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Nigeria Will Rank Higher At Next World Bank's EoDB Index Release

EDITORIAL

The growth of businesses in any economy provides support to governments in addressing and overcoming economic challenges faced by the society such as job creation, financial resources generation, and in improving the standard of living of the citizens.

The import of the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and how it affects the economy?

Definitively, EoDB is an index published by the World Bank. It is an aggregate figure that includes different parameters which define the ease of doing business in the country. It is computed by aggregating the distance to frontier scores of different economies.

Therefore, the EoDB in Nigeria obviously could help in assessing the absolute level of regulatory performance and how it could improve over time.

In Nigeria, the signing into law of the Business Facilitation Bill calls for thumps up for President Muhammadu Buhari and his team. Of course, the consummation of the bill into law is quite fascinating because it would aid the EoDB for small businesses owners in the country.

The move signposts an important step in the delivery

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FG Unveils River Navigation Charts For $61.5mn Sealink Project

- As Finance Minister Commits To Smooth Implementation
- Project To Bridge Maritime Infrastructure Gap – *NEXIM Bank MD*

By Musa Ibrahim

The $61.5 million regional Sealink project being promoted by the Nigerian Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has received a boost as the federal government unveiled navigational charts for the lower River Niger.

The project seeks to establish and operate a maritime shipping company, which would connect the West African coastal ports as well as link parts of Central Africa to the West African region in order to facilitate trade.

The initiative would gulp $60 million in equipment and working capital and $1.5 million for the operation of a special purpose vehicle (SPV) for the promotion of the concept among member countries.

The funding of the landmark project includes 40 percent equity participation by private investors while the remaining 40 percent capital would come from institutional investors in the form of loans.

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Chairperson, Sealink Promotional Company, **Mrs. Dabney Shalhoma** (left), Managing Director, Nigeria Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank, **Mr. Abba Bello,** and Chief of Naval Staff, **Vice Admiral A.Z. Gambo,** during the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

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Finance, Women Affairs Ministers Advocate Women's Participation In Digital Technology PG 14

NEXIM
NIGERIAN EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

FACILITATING EXPORT DIVERSIFICATION PROMOTING TRADE CONNECTIVITY

NEXIM's mandate is to provide credit and risk-bearing facilities to support the export of Nigerian products and services. Also, the Bank, as part of its developmental roles is involved in trade-related infrastructure facilities with its regional Sealink project promotion to enhance Nigeria's trade connectivity. Our intervention covers manufactuiring, agro processing, solid minerals, and services sectors.

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How Business Facilitation Act Will Boost Transparency of MDAs, Business Environment

• IMF, UN Population Fund, Other Dev't Partners, Private Sector Pledge Commitment To Exercise

President Muhammadu Buhari on February 13, 2023 signed the Business Facilitation Bill into Law. The law is targeted at improving Nigeria's business environment, among others. ***Musa Ibrahim*** *points out the key ingredients of the Act.*

President Muhammadu Buhari

The Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (the 'Act') became law when, on 13th February, 2023, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, signed the bill passed by the Senate in December 2022.

The Act is a legislative brainchild of the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) aimed principally at removing bureaucratic bottlenecks and administrative impediments to doing business in Nigeria.

The Act was passed in a bid to ensure that Nigerian economy is conducive for business operations by providing regulatory ease, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and productivity in order to ultimately catalyse the growth of the economy.

Key Highlights of the Act

The Act requires Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the federal government that provide products and services to the public to publish and keep updated complete list of requirements to obtain such products and services.

The said products and services include, among other things: permits; licenses; waivers; tax-related processes; filings; approvals; registrations; and certifications, to be performed or conducted in accordance with the functions of the relevant MDA.

MDAs are also now mandated to communicate the approval or rejection of an application within the time stipulated in its published list. Where an application for a product is not concluded within the stipulated timeline, such application will be deemed approved and granted.

In addition, where an application is rejected within the timeline, the MDA is obligated to communicate the rejection to the applicant setting out the grounds for the rejection.

Also, the new Act has made some amendments to the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA), among other laws, findings by *fmfinsights* have shown.

Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) 2020

One of the major disruptions of the Business Facilitation Law on CAMA is the increase in share capital. The Act has amended the provisions of Sections 127(1) and 149(1) of CAMA as a company may now increase its issued share capital by the allotment of new shares, either in a general meeting or by a resolution of the board of directors, subject to the condition or direction that may be imposed in the Articles or the Company in general meeting.

The existing provisions of Section 127(1) of CAMA states that a company may increase its share capital only by the members in general meeting, and not otherwise. As such, the new amendment removes any constraint or limitation which a company may experience where it seeks to increase its share capital, without the requirement of a general meeting of its shareholders, provided that the shareholders in general meeting or the company's articles have authorised the board to issue such resolutions.

Consequently, a company may have to amend its articles to empower the directors to increase its share capital where this is not already provided in its articles. The company alternatively may have its members sign a resolution empowering the directors to do so and setting the parameters for the exercise of this authority.

The law has also changed the return of allotment of shares by companies. The Act by amending the provisions of Section 154(1) of CAMA has cut the period within which to make a return on allotment of shares to the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) from one month 15 days. Companies are therefore required to ensure that necessary returns and filings are made with the CAC within this time.

Due to the amendment made to Section 378(1) of CAMA, a company's financial statement must comply only with the requirements of the accounting standards as prescribed by the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN).

This amendment eliminates in its entirety the requirement to comply with the accounting standard as provided in the First Schedule of CAMA and the requirements of the FRCN, as stated in the existing provisions of CAMA.

Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

Another impact of the Business Facilitation Act is on the Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Miscellaneous Provisions (Forex Act 2004).

The Business Facilitation Act has amended the Forex Act by providing the various grounds on which the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) may revoke the appointment of an authorised dealer or buyer licensed to transact in foreign exchange. These grounds include failure to utilise the license within 30 days; inability to commence its exchange business within six months from the date of issuance; failure to comply with a directive under the Forex Act.

Where the entity conducts or intends to administer its business in a manner that threatens the interest of customers or potential customers.

Others are failure to disclose in its application, any material information known to the entity or reasonably expected to have been known by the entity, etc.

National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) Act, 2004:

fmfinsights findings show that the provisions of Section 5(2) NOTAP Act, there is an obligation to register with NOTAP not later than 60 days of execution, every contract or agreement entered into by any person in Nigeria with a person outside Nigeria relating to the use of trademarks, patented inventions, supply of technical expertise, supply of basic or detailed engineering, etc.

However, the Business Facilitation Act has now amended the Act companies in their first two years of business operation shall not be liable to late registration penalties where such contracts are registered before the end of the second year of their business operation

It also provides that for companies to qualify for exemption for late filing, the company must not be more than two years in operation. It also affirms that the contract or agreement is filed not later than the end of the second year of its operation.

Consequently, a company may have to amend its articles to empower the directors to increase its share capital where this is not already provided in its articles

FG Unveils River Navigation Charts For $61.5mn Sealink Project

CONTINUES FROM COVER

The launch of the survey and navigation charting, which was jointly undertaken by hydrographers of the Nigerian Navy and the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) with financial support from both NEXIM and Afreximbank, comprised 12 paper and electronic charts to ensure navigational safety of the lower River Niger channel to boost both hinterland and coastal trade.

Speaking during the event, the Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, commended NEXIM for its determined drive to implement government policy initiatives and for the inter-agency collaboration on the Sealink initiative.

Represented by the Ministry's Director, Home Finance, Mr. Mohammed Ali, Mrs. Ahmed noted that the Ministry had adopted the regional initiative as one of its ministerial mandates because of the need to support initiatives that would promote and attract private sector investments in maritime logistics infrastructure.

The Honourable Minister said that the project was expected to engender sustainable growth and diversification of the economy, as well as enhance the country's potential to undertake export trade of bulk commodities like solid minerals and agricultural produce.

She commended the inter-agency collaboration and strategic partnerships on the completion of the joint project of survey / charting activities by the Nigerian Navy, NIWA and NEXIM. "May I also extend the ministry's appreciation to the Afreximbank."

