

## Kaigama succeeds Esele,

### Becomes 9th president of TUC

- Floors Babatunde Ogun of PENGASSAN
- Says no victor, no vanquished, *aluta continua!*
- Jonathan, Atiku Abubakar, others congratulate him

History was once again made in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city on Friday June 21, 2013 when 683 delegates of Nigerian workers who converged on the cite from Thursday June 20, 2013 for the 9<sup>th</sup> triennial national delegates conference of Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC) elected, Comrade Boboi Bala Kaigama, a senior civil servant, chartered town planner, an environmentalist and administrator, as the new President of the nation's senior staff labour federation, the TUC.

Kaigama who is also the National President of Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) emerged victorious at the polls after defeating Comrade Babatunde Ogun of Petroleum and natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN). He polled 356

votes to defeat Ogun's 314 votes at the Conference. The conference which was tension soaked saw affiliates, delegates and their candidates engage themselves at the conference hall in quiet, but high wire political bricksmanship in solemn moves to undo each other at the polls.

Until his election into one of the two highest labour Offices in the Country, Comrade Kaigama was the third deputy president-general of the Congress.

He holds the Bachelor of Science Degree, B.Sc, (Hons),

MBA (Project Management Technology); and is the Director, Urban and Town Planning, Taraba State, and has been a two-term State Chairman of ASCSN; two term State Council Chairman of TUC; a NEC member of TUC since 2005; a one time National Vice President of ASCSN, and currently the National President of ASCSN.

He was born in 1958, and hails from Kakara village in Sarduna Local Government Area of Taraba State. He attended Kakara Primary School, Government

Secondary School, Gembu; College of Remedial Studies, Yola; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; and Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria.

From these schools he attended between 1970 and 2004, he obtained the First School Leaving Certificate; General Certificate of Education, O/Level; B.Sc (Hons) Urban and Regional Planning and Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degree (Project Management Technology). He also attended several

management and professional courses as well as trade union trainings within and outside Nigeria.

His work experience began in 1982 with Nigerian Beverages Production Company Limited, Kakara. He had his National Youth Service (NYSC) programme in 1990 at Irepodun, Kwara State. He joined Gongola State Urban Planning and Development Authority in September 1990 and I was promoted to Town Planning Officer 1, and was posted to Mubi Zonal Town Planning Office as a

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## Government committed to Job creation, Labour Minister tells Nigerians

- Moves to strengthen implementation machinery of CSWYE

The Honourable Minister of Labour and Productivity, Chief Emeka Wogu CON, has assured Nigerian workers that the administration of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan GCFR, is committed to employment creation and job retention.

A statement from the Ministry signed by the Assistant Director (Press), Samuel Olowookere, indicated that Chief Wogu gave this assurance recently in Abuja, while receiving on courtesy visit the Public Service International (PSI) team in



• Chief Emeka Wogu, Labour Minister

Nigeria, led by its Secretary-General, Rosi Pavanalli.

In his words "since the

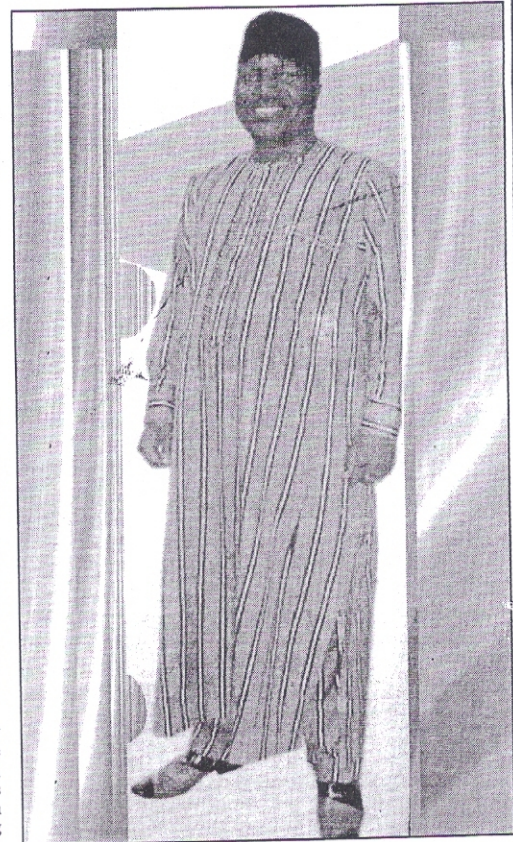
inception of the administration of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan GCFR, we have not witnessed any job lost. I want to re-assure you that the present administration is more concerned about employment creation and job retention".

