



The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



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SPECIAL EDITION

The Investiture Ceremony of Engr. Dr. Asinyetogha Hilikia Igoni *MNSE*, as the 15th Chairman of The Nigerian Society of Engineers, Port Harcourt Branch on January 21st, 2009.



Engr. Dr. A. H. Igoni taking his oath of office



Engr. Ogariawo (IPC) decorating Engr. Igoni with the medallion



2nd right, Prof. Nimi Briggs & other dignitaries at the event



Engr. Chief Oruye (left) & Engr. Prof. Y. O. Beredugo



Some Fellows of the society



NSE PH 2010 EXCO members taking oath of office

An interview with Engr. Olafemi Olaniyan, (past chairman NIEEE) during NSE AGM in Owerri, 9th December 2009 on The Role of Engineers in the areas of Design, Construction and Maintenance of Infrastructure

E-Newsletter: *The theme for the Conference says, "Engineering Strategies for confronting challenges of global economic meltdown", we want to look at it as the role of engineers in confronting the challenge of global economic meltdown in our discussion in the Nigerian society. We have discussed the role of engineers; right now, let's discuss what engineers can do in the area of design, construction and perhaps in the area of maintenance of infrastructure; but before we go into that, can you tell our reading audience about yourself and your contribution to the engineering profession?*

Engr. Femi: Okay. I am Engr. Olafemi Olaniyan. I graduated from the University of Lagos in the year 1982 as an Electrical Engineer. I have worked with PHCN, Guinness and I now practice under my company, 'Electrolyte Limited'. I have contributed to the activities of the NSE in many capacities either as a member of the Executive Committee of the NIEEE for which posi-

tions I have held the Publicity Secretary, Technical Secretary, General Secretary, Vice Chairman, and now the position of Chairman. I have worked with several teams of engineers and



Engr. Olafemi Olaniyan

what I have seen is that engineers love their profession but they are highly constrained by one single factor and that is the ability to come together for a common objective. Thankfully we are beginning to see the importance of institutions in the development of the profession in the country. At this conference one thing has been recurrent, I was at a Local content seminar today, the recurrent decimal is that engineers' problems are not money, it is access to knowledge and information; and the

way you can get knowledge and information is through the institutions, so until we get to the point where we begin to recognize that and begin to work on it, we will not see too much growth in the profession. We are growing numerically but we are not growing in terms of capability. Capability comes through synergy, collaboration, networking and common objective. That is where capability is and we are not developing that.

E-Newsletter: *Okay. Thank you very much. Is there any plan you have in mind, advice, either to engineers or the local bodies, COREN or the government? Because like you rightly mentioned there are complex infrastructure, that when we talk of local content we are very far behind. We want to incorporate, to consider local man hour contributions to such complex infrastructure like subsea during the local content presentation going on all over the world. We are still*

lagging behind so what plan do you think can help us contribute in terms of capacity building because that is also a strategy that we can apply.

Engr. Femi: Before you finish your question I will like to start answering because sometimes I forget the answer to the question before the question is finished. I always talk of capability because when people talk of capacity building people only talk about your technical capacity. Whatever we are doing as engineers go down to business. You have to build your engineering organization within the business framework; anything outside that framework is really not capable of achieving much. Why is it that when multinationals want to come into Nigeria they go to the lawyers first, why don't they come to engineers? Because they know that to craft in a business framework on which they can do business in Nigeria the lawyers are capable of doing it. So when I talk of capability I always tell engineers merely coming to our conference to come and hear, 'we don't go to other professional conference to hear what the lawyers are doing or accountants are doing, not to become accountants but to hear all their strategies. My advice to engineers is, let's stop being naïve and believing that the world revolves around us. What we need to do is take the leadership role in the enterprise. The leadership role in an engineering enterprise should differ from the role of an engineer because you work with other professions to bring about the business structure required to deliver that project or deliver that organization. Until we build up other skills as engineers that allow us to lead the enterprise we will be left just as the knots and bolts people who are used to deliver the project. How do we do it? Number one, we need to train ourselves more, we need to go outside our core area. Communication, law, contract, list management, project management these are very powerful tools that if an engineer can have in his arsenal can head the enterprise.

E-Newsletter: *What I want us to look at quickly is the area of decay in infrastructure. For the number of years we have been practicing the profession, we discover that most of our infrastructure if not all, especially from the government angle, no maintenance, no schedule or plan in terms of maintenance. The government builds say a road the road will cut into two, bridges especially jetties, including NDDC put electrical structure in place nobody cares to go back, no control or check, no maintenance. What do you think can be done? Apart from oil industries that have maintenance structure in place, government and other agencies they don't have this. What do you think can be done in this area?*

Engr. Femi: Okay. Let me start from private sector. Why is it that in a company like Guinness for instance, they can use a tiller plant for 25 years, without any problem? I will not answer the question, let our leaders answer.

Why is it that, a company like aero contractors can keep their airplanes flying but Nigeria airways was the worst and is unable to keep flying? The truth is that people keep talking of political rule, but with my little exposure to cooperate governance, I know that if the organizational objective and political objective are variant that organization can't survive. A number of chief executives in private sectors have tried it and they almost made their companies come down. The truth is that those running the government organization unlike the private sector if you're not making profit you're sacked. What measure is government using to look at whether their MBA's are performing according or delivery good executives in the society as they are expected to do. If you cannot measure what you have put an organiza-



Engr. Olafemi Olaniyan (left) & Engr. Dr. Ujile (right)

tion in place to do to find out its effectiveness, then you can't blame anybody. All the lack of maintenance, etc. nobody is measuring the quality of service. Do corporations exist to check? They do. They are parastatals of the FG of Nigeria, but has anybody asked how many tons of carriage a Nigerian railway corporation carries in a year say in 2008. Or how much fuel the NNPC refines in the year 2008. Until we ask these questions and we hold those put in those organizations accountable nothing will happen. It's not about whether engineers are running these organizations or not. If the heads of those organization know that they have target to meet, they will look for engineers that can do the jobs for them then call them to do the jobs, then we will begin to see change. But it is because there is no measurement or accountability, the decay will continue.

E-Newsletter: *Thank you very much. We would like to use this opportunity to thank you for the audience you have given us and we do hope next time we call on you that you will be able to assist us to tell others out there what they should do to develop our nation. Because that is the information we have been carrying. Let people know our problems and perhaps one day we will overcome all these problems.*


Engr. Femi: Thank you very much. I want to commend the entire crew for the wonderful job you are doing in the dissemination of your news letter. I receive it and I know that over time people will come to appreciate the effort that has been put into it.

E-Newsletter: *Thank you very much sir.*

Engrs. Dania (l), Ogariawa (m) & Igoni (r) during Civil 2009 which was held in London on 25th-26th Nov. 2009.

Engr. & Mrs Sam Nwakwo, fnse, ksc, on their thanksgiving service at the Anglican Church in his home town after his investiture as Knight of St Christopher

ANNOUNCEMENT
The Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch will hold its first General Meeting in 2010;
Date: Thursday 28th January 2010
Time: 5.00pm
Venue: #3 Bernard Carr Street, behind Rivers State Library, Port Harcourt.
Agenda: Ratification of 2010 Budget, Committee composition, Programme of activities etc
 Please all members should endeavour to

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NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!
 All members of NSE PH should pay their **annual branch dues** of N4000 and **compulsory levy** of N5000 towards the Engineer Resource Center to UBA **ACC. NO: 0234-031-0000962 (Port Harcourt Main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of N7,500.00 for **Members** & N9,500 for **Fellows** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank