

# Palm Sunday: CAN urges leaders to show empathy, tackle economic hardship

ABUJA

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has called on political leaders to embrace empathy and humility in governance, urging them to take deliberate steps to ease the economic burden on Nigerians.

CAN President, Daniel Okoh, made the call in a statement

issued on Sunday in Abuja to mark Palm Sunday, drawing lessons from the symbolic entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem.

Okoh said that effective leadership is often defined by quiet resolve, rather than the outward display of power, stressing the need for those in authority to prioritise the welfare of citizens and adopt modest lifestyles in the face of widespread hardship.

Reflecting on the significance of the day, he noted that Christ's choice to ride on a colt instead of a symbol of worldly might offers a timeless example of humility in leadership.

"True leadership is not always loud. It is seen in restraint, in empathy, and in a steady focus on the common good. It is reflected in decisions that ease burdens, calm anxieties, and

bring people together," he said.

The CAN president added that amid prevailing uncertainty, Nigerians require stability and reassurance that their leaders understand and are responsive to their daily struggles.

Okoh also linked the rising cost of living to global geopolitical tensions, particularly the instability involving Iran, Israel, and the United States, not-

ing that disruptions in global energy markets have adversely affected the domestic economy.

He said the impact is evident in rising fuel prices, increased transportation costs, and persistent food inflation across the country.

The cleric further urged the Church and faith-based organisations to remain pillars of hope and sources of encouragement during the challenging period.

He also appealed to young people and vulnerable groups to remain steadfast, assuring that the current difficulties do not define the nation's future.

"We must stand for peace; we must strengthen unity; we must support one another.

In a season that can easily tilt towards tension, we must remain a steady source of light and hope," he said.

# The Nigerian Observer



...that the people may know

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**FCT reports 16,000 TB cases as treatment success hits 94%**

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# Edo boosts varsity funding to N250m monthly

LAMAI CASSIUS WITH AGENCY REPORT

IYAMOH (EDO)

The Edo State Government has increased the monthly subvention to Edo University, Iyamoh, in Etsako West Local Government Area, from N100 million to N250 million, in a move aimed

at strengthening academic excellence and institutional development.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Victor Adetimirin, disclosed this at the weekend during the university's 7th convocation ceremony held in Iyamoh.

He said the university council had, upon assumption of office, requested an upward

review of the subvention from N100 million to N250 million, adding that the request was granted by October.

According to him, the increased funding has restored confidence among staff and significantly improved students' academic performance.

Adetimirin also revealed that a total of 850 students

graduated at the ceremony, comprising 693 first-degree holders and 157 postgraduate students.

He described the convocation as more than the end of an academic journey, noting that it reaffirmed the university's vision of becoming globally competitive, with a focus on service, societal impact and

excellence.

Congratulating the graduates, he urged them to uphold the values instilled in them and to embrace the challenges of a rapidly evolving world.

"Today, you have received more than certificates; you have received a responsibility. The world you are entering is competitive, technology-driven and constantly evolving. It demands innovation, adaptability, resilience and, above

all, integrity.

"Let your knowledge solve problems. Let your character inspire trust. Let your actions reflect the values instilled in you by this university. Be worthy ambassadors of Edo State University, Iyamoh wherever you go," he said.

In his address, Governor Monday Okpebholo, who is the Visitor to the university,

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APC NATIONAL CONVENTION:

L-R: Hon. Sylvester Aigboboh, Deputy Chairman, Edo State APC; Senator Monday Okpebholo, Edo State Governor; Emperor Jarrett Tenebe, Chairman, Edo State APC; Engr. Lawrence Okah, Secretary, Edo State APC; Musa Ikhilor, Esq., Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Edo State, and other party delegates at the APC National Convention held recently in Abuja. Photo: Government House, Benin City.

## 2027: APC orders nationwide grassroots mobilisation

ABUJA

The All Progressives Congress (APC) has directed its state and zonal coordinators to intensify grassroots mobilisation ahead of the 2027 general election, as the ruling party moves to consolidate support across the country.

Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State gave the directive at the weekend in Abuja during the fourth strategic meeting of the Renewed Hope Ambassadors Network, attended by party officials, coordinators and key stakeholders.

