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Mmom Succeeds Anele As Social Sciences Dean



Following the successful completion of tenure by Professor Kinikanwo Anele of the Department of Sociology which ended on February 28, 2019, a new Dean has been appointed to pilot the affairs of the Faculty of Social Sciences for the next two years. He is Professor Prince Mmom of the Department of Geography and Environmental Management. The new Dean was also immediate past Director of the Centre for Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies, reports *Mercy Adeniji*.
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Side Bar CONVOCATION MEETS TODAY

Members of Convocation are invited to a Meeting of the body today at the Ebifimi Banigo Auditorium, University Park. Time is 10:00am
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Blue House Wins UDPS Sports Meet



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NAEC Chair Lauds UniPort On Manpower Development

By Olorik Samuel

Chairman of the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC), Professor Simon Mallam, has described the resounding success story recorded by the Centre for Nuclear Energy Studies in the University as unparalleled when compared to other centres established by the Commission across the country.

Professor Mallam made the observation when he led other officials of the Commission on a familiarisation visit to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale at the Committee Room on Tuesday, March 5, 2019. The Chairman noted that the Commission had recorded a number of achievements since its establishment in 1996 with a distinguished alumnus of the University of Port Harcourt, Dr Franklin Osaial as pioneer Director.

"This University has remained a very precious partner to the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission ever since the Commission approved the establishment of a Centre here in 2009. I am happy to note that UniPort easily adapted to our mandate of human capacity development when it became the

first Centre to graduate master's degree students. The UniPort Centre has succeeded in shaping the future of our programme as 27, out of the 29 pioneer graduates of the Centre, are currently pursuing doctorate degree programmes in reputable higher institutions outside Nigeria. Some of them have already completed their programmes and they will further boost the production of manpower in nuclear technology

on their return to the country.

"I wish to add that the University of Port Harcourt Centre has done us proud again by commencing a certificate programme in Nuclear Security Science at the Postgraduate level. Following this highly commendable initiative, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has accepted to donate cutting-edge equipment to further deepen nuclear technology

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APWEN inaugurates UniPort Students' Chapter

By Williams Wodi

As the rest of the world stood still to celebrate the 2019 International Women's Day on Friday, March 8, 2019, the Port Harcourt Chapter of the Association of Professional Women Engineers in Nigeria (APWEN) seized the moment to inaugurate its University of Port Harcourt Students' Chapter. The inauguration was more symbolic against the background of the 2019 theme of the International Women's Day: "Balance For Better" which seeks to make the world a better place with emphasis on gender equity. Feminists and women activists believe that a balanced world is a better, happier world for everybody. The professional women engineers who gathered at the auditorium of the Centre for Gas, Refining and Petrochemicals at the Institute of Petroleum Studies Park, brimmed with eager anticipation as they sought to place women and young trainee-girl engineers at the heart of efforts aimed at achieving gender equity in an irritatingly patriarchal and sexist society that is hell-bent on holding women hostage in 21st century room. The professional women engineers who gathered in UniPort are in tune with the sub-theme of this year's celebration: *Third Equal, Build Smart, Innovation for Change*, aimed at attaining gender equity. Engineers are known for creativity and innovation and women are better organisers. Chairman of the Port Harcourt Chapter of APWEN, Mrs Martha Ikhalo, restated her Association's commitment to quality engineering education for women in Nigeria. She encouraged young girls to embrace the noble profession, which is currently dominated by men, some of who are scared of confident and self-assured professional women. "APWEN is concerned with mentoring the girl-child to elicit her interest in the study of engineering as a choice career. We



APWEN members in a group photograph with Provost, CHS, Prof Mato (arrowed)

also place emphasis on encouraging female engineers to assume positions of leadership and self-development in line with our organisation's Motto: *Encourage, Enhance, Excel*. Newly-inaugurated UniPort Students' Chapter Executive of the Association has Miss Daisy Oghonnia as President. Others are Sophia Onuoha (Vice President), Sonia Jamabo (Secretary General), Happiness Udoh (Director of Welfare), Precious Utubuhli (Organising Secretary) and Oghenyoma Okobiah (Public Relations Officer). In a brief remark, President of the UniPort Chapter, Miss Oghonnia, expressed gratitude to the parent body for encouraging and mentoring the female student engineers to embrace the profession. She promised to justify the confidence reposed in her newly-inaugurated Executive. "We are grateful to our teachers and mothers

in the profession for inaugurating us and we promise to take the message to some secondary schools around us to create awareness amongst female students to take up the profession," Oghonnia told our Correspondent. In her opening remarks, Provost of the College of Health Sciences, Professor Christie Mato who stood in for the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndora Lale, expressed support for the new students' Chapter of APWEN in the University. "We are hopeful that this platform for professional women would encourage them to excel in their career choices. We are also happy that the Association would serve as a role model for young female students wishing to pursue exciting and rewarding careers in the engineering profession. This is a good opportunity for aspiring female engineers to establish themselves in the profession and I am happy that they now have experienced female engineers to mentor them," Professor Mato told the gathering.

Also speaking, one of the matriarchs of the engineering profession, Professor Falilat Ademiluy of the Department of Chemical/Petrochemical Engineering at the Rivers State University, urged her younger professional colleagues to deploy their minds to solve complex engineering problems. "As women in engineering, you must balance your career and homes in an exceptional way. I urge you to explore entrepreneurial opportunities in other business endeavours through networking with colleagues to further enrich your professional standing," she charged the female engineers.

The women did not forget to key into the theme of this year's International Women's Day which seeks to create heightened awareness of discrimination and celebration of women's accomplishments since the beginning of time. Women started mobilising since the early 1990s to challenge sexism by mobilising governments, women's organisations and charities to take action to reverse the trend. For instance, a movement known as *HeForShe* has done a lot to bring about gender equity in this direction of encouraging men to support gender equity to attain better global peace and progress for all of humanity.

