



**KW-IRS**  
KWARA STATE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

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# KWAREVE NEWS

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December Special Edition



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Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

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## EDITORIAL

# Leadership with a vision

The focus of attention of the last edition of our magazine for the year 2016 is specially devoted to raying the former Governor of Kwara State whose stint of eight years was used to lay the foundation for a solid modern development of the State. A visionary leader who while being sworn in as Governor in 2003 promised to change the face of development in Kwara, did not only actualize his vision of a modern Kwara, but has carried on to an able representation of his constituency, Kwara and Nigeria by occupying the exalted position of the Senate President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria since 9 June 2015.



# Editorial

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Dr Saraki started the reform of the Internally Generated Revenue of Kwara State which he met at a paltry N100 million monthly average in 2003 and took it to about N500 million monthly average by 2011. This was achieved through the conscious overhaul of the collection process then and the aggressive revenue drive introduced by his administration as the first leg of the revenue transformation in Kwara State. Today, his successor and student of his School of Governance and Leadership, Dr Abdulfatah Ahmed has not only sustained the tempo but taken the transformation through the second leg with the enactment of the Kwara State Revenue Administration Law 2015 that gave birth to the new Kwara State Internal Revenue Service that has moved the IGR from the monthly average of N600 million in 2015 to a monthly average of about N1.5 billion which we have today.

*Today, his successor and student of his School of Governance and Leadership, Dr Abdulfatah Ahmed has not only sustained the tempo but taken the transformation through the second leg with the enactment of the Kwara State Revenue Administration Law 2015 that gave birth to the new Kwara State Internal Revenue Service that has moved the IGR from the monthly average of N600 million in 2015 to a monthly average of about N1.5 billion which we have today.*

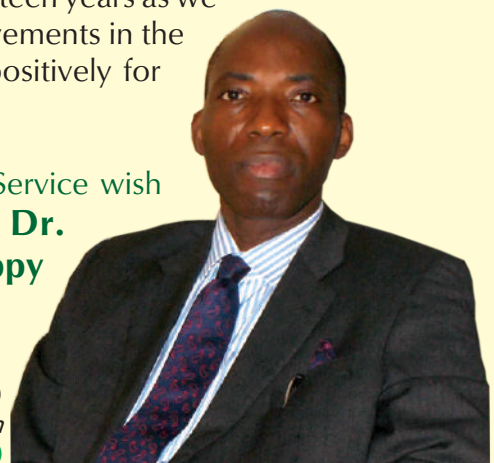
We are therefore dedicating this month's edition of *KWAREVENEWS* to a born leader, a made leader that is making leaders through the 'unstructured' **Bukola Saraki School of Governance and Leadership** that our research has unfolded.

We spoke to people who have worked closely with this enigmatic leader in the past twelve to fifteen years as we profile him, his programmes and achievements in the pursuit of a vision to impact Nigeria positively for growth and development.

We at Kwara State Internal Revenue Service wish our amiable **Senate President, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki a Happy 54<sup>th</sup> Birthday.**

Muritala Awodun, PhD  
*Executive Chairman*

Kwara State Internal Revenue Service (KW-IRS)







Senator (Dr.)  
Abubakar Bukola  
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I have been lucky through his leadership, in terms of the way I've progressed politically...

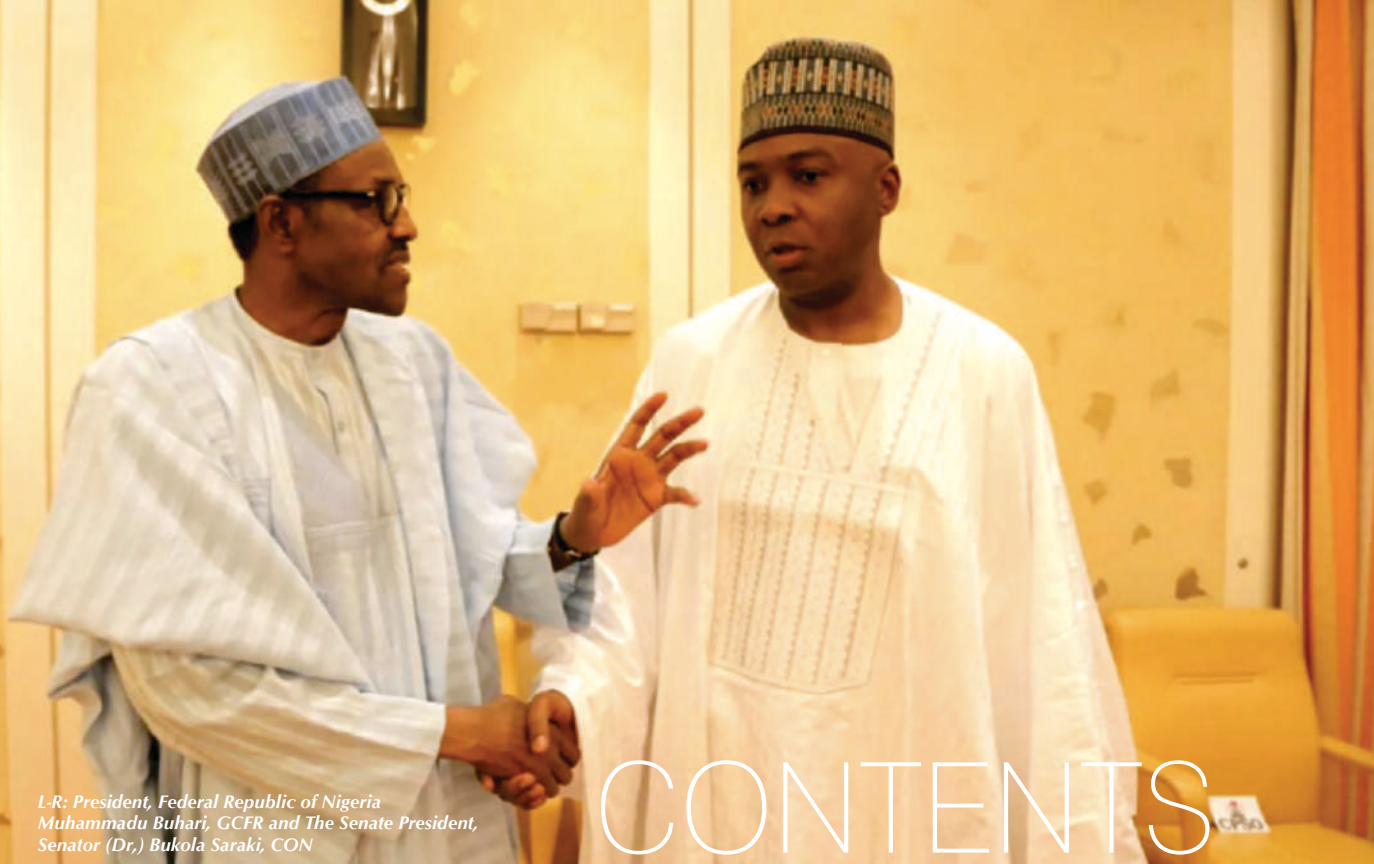
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What else could it have been? Very cordial. More or less, a family-like relationship. Don't forget, this is a relationship that sprang over a number of years. First, as a boss in the Societe Generale Bank, later as a benefactor in the GT Bank and again a boss, mentor and role model in politics.

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I also find fascinating that apart from the grace given to some of us, Alhamdulillah, to the glory of God...



L-R: President, Federal Republic of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR and The Senate President, Senator (Dr.) Bukola Saraki, CON

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Born a  
**Leader,**  
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and Making  
**Leaders**



Senator (Dr.)  
Abubakar Bukola  
**Saraki** CON  
Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

*Three thousand years ago on a battlefield in ancient Palestine, a shepherd boy felled a mighty warrior with nothing more than a stone and a sling, and ever since then, the names David and Goliath have stood for battles between underdogs and giants.*

**T**hree thousand years ago on a battlefield in ancient Palestine, a shepherd boy felled a mighty warrior with nothing more than a stone and a sling, and ever since then, the names David and Goliath have stood for battles between underdogs and giants.

David's victory was improbable and miraculous. He should not have won by every human calculation because the odds were glaringly against him. But beyond what the ordinary eyes could see, he was obviously destined to win.

This story of David and Goliath comes to mind at every opportunity when ordinary people confront giants or powerful opponents of all kinds – from armies and mighty warriors to disability, misfortune, and oppression.



It is always apt to use it to tell the story of a different person – famous or unknown, ordinary or brilliant – who has faced an outside challenge and been forced to respond asking questions such as; Should I play by the rules or follow my own instincts? Shall I persevere or give up? Should I strike back or forgive?

Quickly, two great ideas are worth deriving from the story. The first is that much of what we consider valuable in our world arise out of these kinds of lopsided conflicts, because the act of facing overwhelming odds produces greatness and beauty. Secondly is that we consistently get these kinds of conflicts wrong as we misread them, and mis-interpret them as well.

It is important to note that giants are not what we think they are. The same qualities that appear to give them strength are often their sources of great weakness. Also the fact of being declared an underdog can change people in ways that we often fail to appreciate; it can open doors and create opportunities, educate, enlighten and make possible what might otherwise have seemed unthinkable or unachievable.

Goliath requested by shouting out to the Israelites asking for a single combat, a common practice in ancient world to avoid heavy bloodshed, he was expecting – a warrior like himself to come forward for hand-to-hand combat. It never occurred to him that the battle would be fought on anything other than those terms, and he prepared accordingly.

Fully dressed for the battle as a heavy infantry, Goliath expects that he is going to be engaged in a duel with another infantryman, but David had no intention of honouring the rituals of a single combat. When he tells Saul that he has killed bears and lions as a shepherd, he does so not just as testimony to his courage but to



*“You come against me with the sword and spear and javelin,” David said to Goliath, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of armies of Israel, whom you have defiled...*

make another point as well: that he intends to fight Goliath the same way he has learned to fight wild animals – as a projectile warrior.

When David ran towards Goliath without armour, he has the speed and maneuverability because he is not carrying any weight in the form of armour dresses. David slung and hit Goliath in little more than one second – a time so brief that Goliath would not have been able to protect himself and during which he would be stationary for all practical purposes. Goliath could do but nothing as he was carrying so much weight in preparation for a battle at close range, where he could stand, immobile, warding off blows

*The story above aptly describes the emergence of Senator (Dr) Abubakar Bukola Saraki as the President of the Senate and Chairman of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2015. His father, Senator (Dr) Abubakar Olusola Saraki was a senator of the second republic and the Godfather of Kwara politics. By this circumstance of birth, if we are to go by the hereditary theory of leadership, we will be right to say that Senator Bukola Saraki was born to be a leader.*



with his armour and delivering a mighty thrust of his spear.

He watched David approach, first with scorn, then with surprise, and then with what can only have been horror – as it dawned on him that the battle he was expecting had suddenly changed shape, but then it was already late.

“You come against me with the sword and spear and javelin,” David said to Goliath, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of armies of Israel, whom you have defiled. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I will strike you down and cut off your head... All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord,

and he will give all of you into our hands.”

Twice David mentions Goliath's sword and spear, as if to emphasize how profoundly different his intentions are. Then he reaches into his shepherd's bag for a stone, and at that point no one watching from the ridges on either side of the valley would have considered David's victory improbable. David was a slinger, and slingers beat infantry, hands down.

Obviously, Goliath had as much chance against David as any Bronze Age warrior with the sword would have had against an opponent armed with a 45 automatic pistol.

David came running towards Goliath, powered by courage and faith. Goliath was blind to his approach – and before he knew what was happening, he was down. He was too big, slow and blurry-eyed to comprehend the way the tables had been turned against him.

