

SPEECH BY GOVERNOR SAMUEL ORTOM ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING OF BENUE STATE e-LEARNING/VIRTUAL EDUCATION ICT RESOURCE CENTRE (BESEVIC) AT NO .65, J.S TARKA WAY, MAKURDI ON TUESDAY, 1ST MARCH, 2022

PROTOCOL

I wish to formally welcome you all to the commissioning of the Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre. Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) which is established in line with Benue State Government intervention policy on ICT in Education.

2. The State ICT Policy in Education has been developed as a response to the Federal Ministry of Education's National Policy on ICT in Education Document 2019 which calls for State Government's intervention through robust alternative financing of ICT in education. The policy has emphasized 50% ICT inclusion at Basic education level, 70% inclusion as Secondary and 100% at the Tertiary Education levels. Relatedly, the National Digital Economy

Policy and Strategy (NDEPS) of the Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy 2020-20230 has propelled all desire to transform Benue State into an Information Technology hub using Education Sector as a spring board.

3. Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) is a deliberate response by the Benue State Government aimed at mitigating the devastating effect of COVID-19 and post COVID-19 pandemic on education in the State. It is also to assist in the implementation of “Benue State Policy on ICT in Education” through subsidy interventions that will support, finance Software and Hardware Infrastructure in the State Education ICT Sector. The target being to foster knowledge economy, human capital development and youth empowerment through ICT revolution.

4. It is from the foregoing, that Benue State Government Executive Council on 5th August, 2020 approved the establishment of Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) under the supervision of Benue State Ministry of Education. The Hon. Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice was

therefore requested to provide the legal framework and implementation document which will guide the Ministry of Education to ensure its full implementation. The aim is to ensure that the State has a robust IT revolution in the Education Sector for competitive global space for our youth in the IT world and digital economy.

5. It is towards this end that Government has mandated the Ministry of Education with its Agencies and stakeholders to uphold and effectively enforce “Benue Policy on ICT in Education” for a new IT order in the State Education Sector. We enjoin all Teachers and Lecturers in Public Schools and Institutions of learning to consider our Policy on mandatory digital literacy and ICT Skills Training and Certificate under Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) as a child of necessity targeted at achieving a new State order in education for Manpower Development.

6. We have mandated Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) to create awareness and ensure availability of minimum ICT requirements expected for all Schools operating in the State. The Executive Bill for the establishment of “Benue

State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Policy and other related matters thereof” is before the Benue State House of Assembly for consideration and passage by the House.

Benue State Government Intervention

7. In line with the Benue State Government policy of ICT in education, the State Government has subsidized setup and onboarding services of Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) for schools by 60% cost through funding from Bank of Industry and partnership with other intervention bodies.

8. As a Government, we appreciate the robust partnership we have enjoyed from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF and Federal Ministry of Education (FME) for including Benue State on the list of benefiting States on the Nigeria Learning Passport (NLP). It is imperative to also commend them in other areas of intervention such as Staff Training, donation of ICT equipment and recently approval for the allocation of e-cloud Space for the State e-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre to further enhance the digitalization of learning in the State.

9. I commend the Secretary of the State Government, Prof. Anthony Ijohor, SAN and Members of the Steering Committee for their expert review of the document and proposal for establishment of Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC) and also the immediate past Honourable Commissioner for Education, Prof. Dennis Ityavyar for his efforts towards ensuring that this project is completed.

10. Finally, I must commend GAMINT CORPORATE LTD which has partnered the State Government on a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) to establish Benue State E-Learning/Virtual Education ICT Resource Centre (BESEVIC). I am extremely happy that this is happening in our time.

11. Thank you and may God bless you all.

12. In God we trust.