The Association of Professional Women Engineers who gathered to inaugurate the UniPort Student Chapter of APWEN realise that women are not just going to free themselves from dehydrating male domination by shouting from the rooftops a few hours each year on March 8. Women should listen to former American First Lady, Michelle Obama: "The future of our world is only as bright as the future of our girls." True! Men too must listen to this warning and join forces with women to balance the world.

Demolish Defective Hostel Building, Council Chairman Directs DPPD

By Otiok Samuel

Preparatory to the commissioning and handover of completed projects on campus, members of Council of the University again, embarked on another inspection tour of ongoing project sites. The Chairman of Council and Pro-Chancellor, Professor Mwendaga Jibo, who led his colleagues on the facility inspection visit, expressed happiness with the level of work done by some of the contractors at the sites they inspected. He enjoined the contractor handling a female hostel at the University Park to note the observed deficiencies before finally handing it over to the University.

Projects inspected included: the mega circular building opposite the Senate Building, office complex, museum, lecture halls, Department of Human Anatomy building and the new Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences complex.

Others included the Power System Engineering building, which was abandoned for years by the contractor and projects sponsored by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund).

The Council inspection team and Principal Officers also visited the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences Lecture Hall and Female Hostel under construction

at the University Park. The two buildings are sponsored under the NEEDS Assessment projects, while the Pharmacy Lecture Hall was certified ready for commissioning.

Briefing the Pro-Chancellor on the outcome of geological test of the soil structure carried out at the site of the deficient Female Hostel building, the Deputy Director in charge of the Department of Physical Planning and Development, Mr Michael Uhom, told the inspection team that the soil test revealed some of the structures fell below the approved standard. He promised that efforts were on to correct the observed deficiencies to make the projects safe for human habitation.

Mr Uhom disclosed that professionals from the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN) recommended thorough restructuring of the observed lapses or total demolition of the defective structure in the alternative. The Council Chairman, however, opted for outright demolition of the building to safeguard students who may inhabit the building. Professor Jibo insisted that the University should not be seen to tolerate sub-standard jobs, maintaining that quality assurance must not be compromised under any guise.



Chairman of Council, Prof Jibo (arrowed) flanked by members of Council, V-C, Prof Lale (4' right), Principal Officers, some Senior Officers and a Contractor, Mr Adun Aluya

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Mmom Succeeds Anele

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.Pledges A New Era



New Dean, Prof Mmom (arrowed), flanked by the Associate Dean, Dr Peter Medee (right), Faculty Officer, Mrs Ngazi Igwe, immediate past Dean, Professor Anele (4th right) and other senior academics of the Faculty

Speaking during a brief handover ceremony which held at the Faculty Lecture Hall on Tuesday, March 5, 2019, Professor Anele commended Board Members and Staff of the Faculty for affording him the opportunity to serve them. "We are gathered here under the authority of the Faculty Board and the goodwill of my colleagues. I thank you for the confidence reposed in me in the last two years. If not for your total commitment to the growth of Faculty, there would not have been a moment like the successful transition we are experiencing today," Professor Anele said, recalling that he assumed office on March 1, 2017 as Dean of the Faculty with daunting challenges before him.

He listed the successful accreditation of the Department Geography and Environmental Management in November 2018 and approval of a new Department of Social Work from the Department of Sociology Department, including hosting of conferences, among others as some of his accomplishments in office. Professor Anele, however, regretted that the proposed Department of Public Administration which was to be carved out of the existing Department of Political and

Administrative Studies was not successful, following resource verification by the National Universities Commission. He hoped that his successor would represent the proposal at another opportune moment.

The immediate past Dean stated that during his tenure, the Faculty enjoyed peace and a high level of professionalism. "There was peace and comradeship among staff and between students of the Faculty. The teaching method has improved immensely and students' results are being carefully handled to reduce problems associated with late release of results to the barest minimum. Our Faculty is doing well and I thank all my colleagues for assisting me in the successful stewardship of the Faculty," Professor Anele told them.

Presenting a copy of his handover note to his successor, Professor Anele expressed gratitude to the outgoing Associate Dean, Professor Ijeoma Kaka and all those who voted him into office as Dean in February 2017. He expressed gratitude to his colleagues and students for their unwavering support for him in office. The erstwhile Dean heartily congratulated his successor, Professor Mmom on his success at the poll, urging

his colleagues to continue to extend all the support they gave him to his successor to take the Faculty to new heights. In his acceptance speech, the incoming Dean, Professor Mmom, commended members of the Board for believing in him and giving him the mandate to superintend over the affairs of the Faculty. "I don't think I am the best to lead this great Faculty, but you found me worthy to be entrusted with this enormous responsibility to lead. I recognise that this is a hot seat with a lot of work to be done and I count on you all to help me make progress. Let me assure our elders in the Faculty that I will always come to you for invaluable advice from time to time. I assure you by God's grace that I will sustain the established tradition of the Faculty. I will not fail you and you can count on me. This Faculty would be a paecester under my watch and others would be motivated to emulate us. We would continue to set the pace as our predecessors did before us and the best way to achieve that goal is for me to give adult leadership from the frontlines," he promised.

Unveiling his vision for the Faculty, Professor Mmom listed the introduction of a quarterly *Distinguished Lecture Series* and *Faculty Founder's Day*, including regular conferences, public lectures and graduate seminars. He also promised to introduce a *Faculty Journal* as part of his plans to reignite robust academic activities in the Faculty. "We plan to construct a walk-way to connect the main Faculty building with the new Social Science Annex to facilitate movement. We also hope to liaise with friends to procure a Coaster Bus for field work," he disclosed.

He promised to ensure that staff and students adhere strictly to extant rules governing the engagements in the Faculty. Professor Mmom encouraged staff to be dedicated to their duty schedule and be hardworking, emphasising that under his watch, mentorship of younger academics and staff development would be pursued with renewed vigour. The new Dean further reminded his colleagues that attendance at Departmental, Faculty and Board Meetings would be taken very seriously, assuring them that the Faculty would step into a brighter future under his watch.

Two major highpoints of the handover ceremony were the appointment of some deserving staff into various Faculty Committees, while a Voice Vote resulted in the appointment of a new Associate Dean, Dr Peter Medee of the Department of Economics.