The story above aptly describes the emergence of Senator (Dr) Abubakar Bukola

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*He was therefore, not only born a leader but was also made a leader of leaders by his colleagues who identified his distinct leadership qualities. What is more important is the fact that as a leader, he has brought up, identified and made quite a number of people leaders and is still doing so.*

”



Saraki as the President of the Senate and Chairman of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2015. His father, Senator (Dr) Abubakar Olusola Saraki was a senator of the 2nd republic and the Godfather of Kwara politics. By this circumstance of birth, if we are to go by the hereditary theory of leadership, we will be right to say that Senator Bukola Saraki was born to be a leader.

But he did not just sit back to await the actualization of leadership by this theory. Rather he studied, acquired the necessary knowledge and skills required of a modern day leader. He not only studied to become a medical doctor like the father, he also worked

as a banker for about a decade, gathering private sector experience before going for mentorship under no less a personality than the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Olusegun Obasanjo) as Special Assistant on Budget to gather the necessary public sector experience that made it possible for him to emerge a two-time Governor of Kwara State, and the Chairman of the Nigeria Governors Forum.

He was therefore, not only born a leader but was also made a leader of leaders by his colleagues who identified his distinct leadership qualities. What is more important is the fact that as a leader, he has brought up, identified and made quite a number of people leaders and is still doing so.

We present the views of a select leaders that have emerged from the Bukola Saraki School of Governance and Leadership.



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# BUKOLA SARAKI

**SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP:**

## *Igniting Your Leadership Potentials*



*...leadership is the ability to set a realistic direction, develop effective plans, get others to implement the plans, and measure results.*

It is an established fact that every man has the potentials of leadership. Some actualise the potentials, others do not. Also established is the fact that at one time or the other in life, we face one challenge of leadership or another. It has further been established that in today's world, there are no limits to the challenging opportunities that one may face or encounter. In fact, these challenges seem to be increasing by the day, but the good news is that through our various responses, we have the potential to change the world in which we live and work (Kouzes and Posner, 2002).

Let us try to dig deep into the concept of leadership which has been so dynamic and has therefore changed over time. During the ancient period and even up to the recent past, we have been told and made to agree that leaders are born. This heredity theory of leadership began with the premise that there was a trait that marked a leader, and originally that trait was heredity. Based on this premise therefore, the





*The focus of leadership on style provided insights into how to interact with others and how to present information to others. This concept of style is significant in the sense that leaders are expected to know how to work with followers. Possessing a style by a leader is therefore helpful, but it is not a sufficient guide as was eventually discovered that many leaders who have the same style end up with varying levels of results, hence the conclusion that style is not enough.*

firstborn son of a reigning king was automatically considered a leader in waiting or leadership material (Lundy, 1986 and Lippit, 2002). However, over the years, history has revealed the problems with depending on bloodlines for leadership determination that has faulted the total reliance on this heredity theory of leadership.

As a result of the problems of relying solely on heredity to determine leadership, the study of leadership shifted from heredity trait to charisma as a basic determinant of leadership. The basis for this was also justified and propagated by the proponents. However, this charismatic theory of leadership has also failed the test of reality as we found situations where less charismatic leaders succeeded where charismatic individuals have failed (Lippit, 1998). The charismatic theory of leadership has therefore faced its own challenges that has put to question any form of complete reliance on charisma as a major determinant of leadership.

Then came, the 'invincible-hero' theory of leadership which has produced case studies, biographies, and autobiographies describing how successful leaders accomplished their outstanding results. This approach obviously could not say who will succeed or fail until after the fact, hence its limitations in the determination of leadership. The above limitation resulted in the more promising method of prediction, the study of personal style.

The focus of leadership on style provided insights into how to interact with others and how to present information to others. This concept of style is significant in the sense that leaders are expected to know how to work with followers. Possessing a style by a leader is therefore helpful, but it is not a sufficient guide as was eventually discovered that many leaders who have the same style end up with varying levels of results, hence the conclusion that style is not enough.



With the above limits of style, the leadership theory shifted its focus to skills, knowledge and competencies as the critical components of leadership. The assumption upon which this theory was based is that weak results are caused by weak skills. However, under the assumption that knowledge and competencies, the other components of this theory, could generate a list of essential skills for developmental plans, leaders therefore started developing plans. This resulted in some improvements in leadership performances, but not uniformly. The underlying submission arising from the above therefore is that competencies are helpful, but they present an incomplete picture because successful leaders never had the same key competencies. Finally, knowledge alone does not equate leadership, hence rendering the skill approach inadequate (Daft and Lengel, 1998, and Lippit, 2002).

Following from the above therefore, one could safely jump to the conclusion that leadership is not a trait or a matter of intelligence alone. Putting it succinctly based on the above analysis, one can summarize that *leadership is the ability to set a realistic direction, develop effective plans, get others to implement the plans, and measure results.*

*The underlying submission arising from the above therefore is that competencies are helpful, but they present an incomplete picture because successful leaders never had the same key competencies.*

We observed that too frequently leadership is equated to vision, but we know from experience and practice that *vision without implementation is hallucination.* Therefore, vision does not equal leadership as words do not equal accomplishment. Leadership, in the words of Alan Keith which I fully subscribe to

“is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen,” and this is what consciously the emerging **Bukola Saraki School of Governance and Leadership** is all about.

### Proponents of the Bukola Saraki School of Governance and Leadership

1. Governor (Dr) Abdulfatah Ahmed
2. Ambassador Nimota Akanbi
3. Alhaji Kawu Baraje
4. Mallam Bolaji Abdullahi
5. Senator (Dr) Rafiu Ibrahim
6. Honourable Dr Ali Ahmad
7. Honourable Moshood Mustapha
8. Honourable Zakari Muhammed
9. Honourable Ahman Pategi
10. Honourable Abdulrasaq Atunwa
11. Honourable Funke Adedoyin
12. Honourable Danladi
13. Honourable Moshood Bakare
14. Alhaji Isiaka Gold
15. Alhaji Toyin Sanusi
16. Dr Muritala Awodun





# The Saraki I Know

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KWARA STATE  
HIS EXCELLENCY,  
ALHAJI (DR) ABDULFATAH AHMED

**Kwareve News:** Your Excellency, what's the relationship between you and the Senate President?

Ans.: What else could it have been? Very cordial. More or less, a family-like relationship. Don't forget, this is a relationship that sprang over a number of years. First, as a boss in the Societe Generale Bank, later as a benefactor in the GTBank and again a boss, mentor and role model in politics.

I remain eternally grateful for the opportunities I had, through the instrumentality of the Senate President, first as a commissioner for Finance and later, Commissioner for Planning, to serve under his administration. It was that singular exposure that God used to prepare me for where I am today.

Dr Saraki is my leader, in all ramifications because the political structure that brought all of us to wherever we are today is the Saraki structure or maybe you can call it a movement. And it is such a strong structure and veritable movement that precedes his own entry into the political sphere of the State and now Nigeria. It is thus a structure that he himself inherited but which he has so wonderfully transformed and solidified. It is a structure built over years of political toiling and commitment by our late father, the Waziri Ngeri, late Dr. Olusola Saraki.

This structure has one notable hallmark which the Senate President has continued to nurture. That hallmark is the total dedication and commitment to the welfare of the people.

“

*I remain eternally grateful for the opportunities I had, through the instrumentality of the Senate President, first as a commissioner for Finance and later Commissioner for Planning, to serve under his administration.*

”

You cannot lay claim to a genuine membership of the Saraki political family if you have no feeling for the well being of the people; if the plight of the masses does not touch your heart. I'm sure you are aware that this has been a common trace in the public communications of the Senate President, even in his interactions with the executive arm of the government. For instance, you will recall that the highlight of his speech at the presentation of the 2017 budget was to tell President Muhammad Buhari that the masses are hungry. If anyone thinks that was a means to scoring cheap political gain,

such thinking would be wrong and would be mainly because such people are not familiar with the basic principle that guides the Saraki political philosophy.

The fate of the common man lies in the hands of those of us who are leaders today and we must not fail to do whatever we can to ensure their welfare; that was one major assignment that our late father gave us and which under the leadership of the Senate President we are privileged to sustain. That is why you see the Senate President coming home all the time; spending time with the people, unlike those who come home during elections.

**Kwareve News:** How would Your Excellency describe the Senate President?

Ans.: This is like asking me to deliver a paper on the Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki. Given what he's to me, personally, and what he has become for Kwara State; it will always be a great honour for me

government elders, state elders, senatorial elders before finally coming to the centre. As such, unless where there is a problem, the final choice is always the first and original choice from the people and that has been responsible for the electoral victories you have seen us garner over the years. It is this style of leadership which has given various men and women who ordinarily would not have been opportuned because of their poor backgrounds, opportunities to come to limelight.

In terms of his personal characteristics that I have come to know and admire over the years, I can say that first and foremost, Dr. Saraki loves doing whatever can help the people. He is not a dictator but a consummate democrat who loves to brainstorm a lot. He doesn't enjoy sychophancy and sloppiness. He has a progressive mind and would want to leave a positive, solid mark behind anywhere he goes. He sees far ahead of the time; I think he has this ability to understand many of the

*"I remember the day he was leaving Ilorin after I was sworn in as the governor in 2011. It was an emotional day for the two families. At the Ilorin International Airport, he held my hand and whispered to me: "please take good care of my people. Please tolerate their idiocracies. Reward their loyalty and commitment." That was a time I felt the enormity of the task ahead.*

to take up such an assignment. Saraki is a man of the people, with the people. He loves the people "to the moon and back."

I remember the day he was leaving Ilorin after I was sworn in as the Governor in 2011. It was an emotional day for the two families. At the Ilorin International Airport, he held my hand and whispered to me: "Please take good care of my people. Please tolerate their idiocracies. Reward their loyalty and commitment." That was a time I felt the enormity of the task ahead.

Another notable feature of the Senate President, which is also a carry-over of the Saraki political philosophy, is what I call community leadership and decision making process. Contrary to what many critics say, the process of decision making within the Saraki political structure is one of community consultation and review until everyone is convinced the right thing has been done. Before even a councillorship candidate is chosen for election, the process would go through the ward elders, local

things that could play out in the far future and he prepares himself to be in the right frame to make the best use of such opportunities and events. He is bold and does not take no for an answer because he believes that there is always a way out for every challenge. Indeed I would say that the Senate President is someone who loves to take up challenges. And you can see the evidence of this everywhere he has been since coming to public service in the days of former President Olusegun Obasanjo whom he served as Special Adviser on Budget and you can also see the various progressive reforms he has brought to the National Assembly since assuming the position of Chairman of the legislative body. He is a fast thinker, very fast and at home with figures, of course that should not surprise us given his rich background of experience as a banker of great astute.

**Kwareve News:** What's your perception of an ideal civil service?

Ans.: When we came in 2011, we had a clear





*To achieve the desired results, the civil servants must be adequately remunerated and motivated based on available resources. So far, we ensure timely payment of salaries to all categories of civil servants, until we experienced unexpected recession in the National Assembly occasioned by the activities of militants in the Niger Delta region. Even at that, we were still able to pay core state civil servants. Thank God and the perseverance of our people, the bad days are over.*

understanding of where we were and where we wanted to be, having carefully studied the system and processes over the previous eight years when I served as Commissioners for Finance and later that of Economic Planning. Those years exposed me to the critical challenges that we had in the public sector and which must be tackled if our dream of having a state that can compare favourably with her peers in the region and across the country were to be realised.

So, from day one, we realised the importance of setting achievable targets and then ensuring effective mechanism for monitoring and evaluation. We also place premium on inputs, outputs and impacts. This enables us assess the effects of our actions vis á vis the inputs.

