advance progress towards net zero decarbonization by replacing conventional fuel vessels with dual-fuel capable vessels in the short term, including those fuelled by LNG.

Furthermore, it noted it endeavours to be a steward of the world's oceans, adding it has invested substantially in ship design, cutting-edge technologies and digital applications to improve energy efficiency. It also emphasized it is taking actions to properly support meeting its target of complete net decarbonization by 2050.

MSC is also exploring a range of alternative fuels and propulsion solutions. It said it sees cross-industry collaboration as crucial to scaling these solutions for the maritime industry, and it expects to operate its vessels on a range of fuel options in the future.

The company is also a member of the Methane Abatement in Maritime Innovation Initiative (MAMII) and the Society for Gas as a Marine Fuel (SGMF).

## India's Rice Export Shutdown Adds to Concerns About Global Grain Trade

**I**n an attempt to control inflation for domestic consumers and ensure adequate supplies, the government of India has banned the export of non-basmati rice, slashing shipment volume from the world's largest rice exporter overnight. It is the second time in a year that India's government has decided to shut down exports of a food commodity, following its wheat export ban in May 2022.

The global rice trade totals about 55 million tonnes per year, and India's exports account for 22 million tonnes of the total, including six million tonnes of lower-cost Indica white rice. Indica exports are now prohibited by the Indian government in order to preserve domestic stocks, and according to Indian outlet Mint, about 200,000 tonnes is now stuck at Indian seaports.

While India is in possession of about 40 million tonnes of stored rice - three times its target for a strategic reserve - it has had a hard time controlling domestic price increases. With elections on the way, and the local price of rice up 11 percent in a year, the Indian government has decided to ban Indica exports and keep extra supplies locally in a bid to reduce the cost of living, analysts told BBC. A second motivation may be to prepare for poor harvests ahead after

a drier-than-usual monsoon season.

The sudden disappearance of Indian Indica rice shipments will contribute to food price inflation, according to the IMF. The agency estimates that the average price for all grains could rise by 15 percent over the span of 2023. Grain prices have already risen by nearly the same amount since June 2022, driven upwards by restrictions on Ukrainian wheat exports.

In some African nations, imported Indian rice accounts for a majority of the supply, and the decision to cut back has drawn criticism. Price hikes could put rice out of reach as an affordable staple for consumers in low-income countries. Food aid shipments from Indian government agencies are exempt, so some unpurchased amounts will continue to flow.

Nations in the Middle East may feel the effect most. India's top rice export market is Iran, followed by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. On Friday, the government of the UAE announced a similar ban on rice exports and re-exports in an attempt to preserve its own stocks. The UAE ordinarily gets the majority of its rice from India, and may experience price hikes of as much as 40 percent due to the ban, according to local media.



Rice arrives in Dakar, Senegal from India. India is a major supplier to African rice import markets

## Concordia Maritime Down to Last Ship as it Sells 10 Tankers in 18 Months

**C**oncordia Maritime has entered into a sale agreement for two more of its product tankers, essentially completing the sale of its entire fleet in the past 18 months as it sought to work down debt. The company has one remaining product tanker which is on long-term charter after having sold 10 vessels.

The sale process started at the beginning of 2022 to lower debt and reduce pending costs. Since then, the company has pivoted to take advantage of the strong market and the high prices for older vessels. The sale of the latest two vessels, after the repayment of loans and liabilities to related parties, is expected to generate more than \$9 million in liquidity for Concordia. The company did not provide the sale price but said it was affected by the buyer's expected earnings for the vessels which remain under contract till late 2024.

Concordia's strategy had been to place

the vessels on medium to long-term charter agreements. They built up large debts with the building of the ships and were hard hit by the prolonged weak market. When the market rebounded in 2022, the charters reduced the benefits but increasingly made the sale of the vessels attractive.

The latest agreement is for the sale of two 65,200 dwt product tankers, the Stena Progress built in 2009, and the Stena Premium built in 2011. The company notes that since 2021, Stena Progress and Stena Premium have been on a five-year charter to Stena Bulk, which in turn has chartered out the vessels on a combination of short and medium-term contracts. The existing contracts, which run until the fall and winter of 2024, will be transferred from Stena Bulk with the delivery of the vessels to their new owners.





The Panama Canal

## Panama Canal Seen Losing \$200 Million Next Year As Ship Crossings Dip

**T**he Panama Canal expects its revenue to shrink by about \$200 million in its next fiscal year due to crossing restrictions meant to save water as a consequence of an unprecedented drought, its administrator announced on Thursday.

The projected losses come as the transoceanic waterway key to moving hundreds of billions of dollars in global trade each year expects its daily average for cargo ship crossings to slide by about 16%.

Specifically, between 30 and 32 ships are expected to cross daily during the new fiscal year which starts in October, said canal

administrator Ricaurte Vasquez at an event.

That compares to the 36 to 38 ships that transit the waterway when it operates at full capacity. The \$200 million cut would reduce the canal's revenues for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to \$4.9 billion.

Last month, the canal's administrators extended restrictions on the maximum depth for ships and limited average crossings to just 32 vessels per day due to the abnormally dry weather.

Panama typically sees heavy rains in July, and the canal authority has called the lack of precipitation "historically unprecedented." **Source: Reuters**

## Höegh Autoliners Secures 5-Year Contract with Major Car Producer

**H**öegh Autoliners has signed a 5-year contract with a major international car producer to transport cars from the U.S. to the Middle East.

