



JoSTUM

NEWS

MAY, 2025

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF JOSEPH SARWUAN TARKA UNIVERSITY, MAKURDI

JoSTUM Graduates 22,027 in Grand Convocation Ceremony

Commissions Landmark Projects | Marks Milestone Convocation
Stages Research Fair/Exhibition | Holds Convocation Lecture



ENACTUS JoSTUM:

National Champions and Leadership Award Winners 2024

Rebranding JoSTUM:

Prof. Itodo's Strategies and Impact

A New Era for Animal Care as VCN Inducts 24 JoSTUM Graduates

One-on-One with Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo, 7th Substantive Vice-chancellor, JoSTUM



TABLE OF CONTENT

01	JoSTUM Graduates 22,027 in Grand Convocation Ceremony Commissions Landmark Projects Marks Milestone Convocation Stages Research Fair/Exhibition Holds Convocation Lecture	3
02	ENACTUS JoSTUM: National Champions and Leadership Award Winners 2024	12
03	Rebranding JoSTUM: Prof. Itodo's Strategies and Impact	14
04	JoSTUM and NACEST Renew MoU, Deepen Academic and Technical Partnership	16
05	A New Era for Animal Care as VCN Inducts 24 JoSTUM Graduates	17
06	One-on-One with Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo, 7th Substantive Vice-Chancellor, JoSTUM	19
07	JoSTUM Unveils New Security Uniforms to Enhance Efficiency and Boost Morale	25
08	Building Bridges: JoSTUM Administration Dialogue with Traditional Rulers for Peace and Progress	26
09	Addressing Corruption and Remodeling the Future through Human Capacity Development: IPESS JoSTUM in Perspective	28
10	JoSTUM Matriculates 6,472, as VC Reaffirms Commitment to Academic Excellence	30
11	JoSTUM Holds 2024/2025 Orientation For Fresh Students	31
12	"Do Not Play to The Gallery:" VC Adjures New SSANU EXCO	32
13	ICPC Inaugurates JoSTUM ACTU Unit	33
14	VC to NASU - "Don't Stop at the Welfare of Your Members"	34
15	Lighting the Way to Excellence: Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University's Renewed Focus on Students' Welfare	35
16	JoSTUM Management Rebrands College of Education, Reinstates Programmes in Bold Academic Revival	36
17	Rekindling Professional Bonds: JoSTUM's ANUPA Chapter Ushers in a New Era of Engagement	37
18	SSA to Benue Governor Reaffirms State Government Commitment to Addressing Illegal Activities on Campus	38
19	Strengthening Campus Security: A Call to Action	39



EDITORIAL

Dear Esteemed Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we reintroduce the JoSTUM News Magazine after a publishing hiatus of over two years. This revived edition marks not just a return, but a bold step forward in documenting and celebrating the vibrant life of Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi.

At the heart of this edition is the grand 26th to 31st Combined Convocation, a landmark event in our University's history. We bring you full coverage of the memorable week, from the commissioning of key infrastructural projects and an impressive research exhibition, to the thought provoking Convocation Lecture and the Convocation proper which honoured academic excellence across board.

This magazine is particularly significant as the first to be published under the leadership of our 7th Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. Isaac N. Itodo, who assumed office two years ago. In an exclusive interview, he shares candid insights into his vision for the University, the challenges faced, and the strides already made. Another feature delves into his leadership style, outlining the tangible impact of his administration on the institution's growth and direction.

Packed with rich content, this edition

showcases the energy, resilience, and innovation that define our University community. Whether you are a member of staff, student, alumnus, or friend of the University, we trust you will find these stories as engaging as they are inspiring.

Welcome back to your magazine.

Warm regards!

Editorial Team

Engr. Prof. I N Itodo	-	Executive Editor
Rosemary Waku	-	Supervising Editor
Terkimbi Unande	-	Editor
Wilfred Nyajo	-	Assistant Editor
Sylvia Womboh	-	Member
Sylvia Agon	-	Member
Ruth Akulega	-	Member
Grace Ebe	-	Member
Deborah Attahiru	-	Member
Blessing Chia	-	Member
Abraham Ogwiji	-	Member
Doofan Abu	-	Member
Helen Abu	-	Member
Michael Uche	-	Member
Jairus Ominyi	-	Secretary
Jonathan Chigba	-	Photographer
Fidelis Mbauhar	-	Photographer

JoSTUM GRADUATES 22,027 IN GRAND CONVOCATION CEREMONY

Commissions Landmark Projects | Marks Milestone Convocation Stages Research Fair/Exhibition | Holds Convocation Lecture

By Sylvia Agon, Grace Ebe & Ruth Akulega

Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM) has once again reaffirmed its commitment to academic excellence and national development with the successful hosting of its 26th–31st Combined Convocation Ceremony. The historic event, which held between March 27 and 29, 2025, celebrated six graduating classes spanning the 2017/2018 to 2023/2024 academic sessions, culminating in the award of 22,027 degrees and diplomas.

The Convocation, staged at the James Ayatse Convocation Square, brought together dignitaries, alumni, scholars, and family members in a grand celebration of achievement, research, and reflection on national issues. The University also used the occasion to commission new projects, stage a research fair and exhibition, and hosted a thought-provoking Convocation Lecture focused on food security and peace in Nigeria.

The ceremony began on Thursday, March 27, with the commissioning of key infrastructural projects by notable figures including the SGF, Sen. Dr. George



Engr. Prof. Isaac N. Itodo, Vice-Chancellor, JoSTUM Delivering his Welcome Address



Prof. Ishaya Tanko, VC UNIJOS & Representative of the Visitor & President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR

Akume, represented by the Hon. Minister of Water Resources and Environment, Prof. Joseph Utsey; TETFund Executive Secretary Arc. Sonny Echono, and the representative of the Education Minister, Hajiya Ilyasu Gambo

Projects commissioned include the new College of Animal Science Academic Office Building, a 500 capacity Lecture Auditorium for College of Agronomy, an Academic Staff Building for the Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication as well as the New Academic Office Building for the Department of Agricultural Engineering and Biosystems.

It was followed by a Press Briefing where the Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo, presented a two-year scorecard, spotlighting achievements in infrastructure, research, and programme expansion.

On Friday, March 28th saw the exhibitions from various Colleges and Departments, showcasing innovations and inventions in Agriculture, Science and Engineering. This was preceded by a Convocation



Senator Joy Emordi Pro-Chancellor and Chairman Governing Council, Delivering Her Address

Lecture titled *"Food Security and Peace: The Complex Relationship Between Insecurity and Food Systems in Nigeria"*, delivered by General Martin Luther Agwai (Rtd.)

MARKS MILESTONE CONVOCATION

It was all fanfare on Saturday, 29th March as graduands, family, friends and dignitaries converged at the James Ayatse Square for the formal graduation and presentation of awards to 22,027 graduates of the University. The six sets of graduates include the years 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/2020, 2021/2022, and 2023/2024 academic sessions.

Pro-Chancellor and Chairman Governing Council of the University, Senator Joy Emordi, in her address at the event, emphasized the University's unwavering commitment to improving its service delivery system, pledging to sustain and enhance the quality of education and research at JoSTUM. "We commend the conscious efforts of Mr President towards making agriculture a viable alternative to the mono-cultural reliance on oil," she added. The Pro-Chancellor further praised the Tinubu-led administration for diversifying Nigeria's economy away from oil to agriculture, noting that the University's Governing Council had aligned its actions to liberalize access to new agricultural technologies.

Delivering his welcome address, the Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo acknowledged the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and Visitor to the University, His excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu and expressed joy at the success of the Convocation, adding " It gladdens my heart to inform you that on this occasion of the Combined Convocation

Ceremonies, we are graduating a total of 22,027 students comprising 15,402 conventional Bachelor Degrees, 2,121 Sandwich Degrees and 4,504 Postgraduate Degrees." He therefore congratulated the graduands for their hard work and dedication which have earned them their success.

Highlighting the University's commitment to agricultural research, technological advancement and innovation, Prof. Itodo outlined notable achievements recorded under his tenure including infrastructural development, expansion of academic programmes and improved research funding. Clarifying a lingering question whether JoSTUM was still a University of Agriculture, the Vice Chancellor said "JoSTUM by law remains a University of Agriculture, out of the 11 Colleges, 6 are agriculture-related,".

He however said this does not prohibit the University from offering impactful programmes of study. According to him, it was important to keep faith with the University's Vision "to become a major institutional player in the process of national and global human resource capacity building in Agriculture, Science, Engineering and Technology (ASET) for rapid economic growth. He therefore praised the resilience of staff, students and alumni in maintaining academic excellence in the University.



Prof. Joseph Utsev, Hon. Minister of Water Resources and Environment, Commissioning the Col. Of Agronomy Lecture Auditorium

The Visitor to the University, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu (GCFR) who was represented by Prof. Tanko Ishaya, Vice Chancellor of University of Jos, in his address encouraged the graduands to put on their thinking caps to find ways of enhancing the overall improvement of the University and the nation at large with their wealth of knowledge in contemporary skills

NEWS

in agriculture, so as to increase food production and sustainability. He called for mechanized agriculture as a way of life since Agriculture as a food producing tool cannot continue to be relegated to the subsistence level if food security must be ensured in the nation.

The event also recognized outstanding graduands, celebrating their academic excellence. The overall best graduating student Rabo Nathaniel was from the College of Veterinary Medicine. He shared his journey of balancing studies and losing a parent with JoSTUM News, "It wasn't easy, but God, and I think my study technique helped a lot", he said with joy.

STAGES RESEARCH FAIR/EXHIBITION

One event debuting as part of activities for the 26th - 31st Combined Convocation Ceremonies was a Research Fair/Exhibition which held on Friday, 28th March, 2025. It prominently featured innovations and inventions from the University's scholars. The parking lot of the Anande Richard Kimbir Senate Chamber, was a beehive of activities as enthusiasts drawn from both the University and the general public flooded the pavilions to catch sight of the various objects of invention on display.

Chairman of the Research Fair, Engr. Prof. J. A Enokela



An Automated Electric/Liquified Petroleum Gas Poultry Eggs Incubator on Display at the Research Fair

who led the Vice-Chancellor and other dignitaries round the pavilions was full of praises for University administration for the opportunity given to various Colleges and Departments to showcase their skills and craft. He also invited the crowd to patronize the University's inventions saying many of the items were already commercialized.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor of JoSTUM, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo noted that the Research fair was one of the highlights of the 26th-31st Combined Convocation Ceremonies. He stated that, "when there's a Convocation, it means that the graduands have met the requirements of their chosen degrees and as such, they should leave foot prints by which they'll be remembered, hence the exhibition".

The College of Engineering Pavillion was the first port of call for the Visitors starting with the department of Agricultural and Biosystem Engineering stand, where a dual powered drinking water treatment system, an Acha Dehauling machine and a Peanut coating machine were on display. The innovator of the water treatment machine, Dr. Raphael Iwar said the machine had the capacity to purify unclean water into safe drinking water.