But to achieve the desired results, the civil servants must be adequately remunerated and motivated based on available resources. So far, we ensure timely payment of salaries to all categories of civil servants, until we experienced unexpected recession in the National Assembly occasioned by the activities of militants in the Niger Delta region. Even at that, we were still able to pay core state civil servants. Thank God and the perseverance of our people, the bad days are over.

We also ensure that civil servants get their bonuses, apart from our training programme towards making sure that they are twenty first century compliance.

The Kwara State Internal Revenue Service is a baby of such a continuous monitoring and evaluation of our programmes and policies.

**Kwareve News:** How does the Senate President contribute to the day to day running of your government?

Ans.: (Laughs) If you truly understand governance, you'll agree with me that it's a serious business. Sustainable success can only be achieved through an inclusive decision making process. This means relating with stakeholders and experienced leaders and elders. Therefore, tapping into the Senate President's huge intellectual capital is completely in consonant with our ideas of inclusive governance.

It will be foolhardy to assume that you want to begin to reinvent the wheel in our kind of economic situation where resources are also dwindling.

Rather, you inclusively take decisions that would bring optimal benefits to the people in the short, medium and long terms. These ideals are achieved through the instrumentalities of the executive, the legislative and the judicial arms of government. This is exactly what we are doing in Kwara State.

# SENATOR BUKOLA SARAКИ IS MY INSPIRATION

Interview with Senator (Dr.) Rafiu Ibrahim

“ I have been lucky through his leadership, in terms of the way I've progressed politically... I will be right by calling him a teacher, because he allows you to see how things are done. It is only when you do not meet up with his pace and his depth that you will be put aside. ”

**Kwareve News:** Who is Senator Bukola Saraki to you?

**Senator Rafiu:** He is a brother, a mentor, a leader and an inspiration for me in politics. On Sunday when I made my speech (at my 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday and Launch of the Rafiu Ibrahim Bilal Foundation), I did not mince words that coming from private sector into governance will not work. But I was watching him right from 2001, 2002 when he became adviser to the President (Olusegun Obasanjo) and in 2003, the Executive Governor of Kwara State. When I left my job at the bank, it was to face my personal business and from there, I realised it depends on your personality; that's what defines your path, even in governance and in politics. That was what encouraged me to decide that at the appropriate time, I may join. I have always wanted to be part of leadership and governance. So he is my inspiration. And what I see in him is that he is a very a focused human being, highly focused, very hard working and always determined once he has a goal set. For me, I've worked with a lot of leaders even from the corporate world, because, whomever you report to is your leader. What I've seen in him is that even if he has an idea about an issue he will let it radiate from your own opinion before he makes a decision. He is a super team builder and team leader. For some of us, what made me see him as a mentor... I have been lucky through his leadership, in terms of the way I've progressed politically... **I will be right by calling him a teacher**, because he allows you to see how things are done. **It is only when you do not meet up with his pace and his depth that you will be put aside.** When he gives you an assignment you have to come with zeal and drive, even if you're not very intelligent, the depth must be very seen... that you're not someone that just does things without thinking deep.

**Kwareve News:** What do you think prepared him for the assignment of the Senate President?

**Senator Rafiu:** The most important thing that worked for him is relationship with people. He has deep reach and he's unassuming. You'll never know whom he knows, he does not brag or name-drop. What I now noticed again, is when there is crisis, he looks out for his friends. This allows him to keep friends all over Nigeria, he has friends everywhere. That is why today the way he relates with the Senators, you cannot notice difference between a PDP Senator and an APC Senator. This is in terms of the access to him, people he moves around



with, etc. He cuts across tribe, religion, party, etc. By the time you look at this project of his 'SP-ship', if I can use that word, if you find the people that started it, they are just people he has been with all these while. Some people before were doubting his leadership quality, but not anymore, in fact some can begin to tell you things about his leadership quality that I, that am his brother cannot tell you about.

**Kwareve News:** How do you want to relate this to his heredity, his family background?

**Senator Rafiu:** What I see the family background doing for him is he is a very kind and generous person; to a fault. And those are very important qualities in a leader. Generosity is not always about giving people money, from my perspective, it's more about dropping things easily – You want this? You can have it – to the extent that some of us are not happy when he takes some decisions, but later, we realise there is wisdom in the decisions. He is someone who believes so much that tomorrow is better than today, especially in taking decisions. He also doesn't take hard line decisions. Contrary to what people believe, **he's ambitious but is never desperate; he is never aggressive about positions.** But what you will see especially in this struggle about the SP is if he ventures into something, if he's going to get out it must be very clear that he needs to get out. **He cannot be intimidated by any set of human beings!** I have never witnessed him being afraid; he is fearless. As a student under him, I wondered, is he not a human being? Even when it seems the earth will swallow him, he still maintains his calm. The only thing you can see on his face is tiredness. He might not even sleep for 3 days. But he has no fear, no fear! Even in the dock, he writes instructions for the lawyers. He has this wonderful resilience and threshold for pressure.

**Kwareve News:** What role do you think the politics of Kwara which he was deeply involved in had played in the national politics?

**Senator Rafiu:** You can say he came into proper leadership by becoming Governor of Kwara, which he did for 8 years excellently. So I see it as testing the knowledge he has, and using the experience to build his capacity as somebody that can lead. The Almighty also gave him the opportunity of national politics through the Governors' Forum. The achievements attained in his tenure is unprecedented to date. He brought the Governors' Forum into the national lime light and into decision making process of governance in Nigeria. He had the opportunity of leading Kwara at a time that he took over from a Government of chaos and he was able to straighten out everything.

His results are there to compare with those of any administration either before or after him.

**Kwareve News:** Bringing in his private sector experience, how does that play out?

**Senator Rafiu:** The biggest players in the private sector are his friends. That's what I mean by he never leaves his friends. He left private sector but he's still there. So if he wants to go back there, he has his place. Most people just lose ground where they were when they are in another place, but not him. I have decided to copy that so I make sure no matter how busy I am I make time for my friends in the public sector and also be there when they need me.

**Kwareve News:** He has mentored and raised a new generation of leaders. What do you think he looks out for to pick up someone to mentor?

**Senator Rafiu:** Like I said, you must be ready to be hard working, he must be ready to be taught even if not adequately prepared, you must be teachable, and you must be ready to be deep into whatever assignments he gives you.

**Kwareve News:** What is the role of commitment and loyalty?

**Senator Rafiu:** That is why I don't just want to use that word. For example, if he says you and I will go through this document today, he might leave you there and be outside with people and he has forgotten, it's not deliberate, but are you ready to wait after he has told you this is very important today? He might even say I'm coming and have even gone to do some other things and think you are already there working on it. You must have that resilience to be very very committed to whatever you're doing. Myself, I talk about him but **my loyalty is not to him, it's to his ideals.** What he hates the most, hero-worshipping.

**Kwareve News:** Hero-worshipping, we need to talk about that because a lot of people try to play at that. Rather than attract his attention positively, they might even repel him.

**Senator Rafiu:** Imagine if am not able to do the works he gave me, I will not be able to speak about him the way I've spoken. It's not possible because he'll push you aside. You must be seen to be doing the work he gave you with all your energy and resources at your disposal. So hero-worshipping, he hates it.



# People trying to stop him did not take the time to match him

## Mallam Bolaji Abdullahi



**Kwareve News:** As one of the few people who were already on his team even before the Senate President (SP) Bukola Saraki was sworn in as the Executive Governor of Kwara, how do you see him?

**Bolaji:** I see him as a leader, mentor, friend, boss and of course role model in many respects. We have worked together since 2003 when I started as a Special Assistant (SA). I later rose to Special Adviser and then Commissioner. SP is a leader who believes more in and values contribution more than the office you occupy or what you're called. He indicated this by nominating me to attend Executive Council meetings despite my being a Special Assistant. Even as a Special Adviser, he made me the Chairman of the Budget Implementation Committee. He has a clear understanding of the people on his team. Only someone like him can take radical decisions such as placing a journalist even as a Special Assistant, talkless Commissioner for Education.

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*I also find it fascinating that apart from the grace given to some of us, Alhamdulillah, to the glory of God, people who read about him in the media see him as this ultra-politician who is ambitious and will do anything to attain power. On the contrary, he is very clear about his vision at every particular point in time.*

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I also find it fascinating that apart from the grace given to some of us, Alhamdulillah, to the glory of God, people who read about him in the media see him as this ultra-politician who is ambitious and will do anything to attain power. On the contrary, he is very clear about his vision at every particular point in time. He said this is a marathon race, not a sprint. The mental stamina he has to carry on is unbelievable. He believes in the longer term, not short-term. Even after returning from a closed session with the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT), SP come back to worry about the case like most of us. He does not allow any situation to overwhelm him. In fact I remember we had to ask him, is there something you know that we don't? As leader, your followership is only as strong and confident as you are.

I don't know many people who respond to crises like he does. That is actually when you see the best of him. It's been an inspiration and a great learning opportunity. The drawback for him, is that because he's a result-oriented person like any, he has tunnel-vision; so he loses sight of all the individual problems that surround him. So if you have a problem, he may not notice, you have to speak up. This is the nature of people who like to get results.

**Kwareve News:** What has been the role his Governorship tenures has played in developing his leadership style? Those were probably your early days in his school.

**Bolaji:** He's someone who is always willing to debate. He enjoys you talking him up on visions and he will try to convince

you but if you have superior argument, he will agree with you. **He sees and does things differently.** An instance is with the Shonga Farms. When we came in in 2003, after a month, i.e. by June, we had launched the 'back to farm' initiative. But by the end of that year, SP had realised that the project was not going to work. We had invested a lot in terms of seedlings, insecticide, equipment, etc. He called one day and asked, have you been following the case in Zimbabwe where white farmers were being chased out of the country. SP kept pushing for them to come despite oppositions. It was because of his believe and commitment that was sold on the vision that the results from that farm can change the economy of a Local Government. While the project did not achieve its full potential, it did very well.

**Most leaders will probably persist even when an initiative is not quite working well for any reason including their ego but SP rather adjusted it to fit the policies** having seen the results so far and not abandon the project or remain adamant on carrying on as usual. This is a remarkable quality in a leader.

People don't know how tough he is. I shut down a few schools for exam malpractices and reopened them 2 weeks later. I had gone to report myself to him then saying that people might come to him. He said he already knew because an extended family of his who was affected had come already. He then questioned why I reopened the schools saying we could have locked them up for good. The same thing when we arrested teachers who were aiding in exam malpractice and one of them happened to be the son of a prominent person. SP refused to step in insisting that laws have to be uniformly applicable. These are some of the tough decisions he is able to withstand and people don't realise.

**Kwareve News:** Tell us about the introduction of Special Assistants and Advisers which was not there before his time.

**Bolaji:** Look at how he was able to wriggle out of the selection of his cabinet members. Commissioners had already been selected for him through the party as is standard practice and he did not want to turn them down despite him knowing they would not be able to meet his standards as is practice so what he did was to appoint by himself, SAs, which is quite ingenious. While the Federal Executive members met on Wednesdays, he met with his assistants on Mondays. Having allocated portfolios to assistants, they were expected to give reports on activities and upcoming proposals and have convincing recommendations. He however did not do this in a way that undermined the authority of the commissioners. In fact, they must not report to him

about an SA usurping their powers. He takes it very seriously as he believes you should be able to manage them properly.

From his first term, some of us were moved from Special Assistants to Special Advisers and then in his second tenure, some of us become Commissioners. You must however realise that **as Commissioners, we really already had 4 years' experience from the first tenure as SAs to learn and get to know the civil servants and seamlessly transfer.**

**Kwareve News:** Let's move to his emergence as the SP. Many underrated his capacity, as if to say the more they look the less they see. For those of you close to him, was his emergence a surprise?

