



## UniPort Marks World Theatre Day

*...Honours Gbadamosi, Udemba, Olu Jacobs*

The Department of Theatre and Film Studies joined its counterparts all over the globe to mark the 2014 World Theatre Day, penultimate Thursday. The event which began with a lecture at the New Theatre Arts Auditorium climaxed with a drama at THE CRAB, Delta Park, reports Humphrey Ogu.

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### Side Bar

The University of Port Harcourt inaugurated its Nigerian Institute of Management chapter last Friday. Details next week.  
-Editor



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**Matriculants Relieve Experience**

## Stakeholders Canvass More Opportunities For Indigenous Oil, Gas Operators

By Obinna Nwodim

**S**takeholders in the strategic Oil and Gas industry have advocated the need to enhance indigenous participation of operators and contractors in the industry, by tackling the challenges militating against local capacity utilization, growth and development.

This view was canvassed at an *Energy Policy Roundtable* organized by the Emerald Energy Institute at the Emmanuel Egboagha Auditorium, University of Port Harcourt, last

Tuesday.

Discussants, who spoke on different topics and drawn from various fields in the industry, agreed that it was necessary to help indigenous companies play an active role in the Oil and Gas industry to enable it contribute to the socio-economic development of the country and also transfer technical know-how to local personnel.

They also agreed that there was need to improve the Nigerian content in the Oil and Gas industry, with government actively playing the role

of encouraging local investors, to boost technological development of the country. They noted that the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) would enhance the activities of indigenous operators in the industry and yield the desired multiplier effects.

Earlier in his address, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajenka, who was represented by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Igho Joe, stressed the need to add value and apply technology to

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The celebration was also used to confer the award of Great Theatrical Fellow on Playwright, Dr Rasheed Ghadamsen, the Chairman and Chief Executive of CTL, Eng. Uzo Idemba and veteran actor, Olu Jacobs in recognition of their contributions to the growth of theatre and film in the country.

In her welcome address, Acting Head of Department, Dr Julie Umukoro, thanked the guests for responding

to the Department's invitation, promising to continue to propagate the cause theatre in Nigeria and beyond. Delivering the message for the World Theatre Day 2014, Dr Friday Nwadike of the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, quoted Brett Bailey as saying: "wherever there is human society, the irrepressible spirit of performance manifests; under trees in tiny villages, and on the high-tech stages in the global metropolis; in school halls and in

fields and temples; in shacks in urban plazas, community centres and inner-city basements, people are drawn together to commune in the ephemeral theatrical worlds that we create to express our human complexity, our diversity, our vulnerability, in living flesh, and breath, and voice."

The event featured a lecture presented by Professor Matthew Umukoro of the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ibadan, who highlighted the importance of the theatre in transmission of culture, fostering peace and development in society, calling on stakeholders in the entertainment industry to join hands in harnessing the growth potentials of the theatre in bettering the society. Award of Excellence was conferred on the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka and the Registrar, Mrs Matilda Nandini.

Receiving the Award, the Vice-Chancellor, who spoke through the Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Professor Ozo-mekuri Ndimele, expressed gratitude to the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, pledging Management's support towards repositioning the Department as a one-stop destination for producing of future film stars.

Other highlights of the celebration were presentation of N200,000 cheque as part of the prize endowed by the family of late Amata Braide for best graduating students in Dance and Chorography for a period of 10 years, a rally by students of the Department, stage presentation of Rasheed Ghadamsen's *Reheald My Redemeer*, recognition of donors and cultural performances.



Mr Adielia Onyedibia presenting Award to rep of V-C, Prof Ndumeli (right) while ag. HoD, Theatre & Film Studies, Dr Umukoro and a Lecturer in the Department, Ovunda Ihawuo looks on

## V-C Reaffirms Commitment To Agric Faculty Accreditation

Acknowledging the importance of securing accreditation for all programmes offered by the University, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka, has reaffirmed his commitment towards ensuring that the Faculty of Agriculture is also accredited, just as the Faculties of Dentistry, Pharmacy and Department of Nursing Science that secured accreditation from relevant regulatory agencies under his watch.

Professor Ajienka, who made the commitment when a high-powered delegation from the Faculty led by the Dean, Professor Ekaeme Wakoma, paid him a courtesy visit in the Committee Room, Senate Building, penultimate Tuesday, promised that his administration would do all that is within its reach to ensure the accreditation of the Faculty by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory agencies.