The company did not disclose the car producer or the value of the contract, but said it is the company's practice to disclose to contracts valued at more than \$100 million.

"We are happy to partner with this major international car producer for transportation of their cargo in one of our core trade lanes," said CEO Andreas Enger. "Serving our strategic customers and allocating capacity to them in our systems both ex. Atlantic and ex. Asia is our top priority. We have a long history in the US to the Middle East trade and it gives us confidence that customers see us as their trusted long-term carrier for their products in this corridor."

Höegh Autoliners is committed to reducing carbon intensity for customers and has successfully reduced its carbon footprint by 40% since 2008. Next year, the company is set to introduce its first Aurora class newbuilds, which will be the largest and most carbon-efficient car carriers in the industry.

## Maersk Warns of Slower Demand For Container Shipping

**S**hipping group A.P. Moller-Maersk warned on Friday of a steeper decline in global demand for shipping containers by sea this year, prompted by muted economic growth and customers reducing inventories.

The company, one of the world's biggest container shippers with a market share of around 17%, said it expects container volumes to fall by as much as 4%. It had previously forecast a decline of no more than 2.5%.

Maersk transports goods for retailers and consumer companies such as Walmart, Nike and Unilever, and is seen as a barometer for global economic and corporate health.

CEO Vincent Clerc said he saw no sign that the destocking which has curbed global trade activity would end this year.

"We had expected customers to draw down inventories around the middle of the year, but so far we see no signs of that happening. It may happen at the beginning of next year," Clerc said at a media briefing.

"Consequently, the uptick in volumes we had expected in the second half of the year

has not occurred," he said. He predicted that the drawdown of inventories would take longer in the U.S. than in other regions.

Maersk posted record earnings last year due to high freight rates caused by strong consumer demand and pandemic-related logjams at ports. But freight rates have tumbled this year amid a global economic

slowdown.

To make things worse for the industry, a wave of hundreds of new container vessels ordered during the pandemic has started to come to market this year.

"Most of the orders are still in the shipyard, so we have a long haul in front of us," said Clerc.

## Russia To Receive 30 New Ships In 2023 In An Effort To Strengthen Its Naval Forces

**P**resident Putin reviewed a parade of war vessels and nuclear subs in St Petersburg on Sunday and declared that Russia's Navy would receive 30 new ships in 2023.

Forty-five vessels, subs, and other vessels reportedly participated in Russia's annual Navy Day event, a traditional show highlighting military might. It was held in the Gulf of Finland and on the River Neva in St Petersburg.

Nearly 3,000 navy personnel participated in a parade on land, per Kremlin. Putin, with Sergei Shoigu, the country's Defence

Minister, as well as Admiral Nikolai Yevmenov, the head of the Indian Navy, examined some of the vessels from a launch boat on the Neva before delivering a speech.

Today, Russia is confidently executing large-scale tasks of the national maritime policy and is also building up the strength of the Navy consistently said Putin. He mentioned this year alone that 30 vessels of different classes are being added to the fleet. He did not comment on what Russia calls its special military operation in Ukraine.

# Dressing For The Office: Accessories

By Fiberesima Miebaka

**D**ressing properly in today's corporate world entails more than just wearing a well-tailored suit or a smart dress. To genuinely create a statement and exude confidence, pay attention to the details, and accessorize with care. This article delves into the art of office accessorizing, offering advice and ideas to help you boost your professional style and leave a memorable impression.

## The Power of Accessories

Accessories have the extraordinary power to elevate a simple suit to a polished and elegant appearance. They enable you to exhibit your individual flair while remaining professional.

## Timeless Timepieces

A timeless watch is a mark of luxury and timeliness as well as a utilitarian accessory. Choose a watch that is sleek, stylish and complements your outfit. A traditional leather or metal band can offer a touch of elegance, whereas a minimalist design demonstrates expertise and attention to detail.

## Statement Jewellery

Subtle yet eye-catching jewellery can improve your entire appearance. To prevent seeming cluttered, limit your ensemble to a few carefully picked pieces. A trendy bracelet, a beautiful necklace, or a pair of elegant earrings can bring a touch of personality and refinement to your business wear. Always choose high-quality materials and avoid anything overly showy or obtrusive.





## Scarves

Scarves are useful accessories that can instantly improve your appearance. For a more elegant look, choose lightweight scarves made of silk or chiffon. You may tie them around your neck in a loose knot, drape them over your shoulders, or even tie them to the handle of your bag for added style. Choose patterns and colours that will match your clothing while also adding a splash of intrigue.

## Belts & Accessories for Men

Well-chosen belts and other accessories can help men improve their business appearance. A high-quality leather belt in a complementary colour to your shoes can complete your look. Cufflinks, tie bars, and pocket squares allow you to show off your unique style while yet retaining a professional image.

Accessorizing for the office allows you to demonstrate your flair and attention to detail while remaining professional. You can improve your entire appearance and leave a lasting impression by carefully picking

classic timepieces, statement jewellery, professional bags, fashionable scarves, and appropriate footwear. Remember to establish a balance between fashion and business appropriateness, ensuring that your accessories enhance rather than overshadow your

professional image. So, use these techniques to boost your professional style and embrace the power of accessorizing in the office.

## Professional Footwear

Never underestimate the significance of proper footwear. Choose shoes that are both comfortable and fashionable, and that match the company dress code. Classic pumps or loafers in neutral tones are always appropriate. Make sure your shoes are clean and well-kept, as scuffed, or worn-out footwear can detract from an otherwise polished image.



