

Agenda  
The nation  
Business

## The nation

### JONATHAN VOWS TO SACK APPOINTEES OVER 2015 CAMPAIGN

#### Warns against candidates' imposition

##### PDP convention holds March 24

IT is an issue President Goodluck Jonathan could no longer gloss over. Three years to the end of his tenure, his appointees, who are eyeing elective offices at both the federal and state levels, are into open and secret meetings as well as campaigning for such offices. Their actions are believed to have slowed down the pace of governance and the targets set by the President under his Transformation Agenda, seemingly becoming elusive. And yesterday in Abuja, the President warned that public office holders who are overheating or distracting his administration through their scheming for elective positions in 2015 would be fired. Jonathan said he would not hesitate to remove such appointees if his admonition was ignored or treated with levity. He also warned leaders of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) against the imposition of candidates on the members as the party prepares for its congresses and national convention. The President, who spoke at the 58th meeting of the PDP National Executive Committee (NEC) in Abuja yesterday, told public servants not to give the impression that everything was about elections. He asserted that appointees, who performed well in office, could always get the nod of the electorate. He said: "Let me also plead with those who are interested in the general elections in 2015. I have noticed that some people have just started some meetings. It is too early to hold such meetings. We can see it in the electoral laws and the nation's constitution. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) normally declares it (race) open. The idea is that people, who were elected into the offices, as governors and President, should be given time to work. "In a situation whereby a governor has not even stayed for a year, the President has also not stayed for one year and you start harassing people for 2015 is another way of saying everything is about election.

"There must be time to work. At the federal level if you are holding a political office and I notice that you are involved in meetings for 2015 elections, I will ask you to leave and concentrate on your meetings because that is too early. Government must not be distracted. Nigerians are interested in what we put on ground for them not how many elections we conduct and win," he said. On the PDP congresses and the national convention re-scheduled for next month, the President warned the party leaders against the imposition of candidates at all levels. He also charged them to allow the choice of the people to prevail. According to the President, whatever happens in the transition process of the PDP next month would determine the shape of the 2015 elections. "Let us begin to move from the culture of imposition because if we elect those who will lead us well, we are sure that the primaries or general elections in 2015 will also be democratic and of course, the general elections will be free and fair. And as a party, we've been able to develop that culture. The presidential election is the number one election in the country and every party will want to produce the president because of the status that goes with the ruling party," he noted. Jonathan also tasked members on unity noting that if the PDP performed well, Nigerians would continue to vote for its members. "I plead that the unity of the party and the cooperation of all of us is paramount and we should not fight one another because it will not translate to the dividends of democracy. For PDP to be regarded as a party that has succeeded that means that the governors will perform, the President and the states will perform. What Nigerians want are good roads, health facilities, power and so on, not people wearing boxing gloves and doing shadow boxing in different forms," he stated. **(From The Guardian)**

### COMMISSION SCREENS 18 AIGS TODAY

#### •Biu trial report ready

The Police Service Commission (PSC) will today screen 18 Assistant Inspectors-General of Police among whom six will be appointed as Deputy Inspectors-General of Police. Besides, the commission has received the report of the Police Disciplinary Committee on Commissioner of Police Zakari Biu and five others who were tried in connection with the escape of Boko Haram suspect Kabiru Sokoto. Sokoto has since been rearrested. Biu and others will know their fate tomorrow when a full session of the commission sits. The Appointment and Promotion Sub-committee will meet in Abuja today to select new DIGs for the Police. The AIGs to be screened by the Police Service Commission and their retirement dates are: Suleiman D. Fakai (1/1/2019); Johnson Uzu-Egbonam (30/12/12); Mohammed H. Zarewa (15/3/2015); Ibrahim Paiko Machi (1/3/2012); Abubakar Mohammed; Ibrahim Mohammed (1/3/2012); Christopher Ola (16/7/2015); Saidu Daya (5/2/2013); Bukar Maina (5/5/2013); Danlami Yar'Adua (5/6/2013); Atiku Yusuf (8/12/2017); Mohammed Abass (1/12/ 2016); Aloysius Okorie (14/2/2012); Shehu Babalola (8/7/ 2015); Ephraim Amakulor (17/5/2012); Madueke Dax (10/5/2014); Mu'azu Idris (20/8/2013); and Charles A. Cole (12/5/2014). A source in the commission, who spoke in confidence, said merit, past service records, level of education and geopolitical consideration will determine the six that will be selected.