The meeting reviewed mobilisation strategies and aligned communication efforts with the policy direction of the current administration.

It followed an earlier session convened by the Progressive Governors' Forum in February at the Presidential Villa, which was attended by President Bola Tinubu and Vice-President Kashim Shettima.

Uzodimma explained that the network was established to drive the promotion of the President's Renewed Hope Agenda at the grassroots through a coordinated mobilisation framework, aimed at bridging the information gap between government and citizens, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

"This outfit is designed to create national awareness and help citizens understand the reasons for the President's reforms and their benefits," he said.

He urged coordinators to clearly communicate government policies to Nigerians in order to prevent misinformation and misinterpretation of ongoing reforms, warning that failure to properly inform the public could lead to widespread misunderstanding of the administration's intentions.

According to him, effective engagement would not only

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# Ultimum launches Aba plant, eyes nationwide beverage expansion

ESE AMADASUN

## ABA (ABIA)

Ultimum Limited has commissioned a new beverage production plant in Aba, signalling a major push to scale operations, stimulate industrial growth, and expand its footprint across Nigeria's competitive drinks

market.

The facility, located in the Osisioma Industrial Layout, will produce the company's Razzl range of carbonated soft drinks, including Pamplemousse, Cola, Orange, and Lemon variants.

Speaking at the commissioning, Abia State Governor, Alex Otti, described the in-

vestment as a strong vote of confidence in the state's economy, emphasising that it reflects broader efforts to create a business-friendly environment.

"This project goes beyond a factory inauguration; it represents a resurgence of investor trust and renewed economic activity," he said.

Ultimum Limited Chairman Whalen Kadji said Aba was chosen for its entrepreneurial

spirit and long-term growth potential.

He added that the plant would not only boost beverage production but also generate employment, support local industries, and drive sustainable development in the region.

Managing Director Austin Ufomba described the facility as a milestone in Ultimum's expansion strategy, highlighting its role as a hub for innova-

tion and operational excellence while strengthening host communities and contributing to national economic growth.

The plant will enhance supply chains across the South-East and South-South regions, with plans to extend distribution nationwide soon.

The initiative aligns with Ultimum's "Refreshing Nigeria" campaign, aimed at delivering affordable, high-quality bever-

ages while deepening market penetration.

Headquartered in Lagos, Ultimum Limited began operations in Nigeria in 2022 under the Kadji Group.

The Razzl brand was introduced in 2023 with Cola, Orange, and Lemon flavours, later adding Pamplemousse, and currently produces seven stock-keeping units, including 40cl and 60cl variants.

## Edo boosts varsity funding to...

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reaffirmed his administration's commitment to transforming the institution into a world-class university.

The governor, represented by his Special Adviser on Policy and Strategy, Prof. Philip Afaha, said the increase in subvention aligns with his administration's SHINE agenda and its focus on quality education.

He pledged sustained investment in the institution, assuring that the government would continue to raise subventions

and provide necessary interventions to support optimal performance.

"I assure you that we will continue to increase our subvention and interventions and upgrade this university to world-class status. Edo State is becoming an education hub for academic excellence," he said.

Okpebholo noted that the state currently has two universities, including Edo University, Iyamoh, adding that the goal is to expand opportunities for self-development among the state's growing population.

## 2027: APC orders nationwide...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

build public trust, but also ensure that citizens fully understand policy objectives and expected outcomes.

Uzodimma credited President Tinubu with implementing bold reforms targeted at repositioning the nation's economy for sustainable growth and development, noting that while the measures may be challenging, they are necessary to stabilise the economy and lay a foundation for long-term prosperity.

He, however, alleged that opposition elements were spreading misinformation to undermine government programmes and mislead the public, warning that unchecked narratives could erode public confidence and distort the impact of ongoing reforms.

The governor called for unity within the network, stressing that the party currently enjoys the support of 31 state governors, a development he said provides a strong platform for coordinated mobilisation and effective dissemination of government achievements.

He highlighted some of the challenges inherited by the administration, including stalled subsidy reforms, low minimum wage and a high number of out-of-school children, noting that these issues required decisive policy responses and sustained commitment.

Uzodimma maintained that the administration had recorded measurable progress through policies aimed at economic recovery and social development.