Nigeria has been identified as one of the countries with very high tourism potentials in Africa which should be harnessed to boost the national economy. Government has, therefore, been advised to invest massively in the sector to raise foreign exchange and create jobs. This was the position taken by Dr Judipat Obiora who delivered the 15th Faculty of Management Sciences Public Lecture on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at the Faculty of Management Sciences Lecture Hall.

Dr Obiora who is a lecturer in the Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism, appealed to government at all levels to invest massively in tourism to create jobs for the teeming army of youths who currently roam the streets. Delivering the lecture entitled: *Doing Something, Doing Nothing, Getting Something*, Dr Obiora observed that countries that harness or fail to harness their latent tourism potentials were bound to get something either in the form of sustained economic output or an underdeveloped economy. She submitted that getting something was a function of either doing something or doing nothing, pointing out that every activity or inactivity of man had the capacity to produce positive or negative results.

Dr Obiora listed employment opportunities, security, preservation and promotion of culture and traditions, as some of the benefits that would accrue from a fully harnessed tourism sector in Nigeria. She identified insecurity and poor infrastructural base, including erosion of cultural values, untapped tourism potentials and massive unemployment as some of the dire consequences of doing nothing or operating below capacity in the critical sector with such huge potentials.

Dr Obiora compared the parlous state of tourism in Nigeria to "a malnourished child begging for attention." She further identified poor government policy, capital investment by the relevant ministries and poor marketing as some of the problems currently militating against the critical tourism sector.

The Lecturer described "doing nothing" as operating below the country's installed capacity in the tourism industry. This situation, according to her, was marked by failure to make significant progress in the sector. Dr Obiora further described "getting something" as "achievement of an objective that receives public notice or failure to achieve a stated objective that still receives attention. Nigeria is doing nothing in the lucrative tourism sector because it is operating for less than capacity in its policy on tourism, capital investment into sustainable tourism development, social amenities, addressing security challenges, human capital development indices and engagement of professionals to man the business."

Dr Obiora decried the practice of burying tourism under the

15th FMS Lecture

Invest In Tourism To Boost Economy, Obiora Urges FG

By Letom Nnen

malnourished Ministry of Culture and Tourism without professionals at the helm of affairs. She appealed to government to create a Ministry of Tourism that should be manned by professionals with capacity to harness its full potentials for national development. The Lecturer also called on Management of the University to transform staff quarters and the campus environment into major tourism attractions that could generate revenue. She also charged the leadership of the Faculty of Management Sciences to lead by example by attracting tourists to the University through targeted activities.

Bracing to the lecture, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndaba Lale, who was represented by the Director of Quality Assurance and Quality Control, Professor Ikechukwu Agbagwa, commended the Dean, Professor Barisun Nwize, for sustaining the Faculty Public Lecture Series. "We thank the Dean and his colleagues for the good work they are doing in sustaining the Public Lecture Series in the Faculty. Each

time I attend public lectures in this Faculty, I learn many new things, which is what we benefit from a robust academic environment and we are grateful to Dr Obiora for her brilliant presentation. She did very well," he stated.

Welcoming the guests, Professor Nwize said that the Faculty Public Lecture Series has become an established academic tradition that has been embraced by staff and students. "As a Faculty, we decided to take our place in the forefront of academic activities in the University. Today was the turn of the Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism to perform and I knew from the outset that the Lecturer would do justice to the topic, and she did not disappoint us," the Dean stated.

In his contribution, a lecturer in the Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism, Dr Vekinni Bello expressed gratitude to the Management of the University for establishing the Department in the University. He praised the Faculty leadership for sustaining the Public Lecture Series. Highlight of the lecture was the donation of 20 trees by Dr Obiora to the University on behalf of her Department.



Dr Vekinni Bello (left), Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences, Prof Nwize, reading the citation on the Lecture. Inset: 15th Public Lecture, Dr Obiora



HIV "Cured" In Second London Patient

In the three and half decades since HIV was discovered, the pandemic has killed 35 million people and counting. Remarkable progress has been recorded since then. Scientists have long tried to duplicate the procedure that led to the first long-term remission 12 years ago. With the so-called London patient, they seem to have succeeded, reports Apoorva Mandavilli

For just the second time since the global epidemic began, a patient appears to have been "cured" of infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The news comes nearly 12 years to the day after the first patient was known to have been cured, a feat that researchers have long tried, and failed to duplicate. The surprise success now confirms that a cure for HIV infection is possible, if difficult, researchers said.

Both milestones resulted from bone-marrow transplants given to infected patients. But the transplants were intended to treat cancer in the patients, not HIV. Bone-marrow transplantation is unlikely to be a realistic treatment option in the near future. Powerful drugs are now available to control HIV infection, while the transplants are risky, with harsh side effects that can last for years.

But rearming the body with immune cells similarly modified to resist HIV might well succeed as a practical treatment, experts said. "This will inspire people that cure is not a dream," said Dr. Annemarie Wensing, a virologist at the University Medical Center Utrecht in the Netherlands. "It's reachable." Dr. Wensing is co-leader of IStem, a consortium of European scientists studying stem cell transplants to treat HIV infection. The consortium is supported by AMFAR, the American AIDS research organization. At the same conference in 2007, a German doctor described the first such cure in the "Berlin patient," later identified as Timothy Ray Brown, 52, who now lives in Palm Springs, California.

The transplants were from a donor with a mutation in a protein called CCR5, which rests on the surface of certain immune cells. HIV uses the protein to enter those cells but cannot latch on to the mutated version. Mr. Brown was given harsh immunosuppressive drugs of a kind that are no longer used, and suffered intense complications for



HIV resistant stem cell

months after the transplant. He was placed in an induced coma at one point and nearly died. "He was really beaten up by the whole procedure," said Dr. Steven Deeks, an AIDS expert at the University of California, San Francisco, who has treated Mr. Brown. "And so we've always wondered whether all that conditioning, a massive amount of destruction to his immune system, explained why Timothy was cured but so no one else."

