

## Law on urban development in Ondo coming

by Damisi Ojo, *The Nation*

THE Ondo State government has introduced the Urban Development Policy, which will soon be ratified and passed into law.

This is to control and guide management of urban utilities and services, urban renewal and slum upgrading, sanitation and urban Environment, civic responsibility, urban wetlands development, and urban security and governance.

At a forum to mark this year's World Habitat Day in Akure, the state capital, the Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Dr Igbekele Daodu, said the administration was conscious of the positive role a well-planned city could play in the economic and social development of the citizenry.



*Igbekele Daodu*

According to him, part of the measures was the creation of separate full-fledged ministry of Physical Planning and that of Environment in 2009.

Daodu said the state government also established the State Environmental Task Force (SETF) to enforce environmental laws and strengthened the State Emergency Agency (SEMA) to respond to natural disasters.

Besides, he said the administration founded OSARMCO, which designed and constructed line drains and channels to distribute water in the cities and city connective roads, channelisation of rivers in Ondo State to avoid blockage and flooding.

The commissioner said typical examples are the massive channelisation of Lipakala in Ondo town and Ijala in Owo as well as watershed stream from NEPA market through Court road, Akure.

He said: "The massive afforestation programme initiated by the state government, urban renewal and slum upgrading programmes including relocation of street traders and re-development of markets and channelisation of river courses, especially Elegbin and Ala rivers."

He added that the state had done a lot in the de-silting of drainage channels and clearing of waterways, while the Waste Management Authority (WMA) had been re-invigorated to perform its functions.

Daodu disclosed that the state is set to prepare master plans for major cities to guide their growth in a sustainable way to avert untoward consequence of unplanned urbanisation.