The source said: "The choice of new DIGs will be based on the existing mandate given to the new IGP to clean the system and fight crime to a standstill. "It is not going to be a tea party; the era of automatic appointment based on service age is gone. We want results; we need a proactive police and we will select those who can meet these targets. "Although we are aware that the appointments should reflect the six geopolitical zones, we will not compromise merit." Responding to a question, the source added: "The report of the appointment committee will also be presented to the full session of the PSC tomorrow. "These AIGs do not need to appear physically before the commission for screening. We will only go through their files and achievements right from their first day of recruitment. Those with bad records may lose out. The source added: "I think those due for retirement in the next few months may not be considered for appointment as DIGs." The Commission has received the report of the Force Disciplinary Committee on the trial of Biu and five others. A source said: "We have received the report; that is why we are meeting on Wednesday. We will make a pronouncement after our session. "It is either they are guilty or not. Where they are guilty, we will take appropriate disciplinary measures." Section 30 of Part 1 of the Third Schedule to the 1999 Constitution says: "The Police Service Commission shall have power to (a) appoint persons to offices (other than the Office of the Inspector-General of Police) in the Nigeria Police Force; and (b) dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding any office referred to in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph."**(From The Nation)**

### REPORT FAULTS NIGERIA ON MIGRATION DATA MANAGEMENT

A SERIES of institutional needs assessment for migration management agencies in Nigeria has picked hole in Nigeria's ability to manage migration data. The survey, which was carried out in the framework of the European Union funded project was carried out by consultants of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and focused largely in three thematic areas of migration data and policy, labour migration and Diaspora mobilisation and irregular migration. Actual implementation of the project, valued at 20 million Euros (N4 billion) is expected in April. The overall objective of the project, according to officials of the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and those of the International Organisation for Migration, is to enhance the capacity of the government of Nigeria to

manage migration in order to maximise its development potential. The project is expected to strengthen the capacity of key institutions involved in migration management, to improve the overall governance of the sector in terms of policy coherence and the use of evidenced-based instruments. Head of Section at the European Delegation to Nigeria, Alan Munday stressed that the improvement of migration management was at the heart of the project. He, said at a validation seminar of the inception of the project in Abuja recently, "the project addresses capacity issues linked to regular migration such as in the fields of legislation and policy, data management, circular and labour migration, as well as migration and development related issues, Diaspora mobilisation and remittances in particular. "Under another component, the project also addresses irregular migration aspects, including support to law enforcement, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

"The EU is a committed actor in the improvement of the migration management capacities worldwide. Locally, the project is responding to challenges held in the Nigeria-EU dialogue on migration and meeting held in January 2012. These dialogues provide a platform to exchange information and to identify practical measures of cooperation in order to strengthen relations between Nigeria and the EU on migration related matters. "It shows, however, that we had agreed on an important area for co-operation at the time of programming our current cooperation package with Nigeria three or four years ago, and which remains critical today." Speaking, the Secretary to the National Planning Commission, Fidelis Ugbo, stressed that the commission collaborated with the EU on the project. In a presentation at the workshop, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Anyim Pius Anyim, stressed that government was making efforts to manage migration issues through capacity building, advisory services and technical assistance on migration matters, including health and information, assisted voluntary returns and counter trafficking. He said, "Strong collaborations have also been established with national and migration stakeholders in order to enhance border management, fight trafficking in persons, and reduce irregular migration and mainstream migration in the country's development agenda." **(From The Guardian)**