The London patient has answered that question: A near-death experience is not required for the procedure to work. He had Hodgkin's lymphoma and received a bone-

marrow transplant from a donor with the CCR5 mutation in May 2016. He, too, received immunosuppressive drugs, but the treatment was much less intense, in line with current standards for transplant patients. He quit taking anti-HIV drugs in September 2017, making him the first patient since Mr. Brown known to remain virus-free for more than a year after stopping.

"I think this does change the game a little bit," said Dr. Ravindra Gupta, a virologist at University College London who presented the findings at the Seattle meeting. "Everybody believed after the Berlin patient that you needed to nearly die basically to cure HIV, but now maybe you don't." The transplanted immune cells, now resistant to HIV, seem to have fully replaced his vulnerable cells.

Most experts who know the details agree that the new case seems like a legitimate cure, but some are uncertain of its relevance for AIDS treatment overall. "I'm not sure what this tells us," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. "It was done with Timothy Ray Brown, and now here's another case—ok, so now what? Now where do we go with it?"

One possibility, said Dr. Deeks and others, is to develop gene-therapy approaches to knock out CCR5 on immune cells or their predecessor stem cells. Resistant to HIV infection, these modified cells should eventually clear the body of the virus. (CCR5 is the protein that He Jiankui, a scientist in China, claimed to have modified with gene editing in at least two children, in an attempt to make them resistant to HIV—an experiment that set off international condemnation.)

Several companies are pursuing gene therapies but have not yet been successful. The modification must target the right number of cells, in the right place—only the bone marrow, for example, and not the brain—and tweak only the genes directing production of CCR5. "There are a number of levels of precision that must be reached," said Dr. Mike McCune, a senior adviser on global health to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. "There are also concerns that you might do something untoward, and if so you might wish to have a kill switch."

Several teams are working on all of these obstacles, Dr. McCune said. Eventually, they may be able to develop a viral delivery system that, when injected into the body, seeks out all CCR5 receptors and deletes them, or even a donor stem cell that is resistant to HIV but could be given to any patient. "These are dreams, right? Things on the drawing table," Dr. McCune said. "These dreams are motivated by cases like this—it helps us to imagine what might be done in the future." One important caveat to any such approach is that the patient would still be vulnerable to a form of HIV called X4, which employs a different protein, CXCR4, to enter cells.

This is to notify our readers that we edited the original report on account of space constraint. Full report is available at: helluz@juliaforontojulia or helluz@foxmedia.com

We Are Ready To Run Quality Masters' Degree Programme ~ACIB/BSc Coordinator

By Mercy Adeniji

Newly appointed Coordinator of the Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers (ACIB/BSc.) programme in the Faculty of Management Sciences, Dr Samuel Ogunbiyi, has restated his resolve to ensure that the programme is packaged to compete favorably with similar programmes in other universities in the country.

Dr Ogunbiyi made the disclosure while exchanging views with a *UniPort* News Correspondent on Monday, March 4, 2019, stating that in line with the objectives of the ACIB/BSc. programme, plans have been concluded for

the commencement of the Master of Finance and Banking (MFB) degree in the 2018/2019 academic session. "On the completion of the programme, a graduate will earn the Master of Finance and Banking (MFB) degree from the University of Port Harcourt and will also be awarded the Associateship Certificate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN)," Dr Ogunbiyi disclosed.

The Coordinator recalled that he assumed office on January 24, 2019, in the heat of the prolonged strike action. "We could not commence academic activities immediately the strike was suspended because of the just-concluded General Elections. Our students had only two classes left to conclude the Semester before the strike action. Classes resumed on March 2, 2019 and we hope to commence examinations very soon. This would be followed up with thesis defense because the students were already on their research work before the strike commenced. We need to assist these students to complete their course work on time since most of them are workers who need the certificates for their career progression," Dr Ogunbiyi pointed out.

On the challenges of the programme, he explained: "It is no longer a monopoly for us in this area as was the case before now. As I speak, the Rivers State University now runs the same programme and is in the same market to compete for students. Consequently, patronage of the programme has dropped, but we are working very hard to attract more students with special incentives such as according them respect, giving them preferential treatment and ensuring they do not exceed their period of residency on the programme in this highly competitive environment," the Coordinator further explained.

Dr Ogunbiyi promised to continue from where his predecessor stopped, adding that despite the obvious challenges, he had enjoyed the experience so far. "There is a laid down procedure on how we do things in the Department of Finance and Banking which is why we hardly run into problems. I hope to continue from where my predecessor stopped by improving on what I met on ground," Dr Ogunbiyi promised.



Dr Ogunbiyi

Commonwealth Fellows Mark Day In UniPort

By Letom Nnen

Commonwealth Fellows in the University of Port Harcourt were not left out of the 70th Commonwealth Day Celebration held in Commonwealth countries on Monday, March 11, 2019 with the theme, *A Connected Commonwealth: Issues & Implications for Sustainable Development*. This year's celebration featured a *Health Walk/Talk* show that took the

celebrants from the Selwyn Lulu-Briggs Children's Park to the Convocation Arena, where the organisers held the 2019 Commonwealth Lecture.



Commonwealth Fellows, Drs Onyige, Nwaichi and Nduhuzue-Oragaku with some students marking the Day

Staff Club Seeks Support For Cozy Hour

By Letom Nnen

In an effort aimed at affording its members the opportunity to relax after a hard day's work and cushion the effects of stress on staff, the Executive of the University of Port Harcourt Senior Staff Club, has unveiled a new concept tagged: *Cozy Hour*. The equivalent of the conventional: "Thank God It's Friday," is aimed at adding verve to social life on campus.