"As I speak, over one million students are benefiting from the National Education Loan Fund programme," he said, adding that the scheme has improved access to tertiary

education and eased financial pressure on families.

He also cited a reduction in the price of rice, from about N120,000 per bag two years ago to approximately N50,000 currently, attributing the drop to improved agricultural output and policy measures designed to stabilise food prices.

"All these achievements must be communicated effectively for Nigerians to appreciate the progress being made," he said.

In his remarks, Governor Uba Sani of Kaduna State called for stronger amplification of the administration's achievements at the sub-national level, stressing that state governments must tailor communication strategies to local realities to ensure policies resonate with grassroots communities.

He noted that initiatives such as improvements in primary healthcare and other development programmes should be effectively communicated to the people.

Similarly, Governor Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State underscored the need for synergy among party members to enhance the communication of government successes, saying that collaboration among co-ordinators would strengthen outreach and ensure consistent messaging nationwide.

"Synergy will aid our task of spreading the successes of this administration, including efforts to tackle insecurity in the North-East," Yahaya said.

The governors expressed confidence that sustained mobilisation would bolster public support for the APC ahead of the 2027 elections, urging members to remain committed, disciplined and focused in delivering the party's message across all communities.



**UNDER CONSTRUCTION:**

Auchi-Igarra-Unemu-Nukhua Road in Edo North Senatorial District under construction, courtesy of Edo State government.

## NAPTIP launches school Vanguard Clubs to fight human trafficking in Delta

BETTY IDIALU

### WARRI (DELTA)

The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) has urged students across Delta State to report any suspicious approaches or movements to their teachers, promising swift action to rescue victims and prosecute offenders.

The call came during the inauguration of Anti-Traffick-

ing Vanguard Clubs at schools across the state, where members pledged to raise awareness and combat human trafficking within their campuses.

At the Special Education Centre in Agbor, the Zonal Commander reaffirmed NAPTIP's commitment to protecting pupils, describing the Vanguard Clubs as a strategic step in the fight against human trafficking.

He urged students to lead by example, reject all forms of trafficking, and promptly

report suspicious activities to teachers and parents.

The Principal, Mrs Ezehi Francisca Chukwudi, praised NAPTIP and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development for the timely initiative, describing it as impactful.

A similar event at Ute-Ukpu Grammar School in Ika North East LGA saw stakeholders pledge support to ensure the effective functioning of the new Vanguard Club.

During the events, Mr Offiah outlined NAPTIP's five-point strategy—Protection, Preven-

tion, Prosecution, Partnership, and Policy and educated students on the three essential elements of trafficking: the act, the means, and the purpose.

Delta State Project Officer for STEAP, Ijeoma David-Ukoko, encouraged club members to share knowledge and remain committed to the programme.

The inauguration featured goodwill messages from representatives of the Delta State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, distribution of educational materials, and cultural performances by students.

## FCT reports 16,000 TB cases as treatment success hits 94%

ABUJA

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) records about 16,000 Tuberculosis (TB) cases annually, with a treatment success rate of 94 percent, health officials have disclosed.

Dr Dan Gasama, Director of Public Health, FCT Health Services and Environment Secretariat (FCT-HSES), made the revelation during a community outreach to mark 2026 World Tuberculosis Day in Abuja.

The outreach was organised by FCT-HSES, Stop TB Partnership Nigeria, the Na-

tional Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme (NT-BLCP), and partners.

Gasama said TB mortality had dropped by 64 percent over the years, noting that the disease remains a major public health concern globally and nationally.

"Globally, an estimated 10.7 million people fall ill with TB, with 1.23 million deaths, including 150,000 among people living with HIV.

Nigeria remains among high TB burden countries, with the FCT accounting for 16,000 cases annually," he stated.

He attributed Nigeria's re-

cord 467,000 TB cases in 2025 to improved detection through strengthened surveillance and community outreach.

Early detection and proper treatment, he added, have contributed to the 94 percent treatment success rate in the FCT.

In 2025, the FCT Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme identified over 40,171 presumptive cases, confirming 3,679.

The 2026 commemoration focused on raising awareness, screening, and treatment services in high-burden communities.

