

NEWS

Why criminal cases are poorly investigated, by IGP, jurist, lawyers

MAJOR stakeholders in criminal justice administration have identified poor funding as the reason why most criminal cases were poorly investigated by investigating agencies.

President of the Court of Appeal (PCN), Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Idris, Executive Secretary of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption, Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye and Law Professor, Yemi Akinseye-George (SAN) claimed that without adequate funding, it was impossible to expect success in criminal investigation and prosecution.

They spoke in Abuja on Wednesday at a training session for officers of the Nigerian Police on the theme: "Towards Effective Implementation of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) 2015," organised by the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (CSLS), headed by Prof Akinseye-George.

About 350 policemen participated in the training.

Represented by a Justice of the Court of Appeal, Justice Emmanuel Agim, the PCN noted that the quality of investigation often determines the outcome of the any criminal case in court.

Justice Bulkachuwa said: "Unless the pre-trial process is

From Eric Ikhilae, Abuja
fair and transparent, the end, which is the trial, will fail. Investigation is the foundation of what is going to happen in future, that is, the trial.

"We must spend more on police and more on investigation. There is still a huge problem with investigation. Investigation does not mean detaining a suspect for long before taking his statement.

"It does not require just taking the suspect's confessional statement. All these must happen before the arrest. You have to have funds in order to deal with the facts. Investigation requires logistics. It requires funding.

"It requires you to provide vehicles and stationery to take the statement. To be able to arrest they need vehicle and they need stationery to be able to take the statements of suspects.

"Lack of funding for investigation will make police officer to sit back in the office and compile the file only the extent that he can.

"You need the moral will to do what is right. If you do not have the moral will you cannot effectively enforce the law. What is your moral standard and professional ethics?

"If you do not have the moral will you cannot effectively enforce the law by arresting a sus-

pect or in taking his statement," the PCN said.

Ibrahim, who declared the event opened, said he was committed to the concept of "policing with integrity," with emphasis on continuous training for members of the police force.

The IGP assured that gathering that he will not relent in ridding the force of bad eggs. He said the dedicated and upright ones will be rewarded.

Owasanoye contended that without adequate funding, the country will hardly record success in crime fighting.

He conceded that it was impossible for the police to get all the required funding. But, urged the IGP to create a "credible" platform to receive contributions from members of the public.

He said: "So many of us are ready to contribute so long as we are sure it will not end in somebody's pocket."

Owasanoye further urged the IGP not to relent in his effort to rid the force of bad eggs, but advised him to create a system to reward the diligent among them.

Akinseye-George drew a parallel between the role of the police within the criminal justice system and how judicious application of the provisions of the ACJA could aid the effectiveness of the system.

He said: "Several provisions of

the Act depend entirely on the Police. For example, the establishment of the Central Criminal Records Registry, which is an electronic and manual platform for storing criminal justice data, the deployment of video recording and other modern gadgets for modern law enforcement, the observance of arrest protocols and the new guidelines for remand proceedings depend heavily on the police."

Akinseye-George argued for adequate funding of the police. He described as worrisome, a situation where the rank and file of the police would have to spend part of their meagre salaries or depend on handouts from complainants to perform their official functions.

He said the police was a strategic partner in fighting systemic and endemic corruption, including electoral fraud as "all other anti-corruption bodies are merely off-shoots of the police."

He said: "Without a good and effective police there can be no meaningful economic and social progress.

"A situation in which the ordinary policemen have to spend part of their meagre salaries to perform official functions or even depend on handouts from complainants to be able to investigate or apprehend offenders is nothing to write home about."

Don to Fed Govt: give women more opportunities

DEAN, Faculty of Social Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. Paul Pindar Izah has called for more opportunities for women to reach their full potentials so as to contribute their quota to nation building.

Prof. Izah said this during a courtesy visit on the management of Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Abuja. Izah noted that no country could develop if it neglected half of its population behind.

Seeking cooperation and partnership from the FRSC in organising a conference for women in security, judiciary and law enforcement billed to hold 18th -20th of July at the NAF conference centre Kado. Professor Izah said the conference will recognise and elevate ladies that have excelled.

"If this is done, these women can serve as model to our daughters, so that they believe that they also can achieve whatever they put their mind to," he said.

He disclosed that the conference would have as a special guest of honor, the wife of the president, Hajiji Aisha Muhammadu Buhari, while the awards dinner will be graced by the wife of the former vice president, Mrs. Titi Atiku Abubakar.

Earlier the Director of the conference, Dr. David Okoror, explained that the conference would further enhance the knowledge of the officers and help them build networks that will produce positive result in gender issues.

"This conference will bring professionals from various agencies to brainstorm, network and synergize while building collaboration across services, though little rivalry exist in the agencies but meetings like this will enable them drop their guards and have friends across several security outfits.

"Issues of violence against women are on the increase, trafficking, rape and girl child education, the best people to help address this within the structure are those in this group because the laws are there but what we need is implementation."

Dons seek new approach to teach science subjects

THE Dean of Engineering, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, United States, Prof. Wole Soboyejo and the Co-Centre leader of the Pan-African Material Institute (PAMI) of African University of Science and Technology (AUST), Dr Sola Odusanya, have called for new approach in the teaching of sciences in universities and other tertiary institutions in the country.

