

PRESS RELEASE

CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA



REPLACEMENT OF AJAMI INSCRIPTION FROM THE REDESIGNED NAIRA NOTES.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has noted with serious concern the controversy which has trailed the replacement of the Ajami inscriptions with Roman letters in the newly redesigned Naira notes. Commentators have turned a technical issue in the production of Naira notes to a religious one, laden with emotions. The CBN wishes to state categorically, that the decision to replace the inscription has no religious undertone in whatsoever form. It is pertinent to ask at this juncture, for what reason was the Ajami inscribed over 40 years ago?

It might interest the general public to note that the Ajami was inscribed on the currency notes during the colonial era without any religious sentiment. The intention of the colonialists was to ensure recognition of the face value of the notes by those without Western education in certain parts of the country who constituted a large segment of the society. After over four decades of encounter with Western education, the story is no longer the same as most of those citizens can now easily read and write the Roman letters.

This is also to conform with Section 55 of the 1999 Constitution which recognizes four languages of English, Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba as medium of conducting government businesses. This,

we believe can strengthen our unity by ensuring equity and fairness. -Indeed the replacement was done in national interest and the desire to comply with the constitution of the country.

We wish to assure all Nigerians that as a responsible corporate entity, the CBN will neither fan the embers of religious discord, nor will it pander to parochial sentiments aimed at promoting disunity among the citizenry.

The Bank will continue to promote the unity and economic progress of Nigeria. We therefore appeal to all concerned to discard sentiments and support the banking sector reforms aimed at repositioning our beloved country on the path of sustainable development.

This clarification is for the records.

Thank you.

**Signed:
Corporate Affairs,
Central Bank of Nigeria**