

JumBo Journal

“full of opinions”

Issue 01 - January 2010

The Actualizer

O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request,
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.
(source: Nigerian National Anthem 1960 -1978: Nigeria
We Hail Thee)

O God of creation,
Direct our noble cause;
Guide our Leaders right:
Help our Youth the truth to know,
In love and honesty to grow,
And living just and true,
Great lofty heights attain,
To build a nation where peace and justice reign.
(source: Nigerian National Anthem 1978 -present:
Arise, O Compatriots)

These verses are from the two Nigerian National anthems since independence; it used to be 'God save the King/Queen' before then. It is obvious that Nigeria believes so much in divine intervention in all her actions and activities and is always seeking guidance from high places.

The shameful fact is that over the years the cry for guidance from the Almighty does not match the actions and activities of most of the Rulers of the Country. I am absolutely certain that this is not due to a lack of guidance from the almighty, but to a conscious decision to ignore this guidance wherever and whenever it might have been offered in whatever shape or form.

This has resulted in a downward spiral of Africa's most populous and, ironically, one of the richest Countries. Years of Military dictatorship and

economic mismanagement have resulted in one of the most scandalous, squandering and financial corrupt governments the world has ever seen.

Nigeria, that should be on a developmental par with the emerging oil rich Nations in the Middle East, is left in squalor and dilapidation while the few ruling elites are jetting around the world in First class opulent; living off the means of their ill-gotten wealth, at the expense of the vast majority of the Nigerian citizens.

As the well-known cliché says, 'God only help those who help themselves'. In as much as this statement is nowhere to be found in any religious script it is still a valid statement, as anyone asking for help should not idly stand by and watch the helper do all the work.

In order for Nigeria to be *blessed, grow, attain lofty height and have peace and justice reign*, Nigerians have to help themselves by identifying and choosing leaders that are '*just and true*' and willing to direct the '*noble cause*'.

This has not happened in Nigeria for a long time; as leaders have normally been chosen on their wealth and position in society and how benevolent a small section of the society believe that the chosen leader will be to them.

Well things are changing, Nigerians seem to have seen the light and are prepared to give people a chance who they believe are only interested in fighting the course of the masses and are prepared to put personal aggrandisement aside for the good of the populace.

These people have the leadership qualities required to direct the Country on the road to success, development and true inclusion in the economic drive to create a modern affluent society.

One of these new 'breadths of fresh air' is the Governor of the Lagos State of Nigeria, His Excellency, Barrister Babatunde R Fashola (SAN) who has emerged as a revelation in terms of what can be achieved in a very short span of time by a leader who is ready to work for the populace rather than the other way round.

Barrister Fashola has only been in office for just over two years and all feedback and pronouncements indicate that his term in office, so far, has resulted in the best administration that the state has seen for a very long time.



He is nicknamed the '**Actualizer**', a name that, on reflection, is absolutely apt as transforming Lagos and 'making real' the dream of Lagos being one of the top cities in the world.

He is doing such a wonderful job that the people are already taking about him serving a 'second term' in Office. I would go one further and say that Nigeria has found a truly remarkable individual and a potential future president of the republic.

An often misquoted and mis-attributed quotation often used in the Nigerian media, which I would not use in its entirety, has these two phrases in the sentence; 'political sagacity' and 'garrulous asperity'. The sentiments expressed when these words were uttered many years ago in the 70s are just as true today as they ever were.

Anyone who wants to take a leadership role in politics has to be extremely politically wise but does not need to be an abusive windbag. Abusive talk is cheap; having the wisdom, the level-headedness and judiciousness to do the right thing is the key to being a political giant.

Barrister Babatunde Fashola epitomises what is right in Nigerian Politics; he is dynamic, honest, intelligent and extremely conviction driven. He always aims to do the right thing at all times.

Given the right support, I am sure Lagos will be unrecognisable by the time he leaves office. The perennial problems of



armed robberies have been dramatically reduced, traffic congestions are gradually being eliminated, corruption in government establishments are being eradicated and a new, open and accountable form of government has been introduced in Lagos.

For the first time anyone can bid for, and hope to be awarded, a contract for providing services to the state government. It is no longer the bastion of the few elites. It is no longer who you know but what you can deliver. This, as simple as it might sound, is a new concept in Nigerian politics. It takes a strong leader to change the status quo and oppose those who think they have a divine right to the government contracts and hence the government's purse.

The stakeholder base in Lagos has suddenly been enlarged and with it the feel good factor within the state. People no longer feel that the fruits of government are only available to a few elites but to all those who have something positive to offer to the state. The current mood in Lagos is buoyant, with all and sundry full of motivation and hope for a better future. This is political sagacity of the highest order.

This transformation has been done by a relatively 'newbie' in the politically arena. He was a very successful Barrister by profession and one of the youngest Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SAN).

It is nice to know that there is someone around now who can bring back trust into Nigerian politics. Someone who can put a smile in the face of Lagosians and gives hope that things are going to get better in the years to come.

Governor Fashola deserves all the credit and accolade he has been getting. One hopes that he is given the support and freedom required to transform Lagos to what he hopes will be a city of Excellence.

Eng Olanrewaju Bombata CEng MSc
January 2010

Advert
L4T – leadership for Today
Capacity building and capability development organisation in leadership and management
<http://www.leadershiptodayuk.com/>

Download your own copy of JumBo Journal at
<http://www.lagosbusinesslink.com>