At the Department of Electrical Electronics Engineering stand, an automated electric/liquified petroleum gas poultry eggs incubator invented by Audu Msughter M. was on display. Other offerings from the department include a robotic yam sorting machine and soya milk machine, A Solar DC Refrigerator (powered using the sun). Worthy of note was an electronic voting machine developed by Engr. Prof. J. A Enokela. The machine is suitable for deployment in Nigeria's electoral environment. There was also mobile app-based door lock system, an obstacle avoidance car application which was invented to prevent cars from colliding with obstacles in their paths, an electronic mobile safe deposit box, a solar yam pounder and solar lawn mower powered using a solar panel and battery, all on display to the admiration of the visitors.

At the College of Physical Sciences Pavillion, the Department of Chemistry featured items such as clothes, bags and name tags all transformed from waste materials into beautifully refined products. A specie of grass was also processed to produce molded



A Robotic Yam Sorting Machine on Display at the Research Fair

blocks.

Other College and centres also featured their products including Centre for Entrepreneurship and Development, College of Agronomy, College of Food Technology and Human Ecology, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and ENACTUS.

The Vice-Chancellor, Principal Officers and Members of the Governing Council expressed satisfaction and commended the various Colleges and Centres for the success of the exhibition. Mr. Aminu Lawal Othman, a member of the University's Governing Council appealed to the Vice-Chancellor to release some staff of the Department of Family and Consumer satisfaction to train students in Entrepreneurship in Kaduna, a request the Vice-Chancellor promised to honour.

CONVOCATION LECTURE

Gen M. L Agwai (Rtd) Advocates for the Adoption of Robust Dialogue as a Tool for Conflict Resolution to Ensure Food Security

General Martin Luther Agwai (Rtd) has affirmed that dialogue is the most viable tool for conflict management to bring about

lasting peace and ensure food security in Nigeria. He made this affirmation while delivering the 26th - 31st Combined Convocation Lecture of JoSTUM on Friday 28th March, 2025 at the Anande Richard Kimbir Senate Chamber.

Speaking on the topic: *"Food Insecurity and Peace: The Complex Relationship Between Insecurity and Food System in Nigeria"*, General Agwai asserted that, one of the cardinal responsibilities of governments globally is to provide and ensure security for their citizens, acknowledging it as the bedrock and hallmark of every modern society. He noted that the insecurity in Nigeria which has ultimately led to high incidence of food insecurity is a fallout of the global security environment which has become volatile and unpredictable, impacting heavily on food security around the world.

Gen Agwai emphasized the importance of dialogue as a measure to foster peace, adding that conflict always comes when people stay together but what is important is how to manage these conflicts. He advised that Government should ensure, a free flow of communication, free access to education and low tolerance for corruption while upholding human rights, good governance and a functioning government apparatus to ensure development.

In his lecture, the Retired General quoted a United Nations (UN) Food Programme Report 2022, which indicated that 34% of the population in 26 States of the



Gen. Martin-Luther Agwai (Rtd), Presenting The 26th – 31st Combined Convocation Lecture



Senator Joy Emordi Pro-Chancellor, JoSTUM, Presenting a Plaque to the Convocation Lecturer while the Vice Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo looks on.

Federal Republic of Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory had minimal food consumption. Also, an Institute for Development Studies according to him, indicated that 32% of children under the age of five experienced stunted growth while two million children suffer from severe acute malnutrition due to insufficiency or lack of access to food. He noted that, without a well-fed workforce the society may collapse, become vulnerable to annexation or turn into a pariah state in the sight of other nations.

The Convocation Lecturer further explained that where the environment is not conducive and is hostile, farmer's interest would certainly be threatened in terms of improving and sustaining the process of food production that would lead to food security. Food production according to him must have the attribute of not just providing basic nutrients but should also improve the economy of individuals.

Gen. Agwai explained that Nigeria, despite being in a democratic dispensation which is expected to herald positive dividends, has instead produced a deficit in terms of insecurity. He noted the heightened level of insecurity occasioned by terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy and separatist agitations, herders-farmers conflicts, transnational organized crime, piracy and sea robbery, cyber-crimes, technological challenges, environmental threats, public health challenges, fake news and hate speech, economic challenges, regional and global security challenges threaten the peace and

development of the country adding that all these are and will continue to be the major hindrance to the food chain production.

The General surmised the lecture by quoting Robert McNamara, saying "any society that seeks to achieve adequate military security against the background of acute food shortages, population explosion, low level of productive and per capital income, low technological development, inadequate and insufficient public utilities and chronic unemployment has a

false sense of security". He observed that security is development and without development there can be no security noting that in today's world the security of any country is not necessarily the function of its military power but essentially the aggregate of both military and non-military factors especially its human security. He reiterated that a developing nation that does not develop simply cannot remain secure and justice and equity brings peace. He therefore called for the adoption of dialogue and robust communication as a recipe to managing crisis and urged the graduands to make use of their knowledge and these skills acquired to make impactful contributions to the society for national development.

Earlier in his opening remarks, the Vice Chancellor Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Engr Professor Isaac N. Itodo disclosed that with the prevailing situation of insecurity in the country, it has become imperative to talk about it to find a lasting solution to peace and food security; hence the chosen topic for the lecture.

The Chairman of the occasion Engr. Professor E.I. Kucha identified the emergence of crisis in different parts of Benue State as being responsible for food shortages in Nigeria, resulting in hike in food prices. He stated that the Lecture has come timely for us to reflect on how to proffer lasting solutions to ensure the situation of food insecurity do not escalate.

PROJECTS COMMISSIONED



College of Animal Science Academic Staff Office Building



500 Capacity Auditorium for the College of Agronomy



Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Academic Staff Office Building



Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication Academic Staff Office Building

RESEARCH FAIR AND EXHIBITION



Acha Dehulling Machine



Peanut Coating Machine



An Automated Electric/Liquified Petroleum Gas Poultry Eggs Incubator



A Robotic Yam Sorting Machine



Electronic Voting Machine



Bread, Snacks and Drinks from Centre for Entrepreneurship Development



Dual Powered Drinking Water Treatment System



Electronic Mobile Safe Deposit Machine



Improved Cowpea Varieties, FUAM PEA 1,2,3&4



Beta Coal by ENACTUS-JoSTUM



Solar Powered Generator



Wares on display at Centre for Entrepreneurship Development

CONVOCATION LECTURE



Gen. Martin-Luther Agwai (Rtd) during his citation



Engr. Prof. E. I. Kucha, Convocation Lecture Chairman & Former VC, JoSTUM



Engr. Prof. I N Itodo, JoSTUM VC



University Principal Officers Processing in for the Lecture



Former JoSTUM VC, Prof. A. R Kimbir Adorning the Convocation Lecturer in The Ceremonial Tiv attire



Gen. Martin-Luther Agwai (Rtd) in his Ceremonial Tiv Attire



Gen. Martin-Luther Agwai (Rtd) Acknowledging greetings from the Cultural Group



Gen. Martin-Luther Agwai (Rtd) in a group Photograph with University Principal Officers, Governing Council Members and Special Guests



HRM, Prof Felicia H. Ayatse and Dr. D. T Uza



Pro-Chancellor, JoSTUM, Sen. Joy Emordi Welcoming the Convocation Lecturer



Unveiling the Convocation Lecture Cake



Tiv Cultural Dancers Entertaining Guests at the Lecture

CONVOCATION



Senate Procession



Sen. Joy Emordi, Pro-Chancellor, JoSTUM



Prof. Ishaya Tanko, VC UNIQUOS & Representative of the Visitor & President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR



Engr. Prof. Isaac N. Itodo, JoSTUM VC



HRM. Prof. James Ayatse, Tor Tiv and Former VC, JoSTUM



Prof. Joseph Utsev, Hon. Minister of Water Resources and Environment



Maj. Sunday Agwon
Commanding Officer II
72 Special Forces



L-R, Former JoSTUM Vice-Chancellors, Prof. A. R. Kimbir, Engr. Prof. E. I. Kucha and Prof. D. V. Uza



Dr. John David, Registrar, JoSTUM



L-R: HRH Chief Ajoh Simon, Mue Ter Ihyarev & HRH Chief Vincent Aule, Ter Makurdi



A Cross Section of Graduates



Prof. Zacharys Gundu, VC, University of Mkar presenting a goodwill message to JoSTUM VC



Prof. Itodo, VC JoSTUM & Prof. Joseph Utsev in a handshake



Outstanding Graduates in a Handshake with JoSTUM VC



ENACTUS JoSTUM: National Champions and Leadership Award Winners 2024

By Blessing Chia & Terkimbi Unande

In a defining moment for Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), the University's ENACTUS team has earned national and international acclaim for their groundbreaking project, ECORESIN; a biodegradable polymer resin innovation turning agricultural waste and invasive plants into a powerful tool against plastic pollution. Their outstanding accomplishments culminated in winning the prestigious "Leadership Outstanding Young Person of the Year 2024 Award" on 8th April, 2025, following their historic victory as National Champions at the ENACTUS Nigeria National Competition in July, 2024.

ENACTUS, an acronym for "Entrepreneurial Action in Us" is a global nonprofit organization that empowers



University students to address social, economic, and environmental challenges through entrepreneurial action. Since its inception at JoSTUM in 2004, the team has consistently evolved, but 2024 marked a landmark year, for the first time in two decades, ENACTUS JoSTUM clinched first place nationally, outshining 32 top Universities including finalists from Ahmadu Bello University and Adekunle Ajasin University.

Their winning initiative, ECORESIN, tackles the global crisis of plastic waste by developing biodegradable resins made from cassava starch. These eco-friendly materials replace petroleum-based plastics and can be used for food packaging, shopping bags, and agricultural wrappers. Not only do they naturally decompose without polluting the environment, but they also enrich the soil, offering a dual benefit of waste reduction and agricultural enhancement. ECORESIN's transformative potential was further validated when it won first place in the ENACTUS



Plates made from Ecoresin



L-R Engr. Prof. Simon Itwange, ENACTUS Primary Faculty Advisor; Prof. Lami Nnamonu, ENACTUS Co-Faculty Advisor; Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo, Vice Chancellor; Mr. Michael Ajayi, ENACTUS Nigeria Country Director and Levi Isreal, ENACTUS JOSTUM Team Leader

empowerment for rural farmers. These projects are rooted in the philosophy of creating community focused, sustainable change, and they exemplify the University's dedication to equipping students with the skills to solve real world problems.

The story of JoSTUM ENACTUS is not just a celebration of a single win; it is a powerful example of what is possible when innovation, youth empowerment, and

Action with Africa Challenge 2024, an initiative focused on solving socio-economic issues across the continent. Additionally, a rigorous audit by Enactus Global Headquarters in August 2024 affirmed the authenticity and scalability of the project, a nod to the team's commitment to excellence.

This achievement not only shines a spotlight on the ingenuity and determination of JoSTUM's student innovators but also underscores the pivotal support and enabling environment provided by the University's administration. This trailblazing success would not have been possible without the steadfast support of JoSTUM's administration, which has been instrumental in nurturing a culture of innovation and excellence. By investing in platforms like ENACTUS, the University has demonstrated a forward-thinking approach to student development, one that goes beyond traditional classroom learning to real-world problem solving. Beyond ECORESIN, the JoSTUM ENACTUS team has implemented various initiatives over the years ranging from sustainable farming practices to financial literacy programmes and

institutional support come together. The team's achievements have not only elevated the University's reputation but also inspired countless other students and institutions across Nigeria. Their journey is a masterclass in how young minds, when empowered with the right support, can design sustainable solutions with global impact. It reflects JoSTUM's broader mission to develop entrepreneurial leaders who are resourceful, value-driven, and socially responsible.