Hundreds of Mabushi res-

idents benefited from free TB and malaria screening, with medications distributed and severe cases referred to hospitals.

Representing the WHO FCT Coordinator, Dr Jenny Momoh reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to ending TB, stressing the need for sustained investment and collaboration.

Mrs Teresa Jatau, Programme Manager of TB Network, called on communities to embrace early testing and adhere to treatment, highlighting that TB is curable when detected early.

The 2026 World TB Day carries the theme: "Yes, we can. We can end TB."

## NEWS

# Edo govt cracks down on Okpella monarchy crisis, warns against self-help

## BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government has issued a stern warning to all parties involved in the lingering dispute over the Okpella traditional

leadership, cautioning against any form of self-help following a recent court ruling on the matter.

In a statement released by the State Commissioner for Public Safety and Security,

Hon. Festus Ebea, the government disclosed that the Attorney-General of the state has already initiated processes for an appeal and a stay of execution.

Pending the outcome of legal proceedings, the govern-

ment directed all stakeholders to maintain the status quo to prevent a breakdown of law and order within the community.

It warned unequivocally that any attempt to forcefully take over the traditional institution, intimidate opponents, or disrupt peace in Okpella would be considered illegal and met with

decisive action.

Security agencies, the statement added, have been placed on red alert to respond swiftly to any disturbance.

The government further urged community members and interest groups to remain calm, avoid provocative ac-

tions and allow the judicial process to run its full course without interference.

It stressed that it would not hesitate to apply the full weight of the law against anyone found undermining public order or threatening the peace and stability of the community.



## UNVEILING 2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN:

President of ECOWAS Court of Justice, Ricardo (2nd L); Head of Delegation, International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr James Mathews (L); Member of the Court, Justice Dupe Atoki (M); Representative of the Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament, MP Suleiman Gumi (2nd L); ECOWAS Auditor-General, João Fadiá (R) and other members of the Court, during the unveiling of 2026-2030 Strategic Plan in Abuja.

## Hajj cut: Edo loses over 250 slots, pilgrims told to wait for 2027

## BENIN CITY

Hundreds of intending pilgrims in Edo State have been thrown into uncertainty following a drastic reduction in the state's Hajj allocation for 2026, with authorities confirming that not all those who paid will be able to perform the pilgrimage.

The Edo State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board disclosed that the state's quota was slashed from 351 to just 93 slots by Saudi authorities, significantly disrupting arrangements for the exercise.

The Board explained that the reduction is part of a nationwide adjustment that saw Nigeria's allocation cut from 66,000 to 40,200 pilgrims.

Chairman of the Board,

Mallam Musa Muhammad Uduimoh, appealed to affected pilgrims for patience and understanding, stressing that the development was beyond the control of the state government.

He assured that those already captured on the NUSUK Masha'ir platform would be given priority for the 2027 Hajj.

Similarly, the Executive Secretary of the Board, Alhaji Eranga Abdulkabir Muhammadkibir, urged affected pilgrims to remain calm, describing the situation as unfortunate but ultimately beyond human control.

The Board advised intending pilgrims to contact its Administrative Department to confirm their visa status and seek necessary clarification

## Drug convict collapses in court as NDLEA secures 33-year jail terms for 3

## BENIN CITY

Drama unfolded at the Federal High Court in Benin City as a 34-year-old female drug convict, Tope Ayanwale, collapsed shortly after being sentenced to prison, in a case that also saw two other traffickers handed a combined 30 years' jail term.

Ayanwale was convicted for unlawful possession of 1.272 kilograms of cannabis sativa,

2.1 grams of methamphetamine and 176 grams of tramadol, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment with an option of a N10 million fine by Justice B. O. Quadiri.

Moments after the sentence was pronounced, the convict slumped in the courtroom and required urgent medical attention before she was stabilised and taken into custody to begin her sentence.

In separate rulings, two

other drug offenders, Etinosa Bazuaye and Godfrey Osabuohien, were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment each by Justice Chuka Obiozor.

Bazuaye, convicted for possession of 13 grams of cocaine, was given an option of a N6 million fine, while Osabuohien, found guilty of possessing 15 kilograms of cannabis, was handed a 15-year sentence with an option of a N3 million fine.