**Bolaji:** for me it was not a surprise, despite the odds. He is someone who doesn't take anything for granted, he has his plans very clear in his mind. **I think those who were trying to stop him underestimated him.** He is very prepared and pays attention to details. **Those people didn't take the time to match him, they thought they could just command some people and intimidate him.** For him, he plans well ahead. For example, when the House was to be sealed at 7am, he was already there at 5am. For his emergence as SP, he paid attention to realise that the proclamation for voting to be at 12noon was already with the clerk without any counter proclamation, he knew by law, it would hold.

With regards to the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT), I don't think he expected it to be easy, he knew it was a marathon. **Again, those against him underestimated him again assuming the Senators would have removed him as President.** So they kept playing on public perception. He however realises that if it is about the Senate Presidency, the focus had to be the Senators. He needed the trust and confidence of the other 108 Senators who were the people that really mattered in this regard. **As long as the Senators did not think him unsuitable to lead them, then he's fine.**

**Kwareve News:** His kind of leadership is not common in Nigeria?

**Bolaji:** Yes, it is not. **It is funny how we think people who should treat us and administer our drugs should be trained in medicine, those who should fly us trained as pilots, and so on. But we do not think training is necessary for governance.** And these are the people that handle the economy and the finance and make policies. Even for those in the private sector who think they may not care, one man can come one day with a policy and turn all your hardwork to nothing.

**Kwareve News:** That's worth a thought. Thank you for sharing with us.

# “ LEADERS MAKE FOLLOWERS BUT GREAT LEADERS MAKE LEADERS ”

## – HONORABLE ZAKARI MOHAMMED

*Whether you love him or not, what you cannot take away from him he is someone who is always on top of his game.*

**Kwareve News:** How would you describe the Senate President, Bukola Saraki?

**Honourable Zakari:** I would describe him as someone who is very compassionate, yet firm. He is someone who when he gives you an assignment he gives you free hand to operate. Let me put it this way, **leaders make followers but great leaders make leaders.** Bukola Saraki is a great leader having made leaders out so many of us. He is someone who is not easy to convince so you must have power of argument to convince him empirically. He will then be able to decipher and get value from your discussion.



**Kwareve News:** So we are not wrong to think of him as born leader, made leader and making leaders?

**Honourable Zakari:** Like I used to tell people even if he was not born by Oloye, he would still have been a leader because naturally, even while he was a Senator, the aura around him tells you this is a leader. Even when he talks in meetings and interjects you're forced to say there's some sense coming in. It is the icing on the cake that he has a father who has a structure, political background and sowed the seed of dynasty that he inherited. Even if it is to his credit, am sure he would do something for himself quite naturally. He used to say to me we need to carve a niche for ourselves, aside Baba – we must be remembered for something.

**Kwareve News:** Looking back to those years when he was the Executive Governor of Kwara State for 8 years. Your administration, led by him transformed Kwara. How did you see him achieve all this, was it out of carefully planned agenda or whatever comes?

**Honourable Zakari:** if you know him very well, you will know he is not someone who just stumbles on anything. He is a very smart thinking individual and he is on a fast lane. I'll give you an instance, one night he invited me to the Government House to watch a match when I was SA, Sports. He asked if I know why Nigeria lost? He said it was because that other team was a product of carefully planning, schooling and proper execution – they are the products of academy. The others he said stumbled upon football. When you hold a ball with education, you know what to do with it. That's was how we started Football Academy. To his credit, it was the first well-structured

football academy in Nigeria. You could see professionals come out of it who spoke good English and keep on rising in their chosen field. That is the kind of dream he has, footballers who could come out as intellectuals. The motto was skills and intellect.

**Whether you love him or not you know he is someone who is always on top of his game.** He is not someone that likes sycophancy, he gets very uncomfortable. He is realistic and he allows you to express yourself. If you argue with him he would ask you why and you explain. That kind of leadership is not common in Nigeria. And he is not a petty leader. Wherever I find myself, that's the training I emulate, I can hold my own, anywhere. Self-confidence is a route to success. All the projects we executed were carefully planned. Kwara is a placed that is 32 out of 33 States in the Federal Allocation, so how have we achieved so much? It is as a result of resilience. He always said while we are not well paid as commissioners compared to our peers, he says this calls for sacrifice. So all that we achieved was a result of careful planning.

**Kwareve News:** Let's bring it down to legislative activities. What kind of person was he or has he been that has metamorphosed into the Senate President (SP)?

**Honourable Zakari:** you know he is a team player and has earned him a lot of respect. Remember that he is not someone who just jump on motions. He brought out the issue of fuel



subsidy and brought out a lot of issues. As the Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment he was able to highlight environmental issues and made firms sensitive to communities and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). He would love to do more but the legislative process is slow. I would say he used the first 4 years to find his feet. With the vote of his colleagues, he was able to become the Senate President. From a cloudy environment, the Senate has become a stable institution and has been trying to impact positively. Moving out of the docile nature that it used to be, they are picking up ambitions that were ordinarily a 'no go area'.

**Kwareve News:** As someone very close to him, after his tenure as Governor, could you have seen him becoming the SP?

**Honourable Zakari:** Yes, for me, am not surprised. Leaders are anointed and Shakespeare said in one of his books that no amount of water can wash off the balm of an anointed leader. Like I said, there are certain things that would distinguish you from others. The things that are of a leader is be true to your followers, your words are your bounds and you're not selfish. These make you a rallying point, a natural leader. When I saw him and the people in the race I said look, that's our next SP.

When he became the Governor and they were Commissioner, he realised these people because of where he was coming from they might not be able to meet the pace, so he appointed SAs. It was tough but it made us part of a success story and it was a good exposure to leadership that has strengthened me. He is a British man by orientation and he may not commend you. I have worked with him for about 17 years now and he has only said 'well done' I think twice; even when am breaking my neck. I became used to it. He does appreciate. People complain sometimes when you're talking to him, he's just looking and people wonder if he has dosed off but he's probably just pondering over what you're saying. So for those who don't know him, they keep quiet. But for those of us who do, we keep talking and when you mention a critical point he responds and mentions something you're said and that's when you know he's following you.

**Kwareve News:** Are there things that has happened in the past that up till now you still can't find answers as to why he did them?

**Honourable Zakari:** Usually, when you're appointed SA, the tradition is to go and take brief. When I heard the announcement on Radio I went to see him to say thank you and he didn't see me so I sent him a text, and

there was no reply. I just started that job without a brief.

**Kwareve News:** You seem to know him so well, what has he done that has surprised you?

**Honourable Zakari:** surprises are so many with him and you cannot say this is how it will come out. When he's asking you something, he's asking you from the point of knowledge so just tell him what you know and your limitations. He is not someone who is quick to blame you for flaws. For some of us, my own background as a criminologist, journalist and a bit of law has modelled me to be able to understand a bit of psychology to know what to say and when to say.

*“He is a leader who has the capacity to bear. In the heat of crisis, you do not see it in his face. He has that team spirit to lead.”*

**Kwareve News:** You talked about his father, am sure he has learnt a lot from Baba that he emulates, but what has he also learnt to do differently?

**Honourable Zakari:** You know Baba, may God bless his soul, he is a very great man and very giving. Yes, SP is a product of him but they are different. A typical Baba, when he comes from Lagos and people come to report others. Baba was like a police station. But for SP, he does his findings. When he hears any information, he goes underground to dig deep. Another is that when Baba, when you come to Baba with a problem whether true or lies, if his heart gives you, he'll give, even if he knows you don't deserve it. But for SP, he will give but it must be for the purpose you asked for. He is a leader who has the capacity to bear. In the heat of crisis, you do not see it in his face. He has that team spirit to lead, imagine as a leader he breaks down and weeps.

**Kwareve News:** what is the best kept secret about him?

**Honourable Zakari:** I think it is the strength that he has. **He passes for a butty child but behind that is a steel heart.** Also, he has so much loads and loads and loads of energy.

# DON'T JUST THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX, LIVE OUTSIDE THE BOX AND STAY THERE

Honourable Abubakar Kanneke 'Karya Babu'

## **Kwareve News: Who is Senator Bukola Saraki?**

**Karya Babu:** The Distinguished Senator Abubakar Bukola Saraki, to me is a mentor, a political leader and an elder brother. He's a mentor because he is somebody that I have seen as the kind of politician I want to be. I have been his mentee as I have had the opportunity of being co-opted into public service and his believe in my ability to work. I have worked with him as SA on Agriculture through his tenure and I have learnt a lot in public service. His attitude is different from the norm, he brought a lot of private sector depth and seriousness. He took public service in Kwara State to the level it is now.

His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kwara State graduated from his school and a lot of us have the opportunity of continuing to learn from him. He strives to bring better impact of governance to the people. He is not easily rattled by shenanigans. He's a politician's politician. I am proud to have him as a mentor and to be associated with him.

## **The quality of expectations from Kwarans is now high because of his quality of leadership.**

He challenges us to step up our game. If you do not meet up to such, they would probably question whether you learnt anything from him. He is an astute leader, a politician per excellence. He has an almost **I admire how easily he has transitioned in the sense that everyone basically at his pleasure as the Executive Governor and now he's working among equals.** You have to adjust and change paradigms immediately. To be able to create a team there and provide leadership takes wisdom. He has ventured into bringing the people close to the National Assembly for example dared to go to the Niger Delta to see the environmental degradation and go to the Northeast to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). All these are ingredients of appropriate and robust legislation. When he came, he set up an agenda for the Senate. He is a believer in Nigeria and that's what gives him the passion to drive.

## **Kwareve News: Back to his leadership as to the Governor of Kwara State, what will you appropriate his nature of service to? Is it a function of the private sector that he has managed with the politics? How was he able to distinguish himself from the old order to the Kwara we have today?**

**Karya Babu:** It's true he came from the private sector but having leadership qualities come to play whether you're in the private or public sector. Among the assets Allah has endowed him with is the ability to profile people and identify capacities, even those the individuals may not know they possess. **He could meet you and probably do a SWOT analysis on you immediately;** identify your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is an asset



*Kwara is ahead of many states, because we are proactive in governance and meticulous in the management of resources for optimal utilisation in areas where it would have the optimal impact to improve the standard of living of the people. If not for leadership Kwara will not be where it is today. Senator Bukola Saraki is the architect of the new Kwara we have today.*

for someone who has to manage human resource which is first, after all, a tree does not make a forest. Even when you have meagre capacity in economic resource, having the right team will allow you the best utilisation.

The way Government was run before that was reactionary. It was not planned. And they run Government by proposal that comes from others. But when he came, and said no, like in anything where you want to succeed, you must plan. He believes you must do due diligence of the situation you meet on ground. At the same time, you must know your capacities, your assets and your liabilities.

Despite the bitter election that ousted the Governor Lawal and brought him in, he did not react as many would think. **He did not abandon the projects of Governor Lawal.** The first thing he did was consolidated projects of the previous administration and worked on the low hanging fruits and finished those projects. I had not joined the team then,

I was still at work in private practice. To me, that was a good indicator we are having fresh leadership. I started monitoring and realised from day one he organised a strategic retreat with civil servants he met on ground and people on his campaign trail who were potential appointees. He brought in external facilitators to discuss 'the project Kwara'. That was when we first had a blue print to move Kwara forward, with milestones and put key performance indicators (KPI) like you would in the private sector. He turned around the outlook of governance and gave us the opportunity to participate. He head hunted and brought me in to manage the incoming Zimbabwean farmers as the SA, Agriculture.