She said that the NEXIM supported the exercise by providing technical assistance and granting funding support of US$350,000, stating that the federal government is committed to driving the project.

"It is instructive to highlight at this juncture that my ministry had in 2019 adopted NEXIM's developmental initiative under the Regional Sealink Project as one of its 'Ministerial Deliverables' toward the effective implementation of government's priority projects.

"The implementation of Sealink will enhance the development of the Nigerian maritime industry and significantly contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP).

"The ministry's adoption of the Regional Sealink Project as one of its ministerial mandates was informed by the need to support initiatives that will promote and attract private sector investments in maritime logistics infrastructure".

"This is with a view to engendering sustainable growth and diversification of the economy, as well as enhance the country's potential to undertake export trade of bulk commodities like solid minerals and agricultural produce.

"This would support federal government's economic diversification drive in line with Mr. President's agenda of promoting sustainable economic growth, investment promotion and infrastructural development, which the government articulated with its programme of action that provided strategic direction for the administration under the mandated priority projects and deliverables,

Managing Director, Nigeria Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank, **Mr. Abba Bello,** at the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

she explained.

She hailed stakeholders that contributed to the completion of the survey / charting activities, which, according to her, would not only ensure navigational safety of lower River Niger but also facilitate hinterland trade connectivity and the creation of an alternative logistics freight corridor that would boost trade.

Speaking further, the Honourable Minister added that the maritime industry in Nigeria constitutes a very critical sector of the Nigerian economy, which has remained largely untapped with insignificant annual contribution to the GDP at less than one percent.

"The opening up of the inland waterways will no doubt significantly complement and help to decongest other freight corridors and port gateways that are currently under severe pressure. This will enable Nigeria to reap immense economic benefits of being a littoral state and be able to harness its huge inland waterway resources," she further explained.

> **The opening up of the inland waterways will no doubt significantly complement and help to decongest other freight corridors and port gateways...**

Mrs. Ahmed assured that the ministry remains committed to supporting this strategic initiative and similar programmes that would attract investments towards enhancing the contribution of maritime shipping to GDP, thereby helping to generate and conserve foreign exchange earnings, as well as improve fiscal revenue receipts.

In conclusion, she commended the NEXIM for its determined drive to implement government's policy initiatives and for its commitment to funding intervention.

Also Speaking at the ceremony, Managing Director (MD)/Chief Executive of NEXIM, Mr. Abba Bello, said that as a trade policy institution, the bank embarked on the deliberate policy initiative to bridge maritime infrastructure gaps towards lowering logistics cost to foster trade with the promotion of the regional Sealink project.

He pointed out that as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under a public-private-partnership framework, Sealink essentially aims to enable the bank to significantly broaden the national export basket.

According to him, the cessation of the use of the Burutu port in the mid-1970s substantially led to a considerable level of disuse of the river channel for mercantile trade, leading to the siltation of the channel over the years that resulted in navigational challenges.

This, therefore, informed the decision of the NEXIM to partner with Afreximbank, the Nigerian Navy and NIWA to undertake the survey/charting exercise.

The Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral A.Z Gambo, thanked all the critical stakeholders and pledged the commitment of the Nigerian Navy to provide all logistical and technical support needed to ensure that the Sealink project is completed.

He stressed the critical role played by the Nigerian Navy in developing the charts, spearheaded by the naval hydrographer, stating that this was the first time a project of this nature would be handled by an indigenous Nigerian entity.

"Undoubtedly, unveiling these charts is crucial towards exploitation of the vast strategic reserve of mineral resources along the Lower Niger Basin with great prospects for Nigeria's economic diversification.

"This is expected to boost tourism potentials, create more job opportunities and increase economic viability. It will also reduce pressure on road infrastructure, as bulk cargos would be transported through the channel. Furthermore, successful opening of this river channel for navigation will accelerate activation of concessional inland ports and export processing zones for handling bulk cargoes from coastal areas and export of solid minerals as well as agricultural produce.

"Thus, the ceremony we are gathered here today is yet another testimony to the resolve of the federal government towards evolving comprehensive mechanisms to emplace sustainable infrastructure through public private partnership (PPP) collaborations," the Naval chief explained.

Speaking further, he noted that although this is a preliminary step towards opening the Lower River Niger, and also maintained that the Nigerian Navy is willing to sustain the partnership with NEXIM, Sealink Consortium and the NIWA, including other critical stakeholders under this collaborative initiative to complete development of the river channel towards creating vibrant maritime activities along the lower River Niger basin.

"I want to also assure that the Nigerian Navy Hydrographic Survey Department, having recently acquired state-of-the-art survey platforms and equipment, is poised to provide standard hydrographic service delivery to all mariners within the nation's maritime environment towards facilitating sustainable blue economy in Nigeria," he further stated.

On his part, Honourable Minister of Transport, Jaji Sambo, affirmed his ministry's commitment to the successful attainment of the overall objective of the project in line with President Muhammadu Buhari's vision for the holistic and sustainable development of the maritime sector and the inland waterways.

Petrol Subsidy To Go Before May 29, Finance Minister Reaffirms

- Explains Why Census Was Postponed To May
- Urges Incoming Government To Raise VAT To 10%

The Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, ***Mrs Zainab Ahmed,*** *has reaffirmed government's commitment to ease fuel subsidy before the life span of the current administration ends.* ***Musa Ibrahim*** *writes.*

The Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, has reiterated the federal government's resolution to remove petrol subsidy before the end of the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, which elapses on May 29, 2023.

During a courtesy visit to the headquarters of Voice of Nigeria (VON) in Abuja recently, Mrs. Ahmed said that the delay in the removal of the subsidy, as provided for in the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) 2021, was as a result of the 2023 general election and the forthcoming national population census.

She also confirmed that the government postponed the 2023 population and housing census, earlier scheduled for end of this month, to May, this year, and approved Nigeria's Agenda 2050, which aims to make the country a high-income economy.

She further urged the incoming administration to increase the value added tax (VAT) from the current 7.5 percent to 10 percent.

Mrs. Ahmed said that subsidy removal was a difficult political and economic decision for the government to take. But, almost everyone has agreed now that subsidy was not serving the people it was supposed to serve and its high cost was adding to government's deficit.

She stated that the subsidy cost per litre of petrol ranged between N350 to N400, maintaining that Nigeria spends about N250 billion monthly on subsidy.

The PIA signed into law on August 16, 2021 by President Buhari provides for total deregulation of the downstream sector, which implies the removal of subsidy and enthronement of a free market regime for the sector.

But in January 2022, the federal government kicked that section of the PIA aside and postponed subsidy removal to end of June 2023. The government cited the pains subsidy removal would bring on the poor and vulnerable masses as the reason for the postponement.

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

Mrs. Ahmed also said: "The fuel subsidy is one of those political, economic decisions that you do not want to have, but you are stuck with it, anyway. We have come to the point where almost everybody has agreed that this is really not serving the people it is supposed to serve and the cost of it has become so high that it is adding to our deficit.

"And right now, we have an approval within the Appropriation Act to exit subsidy by June 2023. Or at least, I can say, the Appropriation Act made provision that only allows subsidies up to June 2023.

"So, we have to find ways in which we have to remove the subsidy and allow the market to flourish. When you remove the subsidy, then you have marketers that would be able to invest and bring this fuel product and sell it at market prices right now. The Nigerian National Petroleum Limited (NNPC) is the sole importer, the fuel product is imported and it is limited to an official price.

"So the subsidy per litre now ranges from N350 to N400 per litre. The subsidy that government is carrying, just imagine what you can do with N250 billion per month, because that is the average cost per month to the nation. That is even the cost to NNPC; there is an implicit subsidy of forex."

Mrs. Ahmed also stated that such amount could be invested in building more hospitals, schools, improving infrastructure and other critical sectors that would have visible positive impacts on Nigerians.

