

News

'How Nigeria Can Achieve MDGs'

By Ndubuisi Ugah

National Assembly, stakeholders in these sectors weekend, advocated for the building of a culture of transparency as a prerequisite for

eradicating poverty and realizing other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to which Nigeria is committed.

The event, which was facilitated by Oxfam GB Nigeria, as part of its Oil Extractives Programme,

also observed that there was need "to establish an Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (ALTAN) for the purpose of anchoring civil society efforts in actualising the passage of the bills as laws holistically".

But rising from a two-day roundtable on the theme: "Facilitating Legal Framework for Improving Transparency and Accountability in the Management of Natural Resources", the participants said for Federal Government to achieve the desired results in its graft war, it was imperative that the aforementioned Bills are passed without further delay.

The participants were drawn from the Freedom of Information Coalition (FOIC), the Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency

Initiative (NEITI), Zero Corruption Coalition, The Nigeria Budget Network, and other civil society coalitions closely monitoring the Fiscal Responsibility Bill, Oil and Gas Legislations, and the Public Procurement Bill, and some academia and journalists.

However, the participants in a communique issued at the end of deliberations further observed that "the passage of these Bills will institutionalise the Federal Government's avowed commitment to promoting transparency and accountability in Nigeria particularly the oil and gas sectors, and anti-corruption in Nigeria".

The communique, which was endorsed by Prof. Assisi Asobie, member NSWG (NEITI), Tive Denedo (FOIC) MRA, Mr. Victor

Ihekweazu (Whistle Blower) ZCC, Mr. Bode Olufemi (Environment Bill) ERA, Mr. Babatope Babalobi (Fiscal Responsibility) BLD, the participants argued

"that these Bills will strengthen the democratic process as it will make it possible for citizens to hold the government accountable and be involved in all facets of policy formulation and implementation".

According to the communique, it was advocated "that these Bills will improve the capacity for rigorous advocacy and playing of watchdog functions among civil society organizations thereby trigger a number of social changes, which will be a catalyst for more rapid social and economic development".

Labour Ministry Holds Seminar for Retirees

From Juliana Taiwo
in Abuja

Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity in collaboration with International Multi-Sectoral Economic Development Organisation (IMEDO) yesterday began a three-day Retiring Planning Seminar for Middle and Senior Level Officers in the ministry to enable them make informed decisions that will give participants a greater chance to enjoy a financially successful retirement.

Permanent Secretary, Dr. Timiebi Koripano-Agary stressed that the seminar is to provide participants with an opportunity to check up on their personal finances and promote the habit of planning

and saving for retirement, teach them entrepreneurial skills to start business that respond to market opportunities after retirement, promote the culture of carrying out pre-retirement needs assessment so as to create a balance between the expected retirement needs and expected retirement funds, in order to bridge the gap between the retirement income and expenses.

Agary, who was represented by the Director of Personnel, stressed that the transition from paid employment to retirement can be

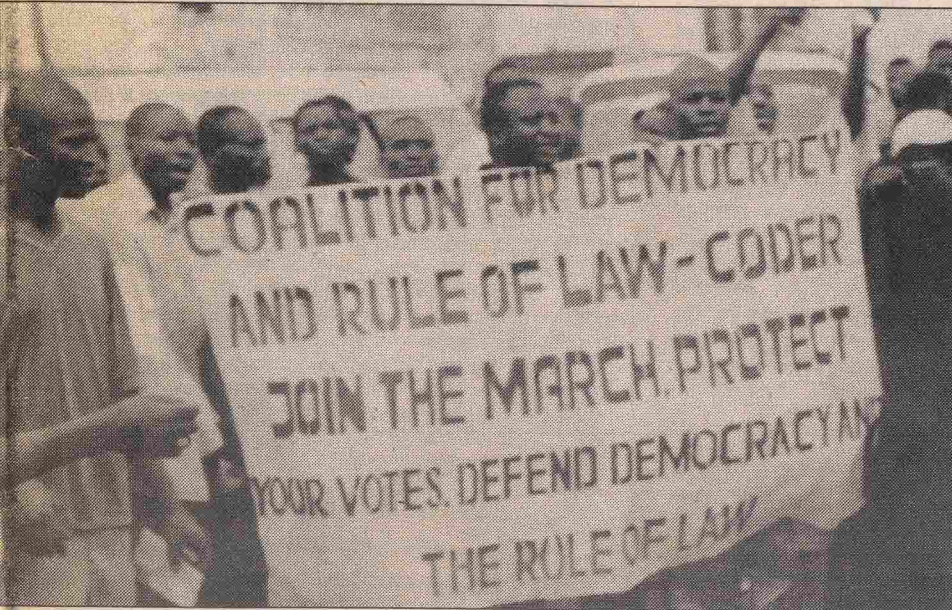
quite tough and that majority of staff are most times unprepared for it, to the extent that they are suddenly faced with the pain and trauma of starting from the scratch, with no road map to help them break new ground.

Lack of pre-retirement planning or poor planning is the most common reason for this. Therefore, with proper planning, a retiree can achieve financial independence and this seminar will assist participants plan well for this. Permit me to remind you again that at retirement, one comes face to face with the reality of life. The time of receiving monthly remuneration even without doing any serious work passes.

Tsav Accuses Water Ministry Officials of Fraud

Former Lagos State police

Piqued by the inability of the National Assembly to pass the Fiscal Responsibility Bill, Oil and Gas Legislations, the Public Procurement Bill, Freedom of Information Bill among others, which are presently before the



Coalition for Democracy at a mass rally for reinstatement of Governor Rashidi Ladoja of Oyo State in Ibadan...yesterday

PHOTO: Felix Ademola

FIDA Delegates Point Path to Women Empowerment

The International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) has advanced a case for equal participation of women in government and business across the world.

This forms part of the 7-point resolution of the Federation's 32nd Biennial Convention recently held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where a 22-member Executive Council was constituted for 2005 - 2007. Nigeria secured four slots with Mrs Stella Ubohoma emerging sec-

children by ensuring adequate funding of the health sector and incorporating women and children specific concerns into the legal and regulatory aspects of healthcare delivery as mandated by United Nations protocols.

As a demonstrations of this,

FIDA challenged governments to make special efforts to repeal all discriminatory and oppressive laws, take strict actions against practices and customs and undertake affirmative measure for the empowerment of all women in the society