

MINISTERIAL FACILITIES TOUR OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (NIPRD), IDU INDUSTRIAL AREA ABUJA ON 28TH JANUARY, 2021.



SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH, DR (SEN) ADELEKE OLORUNNIMBE MAMORA

PROTOCOL

I am pleased to be here at the premises of the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), a renowned Centre of Excellence in Pharmaceutical Research and Development (R&D), on Ministerial Facilities Visit to see firsthand the giant strides brought on board at the institute in the last two years.

2. All over the world, management of disease conditions and ill health revolves around access to new technologies and good medicines. Nigeria has since recognized the role of R&D in the push to promote good health, well being and economic development, and has developed policies, institutions and programmes that support scientific R&D.

3. NIPRD, as a parastatal of the Federal Government of Nigeria was established by Government order No. 33 Vol. 74 of 11th June 1987 part B under the Science and Technology Act Cap 276, a PSN and PMG-MAN Initiative and became functional in the year 1989 under the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. The institute was later moved to the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Health in 2001.

4. NIPRD, with its core functions to undertake, promote and sponsor research and development work on drugs, biological products including vaccines with pharmaceutical raw materials from indigenous natural resources and by synthesis using appropriate science and technology methodologies is expected to contribute to the rapid economic transformation of the nation.

5. From cursory assessment, in the last three decades, NIPRD has made appreciable progress within the available resources at her disposal, in the Nigerian Pharmaceutical industry, in spite of numerous limitations and challenging factors that must have hampered her adequate growth.

6. Today's historic tour is coming at a critical time of a ravaging COVID-19 pandemic, when the country and indeed all Nigerians earnestly look up to the timely interventions from the institute towards proffering ways to tame the scourge of this public health crisis.

7. The current administration of the institute, under the leadership of the 4th Director-General and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Obi Adigwe have painstakingly ramp up strategies to re-engineer the workings of the institute in all aspects.

8. These new strategic engagements and drive towards rebranding NIPRD into a world class organization, that is innovative and product-output oriented, has indeed started yielding positive and visible results.

9. This important exercise avails us the opportunity to get feedback and undertake on the spot appraisal of the true situations on things at the agencies, for necessary actions or otherwise if needs be.

10. The Director General (NIPRD), Dr. Obi Peter Adigwe, I wish to, on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health, congratulate you and your team for reawakening the potentials and indeed the prospects of the institute to becoming the reference point of pharmaceutical R&D in West African region, with Nigeria being the hub for pharmaceutical industry. I also assure you of the full backing and support of the government for the Institute's efforts towards attaining its noble vision and mission.

11. Thank you all for listening and God Bless Nigeria.



ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, DR. OBI PETER ADIGWE

PROTOCOL

I am honoured to welcome you and your team, on behalf of the Management and entire staff of the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD). I believe this is your first visit to this great establishment and so we would like to use the opportunity to apprise you of some of our recent achievements. We also wish to commend your continued leadership and strident efforts and in the COVID-19 pandemic response as well as in other critical areas of National healthcare provision.

2. NIPRD was established with the primary objective of enhancing the development and commercialization of pharmaceutical raw materials, drugs and biological products from Africa's indigenous natural resources. NIPRD is also mandated to engage in activities relating to capacity building, policy making, data collation, drug distribution and the development of contextual partnerships that can expedite access to healthcare. In achieving these objectives, a significant number of relevant international accreditations and certifications have been attained

by the Institute, including ISO 9001:2015 certified by the Standards Organization of Nigeria and ISO 17025:2017 in the field of technical competence in testing. Consequently, the Institute's work has been globally recognized as evidenced by awards such as its recent designation as a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in the African Sub-region towards improving the health and wellbeing of Nigerians and mankind by the African Network for Drugs and Diagnostics Innovation (ANDi).

3. As you are aware Sir, during the 2020 calendar year, NIPRD made a considerable contribution to the COVID-19 pandemic response, both within the country and internationally. For instance, NIPRD provided the internationally acclaimed analysis that underpinned Government's categorical position on the Madagascan Covid Organics preparation. This analysis went viral internationally, with scientists and policymakers around the world referencing NIPRD's seminal work on the product. With their work, a multitude of lives on the continent were saved, Africa conserved millions of Dollars that would otherwise have been expended on an unverified product, and Research and Development resources were prioritised to more effective solutions.

4. Early last year at the onset of the pandemic, NIPRD pioneered and strongly advocated indigenous manufacturing of hand sanitisers from locally sourced raw materials. The Institute notably concept produced its own brand of hand sanitisers and this has gone on to become famous for its high international

quality. The Institute has also been involved as sponsor, as well as technical partner to a number of ongoing Randomised Control Trials aimed at scientifically proving the efficacy of a number of conventional medicines currently at the Clinical Trials' phase.

5. Furthermore Sir, NIPRD leveraged on its reputation as the first African Institute to develop a world-class phytomedicine from drug discovery up to phase two clinical trials, to begin work on repurposing NIPRIMUNE™, its flagship immunomodulatory agent for relevant clinical studies for COVID-19. Several months after NIPRD's breakthrough in this area, The Government of Thailand approved the same phytomedicine for the management of COVID-19. These are just a few of the many areas where the Institute has supported the National response for the deadly virus.

6. Honourable Minister Sir, we are indeed grateful for the time you have taken today to inspect our ISO certified laboratories and engage with our world-class scientists. This is further evidence of this administration's commitment to providing a policy milieu that entrenches Research and Development in our National Development Strategy. It will interest you to learn that NIPRD is well positioned to lead the scientific evolution that will enable Africa attain its rightful place in the global community. Our ground breaking work in various areas including Nanomedicine, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Development of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, Phytomedicinal Drug Discovery and several others, are at all advanced stages, and when supported

to completion will ensure that Nigeria emerges Africa's hub for all forms of pharmaceutical research, manufacturing and development.

7. Despite this great potential Sir, there are still significant challenges. For instance, prioritisation and adequate funding of the sector is still suboptimal. So far, despite this Administration's clear policy prioritisation, and marginal support, partners such as philanthropic organisations, and development partners are yet to align to Government's position. I therefore wish to use this opportunity to urge all well-meaning individuals and corporate entities to stand up now and be counted amongst Nigeria's friends. Honourable Minister Sir, we also expect that given your massive network and immense influence, you will reach out to stakeholders in the aforementioned categories to step up their support for NIPRD's national Research and Development efforts for COVID-19 and other critical health issues that plague our people.

8. God Bless Nigeria.