She further stated: "You can build more hospitals, more schools, provide more social services, improve infrastructure that will enhance the quality of life of the people, instead of just using it on a consumption item. You put gas in your car and in a couple of days it is gone and then you have to put again.

"So we do hope that this time around, the whole country will work with the government to get rid of this subsidy to save us from continuously expending limited resources on a consumption item."

> You can build more hospitals, more schools, provide more social services, improve infrastructure that will enhance the quality of life of the people...

Mrs. Ahmed advised the next administration to increase VAT to 10 percent, saying that this would stimulate the country's economic growth.

She noted that the government had used the finance bills to block leakages, strengthen the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), stating that the government has also done automation of the two institutions through the process.

She stated: "So, tax compliance has increased. As a result, we have also been able to adjust our VAT rate from five percent to 7.5, even though our target was to 10 percent. But you know how it is in Nigeria, we are targeting 10 percent by the second half of the year, so as to increase revenue.

"VAT was one of the ways to increase revenue and we still have to increase VAT because at 7.5 percent, Nigeria has the lowest VAT rate in the world, not in Africa, in the world. In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the Africa average is 18 percent, when you increase your VAT, your gross domestic product (GDP) will grow.

"It will further grow because it will generate more revenue and, therefore, more economic activities. But that is something that the next administration has to look at to incrementally adjust and increase our VAT rate because it is too low at the level it is now."

Speaking further, she noted that Federal Executive Council (FEC) also has approved Nigeria's Agenda 2050, which aims to make Nigeria a high-income economy. Nigeria's Agenda 2050 is a perspective plan designed to transform the country into an 'Upper-Middle Income Country', with a significant improvement in per capita income.

The plan aims to fully engage all resources, reduce poverty, and achieve social and economic stability.

Speaking on the agenda, the Honourable Minister of State, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, explained that the Nigeria's Agenda 2050 projected annual average real GDP growth of seven percent.

Also providing details on the postponed census, the Honourable Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, said that the rescheduled Nigeria's 2023 population and housing census, earlier scheduled for end of this month, to May was necessitated by the rescheduling of the governorship election to March 18.

Mr. Mohammed also disclosed that the council approved N2.8 billion for the National Population Commission (NPC) to procure software to be used for the census.

According to him, "There was a memo presented by the NPC, seeking for some software to allow them conduct the census in May this year. I believe because of the rescheduling of the elections, they cannot commence the census as scheduled.

"They sought council's approval for a contract to procure the software for the census at the sum of N2.8 billion."

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EDITORIAL

Nigeria Will Rank Higher At Next World Bank's EoDB Index Release

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of an enabling environment for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria.

Apparently, it is not surprising at all that President Buhari's administration would not want to take it easy with the widespread reforms to better the country's business space.

In naming Nigeria as a top performer in the last ranking, the World Bank alluded to improvements in the business environment unleashed by operationalising a new electronic platform that integrates the tax authority and the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC); it also stated that Nigeria may be getting electricity easier by allowing certified engineers to conduct inspections for new connections; and spearheaded an initiative that made commercial litigation of smaller cases more efficient.

But we are aware that government reforms go deeper than that. First, to demonstrate that it means business, a Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) was inaugurated with the Vice President as the head. PEBEC is the mechanism behind the actualising effect of the Business Facilitation Bill.

That initiative birthed and implemented no fewer than 140 reforms in the last three years targeted at opening up the business space and facilitating the smooth conduct of business by local and foreign businesses. This was the subject of the 2nd Presidential Enabling Environment Council Awards held recently in Abuja.

Some of the successful reforms include the ability to reserve a business name within four hours, complete the registration of a company within 24 hours online, as well as apply for and receive approval of a visa-on-arrival electronically within 48 hours.

Historically, Nigeria had been one of the worst performers on preparedness for business and investment, ranking 169 in 2016 and 145 in 2017 out of a field of 190 countries, on the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business Ranking'. The uninspiring trend had left the economy worse off, restricting foreign direct investment (FDI) and deflating business confidence.

It is noteworthy that sub national governments keyed into the initiative as Lagos and Kano states established specialised small claims commercial courts. Other states that championed reform were Kaduna, Enugu, Abia, Lagos and Anambra.

Should the reforms be sustained and pursued with equal vigour and commitment, no doubt that the target of the PEBEC to catapult Nigeria into very admirable level in the near future could be attained, if not surpassed, although the ranking is temporarily suspended.

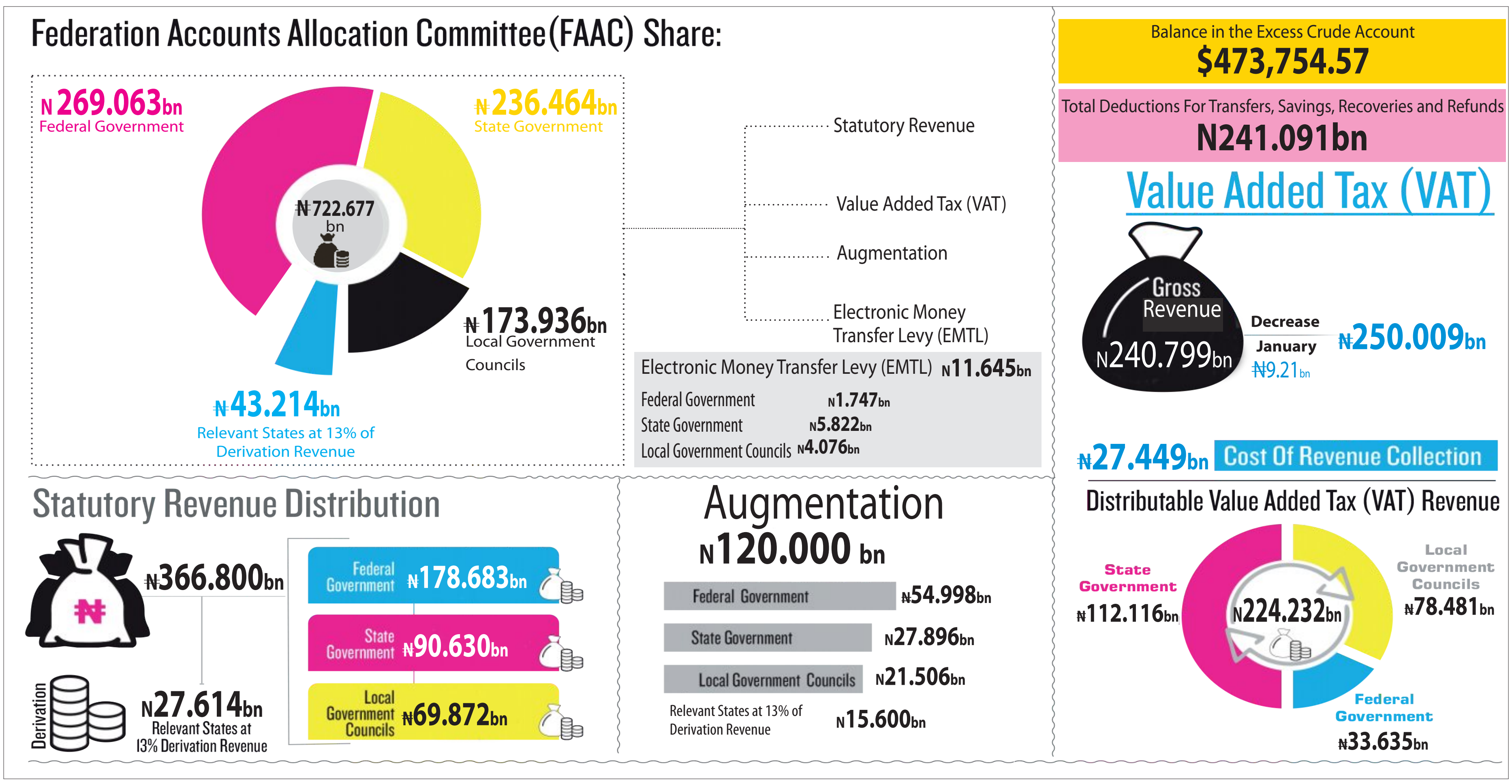
But this is also to say that to get to such target would require improvements in many other areas of the economy such as getting permissions, approvals, renewal of certificates, licenses, decriminalisation of minor offences, filings/returns, and inspections/audits can also be seen to further improve ease of doing business and ease of living.

