



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH

e-newsletter

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## Merry Christmas

### An interview with Engr. Ajani, FNSE, on Engineering Registration and Quality of Engineering Personnel in Nigeria

*E-Newsletter: Before we go into our discussion for today, we will appreciate if you tell us about yourself, your contributions to the profession and experiences in Engineering because our reading audience will be interested to know these facts.*

**Engr. Ajani:** My name is Engr. Ajani. Let me start by saying I am so happy to be given the opportunity to discuss with you, the team of NSE e-newsletter Port Harcourt Branch. I am the Director Membership Nigerian Society of Engineers.



Engr. Ajani, FNSE

*E-Newsletter: What is your opinion on the quality of engineering personnel that are being produced in Nigeria as compared with those from other countries?*

**Engr. Ajani:** I think we have a long way to go in getting the right calibre of engineers equipped with capacity requirement for the development of this country. And I think that we have to start from the training of Engineers. You find out these days that the quality of engineering graduates our high institutions are producing is below expectation. The engineering curricula, funding of our universities, lecturers attitudes and professional development, parents and guardians should be viewed with seriousness and critical attention and perhaps with positive changes. We should train engineers with the intention that engineers should be trainers of other engineers. We have discovered that most of our young engineers cannot express themselves. This perhaps may be attributed to admission systems. They are not equipped enough to know the technical ability required of an engineer. Some measures have to be put in place without delay to salvage the profession. Our engineering graduates have to be encouraged and supported to be useful to the society. Now the professional bodies need to take it up from there. We need to have a second thought of the training of our engineers after school. How can we expose them to practical things that will make them to be good engineers in the years to come? Professional bodies and faculties/schools of engineering have roles to play in this direction. Like NSE we are to have school of engineering. We started one during Engr. Ezech's regime in Lagos and we were able to have some computers. However, those computers are no longer functional because of our attitudes towards maintenance. This we have to take up. COREN must wake up on its responsibility; NSE must wake up on its responsibility to get the right calibre of engineers for Nigeria.

*E-Newsletter: Thank you very much. Now coming back to Professional Development, professional interviews that Nigerian Society of Engineers conducts in April and September, what is your rating of NSE performance in this direction? It is well known that some people after obtaining the certificate they just go back to their industry without contributing to the profession, they don't attend seminars and workshops, what is your opinion about this?*

**Engr. Ajani:** Like I have been saying, what we are doing is not enough, we should do more. As an insider in NSE, I believe that we should do more than what we are doing. All these things you are saying, we should be more serious about the way we conduct our examinations so that credibility will be given to the holders of our certificates. Whatsoever means we are using

in training our engineers should be taken seriously. If it requires paying more money we should be ready to pay this money. Pay the interviewer very well so that they can do the right thing they ought to do. Pay the examiners very well so that they can do the right thing they ought to do as well as the coordinators, so that we can get the qualified members from that source. Then we should establish a policy where holders of membership certificates should not regard the certificates as their property, but the property of the professional body. It is the society's property. This means that we have to be following up our members. We have recommended to COREN which is our regulatory body that any registered member who fails to score a minimum mark a year for professional development the member's name should be removed from the register. Other professions are doing this. Members will begin to develop interest in the profession. We must be able to have a bench mark of which if we say you fall below this bench mark your certificate will not be renewed. With this, people will know that engineering is a dynamic profession and we have to be dynamic with it.

*E-newsletter: We have just heard of recent that one of our consulting engineering jobs in terms of design project was rejected twice by two different foreign contractors. It was later discovered that the codes applied in the design was 1938 codes. What structure do we have in place to sanction such engineering firm because it is a disgrace to the profession?*

**Engr. Ajani:** The structure is not there yet and if we have been following what we ought to do and we have been doing it well, that wouldn't have happened. An engineering firm who is using 1938 codes, it means he is not in tune with the new development in the technology and you can not blame him because he had been doing it and without any punishment. The policy that is in place is: if you don't have a particular (CPDU), Continuous Professional Development Unit your certificate is not suppose to be renewed, your license for practicing is not suppose to be renewed. Such engineering firm, if we are able to visit it either with our ERM and we find out that he does not even have these units it means he will continue to be relying on this old idea he has before when he was in the university which the world and

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### FELICITATION

The NSE PH e-newsletter felicitates with Engr. Prof. Y. O. Beredugo, FNSE, OFR, on his conferment of Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR).



### FELICITATION

The NSE PH e-newsletter felicitates with Engr. Mrs. Maduka, FNSE, OON, on her conferment of Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON).



An interview with Engr. Ajani, FNSE ...continued from pg 1

technology must have changed. The only way we can monitor it is to be able to have a standard. Standard that will say, as you are developing our profession, we equally need to develop these personnel applying the engineering principles.



*E-Newsletter: As the Director in charge of membership of NSE, what strategy do you have in place to monitor this Continuous Professional Development?*

**Engr. Ajani:** For now we are going to put strategy in place. In NSE we have four specific departments, we have professional development, and we want this department to be empowered to be involved in the training of our engineers. The department which I am heading now, it is my responsibility to ensure that members coming in meet all the requirements to be members. Immediately I can do that it means that I will be getting the right calibre of engineers. I can now deliver these members to Continuous Development department for them to be trained. What I am doing is that I have already reviewed with the foundation of my board our guide to membership. I call it guide to membership 2008. Those things that we see that is obsolete we remove them off the guide and those things we should bring in we have already incorporated. To that extent we are already thinking that engineers should have higher qualifications as what is happening in US and UK now. At HND you can be practicing engineering but you can not be registered. In US, you are not registered if you don't have masters' degree in engineering today. If we look at your age, we can mark your experience with the young ones who have masters' degree. With your experience and BSc here you can be equated with those who are just coming with masters' degree. But these days even the HND holders are now competing that they want to be registered directly. We are now saying look, it is not that we hate you and because the economy has been skilled unnecessarily that is why HND holders are competing with B.Sc engineers. Any technologist and with hard work can achieve his/her goal in life. Whatsoever you are doing, in your own area of engineering do it well. The engineers that have gone to the universities and cannot do what they studied well, the technologist who is doing it well may be more successful.

*E-newsletter: Thank you very much our last question is on the role of government; Federal, State and Local government. What do you think on government impact on training of engineering personnel?*

**Engr. Ajani:** Government has dual role to play, in this direction. In fact whether we like it or not they are the one we should take it to because they are the payer. That is why they have dual role to play. We should romance with government, all our engineers that are in strategic positions in government; we should try to make friends with. We need government because if we are not empowered by law, what ever you say can become unlawful. So we need law to back you in what so ever you want to do. That is one. Secondly, as at today government is the chief employer of labour engineering personnel inclusive. If we can convince them to pay engineers very well in their establishment, it will be easy to use them as a yard stick for the private employers to pay engineers in their employment very well too. Thirdly, where ever we find ourselves we should be fighting and defending our profession. How do you check this out? If a governor should give you a job, the government may not bother that you use qualified engineers but you can insist that all personnel that you will use must be qualified engineers. You must have built in the cost in the system, government will be happy that its job is being handled by professionals, but when you use unqualified people, government will not thank you but will rather blame you that is why I say we need to relate with the government in this three aspects.

*E-Newsletter: Thank you very much Engr. Ajani for the audience you have given us.*

**NSE PH IN COLOURFUL EXCO END OF YEAR PARTY AND THE APPRECIATION OF NSE PH STAFF**



The staff that were appreciated are;

1. Mrs. Okorinama Briggs
2. Mr. Austine Kpemu
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6. Miss Tonte Numbere
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