

Truckers lament harsh policies as foreigners take over haulage business

TRUCK owners and operators under the aegis of the Council of Maritime Truck Unions and Associations (COMTUA) have condemned harsh government policies, which frustrate indigenous firms and 'hand over' haulage business to foreigners.

The council, in its Workers' Day message, said while other sector workers have started enjoying and celebrating a 40 per cent pay rise by government, as well as an improvement in purchasing power and standard of living, members of the maritime transport industry find it difficult to celebrate.

The National President, COMTUA, Adeyinka Aroyewun, said government policies have been aimed at hijacking truck businesses under the disguise of the call-up system and export processing zone. He said this is aimed at patronising their cronies and preparing retirement bene-

fits and severance allowances for themselves.

"All parks and proposed processing zones are owned by Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and other government officials, using fronts and pseudo directors. The call-up regime has reduced us to onlookers in our businesses, foreign investors have 70 per cent of trucks on the road, yet we are Nigerians," he groaned.

Aroyewun said truck owners have lost trucks and operators to the activities of hoodlums, extortionists and the retrogressive policies of regulators.

"While the cost of trucks, spare parts, dues, levies, diesel and road expenses are on the increase; an unenlightened individual and his group of inept officers are celebrating the decline in the charges on haulage. What economic sense it makes to them baffles every sane mind," he noted.

The Guardian, May 10, 2023
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