The EoDB index is a ranking system established by the World Bank Group. In the EODB index, 'higher rankings' (a lower numerical value) indicate better, usually simpler, regulations for businesses and stronger protections of property rights. Equally important is the issue of easy profit repatriation by foreign companies, the lack thereof, which led to major international airlines leaving the country in 2016, though the Nigerian government did a quick rethink which really helped that others did not follow.

Our economy, among emerging markets, looks to rank impressively in the comity of great nations of the world, once the reforms are fully implemented, leading ultimately to growth in FDI, with impact on the gross domestic product (GDP) along with its long-term welfare benefits.

And although the World Bank's EoDB index has been suspended, we are confident Nigeria will rank higher when the next ranking is released.

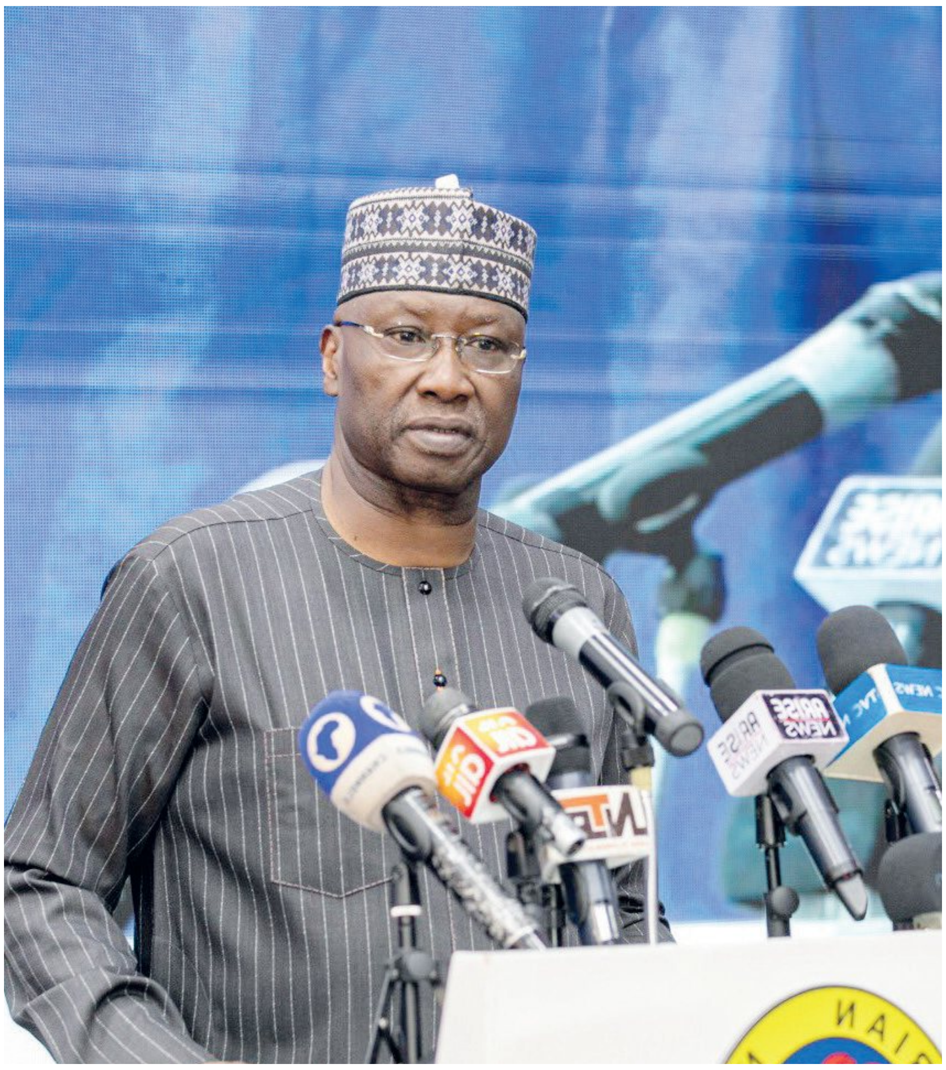
FAAC Shares N722bn February 2023 Revenue To FG, States, LGCs



According to the communiqué, in the month of February, Petroleum Profit Tax (PPT), Companies Income Tax (CIT), Oil and Gas Royalties, Import and Excise Duties all decreased significantly while Value Added Tax (VAT) and Electronic Money Transfer Levy (EMTL) decreased marginally.

NEWS IN PICTURES

Top personalities from Federal Government, Nigeria Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank, Nigerian Navy, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, and other stakeholders at the Unveling Ceremony of Navigational Charts of Lower River Nigeria.



Secretary to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, **Mr. Boss Mustapha,** during the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral, **A.Z. Gambo,** during the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

NEWS IN PICTURES

Managing Director, Nigeria Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank, **Mr. Abba Bello,** during the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

Chairperson, Sealink Promotional Company, **Mrs. Dabney Shalhoma,** during the unveiling ceremony of the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger at the Nigeria Air Force Conference Centre, Abuja.

L-R: Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral A.Z. Gambo, Minister of Transportation, **Mr. Mu'azu Jaji Sambo,** and Secretary to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, **Mr. Boss Mustapha,** unveiling the Navigational Charts of Lower River Niger recently in Abuja.

FIRS Chair Charges Tax Administrators To Keep Up With 21st Century Disruptive Technologies

• As Manufacturers Account For 28% Of FIRS Collection In 2022

By Edmond Martins

L-R: **Muhammad Nami,** President, Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators (CATA), and Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS); **Jim Harra**, His Majesty's Revenue And Customs (HMRC) Permanent Secretary and Chief Executive; **Mr. Jon Swerdlow**, Capacity Building Unit Transparency Lead, HMRC, and Vice Chairman, CATA; **Mr Duncan Onduru,** Executive Director, CATA

Tax administrators were recently charged to keep up with the changes occasioned by disruptive new technologies of the 21st century.

In his remarks at the 2022 CATA Senior Leadership cohort, Mr. Muhammad Nami, Executive Chairman of Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and President of the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators (CATA), stated that due to technological advancements in actualising human needs, fulfilling social interactions and conducting commercial activities, the way and manner of tax administration was constantly changing. He therefore called for tax administrators to keep up with the times by improving on their skills and competence in line with these changes.

During the closing ceremony of the programme held at His Majesty's Treasury Headquarters, London, United Kingdom, Mr. Nami also urged them to arm themselves with the necessary skills, capacity and character for effective and efficient tax administration in the fourth industrial revolution age.

Noted Nami: "The global tax arena is continually changing. The growing reliance on technology for much of basic human needs, social interactions and business dealings means that the tax-turf remains in a state of constant flux.

"The taxman is only able to match the depth and pace of the changes if equipped with relevant, adequate and up-to-date skills".

The CATA President praised the Commonwealth association for its investments and contributions through its Senior Leadership Programme, which he noted had helped bridge the capacity gaps of tax officials in member countries.

"I am glad to note that CATA has, over the years, continued to organise the Senior Leadership Programme in order to meet the capacity development needs of tax officials in commonwealth countries. It has become a tradition for CATA to provide participants at this programme with top-notch tuition using case studies in a fun-filled environment.

"The 2022 edition did not depart from this tradition. The classes, according to reports, were very interactive all through the various sessions whether at home, in India or in the UK.

"Without doubt, the capacity of participants to lead themselves, to lead others, and to lead their functional units have been greatly enhanced".

Quoting the renowned African philosophy of Ubuntu, "I am, because we are", Nami urged the 20 participants drawn from senior tax officials in commonwealth countries to put the knowledge and skills they have acquired during the programme into good use for the benefit of their countries, while further calling on the cohort to maintain and sustain the network of colleagues they had met during the programme.