Justice Quadiri, in his remarks, warned of the grave dangers posed by drug trafficking, linking illicit drug trade to

rising violent crimes such as armed robbery and banditry, and called for stiff penalties to deter offenders.

Reacting, the Edo State Commander of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Dr Mitchell Ofoyeju, commended the judiciary for what he described as a landmark judgment.

He reiterated the agency's resolve under its leadership to dismantle drug networks and prosecute offenders, declaring that Edo State would remain hostile territory for drug traffickers.

## Police arrest over 270 in Delta crime sweep, recover drugs from hotspots

## ASABA

The Delta State Police Command has arrested more than 270 suspects in a sweeping crackdown on criminal networks and drug activities across Warri and Ughelli, in what authorities described as a major operational breakthrough.

The Police Public Relations Officer, SP Bright Edefe, disclosed that the raids, carried out on March 25 and 26, 2026, were intelligence-driven and targeted known criminal hideouts across Warri South, Uvwie, Okpe and parts of Ughelli.

The operations, led by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, involved the Buffalo Operational Team, Crack Squad,

Rapid Response Squad and other tactical units.

In the first phase, 59 suspects comprising 51 males and eight females were arrested from locations including Ugbrumu and Jeddo communities. Several of the raided sites, including hotels and a bush bar, were identified as centres for criminal activities and prostitution.

Recovered items included substances suspected to be cocaine, crack cocaine, "loud," "colos," and Indian hemp, while some suspected cultists on the police watch list were also apprehended.

In a follow-up operation in Ughelli, 213 additional suspects were arrested from locations such as Epini Hotel, Tor-sac Hotel and Primaria Guest House, all identified as major drug hubs.

Large quantities of suspected Canadian loud, CSC syrup, tramadol, swinol and Indian hemp were recovered during the raids.

Police authorities confirmed that all suspects and exhibits have been transferred to rele-

vant units for further investigation and possible prosecution.

The Commissioner of Police reaffirmed the Command's commitment to sustaining the offensive against crime across the state and urged residents to continue providing credible

## FCT electricity consumers allege tariff hikes without notice

## ABUJA

Electricity consumers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have raised concerns over what they describe as an unexplained increase in electricity tariffs, alleging that units on their prepaid meters have dropped without prior consultation.

Residents in Kubwa and Lugbe told newsmen on Sunday that they noticed a signif-

icant reduction in the number of units received for the same amount of money when re-charging their meters.

Mrs Juliet Ogheneovo of Kubwa said she used to get 89.9 units for N5,000, but now only receives 73.4 units.

"I was surprised when I purchased credit for my meter and discovered the units had reduced," she said.

Similarly, Mr Malik Abubakar, also from Kubwa,

said he now gets 51.7 units for N5,000, down from 89.9 units.

"It is frustrating to pay a higher tariff when the power supply is not even regular," he added.

In Lugbe, Mrs Caroline Uneru reported that N6,000 now buys her 88.2 units, compared with 99.6 units previously.

Mr Stephen Adelaja said he used to get 28.7 units for N2,000 but now only receives 22.5 units.

"Power supply is not stable, and AEDC is inconsistent with prepaid tariffs," he complained.

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), which regulates electricity tariffs, told newsmen that there has been no recent review of tariffs.

An official explained that tariff revisions involve extensive stakeholder consultations and media engagement before implementation.

# Tinubu seeks political reset, promises power shift to youths, women

CAROLINE AMEH

ABUJA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has signalled a strategic shift within

the All Progressives Congress (APC), pledging to open up political space for young people and women as part of efforts to strengthen governance and secure the party's future.

Addressing delegates at the party's national convention, the President said the time had come for youths to move from the margins of political participation to the centre of leadership and decision-making.

He described young Nigeri-

ans as not only the future but the driving force of national progress, stressing that their energy and innovation must be harnessed within party structures and government.

Tinubu also made a strong case for greater female inclu-

sion, warning that excluding women from leadership roles undermines the strength and competitiveness of any political organisation.

He assured that deliberate mechanisms would be introduced to elevate more women

into positions of authority across the party and government.

The declaration is widely interpreted as part of a broader political recalibration by the ruling party aimed at expanding its appeal and consolidating support ahead of future elections.

