



Nigeria Association of West Michigan

Celebrates Nigeria's 49th Day of Independence

Saturday, October 3, 2009

FOP Lodge

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49506

5:00PM

Order of Events

5:00pm.....Arrival of Guests

5:15pm.....Introduction of Master of Ceremony

Master of ceremony introduces the electoral officials

Electoral officials introduces the elected executives

Master of ceremony invites the oath administrator

Swearing in ceremony of the elected officials

5:45pm.....Invocation

National anthem (Nigeria and United States)

Chairman Welcome Address

6:15pm.....Key Note Address

T.A. El Amin

Topic: Wazobia! (Unity)

We are still family, We are all Africans

6:40pm.....Children's Skit / Cultural Skit

7:00pm.....Dinner / Entertainment

Speeches

Recognitions

8:00pm.....Dance! Dance!! Dance!!!

11:40pm.....Closing Remarks

Vote of Thanks by Director of Socials.

Adetunji Ojo



Nigerian National Anthem

Arise, O compatriots,
Nigeria's call obey
To serve our fatherland
With love and strength and faith
The labor of our heroes past
Shall never be in vain
To serve with heart and might
One nation bound in freedom,
peace and unity.



American National Anthem

Oh, say! can you see
by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed
at the twilight's last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched
were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare,
the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
that our flag was still there:
Oh, say! does that star-spangled
banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave?

Executive Committee



President
Kanario Okoroafo



Vice President
Euse Ekere



Secretary
Leonard Uchendu



Financial Sec.
Michael Ojeh



Ass't Financial Sec.
Joseph Ifaturoti



Treasurer
Angela Egbor



Director of Socials
Adetunji Ojo

Welcome

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me extend a hearty welcome to all of you. We are delighted that you chose to join us today as we celebrate 49 years of Nigeria's Independence!! To the Director of Socials, Executive members and all the association members who are gathered here today, I congratulate each and everyone of you for making this occasion a success.



Today in particular, I reflect on that cold day this past January when we had our first meeting. Our goal was to revive this Nigerian Association in Grand Rapids and in West Michigan. Then, it was hard to envision this day as we hold this celebration. May this accomplishment bring us closer to our mission of building a strong association, an association in which we strive to cherish family, to respect and to help each other. After we have left today's celebration, this association and its executive board will not rest on its heels. We will be working with our community to make it a better place to live and work. We will be introducing a committee of volunteers to help us achieve this goal. These volunteers will help us realize our dreams for this great association as we look forward to many Nigerian Independence Day Celebrations and picnics.

Once again, allow me to take one last opportunity to thank all members of the executive leadership team, all association members, all the volunteers and all our friends for the support that they have shown for this successful Nigerian Independence Celebration.

With Thanks,

Kanario Okoroafo

President of Nigeria Association of West Michigan - USA

History of Nigeria

Federal Republic of Nigeria, is a federal constitutional republic comprising thirty-six states and one Federal Capital Territory. The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast lies on the Gulf of Guinea, a part of the Atlantic Ocean, in the south. The capital city is Abuja. The three largest and most influential ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the eighth most populous country in the world, with a population of over 148 million, it is the most populous 'black' country in the world. Nigeria is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The economy of Nigeria is one of the fastest growing in the world, with



the International Monetary Fund projecting a growth of 9% in 2008 and 8.3% in 2009.

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria gained its independence from the United Kingdom. The new republic incorporated a number of people with aspirations of their own sovereign nations.

Nigeria is a Federal Republic modeled after the United States, with executive power exercised by the president and with overtones of the Westminster System model in the composition and management of the upper and lower houses of the bicameral legislature.

The current president of Nigeria is Umaru Musa Yar'Adua who was elected in 2007. The president presides as both Chief of State and Head of Government and is elected by popular vote to a maximum of two four-year terms. The president's power is checked by a Senate and a House of Representatives, which are combined in a bicameral body called the National Assembly. The Senate is a 109-seat body with three members from each state and one from the capital region of Abuja; members are elected by popular vote to four-year terms. The House contains 360 seats and the number of seats per state is determined by population.