The CATA Senior Leadership Programme is a yearly senior-level Leadership Programme delivered by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on behalf of the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators. It pools together senior leaders of tax authorities in Commonwealth countries to equip them with the requisite leadership skills to navigate their organisations in a dynamic and complex landscape. The programme recognises the importance of good leadership to result-driven tax administration in the 21st century.

The 2022 edition combined residencies in India and the UK, accompanied with virtual sessions, and work within the domestic tax authorities of participants.

Meanwhile manufacturers account for 28.76% of FIRS collections in Q3 2022

Despite the lingering challenges in the real sector, Nigeria's manufacturing sector, in Q3, 2022 contributed 28.76 percent to lift tax collection indices of the FIRS overall revenue.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), company income tax (CIT) for the third quarter of 2022, showed that the manufacturing sector contributed 28.76 percent in terms of sectoral contributions followed by the ICT sector, which contributed 27.31 percent, while the financial services sector ranked third at 8.81 percent contribution.

The NBS says the aggregate CIT was reported at N810.19 billion for Q3 2022, in its recent report. According to the report, this shows a growth rate of 13.41 percent on a quarter-on-quarter basis from N714.40 billion in Q2 2022.

The report says local payments received were N483.17 billion, while foreign CIT payment contributed N327.02 billion in Q3 2022. It also says on a quarter-on-quarter basis, the arts, entertainment and recreation activities recorded the highest growth rate with 93.33 percent, followed by agriculture, forestry, and fishing with 75.38 percent.

On one hand, accommodation and food service activities had the lowest growth rate at 64.81 percent. "This was followed by water supply, sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities at -64.75 percent."

It says tax collections from the ICT sector rose to N131.97 billion as against N53.36 billion in the corresponding period in 2021. On a quarter-by-quarter comparison, tax collection fell by 15.26 percent from N155.74 billion.

As part of the drive to increase its revenue from non-oil sources and support the implementation of the 2022 budget, the federal government made certain amendments to the Finance Act 2022.

Part of the changes was the introduction of taxes on non-resident companies (NRCs) with digital presence in Nigeria. Section 30 of the Act was amended by introducing a new sub-section that allows the government to assess NRCs with a digital significant economic presence (SEP) in Nigeria; to tax on a fair and reasonable percentage of their turnover attributable to the SEP in the instance where there is no assessable profit, or the assessable profit is less than what is to be expected from that type of business or cannot be ascertained.

As a reflection of increased activities in the information and communication technology (ICT) space, especially on the back of the outbreak of COVID-19, CIT from ICT firms soared Year-on-Year (YoY) by a huge 147.30 percent in the third quarter ended September 30, 2022 (Q3'22).

Buhari Writes Senate, Seeks Confirmation Of New NDIC Board

• As Corporation Moves To Tame Fraudsters

By Kingsley Benson

President Muhammadu Buhari has written to the Senate requesting the confirmation of new members of the board of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC).

The request was contained in a letter dated March 15, 2023, and read at the start of plenary recently by the Senate President, Mr. Ahmad Lawan.

The letter in part reads: "Pursuant to section 5 (4) of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation Act, I forward herewith for the confirmation of the Senate the under-listed names of the newly appointed members of the Governing Board of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC).

The nominees include: Abdulhakeem Mobolaji for Chairman (South-West).

The members are Prof. Osita Ogwu (South-East); Umar Jubril (North-Central); Mohammed Haruna (North-East); Yesmin Dalhatu (North-West); Simon Ogie (South-South) and Abimbola Olashore (South-West).

Meanwhile, the NDIC has warned bank customers and the public against displaying their bank details, saying fraudsters were becoming more creative. The corporation in its official website recently gave out four tips for bank customers to safeguard their accounts.

The corporation warned that customers should ensure that their phones had password and they must not share their bank mobile application password with anyone. It also warned bank customers to ensure that their tokens were secured, and other parties did not have access to it.

The corporation also urged customers to ensure that their debit card numbers and card verification value (CVV) were not exposed to people.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SEC Harps On Need For Savings, Personal Finance For Youths

• Approves Mandatory Takeover Of Courteville By BOWS

By Jennete Ugo Anya

As the world celebrated the Global Money Week (GMW) from March 20 – March 26, 2023, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), has again emphasised the need for children and young people to develop sound financial habits, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours from their young age.

This, the commission said, would help them to know how to manage their personal finances throughout their lives and be empowered to make better financial decisions for their future.

Mr. Lamido Yuguda, Director-General (DG) of the SEC, while commenting on the weeklong commemoration of the event, stated that the earlier children and youth learn about money, saving, investment and budgeting, the better they would manage their personal finances throughout their lives.

The GMW is an event organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) International Network on Financial Education with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) responsible for coordinating the event in Nigeria. It is an annual global awareness-raising campaign on the importance of ensuring that young people, from an early age, are financially aware, and are gradually acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviours necessary to make sound financial decisions.

According to the DG, 'Plan your money, plant your future' is the official theme of GMW2023.

Mr. Lamido Yuguda, Director-General, SEC

This theme aims at raising awareness about the importance of adopting a responsible, informed and forward-looking approach in making financial decisions. It also recognises that future individual financial well-being is strictly linked to the health of the planet and of the society as a whole

This year's GMW2023 is a great opportunity for everyone to engage children, youth and young people in activities around the theme.

Mr. Yuguda stated that the celebration of the week-long event by the commission would include visits to schools in Nassarawa and Gwagwalada, a visit to the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX) by 150 students and ringing of the bell at the NGX, among other activities.

GMW promotes efforts aimed at improving the financial literacy of young people. The ultimate goal of the campaign is to ensure that all children and young people have access to high-quality financial education, they learn about money matters and are able to take smart financial decisions that can improve their future financial resilience and financial well-being.

Approves Mandatory Takeover of Courteville By BOWS

Meanwhile, SEC has approved the mandatory takeover (MTO) of Courteville Business Solution Plc by BOWS Nigeria Limited.

BOWS Nigeria Limited is the majority shareholder of Courteville, the foremost Nigerian e-business solutions and advisory company. It controls a 67.01 percent stake in the firm.

In a regulatory disclosure to the NGX, Courteville said that BOWS Nigeria is offering 48 kobo per unit for the 1,171,939,459 shares held by other investors, representing a 32.99 percent equity stake in the organisation.

This means the majority investor would pay N562.5 million to the other shareholders to take charge of the company fully.

According to the statement issued by the firm, it was disclosed that the tender offer would open on February 22, 2023 and closes on March 22, 2023.

You would recall that a special resolution approving the 90 of the securities of the company was passed by the shareholders at the 17th Annual General Meeting of Courteville Business Solutions Plc held on July 26, 2022.

The investing public and the NGX are hereby informed that BOWS Nigeria Limited, a shareholder who holds 67.01 percent of the issued share capital of the company, made a proposal to buy the 32.99 percent held by the other shareholders of the company through a MTO to SEC, and the MTO has been registered with SEC as SIS/M&A/TBR/CBS/000824 in the commission's record.

"BOWS Nigeria Limited has obtained SEC's approval to launch the MTO and the same is priced at 0.48k per ordinary share net of any applicable tax," the firm stated.

With the MTO, Courteville would be delisted from the NGX Limited, as BOWS offers to buy out the stocks held by other shareholders.

IMF Executive Directors Recommend Decisive Fiscal, Monetary Tightening

• As The Board Concludes 2022 Article IV Consultation With Nigeria

By Chiamaka G. Okpala

Looking ahead, executive directors at the 2022 Article IV Consultation With Nigeria recommended decisive fiscal and monetary tightening to secure macroeconomic stability, combined with structural reforms to improve governance, strengthen the agricultural sector, and boost inclusive, sustainable growth.