## UBTH, Royal Academy forge alliance to boost nursing education

IRRUA

Efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery and professional training received a boost as the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH) deepened collaboration with St. Matthew's Royal Academy in Irrua.

The Chief Medical Director of UBTH, Prof. Ize-Iyamu, led a management delegation on a visit to the founder and president of the academy, Rev. Matthew Okpebholo, in recognition of his contributions to nursing education.

During the visit, Prof. Ize-Iyamu commended the institution's commitment to training competent healthcare professionals and urged students to remain focused and disciplined in their studies.

She described nursing as a vital and noble profession, emphasising its indispensable role in patient care and the overall healthcare system.

Addressing the students, she encouraged them to strive for excellence and uphold the values of the institution, noting that their dedication would have a direct impact on healthcare outcomes.

## SSANU gives FG April ultimatum over 2009 agreement

ABUJA

The Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) has given the Federal Government a final ultimatum to conclude renegotiations of the 2009 agreement, warning that failure to do so could trigger an indefinite strike.

The union made the announcement in a communiqué issued on Sunday in Abuja, following its 54th National Executive Council meeting held at Ekiti State University.

The communiqué was signed by SSANU National President, Mr Muhammad Ibrahim.

Ibrahim expressed concern over what he described as slow and inconclusive renegotiations with non-teaching unions, citing the absence of clear timelines and firm commitments by government.

He urged authorities to reconvene and conclude the process in a fair, transparent, and time-bound manner.

"In view of this, SSANU hereby issues a final ultimatum to the federal government from April 1 to April 30, 2026, to conclude the renegotiation process and sign the agreement," he said, adding that failure would force the union

to liaise with its partners in the Joint Action Committee to commence an indefinite industrial action.

He also condemned delays in salary payments and non-payment of increments, calling for immediate settlement of outstanding salaries and a unified payment platform, recommending Remita.

Ibrahim further alleged that some categories of workers were excluded from the N50 billion earned allowances approved in 2022, insisting that all eligible staff in universities and research institutes be included without discrimination.

He urged the government to address rising inflation through wage reviews and strengthened social protection measures.

The SSANU president also raised concerns over underfunded universities, poor infrastructure, insecurity on campuses, weak digital infrastructure, and inadequate research funding, warning these issues could undermine Nigeria's global academic competitiveness.

He rejected public-private partnership arrangements likely to cause job losses, calling instead for sustained dialogue to prevent industrial disputes.



**COMBINED CONVOCATION CEREMONY:**

L-R: Former Chief of the Air Staff, retired Air Marshal Oladayo Amao; Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Aneke; former Chief of the Air Staff, retired Air Marshal Sadiq Abubakar and the Commandant, Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT), Air Vice Marshal Adeniran Ademuwagun, during the combined convocation ceremony of the AFIT in Kaduna on Sunday.

## 2027: INEC rejigs timetable, extends party register deadline

CAROLINE AMEH

BENIN CITY

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has adjusted critical timelines for the 2027 general elections, extending the deadline for the submission of party membership registers and modifying the schedule for

party primaries.

The commission said the decision followed concerns raised by political parties during a consultative meeting held on March 24, 2026.

INEC's National Commissioner and Chairman of the Information and Voter Education Committee, Mohammed Kudu Haruna, explained that the

deadline for submission of membership registers has now been moved from the initial April 1-21 window to May 10, 2026.

He noted that the adjustment was necessary to ensure compliance with Section 77(4) of the Electoral Act, 2026, which requires political parties to submit their registers at least 21 days before conducting primaries.

Under the revised timetable, political parties are now permitted to conduct their primaries between April 23 and May 30, 2026.

The commission emphasised that strict adherence to the updated schedule remains crucial to delivering a credible and well-coordinated electoral process as preparations intensify towards the 2027 polls.

## CSOs fault grassroots governance, demand transparency reforms in Edo

BENIN CITY

Civil society organisations and governance advocates have raised fresh concerns over weak service delivery and poor transparency at the grassroots level in Edo State, calling for urgent reforms to bridge the widening gap between government and citizens.

The concerns were outlined in a communiqué issued at the end of the Citizens Government Engagement Forum on Policy Issues, Service Delivery

and Local Government Governance Enhancement, held in Benin City under the E-CE-CALE Project.