### **FG TO IMPLEMENT WHITE PAPER ON ENGINEERING CONTROL**

THE Federal Government has concluded plans to implement its white paper on Strategic Plans for Engineering Development and Control in the country. Minister of Works Mike Onolemenmen who disclosed this while declaring open international workshop on maintenance of infrastructure yesterday in Abuja, explained that the white paper report of the presidential panel on engineering development and control has to do with the issue of expatriate quota in engaging engineering professionals from outside Nigeria, particularly as the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan seeks to generate employment for our teeming youths across the nation. He noted that the white paper, when implemented, would ensure that where there are indigenous capacities in any engineering sector, there would be no need to employ foreigners. "I am going to ensure that the white paper is implemented. In fact, for me, it is a commitment that I have made; it is a commitment that I will see through," the minister said. Onolemenmen who described as timely the theme of the workshop "Maintenance of infrastructure" observed that there has been passive attention to maintenance of infrastructure in the country in the past, adding that the workshop would mark a turning point in the sustainable maintenance of infrastructure in the country. **(From The Guardian)**

### **FASHOLA BANS RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN STATE SECRETARIAT**

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babatunde Fashola (SAN), yesterday banned all religious activities within the premises of the State Secretariat in Alausa on the heel of sectarian attacks on religious bodies in the country. Fashola gave the order in a circular with reference number EO/BRF/003/ 2012, which he personally signed and sent to all Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The order was titled: 'Improvement on security measures within and around the Lagos State Secretariat' dated February 15. The order would therefore bring an end to the daily conduct of prayers by Muslim faithful behind the Ministry of Justice and behind the Ministry of Tourism and Intergovernmental Relations. In the circular, Fashola said all Muslim and Christian faithful should utilise the Central Mosque and Chapel of Christ the Light respectively to conduct their religious affairs. He also ordered that only vehicles bearing the official state government sticker, produced by the Public Service Office would henceforth be allowed to park within the secretariat. He frowned at the lack of adequate security measures in place to check movement in and out of the secretariat, which he said, had resulted in a high level of human and vehicular traffic within and around the secretariat. He also ordered the Ministry of Transportation to immediately clear the public car park hitherto used as a dumping ground for impounded vehicles of traffic offenders by Lagos State Transport Management Agency (LASTMA) officials within seven days of the order and look for an alternative location which would not pose security risk to the state. **(From ThisDay)**

### **BOKO HARAM: QAQA DISCLOSES MORE OPERATIONAL CLUES**

The detained spokesman of Boko Haram, Abu Qaqa, Monday gave more insight into the operations and strategies of the group as he opened up on how they procured vehicles used for suicide bombing. THISDAY source from the State Security Service (SSS) interrogation room revealed that most of the cars used for operation were usually snatched from owners. "We snatch those vehicles at gun point. We use the less exotic ones for suicide bombings and just load vehicles with bombs, drive them near our target, park and get out of it and leave them to explode thereafter," he said. According to him, exotic cars were retained by the group's leader, Abu Shekau, who always said he would sell them and put the money for the operation, which he usually fails to do. Qaqa said the handling of the cars had helped to create disharmony in the group because of the partial distribution mostly in favour of the Kanuris. "The leadership (Shekau) takes the expensive (exotic) ones always saying that he would arrange for them to be sold and the proceeds put into the Jihad. This is never done, anyway. Most of those vehicles end up with him and the Kanuri members of our sect. They use and pose in them to deceive security agents at check point. The distribution (utilisation) of these stolen vehicles on 'man-know-man', 'man-know-tribesman' became another source of anger and acrimony but you have to bear it or you die. Once you are in, you are in. If you attempt to leave, you are seen as a traitor who must die," he added. "Before I was arrested some of us had already shown signs of tiredness," Qaqa confessed to his interrogators, while also acknowledging division in the group along ethnic lines as non-Kanuris were worried at the arrest of only their members. He also explained the larger than life power of their leader, Imam Shekau, as he ordered the execution of any member who tried to back out. "Most of us were tired of fighting but we couldn't come out to say so because of fear of reprisal from Shekau on dissenting members. Several of our members that denounced the violent struggle were slaughtered in front of their wives and children. Seven were killed recently," he said.