## Professional Bags

A well-chosen bag is both a functional and fashionable accessory. Invest in a high-quality leather or faux-leather purse that is large enough to store your essentials while remaining professional. Choose neutral colours like black, brown, or navy that will go with everything. A structured tote or a sleek briefcase can be utilitarian as well as stylish.



**T**he common cold is an illness affecting your nose and throat. Most often, it's harmless, but it might not feel that way. Germs called viruses cause a common cold.

Often, adults may have two or three colds each year. Infants and young children may have colds more often.

Most people recover from a common cold in 7 to 10 days. Symptoms might last longer in people who smoke. Most often, you don't need medical care for a common cold. If symptoms don't get better or if they get worse, see your health care provider.

Illnesses of the nose and throat caused by germs are called upper respiratory tract infections.

#### Symptoms

Most often, common cold symptoms start 1 to 3 days after someone is exposed to a cold virus. Symptoms vary. They can include:

- \*Runny or stuffy nose.
- \*Sore or scratchy throat.
- \*Cough.
- \*Sneezing.
- \*Generally feeling unwell.
- \*Slight body aches or a mild headache.
- \*Low-grade fever.

The mucus from your nose may start out clear and become thicker and yellow or green. This change is normal. Most often, it doesn't mean that you have a bacterial illness.

#### When to see a doctor

For adults. Most often, you don't need medical care for a common cold. But see your health care provider if you have:

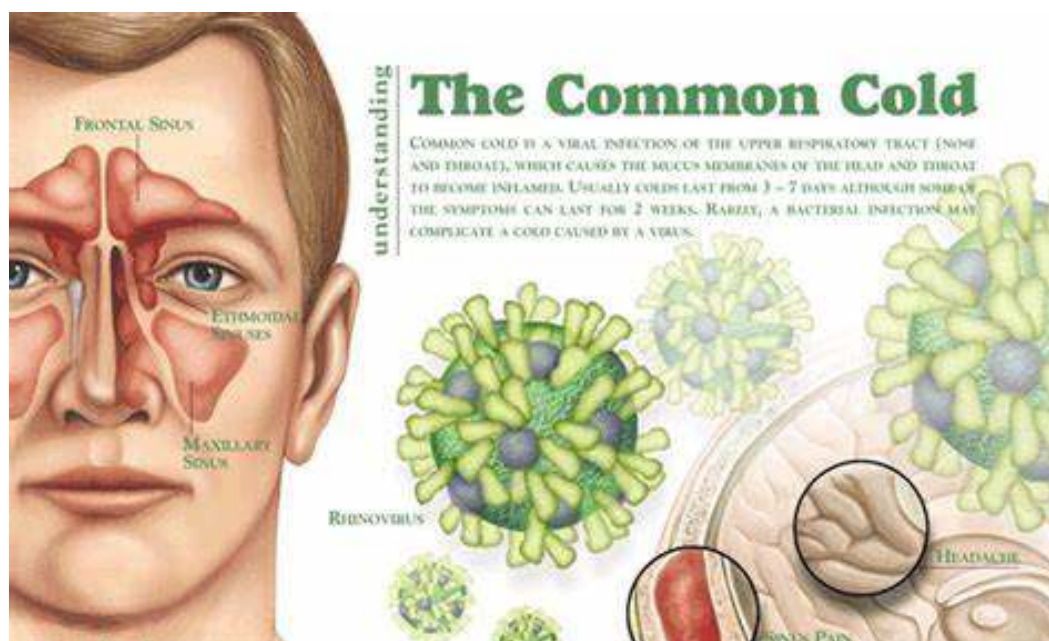
#### Symptoms that get worse or do not get better.

- \*Fever greater than 101.3 degrees Fahrenheit (38.5 degrees Celsius) that lasts more than three days.
- \*Fever returning after a fever-free period.
- \*Shortness of breath.
- \*Wheezing.
- \*Intense sore throat, headache or sinus pain.

#### For children

Most children with a common cold don't need to see a health care provider. Get medical care right away if your child has any of the following:

- \*Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) in newborns up to 12 weeks.
- \*Rising fever or fever lasting more than two days in a child of any age.
- \*More-intense symptoms, such as headache, throat pain or cough.
- Trouble with breathing or wheezing.
- \*Ear pain.
- \*Fussiness or drowsiness that isn't



## Common cold

typical.

\*No interest in eating.

#### Diagnosis

You usually don't need medical care for a common cold. But if symptoms get worse or don't go away, see your health care provider.

Most people with a common cold can be diagnosed by their symptoms. Your care provider may take a nasal or throat swab to rule out other illnesses. A chest X-ray may be ordered to rule out a lung illness.

#### Treatment

There's no cure for the common cold. Most cases of the common cold get better without treatment within 7 to 10 days. But a cough may last a few more days.

The best thing you can do is take care of yourself while your body heals. Care tips include:

- \*Rest.
- \*Drink plenty of liquids.
- \*Humidify the air.
- \*Use saline nasal rinses.
- \*Antibiotics do not treat cold viruses.

They are used to treat illnesses caused by bacteria.

#### Pain relievers

Pain relievers you can buy without a prescription can lessen the discomfort of a sore throat, headache or fever.

For adults. Nonprescription pain relief for adults includes:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol, others).
- Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others).

For children. Guidelines for pain relief medicines for children include the following:

Do not give children or teenagers aspirin. Aspirin has been linked to Reye's syndrome, a rare life-threatening condition, in children or teenagers who have the flu or chickenpox.