The forum, convened by the Josemaria Escriva Foundation in partnership with the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, identified major deficiencies in sectors such as health, education and infrastructure, alongside weak collaboration between local authorities and communities.

Participants urged local government councils to institutionalise regular town hall

meetings, strengthen citizen engagement platforms and enhance transparency in public expenditure to improve accountability.

They also called for the development of policy frameworks that promote participatory governance, as well as increased investment in capacity building for both citizens and public officials.

The Team Lead of the E-CE-CALE Project, Dr Jude Obasanmi, noted a growing trust deficit at the grassroots, explaining that while the state

has digitalised central operations, such reforms have yet to fully impact local governance.

Similarly, civil society representative Peter Nwadishi pointed to systemic issues including low fiscal transparency, lack of standardised reporting tools and limited access to budget information at the local level.

Stakeholders at the forum stressed that sustained collaboration between citizens and government is essential to achieving responsive and inclusive governance.

## Edo govt moves to empower visually impaired with job opportunities

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government has taken steps to promote inclusivity by opening employment pathways for technology-inclined visually impaired persons, as part of broader efforts to ensure no segment of society is left behind.

The State Commissioner

for Information and Strategy, Prince Kassim Afegbua, made this known while receiving executives of the Association of Technology-Inclined Visually Impaired Persons of Nigeria during a courtesy visit to his office in Benin City.

Afegbua reiterated the ministry's open-door policy and urged the association to submit the names and curriculum

vitae of qualified members to enable their consideration for upcoming employment opportunities.

He assured the group that their concerns would be relayed to relevant government agencies, affirming that their demands were legitimate and aligned with Governor Monday Okpebholo's commitment to citizens' welfare.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Chairman David Iwuala appealed for sustained government support, noting that access to employment would significantly improve the livelihoods of visually impaired persons.

The meeting was attended by the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Dr Desmond Agbama, alongside other senior officials.



PRESIDENT BOLA TINUBU



IBRAHIM

## NEWS

# NDLEA busts cocaine ring at Lagos airport, seizes drugs bound for India

ABUJA

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has intercepted a major consignment of cocaine at the Murtala Muhammed Interna-

tional Airport, uncovering an international drug trafficking network.

Spokesman of the agency, Femi Babafemi, disclosed on Sunday that the illicit drugs were concealed in the heads of

imported dry stock fish, popularly known as "okporoko."

He said operatives arrested a key member of the syndicate involved in trafficking narcotics across borders, particularly to India, following intelligence on their activities.

The breakthrough, according to him, came after a coordinated sting operation by the

agency's strategic command in Lagos on March 19.

During the operation, three jumbo bags were recovered from the suspect, with a subsequent search revealing 237 wraps of cocaine weighing 5.80 kilogrammes hidden in the fish heads.

The consignment, Babafemi said, was intended for export to Delhi, India.

In a related operation, NDLEA operatives intercepted two separate drug consignments bound for the United Kingdom at a Lagos courier company on March 25.

One of the shipments, which originated from Cotonou, Benin Republic, contained 1.9 kilogrammes of methamphetamine concealed in automobile filters, while another parcel held 40 ampoules of Morphine Sulphate and nine ampoules of Fentanyl.

In another major crackdown, operatives of the agency's Special Operations Unit

raided a suspected drug den in Yaba, Lagos, arresting a 46-year-old woman, popularly known as "Iya Ghana", alongside her sales assistant.

A total of 135 blocks of "Ghana Loud" cannabis weighing 76.30 kilogrammes were recovered, while another suspect was arrested the same day at Surulere with 78 blocks weighing 41 kilogrammes.

Chairman of NDLEA, Buba Marwa, commended officers involved in the operations, urging sustained efforts to balance drug supply reduction with demand control nationwide.



## MUSIC CONCERT AND BOOK PRESENTATION:

L-R: Wife of the General Secretary, God's Kingdom Society, Church, Mrs Elizabeth Hart; wife of the celebrant, Sally Eyekosi, Author of the book title 'Managing the Displaced', AVM Sampson Eyekosi; representative of the Olu of Warri Kingdom, Misan Ukubeyinje; Chairman of occasion, Mr Sam Oburoh and General Secretary, God's Kingdom Society Church, Mr Benedict Hart, during a Music Concert and book Presentation by AVM Eyekosi, in Abuja recently.