The Vice Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo and University Principal Officers in a Group Photograph with the ENACTUS JoSTUM Team After Presenting the Leadership Award to the Vice Chancellor

Rebranding JoSTUM: Prof. Itodo's Strategies and Impact

By Rosemary Waku & Terkimbi Unande

Rebranding a University goes beyond a change of name or logo, it is a comprehensive transformation that revitalizes identity, improves functionality, strengthens visibility, and repositions the institution for relevance in an evolving academic landscape. For Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), rebranding has come to life through strategic leadership, visionary reforms, and relentless commitment to excellence under the stewardship of Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo, who assumed office as the 7th substantive Vice-Chancellor on February 17, 2023.

An accomplished alumnus of JoSTUM, Prof. Itodo brought a unique advantage to the role; an insider's understanding of the University's challenges and untapped potentials. His deep-rooted connection with the institution allowed him to hit the ground running, setting out a transformative agenda tailored to the University's peculiar realities. He identified and prioritized a broad range of issues including poor student enrolment, infrastructural decay, academic inertia, unmarketable programmes, staff demotivation, weak student welfare, security concerns, and limited external collaborations. Two years into his tenure, the results are compelling.

Tackling Enrolment and Academic Redesign

One of the first interventions by Prof. Itodo was addressing the declining student enrolment linked to slow result processing and delayed graduation timelines. Recognizing that outdated and unattractive academic offerings were deterring potential students, his administration embarked on an ambitious overhaul of the University's academic structure. This included ensuring the swift processing of students results and the introduction of market relevant programmes while unbundling existing ones.



Engr. Prof. Isaac N. Itodo,
Vice-Chancellor, JoSTUM

The College of Management Sciences saw the restoration and approval of previously delisted programmes such as BSc Business Administration, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Accounting, Public Administration, Finance, Agricultural Marketing and Cooperative, and Procurement Management. These approvals, secured after successful resource verification by the National Universities Commission (NUC), have rejuvenated the College and attracted new student intakes.

In the College of Engineering, a bold restructuring transformed it into a hub of innovation. Beyond the

traditional offerings, new programmes such as Computer Engineering, Environmental Engineering, and Telecommunication Engineering were proposed and approved, bringing the total to seven specialized engineering degrees.

Likewise, the former College of Agricultural and Science Education was renamed and restructured into the College of Education, now offering 20 distinct programmes including Environmental Education, Industrial Technical Education, and Library Science. Similar expansions occurred in the Colleges of Physical Sciences and Agricultural Economics & Extension. These academic reforms

culminated in a record-breaking 6,472 new student matriculations for the 2024/2025 academic session, the highest in the University's history.

Enhancing Quality and Recognition

The rebranding of JoSTUM also extended to previously neglected segments such as the Sandwich Programme. For years, its graduates were ineligible for the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), but Prof. Itodo's administration secured NUC resource verification and has begun processing NYSC exclusion certificates for past graduates. These graduates were recognized during the 26th to 31st Combined Convocation Ceremony in 2025.



The University Clinic Wearing a New Look

In a bid to enhance intellectual visibility, the frequency of Inaugural Lectures was increased, jumping from one per month in 2023 to two per month in 2024. By May 5th, 2025, the University had held its 70th Inaugural Lecture, 35 of which took place under Prof. Itodo's tenure.

On the postgraduate front, JoSTUM was selected as one of only 20 Nigerian Universities approved by TETFund as a tenable institution for the local component of its Academic Staff Scholarship (TSAS) programme, an endorsement of the University's rising academic credibility.

International Visibility and Innovation

A crowning achievement under Prof. Itodo's leadership is the elevation of the World Bank-sponsored Centre for Innovation in Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (CIPESS). Ranked first among its peers nationwide, the Centre has now been institutionalized as an institute within the University. It currently runs BSc programmes in Procurement, Social Standard, and Environmental Standard and has begun attracting international students underscoring JoSTUM's emerging global appeal.

Infrastructure and Facility Upgrades

Addressing infrastructural deficits was another pillar of the rebranding initiative. JoSTUM received a TETFund High Impact Intervention of ₦2 billion in 2023 and another ₦4 billion in 2024. These funds have powered extensive development projects like new office buildings, lecture theatres, laboratories, roads, and modern facilities across multiple Colleges. Highlights include the Professorial College building at the College of Animal Sciences, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering and Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication respectively. Others include a 500-seat theatre at the College of Agronomy, an auditorium for the College of Food Technology and Human Ecology, the rehabilitation of the Vice-Chancellor's Lodge, and the development of specialized labs and greenhouses. ICT

upgrades, road asphaltting, and beautification efforts have further improved the campus environment.

Additionally, the University secured TETFund grants for 42 research proposals, totaling ₦151.5 million with ₦90.9 million already disbursed for institution-based research.

Welfare, Morale, and Security

Prof. Itodo's administration placed great emphasis on staff motivation and welfare. This included the promotion of over 100 academic staff to professorial ranks, establishment of new directorates in both academic and non-academic sectors, and introduction of annual leave schemes and prompt claims processing. These efforts have significantly boosted staff morale and efficiency.

On the student front, renovated hostels, constant electricity and water supply, surveillance systems, improved sanitation, and common room upgrades have redefined campus living. The administration's attention to security and welfare has created a conducive environment for both learning and personal growth.

Community, Competitions and Legacy

JoSTUM's visibility in national and international competitions has surged. The ENACTUS team ranked 16th globally, while

the University's football team, the JoSTUM Tillers, emerged champions of the maiden Varsity Football League. The University's national ranking improved dramatically from 86th in 2021 to 48th in 2024.

A renowned Agricultural Engineer, Prof. Itodo continues to advance

innovation beyond administration. His joint patent with the Raw Materials Research and Development Council for an Acha dehulling machine, and his near complete patents for a yam in mound harvesting machine and improved acha dehuller, highlight his impact in agricultural mechanization. Prof. Itodo's accolades including the National Productivity Order of Merit Award (2019) and fellowships in numerous engineering bodies including the Academy of Engineering add to his credibility as a visionary leader.



Asphalted Intra-campus Road



On-going Construction Work at the College of Food Technology and Human Ecology Lecture Auditorium

JoSTUM and NACEST Renew MoU, Deepen Academic and Technical Partnership

By Deborah Attahiru & Terkimbi Unande

Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), and the Nigerian Army College of Environmental Science and Technology (NACEST), formerly known as the Nigerian Army Institute of Technology and Environmental Studies (NAITES), have reaffirmed their institutional alliance through the renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), reinforcing their commitment to collaborative academic and technical engagement.

The renewed MoU outlines key areas of partnership aimed at enhancing capacity-building and knowledge transfer between the two institutions. The document stipulates that JoSTUM will support NACEST by teaching Engineering Technology courses, deploying technical staff on a part-time basis, and granting NACEST access to its laboratories and workshops. JoSTUM will also offer technical assistance and other forms of academic cooperation to help meet the goals of the agreement.

Addressing the management team in the Vice-Chancellor's Conference Room before signing the MoU recently, the Acting Rector of the College, Brig. Gen. Solomon Inuwa, stated that collaboration is very important in the 21st century as it provides Nigeria with multi-dimensional approaches to solving issues. He submitted that though the exercise is to update the MoU following its 5-year expiration tenure, the College still covets the partnership of the management to thrive. He appreciated the support of the University so far, adding that this enormous gesture has birthed the successful admission exercise held in the College some

few weeks ago.

Gen. Inuwa therefore pledged the commitment of the College to the provision of the agreement, noting that the wealth of experience and expertise they aim to garner from the University, cannot be under-emphasised.

Reacting, the Vice-Chancellor, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), Engr. Prof. I. N. Itodo remarked that this collaboration has been in existence for many years, and they are privileged to renew it. He echoed that as an Engineer, the days of the Y the X Engineering is phasing out, leaving the practical skills an

individual has, to put food on his table. The Vice-Chancellor further maintained that with the current knowledge-based economy, the College is becoming more indispensable as it provides practical solutions to the challenges bedeviling the society today.

Prof. Itodo promised the management's unflinching support, adding that the JoSTUM's Colleges are getting better with state of the art facilities, commodious buildings, and world class infrastructures geared towards making the school better, and the Military College by extension.

Earlier in his address, the Dean, College of Engineering, Engr. Pro. M. O. Udochukwu appreciated the joint efforts of the University management and the College for a fruitful partnership over the years, and their quest to sustain it upon its expiration.

The NACEST team thereafter proceeded to attend the 70th Inaugural Lecture of the JoSTUM which held the same day.



A New Era for Animal Care as VCN Inducts 24 JoSTUM Graduates

By Grace Ebe

The future of animal care in Nigeria looks promising as more Veterinarians are being trained with various initiatives to provide essential care and promote animal welfare. At the Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), twenty-four veterinarians were inducted into the Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN). The occasion was held on Wednesday, 23rd April, 2025 at the Anande Richard Kimbir Senate chamber, North Core under the Distinguished Chairmanship of Dr. David Shehu, Zonal Commander, Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Services (NAQS).

Declaring the event open, Dr. Shehu counted it as a privilege to be present at the 16th oath taking ceremony. He applauded the University management and staff of the

recruiting veterinary manpower, setting up animal disease diagnostic laboratories and equipping veterinary clinics are essential for effective animal health management. He noted that robust disease surveillance systems enable early detection and prompt response to outbreaks, mitigating economic losses and preventing diseases from being transmitted to humans.

He further explained that educating the public about animal health and responsible animal husbandry practices reduces disease transmission between humans and animals and controls antimicrobial resistance.

Furthermore, he emphasized that, strengthening partnerships leads to better disease management, reduced livestock mortality rates, and increased

productivity, adding that enhanced food security and healthy livestock ensures a stable supply of meat, milk, and essential products, contributing to food security and economic stability. Dr. Asambe added that, A robust animal health system can boost Nigeria's agricultural sector, contributing to GDP growth and poverty reduction.

In a welcome speech delivered by the Dean of



The new Vet Doctors in a group photo with University Principal Officers and VIP Guests at the Induction

College of Veterinary Medicine for attaining such a feat and congratulated the graduands, urging them to be good ambassadors of the University, wherever they go.

Speaking on the theme, “Animal Health, National Wealth: Strengthening partnership for a safer Nigeria,” the guest lecturer Dr. Aondoakaa Asambe, DG, Benue State Bureau of Livestock Development and Transboundary Animal Disease Control stated that strengthening partnerships is crucial for improving animal health in Nigeria which in turn contributes to national wealth and safety. He noted that

the College of Veterinary Medicine JoSTUM, Prof. J.A Bosha, he welcomed and appreciated members of staff, members of College Boards, team of consultants, clinicians and technologists for their doggedness in training the graduands. He also appreciated the Senate of JoSTUM, the Colleges of Agronomy, Fisheries and Aqua-culture for providing a suitable academic learning environment for the programme. He noted that the livestock industry has a lot of potential and it is also the major source of conflict in Nigeria therefore, there is every need for partnership for a



Dr. David Shehu, Zonal Commander, Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS)

safer Nigeria and Benue in particular. He intimated that the success rate of the students has been on grade A since the inception of the College. He called on the graduands to take advantage of the opportunity in the livestock industry which is at the verge of transformation in our country and also strive to be good ambassadors of the College and the University at large.