Speaking further, the Minister stated that progress is being made in resolving the industrial action declared by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). While appreciating the maturity of Trade Unions in handling labour crisis in Nigeria, Chief Wogu stressed that industrial

impasse in Nigeria are not allowed to assume violent dimension usually witnessed in some other parts of the world.

"This is what we do in Nigeria, Government and labour unions dialogue to resolve crisis, we have the political will to ensure co-operation under the Transformation Agenda of the present administration, and we believe that this is a lesson for other nations to learn from us", the Minister stated.

In her remarks, the Secretary General of Public Service International, Rosi Pavanalli, commended the Minister for his role at facilitating negotiation and the possibility of reaching collective agreements in



• Boboi Bala Kaigama, New President of TUC

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## The Bureaucrats tackle FG, Ogun State on appointment of perm secs

- Demand removal of those appointed from outside Public Service

The leadership of Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN), otherwise called the Bureaucrats in trade union circles, has commenced a battle of appropriateness with the Federal and Ogun State

governments on the planned attempts by the State and on-going activities of the Federal Civil Service Commission in the appointment of permanent secretaries into the Federal and Ogun State civil services from outside the public service.

In its letter dated June 28, 2013 with reference number ASCSN/OGUN/YOL. 1/132 signed by Secretary-General of the Association, Comrade Alade Lawal, the Union frowned at how the state government had allowed itself be misled into anti-civil servants policy of searching for permanent secretary candidates from outside the State Civil Service.

The nine (9) paragraphs letter informed Governor Ibikunle Amosun that reports reaching the Bureaucrats House in Lagos "indicates that Your Excellency is being nudged by ill-motivated advisers to recruit Permanent Secretaries from outside the core Civil Service" adding that, "This plan if allowed to materialize will create disaffection among

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## Accede to ASUU's demands, labour urges FG

The trade Unions arm of organized labour in the country has thrown its weight behind the leadership and members of Academic staff union of Universities (ASUU) on the on-going strike to compel the Federal Government to implement the agreement she had in 2009 with the Union.

In a separate statement signed by Comrades Abdulwaheed Omar, President of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) on the matter, the Congress called for Government's understanding and cooperation with the University lecturers in the interest of the nation's education and benefit of the students.

The NLC expressed deep concerns about the on-going

nation-wide strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). According to NLC, this strike action, is completely avoidable, but made inevitable by Federal government's insensitivity, and a penchant for observing agreements in breach".

The issues articulated by ASUU, the NLC said, "are not self-serving, but tenable, valid and germane to the sustenance of a qualitatively viable education system, the hope of any serious nation".

"If a nutshell, these issues include, the lingering crisis at the Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUST), the continued

violation of the rights of the re-engaged 49 academics at the University of Ilorin, the non-release of the White Paper on Special Visitation to the University of Abuja, the parlous state of the economy and government's disregard for its agreements", the Congress later said, adding that "The violations at RSUST and Unilorin hurt academic ethics and culture as well as infringe on human rights of specific parties and therefore not acceptable".

The release added that "Universities are citadels of learning with rights, privileges and obligations and not extensions of political parties or

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### Corrigendum:

Certain details were inadvertently left off the recent article 'May Day Celebrations: Towards a Viable Counter-Movement in Nigeria,' which appeared in our June 20, 2013 edition. The paper was jointly authored by Mutiqa Yushadi (Nigeria Labour Congress, Abuja, a graduate of the Global Labour University, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; and Stan Byrne (National Labour and Economic Development Institute / NALEDI, South Africa); Warren McGregor (activist, part-time lecturer and coordinator, Empowerment & Capacity Building Network for Global Trade Unionists & Labour Activists (ENGAGE) programme, University of the Witwatersrand); Lucien van der Walt (lecturer, Rhodes University, South Africa). Also missing were two references cited in the text: Hashim, Y. (2001), 'Co-option, Control and Resistance: the State and the Nigeria Labour Congress', in Beckman, B. & Sachikonye, M. (eds), *Labour Regimes and Liberalization: the Restructuring of State-society Relations in Africa*, Harard University of Zimbabwe Publications, and Van der Walt, L. & Schmidt, M. (2009) *Black Flame: the Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism*, San Francisco, Edinburgh: AK Press.

The omission is regretted—Editor



**May Day Celebration:**

**Towards a Viable Counter-Movement in Nigeria**

The origin of the May-Day can be traced to the historic fight for decent working hours that culminated in the prosecution of and execution of four trade unionists in Chicago, the United State in November 1887; this decisive moment in the struggle for a just society through militant trade unionism was the origin of May Day. In Nigeria, May Day was first declared by the People's Redemption Party (PRP) led government of late Abubakar Rimi of Kano State in 1980.