He has from his Governorship worked towards getting the most impact to the common man from little resources. I have seen him change the face of public sector in Kwara State. He brought it the commitment and seriousness of the private sector. He has brought organised nature into the public service and has brought that to bear in the National Assembly. That manner and pattern of governance is still what he brings now. And this has put **Kwara ahead of many states, because we are proactive in governance and meticulous in the management of resources** for optimal utilisation in areas where it would have the optimal impact to improve the standard of living of the people. If not for leadership Kwara will not be where it is today. Senator Bukola Saraki is the architect of the new Kwara we have today.

A lot of states probably saw the recession coming and they maybe didn't know what to do or just didn't do anything about it. But Governor Ahmed planned and acted at the nick of time. And now, it is what some of us in the National Assembly when we have opportunities are sharing with other people. We tell them you need to think outside the box. Or like they say, **it is not enough to think outside the box, because it will make you remain in the box so you have live outside the box and stay there.** Those are the things you get from people he has mentored.

I see him as a man of faith. A lot of us came to be religious but we are not solid in faith and there's a strong difference. Being solid in faith is not particularly apparent because it is something that is in your inner being. Religion sometimes is the activity, the outward one people see and measure from the outside like praying, going to church, fasting etc. you can have someone who does that but yet is not a faithful man. In Islam, the first pillar is faith, before prayers, fasting, going to hajj and giving alms. Faith is the cornerstone. He is a man of faith because in the face of trials and tribulations is he knuckling or does he stand up and accepts it as a test from his God and is he faithful with God to help he resolve the situation?

**Kwareve News:** What role do you think his family background, the dynasty, has played?

**Karya Babu:** He's privileged to come from that background. We call him a chip from the old block. His Eminence, the late Waziri is definitely an astute politician and has the love of the people of Kwara at heart. Throughout his lifetime, he was an ambassador of the State. He was an icon in Kwara and the status is almost synonymous with the State itself. He was first and foremost a Kwaran before a Senator or Medical Doctor or successful Businessman. I think definitely, am also a parent now and a significant part of who people turn out to be is formed in the home front. Kids are very observant. Every time I talk about a new Nigeria, I always talk about family. We do not have the right to blame the Government when most of us are not even successful as family heads. Family is the fabric society; the unit where it all starts from. The Senate President (SP) must have witnessed everything as carried out by his dad even if he didn't realise at a young age. People say things like he was brought with a silver spoon, he didn't grow up among us, etc. all these are true, but they have forgotten he has witnessed his father who has received people from all social stratas who all have access to his house.

**Kwareve News:** You have insisted that you're his student, not yet a graduate, giving your closeness with him, can you tell us of a time when you were most scared about a decision he took?

**Karya Babu:** What comes to mind is when we were trying to jump ship from PDP to the APC. Knowing him to be a detailed person and the process, I was a believer in his decision but there was anxiety whether we were taking the right steps. My concern was not for Kwara but federal. If we lose at the Federal level, what will become of Kwara? People might come back to haunt us. But I know he is someone that processes and reprocesses his thought so I know if he asks us to move, we'll move with him because like the saying, what an elder sees while sitting, a young one cannot see even on top of a tree.

**Kwareve News:** Which of his qualities would you like to clone?

**Karya Babu:** His capacity to profile people and determine their strengths. For instance, I was Commissioner for Sports & Youth development and there was a dire situation in Kwara with regards to access to water. The SP, then Executive Governor of Kwara decided to sack the then Commissioner for Water Resources and by the same announcement I was told to take that position while I was still in Sports & Youth Development. I found myself running the 2 ministries for over a year. For me, I did not even know I had the capacity. Having learnt from him, I was able to rise to the challenge. So I believe he has that virtue to identify competencies just by relating with you and knows how to deploy or give responsibilities.

**Kwareve News:** We are very grateful for your time.

**Karya Babu:** No problem!



# Bukola Saraki, *just being understood*

Honourable Ali Ahmad

*I've met a lot of people that it is when they eventually came close to him that they say wow, I didn't know this man is like this – the depth of his intellect, the love for his people – he's a person that you cannot just judge from a distance.*

**Kwareve News:** Who is Senator Bukola Saraki?

**Honourable Ahmad:** Senator Bukola Saraki is one politician that I would say is just being understood now, before now he's been largely misunderstood. Fewer people know the essential Bukola Saraki, if half of the people that should know him know him, in fact this is not where we would be today. From a distance, **I've met a lot of people that it is when they eventually came close to him that they say wow, I didn't know this man is like this – the depth of his intellect, the love for his people – he's a person that you cannot just judge from a distance.** He doesn't fake, he's just who he is. So people who try to judge him from a distance miss the point. I think that is how I would encapsulate him. You don't know him until you get close to him. I think perhaps it's because so many people out there do not have the opportunity to come close to him. I haven't seen any one that has come close to that has regretted. Yes, you find those who have personal selfish reasons but you can hardly find that the reason that one disagrees with him is that you can fault the interest or the affection he has for the people, the development of his people and the country, the constant worry he has for the progress of this country. This is a person that hardly does anything or speaks without thinking how to move this country forward. So people like us that have been very close to him we've learnt a lot. Working close to him I count myself lucky as student as a politician to meet first rated politicians.

**Kwareve News:** let's try to match who he is with his heredity, how much of preparation do you think that made or contributed to who he eventually is now?

**Honourable Ahmad:** I think if you say active preparation, I think this thing is in the DNA because I know that when we were kids, although I didn't grow up in Ilorin but from the people who did, you hardly saw the Senate President (SP) go with Baba Saraki to Eid ground or campaigns. Of course being someone who is very intelligent, perhaps when Baba went back home then they discuss. He is a

very smart person, I guess that is where he developed, not on the field. The moment he came up as a Governor, he hit the ground running. People were saying this is not a politician but after 1 or 2 years he went beyond their expectations. The reason I would still believe it is when Baba has come back home that he poured and SP picked.

**Kwareve News:** his private sector background, before venturing into politics, do you think it made any significant impact?

**Honourable Ahmad:** Yes, it did. In his approach and outlook, it contributed a lot because this shaped the way he governed Kwara. In the early years, he changed the orientation completely as Chief Executive of the State. This is part of the reason... where he was coming from helped him a lot.

**Kwareve News:** We have observed a new crop of leaders who Senator Bukola Saraki has mentored, one of which we consider you to be. From his birth and his skill set, it is easily understandable that he might become a leader, but what is significant is that he is also making leaders. We want you to talk more about this.

**Honourable Ahmad:** He is not intimidated by the success or achievement of anybody working with



**him.** What I have seen through the length and breadth of politicians in Nigeria is that you have leaders who are envious of their successful followers, 90% of our leaders are like that. I can really only count Senator Bukola Saraki who isn't, may be 2 or 3 more people. But the vast majority of people are scared ones you have potentials they identify, they stuntify it and kill it because they don't want rivals. But with SP, the sky is your limit, he encourages you and you can see that he is happy. With previous Governors, when Commissioners are building houses, they are basically in trouble.

**Kwareve News:** Let's go specifically into his emergence as SP. What insight can you give us?

**Honourable Ahmad:** He emerged as SP because that was the natural thing to have happened. God had destined it, he worked for it, he worked his way into the hearts of the people. Once he did that nothing could have stopped him. The night before the inauguration, the entire PDP gave their support. We have external people that would want to stop that. One lesson apart from his own personal success is from now on, no president of Nigeria would want to pick a fight about who becomes the House of Representative or Senate Speaker. And this is good for democracy; independence of the legislature.

**Kwareve News:** as it is right now, so many were privy to the fact that what you did in Kwara is a demonstration of his resource management capacity, a good example is the creation KWASU looking at the statistics of funding, the answer would have been no.

**Honourable Ahmad:** That's what I said that people who need to know him. Even the people who were against him, if you ask 90% of them today if they are still against him being the SP, they would say no, he should continue. Because now they have seen what he can do. The problem is that he is not a noise maker, he is a silent achiever. Look at his speech at the budget presentation, unconsciously everyone just gave him a standing ovation. Whoever was in that hall could see the message was coming from his heart, and it resonated. This is a man that doesn't sleep. If Nigeria knows what he has what he has in stock, I think we would be running after him, coming to Kwara and begging Kwara that please leave this man for us in this country. If Nigeria will be lucky, this is the time. Bukola is in his 60s, I think Nigeria would be the luckiest country in the world. Because the energy, the vision and the power of thought that he has that he can hold this country and hold the reins. Sometimes it's not a question of age, it's maturity.

**Kwareve News:** If you could acquire one virtue from SP what would it be, one you admire?

**Honourable Ahmad:** If you say one you're limiting my choice, I admire so many things about him. But if I could put them in gradation, I'm hardworking, but this

man, I have not seen a single person that can work for SP and be enough. If you're his PA then he needs 3 PAs because one cannot satisfy him. Sometimes I don't know here he gets his zeal, if I could have half of it. There must be something pushing him and that is what we are all trying to learn. And it helped me at the House of Representatives, I had to work as much as possibly because I didn't know if I was coming back. You can see some people working as if they'll be there forever, some even up to 3 or 4 months do not have commissioners. A Bukola man would not do that, you would have your commissioners before you're sworn in. You want to achieve so much within little time.

**Kwareve News:** What do you think he looks out for to select people he grooms?

**Honourable Ahmad:** He looks for excellence. **For you to work for him, you have to be able to bring some things to the table.** If political exigencies demand he can work with anyone but for the real work you have to be able to add value. I remember there was an assignment he gave me and I laboured and laboured and did everything and I couldn't achieve it. I was panting and I was like yes, am going to my leader to tell him what efforts I have made. I go there boasting and he said but Ali you did not achieve it.

**Kwareve News:** Many people have described him as mentor, friend, brother, teacher some have even insisted they are still in school, can you describe one moment that you are able meet his expectation.

**Honourable Ahmad:** I have met his expectations many times. When he says to you thank you, he just says it in a low voice then you know you have delivered. **But once you give it to him and he says just put it there or he screams then you know you haven't met his expectations. He appreciates people, but he's not a loud person, so he will not bring you out and say call Pele oya sing and clap for him but he has his ways of appreciating people.** He can bring himself to serious inconvenience to please you, and you can see it, you can see him bend backwards and you wonder what have I done to deserve this, then you know you're so big in his eyes.

**Kwareve News:** Describe a time when you've had to learn from him.

**Honourable Ahmad:** I would say during the House of Representatives' investigation on the fuel subsidy and Faruk Lawal was the Chairman and I was virtually the Vice Chairman. It was my first time and there were 3 time members but I was voted because of my type of questions and issues raised. The truth is anytime I see SP he would say oh Ali I watched your programme yesterday, how about this and you would have the respond. So the next time, I would throw that question and people would say wow, how did you think about that. Not knowing I have a coach at home.

# Bukola Saraki,

## the man who lives above the clock -Kingsley Amaku

**Kwareve News:** Let's know you, sir.

**Mr Kingsley:** My name is Kingsley Amaku. And as the name sounds, am sure you know it doesn't sound Kwaran. I am a lawyer by training and I am Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the Senate President (SP) on legislative matters and strategy.

**Kwareve News:** How would you describe the Senate President (SP)?

**Mr Kingsley:** I trained under a SAN and I was Special Assistant (SA) to Senator Ken Nnamani, Former Senate President and I was his SA on Research & Strategy also. After my time with the Fmr SP, I went back to practice and I deviated from my initial direction which was commercial practice as then I focused on legislative advocacy and practice. It was during that that I met with the current SP in 2011. We had a dinner conversation and after that I knew that I was going to work for this person. Before that I actually didn't want to work for anyone anymore because I had a vision of what I wanted to do and it was going well. So when he called saying he would like us to do things together I said I would prefer to consult for him for a while and then leave.