Prof. Bosha further appealed to the Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) to increase the intake quota from thirty to hundred, stating that JoSTUM has better manpower and equipment compared to other veterinary schools. He however seized the opportunity to raise some challenges confronting the College such as the lack of running water in block A South Core, which houses the College and Offices, lack of water in the laboratory, no good conveniences for senior academics, discrimination at the entry point of DVM holders, best graduating students of the College not benefitting from the retention policy of the school and also, the need for digitization of records in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) for easy retrieval of

information and for future purposes.

In his remark, the Vice Chancellor of the University, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo gave his assurances that every challenge of the College will be duly attended to. In his address earlier, he congratulated the graduands and applauded the efforts of the staff of Vet. Medicine, stating that the College is known for being first in everything especially beginning lectures on the



Dr. Aondoakaa Asambe, DG Benue State Bureau of Livestock Development & Transboundary Animal Disease Control

first day of resumption therefore he will give his full support in all their activities.

The President of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria, Prof. Adamu appreciated the Vice-Chancellor, members of staff and the students for their support. He encouraged the inductees to take on the profession seriously ensuring that they function within the ambit of the Veterinary ethics as failure to do so will attract discipline. He assured the College of his unalloyed support in all their activities and prayed to God to grant them more success in their endeavors.

The Acting Registrar VCN, Dr. Fadipe Oladotun led the graduands in the oath taking as they pledged to use their scientific knowledge and professional skills for the benefit of the society through the protection of animal health, the promotion of animal production and of public health and the advancement of veterinary medicine knowledge.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of certificates to the graduands and presentation of awards to the overall best graduating student, Dr. Osaji, Ifechukwudi Joshua with the highest CGPA of 4.56. He came top in eight courses. Other best graduating students are Achegbulu, Eleojo Regina (came top in five courses) and Bako Eunice Joshua (Best in Clinics).

Veterinary Konnect Award of Excellence and Farm alert Outlier award of a Hundred Thousand Naira was given to Dr. Undo Jacob Fater.

Delivering the Valedictory speech, Dr. Idigbe Success Umumenyohe urged her colleagues to have courage to look around as much as they look ahead to find the real gems that will make the account of their life's journey more beautiful with lasting memories.

In a vote of thanks, the Deputy Dean of the College, Dr. Nathaniel Wanmi, appreciated the University community, parents of graduands, invited dignitaries, friends and well-wishers for their support and presence. He prayed for safety back to their various destinations.



President VCN, Prof. Matthew Adamu presenting a plaque to the overall best graduating student, Dr. Osaji Ifechukwudi Joshua at the 16th Oath Taking Ceremony

ONE-ON-ONE WITH ENGR. PROF. ISAAC NATHANIEL ITODO, 7TH SUBSTANTIVE VICE-CHANCELLOR, JoSTUM

In an exclusive interview with JoSTUM News, the Vice-Chancellor, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, offers a dive into his administration's strategic direction, sharing his bold vision for the institution's future. Speaking on a range of issues from academic excellence to infrastructural development, he outlines his strategic efforts to reposition JoSTUM for global competitiveness.

We bring you excerpts

JoSTUM News: Kindly share with us your feelings and thoughts about the University that you preside over now as Vice-Chancellor and CEO.

VC: My thoughts for the University are very positive, although there is no entity without setbacks or drawbacks. I can tell you that this University is blessed with very, very deep contents and evidence abounds as to why I say the University has a deep content. When you say a system has contents, it means the system has what it takes to be called a University. In the area of Academics, in the area of Sports, Partnerships, Linkages; in the area of Scholarships. If you try all these, you'll agree with me that the University is deep. For example, we are the champions of Nigeria in the ENACTUS

Programme. The ENACTUS programme is supposed to be the creative hub for Nigerian students. We established our content as the best in Nigeria in this area, and we went to Kazakhstan and we were ranked 16th in the entire world which is no mean feat! In sports, remember JoSTUM won the first edition of the University Premiership League. We followed up again, back to back as double champions. The third time we were runner up and that competition

stopped. And it has been rejuvenated again to what they call the University cup. JoSTUM took the very first edition again. We won the competition at the University of Benin, belittling traditional Universities like the University of Illorin. That is in Sports. There are (6) Centres of Excellence for the World Bank in the entire Nigerian Universities, both Federal & State

Universities. Nigeria has over 200 Universities and the Centre of Excellence in the middle belt is domiciled in our University here. During the competitive bidding process to win the Centre of Excellence, our University came overall first. Even after we've established the CIPRESS programme, our CIPRESS programme remains the no. 1 in Nigeria not just in the middle belt. So that is

why I say our content is deep. Certainly, we have some setbacks and those too should be part of my thoughts.

One of the major problems I have identified here which demotivates our enthusiasm to deliver is that both Staff & Students don't take pride in the University, I don't know why. The Makurdians rarely take delight in showcasing themselves. Perhaps, they belittle themselves just like most people belittle





them, too. And here, maybe because we are constricted to Agriculture, we keep doing Animal Science, Plant Science, Agricultural Economics and nothing else for close to 30 to 40 years of our lives, right? And so we couldn't have the required student population; we couldn't have the societal impact that we should have had over the years. But I think all that is changing now. That's why I am here to change the narrative because I know exactly what the problems are. So, those are my thoughts on the University but I believe with some conscience in our work ethics, this University will be great eventually.

JoSTUM News: Thank you very much, Sir. From all you've said now do I say this is why your Mission and Vision is to reposition the University for global competitiveness?

VC: Yes, I am thinking beyond Nigeria because I think we are the best in Nigeria. So, if we say we are, we should be thinking of competing globally. And I mean it. Look, this year I'm a Professor of 22 years, right? Before then, I've paid my dues considerably, and I have been external examiner to UNN, University of Ibadan, Ife. Bayero, Zaria, Port-Harcourt, in fact, all over the Universities in Nigeria. I have also gone on Accreditation; I mean, visits to almost all the Universities in Nigeria. Personally, I belong to the peak of the Engineering Society; The Academy of Engineering. We are less than a hundred in the whole Country and the best of the best in the Academy, and I can tell you that yes, our University is

competitive enough. But I already told you the problems that beset us and those are largely self-made, and self-inflicted.

JoSTUM NEWS: You have spent two years out of your five year tenure as Vice Chancellor, are you satisfied with your rate of progress in fulfillment of your vision for the University? In other words, what percentage of achievement would you give yourself in relation to your vision for the University?

VC: I leave the last one for you to answer but I can attempt the first one whether I am satisfied? Very satisfied! Because I set out to do many things and if I do a check of it, I can tell you that I have not missed out on any since I came into office. The first thing is Students' results, mobilisation to NYSC, right? I didn't take up to six months to deal with that and within the six months, over Seven Thousand JoSTUM graduands were mobilised for NYSC and after that time, it has remained regular. The major problem here is infrastructural deficit, so I set out to identify the needs of every Academic College and in doing that, I saw where the Infrastructural deficit lay; and in some places, the deficit was so deep. Some places, it was extremely negative, at others, it was moderate. The infrastructural deficit in the Academic sector was really, really challenging and in the space of two years, the first that I intervened was in my own Department, Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering because other Engineering

INTERVIEW

Departments are here because of Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering. If you have been a part of this University, you'll discover that Agricultural Economics & Extension since they came here and those buildings; nothing has been added, not even a renovation of any of the structures there. And so I went for a commodious building for Department of Agricultural Economics & Extension and Communication. And there are 20 offices there. Each office has its convenience; each office has its conditioner, beautifully furnished. So it is a 70% to 80% motivation for the staff. We expect that they will be able to do their work proudly and the quantum of what comes from them will now be better. So that is how I did that intervention there. The building has already been commissioned and handed over to the College.

Then don't forget that we had abandoned buildings in the past and I felt that I had good connection with some very strong people in Government... And so if this University does not get these things done now, it may never be again because everything has its season and time. So I went to work and eventually they gave me that FST Lecture Theatre. I am hearing through the grapevine that all my efforts since last year to this year are not in vain; that the ICT building will soon get a letter of approval and then work will start almost immediately on the abandoned ICT building. So by doing that, we don't have any abandoned project in the University again.

JoSTUM News: Sir, when you assumed office in 2023 you expressed dissatisfaction with the state of the University's ICT services and swiftly set out to transform/overhaul ICT in the University. Have your efforts started yielding benefits? What has actually improved in our internet service delivery?

VC: Let me tell you, ICT can never be totally achieved. You know why? In a month's time, you'll be talking about a new technology, so, you see us struggling, coming from behind. But that notwithstanding, you know there is Wi-Fi in the hostels now. It is a rare feat for such a large Campus that every College you go, you have Wi-Fi. So that has saved the cost of data. It is gradual, and we are making steady progress. Even our Website was very poorly populated, I am told now

that it is very rich.

JoSTUM News: Sir, this University has existed for over 4 decades executing its mandate of Teaching, Research and Extension. In your assessment, how well has this mandate been exercised and what impact has the University created within its catchment areas & Nigeria?

VC: When you talk of impact, it has to do with your area of influence. Our area of influence has shrunk. Our area of influence is not as wide as it used to be. But never the less, a University is a University. I can tell you we have Alumni who are retired Air Marshalls in the Air force. For example, Jafaru Ibrahim Yahaya, my own classmate. He retired about 3 or 4 years ago from the Air force as an Air Vice Marshall. So I'm just calling a few; we have so many of them in Universities abroad who are Professors. University of Atlanta, German Universities, and all that. There is almost no Nigerian University you go today you will not have an Alumnus as a Professor. And then in the bureaucracy, in government, there are Permanent Secretaries, of course. So, in terms of impact, I have mentioned qualitatively a few of our Alumni and where they are, or where they were, and then the roles that they have played so it is for you to judge.

JoSTUM News: The combined Convocation will be holding from the 27th to 30th of March, 2025. How prepared are we for this event?

VC: All hands are on deck. Each time they have a major problem and they don't know which way to go, they come and knock and I open the door for them. So I think arrangement is in top gear and there is no watertight arrangement anywhere as long as it's a human system. But I hope we'll be able to have a good Convocation.

JoSTUM News: The Solar Power Plant is one of the achievements the University prides in but recently the power interruptions have become rampant. Sir, what is the challenge and how can this be tackled?