According to them, "Nigeria's economy has recouped the output losses sustained during the COVID-19 pandemic supported by favourable oil prices and buoyant consumption activities. Gross domestic product (GDP) adjusted for inflation has already reached its pre-crisis level and the third quarter of 2022 marked the eighth consecutive quarter of positive growth—despite continued challenges in the oil sector. Growth is estimated at three percent for 2022.

They stated that headline inflation declined in December 2022 for the first time in 11 months, but at 21.3 percent remains high—driven by elevated international food prices, large parallel market premiums and monetary policy accommodation.

While the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) raised the Monetary Policy rate (MPR) by a cumulative 500 basis points (bps) in 2022 and another 100 bps in January 2023, inflation remains above the MPR.

They noted that despite rising oil prices, the general government fiscal deficit is estimated to have widened further in 2022, mainly due to high fuel subsidy costs. While the current account is estimated to have improved in 2022, foreign currency reserves declined amidst capital outflow pressures.

The directors stated: "Notwithstanding the authorities' success in containing and managing the COVID-19 infections, socio-economic conditions remain difficult. The spillover effects of the war in Ukraine, which have been transmitted mainly through higher domestic food prices, worsened the scarring effects of the pandemic, particularly on the most vulnerable—with Nigeria being among the countries with the lowest food security.

The near-term outlook faces downside risks, while there are upside risks in the medium term. Higher international food and fertilizer prices and continued widening of the parallel market premium could culminate in the de-anchoring of inflation expectations. The oil sector faces downside risks from possible production and price volatility, while climate-related natural disasters (e.g., floods) pose the same risks to agricultural production. Further widening in sovereign premia could increase debt servicing costs. In the medium term, there are upside risks from a potential stronger reform momentum and a larger-than-expected rebound in oil and gas production.

In the executive board assessment, the executive directors agreed with the thrust of the staff appraisal. The directors welcomed the broadening of Nigeria's economic recovery but noted that the opportunity to reap the benefits from higher global oil prices was missed. They underscored near-term downside risks arising from elevated inflation, high debt-servicing costs, external sector pressures, and oil sector volatility.

The directors highlighted the need for bold fiscal reforms to create needed policy space, put public debt on sound footing, and reduce vulnerabilities. They urged the authorities to deliver on their commitment to remove fuel subsidies by mid-2023, and to increase well-targeted social spending. Strengthening revenue mobilisation, including through tax administration reforms, expanding the tax automation system and strengthening taxpayer segmentation, and improving tax compliance is also a priority. In the medium term, Directors recommended modernising customs administration, rationalising tax incentives, and raising tax rates to the levels of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

They urged decisive and effective monetary policy tightening to avoid a de-anchoring of inflation expectations. Noting recent increases in the policy rate, they encouraged the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to stand ready to further increase the policy rate if needed, and to implement additional actions, including fully sterilising central bank financing of fiscal deficits and phasing out credit intervention programs. Strengthening the CBN's independence and establishing price stability as its primary objective is critical. The directors also urged the authorities to finalise securitisation of the CBN's existing stock of overdrafts and emphasised that the CBN's budget financing should strictly adhere to the statutory limits.

They encouraged a continued move toward a unified and market-clearing exchange rate by dismantling various exchange rate windows at the CBN. Providing clarity on exchange rate policy would help boost investor confidence, quell capital outflow pressures, and rebuild buffers. They welcomed Nigeria's intention to participate in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

Welcoming the resilience of the banking sector and encouraging increased vigilance given potential risks associated with dynamic retail credit growth, they also emphasised the need to enhance the effectiveness of the AML/CFT framework and to avoid public listing by the FATF. They welcomed ongoing efforts to foster financial inclusion, including through the use of mobile money with appropriate regulation and supervision, and highlighted the importance of improving the performance of the agricultural sector for job creation and food security. They urged the authorities to implement governance reforms, including delivering on commitments from the 2020 Rapid Financing Instrument. Improving transparency and accountability in the oil sector is also key to strengthening governance.

It is expected that the next Article IV consultation with Nigeria will be held on the standard 12-month cycle, according to them.

Finance, Women Affairs Ministers Advocate Women's Participation In Digital Technology

As DBN MD Highlights Achievements Of Women In Tech

*Recently, Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) in Abuja celebrated the International Women's Day. At the event stakeholders, including the Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National, **Mrs. Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed,** made salient points on the need to bring more women into digital tech. **Musa Ibrahim** reports.*

The Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, has advocated for women's active inclusion in the Nigerian digital technology spheres, saying that digital device had far reaching consequences for women's economic, social and political empowerment.

Mrs. Ahmed stated this in Abuja recently at the International Women's Day yearly programme of the Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN).

This year's programme, themed, 'Digit all innovation and technology for gender equality #embrace equity,'harped on technology as pathway to achieving desired progress by women. The Honourable Minister noted that without technology women would not make the desired progress in Nigeria.

"In this respect, we must seek for innovative solution that can facilitate how to leverage technology to close the gender gap and empower women to have access to health care, information, financial services, education and governance processes.

"It is indeed gratifying to note that the commitment of this government to issues of women development and empowerment has remained legendary and commendable. Only recently did Mr. President inaugurate the high-level advisory council of women and national women economic policy dialogue whose major objective is to bridge the gender gap in our polity.

"This council and policy initiative is meant to broaden the social, political and economic landscape for women's development and is expected to work with other critical stakeholders towards achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) of gender equality between now and the year 2030.

"This and other policies and programmes of government are indeed a testament to the unwavering commitment of government to dramatically change the narratives of women backwardness and bring them to reckoning with every facet of governance and leadership in the country," she said.

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

Reflecting on the essence of setting a day to honour women, Managing Director (MD)/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DBN, Mr. Tony Okpanachi, said that the global event recognises and celebrates women championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education.

"At DBN, we believe that innovation is key to driving gender equality. We recognise and celebrate the unique contributions that women bring to the technology space, and we are committed to creating a workplace where women can thrive and succeed. We have made great strides in advancing gender equality within our establishment.

"We have implemented programmes to support the development and advancement of women in leadership, and we have also established partnerships with organisations that work to empower women and girls across the country."

He added that the global event recognises and celebrates women who are championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education.

"Technology is no doubt reshaping life as we know it today and we are witnessing ground-breaking advances that have transformed our world with women playing a pivotal role in accelerating this progress.

"From Ada Lovelace, who created the first computer program, to Grace Hopper, who developed the first compiler for computer languages, women are leading the charge in fields such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and cybersecurity, creating new products and services that are changing the world and impacting on the quality of lives.

"Notwithstanding these tremendous advances by women in technology, there is still a significant employment discrepancy in the tech profession, with women accounting for between 28 percent and 42 percent of the workforce.

"According to a report by The World Bank, women make up less than a third of the world's workforce in technology-related fields. Women hold 28 percent of all jobs in computer and mathematical occupations, and 15.9 percent of jobs in engineering and architecture occupations. In Nigeria, according to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), women make up 22 percent of the total number of engineering and technology university graduates each year.

Technology has the potential to improve the lives of women and girls all over the world in a variety of ways, including increased access to education, health care, and financial services, as well as new avenues into business and entrepreneurship. But to realise the full potential of the technology, we must also confront its perils, that is a separate conversation entirely which does not take away the benefits of information technology (IT) to humanity," he further explained.

Mr. Okpanachi admitted that there is still much work to be done, stating that Nigeria must continue to challenge gender biases and promote diversity in all aspects of life.

"We must join our hands together to close gender disparity and provide more opportunities for women to gain the skills they need to succeed in the digital economy. We must also ensure that technology is used to empower women, not reinforce gender stereotypes.

"We need to challenge biases in data and algorithms that perpetuate gender-based discrimination, and ensure that technology is designed with the needs and perspectives of women in mind.

Innovative solutions are needed to address the unique challenges faced by women and girls, such as access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.

"We need to leverage technology to provide women with the tools and resources they need to succeed, from online education and training programs to mobile health clinics and e-commerce platforms," he added.

He also said that with a joint collaboration, Nigeria could strongly believe that together, we could create a future where women are fully represented and empowered, not only in the digital economy but across all areas of human endeavour.

