

SHORTLIST OF SIX FOR AFRICA'S BIGGEST LITERATURE PRIZE

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PRESS RELEASE

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\$100,000 FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

SIX BOOKS SHORTLISTED FOR 2011 EDITION OF THE NIGERIA PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

The Advisory Board for The Nigeria Prize for Literature today approved an initial shortlist of six out of the 126 books submitted for the 2011 edition of the prize.

The list parades well-known writers of children's literature like Uche Peter Umez winner of the 2006 Commonwealth Short Story Prize and runner-up for the 2007 The Nigeria Prize for Literature with his book *The Runaway Hero*; Philip Begho, author of over 70 books and two-time contender for The Nigeria Prize for Literature in 2004 and 2010 with his *Aunty Felicia Goes to School*; Ayodele Olofintuade, with *Eno's Story*; Chinyere Obi-Obasi, with *The Great Fall*, Mai Nasara with *The Missing Clock*. Thelma Nwokeji, a new writer, also made the list with her debut, *Red Nest*.

The list was presented after two months of intensive scrutiny by the chairman of the panel of judges for this year's prize, Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo, a professor of English, University of Lagos and past co-winner of the prize. Other members of the panel are Prof. Lekan Oyegoke of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Prof. Yakubu Nasidi of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. David Ker, Vice Chancellor The Catholic University of Nigeria, Obehi, Abia State and Prof. Ini-Obong Uko, Department of English, University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State all well-respected literary critics.

The Advisory Board was represented by its chairman Professor Emeritus Ayo Banjo and Dr. Jerry Agada, President of the Association of Nigerian Authors.

This standard this year, even more than other years, is uncompromising. Even though Nigerian writers from all over the world submitted entries for the prize, the six authors on parade are all home-based.

Although the contending books for the prestigious prize sponsored by Nigeria LNG Limited are overwhelmingly for the 7-12 age range, rather than the teen or 'crossover' books that sometimes pass for children's books, they did not shy away from tackling gritty or difficult subjects. They are also books that can be enjoyed by both children and adults.

The children's literature prize does not favour any genre- prose, poetry or drama; only good writing is rewarded. The prize sifts the huge array of children's books which come out every four years, short listing only the mind-snaring originals.

Professor Akachi-Ezeigbo said the judges were particularly careful to avoid poorly edited books, books with low moral thresholds, junk reads, thrillers or books which can be read on auto-pilot. The emphasis

is on good books that stay with you long past the point at which you put them down, she said.

Professor Banjo thanked the judges urging them to ensure that only entries that meet a very high standard of excellence were rewarded. He said a second shortlist of three books will be announced in September and a winner, if any, in October.

For more information please visit [Press Release](#)

Notes to Editors:

1. The Nigeria Prize for Literature was registered in 2004 as a charity with the Corporate Affairs Commission and sponsored by Nigeria LNG Limited. The prize used by Nigeria LNG Limited to honour excellent writers comes with a \$100, 000 purse. It rotates yearly amongst four literary genres: prose fiction, poetry, drama and children's literature. The 2011 prize goes to children's literature. Entries that qualify for this Prize are those published for the first time in book form within four years, which is the natural cycle for the prize.

2. Nigeria LNG Limited Nigeria LNG Limited incorporated as a limited liability company on May 17, 1989, to harness Nigeria's vast natural gas resources and produce Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Natural Gas Liquids (NGLs) for export is jointly owned by Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) (49%), Shell (25.6%), Total LNG (15%) and Eni (10.4%) www.nlng.com (<http://www.nlng.com/Default.aspx>)

3. Emeritus Professor Ayo Banjo was a two-time Vice-Chancellor of University of Ibadan, the premier university in Nigeria Prof. Banjo
(<http://www.nnma.gov.ng/Citations/Professor%20Ladipo%20Ayo%20Banjo.doc>)

4. Prof. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo is a professor of English Prof. Adimora-Ezeigbo
(<http://akachiezeigbo.org/>)

5. Case studies available at Case Studies , (<http://www.nlng.com/PageEngine.aspx?&id=61>)

6. Photographs available at Photos
(<http://www.nlng.com/Gallery.aspx?Category=Grand%20Award%20Night%202010>)

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