THISDAY dependable intelligence source said that Qaqa disclosed that the non-Kanuris(Hausa, Fulani and others), in the sect were worried at the trend of arrest of our members.. The worrying aspect was that most of our key members arrested were non-Kanuris which raised fears that there's sectional betrayal of members." Abu Qaqa, 42, has variously used the names: Mohammed Shauibu, Mohammed Bello, Abu Tiamiya, and Abdulrahman Abdullahi. When he was set free after the Bauchi jail break by some of his members he adopted Abu Dardaa and ended up with Abu Qaqa until his arrest. Qaqa was trailed to his hideout by a combined team of SSS and soldiers using the General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) used to track his telephone calls. But the sect insisted that: "The person that was arrested was Abu Dardaa and not Abu-Qaqa. I am Abul Qaqa, the spokesman for the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnati Lidda'awati Wal Jihad. Abu Darda is the head of the Lagina (Dept) of public enlightenment and not the spokesman." He claimed that arrested sect leader was detailed to discuss the government proposal to discuss with them arguing that his eventual arrest has demonstrated government's insincerity with the proposals. "The arrest of Abu Darda is an outright deception and betrayal by the Nigerian government and security agents. They proclaimed dialogue and are doing the opposite. His arrest has proved to us that they were waiting for us to avail ourselves so that they can arrest us.**(From ThisDay)**

## SHETTIMA: STAKEHOLDERS TO UNFOLD MASTER PLAN ON BOKO HARAM



**Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno**

Stakeholders in Borno State are to come out with a master-plan to put an end to the Boko Haram insurgency, Governor Kashim Shettima has said. Equally, the Nigerian Army has denied recent media reports that one of their staff by name Captain Bahago was declared wanted by the Police in connection with the activities of Boko Haram. Shettima, who disclosed this Monday at the Maiduguri International Airport, while addressing journalists, said the Marshall plan was to draw up a "road map" on how to address the root causes that led the Boko Haram to killings and bombings in the North-east sub-region of the country. He said stakeholders would work out plan aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment with the belief that it would end the siege on the state by the group, stressing that the report is expected to be submitted in March. The governor noted that the rising rates of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and youths' restiveness in the country had facilitated the Boko Haram insurgency, stating that government at various levels must go back to the root causes of the sect's insurgency in ending the serial killings and bombings by the sect in the North. He lamented that: "In the last two years, the ten local government areas that make up Borno North produced only two students with five General Certificate of Education (GCE) credits and above. And even those two, I heard, were the sons of soldiers posted to the area. So, apart from the children of the elite, there were no children of ordinary citizens in the whole of Borno North who were qualified to secure admission into the Universities." Meanwhile, the Army in a statement signed Monday by the Chief of Staff, Directorate of Army Public Relations, Col. Usman Abdul, said the suspect could have adopted the name in an attempt to divert attention from his real identity.