I had told him that I found the National Assembly too full of routines and unimaginative; people I saw around were not courageous to do things differently. We talked and a few days later he called and said to me "Kingsley, have you seen this report?" It was on the Ogoni oil spill. I got the report, about 400pages. I looked at the Executive Summary and found it was quite deep in terms of the scientific research on the environmental degradation and I said he needed to read this report. So I printed the report and gave it to him on a Friday. Sunday morning, he called on the phone and asked me to come. When I got there he asked if I had looked at the report and I said no, and he was like "Ah!" that he had finished the report and he would like us to discuss the report. I was shocked! That was the first shock I got from him. The report was not prose or something interesting. If you're not someone that is really rigorous, you would not finish the third chapter in one weekend. But SP had read it, marked it all up. I wondered if someone had done it for him so I wanted to find out. So we sat down and he was telling me the recommendations and everything. I couldn't believe it.

He was just a Senator then and the last person I worked with was a Senate President. Ordinarily, there's nothing that would compel me to go lower. But after that experience I knew there was something different about this person. It didn't take long after I started working with him to learn that this man is really different. This was not based on showmanship, this was deeply acculturated personality. He has developed himself in a manner that is unique and different. I wanted to deconstruct him to understand what it is that drives him.

After about a few months working with him, I realised he is someone who works very very hard. I was wondering, does this man smoke? Because I could not see such capacity to work rigorously and endlessly, 24/7 30 days, unbroken. Sometimes, I would wake up and be in his house by 8:30am and he is already awake, dressed, and ready for the day, this is someone I left around 3am. The next thing is the agenda for the day. He does not go unprepared. You asked what we find unique about him, **he lives above the clock**. For example, today is Wednesday, he has already planned Thursday, Friday and Saturday so he



*And he receives people who have been against him, that you can call his enemies with such open arms. You wonder, is this man a politician in Nigeria? He shows us what politics should be. He's been a lesson on how to set your mind, the paradigm of leadership that succeeds.*



already planned and has details that are already choreographed. I don't know how he does it.

He is also a business man and a leader in Kwara. His leadership transcends beyond what you can imagine. I have worked with Governors and Senate President and I can see the level of their reach. I have not seen one that is so coherent, comprehensive and detailed to the point I see with the SP. He changed my understanding about leadership, totally.

I was telling Financial Times, they were having a conversation with us in 2013 about the Nigerian National Petroleum Commission (NNPC) investigation and I told them that it's not because I work for him when we will have him as the President of Nigeria. Even if it's for 1 year, I think that those who will live after will remember that 1 year for a very long time. Because the way he drives himself you'll be scared that he's over-exerting himself. He wakes up the next day. The same energy, the same drive. And it doesn't matter that most people outside have a different image of him, and one day I went home and told my wife, I'm afraid of Nigerian politics **if this man I work with can be seen in any other way other than who he is, then there is absolutely no hope here. But guess what, I may be losing hope but his hope is as high as heaven.**

When he's travelling, everybody wants to travel with him, I don't want to travel with him because you will work! When he travels is the only time I can rest. If I dare travel with him, it's work all through, from the airport to meetings. He does not stop. If he has done it for 6years, and he has not changed, he cannot change. I say this, with every sense of responsibility, I have not met one I can compare both in drive, intelligence, courage and vision.

When we were doing the election for this term, of course we knew he would vie for Senate President, to tell you how he prepares, he called me and asked why is it that these past senate presidents fail. We talked about it and he said ok, do me a report and I did that. He said, in all the reports you gave me, I didn't see one that actually drew an agenda, is aid yes, agenda. Before that, I could not see a legislative drawing up an agenda, I thought that belongs to the Executive, but that is how he thinks. He is someone who even though he drives his spontaneity is a very detailed person who moves according to his vision. Thinking about it now, I think it is even ludicrous that the National Assembly that is supposed to be the architect of setting agenda for the nation does not have its own. Because what the National Assembly does is not make laws, it is the agenda setter for the nation. It builds the architecture on which any national plan is built. He said why don't you go ahead and draw up an agenda. At this

point, we had not had any election, he had not even come back here in Abuja from Kwara, and he developed an agenda that covered governance, economy, education, social, health etc. Every aspect of the agenda, he studied religiously before we started. Then when we started he did not say give me that agenda let me use it to build publicity, let people feel am going to do something. But immediately we got started the very first document he asked for was that agenda. From that day we started building the monitoring and evaluation reporting so we started setting dates and milestones on the agenda. We defined how each aspect is going to be driven and achieved.

Look, working with him is a school, it's been like going to school again and is a lesson in leadership that he is resourceful and effective. I have compared my experience with the leadership he brings to Kwara with what we have elsewhere and I tell you that many people will not be able to fully understand what he's doing for Kwara in terms of how he's moulding and shipping leadership stream, he is picking up people and grooming them. There is no one other place in Nigeria where that methodical experience is going on and from a fair mind-set. I've seen him even in the Senate you can see a fair-minded person. I can't understand his level of liberalness. And he receives people who have been against him, that you can call his enemies with such open arms. You wonder, is this man a politician in Nigeria? He shows us what politics should be. **He's been a lesson on how to set your mind, the paradigm of leadership that succeeds.**

Something that fascinates me is his ability to navigate the entire frame of Nigeria. Everywhere you go he has an entrenched network. A very very broad network that is unparalleled. It is from the way he sees politics, he does not do bitterness politics; am not even sure who his enemies are. As a speech writer, you sometimes develop speeches exposing the flaws of other people and he sees your speech and says remove that. And you try to convince him this is the opportunity to hit hard, but he always says no. he does the same with evidences, ask that they are not used. He has a way of separating his personal disagreement from issues at hand. He has so many layers to him that every day is a new experience. He has clarity of vision

**Kwareve News: Thank you very much!**

Mr Kingsley: You're welcome.

Senator (Dr.)  
Abubakar Bukola  
**Saraki** CON  
Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria



## profile

*Born on 19 December 1962, Senator Saraki was educated in both Nigeria and the UK, qualified and practiced as a medical doctor at Rush Green Hospital in London. A young Dr. Saraki decided to return to Nigeria in 1989 where he worked in the financial sector for nearly a decade until he rose to the position of Executive Director where he oversaw corporate development and expansion programmes within the financial industry.*

*With a vision to translate his experiences into progress and development for the people of his home state, Dr. Saraki was called upon by his people to contest for the position of Executive Governor of Kwara State. He was elected and sworn into office in 2003.*

Senator (Dr.) Abubakar Bukola Saraki, Senator of Kwara Central, has experienced great success in both the private sector and public service of Nigeria.

Born on 19 December 1962, Senator Saraki was educated in both Nigeria and the UK, qualified and practiced as a medical doctor at Rush Green Hospital in London. A young Dr. Saraki decided to return to Nigeria in 1989 where he worked in the financial sector for nearly a decade until he rose to the position of Executive Director where he oversaw corporate development and expansion programmes within the financial industry.

In recognition of his experience and professionalism, the Federal Government of Nigeria appointed him as Special Assistant to the President on Budget in 2000 where he was responsible for preparing the 2000/2001 National Budget. Dr. Saraki equally initiated the Fiscal Responsibility Bill and served on the Economic Policy Co-ordination Committee, where he was responsible for the formulation and implementation of key economic policies for Nigeria.

With a vision to translate his experiences into progress and development for the people of his home state, Dr. Saraki was called upon by his people to contest for the position of Executive Governor of Kwara State. He was elected and sworn into office in 2003. Based on his performances and achievements witnessed by his people, and in demonstration of their overwhelming support for him, the people of Kwara State re-elected him in 2007 general election for second term in office.





As Governor, Dr. Saraki garnered national and international acclaim for his innovative approaches to agriculture, health, education, fiscal policy and environmental reforms. His spirit of team work endeared him to his colleagues where he was appointed as Chairman of the Nigeria Governors Forum. In that capacity, he championed a peer review mechanism among the Governors of Nigerian states. He also used the platform to create a harmonious working relationship between the executive and the legislative arm of government at the national level. He was the first Nigerian Governor to be awarded the National Honor of Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON). As a man of the people coupled with his level of achievements in the political arena, he was conferred and turbaned as a nobleman of high rank with a traditional title of Turaki of Ilorin Emirate.

His transformational programs have been praised and emulated within and outside Nigeria, such as his Community Health Insurance Scheme, Environmental 'Clean and Green' Scheme, Agricultural Transformation by turning Kwara State from a net importer to a net exporter of food through the Zimbabwean Farmer's Project. Senator Saraki has worked tirelessly to bring progress and greater opportunity to Kwara State and the nation as a whole.

Impressed with his good performance during his tenure as Executive Governor of Kwara State (May 2003 to May 2011), his achievements have been noticed and acknowledged both locally and internationally by private and public institutions across the globe which earned him series of awards including: 'Governor of

the Year' by This Day Newspapers (2004); 'Best Governor of the Year in Agricultural Development 2004/05' by City People, KSNG; Leadership Award in appreciation of commitments and outstanding leadership qualities (2005); Harvard Business School Africa Club Award 2005; Kenneth Kaunda Foundation Best Governor in Africa 2006; Osun State Broadcasting Corporation, Man of the Year 2006; 'African Governor of the Year in Agricultural Development' by African Union Media Group in Pretoria, South Africa; Nigeria Referee Association Grand

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Patron 2007; This Day Newspaper Best Governor on Food Security 2008; 'The Friend of Nigerian Youth; Doctor of Science and Public Administration Award' by University of Port Harcourt for his Administration's focus on Agriculture; Life Fellowship of All Nigeria Confederation of Principals of Secondary Schools, (ANCOPSS) 2009; Outstanding Governor on Energy 2009 by the Nigerian Compass; Emerging Tiger of Nigeria (Leadership Award by This Day Newspaper) 2010; Institute of Chartered Accountants Award of Excellence 2010; Nigerian Bar Association Award of Excellence; Award of Excellence in Development of Education and Health Care Delivery in Nigeria by the College of Medicine, University of Lagos 2012.



*Out of his vision to ensure good governance, Senator Saraki sponsored a motion on the floor of the Senate on the need to end the fuel subsidy regime in Nigeria which has been a source of conduit pipe and wastages of national resources.*

In furtherance of his passion to serve the people of Kwara State and in particular, Kwara Central Senatorial District where he hails from, Dr. Bukola Saraki was elected as a Senator in 2011 with overwhelming electoral votes. On his assumption as a Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, he was appointed as the Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology. His legislative interest also includes the area of Health, Agriculture, Education, National Economy and Environmental Policy. Senator Saraki is also a member of the Senate Committee on Capital Markets and Finance.

Out of his vision to ensure good governance, Senator Saraki sponsored a motion on the floor of the Senate on the need to end the fuel subsidy regime in Nigeria which has been a source of conduit pipe and wastages of national resources. Amongst other motions and private member bills, he has sponsored includes: the National Oil Spill Detection and

Response Agency Amendment Bill 2012 which is aimed at putting a halt to oil spills in the Niger Delta, the Gas Flaring Prohibition Bill 2012, and a strong supporter of the Climate Change Commission Bill 2013.

As the Senate Committee Chairman on Environment and Ecology, Dr. Bukola Saraki has championed some environmental issues that need urgent attention in Nigeria which poses a threat to the environment, human health and livelihoods. Notable amongst them are his intervention in the Lead Poisoning incident in Zamfara State, Nigeria where over 1500 children's' lives are in danger of survival. He also supports the mission and vision of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves in ensuring safe and healthy methods of cooking for millions of Nigerians while conserving the environment through reduced deforestation.