Use children-strength, nonprescription pain relievers. These include children's acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, others).

For children younger than 3 months old, don't use acetaminophen until your baby has been seen by a health care provider.

Don't give ibuprofen to a child younger than 6 months old or to children who are vomiting frequently.

Use these medicines for the shortest time possible and follow label directions to avoid side effects.

Call your health care provider if you have questions about the right dose.

#### Decongestant nasal sprays

For adults. Adults can use decongestant drops or sprays for up to five days. These help a stuffy nose. Prolonged use can cause the return of symptoms.

For children. Children younger than 6 years old shouldn't use decongestant drops or sprays. Talk to your doctor before using nasal decongestants in children older than 6 years.

#### Cough syrups

Nonprescription cough and cold medicines are used to treat the symptoms of coughs and colds, not the underlying disease. Research suggests that these medicines don't work any better to treat colds than a placebo, an inactive medicine used in research.

For adults. Follow these tips for nonprescription cough and cold medicines:

Don't take two medicines with the same active ingredient, such as an antihistamine, decongestant or pain reliever. Too much of a single ingredient could lead to an accidental overdose.

For children. Nonprescription cough and cold medicines aren't typically recommended for children. These medicines have potentially serious side effects, including fatal overdoses in children younger than 2 years old. Talk to your child's doctor before using any nonprescription cough and cold medicine in children.



# Port of Vancouver



Canada's Gateway to the World. The Port of Vancouver is Canada's largest and most diversified port, connecting the country to over 170 trading economies around the world. The port handles various types of cargo, from grains and coal to forest products and automobiles, as well as cruise passengers and recreational boaters.

## TOO SAD TO BID EMMANUEL GOOD BYE

**A**ll the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances.....

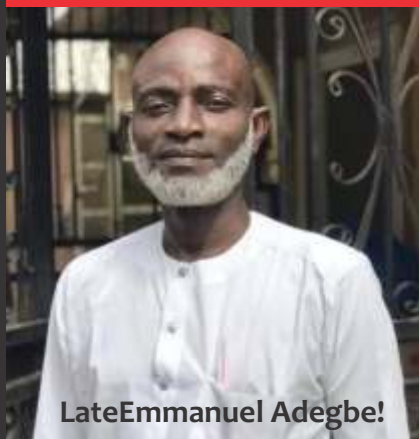
Emma's Exit Has Come! Yet We Mourn. Yes We Must.

Even though we had known Emma Adegbe as a seasoned and thoroughbred maritime journalists over the years, our paths crossed and we began to know him a lot more deeply on the Editorial Board of the Nigerian Ports Today; the official publication of the Nigerian Ports Authority.

As one of our Consultants, Emma had the opportunity of joining a select team of Consultants and some personnel of C&SC the NPA to birth the Nigerian Ports Today. In the inception, even till the 33rd Edition was published, he distinguished himself as a team player. He remained as such even as the 34th Edition nears completion.

Prior to the birth of Nigerian Ports Today, Emma had been a part of us at the NPA. Being a frontline journalist, and President of Maritime Reporters Association of Nigeria (at a time) pre-

### ... A TRIBUTE



Late Emmanuel Adegbe!

supposed that we must relate.

It is to Emma's eternal credit (along with others) that the NPA's Corporate and Strategic Communications Division arrived at the name: Nigerian Ports Today, to depict the new NPA. He contributed his quota from the beginning until he breathed his last.

But, the task at the Nigerian Ports Today brought the Team closer. It

brought out the best in the hardworking, disciplined, yet humorous Emmanuel Adegbe. He was a Team Player.

Our Editorial Meetings were characteristically incomplete and dull, on the very few occasions when Emma didn't show up (albeit for genuine reasons).

Our Production Meetings bear the images of his impressive presence -an image we can never erase!

Now that we yet again get set to put to bed the 34th edition, which bear his evanescence presence, how do we erase your labour of over a decade? No we can't!

Going forward, how do we cope at our all-night-all-day production meetings without our humor merchant?

The memories that we share are not enough to remember that we surely have lost a Compatriot.

To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die - Thomas Campbell

**Adie Emmanuel Adegbe!**

By Lucy Akinsanya

In his desire to enhance transparency and reposition the organization, Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko recently approved a comprehensive pensioners' Audit/Verification exercise across various locations in the country's six geo-political zones.

The two-week exercise, which was completed recently at the NPA sports ground in Lagos, received positive feedback from pensioners who commended its efficiency. While acknowledging the smooth process, pensioners suggested the integration of an online verification system for future exercises.

They highlighted issues like insufficient capturing machines and travel expenses, which an online system could mitigate. The exercise aimed to accurately document the number of existing pensioners and earned praise for its contribution to improving payroll accuracy by removing deceased pensioners' names.

Among those interviewed during the exercise was Pastor Baba Yakubu Yerima Ballah, a former Assistant General Manager Personnel, who had joined NPA in 1986 and served until 2005. Pastor Ballah reminisced about his journey of service in the Authority, which he described as a fulfilling and enriching experience. Rising from a Personnel Officer II to the esteemed rank of AGM, he attributed his success to dedicated efforts aimed at realizing his professional aspirations while adding value to the organization.

The interview shed light on Pastor Ballah's involvement in significant assignments, including revenue generation initiatives and participation in special committees under the leadership of three Managing Directors. His dedication to service was evident, although he acknowledged the personal sacrifices made in committee work. Reverberating a sense of gratitude, he lauded NPA's revenue accomplishments and thanked God for the opportunities he had to contribute.

