



FUTA NEWS

SPACE EXPERT CHARTS PATH TO TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT AT FUTA LECTURE

The Federal Government has been advised to fund the acquisition of equipment needed for research while universities should introduce space physics as a course of study at bachelor level in order to stimulate improvement of stable Energy and advancement of development in all spheres of life in the country. Akeem Babatunde Rabi, a Professor of Space Physics, gave the advice while delivering the 70th Inaugural Lecture of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, FUTA. Rabi emphasized that for sustainable national development to be attained, tertiary Institutions must increasingly direct their curriculum and research agendas towards issues that address basic human and societal needs , adding that scientists in all fields in the University and Research and Development parastatals be mandated to embark on international competitive researches. He also urged government to back effective legislation that mandates industries to support scientific researchers conducted in Universities in their respective operational areas.

Rabi who spoke on the topic “Terrestrials and Extraterrestrials: Divine Nexus for Man’s Comfort”, disclosed that space-based Technologies have found indispensable applications in almost all facets of human endeavours. He confirmed that terrestrial solar irradiance is affected by atmospheric conditions such as turbidity, relative humidity, degree of cloudiness, temperature and sunshine duration; these he opined contributed to the atmospheric clearness index minimum in Nigeria in the months of July and August. Rabi who is the current Director and Chief Executive of the Centre for Atmospheric Research, CAR, of the National Space Research and Development Agency ,NASRDA referred to terrestrials as “the Earth, where humans live and its immediate environment, including oceans and the lower atmosphere which encompasses the air craft flying altitudes and extraterrestrials as objects and locations outside the terrestrials such as the stars, sun and other planets with their moons where applicable, interplanetary medium, the space environment including the earth’s upper atmosphere and other galaxies in the universe”.

He explained that the nexus between the terrestrials and extraterrestrials manifest in forms of natural and man-

induced interactions between them. These nexus, according to him include “the transmission of high frequency radio waves from the earth through the space environment and its reception on earth; propagation of sun-emitted electromagnetic radiation through the space to the earth and its conversion to photosynthesis by plants as primary food producers in the food chain; the microgravity environment in the space environment where satellites and space stations are domiciled; the solar radiation with its enormous potential energy within the reach of humans in the terrestrial environment; space-earth communication as facilitated by satellite technology; and the ultimate effort of terrestrial man to optimize the extraterrestrial for its comfort”. He declared that the recent advances in space technology has made the earth a better and more comfortable place to live in, particularly with myriads of operational satellites domiciled in the extraterrestrial environment. Today, according to him, space-based technologies have eased the burden of terrestrial men in almost all human endeavours and virtually every system has gone electronic and space-dependent such as the e-commerce, e-agriculture, auto-piloting, e-banking, automated teller machine system (ATM), global system for mobile communication (GSM), to mention a few. He credited man’s comfort today over his ancestors to his ability to harness the divine nexus between the terrestrials and extraterrestrials. He therefore proposed that policies favourable to solar energy generation be encouraged and formulated such that the establishment of an inter-University Corporation for atmospheric and space environment research is realizable.

In his remark the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola said the choice of the lecture was apt considering the current energy challenge and atmospheric and space related issues confronting the nation. He noted that the Lecturer showed erudition scholarship and prodigious contribution to knowledge. The lecture attracted the academia, students, traditional rulers and other stakeholders in the education sector.