Speaking with a *UniPort News* Correspondent in his office at the Faculty of Engineering, on Monday, February 25, 2019, SSC Director of Socials, Dr Dennis Eme, disclosed that the *Cozy Hour* was conceived by the present Executive to afford members of the Club the opportunity to drop their guards and unwind after a hard effort at work. "It is a happy hour for members of the Club. We felt that the University community should have a platform to relax frayed nerves by cooling down after work. The first edition which was sponsored by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale on March 1, 2019, was a big hit and we can only improve on our record in this regard," he said. Dr Eme disclosed that the *Cozy Hour* would hold as from 4:30pm every first Friday of the month, enjoining all members of the Club to feel free to be part of the memorable experience. "It is an exhilarating weekend show and we encourage all staff to come, relax and get their full worth of the money deducted from their salaries each month. We will, however, stand in for our members who are not inclined to be part of the social life offered by the Club. We do not have scientific backing for this claim, but we know that staff who patronise the Club are happier, more open-minded, social and live longer," he claimed.

On the format for *Cozy Hour*, Dr Eme revealed that subsequent editions of the recreational event would be hosted by the Deputy Vice Chancellors, Administration and Academic, Professors Regina Ogali and Hakeem Fawehinmi. The two DVs will sponsor the editions to be held on Fridays, April 5, and May 3, 2019, respectively, while Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Professor Franklin Chukwuma, is billed to host the edition slated for Friday, June 7, 2019, following which the other Principal officers, Deans, Directors and Heads of Department will also be given opportunity to host the event," he said. Dr Eme appealed to other members of the Club and other public spirited individuals and corporate organisations to key into the new idea by offering to host the *Cozy Hour*.

Dr Friday Nwafor

A Commonwealth Fellow, Dr Euchartha Nwaichi of the Department of Biochemistry in the Faculty of Science, delivered the anniversary lecture entitled: *STEM and Sustainable Development in a Connected Commonwealth*. She stressed the need for scholars in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to be connected to see another with a view of making sustainable development a watchword for the benefits of all stakeholders. Dr Nwaichi further encouraged the students to be serious with their academic work.

"Work hard and secure the First Class or Second Class Upper Division and qualify for a Commonwealth scholarship to study in the United Kingdom and other member nations," she advised the students.

Speaking on the theme, *Human Trafficking and Human Smuggling in Nigeria*, Dr Chloana Onyige of the Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Social Sciences, advised the students to be serious with their academic work, to qualify for Commonwealth scholarship. She warned them to avoid seeking illegal means of travelling out of the country to avoid being turned into victims of human

trafficking and smuggling. "When you are in slavery, you do not have your freedom. Some people are lured into slavery under the guise of poverty and inequality and they later find out that the grass is not greener on the other side," Dr Onyige admonished the students.

In her contribution, another Commonwealth Fellow, Dr Mercy Nduhuzue-Oragaku of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, charged the students to stay focused, share ideas and connect with friends all over the globe to further enrich their experiences. Highlight of the celebration was an interactive session with some students of the University who attended the event.

Another UniPort Lecturer, Numbere Wins IASR Award

By Otiakor Samuel

Lecturer in the Department of Animal and Environmental Biology, Dr Aroloye Numbere, was one of two academics from the University that won the World Championship awards for 2018. The other winner of the coveted award was Dr Abdulsalam Megida of the Department of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education.

Dr Numbere was the World Championship in Environmental Sciences (Precipitation). His winning article was entitled: "The Effect of Temperature and Precipitation on Global Mangrove Rhizophora Species Distribution" and was co-authored with his PhD Advisor, Gerardo R. Camilo. It was published in the *American Journal of Environmental Sciences* in 2017.

Just like Dr Megida who fended off stiff challenge from 5,975 other contestants from 80 countries nominated and screened to participate in the global contest, Dr Numbere emerged winner among 5,897 nominees from 86 countries.

A letter that conveyed the award dated Wednesday, October 31, 2018, and signed by Lucieta Martorano of the Directorate of Environmental Sciences of the International Agency for Standards and Ratings (IASR), congratulated Dr Numbere for winning the coveted award.

The letter stated that the International Agency for Standards and Ratings "organises international meritorious competition every year for Best Thesis and Dissertation Award, Doctoral Research Award and Milestone International Research Articles. It gives immense pleasure to congratulate you on your research article entitled: *Effect of Temperature and Precipitation on Global Mangrove Rhizophora Species Distribution* co-authored by Aroloye O. Numbere and Gerardo R. Camilo, and published in the *American Journal of Environmental Sciences*."

Reacting to the award, Dr Numbere, who was full of excitement, disclosed that the article which won him the award was his first publication. "I did not envisage a situation in which the article will win an award. This is



Dr Numbere

because it was my first publication and was rejected thrice in 2015 before the *American Journal of Environmental Sciences* accepted it in 2017," Dr Numbere told our Correspondent.

"I am a determined person and so when three high impact journals rejected the article with some comments, I chose to work on their observations rather than give up. I can recall that my PhD Advisor told me he was training me to be a global expert in mangroves," Dr Numbere said. He disclosed that the IASR has concluded plans to issue the *Fibre Hard Copy Certificate and Trophy of World Championship* to winners of the competition.

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research in the Centre. I am happy to inform you that contract for the construction of access roads to and around the Centre has been approved and awarded to reputable contractors. We want the relevant organs of the University to assist us in supervising the project since it would be difficult for our team to fly down from Abuja to carry out such a function to ensure quality project completion," Professor Mallam told the Vice Chancellor. He further commended the Management of the University for signing a Memorandum of Understanding

with the Commission for an exchange programme which had afforded its staff opportunity to gain more practical knowledge. Professor Mallam expressed optimism that some of the staff of the Commission would avail themselves of the exchange programme to improve their knowledge, adding that a roadmap for the Centre's operational structure has been developed to create interface with the Commission.

The Chairman also disclosed that a science and engineering laboratory and researchers' hostel that would attract laboratory workers from around the world were in the offing. He added that hydraulic and

engineering laboratories had already been commissioned at the Centre to spread the benefits of nuclear technology in Nigeria.

In his response, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndawa La expressed gratitude to the Commission for committing itself to the growth of the Centre in the University. Professor La also extolled the historic legacies left behind by the pioneer Director of the Centre, Professor Ayo Kaye, expressing the commitment of his administration to deepening the partnership aimed at furthering research in nuclear technology studies.

