

## CHAIN HOLDS GOLDEN JUBILEE PARLEY

In the spirit of Nigeria's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the Christian Awareness Initiative of Nigeria (CHAIN) gathered hundreds of youths on October 3, 2010 to entertain them and advance ways of building a Godly, progressive, corruption-free society.

Participants got attracted to the venue by CHAIN's package which included free screening of Premier League matches and edible entertainment. Witnessing a hall filled to capacity was hardly surprising since English football means a lot to most young and middle-aged people. Interestingly, the host community itself is named Television. Here was Television community watching a televised football match in a television-loving environment.

The beautiful Sunday afternoon was spiced with two Premiership encounters and an exposition in the interval. The first match was between Manchester City and Newcastle. An infringement gave Man City an early lead through a controversial penalty awarded in the 18<sup>th</sup> minute. Newcastle replied five minutes later with a terrific shot and fans went wild in the thrill. But that happiness was canceled out in the second half when City's marksman, Johnson, carried the day by dribbling confidently past three Newcastle defenders before letting off a great rolling shot at goal angle.

Before the second game, our audience stayed back for a discussion. The talk began with reflections on the Nigerian situation. On the debate regarding whether or not the nation's anniversary was worth celebrating, many participants replied in the negative, citing corruption, poor electricity supply, insecurity, nepotism and other systemic ills.

We probed further to find out if there was anything in the motherland to be thankful for and some voices said it was a good thing that relative peace and considerable progress could be seen in some aspects of national life.

The big question then was how to combat the problems that deprive Nigerians the joy of Golden Jubilee. We pointed out that corruption should not be laid at the doorsteps of government alone, but that each individual should make a personal

decision to fight the menace. As a token, traders should stop telling their customers lies, students must eschew bribery and exam malpractice. Also, social order should be upheld through obeying simple rules of etiquette such as queuing in public places as well as keeping environments clean. Abuses in seemingly minor aspects of life such as these were identified as expressions of corruption tendency and thus, all were enjoined to imbibe the consciousness of social justice in all spheres of life.

There was also a hint on the problem of laziness which encourages the quest for easier, less rigorous but corrupt ways of achieving goals. All were admonished to imbibe hard work as a virtue.

Support for the forthcoming elections was also stressed as one of the means to enhance quality leadership for development.

Most importantly, the fear of *God* was advanced as the greatest safeguard against corruption and its attendant ills. Participants were urged to surrender their lives to *Jesus*, for it is in so doing that people can have true peace and genuine success in life. That would in essence entail saying no to everything that is sin. We made it clear that Nigeria needed *God* more than anything else to establish a humane society.

Willingness to imbibe the message was evinced in the reluctance of our audience to let the talk end. The discussion ended with a prayer session in which everyone had opportunity to speak to *God* in submission. Refreshment time followed, just before *Chelsea Football Club* took *Arsenal* to the cleaners in an impressive two-nil victory.