They made the call in Abuja at a workshop on Mathematics and Science for Sub-Saharan Africa. The event was organised by AUST.

They said new approach in

He said: "We need new pathological approach. We have to train our students and young ones in different ways.

"We need to use methods such as social constructivism, project-based learning. We need to have extra-curricular activities, we need to engage the students in competition just as we play soccer in our society.

"Our teaching methods do not really connect to most of the students because the methods are too abstract and very often we do not teach creativity."

While also calling for new ways to stimulate students' Prof

Association plans insurance scheme for accident victims

From Frank Ikpefan, Abuja

VEHICLES Owners Association of Nigeria (VOAN) at the



IGP, PACAC, SAN seek more funding for Police

By Clement A. Oloyede

The Nigerian Police Force requires a budgetary allocation of N1.03 trillion as against the N31.6 billion it received for it to function at utmost level, the Inspector General of Police Ibrahim Idris has said.

The IGP said this yesterday during a training workshop for 340 officers of the Nigerian police towards the effective implementation of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015 (ACJA) organised by the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (CSLS) in collaboration with the Nigeria Police Force.

He urged the officers to shun corruption and abuse of rights of citizens, noting that anyone caught will be dealt with while those who demonstrate exemplary attitude will be rewarded.

The President of CSLS, Professor Yemi Akinseye-George (SAN), said there was need to recruit more personnel and increase the resources available to the police to perform their duties, while appealing to the National Assembly to pass the National Police Trust Fund Bill into law as soon as possible.

Also speaking, the Executive Secretary of the Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption (PACAC), Professor Bolaji Owasanoye, said while waiting for the National Assembly to pass the National Police Trust Fund Bill into law, the police leadership should create a transparent and credible platform for people to financially support the force.

Owasanoye and the representative of the President of Court of Appeal, Justice Emmanuel Agim, agreed that although underpayment is not a justification for police bribery and corruption, "the system should not be tempting people to engage in corruption."

Again, in the end. But I know for sure there are issues and there's a division," the source said.

Another source said the visit might be to prove to Osinbajo that nobody was trying to hide anything pertaining the president's health to him.

The source added that there appears to be "silent division" in the presidency and that based on observations, the relationship between the president and the acting president's staff is not as cordial as it used to be.

Some of the president's men are said not to be happy with the way Osinbajo has been taking some decisions and dealing with matters.

"Based on our observations, there are issues and there appears to be a division, though it's not pronounced. We also think that the relationship is not that cordial any more.

"Another thing about the visit I believe was to assure the acting president that the president is recuperating fast and that he's not kept in the dark. Remember we have a history, so they want to avoid the mistake of the past.

"Some people are also not happy with some of the changes the acting president did. For example, some of the president's men were not comfortable with the changes in PenCom and Bank of Industry," the source said.

Asked if it is true that some appointees do not give Osinbajo due respect, our source said: "I don't think that's the case. I know the man. He's a very humble person. He's not power-drunk to the extent that he'll expect too much respect

conversation with him. He said that he was even back to his normal humorous disposition.

"Well, first, as you know, I went to see him, I went to check on him, find out how he was doing. I had, of course, been speaking with him on the phone and I thought it would be a good thing to go and see him and, you know, generally check up on how he was doing and also to brief him on developments back at home.

"So, we had a very good time, we had a very good conversation on wide ranging issues and he is in very good spirits, he is recuperating very quickly and he is doing very well," the acting president stated.

On Buhari's state of health, Osinbajo said: "Well, as I have said, he is in very high spirits, he is recuperating very well and we had a very long conversation, we spoke for well over an hour and his humor is all there. He is doing well and he is recuperating fast."

Asked when the president due back home, the acting president responded: "I think very very shortly. Very shortly. I think we should really expect him back very shortly. Like I said, he is recuperating very fast and he is doing very very well."

On whether Buhari will return home before 90 days of his departure for London, Osinbajo said it is not a good thing to give such a deadline.

"No no. Deadlines aren't a very good thing, but as I said, he is recuperating fast, we are expecting him very shortly much sooner than you will expect," he said.

Osinbajo disclosed that he did

months ago. Ocheni is the late former Minister of State for Labour, James Ochoi; while Hassan is to replace Amina Mohammed who resigned as Minister of Environment to become the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General.

"No! We didn't discuss swearing or anything like that," the acting president told journalists yesterday.

Asked when they will be sworn in, he said: "Well, I'm not in a position to say anything. I don't have a date in mind, but I am sure, very, very soon, we will do that."

Osinbajo said he could not go into the specifics of all his discussions with Buhari, saying "wide ranging issues, I really can't go into specifics of all of the discussions we had."

He was answering a question on whether he and Buhari discussed the decision to be taken on the suspended Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Babachir Lawal and the suspended Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency, Ayo Oke.

A presidential panel, headed by Osinbajo, had in April investigated Babachir for alleged violations of law and due process in the award of contracts under the Presidential Initiative on the North-East; and Oke, for the \$43.4m stashed away at a residential apartment at Osborne Towers, Ikoyi, Lagos.

The three-man panel was believed to have submitted the report of its two-week investigations to President Muhammadu Buhari before he travelled to the United Kingdom.