

THE OUTCOME OF THE STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 1ST JUNE 2011

The first meeting of the State Executive Council after the April 2011 general elections took place on Wednesday 1st June 2011 in a newly-reconstructed EXCO Chambers. As a matter of fact, the long hours of the meeting did not have any effect on the spirit, composure and the strength of members to work for the people because of the uncommon conducive atmosphere under which they deliberated and decided on many issues affecting the well being of the electorate.

The meeting, as usual, presided over by the Chairman, Mr. Governor; Dr. Olusegun Mimiko did approve the following in its bid to further deliver on the electoral promises of the Labour Party government to the people of the state.

The Council, after exhaustive deliberations and careful examination of the budgetary provision, quotations, job experience of various contractors and the Project Pricing Monitoring Unit benchmark price as contained in the report of the State Tenders Board, did consider and approve the Akotogbo Rural Electrification Project in Irele Local Government.

The contract, which is part of the 2011 capital projects of the Ondo State Electricity Board, was awarded to UBA Global Resources Nigerian Limited at a cost of N104,125,859.18. Following the compliance with due process, Council approved the beautification of the pieces of lands adjoining the road from Fiwasaye Girls Grammar School to Ilesha - Owo Highway Junction and a Mini park opposite Bishop's Court, Alagbaka in Akure. The contract costing N43,707,793.40 was awarded to Equatorial Parks & Premises Limited.

Also, the contract for the construction of a new Materials Testing Laboratory Building was awarded to H.D. & Supply Services at a cost of N34,947,605.00 by the Council.

It is a fact that over the years, Ondo State has reputedly been known for her high level human resources in all fields due to the high quality education received by its citizens both home and abroad. Moreover, many of them enjoyed overseas scholarship of the then Western State. But there is now a change in the situation causing dearth of high quality professionals to man key areas of our economy which needs to be redressed. To give effect to the redress, Council approved the establishment of Overseas Scholarship Scheme for PH.D and other specialized post graduate programmes.

The scheme, which will commence from 2011/2012 academic session, will be an annual award with provision for 30 beneficiaries covering tuition fees, books and accommodation. The beneficiaries must have been admitted into the following top world class institutions in the United States of America due to the fact that admissions into these institutions are very stringent and rigorous.

- (a) Cornell University
- (b) Dartmouth College
- (c) Harvard University
- (d) Pennsylvania University
- (e) Princeton University
- (f) Brown University
- (g) Colombia University
- (h) Yale University

The scheme among other advantages will no doubt provide great opportunity for brilliant and talented indigenes of Ondo State to study overseas and acquire the much needed professional expertise and skills.

And in furtherance of the determination of the Dr. Olusegun Mimiko's administration to further ease parents' burden of educating their wards and children, Council duly approved upward review of existing Scholarship and Bursary Rates.

It is a sad story that there was no improvement in the Bursary and Scholarship rates in the state for six years. When this government came on board, it resolved that the situation must change for better to assist and promote academic excellence in our students in tertiary institutions within Nigeria.

In spite of the dwindling resources accrued to the coffers of the state, government has continued to meet and improve on its obligations toward advancement of education. The Scholarship and Bursary Rates being paid by the state government could best be described as the highest in Nigeria.

The Council, in consideration of the fact that the N5,000 for bursary award is grossly inadequate in the face of the present day economic reality, approved a hike in the rate to N10,000 per session for each bonafide indigene of Ondo State in tertiary institutions across the country.

On State Scholarship award which was N25,000 per student per session over the years has been reviewed upward to N100,000 by Council to effectively cover tuition fees, cost of books and accommodation of beneficiaries.

However, only qualified students will henceforth receive the award after passing a Competitive Examination and obtaining a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Aggregate (CGPA) of 4.0. A total of 1,000 students will be finally selected from the screening exercise for the scholarship award. It should be noted that physically challenged students will as usual not be left out of the scheme.

You will recall that at the inception of this administration, Mr. Governor unequivocally declared that its Urban Renewal Programme will very soon make Akure, a state capital worth its name and look in the real sense of it. Of course, this development was roundly applauded

and fully supported by the entire Akure citizenry without a single complaint from any quarter.

Apart from the dualization of Arakale Road, government also embarked on the total reconstruction of the 35 year-old Oba Adesida Road which has lost much of its original aesthetics. As the Urban Renewal Programme progressed, it became imperative to reclaim the original Master Plan of the city which can only be achieved by the removal of shanties dotting the pioneer highway in the state capital.

This led to the issuance of notices of removal of shanties to owners of such on the road about one year ago and the speedy rate of the reconstruction necessitated the commencement of the exercise this week.

It is the joy of this government that all the stakeholders - His Royal Majesty, the Deji of Akureland, Chiefs, Community Leaders, Market Women, Shop owners, Corporate establishments, Traders Transporters, Commuters, Students etc have given their full support for the programme that will change the face of Akure for better.

Dr. Mimiko's government is very passionate and concerned about the welfare of those who voted him into office. As a result of this, he has said it times with out number that his administration will never engage in any venture that will inflict pains on the people. The people themselves who are fully aware and informed of government good intention, will never succumb to the insinuations, lies and half truths being peddled about by the Philistines in Ondo State.

Gentlemen of the Press, we want to reiterate once again the total commitment of the present administration to giving hope to the hopeless, voice to the voiceless and strength to the weak and on top of it, move Ondo State to the next level.