# Bukola SARAKI!



## The 3-in-1

*Not many in life build a dynasty and have someone worthy to bolster the trend, many dynasties dissipate over time.*

I could share a little story of a remarkable pathfinder, Otunba Olasubomi Balogun, the founding Chairman First City Monument Bank (FCMB) who got his inspiration from his 8-year-old son who later became the Managing Director of the same establishment. He went through the tussle alone, dreamt alone and shared the glory with many including his family. He was able to succeed where many with the same charisma and calibre failed. And that's in grooming a successor who picked up from where he stopped and doubled the effort to make the dynasty inevitable. Of course some achievements might be destined to happen, but extra efforts, enthusiasm and vigour cannot be overemphasised.

**Otunba said in his words; “I am not a Pharisee of real life experience, my journey to what you now see had been divinely guided”.**

Otunba knew from the start that his sons will take over his dynasty. He initially made Jonathan Long his Managing Director while he was the Chairman. He also had his son Ladi on the side building him to succeed him after he steps aside. When he retired at the age of 70, he made Jonathan the Chairman and Ladi Balogun the Managing Director. Ladi Balogun had taken his daddy's vision to another level, envisioning the bank to be in the list of top 5 financial institutions in Africa, if not the best. This is the story of a Titan who achieved so much and was able to fulfil his dreams extending it to his off springs.

A replica of this story is that of the great Olusola Saraki whose dynasty is one of the greatest dynasties in the history of mankind. Bukola Saraki took after his father the senior Saraki, followed the same career trend of once a medical doctor, a banker and now a politician. Bukola Saraki began his illustrious career at King's College Lagos, from 1973 to 1978, and Cheltenham College,



Cheltenham, London from 1979 to 1981 for his High School Certificate. He then studied at the London Hospital Medical College of the University of London from 1982 to 1987, when he obtained his M.B.B.S (London). He worked as a medical officer at Rush Green Hospital, Essex, from 1988 to 1989. He was a Director of Société Générale Bank (Nig) Ltd from 1990 to 2000.

Saraki became a marshal in politics, he started as Special Assistant to President Olusegun Obasanjo on Budget. During his tenure, Saraki initiated the Fiscal Responsibility Bill. He also served on the Economic Policy Coordination Committee, where he was responsible for the formulation and implementation of several key economic policies for Nigeria. As if that was not enough, in May 2003, he was sworn into office as the Governor of Kwara State, the position he relished twice. As Governor of Kwara, he led reforms in agriculture, health, education, finance and environment policy. One of his major achievements was inviting displaced white farmers from Zimbabwe to Kwara State and offering them an opportunity to farm. This led to the establishment of Shonga Farms Programme, which is now being replicated across Nigeria.

His charisma among his fellow Governors got him appointed Chairman of the Nigeria Governors Forum. Under Saraki, Kwara became the first state to complete the Nigeria Independent Power Project. In collaboration with the Power Holding Company of Nigeria. Saraki re-energised the Ganmo Power Station at Ilorin, and connected over 375 rural communities to the national grid through the development and installation of 725 transformers and 7 substations. Kwara also completed 4 electrification projects which meant power

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became stable 18–22 hours a day. 90% of people living in Kwara have access to electricity, compared to a national average of 30%. While in office, Saraki introduced new health programmes, including a statewide campaign in 2008 to reduce maternal and child mortality from malaria. This included distribution of insecticide-treated nets and free malaria drugs to pregnant mothers and to children under the age of five. A statewide programme of hospital development was also implemented, leading to the redevelopment of hospitals in Afon, Patigi and Lafiagi.

Other measures included improved training and re-training for medical staff; refurbishment of hospitals and staff living quarters; and employment of qualified medical doctors and other health workers. Many of the primary care programmes were sponsored by international agencies such as World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Saraki's versatility in every facet of development could not be overemphasised, that he was equipose touching every aspect of development of the State. He was able to achieve excellence in the area of Agriculture and farming, Infrastructure development. He was elected the Chairman of the Governors' forum. Under his leadership as the Chairman, he was able to achieve, the Doctrine of Necessity, Polio immunisation and the Immunisation Leadership Challenge, the NGF and Global Development Partners etc. He landed as the Governor successfully becoming one of the best in Africa. Afterwards, left a well-defined legacy to a vibrant member of his camp, Dr Abdulfatah Ahmad who became his successor before he joined the train of senatorship. His first attempt as a Senator was successful and in the second, it became more colourful. He was voted unopposed as the Senate President and thus emerged Chairman of the 8th



Dr Bukola Saraki is tenacious, outstanding, extraordinary, charismatic and brilliant. In life, the essence of having a name is for us to live by the good tidings to that name. An amazing nomenclature like this carries the weight.

National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I think in this vein, Bukola Saraki has been able to handle the mantle left by the late senior Saraki upon himself and has laid good examples to the upcoming generations. Saraki proved to the world that given the mettle, he could attain a commanding height in management and leadership, by the grace of God. It's a legacy that will linger for years. In life, there are questions the conscious minds of great people ask;

**In 125 years from now, who will be around to say whether you liked tomato soup or Bukola Saraki? Who will share stories of your childhood, first love, dislikes, and interests? Who will tell the world of your adventures and the places you've travelled if there are no pictures or receipts to prove it? And who will be around to accurately translate the real meaning of any words or artwork you left behind? And who will be around to prove they are actually yours? And if your friends or enemies left anything behind about you, would their words be good or bad, and how much of it would really be true? What if you were a very good person but had many enemies? And what if you were an influential person with a big following, and your words and image become one of the most bankable industries in the world?**

Its one huge answer Bukola Saraki have answered succinctly. His journey from the

beginning to present says it all. Even though the journey of a legend is always encapsulated with controversies, hurdles, rough edges and misconceptions, Saraki has been able to cope with the pressure and has shown his armchair critics his success with his hallmark and achievements. It takes courage and perseverance to conquer the challenges Bukola Saraki faced.

Dr Bukola Saraki is tenacious, outstanding, extraordinary, charismatic and brilliant. In life, the essence of having a name is for us to live by the good tidings to that name. An amazing nomenclature like this carries the weight.

**B- Beautiful background in medicine, banking and business with**

**U- Understanding and**

**K- Knowledge in politics and a well**

**O- Organised**

**L- Landmark**

**A- Achievement**

**S- Sensitive**

**A- Active**

**R- Responsible**

**A- Amiable**

**K- Keen for success and**

**I- Inspiring**

Bukola Saraki is indeed an epitome of determination, doggedness and focused leadership with a history.

Story written by Bolaji Abdullahi a staff of Kwara State Internal Revenue Service





SENATE PRESIDENT,  
**BUKOLA SARA**  
INTRODUCES  
**S.T.E.P**

(Skill Acquisition, Training and Empowerment Programme)

**FOR 40,000 YOUTHS IN KWARA**

**O**n Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016, the Banquet Hall, Ilorin housed the crème de la crème of the State hosted by the Senate President Federal Republic of Nigeria, Senator Bokola Saraki in the launching and inauguration of a Skill Acquisition, Training and Empowerment Programme (STEP) an initiative of the Saraki Employment and Empowerment Centre

(SEEC). The Senate President in the event empowered 250 youths and stated that, the beneficiaries were picked by merit. He said the mission of this initiative is to alleviate the rate of unemployment in the State, starting with the creation of at least 40,000 jobs in the next four years of the initiative in Kwara State.



*He said the mission of this initiative is to alleviate the rate of unemployment in the State, starting with the creation of at least 40,000 jobs for the next four years of the initiative in the State.*

Senator (Dr.) Abubakar Bukola Saraki, CON, Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

Saraki reiterated that this programme was born at the crucial time in the State when the country is in economic decline. He expressed empathy on the situation of things each time he visits the State and sees how people go through tough times. He therefore asked the people to be hopeful and optimistic that improvement in the State of situation will be expedited. He believed that this special programme is a wakeup call for leaders across the country, and an initiative which they should emulate to create more opportunities for the youths.

Also speaking at the event, the Executive Chairman, Kwara State Internal Revenue Service (KW-IRS), Dr Muritala Awodun, he said, those who have benefited from this special scheme should see it as a life time opportunity as thousands of folks are out there waiting for such opportunity. Therefore, he urged them to make good use of the opportunity. He said there are jobs out there, only that we do not have the





required tool to exploit those jobs or rather, the kind of jobs youths are looking for are unavailable. He also said, since the dynamics of jobs has changed in the country, the curriculum in our institutions also needs to change. He expressed his displeasure on the constant growth in the rate of unemployment in the country day by day which amounts to about 34million and counting, and that of Kwara State which is about six hundred thousand.

On the other hand, Dr Awodun declared his joy that, this special initiative brings hope and that it is coming right in time. He exhorted other Senators from other constituencies in the State and beyond to follow suit the trend the Senate President has created and create in their respective constituencies too. He said at least five thousand jobs each can be created by them and one thousand each by Chairmen of Local Governments. By so doing, unemployment rate would have reduced substantially.

*He also said, since the dynamics of jobs has changed in the country, the curriculum in our institutions also needs to change. He expressed his displeasure on the constant growth in the rate of unemployment in the country day by day which amounts to about 34million and counting, and that of Kwara State which is about six hundred thousand.*



Alhaji (Dr) Abdulfatah Ahmed, Executive Governor, Kwara State





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Dr Muritala Awodun, Executive Chairman, KW-IRS

Governor Abdulfatah Ahmed in his statement to the youth present in the 'STEP' inauguration program, mentioned the establishment of International Vocational Centre in Ajase-Ipo in Irepodun Local Government Area of the State. He described it as a place where youth will be trained on various skills. He said the intention is to give the youth the future they deserve with well-equipped vocational training drills which allows them compete locally and internationally. He also commended the initiative by the Senate President, saying it was the latest in the series of individual interventions in youth empowerment in the State.

In line with the Enterprise Category of the KW-IRS Community Impact Program (CIP), KW-IRS contributed to the STEP initiative of the Senate President, Senator Saraki, by providing educational materials such as entrepreneurship textbooks to the

aspiring business owners to enable them learn and to guide execution towards successful businesses that can create up to the 40,000 jobs.

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The wife of the Senate President, The Senate President, The Executive Governor of Kwara State and the Deputy Governor at the inauguration of STEP in Kwara State



Dignitaries at the inauguration of STEP



Dignitaries at the inauguration of STEP





## Saraki Employment Empowerment Centre







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ILORIN CENTRAL MOSQUE



# Landmark Achievements of Senator Bukola Saraki @54

1. Dr Abubakar Bukola Saraki acquired his medical degree from Barts and London School of Medicine and Dentistry in 1987
2. Dr Abubakar Bukola Saraki became the Executive Governor of Kwara State in 2003 at the age of 40
3. Saraki ran again for re-election in 2007 as the Governor of Kwara State and won his second term.
4. Saraki was a Director of Société Générale Bank (Nig) Ltd from 1990 to 2000.
5. Bukola Saraki introduced to the Nigerian Banking System the use of Automated Teller Machine (ATM), starting with Société Générale Bank where 3 points of withdrawal were deployed in Ikeja International Airport, Marina, and Victoria Island in Lagos.





