



*Fifteen months after TELL broke the story of JUBI (NOW JOBELYN), as a promising herbal preparation, more Nigerians including orthodox practitioners, testify to the healing properties of this cocktail of herbs.*

Yemisi Banjoko, 42, takes to her husband's advice in all matters. But not when it has to do with drug prescription. She is a pharmacist, her husband is not. But they are bound by a common search for a solution to their daughter's illness. The young girl, Olusola, is a sickle-cell anaemia patient. Not even her mother's 20 years experience in drug dispensation could end Sola's nightmares. But hope came for her from unexpected quarters late last year. Abimbola Banjoko, Sola's father, who is an insurance executive, returned from work with a copy of Tell Magazine, dated October 11, 1999. He drew his wife's attention to a story therein, which reported how some sickle-cell anaemia patients were re-privileged by a herbal preparation called Jubi. He implored his darling wife to use her professional contacts to locate the herbal formula since the magazine's story did not give clues about its manufacturer's address.

The 42-year-old pharmacist thanked her husband for his concern and more for his 'discovery'. In a calm voice creamed with subtle cynicism, she educated him on the vanity of herbal medicine in the face of a genotype problem that is sickle-cell anaemia. And the man rested his case. Then a message came from Saudi Arabia. The pharmacist's friend who is based in Saudi Arabia had just read the Jubi story in Tell, and wanted to buy some. "She sent money to me and begged me to help her locate the drug at all costs," recalled Banjoko. "I became interested."

But her interest was definite. She wanted to buy for her friend, not for her daughter. Yet she bought extra bottles of Jubi for keeps, perhaps for future scientific probe. A few weeks later, 13-year-old Olusola was in crisis. She writhed in pains and whistled

for breath, as she became rapidly pale and dehydrated. Banjoko rushed her to Tonad Clinic, 42, Ijaye Road, Ogba, Lagos. For Olusola, a junior secondary school student of Topmost International School, Maryland, also in Lagos, Tonad is home. There she had always found succour in moments of crisis. Now, on admission, her heartbeat ran very fast and the blood level went as low as 4.7. It was apparent that she needed blood transfusion. She took half a pint of blood transfused into her veins. The blood volume rose to 5.7. But three days later, Olusola had suffered a relapse. "Her heartbeat went fast and heart failure was imminent." Banjoko told TELL. "She needed another transfusion but I was not ready." Being not ready was a question of finance. For the umpteenth time, blood transfusion has become a veritable source of the spread of HIV. Thus, the pharmacist was not prepared to gamble with her daughter's life. The eye that is set on the sun does not need any adviser before it blinks. Banjoko did not need further counselling on the probability of Jubi. "I decided to try it. I placed her on Jubi suspension, one spoon two times a day," she said, "she became normal. But I did not do any test. I wanted to see what Jubi would do in a month. I did not go back to Tonad Clinic." Ever since, Olusola seems to have overcome the worst moment of her life. Now, she takes one capsule of Jubi twice a day. Her mother too is happy. The stone rejected by the builders became the head of the corner.

Banjoko represents the cynicism and jubilation that greeted the magazine's story on Jubi. It started with a cascade of enquiries. There were thousands of letters, E-mails, phone calls and there were scores of inquirers who personally visited TELL's headquarters on Acme Road, Ikeja, asking for the contact address of Jubi's manufacturers. Jubi is a herbal preparation discovered by Kolawole Awoyemi, retired laboratory technologist at the University College Hospital, UCH, Ibadan.

Jubi is made from a cocktail of herbs and it has been established as an effective boost for a range of very important diseases. They include sickle-cell anaemia, stroke, diabetes, cancerous situations, and perhaps many more.

In the light of its efficacy in restoring health to her daughter, Banjoko said she had embarked on subtle independent clinical trials, and to her surprise, even victims of typhoid fever and other malaria infections got succour from Jubi. She has also found it particularly efficacious in bronchial infections. These refer to infection of the chest and inflammation of the lungs due to catarrh and cold. Talk of clinical trials, Christian Ezeofor has had a plethora of them. Ezeofor, 55, medical director, Sandra Hospital Makurdi, Benue State, got to know about Jubi "through an article I read in TELL." As a medical doctor, he did not believe the story hook, line and sinker. He did not dismiss it either. Like a man in search of precious stones, this physician deployed all his contacts. He got Jubi and used it. His story: "I am a 55-year-old medical practitioner and I have practised for 25 years. I am old enough to know the limitations of medicare and what is new and what is revolutionary - I think this drug is revolutionary." Shortly before getting hold of this nature's recipe, Ezeofor had a 10-month-old child admitted in his hospital, located along South Mission Ward. The child had symptoms of prodroma: measles, restlessness, loss of appetite, bronchitis, vomiting and high temperature. The doctor was at crossroads. "I did something unusual" said Ezeofor. "I opened the (Jubi) capsule and suspended on the palm and gave it to the child. "Within five minutes, he also said, the troubled infant passed out darkish stool. And barely 15 minutes later, his temperature had dropped. He was fully restored. Perhaps, it is revolutionary indeed.