Therefore this article draws attention to the anarchist ethos of first, building a people's counter culture to unravel the dominant class culture in the society and, second building a counter-power; that draws its energy from the trade unions, peasantry, the unemployed and the oppressed to change the world.

This article is concerned with reflecting on the May-Day celebration as a platform to harness the power of the working class into counter-movement for a better society across the world; ordinarily people are faced by ecological problems, the financial crisis, massive unemployment, low wages, and all sorts of oppression. The solution does not seem to lie in more state regulation of the economy, since politicians have often been part of the problem, not the solution.

To understand this, we must look more closely at what the 'Chicago Martyrs' stood for-as well as the role and potential of Nigerian trade unions as a means to change society.

**Anarchism, Chicago and May Day**

What did the "Chicago Martyrs" stand for? This is often forgotten. They were part of the 'anarchist' movement. This term is often deliberately misunderstood, but the truth is that the anarchist simply stood for society being run from the bottom-up by the ordinary workers and farmers-and not by the capitalist and politicians. What they want is that, in place of the masses being ruled and exploited from above, society and workplaces should be run through people's councils and assemblies, based on participatory democracy and self-management.

Anarchism was a global mass movement from the 1870s, including in the United States: its stress on struggle from below for radically democratic socialist society appealed to the oppressed in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas.

May Day was adopted as an international day of remembrance for the "Chicago martyrs" and their struggle by the international working class.

Workers around the world were shocked by the brutal execution of the unionist, and wanted to show their solidarity with the international fight for better condition-and Infact for the anarchist tradition, May Day was to be used as veritable tool of organising the working class. Rebuilding, anarchist and socialist formed the Labour and Socialist international in 1889. The proclaimed May Day as workers Day, a global general strike to commemorate the Haymarket martyrs, fight for 8-hours, and build global workers unity.

**Taking trade unionism forward:**

Noting the radical roots and aims of May Day, it is important to move beyond the as-usual May-Day pattern in Nigeria and elsewhere, of speeches, symposium and dinners; much needs to be done to make the trade union movement relevant to the larger segment of the society, much needs to be done to push for real improvement in the conditions of the masses. What is needed is to galvanise the masses around a positive programme of education and organisation, for social and economic justice and equality, and for real grassroots democracy. The trade unions are central to this.

The trade unions have the responsibility that goes far beyond simple bread and butter issues. They have strategic importance in the production process in Nigeria and elsewhere, and this makes them a very powerful force. They also provide a space to mobilise and educate people. And they can provide allies for other segments of the masses, and provide powerful muscles for all progressive struggles. It is said in the NLC motto that labour creates wealth, and this is true. Everything created by human hands and minds is labour, and the labour is provided by the working class, the poor, the peasantry, and the masses. But the pertinent questions remains, how can this strategic

**Muttaqa Yushau Abdulra'uf**  
**myushau@gmail.com**

power be used to empower all the masses who toil to make the wealth? And how can this wealth be used to empower all the masses who toil to make the wealth? And how can this wealth be used to all benefit the masses of society, who toil to create that wealth, rather than elite economic and political minorities enjoying the lions' share without doing the lions

dynamic new leadership. The new leadership developed a programme of rebuilding the union movement and of making it relevant to the wider segment of society, beyond simply the employed unionised workers.

The formation of Labour and Civil Society Coalition (LASCO) in 2004 was one outcome, a means to rebuild the labour movement both on the shop floor and in alliance with the masses across society. LASCO focused on fighting against neo-liberal state policies such as; deregulation and privatisation; it also fought against-corruption, such as elite driven scams in the pension industry as well as robust campaign for electoral reform.

Neo-liberalism at the crossroad- what next?

But what alternative is being proposed to neo-liberalism? With the collapse of the Keynesian welfare states in Western Europe, the eclipse of the Central Planning Model in Easter Europe, and Russia, and the decline of Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI), in postcolonial countries, neo-liberalism is often presented as the only feasible model of economic organisation: the mantra of the Late Margaret Thatcher's "There is no Alternative" or Francis Fukuyama's claim that this is "the end of history"

But neoliberalism is not a solution for the masses. For the workers it has redefined labour-capital relationship on terms that force labour into retreat through flexible labour markets characterised by outsourcing, labour-subcontracting and labour brokerage, and downsizing. This has weakened the organisational power of the working class, and promotes the proliferation of vulnerable employment in the informal sectors. Meanwhile the commodification of welfare, the removal of subsidies and sky-rocketing prices has hit hard against the un-employed, the peasants, the students and others.