Upon gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria made the liberation and restoration of the dignity of Africa the centerpiece of its foreign policy and played a leading role in the fight against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Nigeria was also a founding member of the Organization for African Unity (now the African Union), and has tremendous influence in West Africa and Africa on the whole. Nigeria has additionally founded regional cooperative efforts in West Africa, functioning as standard-bearer for ECOWAS and ECOMOG, economic and military organizations respectively.

With this African-centered stance, Nigeria readily sent troops to the Congo, at the behest of the United Nations shortly after independence (and has maintained membership since that time); Nigeria also supported several Pan African and pro-self government causes in the 1970s, including garnering support for Angola's MPLA, SWAPO in Namibia, and aiding anti-colonial struggles in Mozambique, and Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) militarily and economically. The military in Nigeria have played a major role in the country's history since independence. Taking advantage of its role of Africa's most populated country, Nigeria has repositioned its military as an African peacekeeping force. Since 1995, the Nigerian military through ECOMOG mandates have been deployed as peacekeepers in Liberia (1997), Ivory Coast (1997-1999), Sierra Leone 1997-1999, and presently in Sudan's Darfur region under an African Union mandate.

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Nigeria is also a member of the International Criminal Court, and the Commonwealth of Nations, from which it was temporarily expelled in 1995 under the Abacha regime.

Nigeria has remained a key player in the international oil industry since the 1970s, and maintains membership in Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC which it joined in July, 1971. Its status as a major petroleum producer figures prominently in its sometimes vicissitudinous international relations with both developed countries, notably the United States and more recently China and developing countries, notably Ghana, Jamaica and Kenya.



Happiness Survey

In 2003, Nigerians were reported to be the happiest people in a scientific survey carried out in 65 nations in 1999-2001.[87] The research was reported by one of the world's top science magazines, New Scientist, and was picked up by a number of news outlets. See Nigeria tops happiness survey. The report considered that the country's family life and culture were more important than its problems and material wealth in determining happiness.

Nigerian States and Capitals

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Abuja | 11. Cross River | 21. Katsina | 31. Oyo |
| 2. Anambra | 12. Delta | 22. Kebbi | 32. Plateau |
| 3. Enugu | 13. Ebonyi | 23. Kogi | 33. Rivers |
| 4. Akwa Ibom | 14. Edo | 24. Kwara | 34. Sokoto |
| 5. Adamawa | 15. Ekiti | 25. Lagos | 35. Taraba |
| 6. Abia | 16. Gombe | 26. Nasarawa | 36. Yobe |
| 7. Bauchi | 17. Imo | 27. Niger | 37. Zamfara |
| 8. Bayelsa | 18. Jigawa | 28. Ogun | |
| 9. Benue | 19. Kaduna | 29. Ondo | |
| 10. Borno | 20. Kano | 30. Osun | |

- Euse Ekere, Vice President
Nigeria Association of West Nigeria

Nigeria's Appeal To Tourists

Nigeria offers a wide variety of tourist attractions such as extended and roomy river and ocean beaches ideal for swimming and other water sports, unique wildlife, vast tracts of unspoiled nature ranging from tropical forest, magnificent waterfalls, some new rapidly growing cities and climatic conditions in some parts particularly conducive to holidaying. Other attractions include traditional ways of life preserved in local customs; rich and varied handicrafts and other colourful products depicting or illustrative of native arts and lifestyle, and the authentic unsophisticated but friendly attitude of many in the Nigerian population. However, many of these attractions are still largely untapped and even at their raw states, they are still being enjoyed by few outsiders, either very rich visitors in quest of exoticism or adventurous people in search of new challenges and experiences. The lack of required modern infrastructural facilities and in some parts of the country acute conditions of underdevelopment and poverty can be seen which many potential Nigeria bound tourist may not like to be confronted with. These are impediments to tourism, which the new administration has been tackling since assumption of office. Investors, both foreign and local are therefore called upon to come and invest in the abundant tourism potentials in the country. The richness and diversity of Nigeria's tourism resources coupled with economic liberalisation policies will provide investment opportunities in various areas.