One of Pastor Ballah's remarkable contributions was his role in pioneering a pensioners' verification exercise in 1987, a groundbreaking initiative that reduced the pensioner count from 25,000 to 7,314. He emphasized the significance of such exercises and praised the current streamlined process for its efficiency and simplicity. He recommended a phased approach for future exercises, considering the challenges faced by elderly participants.

Pastor Ballah's wisdom extended beyond his NPA tenure, as he stressed the importance of self-care, understanding one's body, and early retirement planning. He encouraged employees to embrace a sense of service and ownership, advising them not to solely focus on monetary gains but to cultivate valuable relationships and a vision for their futures.

Reflecting on the broader implications, Pastor Ballah urged NPA management to foster closer interactions with retirees. He advocated for a platform where retirees' wealth of experiences could be harnessed for



Pastor Ballah

# NPA Pensioners and Other Inno Audit Exercise

the benefit of the organization's growth and continuity. Acknowledging NPA's foundational roots laid by colonial masters, he emphasized the need to preserve and build upon this legacy.

Also interviewed was Ali Mutiu Kolawole, who joined NPA in 1970 as a Junior Clerk. His remarkable journey saw him rise through the ranks to become a General Manager ICT before retiring in 2005. Reflecting on the pensioners' verification exercise, Kolawole shared his perspective, emphasizing the importance of modernization.

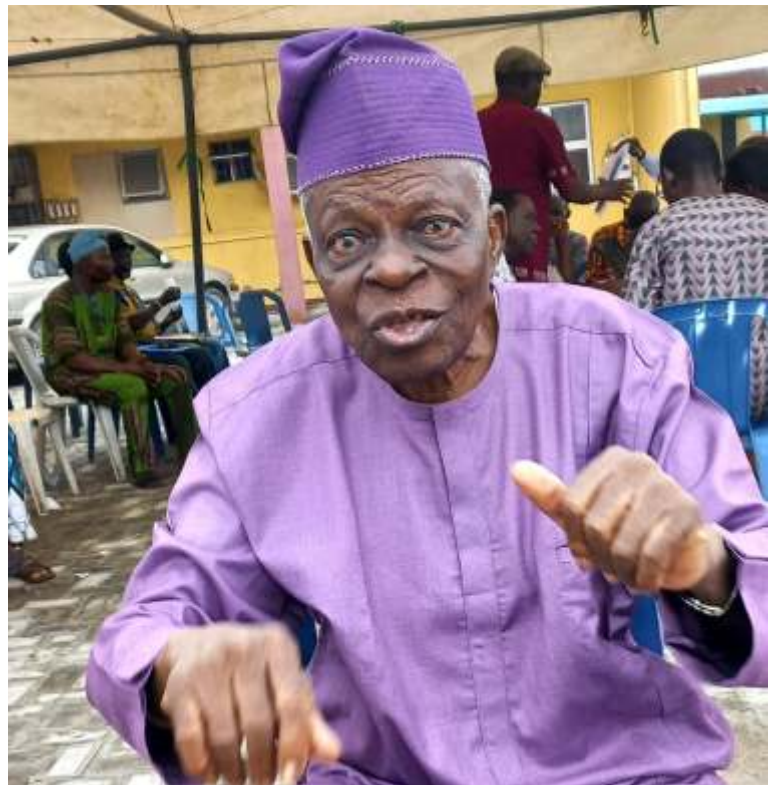
He recommended that NPA embrace an online verification system akin to the Federal Government's approach, suggesting that this would create a more convenient and user-friendly experience for pensioners.

Kolawole's advice aligned with his personal experience as a computer enthusiast during his tenure. He fondly recalled introducing technology enhancements like Punch Card and screen savers to





Ali Mutiu Kolawole



Taiwo Ajifowowe Ajayi

## Call for Online Verifications Following Successful

the office computer systems during his days in active service. He expressed his hope that NPA's current management continues such technological initiatives.

Post-retirement, Kolawole stressed the significance of maintaining one's health. He spoke about his routine exercise regimen and regular clinic visits, particularly crucial due to his diabetic condition. Expressing gratitude for NPA's support in this aspect, he encouraged the organization to extend recognition to retirees who had served diligently and made significant contributions.

Taiwo Ajifowowe Ajayi, a former Traffic Manager promoted to Senior Manager before retiring in 1996, also shared his thoughts on the verification exercise. He expressed satisfaction, viewing it as a testament to NPA's commitment to administrative well-being. Ajayi emphasized the importance of efficient document handling, suggesting that management should require prior document submission to prevent errors and delays.

Reflecting on his career, Ajayi revealed his passion for resolving document-related delays and addressing people's issues. In retirement, he assumed the role of a pastor within the Redeemed Christian Church of God, and though now retired, he finds joy in fulfilling

activities.

Addressing current employees, Ajayi advised them to seize opportunities while they can, citing his own financial choices during his career. He urged employees to invest wisely, stressing the value of proper money management.

Ajayi's final remarks centered on recognizing and motivating diligent employees. He urged NPA management to appreciate and incentivize the workforce, promoting worker-friendly policies and ongoing training. His insights offer a valuable perspective on effective document management, financial planning, and employee recognition within the organization.