Also speaking, the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen, said that Nigeria is on the path of growth in terms of women inclusion, while calling for more commitment.

Dame Tallen stated: "The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, as the national machinery for the advancement of the rights and welfare of Nigerian children and women, including the vulnerable, recognises partnership as key to accelerating industry-wide change, and to remove the barrier to the advancement of women and girls in innovation technology and entrepreneurship.

"We remain ready to work with all partners and stakeholders; together we can attain a future where scientific progress is gender-equal at its core, serving for the benefit of all and drawing on talents of all.

"The poor performance of Nigerian women at the just concluded elections is an indication that we need to sustain our advocacy and change our strategies to ensure that more women are represented in the political process in national development," she further stated.

Amidst Rising Inflation, CBN Raises Interest Rate To 18%

By Anita Dennis

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)'s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has raised its benchmark interest rate known as the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) by 50 basis point to 18 percent.

This represents the sixth straight time the CBN is raising the rates.

Mr. Godwin Emefiele, Governor of the CBN, who disclosed this after the MPC meeting in Abuja recently, said that a moderate tightening may slow the rate of deceleration in inflation without necessarily hurting output.

Nigeria's inflation rate accelerated to 21.91 percent in February 2023 from 21.82 percent in January, fueled essentially by cost of energy, food and Naira scarcity, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Data from the NBS showed that Nigeria's annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate slowed to 3.10 percent in 2022, compared to 3.40 percent in 2021.

The MPC also kept unchanged the asymmetric corridor at +100/-700 basis points around the MPR, retained cash reserve ratio (CRR) at 32.5 percent and liquidity ratio at 30 percent.

Key highlights

CBN has raised its MPR to 18 percent from 17.5 percent in its February 2023 meeting, making the second interest rate hike in 2023.

The decision was made due to the rising inflation rate in the economy, with headline inflation reaching 21.91percent in February, the highest level since September 2005.

The CBN governor noted that stringent micro and macro-prudential guidelines have ensured the stability and sustenance of the banking system, despite concerns about the effect of the hawkish stance on the industry.

Factors cited for the rate hike included planned fuel subsidy removal, rising prices of other energy sources, continuing exchange rate pressure, and uncertain climatic conditions.

The decision of the CBN is fueled by the rising inflation rate in the economy. Headline inflation rose to 21.91percent in February 2023 from 21.82 percent recorded in the previous month, representing its highest level since September 2005.

Highlights of The Committee's Decision

Increase MPR by 50 basis points to 18 percent.

The asymmetric corridor of +100/-700 basis points around the MPR was retained CRR was retained at 32.5 percent.

While the liquidity ratio was also kept at 30 percent.

Addressing the fears of the effect of the hawkish stance on the banking industry, the CBN governor noted the bank's stringent micro and macro-prudential guidelines have ensured that the stability and sustenance of the banking system are not at risk despite the hawkish stance.

Why The CBN Raised Interest Rates

CBN Governor cited factors such as the planned fuel subsidy removal as the major reason why it needs to tighten.

He also included rising prices of other energy sources; continuing exchange rate pressure; and uncertain climatic conditions as further reasons why a rate hike was voted for.

He also commented on subsidy removal, claiming that it would be removed. "Whether we like it or not, subsidy removal will likely take effect before the end of this administration in May," he said.

These, in the views of members, provide a compelling argument for an upward adjustment of the policy rate, albeit less aggressively.

He also stated that the committee noted, despite the concerns, that the naira redesign and cash withdrawal limit policies have resulted in a sizeable reduction in currency-outside-banks.

"The CBN also considered the challenges facing the global banking system exacerbated by rising interest rates from central banks. In addition to this, the MPC examined the possible impact of further policy rate hikes on the stability of the banking system and was convinced that further hikes would not adversely impact the stability of the banking system.

The committee, however, called on the bank's management to strengthen its regulatory oversight on the banking system to ensure that the banking industry remain stable and resilient.

Mr. Emefiele also mentioned that inflation tightening would be the strategy going forward. However, it would be done moderately with one eye on the current effects of rate hikes in Europe and the United States (US) where banks are already citing it as a reason for failure. The CBN Governor, however, emphasised that Nigerian banks are healthy.

fmfinsights

Economy & Investment

ADVERT RATE

COLOUR

PRODUCT

Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	557,916.68	41,843.76
H/P	316,462.50	23,734.68
Q/P	152,770.00	11,457.76
14.5x5	452,218.76	33,916.40
14.5x3	271,293.26	20,347.00
10x6	374,250.00	28,068.76
10x5	311,875.00	23,390.62
10x4	249,500.00	18,712.50
9x6	336,825.00	25,261.88
9x5	280,687.50	21,051.56
9x4	224,550.00	16,841.26
9x3	168,412.50	12,630.94
8x6	299,400.00	22,455.00
8x5	249,500.00	18,712.50
8x4	199,600.00	14,970.00
7x6	251,975.00	18,898.12
7x5	218,312.50	16,373.44
7x4	174,650.00	13,098.76
7x2	172,150.00	6,549.38
6x4	149,700.00	11,227.50
6x3	112,275.00	8,420.62
6x2	74,850.00	5,613.75
5x6	187,125.00	14,034.38
5x5	155,937.50	11,695.32
5x4	124,750.00	9,356.26
5x3	93,562.50	7,017.18
5x2	62,375.00	4,678.12
4x4	99,800.00	7,485.00
4x3	74,850.00	5,613.76
4x2	49,900.00	3,742.50
3x2	37,425.00	2,806.88
2x2	24,950.00	1,871.26
2x1	12,475.00	935.62
1x1	6,237.50	467.82

PUBLIC NOTICE POLITICAL

Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	578,838.55	43,412.90
H/P	328,329.84	24,624.74
Q/P	158,498.88	11,887.42
14.5x5	234,558.65	35,183.80
14.5x3	284,858.44	21,364.38
10x6	388,303.80	29,122.78
10x5	323,586.50	24,268.98
10x4	258,869.20	19,415.20
9x6	349,473.42	26,210.50
9x5	291,227.85	21,842.08
9x4	232,982.28	17,473.68
9x3	174,736.70	13,105.26
8x6	310,643.04	23,298.22
8x5	258,869.20	19,415.20
8x4	207,095.36	15,532.16
7x6	271,812.66	20,385.94
7x5	226,510.55	16,988.30
7x4	181,208.44	13,590.64
7x2	90,604.22	6,795.32
6x4	155,321.52	11,649.12
6x3	116,491.14	8,736.84
6x2	77,660.76	5,824.56
5x6	194,151.90	14,561.40
5x5	161,793.24	12,134.50
5x4	129,434.60	9,707.60
5x3	97,075.95	7,280.70
5x2	64,717.30	4,853.80
4x4	103,547.66	7,766.08
4x3	77,660.74	5,824.56
4x2	51,773.84	3,883.04
3x2	38,830.38	2,912.28
2x2	25,886.92	1,941.52
2x1	12,943.46	970.76
1x1	6,471.72	485.38

BLACK AND WHITE

PRODUCT

Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	366,792.56	27,509.44
H/P	198,423.18	14,881.74
Q/P	95,782.00	7,183.66
14.5x5	283,950.60	21,296.30
14.5x3	190,000.00	14,250.00
9x6	234,993.60	17,624.52
9x5	176,245.20	13,218.4
9x4	140,996.16	10,574.72
9x3	105,747.12	7,931.04
8x6	187,994.88	14,099.62
8x5	156,662.40	11,749.68
8x4	126,329.92	9,474.74
7x6	164,495.52	12,337.16
7x5	137,079.60	10,280.98
7x4	109,663.68	8,224.78
7x2	54,831.84	4,112.38
6x4	93,997.44	7,049.80
6x3	70,498.08	5,287.36
6x2	70,498.08	5,287.36
5x6	117,496.80	8,812.26
5x5	97,914.00	7,343.56
5x4	78,331.20	5,874.84
5x3	58,748.40	4,406.14
5x2	39,165.60	2,937.42
4x4	62,664.96	4,699.88
4x3	46,998.72	3,524.90
4x2	31,322.48	2,349.18
3x2	23,499.38	1,762.46
2x2	15,666.24	1,174.96
2x1	7,833.12	587.48
1x1	3,916.56	293.74