Summary of Investment Opportunities In Nigeria

Investment opportunities exist within the following sub-sectors of the tourism industry:

Beach and Coastal Resort development (Nigeria has over 700km of unpolluted sandy beaches). Conservation and Protection of 8 national parks and over 10 game reserves. Development of hotels and standard restaurants
Transportation: water recreation, package tour services, air and rail services. Development of caves, tunnels, waterfalls and spring waters. Youth hostels, camps and centres Lake and River sport fishing. Scenic and Mountain Holiday resorts Theme/Amusement parks Conference/Congress Services Conservation and protection of endangered wildlife especially drill monkey, manatec, white throated monkey and pigmy hippo. Heritage, cultural and archaeological sites.

YANKARI GAME RESERVE

The Yankari National Park is the premier game reserve in Nigeria. Yankari Park and Wikki Warm Springs are located around the Gagi River, approximately 1 1/2 hours by road, southeast of Bauchi Town. The beauty and size of The Yankari Game Reserve make it the most popular reserve in Nigeria. Set up in 1956 and opened to the public in 1962, the main game-viewing areas of the reserve are open all year round. Japanese, Western Europeans, Americans and Southeast Asian tourists visit this park in abundance. The reserve covers 2,058 sq. km. of savanna wood land and is well-stocked with elephants, baboons, waterbucks, bushbucks, oribi, crocodile, hippopotamus, roan antelope, buffalo and various types of monkeys. Lions are occasionally spotted as well, despite their natural camouflage. The best time to visit is between November and May, when tourists are likely to see more game since the dense vegetation has dried out and the animals congregate around the rivers.



The Wikki Warm Springs is one of the best features of the game reserves. Flood-lit at night, it is wonderful after a hot day's game-viewing to relax in the warm water. The spring gushes out from under a cliff, where the water is at least 6 ft. deep, with a bathing area that extends for 600 ft. to an open area. The park is inhabited by a variety of birds, including the huge saddlebill stork, goliath heron, bateleur eagle, vultures, kingfishers, bee-eaters and more. It is excellent for serious bird-watchers.

Other facilities include: Tennis courts, squash courts, a small museum in the reception area plus gas stations with convenience stores at Wikki Camp and Bauchi.

Reservations: It is advisable to make reservation during the holidays and weekends with Easter a particularly busy season. Reservations can be made at Durbar Hotel in Kaduna, Bauchi State House in Lagos and at the Zaranda Hotel in Bauchi. Or call Yankari Game Reserve at (069) 43-656.

Route: You can travel by road from Lagos to Abuja, where you make an overnight stop, then on to Jos and Bauchi, as it is a 2-day journey by car over well-maintained roads.

Hotels: Basic accommodations are available in chalets or rondavels. Also available are suites, double rooms and family chalets that include small kitchens. There are many other National Parks besides Yankari, as illustrated on the map. Notable ones include Mambilla, Gumti National Park, Cross River National Park, and Kainji Lake National Park.

Mambilla Plateau

The Mambilla Plateau, in the southeast corner of Taraba State, shares a border with Cameroon. A high grassland plateau averaging about 1800 meters, it is scenic, cool and a pleasant change from the heat and humidity of Lagos. Because the roads are still under construction, a sport utility vehicle or jeep is recommended and visitors should pack essentials, camping equipment and food. As an option, there are a few hotels on the plateau.



The Park provides an attractive setting, well worth a visit. Mambilla has cattle ranches, tea plantations and rolling, grassy hills. It is different from the rest of Nigeria with regard to flora and fauna and is home to some rare species of birds and animals, especially at the Gashaka-Gumti National Park.