The Pensioner Audit/Verification exercise signifies a pivotal stride towards transparency and efficiency. With the interactions with retired NPA personnel, the exercise has not only reinforced the Authority's precise record-keeping, but has also offered valuable insights for improved processes and document management. As NPA advances, these pensioners' voices would become guiding advocates for streamlined procedures, diligent employee recognition, and organizational excellence, reflecting NPA's unwavering dedication to its workforce and commitment to excellence.



## NPA MANAGEMENT SYNERGISES WITH EXECUTIVE OF NEPZA IN LAGOS

R-L: Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko presenting the Authority's plaque to the MD/CEO of Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), Prof. Adesoji Adesugba during a working visit to the NPA Management at the Authority's Corporate Headquarters in Marina, Lagos.



Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (3<sup>rd</sup> left), flanked by the MD/CEO, NEPZA, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba (2<sup>nd</sup> left), ED Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown (right), Executive Director, Finance and Admin. Adenrele S. Adesina (left), during a working visit to the NPA Management at the Authority's Corporate Headquarters in Marina, Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (7<sup>th</sup> left), MD/CEO of Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), Prof. Adesoji Adesugba (6<sup>th</sup> left), and officials of both NPA and NEPZA during the working visit.



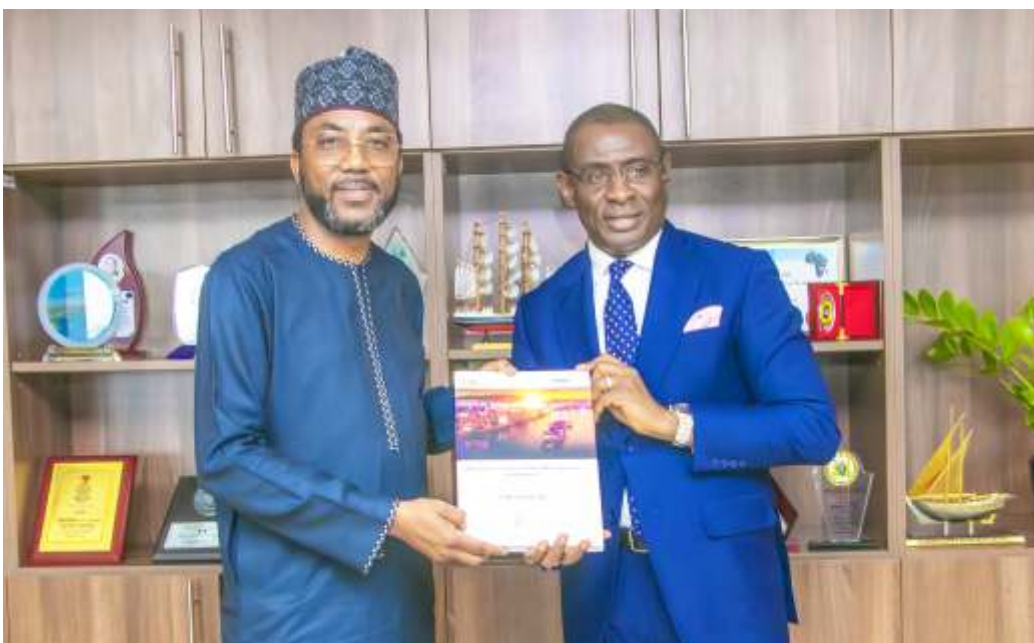


## NPA MANAGEMENT SYNERGISES WITH NIGERIAN NAVY

Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (right) presenting the Authority's plaque to the Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral, Joseph Akpan during his working visit to the management of NPA at the Corporate Headquarters in Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (5<sup>th</sup> left), FOC Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral, Joseph Akpan (4<sup>th</sup> left), ED Engineering & Technical Services, Engr. Ibrahim Abba Umar (3<sup>rd</sup> left), Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Adenrele.S. Adesina (3<sup>rd</sup> right) and other officials of the Nigerian Navy during a working visit to the management of NPA at the corporate headquarters in Lagos.



MD NPA PLAYS HOST TO THE ONDO STATE COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS, MR. BOYE OYEWUMI, WHO SUBMITTED THE FULL BUSINESS CASE (FBC) FOR ONDO MULTIPURPOSE DEEP SEAPORT PROJECT.





## NPA HOSTS 2023 FIRST QUARTER CHARTER GLOBAL MINISTERIAL SERVICOM COMMITTEE MEETING IN LAGOS.

L-R: Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko receives a souvenir from the National Coordinator/CEO of SERVICOM in Nigeria, Nnena Akajemeli during the Global Ministerial SERVICOM committee meeting at NPA corporate headquarters in Lagos.



Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko, (5<sup>th</sup> left), National Coordinator/CEO of SERVICOM in Nigeria, Nnena Akajemeli (6<sup>th</sup> left), Executive Director, Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown (7<sup>th</sup> left), GM SERVICOM, Musa Shehu Yaro (left) and other officials during the Global Ministerial SERVICOM Committee meeting and launching of NPA service charter in Lagos.

## IN-HOUSE SPECIALISED TRAINING FOR NEWLY RECRUITED EMPLOYEES OF CORPORATE & STRATEGIC PLANNING DIVISION AT PTI, DOCKYARD







## NPA MANAGEMENT VISITS MISSION TO SEAFARERS (MTS) CENTRE IN APAPA

L-R: Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko and Chairman, Mission to Seafarers (MTS), Chief Adebayo Sarumi during the working visit of NPA Management to the Mission to Seafarers (MTS) in Apapa, Lagos.