PUBLIC NOTICE POLITICAL

Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	435,178.08	32,638.36
H/P	254,538.96	19,090.42
Q/P	131,226.90	9,842.02
14.5x5	38,040.56	2,853.04
14.5x3	232,825.87	17,461.94
10x6	319,512.00	23,963.40
10x5	266,260.00	19,969.50
10x4	213,006.00	15,975.46
9x6	287,560.80	21,567.06
9x5	239,634.00	17,972.56
9x4	191,707.20	14,378.04
9x3	143,780.40	10,783.54
8x6	255,609.60	19,170.72
8x5	213,008.00	15,975.60
8x4	170,406.40	12,780.48
7x6	223,658.00	16,774.36
7x5	186,382.00	13,978.66
7x4	149,105.60	11,182.92
7x2	74,552.80	5,591.46
6x4	127,804.80	9,585.36
6x3	95,853.60	7,189.02
6x2	63,902.40	4,792.68
5x6	159,756.00	11,981.70
5x5	133,130.00	9,984.76
5x4	106,504.00	7,987.80
5x3	79,878.00	5,990.86
5x2	53,252.00	3,993.90
4x4	85,203.20	6,390.24
4x3	83,902.40	6,292.68
4x2	42,601.60	3,195.12
3x2	31,951.20	2,396.34
2x2	21,300.80	1,597.56
2x1	10,650.40	798.78
1x1	5,325.20	399.40

SPECIAL POSITION	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
FPS 6x2	1,291,193.44	96,839.50
BPS 6x2	923,375.00	69,253.12
STRIP (FRONT) 2X6	1,322,912.50	99,218.44
STRIP (BACK) 2X6	1,037,500.00	77,812.50
STRIP (INSIDE) 2X6	218,460.38	16,384.52
EARPIECE (FRONT) 2X2	517,094.30	38,782.08
EARPIECE (BACK) 2X2	405,145.10	30,385.88
EARPIECE (INSIDE) 2X2	240,000.00	18,000.00
CENTERSPREAD (FULL)	3,320,000.00	249,000.00
CENTERSPREAD (HALF)	1,992,000.00	149,400.00
CENTERSPREAD (STRIP)	594,300.00	44,572.50
DOUBLESPREAD	2,982,952.00	223,721.40

WRAP	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
FULL WRAP	41,500,000.00	3,112,500.00
10 X 6	28,620,690.00	2,146,551.76
HALF PAGE (FRONT)	20,800,000.00	1,560,000.00
5X6 (FRONT)	14,312,344.00	1,073,425.80
4X6 (FRONT)	11,448,274.00	858,620.56
2X6 (UNDER MASTHEAD	7,262,500.00	544,687.50
2X6 (FRONT POLITICAL)	1,560,000.00	117,000.00

LOOSE INSERT	
RATE PER 1,000 SHEETS	60,000.00
HANDLING CHARGE (SINGLE)	1,000,000.00
HANDLING CHARGE (SINGLE)	1,000,000.00

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Democratising PFM Systems In Africa, Considering Timely Funding of Government's Expenditures

POLICY BRIEF
with
ENAM **OBIOSIO**

Though now up and running, the Federal Government of Nigeria had some years ago, precisely since 2009, flagged off the bottom-up cash planning policy for the implementation of an efficient cash management.

The planning policy, according to Mr. Sylva Okolieaboh, Acting Accountant-General of the Federation, is about the collection and aggregation of government cash needs through the individual spending units. According to him, "as part of the overall government's cash management arrangement, it facilitates the optimal allocation and utilisation of government cash resources." This was when the federal government initiated a feasibility study to determine the best strategies to address its cash management challenges as part of its public finance management (PFM) reforms.

Shortly after the pilot roll-out of the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS) alongside the Treasury Single Account (TSA) in April 2012, the process of implementing an efficient cash management system commenced in the country.

On the objectives of the initiative, Mr. Okolieaboh said that the overriding objective of cash management is to ensure that the government is able to fund its expenditures in a timely manner and to meet its obligations as they fall due.

"Other objectives are minimising the costs of holding cash balances; reducing risk (operational, credit and market risk); adding flexibility to the ways in which the timing of government cash inflows and outflows can be matched; and supporting other financial policies," he said.

Speaking further he also said: "Implementation of bottom-up cash planning will bring more certainty to budget execution, and engender fiscal discipline. In his words: "The bottom-up cash management policy guideline was approved by the Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, on June 1, 2020. The formal approval of its implementation by Mr. President on the 24th of August, 2022 sets the stage for its roll out. The bottom-up cash planning policy for the country is apparently to guard against weak PFM systems, and the same could apply in the entire African region.

It is obvious that weak PFM systems have been significant impediment to economic growth and development in Nigeria nay African states. On the revenue side, many African countries underperform on tax collection.

In 2018, the average tax collection as a share of gross domestic production (GDP) in Africa was 16.5 percent - varying from 6.3 percent in Nigeria to 32.4 percent in the Seychelles.

On the spending side, weak legislative oversight means that budget appropriation, implementation, and oversight often reflect the priorities of the executive branch. The result? Only some of the revenue collected in African states actually reaches the public in the form of public goods and services.

Much gets lost to spending on poorly planned 'white elephant' projects, corruption, and general waste. As for borrowing, recent increases in public debt in a number of African countries have raised concerns about a lack of transparency and accountability.

Given Africa's demographic and political trajectories, the challenges confronting its PFM systems will only get tougher.

Addressing these problems, according to Ken Opalo, Assistant Professor, Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, will require more than technical fixes to the operations in African treasuries. This is because at their core, PFM systems reflect societies' implied fiscal pacts. Thus, reforms should reflect the emerging electoral fiscal pact in African states. An important feature of this fiscal pact is the expectation that to legitimately stay in power or win elections, politicians must invest in visible and attributable public goods and services.

"In African democracies and non-democracies (electoral autocracies) alike, electoral competition (however imperfect) has created increased demand for roads, electricity, public schools, accessible healthcare, agricultural subsidies and extension services, social protection, and other public goods and services. The experiences of many African countries over the last two decades have strengthened this implied fiscal pact.

For example, the region's successes with universal primary education under the millennium development goals (MDGs) have created enormous public demand for secondary and tertiary education.

"How will African countries sustainably finance the increasing demands of their citizens? Ignoring the public is not an option, so Africa's PFM systems can no longer focus solely on macroeconomics or insulate taxation and public spending from popular politics. Instead, political bargains – within the guardrails of constitutional order – must drive public finance management systems.

To improve public confidence, taxation must be linked to the provision of public goods and services. In the same vein, to ensure that public spending reflects taxpayers' priorities, legislators at national and subnational levels must play a leading role in budget appropriation and oversight. Finally, the policymaking process must be participatory and sensitive to country-specific political realities.

Some experts would say that exposing PFM systems to full democratic expression will undoubtedly generate significant inefficiencies. However, these inefficiencies should be seen as features, and not bugs, of democratic PFM. It is only through practice that African legislatures and other institutions will establish the institutional habits and norms needed to fully democratise tax administration, public spending, and oversight. The corollary of this is that circumventing legislative input into budget processes will stunt the institutional development of PFM systems in the region – the long-run cost of which will be enormous, given the emerging public demands for goods and services.

"Multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have a significant role to play in fostering the democratisation of Africa's PFM systems. As a starting point, these institutions need to have a healthy appreciation of the pressures facing Africa. It is not enough to offer orthodox reforms borne of distant contexts, watch her fail, and blame 'a lack of political will'.

> It is obvious that weak PFM systems have been significant impediment to economic growth and development in Nigeria nay African states

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