VC: If you've been there, there are almost over 8,000 cycle batteries. You must give them the favourable environment to operate. You must have the ACs that are working and then keep the room below certain temperatures. There must be a match between the

number of batteries and the solar panel. Now I tell you something; in the design of solar panels, there is what we call autonomous days. You design for two autonomous days. Why because, we are in the tropics. When you design solar systems, you design for surplus battery, and you design for surplus modules (panels) more than what you need. And you are doing that so you can take care of two autonomous days. But in this system, they designed for one autonomous day. What you harvest, you use it that night. So if there is cloud cover the next day, it introduces the incidence of dissolution from the panel by 30% then you must augment with regular generator. So we still buy diesel if you don't know. And beyond that, when you have fans controlling the system, ACs having their own fans and all this, after so much use, 2-4-7, you are bound to have misalignments, wear and tear. So when that occurs, it becomes very critical that you have to switch off. Or if you want to save money, you begin to do some form of shading when there is cloudiness; otherwise, you find yourself spending hundreds of naira, thousands and millions on diesel. But we have done what no other people do in Nigeria. The BUK system failed as quickly as they started. Seven Universities were given, but none have their Solar now running. Here I have appointed people who are trained on the system to manage it and they report directly to me. Because I am an engineer, it's an advantage. So each time they want to trouble shoot, they come and we sit down and we discuss it exhaustively. Like now, we know where our next problem from the plant will come and we've already ordered the part online. It didn't quite fit, but we have adapted it and we have them secured somewhere. So you anticipate, and then you follow up. So if out of seven that the Federal Government gave Nigerian Universities, only ours, Abakiliki is a bit epileptic... and so we are the only people standing.

JoSTUM News: Recently, through a Federal Government Policy directive, the Universities were removed from the IPPIS Payroll. Sir, can you comment on that a bit and how that is impacting on Staff welfare in our University?

VC: Nothing has changed significantly. It's just

change in name. You see, they said we'll now be paid through GIFMIS. We have no control over GIFMIS. It's still the same people who are controlling it. For those of you who are in the University long enough, they used to release our overhead and capital every quarter and we manage it the way we want. If my recurrent is not fully spent I can recruit people to spend it, right? I don't have to go anywhere to take permission from anybody. But today, I still have to upload before your salaries are paid. The Bursar and myself we are doing a lot of iteration on the GIFMIS platform and we'll be doing it like that for three days till we'll be able to get to the point where the Account-General will finally finalise before you'll get your pay. What does that mean? Before, the salary section here will prepare the salary, you'd know how much you're going to earn for that month and they'd take it to the Bank. And there is a registrar that signs that schedule. Everything is still from the Federal Government. Nothing has changed.

JoSTUM News: Agricultural Extension is a core component of the mandate of the University through which the deliverables in best farming practices and Agricultural technology reach the farmers. Considering your agenda in this direction, can you say your administration has provoked the right spark to bring innovation in the Agricultural extension drive of the University?

VC: It's true that I am trying to provide the impetus for research and innovation Agricultural Extension, you're right. But it takes time for these things to blossom. Staff that had no offices before now, are getting offices for the first time. They even have to get used to the offices. Their work ethics will change because they now have a convenient office. Their meeting ethics will change; their collaborative research efforts will change. So it is only a springboard. It is only the enhancement that I have provided so some other factors will come to play and it will take time for you to begin to see the result.

JoSTUM News: It is believed that in both the Public and Private Universities, a strong IGR base is vital for growth and development. Sir, how do you rate the IGR base of JoSTUM?

VC: Very poor! Yesterday some students visited and I

INTERVIEW

told them the choice is theirs whether they want us to develop this University or not. Luckily there is the NELFUND now. If what other Universities have done was to increase their school fees to nothing less than Two Hundred and something Thousand Naira, do you know why they did it? Because the students are no longer the ones paying, it's the Federal Government. So, Bayero did that and every year they get about 3 Billion as school fees paid for their students and that is their IGR. But here we are still paying N57,000 as our school fees and that's what NELFUND will give us for the total number of students we have. And then our IGR will be in millions and other people's IGR will be in Billions. So it's time for us to even make our own N300,000 per student because, the Federal Government is the one paying. We should increase our school fees to N300,000. Your own is to just come to school because you're no longer the one paying. What you call your IGR base is really, really pitiable. And that is why, when you write anything and you bring here, there are budget ceilings and budget lines for everything. There are auditors that come to check them. Our revenue base is really nothing compared to the other Institutions. So, it is time for us to up our game, and it means all of us must come together to work together. So all the Federal Universities have increased their school fees so they can park money from the Government and here we are still holding on to our traditional N50,000.

JoSTUM News: The lingering disputes between the University and its host communities has hampered meaningful development in the University; particularly in the area of the University's partnerships with agro producing franchises and campus security. What is the policy direction of your Administration in mitigating the hostilities and fostering healthier cooperation for mutual peace and progress?

VC: Let me tell you, when you go out into the society there, it's no longer a homogeneous group. It is a heterogeneous group. You find all sorts of people and their thoughts and their methods are all different; their idiosyncrasies are different. That plays in every group of people, the host community too is

not an exception. There will always be problems because our forefathers didn't sort these things out well and we are the people suffering it now but I can assure you that I am making steady progress. Like now I got all the host communities into what we call a community policing system. There are 6 checkpoints now on this campus at night from 6pm to 6am. They know the geography of this place more than you and I. and since they started the community policing, we have not recorded one single theft on campus. But there were armoured cables they packed all before now. So if you carry the armoured cables now, where are you going to pass? There are 6 checkpoints on this campus and today we have agreed to do the 7th one towards the river. We are using the host communities now. We got people from Mbayongu, we got people from Ucha community here, from Mbawa and from all the other areas. We are not giving them N10,000, we are paying them N20,000. They are running shifts, and they are quite pleased about that. Since we started that I've not heard of single theft on campus again. That is one of it. And eh, we are having DSS patrol the campus from almost 7:30pm to 5:30am on a daily basis. It costs us so much because we must fuel their vehicles and give the personnel some money, too. All that is going on; and then we have deployed walkie-talkies now so every unit head, every sectional head has a walkie-talkie. So that when you see anything, you can announce, you can broadcast it and the DSS will come there to give you support because they also will have a walkie-talkie. The police will have, the people at the check points will have. So we are trying to practice that for one week to see how it goes. We are also planning some training for our security staff. Of course the security Departmental building is on and the contractor has asked for a month and a half to deliver. I think that is what is happening there.

JoSTUM News: Thank you very much, Sir. Still on the University's performance, you'll agree with me that ranking is one of the indicators that a University is performing. Unfortunately, JoSTUM has continually been ranked low in the Country. Recently, we noticed a significant leap from 86 in 2021 to 48 in 2024. What have you done

differently?

VC: Let me say this: expect better ranking in the next two to three years. Let me tell you, most of these rankings are web based; that's your visibility on the web. What does that mean? The papers that your scholars publish, your lecturers publish, they are publishing here, but it may not be sufficient presence on the web. So what I decided to do is to award the contract for the JAST building. You know we had a Journal called Journal of Agriculture, Science & Technology (JAST). I was the editor of that journal when at the same time I was the Dean of Engineering. After I left as editor, they haven't published one article since then. The Journal, like, literally died. So, the only way to institutionalize that Journal now is to have a building for it and Government has given us the money for the



building, due process has been completed, the site has been allocated in the College of Engineering. That's where the JAST building will be. So, people can now resume to the office. The Editor will have his office. He will also have his secretarial staff. The associate editors will also have their offices. As soon as this happens, they will call for papers and then they will publish. TETFund gives 25,000.000 (Twenty-Five Million) every year for publishing Journals so it is not a problem. We will only harvest that money and continue to publish. Maybe we'll even make it four times in a year but to start; two times in a year and so you will begin to see our visibility on the web more than ever. It will start this year. I am determined to make sure that JAST takes off again. So, with time,

you'll see JoSTUM become one of the top Universities in Nigeria. I would have been out of office by then.

JoSTUM News: Earlier you spoke about the milestones CIPESS now IPESS has achieved since its establishment: we'll like you to in specific terms, rate the impact of the Centre on the University and Nation at large?

VC: You know the three short term and long term courses but mostly the short-term courses. No centre in Nigeria has been as impactful as IPESS because they trained states like Kogi, Nassarwa. The last training, they had, even the Governor of Nassarawa State participated. They've been to Federal University Lokoja to train their staff. They've also organised leadership boot camps for our own Directors, Deans and all that. They have brought in three Academic Programmes approved by NUC.

They even organised training for all the VC's in the North Central states. So, when you look at this, no centre in Nigeria has been able to accomplish what IPESS has been able to accomplish. And more importantly, for sustainability because it's the centre of the World Bank, because the World Bank will soon finish and go, they decided to make it an Institute. That's part of the sustainability plans. No centre has been able to transform into an Institute.

JoSTUM News: Sir, we are really grateful for all the time; but we won't leave this place without asking you to share with us any other thing you want to share about your life so far as the head as...

VC: As VC?

JoSTUM News: Yes, Sir.

VC: Tough! Tough! One, no money for you to drive your dreams, and number two, you don't have the resources to even move around to do exactly what you want to do. If I had more resources, I would have brought in more things than what you are even seeing. Again, it is very difficult to have staff that can deliver in their respective mandates. And they are not even enthusiastic followers and that one compounds the problem.

JoSTUM Unveils New Security Uniforms to Enhance Efficiency and Boost Morale

- Reveal plans to build new permanent security building

By Terkimbi Unande



The Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo Officially Commissioning JoSTUM Security's New Uniforms

The Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM) has taken a significant step in enhancing the morale and operational efficiency of its Security Department with the unveiling of new uniforms for the staff. The uniform commissioning took place on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at the University's Senate Chamber.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo emphasized the importance of the new uniforms describing them as a symbol of identity and pride for the University's security team. He stated that security personnel must wear their uniforms at all times and highlighted the significance of presenting a neat and professional image. The Vice-Chancellor expressed his belief that the new uniforms would not only improve the physical appearance of the security personnel but also serve to inspire confidence in the University community. He therefore charged the security officers to take pride in their attire and maintain high standards of cleanliness and neatness to reflect the values of the University.

The unveiling of the uniforms marked an important milestone in the history of JoSTUM with the Vice-Chancellor outlining additional plans to enhance the security infrastructure of the University. Prof. Itodo revealed that a new permanent security building would soon be constructed to house modern security and surveillance technologies, including drones and communication devices. This development, he stated, would significantly boost the operational capacity of the security team. The Vice-Chancellor also called on the security personnel to utilize both their physical and psychological strength to perform

their duties diligently, particularly in addressing the issue of theft on campus.

In his remarks, Mr. Agera Lawrence, the Acting Chief Security Officer of JoSTUM, expressed deep gratitude to the University administration for providing the new set of uniforms. Mr. Agera emphasized that the new gear did not only boost the morale of the Security Personnel but demonstrated the Vice-Chancellor's commitment to the welfare of security staff and serves as acknowledgment of the vital role the security staff play in maintaining a safe environment for both staff and students.

Mr. Agera highlighted some challenges facing the Security Department. "One of the most pressing issues," he pointed out, "is the inadequate communication equipment available to the security staff, as the existing gadgets are outdated, making it difficult for the team to respond promptly to emergencies." He therefore called on the Vice-Chancellor to procure modern and dependable communication gadgets such as secure radios, adding that the purchase of more operational security vehicles will improve the security outlook of the University.

