



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH

e-newsletter

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2ND AUGUST 2008

**INTERVIEW WITH ENGR. PROF. H. I. HART, FNSE, DEAN FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, RSUST, PORT HARCOURT**  
**TOPIC: EFFECT OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION/PRACTICE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

**E-NEWSLETTER:** Sir, can you please tell us about yourself and your engineering career.

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** Before I talk about myself let me use this opportunity to congratulate you (the e-newsletter team) for the marvelous work and achievements so far. My name is Howells Idaerefa Hart. I am a mechanical engineer by profession and currently a teacher by occupation. I am the dean of the faculty of engineering, Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUST), Port Harcourt. I schooled in Nigeria and the United States. I have served in the industry, government parastatals and now in the academia. I served the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Port Harcourt Branch as one of the chairmen and an active contributor to the activities of the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN). I am married to Mrs. Faustinah Hart who is also an engineer; and the marriage is blessed with two boys and two girls. I started my teaching career as an assistant lecturer and rose through the ranks to my current status as a professor. I was the Head of Department, mechanical engineering for fourteen (14) years. I have been in the senate of the university since 1989 and I have also served in the council of the university.



Engr. Prof. H. I. Hart

**E-NEWSLETTER:** Considering the topic of our discourse, what is your opinion on the seven point agenda of the present administration for sustainable development in the following areas/sectors: power, agriculture, housing, education, water, environment, and peace and security in the Niger Delta? What roles will engineering education and practice play for the realization of this Agenda?

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** I honestly appreciate what the president has

run the same system and it works for them. The parliamentary system which we tried and did not work for us is working for others. Even in France where they have synergy of the two types it is also working for them. The problem is not in the agenda itself but those that will be put in place to implement it. Take education for example, Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) has been on strike for about 6 weeks without real solution but if NNPC workers (tanker drivers) go on strike for one day it will be ensured that the strike is called off. This is because of our consideration is for what brings in physical cash. Even though the educational sector trains others to bring in the physical cash it is not given the proper attention. Education is also a form of long term investment, but our views about investment is that if something does not bring in immediate cash then it's not good enough. Government has refused to build new refineries because it takes long time to reap the benefits so it prefers to import fuel so that the importers will benefit. We need a change of attitude and put more premium in man power development.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** Assuming there is a change of attitude now, what role will engineering practice and education play?

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** Apart from the natural creations of God (trees, seas, firmament etc.) every other thing that exists is an engineering creation. So, if such a profession is neglected then there surely will be a problem. Foreigners do not come to our country to practice law and medicine as much as they come for engineering related things. The engineering profession has a central role to play in the development of this country.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** With so much importance attached to the engi-

## ENGR. NYECHE CROWNED CHIEF OF ORO-AKWOR COMMUNITY

Engr. (Elder) Larry Nyeche, the secretary of the Engineering Week committee and the Engineering Resource Center Committee, a member of the Nigerian Intuition of Mechanical Engineers, and an Elder in the Logos Ministries, was crowned on Saturday July, 26, 2008, with the chieftaincy title, the Nyerisi Mbam Anwanwor Opara Eze VII and Head of Oro-Akwor community: comprising five communities, in Rumueme kingdom in Obio Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The event took place at the Palace of Nyenwe Eli O. N. Nsirim MON, the Apiti of Rumueme, Mile 4, Rumueme Port Harcourt. The crowning ceremony was performed by H.R.H. Nyenwe Eli. O.N. Nsirim, MON (Apiti of Rumueme kingdom). In his speech at the occasion, His Royal Highness, chief Nsirim explained that the present Rumueme kingdom was acquired by conquest of their forefathers who migrated from Isiokpo in 1340 AD, after defeating and driving away the original owners of the land to far away Isaka where they now settle. The conquest according to His Royal Highness has given the Rumueme people unprecedented bravery. In his acceptance speech at the occasion, Engr. Larry Nyeche, while commending the leadership of HRH, O. N. Nsirim's remarkable achievement, especially in the development and defence of the autonomy of the kingdom, he solicited the cooperation of all and sundry for the sustenance of unity, peaceful co-existence and communal relationship. He sued for respect and allegiance to the constitution at all levels of administration and promised unalloyed support for the present government of Rivers Sate under the leadership of Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi and Engr. Tele Ikuru. We pray that God will give the Nyerisi Mbam Anwan-



Engr. Chf. Nyeche & wife



Engr. Chief Nyeche & NSE PH members

wor Opara Eze VII, the wisdom to rule his community.