"I am specifically thank the Commission for all the completed projects, including the proposed ones in this University. I am also happy to note plans to build a researchers' hostel and proposed accreditation of the Centre's programmes by the National Universities Commission. On our part, we will continue to commit ourselves to the vision of the Centre to develop human capital in nuclear technology. The University cherishes the partnership and will further appreciate more goodwill from the Commission and other nuclear regulatory agencies," the Vice Chancellor told his guests.

Other officials of NAEC who accompanied Professor Mallam on the visit included Professor Matthew Agu, Mohammed Yusuf, Saidu Ahidjo and Domotimi Leghema.



V-C, Prof La (6th right) flanked by Prof Mallam (left), some Principal Officers, officials of NAEC and Senior Officers of the University

Tribute To An Intellectual Meteor

(GOODNEWS ONYEKACHUKWU UCHECHUKWU, 1993-2019)

Born in Rivers State of Nigeria on September 23, 1993, Goodnews Onyekachukwu Uchechukwu, an intellectual superstar, gained admission into the Department of English Studies in 2013. He was elected Core Representative of the 2013 Set, a position he held until he was elected as President of the University of Port Harcourt Chapter of the National Association of Students of English and Literary Studies (NAELSIS) in 2016, when he assumed the position of Students' Departmental President. An ardent Christian and polished character, he also served as Assistant Press and Academic Leader in Christ Ambassadors Students' Outreach (CASOR) in 2015. Goodnews was a committed student, sociable, personable, thoughtful, and above all, very humble, respectful and ethical in his conduct. Always considerate of the welfare of others, many were the times he lent moral, financial and academic support to fellow students without drawing attention to himself. Significantly, he excelled and graduated top of his class in the 2016/2017 Academic Session with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 4.58 on a scale of 5.00 points, which earned him the First Class Honourable rare feat in the Department of English Studies of this University.

A diamond in the rough, staff and students of English Studies wept with bated breath for the world to discover Goodnews' brilliance as the lecturer he had always aspired to be! But fate decreed a different destiny for him: he succumbed to leukemia and passed on to eternal glory on January 11, 2019.

Goodnews, had we the power, we would have asked you, in the words of Dylan Thomas, not to "go gentle into that good night, [for] old age should have raved and close of day..."

Alas...
Adieu, Goodnews Onyekachukwu Uchechukwu, our star; now, God's angel! Your memory will forever blaze in the Ken Saro-Wiwa English House, where you left bold footmarks. Like a meteoroid, your mortal clay may hit the earth in accelerated motion, but you will never disintegrate! You will always be the meteorite. May God continue to light your path. Adieu!

From your teacher,
Margaret Fafa Nutsupko,
Ph.D



Late Uchechukwu

Provost, Dean Charge Basic Medical Students On Hard Work

By Mercy Adeniji

Newly-admitted students into the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences in the College of Health Sciences for the 2018/2019 academic session have been advised to study hard if they hope to be successful in their studies.

Speaking during the orientation exercise organised by the leadership of the Faculty, Provost of the College of Health Sciences, Professor Christie Mato, congratulated the fresh students on being adjudged suitable to be admitted into the University. "This is the first time we are organising orientation for students in the three Faculties. We welcome and urge you to take everything you are told very seriously. You must be very serious with your studies by attending classes regularly and carrying out assignments. Let me remind you that the Faculty, and by extension, the College, has zero tolerance for indolence, examination malpractice, cultism, indecent dressing and other anti-social tendencies. Your parents and the society expects the best from you and you must not disappoint them," Professor Mato advised.

In his welcome address, Dean of the Faculty of Basic

different topics such as: *The Place of Library in the College* by Dr Millie Hurdall, *Registration, Attendance and Examination (MBBS, BDS Part I)* by Dr Chikwunso Paul, *Academic Advisory and Mentorship* by Professor Victor Dapper, *Registration, Attendance and Examination (MBBS, BDS Part II)*, presented by Dr Ken Wariso, *Proctorial Charges in the College* by the Faculty Finance Officer, Mr Samuel Ndikoko, while the presentation on *Overcoming the Challenges of Youth* was presented by Director of the Youth-Friendly Centre, Dr Rosemary Ogo.

The orientation exercise coincided with this year's *Brain Awareness Week* which seeks to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research. *Brain Awareness Week*, unites the efforts of partner organisations from around the world in a week-long celebration of the importance of the brain every year in mid-march.

Acting Head of Department of Human Anatomy, Dr Chinnia Orish, disclosed that "the *Brain Awareness Week* aims to enlighten people about the brain and diseases that could afflict such a vital organ of the body. This year, we



A cross-section of Basic Medical Science Students during the Orientation. Inset: Provost, College of Health Sciences, Prof Mato (2nd right) flanked by Dean of the Faculty, Prof Chumere, College Secretary, Mrs Joyce Tsumano (right) and other speakers

Medical Sciences, Professor Arthur Chumere, commended the new students for turning out en masse for the programme. "An orientation exercise affords us the opportunity to advise our students and guide them to be successful in their academic pursuits. We are not just here as your teachers; you can also take us into confidence as your parents and friends," Professor Chumere said. Some senior staff took turns to admonish the students on

invited secondary school students to teach them about the importance of caring for their brains." Highpoints of the event was an interactive session and presentation of certificates to three students from Olofin Premier College, University Demonstration Secondary School and Holy Priesthood International School, Port Harcourt, who participated in this year's *Brain Awareness Week* competition.

GUIDE POST

APPOINTMENT

Dr Tovo Orla-Makele, Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, granted *Renewal of Contract Appointment*, effective April 3, 2019 to April 2, 2020.

Dr Charles Mezie-Okoye, Centre for Conflict and Gender Studies, granted *Renewal of Contract Appointment as Lecturer I*, effective June 2, 2019 to June 1, 2020.

Professor Virginia Ejirofor, Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Science, granted *Renewal of Appointment as Adjunct Professor*, effective January 2, 2019 to January 1, 2020.

Professor Olorunfemi Eseyin, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences granted *Renewal of Appointment as Adjunct Professor*, effective January 2, 2019 to January 1, 2020.

STUDY LEAVE

Dr Chinwendum Uzodike, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Humanities, granted *Extension of Study Leave*, effective December 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019.

Mr Chijioko Obieke, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, granted a four-year *Study Leave with Pay* to enable him undertake a PhD degree Research programme at the School of Engineering, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom, effective April 1, 2019 to May 31, 2023.

Miss Chisom Akakuru, Department of Accounting, Faculty of Management Science, granted a one-year *Study Leave with Pay* to enable her pursue the M.Sc. degree in Accounting and Financial Management at the Lancaster University, United Kingdom, effective October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019.

Professor Walter Ihejirika, Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies, Faculty of Humanities, granted approval to participate in a three-month research Fellowship with the UNESCO Chair in Information Communication Technology (ICT), to develop and promote sustainable tourism in the World Heritage sites at the Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano Switzerland, effective February 1, 2019 to April 30, 2019.

HIGHER DEGREE

Dr Glory Ozuwa, Faculty of Law, successfully completed her Doctoral programme in Law from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Dr Michael Wogu, Department of Animal and Environmental Biology, Faculty of Science, successfully completed his Doctoral programme in Environmental Parasitology from the University of Port Harcourt, effective March 28, 2018.

Dr James Amaeghe, Department of Music, Faculty of Humanities, successfully completed his Doctoral programme in Environmental Parasitology from the University of Port Harcourt, effective March 28, 2018.

Dr Abayomi Omotoso, Department of Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, successfully completed his Doctoral programme in Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Chemistry, effective June 27, 2018.

Blue House Wins UDPS Sports Meet



Blue House celebrating its victory

By Mercy Adeniji

Following keenly contested events, *Blue House* emerged overall winners at the 25th Annual Inter-House Sports which held at the main bowl of the University Sports Complex, University Park on Thursday, March 7, 2019.

Declaring open the competition, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), Professor Hakeem Fawehinmi who stood in for the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, congratulated the leadership of the school for incorporating sporting activities into the curriculum. He expressed gratitude to the teachers and parents of the pupils for preparing and encouraging them to showcase their sporting prowess in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

"We are happy to note that the Annual Inter-House Sports fiesta has enabled our children to exhibit their talents in the various events. Sport is an important part of daily life and we are happy that this is part of the drive by the leadership of UDPS to provide holistic education to the pupils. It is a time-tested fact that sound minds can only exist in sound bodies. Apart from that, there are also important end-benefits to the health of those who engage in regular sporting activities," Professor Fawehinmi said.

In her remarks, Chairman of the UDPS Board of Governors, Professor Joyce Akaninwo, described sport as an important part of the education of pupils of UDPS. "UDPS is known for sporting excellence in and outside the University community. Our pupils have won prizes outside Port Harcourt and Nigeria. We want to tell our parents that your children are in a good school and in safe and competent hands. We are here to mould our children in character and learning that prepare them to continue their education on a sound foundational

knowledge," Professor Akaninwo assured the parents. In his opening remarks, Chairman of the occasion, Dr Olanipekun Ndiobo, commended the teachers for preparing the children to excel in sporting activities. "Sport is an integral part of the child's overall educational development, because a school system that has no place for physical exercise will not be successful. Sporting competitions such as this one enable children to exercise their bodies and minds. Some of the pupils competing for honours today may become potential gold medalists, politicians and great professionals in different fields of endeavour tomorrow," he said.

Also speaking, Headmaster of the School, Mr Simon Ewauche, described Inter-House Sport competition as an integral part of the overall educational system.

"Sports play significant roles in the life of young people. Many sportsmen and women have made name by bringing glory to the nation. Our children in UDPS have been groomed in sports and would one day become notable figures that would bring pride to the school," he said. Mr Ewauche urged sports enthusiasts to support the school in catching the children young to represent the country in future competitions.

At the end of the fiesta, *Blue House* came first with a total of 161 points; *Green House* took second position with 124 points, while *Yellow House* placed third with 116 points. *Pink, Purple and Red Houses* came fourth, fifth and sixth with 112, 86 and 81 points, respectively.

The sports meet afforded parents and teachers the opportunity to participate in activities such as UDPS staff, Board of Governors, Parent-Teacher Association, ex-pupils and invitation relay race. Other events at the sports meet included march past, track events, catching the train, filling the bottle by the kindergarten pupils amongst others.

Three To Receive PhDs At 4th EEI Graduation

Gulf of Guinea's first choice destination for the study of Petroleum and Energy Economics, Management and Policy, the famous Emerald Energy Institute (EEI), will hold its 4th Graduation Ceremony on Friday, March 22, 2019 at the Emmanuel Egbogah Auditorium, Institute of Petroleum Studies Park, University of Port Harcourt. Time is 10:00am.

A statement by the Director, Professor Wumi Iledare, disclosed that the Institute which was established through the generosity of late Dr Emmanuel Egbogah, will be graduating its first three doctorate degree candidates since its inception in 2008.

Iledare who doubles as the Chirota and Emmanuel Egbogah Distinguished Professor of Energy Economics further disclosed that "14 candidates would be conferred with the Master of Science degree of the Institute. By the end of this graduation, we would have successfully graduated sixty-five MSc and three doctorate degree holders who are already gainfully employed in the oil and gas industries." Professor Iledare invited stakeholders and the University community to grace the historic occasion and be seated at 9:30am.

Prof Iledare
EEI Director

43rd CHS Induction

New Doctors, Dental Surgeons Take Physicians' Pledge



A cross-section of the new Doctors and Dental Surgeons taking the Physicians' Pledge. Inset: BGS, Dr Obaei giving Valedictory Speech

By Otiok Samuel

A total of 32 newly qualified Medical Doctors and 21 Dental Surgeons trained at the College of Health Sciences, have been inducted into professional practice by the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN). The 43rd Induction Ceremony held on Thursday, March 7, 2018, at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium.