Another critical issue raised by Mr. Agera was the lack of a clear career progression framework for security personnel. He emphasized the need for the conversion of the Department to a Directorate, noting that without opportunities for professional growth it would be difficult for the Department to retain talented individuals. He expressed hope that these proposed changes would lead to long-term improvements in job satisfaction, productivity, and overall security effectiveness in the University.



The Vice Chancellor Inspecting a Guard of Honour Parade

Building Bridges:

JoSTUM Administration Dialogue with Traditional Rulers for Peace and Progress

By Blessing Chia & Terkimbi Unande

Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM) has made significant strides under the leadership of its Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo, in fostering collaboration between the institution and its host communities. Through strategic engagement with traditional rulers, the administration is working to address long-standing issues and ensure the University's growth and development. The University's efforts to create a

Traditional Rulers from the MINDA axis of Benue State in whose domain the University is situated. HRH Chief Dr. Dominic Ortserga Akpeh (Ter Gwer), HRH Chief Denise Shembergha (Ter Guma), and HRH Chief Vincent Aule (Ter Makurdi) visited the Vice-Chancellor's for an important meeting aimed at resolving the University's challenges with its host communities. Their discussions centered on finding solutions to long standing disputes over land ownership and security concerns, particularly the

contentious issue of erecting a perimeter fence around the University.

During the meeting, Engr. Prof. Itodo emphasized the importance of the University's commitment to development through various academic, infrastructural, and commercial initiatives. The Vice-Chancellor outlined ongoing projects such as the unbundling of academic programmes, re-listing delisted courses, and introducing new degree programmes. He also highlighted the crucial need for a perimeter fence to ensure the safety of students and staff, while protecting the University from

encroachment. Unfortunately, efforts to construct the fence have been hampered by legal disputes, with some groups within the host community opposing the project.

Prof. Itodo appealed directly to the traditional rulers for their support in resolving these conflicts, noting that most of the University's junior staff come from the



Members Of the University Governing Council in a Group Photograph with HRM. Prof. James I. Ayatse, the Tor Tiv, when they Visited him in His Palace in Gboko

peaceful and mutually beneficial relationship with the host communities, particularly in resolving land disputes and fostering commercial opportunities, are beginning to bear fruit.

A key moment in this ongoing dialogue came on Thursday, 24th October, 2024, when the Vice-Chancellor hosted a delegation of three Second Class



Members of the University Governing Council in a Group Photograph with HRM, Elaigwu Odogbo John, the Och'Idoma when they Visited him in His Palace in Otukpo

host communities, and that resolving these issues could create more opportunities for local employment.

The Ter Gwer, HRH Chief Akpeh, acknowledged the University's significant role in community development and pledged the support of the traditional rulers in mediating the disputes. He assured Prof. Itodo that they would report the issues to their First Class Chief, the Tor Lobi, for prompt action.

This meeting marked a positive turning point, with the traditional rulers agreeing to act as intermediaries to facilitate peace and understanding between the University and the host community. The engagement was further reinforced in a subsequent visit to the Tor Tiv and the Och'Idoma. The visit to the Tor Tiv's palace on 12th December, 2024, was led by then Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of JoSTUM's Governing Council, Sen. Dr. Olanrewaju Tejuoso, along with other Council members and University officials.

In the palace, Sen. Tejuoso highlighted the University's challenges, particularly land disputes with the host community that had prevented the construction of a perimeter fence, a critical step for securing the campus and attracting potential investors. The Tor Tiv, His Royal Majesty, Prof. James Ayatse, who had previously served as the Vice-Chancellor of JoSTUM, expressed his commitment to resolving the ongoing hostilities. He promised to use his influence and work with the traditional rulers to bring about a lasting solution.

The visit to the Och'Idoma's palace in Otukpo reinforced this commitment. HRM Elaigwu Odogbo John, the Och'Idoma, praised the University's leadership and reiterated his full support for JoSTUM's advancement. He encouraged the Council to work as a team, leveraging collective wisdom to overcome the challenges ahead.

The JoSTUM administration's engagement with traditional

rulers has not only focused on resolving conflicts but also on fostering a collaborative relationship that benefits both the University and the host communities. The University's commercial farming initiatives, designed to generate income and employment, have also been hindered by the hostilities, with reports of destruction of farmlands by some local groups. However, with the pledges of support from the traditional rulers, there is hope that these issues can be resolved, paving the way for economic and academic growth.

Moreso, the Tor Tiv has offered his assistance in addressing the University's infrastructural needs, particularly the repair of the access road to the institution and the construction of a new main road to improve connectivity. These interventions, alongside the peaceful resolution of land disputes, could transform JoSTUM into a more secure, accessible, and prosperous institution for both the students and the surrounding community.

The University's leadership is optimistic that through continued dialogue and collaboration with traditional rulers, the lingering disputes will be resolved, creating an environment conducive to academic growth and community development. The mutual cooperation between JoSTUM and the traditional rulers marks a promising future, one where the University and its host communities can thrive together in peace and prosperity.

Addressing Corruption and Remodeling The Future Through Human Capacity Development: IPESS JoSTUM in Perspective

By Uche Michael Aondohemba

Corruption is a pervasive problem in many societies and organizations as it erodes confidence, obstructs progress, and distorts public administration. Although regulations and enforcement tactics are crucial in the battle against corruption, they sometimes take effect after harm has already been done. Training, educating and building capacity of people, particularly those in public service, commercial industry, and civil society does not only equip people with knowledge of anti-corruption laws and ethical guidelines but serves as a more proactive, long-lasting, and transformative strategy in trimming the claws of corruption.

In Nigeria, a country with a population of more than 200 million and rich in natural and human resources, it is impossible to overstate the importance of building sustainable human capacity as Nigeria has a lot of unrealized potential that may be reached via focused investments in skills and expertise development. By putting the development and advancement of its people's human potential first, Nigeria can capitalize on its demographic dividend and drive growth and prosperity. Through the allocation of resources towards professional training and skills development, Nigeria can produce a highly trained workforce that can efficiently serve the ever-changing requirements of the global economy.

Therefore, the establishment of the Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards

Enhancement (SPESSE) project, dedicated to building sustainable human capacity development in the areas of procurement, environmental and social standards is a commendable initiative by the Federal Government of Nigeria, World Bank and the National Universities Commission (NUC). This project is continuously paving the way for positive change and uninhibited growth of individuals in various spheres of life. Introduced in 2019 with implementing centers across the six geopolitical

zones of Nigeria, the SPESSE project is arguably one of the most successful world bank supported projects to be implemented in Nigeria. This is justified by the laudable milestones occasioned by the project within its short period of implementation.

One notable component of the SPESSE project is its purposeful endeavour to shift focus from developing physical structures to human capacity building which is a crucial component of sustainable growth and advancement in any society.

As the hub for sustainable

human capacity development in North Central Nigeria, the Institute of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (IPESS), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi (JoSTUM) has over time empowered individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities by providing access to educational resources, training programmes, mentorship, and professional development opportunities.

In line with its mandate, IPESS JoSTUM is committed to developing a large and highly skilled workforce that can



effectively address important challenges in the areas of procurement, environmental, and social standards. This is in a bid to nurture a workforce that is not only competent but also adaptable and resilient in the face of an evolving society.

There is a complex and interdependent relationship between procurement, environment, and society that underscores the importance of responsible and sustainable practices. By integrating environmental and social considerations into the procurement process, organizations can drive positive change, minimize risk, and create long-term value for both their business and the world at large. However, owing to lack of skills and experts to manage these critical aspects of life, the SPESSE project is conceived on the need to bridge the gap between insufficient supply of quality professionals in the procurement, environmental and social sectors and develop academic programmes and curricular in these sectors in the Nigerian education system.

Presently, with the strategic launch of the IPESS JoSTUM's Short Executive course (Track A), Advanced Certificate course (Track B), Postgraduate Diploma (Track C), Master of Science degree (Track D), and Bachelor of Science degree (Track E), the Institute has trained and issued certificates to thousands of participants to upscale their skills in the areas of procurement, environmental and social standards which is aimed at facilitating sustainable development. Participants are already harvesting the fruits of the programme as appreciable number of trainees have earned promotion, received job offers, appointments, recommendations, and are as well contributing positively to correct some of the ills resident in various spheres.

To address constraints of tight work schedules, IPESS JoSTUM has fully migrated her short courses and advanced certificate courses to online delivery, making it possible for a wide spectrum of people to advance their knowledge and abilities as well as their professional journeys. The overwhelming testimonies of participants indicate that, apart from the advancement in moral principles and industry best practices in their workplaces, IPESS JoSTUM's programmes have advanced

participants' professional growth and, as well opened doors to new career opportunities.

Due to IPESS' significant impact in JoSTUM, the National Universities Commission (NUC) was able to quickly start the process of establishing a Distance Learning Center (DLC) at JoSTUM. This historic achievement will allow everyone to take part in the Institute's successful programmes regardless of their busy schedules, which will facilitate the development of more individual capacity and raise the University's profile and ranking.

Fundamentally, building capacity through training provides a proactive approach that tackles the underlying causes of corruption, even though laws and enforcement are still essential. Training empowers people, fortifies



IPESS JoSTUM Trainees during graduation event in Abuja

institutions, and increases ethical consciousness. Therefore, reducing corruption via training isn't just about avoiding wrongdoing, it is about developing a community that values and promotes honesty at every level. The goal of a transparent and responsible world becomes not only feasible but also attainable as more governments, institutions, and communities make investments in this strategy.

Ultimately, the Federal Government of Nigeria deserves commendations for initiating a project that does not only seek to address corruption or improve the present but is also designed to advance strategies towards curbing corruption and remodelling the future for the forthcoming generation.

JoSTUM Matriculates 6,472, as VC Reaffirms Commitment to Academic Excellence

- By Sylvia Agon

The Vice-Chancellor Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), Engr. Prof. I. N Itodo has reaffirmed his commitment to drive progress and innovation as well as academic excellence in the institution. He gave the commitment while matriculating 6472 new students for the 2024/2025 Academic Session on Monday, 10th February, 2025 at The James Ayatse Convocation Square, South Core.

Delivering his address, the Vice-Chancellor congratulated the Matriculants on their admission into the University saying "the matriculation ceremony is a rite of passage to usher fresh students into the formal structure, environment, tradition, and culture of the University " He added that "it confers on new students the rights and privileges of the University life immediately the oath is

society.

On the status of the University Prof. Itodo said, "let me seize this opportunity to clarify the vexed question of whether JoSTUM is still a University of Agriculture. JoSTUM, by law remains a University of Agriculture". The Vice-Chancellor reiterated his administration's tireless effort towards providing a conducive learning environment for students, and highlighted the strides of his administration in student welfare within the last one year to include the repair and renovation of students' hostels, ensuring uninterrupted electricity and water supply to hostels and total illumination of hostile environment among others.

He advised the newly matriculated students to shun all acts of violence and social vices warning that these acts are capable of placing their names in the black book and



A cross section Matriculants

administered. The oath therefore is a covenant that must be obeyed, respected and preserved by all students in the University."

As part of his vision and mission, the Vice-Chancellor said his administration was poised to "reposition the university for national and global competitiveness." He added that, the pursuit of academic excellence focusing on quality teaching, research, extension services, infrastructure as well as staff and student's welfare are in the foreground aimed at maximizing the use of ultra-modern techniques in teaching and research, agricultural production and approaches to solving the problems of farmers in the

enjoined parents and guardians to team up with the University administration and law enforcement agencies in stamping out anti-social practices on campus.