These challenges confront the NLC and the Nigeria labour movement with the need to revise its organising strategy, so as to build a counter-movement that could replace the existing rentier and predatory state system, with a participatory democracy that is from the bottom-up, and based on principles of equality and social justice as envisioned by the anarchists.

**Conclusion:**

**Building working class Struggle for something better**

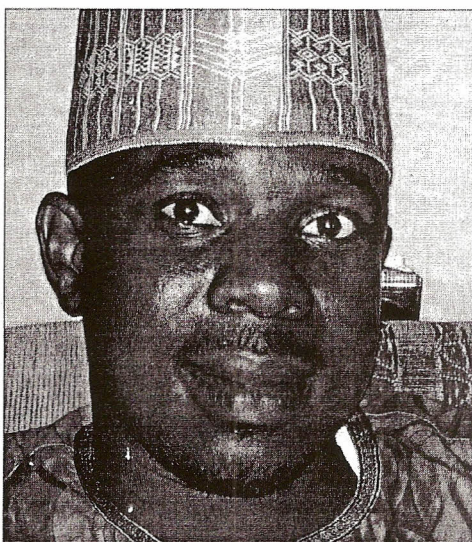
The organisational power and strategic location of Nigerian trade union movement representing over five million workers organised both in the private and state sectors should be the point of departure for building a counter-movement among the broader Nigerian working class and allied to the peasantry and other poor sectors.

The strength of the Nigerian working class both in the white collar and blue collar jobs should be translated into a viable political and social movement, with a clear agenda for change- a movement that can provide alternative to the current state system that is ruinous to the society. To struggle to fix the current state system would continue to be an exercise in futility even the best politicians are powerless to change the state. We should dare not tinker with reform that fails! Rather, we need systemic change that can guarantee equality, fraternity, self-management and socialisation of the common wealth guided by a bottom -up approach to decision making. We need a labour movement guided by the following dictum:

A multicultural and international movement with a profound feminist impulse, a movement with an important place in union, worker, and rural struggles, prizing reason over superstition, justice over hierarchy, self-management over state power, international solidarity over nationalism, a universal human community over parochialism and separatism-anarchism and syndicalism is this and much more. (Van der Walt & Schmidt, 2008:10)

This is my appeal, and that is my message as we celebrate this May Day, on the eve of a country in which the storm clouds gather over humanity-but in which the hope of a better future can break through, if we organised. So May Day began as an example of globalisation-from below-. And it continues to be a rallying point for workers everywhere, facing social and economic injustices 120 years on. Let us rally to it.

Muttaqa Yusha'u works for the Nigeria Labour Congress, Labour House, Abuja. e-mail: myushau@gmail.com



● Comrd Muttaqa Yushau Abdulra'uf

'work? The only way is to build counterculture and counter power, with the anarchist ethos; and this building can start from the strong foundations laid by many years of union struggles.

**Brief history of militant trade unionism in Nigeria:**

It is clear that trade unionism in Nigeria has a proud history of fighting for justice and progress. The ideological standpoint of trade unionism has been leftist since inception, going back into the 1930s. Trade unionism was formally recognised by the British colonial authorities in 1938 with the union ordinance, but recognition arose from struggles.

The colonial economy based on the extraction of raw materials by a cheap labour force formed the basis of on-going agitations, notably the strike over the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) that followed the global depression in 1930, and the callous and unforgivable massacre of miners at the Enugu colliery in 1949.

During the independence struggle trade unions in Nigeria also played a key role. They were, though divided into conservatives exemplified by the trade union Congress of Nigeria (TUCN), the United Labour Congress (ULC) and the Nigeria Workers Council (NWC) affiliated to (ICFTU), and the radicals exemplified by the Trade Union Congress, TUC and Nigeria Trade Union Congress (NTUC), which were socialist in orientation and affiliated to WFTU.

It was only in 1978 when NLC was formed as the sole central labour organisation with a check off system. Infact, the NLC was the creation of a military government which wanted to create a form of corporatism to promote labour quiescence. But like the British authorities, the military miscalculated: workers did not become quite due to government action.

This plan was a failure, for the NLC never shield from challenging the Nigerian state and the Nigerian elite. It was especially notable in the wake of neo-liberalism exemplified by the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme, then the NLC mobilised, and in alliance with the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) issued documents such as "Nigeria Not for Sale" and the "Student Charter of Demand"

The NLC was proscribed from 1990-1998 by the Military junta. But with the return of the civilian administration with the 1999 fourth republic, the NLC revival was rapid culminating in a delegate-based conference that elected a