Speaking before he administered the Physicians' Pledge on the 53 Inductees, Registrar of the MDCN, Dr Tajudeen Samu, congratulated the College for maintaining quality in the training of doctors for the medical profession.

"In as much as we need more medical doctors in Nigeria, we cannot compromise quality because we train doctors not just for the country, but for the world. I am happy with the quality control in the College of Health Sciences of this University. As a Council, we are awaiting the passage of this year's budget to capture our proposal aimed at easing posting doctors for their housemanship. When fully

implemented, new doctors will have the privilege of choosing their own areas of posting themselves," the MDCN Registrar disclosed.

Dr Samu advised the new doctors against engaging in unethical practice, outlining punitive measures that would be levied against doctors who flout the Physicians' Pledge.

"You are not in this profession to amass wealth, just as you are also not going to be poor in professional practice. On the average, you will certainly be comfortable, but don't prioritise money over human life. The medical profession is a regulated profession meant to save lives. I am sure that within the years you have spent in the medical school, you must have come to appreciate the profession better," the Registrar admonished the Inductees.

Also speaking, the Medical Elder, Dr Claribel Abam, congratulated the new doctors, showering praises on the female doctors for their interest in medicine. "As you read every line of the Physicians' Pledge, let it sink into you as you go into professional practice. You should also internalise

what you have learnt and choose your area of specialisation based on your passion," the Medical Elder advised the young doctors.

In his welcome address, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, who commended the leaderships of MDCN and the College for the quality medical training which students undergo in the University, described the induction as a veritable platform for the celebration of academic excellence.

"I can guarantee on my honour that all the doctors who are seated in this auditorium today (March 7) have met the very stringent conditions prescribed by the Senate of the University of Port Harcourt for their graduation. I can easily attest to the fact that these doctors are sending to the society are of very high quality and that they will not only creditably discharge their mandates, but will surely bring honour and glory to their parent, also mother and nation. You can count on this University to produce high fliers," the Vice Chancellor stated.

Professor Lale further enjoined the new doctors to connect their professional skills to the emergent digital technology to facilitate accurate diagnosis of ailments. He promised that Management of the University would provide more conducive learning space in the new Circular building when commissioned this March, in addition to the completed Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences and Department of Anatomy buildings.

In her address, Provost of the College, Professor Christie Matis, commended the University Management, MDCN, the Nigerian Medical Association, parents, guardians and other critical stakeholders for their support to the College over the years.

"I feel highly elated to be presenting this group of newly qualified graduates to be inducted today. I started with the 37th Induction ceremony on 21st September, 2015; today, I will be presenting my last graduates for induction as 9th Provost of the College of Health Sciences, University of Port Harcourt," Professor Matis revealed, adding that a total of 545 Medical and Dental graduates have been inducted under her watch.

Goodwill messages were presented by the Rivers State Commissioner of Health, Professor Princewill Chike who was represented by Dr Golden Owhandaka, Chairman of the Rivers State Branch of the Nigerian Medical Association, Dr Obelora Adebisi, Chief Medical Director of the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Professor Henry Ughwona who was represented by the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Professor Princewill Stanley and 5th Vice Chairman, Emeritus Professor Nimi Ririgs.

Other major highlights of the ceremony were presentation of the Valedictory Address by the Best Graduating Student, Dr Ife Ugochinyere Obaei, and prizes to the Best Students in various subject specialisations.

We Are Set For 32nd Convocation ~Fawehinmi

By Otiok Samuel

The stage is now set for the 32nd Convocation Ceremony of the University for the combined 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 sets of graduates. The eagerly-anticipated event slated for Friday, March 29 and Saturday, March 30, will witness the award of certificates and prizes to First Degree graduates, and conferment of Higher Degrees on deserving candidates the following day.

A statement by the Chairman of the 32nd Convocation Committee and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), Professor Hakeem Fawehinmi, disclosed that activities marking the 32nd Convocation Ceremony will kick-off on Friday, March 22, with a *Junior Service* at the University Mosque, while the Christian faithful will gather at *Chapel of The Annunciation* (Catholic Chaplaincy) on Sunday, March 24, 2019 to pray for the success of the event.

Professor Fawehinmi further disclosed that the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, would hold a Media Briefing on Monday, March 25 at the Council Chambers, Senate Building, to intimate journalists on the state of the University and unfold the Convocation Programme of Activities. On Tuesday, March 26, the Best Graduating Student will perform the historic *Tree Planting* ceremony at 10:00am, to be followed by a drama performance titled: *Use Republic* written by Professor Henry Bell-Gam of the Department of Theatre and Film Studies. The Command Performance will hold at *The Crab* at 6:00pm.

The Chairman revealed that four activities are

scheduled to hold at different venues on campus on Wednesday, March 27. They include the Class Day Activities in the College of Health Sciences and various Faculties, as well as the School of Graduate Studies. There will also be Alumni Day activities scheduled for the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium at 3:00pm and the Vice Chancellor's Dinner with Graduates who attained First Class Honours and their counterparts who obtained Distinction from the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and College of Health Sciences. The Dinner is scheduled for the Vice Chancellor's Lodge, Delta Park at 6:00pm.

Professor Fawehinmi further stated that a Research Fair and Tour of Exhibition stands will hold at the Foyer of Donald Ekong Library Complex on the morning of Thursday, March 28, while the Convocation Lecture with the topic: *Higher Education as a Driver of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan of a Nation*, will be delivered by the Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Ogonnaaya Onu at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium at 2:00pm.

The Chairman said that the Post-Convocation Luncheon would hold at the Indoor Sports Arena (Gymnasium), University Park, immediately after the conferment of Higher Degrees on Saturday, March 30, 2019. He advised the graduates and their parents to be seated at 8:00am each day, warning food vendors and commercial photographers to ply their businesses only at designated locations to avoid embarrassment. Professor Fawehinmi wished all those participating in the 32nd Convocation Ceremony happy celebrations, even as he pleaded with visitors to park their vehicles at

only authorised locations, obey traffic rules and refrain from littering the campus with their wastes.



Prof Fawehinmi, Chairman 32nd Convocation Ctee