Following the matriculation, a special welcome reception was held on Tuesday 11th February 2025 at the same venue in honor of the new students. The reception featured brief lectures from some Heads of Units aimed at introducing the freshers to the academic culture of the University. The event also featured dance, music and other forms of entertainment.

Out of the 6,472 students matriculated, 5,536 are Undergraduate regular students, 204 are Sandwich students and 732 are Postgraduate students.

JoSTUM Holds 2024/2025 Orientation For Fresh Students

By Sylvia Agon

Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi recently held her annual orientation exercise for newly admitted students, aimed at providing a comprehensive introduction to the University. The event held on Monday 16th January, 2025 at the James Ayatse Convocation Square, South Core.

Declaring the event open, the Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I.N Itodo urged the new students to embrace and take the orientation exercise seriously as it would help them navigate their academic journey.

The orientation exercise featured paper presentations and lectures insightful enough to prepare the freshers for their educational sojourn. In a lecture delivered by Commander I. Ameh titled "Dangers of Drug Abuse," the impact of drugs on the mental, physical, social and academic performance of students was stressed. Cdr. Ameh warned against self-medication and advised students to stay drug free and excel.

Another lecture delivered by Prof. Mrs. S. B. Adelabu titled "Study Habits, Continuous Assessment, Examination Conducts and Misconducts", addressed the importance of academic integrity, detailing the severe consequences of examination malpractice as it pertains to the university laws. She said unauthorized use of materials or notes, plagiarism, impersonation and bribery are all forms of examination misconduct. Prof. Mrs.

Adelabu advised students to understand and adhere to the university's examination policies, prepare adequately for examination and seek help from lecturers if faced with difficulties in their studies. She further encouraged the students to develop good study habits which would help them manage their time, retain information and perform well, academically.

In the same vein, the Director of Academic Affairs represented by Mrs Nguavese Wuese in her lecture, "Students' Registration, Matriculation, Need for Student Personal Folder and Change Of Course" outlined the step by step registration process that must be adhered to by the students. On student personal folder, Mrs. Wuese stressed the need for every student to own and maintain a personal folder that contains essential documents and records. The folder, she noted would be a reference for academic and administrative purposes.

Other lectures presented at the orientation programme bordered on Sex Education, Knowing Your Genotype, The Control of HIV/AIDS and other STD's Among University Students; Students Organisations, Registration and Hostel Rules and Regulations. Others included how to Use the Library; Legal Matters as It Concerns Students and Procedure for Seeking Redress amongst others. Students spent the last two days of the orientation exercise in their Colleges and Departments.

"Do Not Play to The Gallery:" VC Adjures New SSANU EXCO

By Attahiru Deborah

Consistent with his mandate to have a progressive Institution, the Vice-Chancellor, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo has adjured the newly elected Exco of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), JoSTUM Chapter not to play to the gallery, but establish University traditions based on merit and hard work, rather than favour and personal interests. Addressing the members recently on their

Administration stand on its toes; and so it is important to do that job because if you do not do it, Administration will sleep," he added. He however enjoined them to carry out this responsibility in a purposeful manner, devoid of agitations and rancor. Commenting on the measures being put in place to mitigate the security challenge the University is addressing, the Vice-Chancellor called on the Union to collaborate with them and make their suggestions on the way forward.

While wishing them a successful tenure, He advised them to work closely with everyone including their oppositions, not forgetting that public office is transient hence, they shouldn't get themselves too deep into it. Earlier, while presenting the newly elected members, the immediate past Chairperson of the Union, Comr. Ruth Kpamor appreciated the management for their warm reception of the Zonal Executive Council, and the support that culminated in the successful election.

According to the Chairperson SSANU - JOSTUM, Comr. Asema John Appollos Terrumum, the visit was just to familiarise themselves with the management as their requests would be made at a later visit. He therefore congratulated the Vice-Chancellor on the successful completion of the University's Combined Convocation, and prayed God gives them strength to continue the good work.



University Principal officers and the new SSANU Exco

familiarization visit in his Conference room, Prof. Itodo noted that; "I'll advise you not to play to the gallery because the University system is a unique system that has its traditions and most of the time, once you derail from the well-known and established traditions of the University, we'll suffer for it."

He intimated on the major role Unions play in every administration pointing that, he sees the Unions as partners in progress. "The Unions help the

ICPC Inaugurates JoSTUM ACTU Unit

By Blessing Chia & Deborah Attahiru

Going by the University's vision which is to become a major institutional player in the process of national and global human resource capacity building in Agriculture, Science, Engineering and Technology for rapid economic growth. It was necessary to inaugurate the Anti-Corruption & Transparency Unit (ACTU) as a strong testament that JoSTUM is in the fore front of driving the avowed anti-corruption Initiatives of the federal government through the mandate of the unit.

The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) Benue State zonal office on Friday, 21st June 2024, inaugurated nine staff of the University into ACTU in JoSTUM.

However, the creation of ACTU derives its power from the provision of section 6(a) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000, which empowers them to serve as compliance and ethic officers, with the sole aim of educating and enlightening their respective MDAs on the need for adherence to rules and regulation and upholding of the ethical practice in a work place.

In a message by the Chairman, ICPC, Dr. Musa Adamu Aliyu, read by the Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner, Mr. Menge Tiku, the Chairman reaffirmed the essence of creating ACTUs in MDAs as part of its preventive mandate in monitoring, identifying and addressing lapses in the operational system of Government establishments especially where such systems promote corruption and unethical practices with a view to correcting them.

Mr. Tiku who further underscored the importance of ACTU, declared that the Unit would assist the management in promoting a transparent and accountable work force by effectively discharging its duties which include conducting system study and review of processes and procedures. Other areas he added would include the conduct of continuous sensitization of Staff on and against corruption;

developing and implementing Code of Ethics or Conduct for staff; and monitoring of budget implementation; amongst others.

He clearly stated that ACTU is not a parallel authority to the management as it is expected to operate under direct oversight of the Vice-Chancellor. To this end, the Commissioner revealed that it needs the unalloyed support of management as he implored the management to adequately fund the activities of the Unit. He therefore seized the opportunity to encourage members of the Unit to be observers in Standing Committees of the Institution to ensure that transparency, accountability and zero tolerance to corruption are observed in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. I.N. Itodo expressed his pleasure and welcomed members of the ICPC for witnessing and also inaugurating the JoSTUM ACTU team.

Speaking on the importance of ACTU, the Vice-Chancellor affirmed that while there was a need to reactivate the ACTU unit that had always existed, he obliged almost immediately and requested for a thorough assessment of staff, academic and non-academic especially those with proven track records in the respective offices they have held. He described the ACTU team as whistle blowers of the University system and charged them to be men and woman of tenacious integrity.

Prof. Itodo further commended the team, saying, he will gladly listen to them when there is need for some things to be changed, some officers to be removed or invited to certain offices and also if the need arise to strengthen the financial or moral procedures of the Institution.

He also assured them of the management's support, adding that; he is just a call away from them whenever his attention is needed provided it is for the good of the Institution.

In his vote of thanks, the Chairman of the Inaugurated Unit, Prof. M. Joel appreciated the Management for the trust reposed on him, while pledging to work to the best of his abilities.

The Inaugurated members of the Unit are; Engr. Prof.

M. Joel as Chairman, Prof. G. O. S. Ojo, Dr. M. M. Manyi, and Dr. (Mrs.) T. Akande as members. Other members include; Mr. J. D. Tukura, Mr. John Ademu, Barr. J. W. Chile, Mrs. Christie Ochigbo, and Mrs. Mnena Maimuna Umar.

VC TO NASU – "Don't Stop at the Welfare of Your Members"

By Attahiru Deborah

The Vice-Chancellor, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), Engr. Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo has advised the Non-Academic Staff Unions of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) not to stop at the welfare of their staff, but to come up with meaningful suggestions on how to improve the quality of labour force the University produces.

Addressing the State Administrative Council (STAC)-NASU in his office recently, the Vice-Chancellor noted that; "although the welfare of your staff is a priority, I expect the unions as busy bodies in the same enterprise to also come up with suggestions to boost and fine-tune the curriculum and lecture deliveries, so that the University can produce individuals that can affect the economy for positive delivery. It is only by so doing that you may begin to understand some of the complex problems of the University."

Acknowledging that he has enjoyed an excellent partnership with the union so far, Prof. Itodo however charged the union to begin to stimulate the universities by checking the excesses and weaknesses of its members, especially negative attitude to work as this will help in encouraging the management and the Government.

While soliciting the union's collaboration for a more productive system of learning, Prof. Itodo called on the union to discharge its roles within the ambits of the law, with emotional intelligence and not with grandstanding nor political interests.

He maintained that there is no junior or senior partner in the enterprise; hence, the need for all to change their orientation and unionism for maximum output.

Earlier in his remark, the State Council Chairman of NASU, Benue State Council, Comr. Ikya Nathaniel, informed that the visit was a routine visit STAC pays annually or biannually to ascertain the welfare of its members in Institutions. He commended the management for a good working relationship with its members, especially with the implementation of hazard allowance across board. He however pleaded with the management to step up payment of stipends to members attached to Principal Officers' offices, considering how late they stay behind to work. In the same vein, the NASU - JoSTUM Chairman, Comr. Girgi Saa Moses appreciated efforts of the management culminating in the implementation of the hazard allowance. He solicited for the review of death benefits of its members given the dwindling economy.

In his vote of thanks, the Senior State Secretary - NASU Benue State Council, Comr. Jatau Jeremias appreciated the Vice-Chancellor and the management team for their impactful contributions to the union, and pledged to step up their game by adopting management's contributions to guide the members on ways to do the right thing.

He pleaded that the management should not relent in telling them their wrongs, as it is only by so doing that they will get better.

Lighting the Way to Excellence: Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University's Renewed Focus on Students' Welfare

By Deborah Attahiru

In a heartwarming display of administrative responsiveness, students of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM) are rejoicing over recent improvements to their learning environment. The JoSTUM Chapter of the Association of Veterinary Medicine Students led by their president, Abdulmajid Ibrahim Abdullahi recently paid a courtesy visit on the Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Prof. I. N. Itodo, to express their gratitude for his swift intervention in addressing long-standing concerns about the College's infrastructure.

For five years, students had struggled with poor lighting systems and uncomfortable classrooms, which had become a recurring theme in their academic lives. However, with the Vice-Chancellor's prompt attention, the College has undergone a transformation. New street and floodlights now illuminate the campus, creating a safer and more conducive learning environment.

The President of the Association, expressed the students' appreciation for the Vice-Chancellor's efforts. He noted that, "out of three letters we wrote to the Vice-Chancellor two months ago, two highlighted the deplorable state of our College. We are grateful for his prompt response, and we believe this is just the beginning of a brighter future for our College."

The students' gratitude was evident in their decision to honor the Vice-Chancellor with an award, a testament to his commitment to their

well-being.

In response, Prof. Itodo expressed his appreciation for the students' thoughtfulness, assuring them that he would continue to prioritize their needs.