L-R: Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko, Chairman, Mission to Seafarers (MTS), Chief Adebayo Sarumi, ED Finance and Admin. Adenrele S. Adesina, ED Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown(middle), during the working visit of NPA Management to the Mission to Seafarers (MTS) in Apapa, Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (7<sup>th</sup> left), Chairman, Mission to Seafarers (MTS), Chief Adebayo Sarumi (8<sup>th</sup> left) and other senior officers of NPA and Officials of MTS during the working visit of NPA Management to the Mission to Seafarers (MTS) in Apapa, Lagos.





## 2nd QUADRENNIAL DELEGATES CONFERENCE IN ABUJA







## LEAGUE OF MARITIME EDITORS VISIT GM C & SC IN LAGOS





## NPA MANAGEMENT RECEIVES DELEGATIONS FROM CHAD REPUBLIC



## MD NPA PAYS A CONDOLENCE VISIT TO LATE MRS. ORAKWUSI'S FAMILY



*Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko signing the condolence register of late Mrs. Margret Orakwusi at her residence in Lagos.*

The Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko has paid a condolence visit to the family of late Mrs. Margret Orakwusi in her residence in Ikoyi, Lagos.

The MD noted that “while it will be difficult to fill the vacuum occasioned by her demise, the Authority and indeed the industry will take solace in the values and virtues she bequeathed through her mentoring, philanthropy and advocacy for maritime sector advancement.”





## MD NPA COMMISSIONS LPC CONTROL TOWER

Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (Middle), Exec. Dir. Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown (3<sup>rd</sup> left) Exec. Dir. Engineering & Tech. Services, Ibrahim Abba Umar (2<sup>nd</sup> left), Exec. Dir. Finance and Admin., Adenrele S. Adesina (2<sup>nd</sup> right), Harbour Master LPC, Capt. Daniel Osaya and President SSASCGOC, Maritime Branch, Comrade Akinola Bodunde (right) during the commission of the refurbished control tower at the Lagos Port Complex (LPC), Apapa, Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (middle), Chief Executive Officer, Lekki Freeport Terminal, Yann Magarian (5<sup>th</sup> left), Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Adenrele .S. Adesina (3<sup>rd</sup> left), Exec, Dir, Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown (5<sup>th</sup> right) and other officials of the Lekki Port during a working visit to the management of NPA at the corporate headquarters in Lagos.





## NPA HEADQUARTERS RE-OPEN REHABILITATED CANTEEN FOR EMPLOYEES



## OFFICIALS OF NPA TOUR LEKKI PORT





MD NPA RECEIVED MARITIME  
ICON OF THE YEAR FROM  
CHAMPION NEWSPAPER



PHOTO SCENE THESIS







## Appreciation Dinner for former minister of Transportation, Mua'zu Jaji Sambo





## NPA MANAGEMENT PLAYS HOST TO AIG, MARITIME IN LAGOS

Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (left) presenting the authority's plaque to the AIG Maritime, Yekini Adio Ayoku during his working visit to the management of NPA at the corporate headquarters in Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (4<sup>th</sup> left), AIG Maritime, Yekini Adio Ayoku (5<sup>th</sup> left), ED Engineering & Technical Services, Engr. Ibrahim Abba Umar (3<sup>rd</sup> left), Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Adenrele .S. Adesina (3<sup>rd</sup> right) and other top officials of NPA during a working visit to the management of NPA at the corporate headquarters in Lagos.





## Closing ceremony of the first WeCAPS training Mission in Nigeria

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) recently hosted stakeholders and security experts to a one day brainstorming sessions to mark the end of the first training of the West and Central Africa Port Security (WeCAPS). Venue of the event was the Eko Hotel and Suites.



Representative of Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), and General Manager, Security, Mohammed Jamil Khalil (4<sup>th</sup> left), Project Manager, WeCAPS, Nico Vertoghen (2<sup>nd</sup> right), Safety Expert, WeCAPS, Samuel Champon (3<sup>rd</sup> left), WeCAPS Nigerian representative (NIMASA/NPA), Dr. Ismaila Kuraye (left) and other stakeholders during the closing ceremony of the first WeCAPS training Mission in Nigeria held in Lagos.



Representative of Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), and General Manager, Security, Mohammed Jamil Khalil (6<sup>th</sup> left) and other stakeholders during the closing ceremony of the first WeCAPS training Mission in Nigeria held in Lagos.



## PRESENTATION AND COMMISSIONING OF TUG BOATS – M.T. MAI KOKO & M.T. DA-OPUKURO



PHOTO**SCENE**THESIS







Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (3<sup>rd</sup> left), flanked by the MD/CEO, NEPZA, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba (2<sup>nd</sup> left), ED Marine and Operations, Hon. Onari Brown (right), Executive Director, Finance and Admin. Adenrele S. Adesina (left), during a working visit to the NPA Management at the Authority's Corporate Headquarters in Marina, Lagos.



Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello Koko (7<sup>th</sup> left), MD/CEO of Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), Prof. Adesoji Adesugba (6<sup>th</sup> left), and officials of both NPA and NEPZA during the working visit.

## EXECUTIVE OF INTERIM PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY COMMITTEE VISITS MD NPA







# The Memorable Sites in the Seat of the Caliphate

BY PAUL ERAKHIFU

**S**okoto State - “Seat of the Caliphate was created in 1976, it is in the North-west geopolitical zone of Nigeria. In 1996, the late General Sani Abacha, Nigeria former Head of State, created Zamfara state from Sokoto State.