But J. A. Adagba of Makurdi's Polyclinic Limited says Jubi smacks of herbal magic. Hear him, "I have had a magical return of PCV from 21 to ▶

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32 within eight days of operating on someone with ectopic pregnancy.” The polyclinic appears mild compared to death wish quashed at the Township Clinic, Ajaokuta, Kogi State. According to Victor Umoh, medical practitioner and township boss, a female patient was rushed into his clinic. “with internal bleeding due to a ruptured ectopic pregnancy. This was severe and she was lapsing into unconsciousness.” Having lost so much blood, it was apparent that she needed blood transfusion. But she was an unusual patient: she is a member of the Jehovah’s Witness, a religious sect that forbids blood transfusion. It was a tough moment for Umoh. “This was a dilemma,” said the physician, “because the following day, her PCV had turned out to be 10.” Death was imminent. Just then, Umoh remembered Jubi, the much-talked about boost for the troubled blood. She was put on Jubi, two capsules three times daily. Two days later, the blood volume rose to 13. And nine days later, she was fully out of danger.

Indeed, 15 months after TELL told the story of Jubi, jubilation abound across the country on account of the healing properties of this rare gift of nature. Perhaps, most enthralling is the dramatic change of attitude of orthodox medical personnel who had hitherto kept Jubi at arm’s length. Even though the world at large is beginning to listen to the rustles of medicinal herbs, many of nation’s health workers believe that nothing good could come out of Nigeria’s herbal sciences. They are gradually changing their minds. Hear Ezeofor: “Though a doctor of long-standing experience, I really never rejoiced at the level of success of my profession so far. Jubi is one drug that can give me some measure of job satisfaction which I had always wanted but never saw.” Such satisfaction includes administering a drug that gives immediate results. Hilda Ogbe, a Benin-based herbal healer, told TELL that her sickle-cell anaemia patients have shown tremendous improvement after, a few dosages of Jubi. Not only that, “my PCV,” said Ogbe, “went up from 29 to

34 after using it (Jubi).” Ogbe, a Briton married to a Nigerian, has lived in this country for 44 years, 22 of which were devoted to ministering healing with herbs.

TELL’s independent findings also show that at least about 300 sickle-cell anaemia patients have had their lives reformed since the magazine took the lid off Jubi. In fact, recently, Oluwafemi Felix, a mild stroke patient in Akure, Ondo State capital, bounced back to active life after nearly six months of partial paralysis. How Jubi did it for him remains a riddle. “For about six months, my left hand was lifeless.” said 45-year-old Oluwafemi. “I had nearly lost my voice.” A fully reinvigorated Oluwafemi is now back to his duty post.

The testimonies are countless indeed. But Jubi remains largely a myth. It has the mythical nuances of a daylight sun that makes the elders quake. It is succour for sickle-cell anaemia patients, a boost for diabetic, a strength for victims of stroke, a fighter against viral infections and generally a friend for the well-being of the human body. Attempts have been made by doctors and allied professionals to explain Jubi’s medicinal might. “It builds up the blood level.” said Banjoko. “It helps the immune system function better and it is an energizer. “No doubt, once a disease strikes, the human immune system is the prime casualty. Perhaps, that is where the drug works. Notwithstanding this and a handful of researches already done,, experts say more investigations are needed to maximize Jubi’s potential. Said Ezeofor, “more studies should be done on this drug in our teaching hospitals and results collated for efficient use.”

Long before it became known, Jubi had passed through the crucible of scientific investigations. It was taken to a laboratory under the supervision of Charles of Obinwanor, medical director, Golden Heart Hospital, 410, Ikorodu Road, Ojota, Lagos. The results obtained indicated that Jubi has essential ingredients that purify human blood. And by the time this herbal mixture found its way to the researchers’ table at the Lagos

University Teaching Hospital, Idi- Araba, Lagos, it was found worthy of its claims. Many more studies may still be carried out on it, but for now, Jubi looms large as a herbal tonic Nigerians can trust.

It has become a treasure for its inventors as well. Though it owes its birth to Awoyemi, 69, it was actually nurtured into limelight by Olajuwon Okubena, 58, chartered accountant. It was Okubena who developed Jubi from a liquid concoction to capsulated substance. Now, he has also anchored the production of a paediatric syrup in conjunction with Toki-Dabur Productions, a pharmaceutical outfit along Fatai Atere Way, Lagos. The packaging of Jubi range - capsules and syrups - is a visual delight. Thus, at a recently concluded 73rd. Annual Conference of Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, which took place at the NICON-HILTON Hotel, Abuja, Jubi was the toast of many pharmacists. It ranked as one of the best in packaging. “Jubi is my life,” says Okubena. He and Awoyemi are looking beyond the nation’s shores. They are exploring avenues of making it available all over the world. Already, it is not unfamiliar in America. Recently, it was sent to Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, where Elsie Vergara hailed its prowess. Vergara is an associate professor at the College of Health and Rehabilitation Services, Boston. Her husband was down with cancer. She saw Jubi on the web, got it and used it for her ailing hubby. Though the man later died, Vergara thought Jubi did something worthy of note. It “kept him alive for a month after they-thought he was going to die.” Vergara had said.

Jubi’s next target is tall. Okubena is taking it from the ebb. Already, Banjoko is offering her services as consultant pharmacist to Jubi. This, she said, would enable her propagate the gospel of this herbal wonder to all and sundry. More than anything else, both Awoyemi and Okubena share the same sense of satisfaction: healing with herbs. ■