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** The problem is not just government but general attitude and perception. I have seen the university educational system deteriorating for over twenty years that I have been in the academia. The quality of education is currently low and there are various reasons for this: The first reason is that students enter the university without adequate preparations. The second reason is that students find themselves in fields where they are not supposed to be. There is no proper guidance. Parents push their children to read a course because of money. Another reason is that parents negotiate for admission for their children these days. Other contributory factors include scarcity of quality human resources in the sector, infrastructures (inadequate laboratories for practical works, epileptic power supply for research and comfort). In summary the conditions are not favourable not only for the universities but also for the engineering profession to contribute their quota. This has made me to be skeptical to the achievement of the agenda.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** *With your view that the problem is not only from Government, what contributions can other stakeholders (like parents, students, industries, entrepreneurs) make to improve the quality of education as one of the seven point agenda.*

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** Using RSUST as an example the Rivers State student pays about Nine Thousand Naira (N9000.00) annually, without tuition; which is not enough to provide the services required by the student. The recurrent expenditure on education should be reviewed with sincerity of purpose. We (government and parent) should be willing to make financial sacrifices to get quality services. This is evident in a secondary school called Jephtha Comprehensive Secondary School



Engr. Prof. Hart & Engr. Dr. Ujile

example. Though there is a lot of work to be done, with concerted effort I believe we can achieve our goal.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** *Now let us consider the issue of security in the Niger Delta. What impact has this on the economy of the nation and the engineering profession?*

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** The primary role of government is the protection of life and property and this is also obtainable in engineering where we lay emphasis on safety as a principle. Though criminality has taken over what I call the genuine agitation for equity and fair play. I am in support of the genuine cry by the people of this area, who are marginalized. But the way it is going has brought a mess into the whole issue. The economic benefits of the security condition down the line of implementation have made issues more complex. The frequent cases of kidnapping, pipeline vandalization and other vices are having negative effect on the practice of engineering in the country which in turn has affected the advancement of the country.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** *In conclusion, what advice do you have for the nation and the engineers?*

**ENGR. PROF. HART:** Though there is much talk about political reforms, it is the people that actually need to be reformed. We need a change of attitude and character. We also need to be patriotic and learn to prioritize correctly to achieve our set goals. Thank you.

**E-NEWSLETTER:** *Thank you for the audience granted us. We do*

#### ENGR OBEMBE GIVES OUT DAUGHTER FOR MARRIAGE

It was a moment of fanfare amidst Joy and Felicitations as Engr. & Mrs. Olubumi Obembe, FNSE, the Executive General Manager Technical Services and local content department, of TotalFina Elf Petroleum Nig. Ltd. Port Harcourt, gives out his daughter, 'Bidemi, for marriage. The event which took place at the Agape Gospel church behind federal secretariat on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 at 10am witnessed the presence of high profile personalities of the society among whom were Engr. & Mrs. Aleokhai Musa MNSE, Deputy Managing Director Corporate Services of TotalFina Elf Petroleum, wife of the Governor of Bauchi state and many other captains of industries. In a sermon at the occasion, the officiating Minister enjoined the couple to be mutual and tolerant in their relationship and admonished them to avoid intervention of third party to settle dispute in their matrimonial home. The Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt was fully represented with the presence of the branch chairman, Engr. Beteim Max Harrison Ogariawo, Engr. Dr. A. H. Igoni, Engr. Denis Danis MNSE, Engr. Chief G. Massari FNSE, Engr. G. C. Okoroma MNSE, Engr. Sam Nwankwo MNSE, Engr. B. N. Ahoroka, MNSE Mrs. Briggs, and Miss Oluchi, some few student members and other members of the branch. The colourful reception was held at the Landmark Hotels Port Harcourt. We wish the couple fruitful marriage life.



The couple

#### COREN 17TH ENGINEERING ASSEMBLY:

**THEME :** *VALUE FOR MONEY IN ENGINEERING PROJECTS: THE ROLE OF ENGINEERING REGULATION.*

**VENUE:** *INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE. ABUJA.*

**DATE:** *23RD-24TH SEPT, 2008.*

**REGISTRATION FEE:** *#12,000. PRE-REGISTRATION: #15,000. AFTER 22ND AUGUST, 2008. TECH & CRAFTMEN: #6,000 FLAT.*

#### PROGRAMME OUTLINE:

**DAY 1:** *9:00AM-OPENING CEREMONY, 12:00PM: TEA BREAK, 1:00PM: TECH SESSIONS, 7:00PM: DINNER.*

**DAY 2:** *9:00AM TECH SESSION, 12:00PM: TEA BREAK, 12:30PM: TECH SESSION, 2:00PM CLOSING*

#### **NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!**

All members of NSE PH should pay their **annual branch dues** of N4000 and **compulsory levy** of N5000 towards the Engineer Resource Center to **UBA ACC. NO: 0802080000194 (Port Harcourt main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of N5,500.00 directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation.

All payments should be made at the Bank