6. In 2012, Saraki was appointed onto the Leadership Council of the Global Alliance for Clean Cook Stoves, an initiative led by the United Nations Foundation supporting public-private partnerships to create a market for clean cook stoves and fuels.
7. In 2013, Saraki established Globe Nigeria as an affiliate of the Global Legislators Organisation, establishing a platform for legislators to advance environmental and sustainable development laws in Nigeria. On this platform, he spoke and campaigned internationally on issues such as better governance, deforestation and economic development.
8. Saraki was highly instrumental to raising funds for the reconstruction of the ultramodern Ilorin Central Mosque.
9. Saraki was re-elected as a Senator in the 2015 general elections.
10. Under Saraki, Kwara became the first State to complete the Nigeria Independent Power Project.
11. In collaboration with the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Saraki re-energised the Ganmo Power Station at Ilorin, and connected over 375 rural communities to the national grid through the development and installation of 725 transformers and 7 substations.
12. Kwara also completed 4 electrification projects which meant power became more stable. 90% of people living in Kwara have access to electricity, compared to a national average in Nigeria of 30%.
13. While in office, Saraki introduced new health programmes, including a state-wide campaign in 2008 to reduce maternal and child mortality from malaria.
14. Saraki also implemented a state-wide programme of hospital development, leading to the redevelopment of hospitals in Afon, Patigi and Lafiagi.
15. Saraki introduced agricultural policy reforms to increase the commercial viability of farming, and also the volume of exports to international markets
16. Saraki led significant and state-wide infrastructure development, including improvements at the Ilorin International Airport Cargo Terminal with logistics and cargo hub in Nigeria and the region.
17. Saraki created extensive road construction in the State and dualise major roads in the metropolis during his tenure as Governor of Kwara State.
18. Saraki initiated the development of new sporting facilities such as Kwara Football Academy.
19. Saraki invited displaced white farmers from Zimbabwe to Kwara State and offered them an opportunity to farm. This led to the establishment of Shonga Farms programme, which is now being replicated across Nigeria.
20. Saraki's charisma among his fellow governors got him appointed chairman of the Nigeria Governors Forum.



- 21.** As the Chairman of the Governor's forum, he established, with a fully resourced secretariat, a technical and administrative division that was entirely focused on delivery.
- 22.** Under Saraki's Chairmanship of the Governors Forum, the Forum developed better and more extensive polio immunisation in Nigeria. A key part of this was the introduction in 2011 of the Immunisation Leadership Challenge.
- 23.** Saraki was on 9th of June 2015 elected unopposed as President of the Senate by an across the party alliance comprising PDP and APC Senators.
- 24.** Bukola Saraki is married to Toyin (née Ojora) Saraki. They have four children together.
- 25.** Saraki reconstructed the government house Ilorin, the governor's lodge and the presidential lodge.
- 26.** Saraki was the first serving Nigerian Governor to be awarded the National Honor of Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON) in 2010.
- 27.** After two term tenure as Governor of Kwara State, Bukola Saraki ran for the office of Senator, representing the Kwara Central Senatorial District and won.
- 28.** Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki in 2012 raised the issue of fraud in the oil subsidy regime in Nigeria and succeeded raising the alarm.
- 29.** Saraki was appointed as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology.
- 30.** He was a member of the Senate Committee on Capital Markets and Finance.
- 31.** Saraki led the Nigeria Governor's Forum (NGF) in collaboration with the National Assembly to implement the Doctrine of Necessity, when there was need for succession of the late President Yar'Adua. The bill was then passed as a resolution by the National Assembly. The Doctrine of Necessity allowed the Vice President to take over and become Acting President until the President returned.
- 32.** Saraki was appointed in 2000 as Special Assistant to President Olusegun Obasanjo on Budget.

**54**  
Senator Bukola Saraki

**Landmark  
Achievements of  
Senator Bukola Saraki  
@54**



### ILORIN INTERNATIONAL AVIATION COLLEGE



- 33.** Saraki inaugurates in 2016 a Skill Acquisition Training and Empowerment Programme, (STEP) in Kwara State.
- 34.** Bukola Saraki in his passion for sport acquired Abubakar Bukola Saraki Football Club, (ABSFC).
- 35.** Bukola Saraki as a Governor successfully established the Kwara State University Malete, (KWASU)
- 36.** The International Aviation College Ilorin was created by Dr. Bukola Saraki.
- 37.** Saraki had produced a crop of young Kwarans giving the opportunity to serve that have now emerged as leaders in their own right.
- 38.** Saraki commissioned the Harmony Estate, Akerebiata.
- 39.** Saraki commissioned Mandate Housing Estate.
- 40.** Saraki constructed the first Fly Over Bridge at Muritala Muhammed Road, Ilorin
- 41.** Saraki constructed the Metropolitan Square along Asa-Dam Road, Ilorin.
- 42.** Saraki completed and launched the Banquet Hall Ilorin.
- 43.** Saraki constructed the Diagnostic Centre along Yidi Road, Ilorin.
- 44.** Bukola Saraki created another Kwara State School of Nursing, Oke Ode





- 45.** Saraki Standardized the Sobi Specialist Hospital and provided necessary equipment to both Specialist and Cottage Hospital in the State.
- 46.** Saraki Empowered both Youths and Women through the office of the Special Assistant on Poverty Alleviation
- 47.** Saraki built First Class Traditional Rulers Guest Houses in GRA, Ilorin.
- 48.** With the efforts of Bukola Saraki, the state for the first time in its history had simultaneously PDP National Secretary, Federal Character Commission Chairman and Nomination of Nigeria Ambassador to Netherlands.
- 49.** Saraki renovated and equipped the Kwara State Library.
- 50.** Saraki awarded Scholarships and Bursary to Kwara State Students through the National Association of Kwara State Students (NAKSS).
- 51.** Saraki commissioned Baruten Road
- 52.** Bukola Saraki helped the All Progressive Congress (APC), mobilise important personalities starting with seven Governors of some states which led to the triumph of the party which became the incumbent Government in the country in 2015.
- 53.** Saraki was the one who initiated the Fiscal Responsibility Bill and served on the Economic Policy Coordination Committee.
- 54.** Saraki's initiated Community Health Insurance Scheme, Environmental 'Clean and Green' Scheme and Agricultural Transformation Scheme in Kwara which made Kwara a profitable and clean State.



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ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HIS EXCELLENCY, SENATOR (DR.) ABUBAKAR BUKOLA SARAКИ TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2017 DRAFT APPROPRIATION BILL BY HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI, PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA.



Senator (Dr.)  
Abubakar Bukola  
**Saraki**.CON  
Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria



Protocol:

1. It is my pleasure on behalf of my Distinguished and Honourable colleagues to warmly welcome you Mr. President and your entourage to this joint session of the National Assembly.

2. Mr. President, while we may have struggled with key aspects of our budget process in the past, I am happy to note that we have made some important progress.

To start with, we are seeing the budget presentation coming slightly earlier this year. Though, we hope to see an even greater improvement on this in the coming year. But more importantly however, is that so far this year's budget process has benefitted from greater cooperation and consultations between the National Assembly and the Executive.

3. Mr. President, I wish to note that the National Assembly recognizes however that the problem with our budget and budgeting process goes far deeper than the relative progress we have made. This is why in August this year, I inaugurated a joint Executive/Legislative committee and a technical committee to review our budget systems and identify ways we can make them more transparent, more participatory, more result oriented and therefore more effective.





The committee has since submitted its report and the National Assembly is already started the process of implementing the recommendations.

4. Already, we have tried to bring the key highlights of the report into effect within the 2016 framework. These include:

- pre-budget consultation and engagement,
- greater information sharing and recording,
- Public hearing on the budget bill
- Drafting of an Organic Budget Bill
- Amendment of the Public Procurement Act

5. Our hope is that the remainder of the recommendations of this report will be implemented within the 2017 budget year with the passage of the Organic Budget Law.

The Organic Budget Law will provide the legal framework for regulating the procedures that budget preparation, approval, implementation and even accounting must follow. It will bring the budget and national planning regime within a clearly defined framework, thereby ensuring greater predictability, transparency and efficiency.

6. When the current National Assembly introduced the Civil Society Public Hearing on the Budget initiative, the idea was to open up the budgeting space by incorporating the Civil Society into the budget process, thereby ensuring greater transparency and accountability. We are proud to say that this engagement has come to stay as a crucial part of our budget approval process.

7. Mr. President, distinguished colleagues, honourable members, you would recall when the National Bureau of Statistics NBS came out with the numbers to confirm that the Nigerian economy has slumped into recession, the National Assembly rose with one voice. Through a joint resolution, we recommended that you make a “state of the nation” address on the plan of government to get us out of recession and have 20 important Executive actions that in our view needed to be taken to get the economy back on track. The National Assembly on its part listed and prioritized 11 economic reform bills for passage. We intend to get these bills ready alongside the 2017 Appropriation bill. We believe that the core elements of these bills will aid the Executive in mobilizing the required private capital into the general economy, but especially the infrastructure market.

8. In the thinking of the 8th National Assembly, our country can no longer rely on the public sector alone to spend us out of recession. It is therefore critical that we mainstream private sector business and investment in the economy. To achieve this, we must make it much easier and efficient for people to invest and do business in our country.





9. Further to this, we are also aware that if we must attract private investments to play a central role in our economic recovery efforts, must make deliberate efforts to market Nigeria as an attractive brand through a very robust and highly coordinated process of engagements. This effort must necessarily start with injecting confidence in the market through clarity and consistency of policies. We must speak the right language and show that we are open to and ready for legitimate business.



10. I wish to reassure Mr. President that the National Assembly would continue to seek opportunities to deepen this relationship because we are convinced it is the only by working closely together that our country can make the progress that we all desire.

11. The overarching purpose of a budget is essentially to ease the economic pressure on our people in general and the poor most especially. The 2017 budget assumes even a greater significance, particularly in this time of recession. Mr. President, the feedback we get from visits to our various constituencies is that there is hardship in the land. We can see it and we can feel it. This situation therefore commands all of us as government to a greater sense of urgency. We cannot work magic, but we must continue to work the clock.

Our people must see that the singular pre-occupation of government is the search for solution to the current economic hardship; and the commitment to ease their burden. They don't want to know what political parties we belong, what language we speak or how we worship God. They have trusted their fates into our hands, and they need us now more than ever, to justify the trust that they have reposed on us. The people of Nigeria will pardon us if we do some things wrong. But they will not forgive us if we do nothing. And that is why, Mr. President the two chambers have taken a position whatever may be our differences, or opinions on issues of the economy we will all work with one common purpose for this reason.

12. It is in times like this, when we are challenged from all sides that we need to develop new relationships and cultivate more friends. No one can clap with one hand and expect to be heard. This is the time when compromise, engagement is the tool necessary for successful collaboration and cooperation.

13. This is why I encouraged the Executive to continue with its engagement plans across all sections and stakeholder in the country particularly with our brothers in the Niger Delta and all parts of the country where instability is impacting on our collective economic and security aspirations.

14. Mr. President, you will recall in 2015, , I made a clarion call while receiving



Your Excellency's budget presentation for that year that the 2016 budget needed to be bold and pragmatic to drive local production and promote made-in Nigeria goods.

15. Today, permit me Your Excellency to reiterate this call. The only way we can cut down on our foreign exchange needs, create jobs and stimulate entrepreneurship in the country is to promote local manufacturing and investments.



16. This is why the National Assembly injected the Made-in-Nigeria amendment into the Public Procurement Act. We are expectant that with your leadership, Mr. President, we will achieve even much more in this area. It is the hope of the National Assembly that the 2017 budget will continue to proactively pursue this policy objectively.

17. Mr. President, though we are confident that we are receiving from you a very well-articulated budget proposal, it is worthy to point out that the best produced budget from the executive at all times still remains a proposal according to our constitution which the National Assembly will work assiduously on.

On behalf of the National Assembly, we commit to work on the 2017 budget, conscious of the responsibility that the current economic situation imposes on us and driven by the urgency to alleviate the suffering of our people and also bearing in mind your aspiration and vision for our people. We assure you Mr. President and all Nigerians that not even a single minute would be wasted on our side in the course of getting this budget approved.

18. With these few words, I hereby invite Your Excellency to deliver your speech and lay the 2017 budget proposals for the consideration of the National Assembly in accordance with Section 81 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended.

19. I thank you and extend the season's greetings to all.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE





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