Abdul said: "The report which quotes the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Zone 7, Mr Atiku Y Kafur, as its source, indicates that the said "Army Captain" is declared wanted along with seven others for being a member of the Boko Haram sect." Besides, he added that: "the late Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf, despite his misguided ideology, retained the loyalty of the sect members by providing a meal a day. The sect leader had a youth empowerment scheme, under which he facilitated members to go into petty trading and wheel barrow pushing to earn a living. He also arranged cheap marriages among sect members, which enabled them get married, which gave them personal dignity and respect." Shettima however noted that the deployment of soldiers to Borno state, was not the preferred and final solution to the insurgency though the soldiers are needed for the protection of people's lives and property, he said: "Unless a political solution is found, we could be in for a war of attrition with the loss of many lives and property." He said the Boko Haram is like a "Bermuda Triangle" sitting on three legs, comprising the sect members, the political wing of Boko Haram which hobnobs with leaders of the PDP in the state, and the ordinary criminals who cash in on the insecurity situation." Shettima however said: "What is needed now is not blame game but to find a solution. We need a holistic approach, including dialoguing with the sect's moderate elements in order to rehabilitate them. Borno State government will pursue a socio-economic empowerment program at the grassroots with agriculture as its centrepiece. My administration inherited N62 billion from former governor, Alhaji Ali Modu Sheriff, which had since increased to N72 billion. Next month, we shall convene a Stakeholders' Conference to work out a Marshal Plan on moving the state forward." **(From ThisDay)**

## WARRI WOLVES PICKS COOREMAN, AS AIGBOGUN RETURNS TO ENGLAND

THE management of Warri Wolves has engaged the services of Kaduna United's former tactician, Maurice Cooreman, to replace Paul Aigbogun, who has just left the club. Aigbogun, who led Wolves to Aba at the weekend, where the team fell 0-2 to Enyimba, was said to have taken a "brief break" from his duties to attend to personal family commitments in England. He took over from Lawrence Akpokona two seasons ago. An official of Wolves, Timi Ebikagboro, told The Guardian yesterday that Aigbogun wrote to the club's management for a "brief break" to enable him return home (London). According to Ebikagboro, "the coach said in his letter that he is still a part of the Warri Wolves family because he felt both the players and management gave him all the assistance he needed while on the job. "He also appealed to the players to give the same level of co-operation to whoever was engaged by the management of the club to stand in for him. He said he would surely miss the team's CAF Confederation Cup competition this year, but hopes that they would do well like they did last season to pick the ticket."

Last season, Aigbogun led Warri Wolves to finish third on the Nigeria Premier League table - behind Dolphins and runner-up Sunshine Stars. The position gave the club one of the two tickets to represent Nigeria in this year's Confederation Cup competition. But even with Ebikagboro's explanation, there were insinuations in some quarters yesterday that the coach might have been sacked for alleged poor performance. Wolves lost 0-1 to Rising Stars at Ijebu-Ode last week and was forced to a 0-0 draw by Kano Pillars in Warri before falling 0-2 to Enyimba at the weekend. Meanwhile, the Belgian coach, Cooreman, is expected to resume duties in Warri today. **(From The Guardian)**

**CHEVRON TO DRILL RELIEF WELL TO SEAL GUTTED FACILITY****Controversy trails oil spill allegation**

CHEVRON Nigeria Limited (CNL) has begun the process of drilling a relief well to seal the Funiwa 1A natural gas well, which was gutted by fire recently. The relief well, according to the company, is being drilled to extinguish a fire that began January 16 at the original well, located approximately six miles (10 kilometers) off the coast of Nigeria. The company however denied any spill on Nigerian waters through the incident. "No oil was spilled or has flowed from this natural gas well," it stated. But the communities in the area have cried out over the alleged oil spills and its devastating effects on their environment. Areas affected were listed as Kolo Ama I and II, Akasa, Sanagana, Fish Town, Fropa, Ekeni, Ezetu and Lobia, all in Bayelsa state. Also, the Bayelsa State government had said earlier this month that it would "speed up the release of money to help hundreds of thousands of villagers affected by the Chevron off-shore oil spill in January". Chevron said the drilling plans would enable the cementing and abandonment of the Funiwa 1A well. "The relief well is being drilled by the Transocean Baltic rig with approvals from Nigerian authorities," it explained. It could be recalled that Chevron, operating an NNPC/CNL Joint Venture experienced a hitch on January 16, during an exploratory gas well drilling, when an explosion occurred on a drilling rig KS Endeavour. At the time of the incident, 154 personnel were on board. 152 of these were rescued, while the remaining two - a French and an Indian were declared missing. The rescue operation was called off two days after futile search for the men. Chevron invited world well fire services that were adjudged to have the ability to extinguish the fire. Unfortunately, the fire could not be brought under control. The viable option, according to the company was to seek for another drilling rig that would sink a relief well to facilitate the sealing of the troubled gas well.