The Vice-Chancellor's vision for the University extends beyond the current improvements. Despite the Institution's significant infrastructural deficit, he remains committed to transforming the University into a thriving academic hub. Quality infrastructural development is crucial to the history of our University, he emphasized. "We will continue to work towards creating a world-class learning environment that supports the academic excellence of our students."

As the University community looks to the future, the improvements in the College of Veterinary Medicine serve as a beacon of hope. The renewed focus on student experience is a testament to the Institution's commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders. With its enhanced facilities and supportive administration, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University is poised to become a hub for academic excellence in Nigeria.

Across the University's Colleges, similar improvements are underway. Classrooms are being renovated; new lecture theatres built and laboratories are being equipped with state-of-the-art technology to promote student well-being. The University's efforts to create a holistic learning environment are yielding positive results, with students reporting increased satisfaction with their academic experience.

JoSTUM Management Rebrands College of Education, Reinstates Programmes in Bold Academic Revival

- By Sylvia Womboh

In a significant move towards revitalizing its academic framework and boosting student enrollment, the Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM), formerly known for its strong agricultural base, has embarked on a new path of academic diversification and rejigging. At the 70th College Board meeting of the College of Education held on Monday, 5th February, 2024, JoSTUM Vice-Chancellor, Engr. Professor I. N. Itodo unveiled a wave of transformative developments initiated by his administration at the College.

At the meeting, Prof. Adoo Wombo, Dean and College Board Chairman of the newly named College of Education disclosed that, the meeting was convened at the instance of the Vice-Chancellor, who sought to engage directly with staff members to brief them on critical institutional reforms. Central among which was the renaming of the College of Agricultural and Science Education to the College of Education, a change that more accurately reflects its broadened academicscope.

Addressing the College Board members, Prof. Itodo stated that the name change was not merely cosmetic but followed the successful resource verification by the National Universities Commission (NUC), which approved the reinstatement of 12 previously delisted academic programmes. With this development, the College now offers a robust portfolio of 20 Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree programmes. These range from science and technical education to humanities and social sciences, including Biological Education, Chemistry Education, Educational Administration and Planning, Library and Information Science, and Pre-Primary Social Studies, among others.

This strategic expansion of programmes, Prof. Itodo

noted, is a deliberate response to declining student enrollment figures. The Vice Chancellor identified the proliferation of conventional Universities in the surrounding regions as a key factor contributing to this trend. To remain competitive and relevant, JOSTUM has had to adapt, not by abandoning its agricultural roots, but by complementing them with broader academic offerings that appeal to a wider student demographic.

Critics may question whether these moves dilute the University's specialized identity, but Prof. Itodo was unequivocal; JoSTUM remains a center of excellence in agriculture. With 6 out of 11 colleges still focused on core agricultural disciplines, the University continues to uphold its mandate to serve the north-central region's agricultural development needs. The diversification, he emphasized, is not a departure from this mission but a reinforcement of the University's capacity to contribute more holistically to national development.

By reintroducing delisted programmes and expanding into new academic territory, JoSTUM is strategically positioning itself as a more inclusive and comprehensive institution. The revitalized College of Education stands as a symbol of this forward thinking vision, one that honors tradition while embracing change.

As higher education becomes increasingly competitive in Nigeria, JoSTUM's proactive approach under Prof. Itodo's leadership demonstrates a clear understanding of the need to innovate. The University is not just reacting to challenges but is seizing the opportunity to redefine its future, ensuring that it continues to play a leading role in shaping minds and serving the region.

Rekindling Professional Bonds:

JoSTUM'S ANUPA Chapter Ushers in a New Era of Engagement

By Doofan Abu

The air in the Old Council Chambers of Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University (JoSTUM) buzzed with a renewed sense of purpose on September 12, 2024 as Professionals from across the University gathered, not for routine administrative tasks, but for a pivotal moment in their collective journey, the election of a new Executive Committee for the University's Chapter of the Association of Nigerian University Professional Administrators (ANUPA).

The significance of the gathering was palpable, a testament to the vital role ANUPA plays in the professional lives of University administrators.

Dr. John U. David, the University Registrar and Association's Patron, set the tone, acknowledging the recent respite in regular meetings with an honest apology. His words, however, resonated with a promise of revitalization. He underscored the tangible benefits of ANUPA membership, painting a vivid picture of career advancement and promotional opportunities that lay within the Association's reach. More importantly, he pledged a commitment to consistent, monthly meetings, a clear signal of a renewed dedication to fostering a vibrant and engaged community.

The election itself was a moment of transition, a passing of the torch to a new leadership poised to guide the chapter into a promising future. Dr. Onehi D. Haruna, the newly elected Chairman, stepped forward with a spirit of gratitude and a vision of collaboration. His acceptance speech was a heartfelt acknowledgment of the outgoing President's contributions, the Patron's guidance, and the collective trust placed in him by the general membership. Appealing for the unwavering support of his Executive Committee and all members, Dr. Haruna's commitment was clear; to serve diligently

and uphold the trust bestowed upon him.

The newly formed Executive Committee, a diverse and capable team, reflects the breadth of talent within JoSTUM's administrative ranks. The team has Dr. Onehi D. Haruna as Chairman, Dr. Mrs. Mercy S. Iannah as Vice-Chairman and Gurgur Japheth as the General Secretary. Others are Anyasodo Elizabeth as Treasurer, Tyokohol S. Williams as the Financial Secretary, Mr. Odi E.I. as the P.R.O., and Mr. Francis Tombukaa as the Assistant Secretary. The newly elected Legal Officer is Barr. Amara M.I., Dr. Mrs. Ayatse as the Training Officer, with Dr. Victor Bem and Mrs. R. M. Kpamor as Ex-Officio I and II respectively.

This group represents a blend of experience and fresh perspectives, a potent combination poised to drive ANUPA's initiatives forward. The inclusion of roles like a Training Officer and a Legal Officer signals a commitment to professional development and ensuring adherence to ethical standards.

Beyond the formal proceedings, the event served as a reminder of the crucial role Professional Associations play in fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. In a University setting, where administrative efficiency is paramount, ANUPA provides a platform for knowledge sharing, networking, and mutual support. The election of the new Executive Committee marks not just a change in leadership, but a renewed commitment to the principles that underpin ANUPA; Professional growth, collaboration, and a dedication to excellence.

As JoSTUM's ANUPA Chapter embarks on this new chapter, there is a palpable sense of optimism, a belief that the association will serve as a vital catalyst for the professional advancement of its members and contribute significantly to the University's overall success.

SSA to Benue Governor Reaffirms State Government Commitment To Addressing Illegal Activities On Campus

By Abraham Ogwiji

The Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the Executive Governor of Benue State on Youth Organization and Illegal Levies, Hon. Gbenda Terver, has reaffirmed the state government's commitment to addressing illegal activities within University communities.

The SSA gave the reaffirmation during a courtesy visit to the University on January 28, 2025 where he emphasized the need for collaboration between the state government and the University administration to curb unlawful practices and foster development.

Speaking to University officials, Hon. Gbenda outlined his mission as strengthening partnerships to eliminate illegal activities that hinder academic excellence and

infrastructural progress. He highlighted the mandate of his office, which was established under Governor Hyacinth Alia's administration, to enforce the Public Order Law enacted in 2024 by the 10th Benue State House of Assembly. The law explicitly bans exploitative practices, such as the extortionary "Marching Ground" activities, and targets groups reportedly engaging in acts that disrupt the University's operations. He

therefore encouraged the University to report any illegal or suspicious activities to the state Taskforce team for swift action.

In response, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration, Prof. Mrs. C. D. Tuleun, who

represented the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. I. N. Itodo, commended the government for its proactive stance. She noted that illegal levies and extortion have posed serious challenges to the University's growth and described the visit as timely and necessary. Prof. Tuleun also praised the establishment of the office of Youth Organization and Illegal Levies, which she credited with significant progress in combating multiple taxation and extortion across the state.

The University Librarian, Prof. Mrs. Jessica Agoh, echoed this sentiment, expressing gratitude for the state government's interventions. She reaffirmed the University's commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at eradicating criminal activities and promoting sustainable development within the institution and its host communities.



L-R: Prof C.D. Tuleun (DVC Admin, VC Rep), Hon. Gbenda Terver (SSA to Benue State Governor), Prof. Jessica Agoh (University Librarian), Mr. Emmanuel Tyo (Rep. Registrar)

STRENGTHENING CAMPUS SECURITY: A CALL TO ACTION

By Helen Abu

The growing insecurity of lives and property across the country and particularly University campuses is assuming a very alarming and frightening crescendo. It is no longer surprising that students and staff of tertiary institutions have repeatedly fallen victim to the horrifying wave of abductions carried out by criminal elements. Who would have imagined that in just a few years, Nigeria would be grouped with nations like Pakistan and Afghanistan in terms of the prevalence of kidnapping and abductions?

Educational institutions are meant to be hubs for human capacity development, promoting rapid societal growth and wellness. However, no meaningful progress can occur in an environment lacking peace, stability, and social harmony. Insecurity, manifested through armed conflicts, banditry, and other forms of violence, not only disrupts educational programmes but also impedes national development. Therefore, strengthening campus security should be the continuous, collective aspiration of all stakeholders involved in University administration.

The recent abduction of students from the Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JoSTUM), not only brought academic activities to a halt but also inflicted deep psychological trauma on students and their families. Thankfully, due to the relentless efforts of the

University administration, security agencies and other stakeholders, peace and order have been restored on campus and academic activities have resumed.

However, it is essential that we look beyond the current collaboration between the University and security agencies. A more sustainable and proactive approach must include adequately equipping security personnel with modern gadgets, utilizing our existing solar hybrid power infrastructure; regular training and retraining of personnel, with emphasis on adopting robotic and smart security technologies. It would also not be out of place to agitate for enactment of laws at all levels of government to regulate and support the lawful arming of campus security teams for swift response to such emergencies. Additionally, expanding the campus security workforce, launching campus-wide security awareness and enlightenment campaigns as well as promoting a strong culture of maintenance and accountability among all stakeholders in the University and surrounding community will go a long way in preparing for, and addressing these said challenges.

Unless these steps are comprehensively implemented, we risk treating our security issues superficially, turning them into recurring problems rather than solving them permanently.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE





**INSTITUTE OF PROCUREMENT,
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STANDARDS (IPESS)**
JOSEPH SARWUAN TARKA UNIVERSITY, MAKURDI
(FORMERLY FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, MAKURDI)

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS INTO SHORT EXECUTIVE (TRACK A) & ADVANCED CERTIFICATE (TRACK B) COURSES

**Applications are open to Professionals, Civil Servants,
Experts, Graduates and other interested individuals
at Institute of Procurement, Environmental and
Social Standards (IPESS) in the fields of Procurement,
Environmental and Social Standards**

Mode of delivery: Online and Face-to-face

Register here: <https://portal.cipessfuam.edu.ng>

**prospective applicants must be Tech Savvy and must have an internet
enabled smart phone or computer**

Participation is strictly by invitation upon registration



www.cipessfuam.edu.ng



info.cipessfuam.edu.ng



[+2348036412077](tel:+2348036412077)