Route: There is a major road to Mambilla from Lagos, Benin City, Onitsha, Enugu, Otukpo, Yandev, Katsina Ala, Wukari, Mutum Biyu, Bali, Serti and Gembu. You can also fly into Yola Airport, then drive a few miles south to Mambilla.

Gashaka-Gumti National Park

This is a vast land of spectacular wilderness (6,000 sq. km) in the southeast corner of Taraba State, adjoining the Mambilla Plateau. Mostly mountainous, from 457 to 2407 meters, it contains Nigeria's highest mountain, Chapal Waddi (2409m). It is the most ecologically diverse conservation area in the country and contains swaths of guinea savanna, gallery forest, moist forest, mountain forest and grassland. Many rivers flow through the park, including the Taraba, a major tributary of the River Benue. A wide variety of animal life can be found, including buffalo, roan ante lope, chimpanzee, colobus monkey, hippopotamus, hyena, giant forest hog, lion and leopard. The park is a birdwatcher's paradise with a wide variety of species, and there is excellent fishing in the River Kam. The reserve headquarters is in the Forest Rest Houses at Serti, on the main road between Bali and Mambilla Plateau. These rest houses provide self-catering accommodation at a small fee. The entrance to the park is about 15 km south of Serti. In the dry season, it is possible to drive to the former headquarters at Gashaka village, some 30 km from the entrance gate, where more self-catering accommodation is available. The park is best explored on foot and it is possible to hire game guards; guides and porters are available at Serti or in Gashaka village.

Cross River National Park

The Cross River National Park was created from two existing forest reserves of Bashi-Okwango and Oban Forest Reserves. It is famous for its unique rain forest vegetation which, according to conservation experts, is some of the richest in Africa. This park contains the last remaining rain forest in Nigeria, which is being preserved with the help of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation. It has a herd of forest elephants, the white-faced monkey (indigenous to Nigeria only), buffalo, leopards and lowland gorillas, besides over a thousand other animal species. The park has a tropical climate characterized by a rainy season between April and October and a dry season between November and April. The moist green vegetation cover makes the forest an excellent place to see birds and butterflies.

The Kainji National Park

This Park, in Kwara State, was established in 1979 and incorporates the Borgu Game Reserve and Zugurma Game Reserve to the southeast in Niger State. The Borgu sector of the park alone covers an area of about of 3,929 sq. km. of savanna woodland, and Zugurma cover an area of about 1,370 sq. km. The Kainji National Park also contains the Kainji Dam, an artificial lake which covers the town of Old Bussa. Here Mungo Park, the explorer, was said to have come to grief in 1805. Now the lake hides the scene of the accident. The lake is 136 km long and tours of the dam are available on request from the Nigeria Electric Power Authority. Boat trips on the lake can be arranged by the Borgu Game Reserve office at Wawa. To reduce the expense, it is better for several visitors to share the cost. Fishing is allowed on the lake.

Calabar Beach

This superb beach, at the mouth of the new Calabar River, is about 2 miles long and 500 feet wide, uninhabited save for a solitary fisherman's hut. The beach is virtually isolated and lends visitors the luxury of privacy in a beautiful setting off the beaten path. Since the beach is flanked by a swamp and can only be reached by boat or canoe, getting there is half the fun and enhances one's fascination with this enchanted locale.



Lekki Beach

There are several beaches along the Lekki Peninsula, the foremost being Lekki Beach, located a few miles from the city center. Lekki Beach is another of Lagos' attractive beaches and remains popular with foreign tourists. Beach shelters made of palm fronds and umbrellas, available for rent, keep the sun at bay, as well as provide a place to enjoy snacks or refreshments sold by local traders.

Eleko Beach

Opened in 1989, Eleko is the newest of Lagos' Beaches, down the Lekki Peninsula about 30 miles from Lagos. There are no traders and no distractions on Eleko Beach, just peace and tranquillity, ideal for those seeking privacy.