Chevron said it had secured the services of Fugro Nigeria Limited, an independent environmental consultant, to sample and test the air, sea and river waters, sediments, soil, fisheries and vegetation to determine any impacts on the environment. It reported that muddiness was visible in the seawater close to the incident site due to agitation of the seafloor from escaping natural gas. The gas was being burnt at the surface by a fire, which has reduced substantially since the start of the incident. To date, onshore air testing has not found any detectable levels of pollutants from the natural gas fire. A report by the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NODSRA) said: "In the process, the initial rig collapsed into the sea, thus, culminating into the discharge of automotive gas oil as well as upsurge of drilling mud into the water. Initial assessment by the Agency during a joint investigation visit on January 17, 2012 showed some dead fishes that were caught up during the explosion incident. The Director General/Chief Executive officer of the agency, Peter Idabor said his organisation had taken both water and sediment samples for laboratory analyses. Furthermore, two overfly exercises had been carried out to monitor the situation. As at February 3, 2012, the fire height had drastically reduced. The communities closest to the incident, a distance of about 12 nautical miles (Koluama and Fish town) have been visited by the operators during which some relief materials were given. Also, he said the agency along side with the operator has commenced the second sampling of water and sediment along the shoreline of the Funiwa field. This exercise is expected to be completed early this week. The results of the initial samples taken would also be concluded this week. (From The Guardian)

**OIL PRICES HIT NINE-MONTH HIGH ON IRAN'S TENSION**

CRUDE oil prices rose to a nine-month high in New York after Iran said it halted some crude exports and investors bet that fuel demand will increase as Europe moves closer to bailing out Greece. Crude for March delivery rose as much as \$2.20 to \$105.44 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, the highest intraday price since May 5. The contract, which expires tomorrow, was at \$105.12 at 10:57 a.m. New York time. The more actively traded April contract gained \$1.84 to \$105.44. Prices increased 4.6 per cent last week and are up 6.4 per cent so far this year. Brent oil for April settlement on the London-based ICE Futures Europe exchange climbed as much as \$1.57, or 1.3 per cent, to \$121.15 a barrel. The European benchmark contract was at a premium of \$14.97 to New York-traded crude. The difference was a record \$27.88 on October 14. Futures climbed as much as 2.1 per cent for a fourth day of gains, the longest rising streak since December. Iran will supply crude to "new customers" instead of companies in the UK and France, the oil ministry's news website, Shana, said, citing Alireza Nikzad Rahbar, a spokesman. (From The Guardian)

**GOVT APPROVES NIMASA'S REPRESENTATION AT OIL PLATFORMS**

THE Federal Government has made fresh move to ensure transparency in the nation's crude oil industry with the approval of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) as a representative at the oil platforms. It was also learnt that the Nigerian Customs Service may also secure approval for representation at the platforms. The representation mandates the agency to monitor the exportation of crude oil from the country and importation of refined petroleum products. The move, according to sources from the Presidency, would ensure improved monitoring of crude oil export business and importation of refined products for more accurate subsidy records. Hitherto, monitoring of oil exports at the platforms were being dominated by officials of Department of Petroleum Resources, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and the Immigration Service. NIMASA's helmsman, Patrick Akpobolokemi, who disclosed the development in Warri, Delta State at the weekend, said the move would also shore up revenue profile from oil business, beside making stakeholders in the off-shore industry to be more accountable to the government and Nigerians in all their dealings, especially in the loading for export of crude oil. Akpobolokemi stressed that henceforth, it would be difficult for a drop of crude oil to be exported from the country without being accounted for because of the activity of the agency, which is now poised to monitor the country's waterways, going by the recent maritime security deal with a private company.