The Vice-Chancellor reiterated the strategic position

of the Faculty of Agriculture towards ensuring food security and adequate supply to the society, stressing the need to support the Faculty for institutional and academic growth. He urged experts in the Faculty to fashion out more collaborative endeavours aimed at reaching out to local farmers through extension services and practical demonstration of modern farming techniques to increase food production.

"We have a lot to share with the communities around the University and we need to make ourselves relevant to them. We need to impact more on the host communities through modern agriculture to strengthen town and gown relationship. I have been thinking of a way out of unemployment and I found out that engaging in agriculture is the key. The University will support the Faculty within the limit of available resources, but the Faculty should be proactive. Once we surmount the hurdle of accreditation, we will tackle other challenges," Professor Ajienka said.

He charged the Faculty to continue to work assiduously towards advancement of the agricultural sector, expressing willingness to fine-tune partnership arrangements for the Faculty. "When there are spending, the Faculty should let us know for us to give institutional support. You are in the right profession that can open a window of opportunity for the country to surmount the problem of unemployment and food insecurity," the Vice-Chancellor said, advising the Faculty to keep faith with its proposal, which he said was strong enough to

attract grants, even though it did not scale through the World Bank grant-making scheme.

Earlier, the Dean, Professor Wakoma, listed some challenges confronting the Faculty, top of which is the problem of accreditation. She requested the establishment of a Faculty Teaching and Research Farm at the University Park, equipment of existing laboratories in all the Departments and the Faculty General Laboratory, renovation and expansion of the Demonstration Farm and capacity building of academic and technical staff.

On the mission of the delegation, the Dean said: "Our visit is aimed at sharing with you and Management of the University; the Faculty's Strategic Plan for the next two years and solicit your support and that of the University Management in order to position ourselves as the leading Faculty of Agriculture in Nigeria. Our five-year Strategic Plan is to be the leading Faculty/College of Agriculture in Africa."

To achieve the vision, Professor Wakoma said the Faculty needed to secure accreditation of its programmes this year, get approval for the commencement of Postgraduate programmes and strengthen external partnerships and collaborations, appealing to Management to drive its partnership and collaborative efforts, while the Faculty undertakes the underground work.

Members of the delegation included: pioneer Dean of the Faculty, Prof Ndowsa Late, Professors Anthony Arianze, Ebere Ezronu, Alex Monsi, Samuel Wrekpe, Dr Annie Francis, Olufemi Adesope, Babatunde Nuga, Ibisiene Etela and Chief Farm Officer, Mr. Tubotamuno Lawson.



V-C, Prof Ajienka (5th left on back row), Dean, Agriculture, Prof Wakoma (1st left on front row), some Principal Officers and members of the delegation







A cross-section of the participants in a group photograph after the Roundtable

## Stakeholders Canvass Opportunities For Indigenous Oil, Gas Operators

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achieve local content in the Oil and Gas industry. He hoped that the outcome of the deliberations would be useful to policy makers and implementers in the critical Oil and Gas sector. In his welcome address, Director of the Institute, Professor Omowammi Iledare, said that the essence of the programme was to look at contemporary energy and petroleum issues with a view to addressing them. "We believe that if the nation is to grow, its intellectual capacity must grow faster", he stated adding that "The Roundtable intended to proffer solutions to

challenges we feel could make the nation grow faster."

The event with the theme: *Improving Access to Technology and Funding for Indigenous Operators and Contractors* had eminent scholars and industry practitioners discuss divers Oil and Gas-related issues. Panelists at the Roundtable included: Nigeria's foremost energy lawyer, Professor Yinka Omorogbe, who spoke on *Emerging Legal and Regulatory Framework to Support Indigenous Operators in the Petroleum and Power Sectors*; Managing Director, Energia Limited, Mr Felix Amleyesofor, *Practical Options for Project Development and Financing from the*

*Energia Partnership Paradigm*; Distinguished Professor of Petroleum Geology, Professor Michael Oti, *Defining a New Horizon for Indigenous EPC Companies in Nigeria*; Director of the Institute of Petroleum Studies (IPS) University of Port Harcourt, Professor Mike Onyekonwa, *Impact of the Nigerian Content Fund on Indigenous Operators and Contractors* and Director, Emerald Energy Institute for Energy Economics, Policy and Strategic Studies, Professor Omowammi Iledare, *Managing Oilfield Asset Acquisition and Investment Mix to Optimize Available Finance and Know-how*.

The Energy Roundtable is in line with the vision of the Institute to meet the needs of the petroleum and energy industries through commitment to excellence in training, applied research, continuing education and capacity building.

## Echoes From TETfund Town Hall Meeting

*By Obinna Nwadiem*

Two weeks ago, the Federal Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund), organized a one-day stakeholders' Town Hall Meeting for the various geo-political zones in the country. The aim was to interact with authorities and stakeholders of the various tertiary institutions to ascertain how funds drawn from TETfund have been utilized over the years. It is worthy of note that the Agency was established to play an interventionist role in funding high and special impact projects in the tertiary education system.

We recall that the establishment of TETfund was as a result of the persistent agitation by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) for infrastructural development in the various tertiary institutions in the country. The institutions were expected to initiate projects and draw their funding from the Agency. In this vein, the meeting was not out of place as it afforded officials of the Ministry, TETfund and other stakeholders the opportunity to ascertain how the special funds have been accessed and applied by the various institutions. It is a way of ensuring checks and balances in the system that reminded those involved in the implementation of the projects that they are accountable to the stakeholders for the proper management of the funds entrusted to their care.

It was a revealing meeting as the stakeholders identified management of tertiary institutions, which have been able to make the best of funding provided by TETfund. It was so important that the event was beamed live on national television for the world to see. The lesson that could be drawn from this novel approach to accountability is that government has invested massively on the infrastructural development of tertiary education through the TETfund.

For the University of Port Harcourt, the encomiums received from the Supervising Minister of Education, Chief Ezehuosa Nyame Nwike and the Chairman, Board of Trustees of TETfund, Dr Mba Babayemi, are heart-warming. This is not surprising, because there are strong pieces of evidence of TETfund-funded projects that adorn all parts of the University. From the new Faculty of Law building, the Department of

Animal and Environmental Biology, the Department of Music, the Central Office Complex, the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, to the Central Instruments Laboratory, amongst others, the story is that of giant strides in infrastructural development in the University. There is no doubt that when all these projects are finally completed, there will be evidence of massive infrastructural transformation in the University of Port Harcourt.

However, as the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joseph Ajienka, pointed out in both his welcome address and presentation, at the event, the issue of compensation for land which has resulted to encroachment by the host communities is a torn in the flesh of the authorities. It is near impossible to commence any infrastructural development on the Campus, without the host communities obstructing such projects, on the ground that they still hold ancestral title to them. This

is because the Federal Government is yet to compensate the people for the land acquired nearly four decades ago for the establishment of the University in 1975.

This has contributed in no small measure to hamper infrastructural development of the University and the Vice-Chancellor has seized every available opportunity to draw the attention of the Government to this intractable problem that would not go away. While we await the Federal Government's intervention on this worrisome issue, it is imperative to commend the authorities of the University for making the best of the bad situation at hand.

No wonder, the Supervising Minister of Education, humorously stated "that is why Professor Ajienka is the Vice-Chancellor. He is trained to handle difficult situations and solve problems." Despite all the vacillation on this important matter, the time has come for government to address the issue, before it gets out of hand.



Supervising Minister of Education, Chief Nwike (left) and V-C, Prof. Ajienka



## TETfund Town Hall Meeting

**U**niversity of Port Harcourt hosted the South-South Town Hall meeting of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) at Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium, University Park on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2014. Pictures below show highlights of the event as captured by our Cameraman, HEADMAN ALU.



V-C, Federal University, Oyo, Prof Bolade Aluko and the Minister, Chief Njemanne Wike in a handshake



A cross-section of students waiting to receive the Minister outside the auditorium



Vice-Chancellor, Prof Joseph Ajenka (left), welcoming the Supervising Minister of Education, Chief Njemanne Wike



Supervising Minister leading Chairman, TETFund Board, Dr Musa Babaya and other members of the entourage to the auditorium



Chief Njemanne Wike and others inspecting progress of works at the Faculty of Social Sciences Building



The Minister and his entourage at the Faculty of Law Building



A Contractor explaining a point to the Minister and his entourage at the Faculty of Law Building



A cross-section of members of the high-table



V-C, Prof Ajenka making a presentation on the state of the University



L-R: DVC (Admin), Prof Fidelis Ndubasi, Emeritus Prof Emmanuel Amanaka, Prof Mike Oh and DVC (Academic), Prof Igbo Joe



The delegation from Federal University Oyo, led by the V-C, Prof Aluko (arrowed) and Registrar, Mr David Sowunmi (in white)



Head, Department of Economics, Prof Okoye Onwuchukwu (right), Rector, Mr Uche Udeagwu and Prof Willy Okowa



A cross-section of participants at the Town Hall meeting