Sokoto State comprises 23 local government areas. The name Sokoto was coined from sakkwato – Arabic origin, representing ‘suk’ which means ‘market’.

Residents of Sokoto caliphate are mostly Muslims – the sultan of Sokoto is the head of the caliphate and the spiritual leader of the Muslim faith in Nigeria. The Sultan of Sokoto is Mohammadu Sa’ad Abubakar while the current Governor of the State is Ammu Waziri Tambuwal. The State shares borders with Kebbi to the southwest, Zamfara to the east and the Niger republic to the North.

Sokoto State is blessed with lots of tourist attractions and memorable sites that would be appealing to traveller, tourists, researchers and students generally.

Happy reading as we x-ray the uniqueness of the tourist sites in the “Seat of the Caliphate”.

# ABOUT NIGERIA



**TOMB OF USMAN DAN FODIO**



**HERITAGE MUSEUM**



## **TOMB OF USMAN DAN FODIO**

This is where late cleric Shehu Usman Dan Fodio was laid to rest, because of his feat as a successful Muslim leader, who propagated the Muslim faith. During festive periods like the 'Eid el Fitri and 'Eid el Kabir most picnickers, travellers and historians visit this tomb.

## **SULTAN OF SOKOTO PALACE**

This beautiful edifice is the seat of the sultan of Sokoto. A well decorated palace with aesthetics, artefacts and cultural display on the walls of the palace. Interestingly the palace is guided and protected by guards in their multi colored regalia, turbans and robes. It's a place one will not want to leave in a hurry when he/she visits.

## **HERITAGE MUSEUM**

Students, sociologists and historians would find this museum useful. It is located at the department of Fine Arts, Shehu Shagari University. The museum houses historical and cultural artefacts of the Sokoto Caliphate.

## **GIBADI ROCKS**

This rock is situated in Gada local government area. Record has it that these rocks contain ancient fossils remains that might provide clues to the origin of life in general.

## **SOKOTO MUSEUM**

This is Sokoto State's national museum, located in the heart of city. The Museum is





GORONYO DAM



Hundreds camel riders fill out at Shehu Kangiwa Square during a "Grand Durbar"

SHEHU KANGIWA SQUARE

dedicated to the famous cleric Shehu Usman Dan fodio, it showcases personal belongings and items of the cleric like maps, scriptures, thrones and copies of his Koran.

**SHEHU KANGIWA SQUARE** was the battleground between British troops and the forces of Sokoto led by Sultan Attahiru in 1903. Formerly known as the open square outside the city wall.

### GORONYO DAM

This is arguably the largest dam in West African sub region region and was completed in 1984 along the Rima River to boost the irrigation in the area. This dam is located in Goronyo town. Tourists and travelers would find this well-designed dam useful due to its location and function ability. The Dam has a storage capacity of 976 million cubic meters.





# D'Tigress win fourth consecutive Afrobasket



In a heart-stopping showdown that had the basketball world on its feet, the unstoppable force of Nigeria's D'Tigress triumphed in a breathtaking 84-74 victory over Senegal, seizing an historic fourth consecutive crown in the scintillating finale of the 2023 FIBA Women's Afrobasket tournament.

Scripting an epic chapter in sports history, this recent triumph was nothing short of a seismic shift, as the Nigerian Ladies cemented their legacy as only the second team ever, after Senegal, to secure a jaw-dropping four consecutive titles.

Emerging from a 12-year title drought, D'Tigress announced their return to supremacy with an electrifying victory that left spectators spellbound.

Their path to glory began in 2017, when they were crowned champions, and their relentless pursuit of excellence continued with victorious campaigns in 2019, 2021, and now, in an awe-inspiring crescendo, 2023.

In the face of doubt and skepticism, this assembly of daring newcomers, peppered with a touch of seasoned brilliance, marched to their own rhythm. Guided by the pioneering coach Rena Wakama, they silenced their critics, turning their journey into a resounding symphony of triumph.

From the opening moments of the tournament, D'Tigress showcased their mettle, dazzling the court with their prowess. An extraordinary performance against Congo DR signaled their intent, paving the way for a resounding message of dominance as they dismantled hosts Rwanda in the semifinals.

The grand finale unfolded at the illustrious BK Arena in Kigali, where Amy Okonkwo ignited the spark, planting the first two points of a pulsating contest. The first quarter saw D'Tigress firmly in control, notching a commanding 19-10 lead. A narrower yet resolute advantage of 24-21 carried them through the second quarter, signaling their unwavering determination.

At halftime, with a commanding 43-31 lead, D'Tigress were perched on the precipice of victory. Yet, the Senegalese Ladies mounted a spirited resurgence after the break, clinching the third quarter with a triumphant 26-19 surge, narrowing Nigeria's lead to a mere five points.

The final quarter was a cauldron of tension and drama, where D'Tigress rose to the occasion with an unwavering resolve. Repelling the fierce challenge from Senegal, they emerged triumphant with a nerve-wracking 22-17 last-quarter victory, sealing their breathtaking 84-74 win.

A monumental achievement was carved into the annals of history, as coach Wakama etched her name as the trailblazing first female coach to seize the Afrobasket title. With her at the helm, the future burns brightly with promise, casting a hopeful gaze towards the impending Olympic qualifiers.

As the echoes of victory resound across continents, D'Tigress stands as a symbol of excellence, a beacon of inspiration, and an undeniable force to be reckoned with. The journey continues, the legacy endures, and the stage is set for even greater triumphs on the horizon.





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