"We have now the magic wand that will solve the problem of inefficient cabotage implementation, maritime safety and piracy. We must take on a project that will murder these problems. By next month, the deployment of security facilities will start, I mean the electronic gadgets. These problems will soon be over because we are going to have resources through the private initiative that is devoid of bureaucracy. "When we start the implementation, piracy problem will be over. We will trace the pirates to wherever they are. We are going to bring them down. Any vessel that is coming into Nigeria without proper record of goods it is carrying in and out will face the battle. We are not going to allow any drop of oil out of the country without being accounted for. "We are going to strengthen our legal department, we are going to have a robust legal department to tackle shipping companies with frivolous cases meant to frustrate us. Henceforth any vessel that wants to visit Nigeria, will pay us our money upfront, and it will not leave the country without our clearance," he said. The NIMASA boss who fielded questions from newsmen after he inspected the agency's infrastructure and offices in the oil rich city, said it was very important for the agency to be represented at all Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) facilities to ensure accountability of oil exports and enable the agency collect its benchmark from the oil companies at the platforms. "We must be presented at every part of the country's off-shore. All FPSO will be covered to ensure that all safety standards are complied with. The oil companies are not being properly monitored. There must be accountability in the business of crude oil lifting," he said. (From The Guardian)

**PHCN PRIVATISATION: PREFERRED BIDDERS TO EMERGE OCT 23**

The announcement of the preferred bidders for the 17 successor companies created from the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) will be made by the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) by October 23, the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) has said. But before the public disclosure of successful preferred bidders, the BPE will between September 25, 2012 and October 10, 2012, open the financial bids of these prospective investors for the privatisation of the PHCN successor companies. According to the BPE in a statement Monday in Abuja by its spokesman, Mr. Chukwuma Nwokoh, the revised bid timeline issued to investors by the privatisation agency stipulates that revised legal documents pertaining to the privatisation exercise will be issued to bidders on March 30, 2012 while the deadline for receipt of comments by bidders on the legal documents is now pegged at April 20, 2012. "Also, the distribution and issuance of final bid documents to bidders will now take place on May 11, 2012 and deadline for submission of technical and financial bids is July 31, 2012." The statement also explained that the revised transaction timeline showed that the evaluation of the technical bids was expected to take place between August 14 and 28, 2012, leading to its approval by the NCP on or before September 11, 2012. It also stated that the deadline given to shortlisted bidders for generation companies to submit their letters of credit was now September 18, 2012 just as October 2, 2012 was set for shortlisted bidders for distribution companies.

Accordingly, the approval of the NCP would pave way for the opening of financial bids of the shortlisted investors. The statement noted that the Acting Director of Electric Power at the BPE, Mallam Ibrahim Babagana in a letter to the prospective investors, explained that the revision to the transaction timetable became imperative in order to address the concerns raised at the Transaction and Industry Review Conference which was held in Abuja on November 28 and 29, 2011. Babagana said in the letter, "In view of the foregoing, we have been working diligently to create a bankable package of transaction and industry documents based on your feedback. Specifically, we have been working with other agencies such as the Federal Ministry of Power, Federal Ministry of Finance, Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Transmission Company of Nigeria(TCN), Gas Aggregation Company of Nigeria (GACN), Nigeria Gas Company (NGC), Nigerian Bulk Electricity Trading Company (NBET), and the World Bank to amend and harmonise the key industry documents, namely, MYTO (Multi-Year Tariff Order) 2, Transmission Use of System Agreement (TUoS), Connection/Interface Agreement (CIA), Gas Sale and Aggregation Agreement (GSAA), Gas Transportation Agreement (GTA), Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), and Vesting Contract."**(From ThisDay)**