## Farmers, herders embrace peace as Kaduna project ends

KADUNA

Farmers and herders in Southern Kaduna have reported improved relations and reduced conflicts following the successful implementation of the LifeMile peace initiative.

The project, executed by the Christian Rural and Ur-

ban Development Association of Nigeria with support from TETRATEC under the SPRiNG programme, focused on strengthening resilience and promoting peaceful coexistence.

Speaking at the close of the project in Zonkwa, Zangon Kataf Local Government Area, Executive Director of CRUDAN, Joseph Gyande, commended stakeholders for their collaboration.

He said the initiative covered communities in Zangon Kataf and Kaura LGAs, promoting dialogue, inclusive participation, and eco-friendly farming methods such as live fencing.

Project Coordinator, Michael Agon, noted that the intervention significantly improved trust and cooperation among farmers and herders.

Traditional ruler, Agwam Bajju, Luka Yabwat, described

the initiative as timely, saying it restored mutual understanding and reduced tensions.

Beneficiaries also attested to its impact, citing improved farm protection, better communication, and increased youth participation in peace-building efforts.

Stakeholders urged sustained efforts to consolidate gains and ensure lasting peace and development in the region.

## Egg prices soar as poultry farmers battle chick shortage

LAGOS

Poultry farmers have raised alarm over a looming egg shortage across the country, attributing rising prices to scarcity of Day-Old Chicks (DOCs).

The Chairman of the Poultry Association of Nigeria, Lagos Chapter, Mojeed Iyiola, said most farmers had sold off

ageing layers, but were unable to restock due to unavailability of chicks.

He disclosed that hatcheries were fully booked till December, with the price of DOCs rising sharply from about N1,800 last year to N3,300.

At present, a crate of eggs sells for about N5,500 at the farm gate, up from N5,000 in January, while retail prices

range between N6,000 and N8,500 depending on location.

National President of the Eggs Sellers and Distributors Association, Olaide Graham, confirmed the trend, blaming supply gaps and rising transportation costs driven by fuel price increases.

She noted that many farmers who paid for chicks months ago were yet to receive supply,

worsening the situation.

Consumers also expressed concern over the rising cost of eggs, warning that the staple protein source is becoming increasingly unaffordable.

Stakeholders called on the Federal Government to expand licences for importation of parent stock and support local production to stabilise supply.

## NCC orders telecom operators to compensate subscribers for poor service

ABUJA

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has directed Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to compensate subscribers whose service quality falls below specified standards.

The directive, announced by NCC Head of Public Affairs, Nnenna Ukoha, in Abuja on Sunday, is aimed at ensuring

subscribers do not bear the burden of network failures.

"Mobile Network Operators shall be required to pay compensations for instances of poor quality of service within specified time frames," Ukoha said.

"The compensation will be provided in the form of airtime credits, calculated based on subscribers' average spending patterns and presence within affected areas."

She added that while regulatory fines have traditionally served as deterrents, this consumer-focused measure strengthens accountability in the telecommunications sector.

The NCC also mandated tower companies that own critical infrastructure to uphold service quality.

Ukoha emphasised that telecommunications underpin economic activity, social in-

teraction, and access to digital opportunities.

Poor service, she noted, affects productivity, commercial activities, and public confidence. The commission said it would continue to deploy regulatory tools to promote fairness, transparency, and accountability while encouraging operators to invest in network resilience, capacity expansion, and infrastructure upgrades.

## Oyebanji hails Tinubu at 74, praises leadership, reforms

ADO-EKITI

Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, has congratulated President Bola Tinubu on his 74th birthday, describing him as a selfless leader and committed patriot.

In a statement issued by his Special Adviser on Media, Yinka Oyebode, the governor commended Tinubu's lifelong dedication to national service and democratic ideals.

He highlighted the President's contributions as a former senator, ex-governor of Lagos State, and now Nigeria's leader, noting that his reforms continue to inspire hope for sustainable development.

Oyebanji expressed appreciation for the impact of federal policies on Ekiti State and wished the President good health and continued service to the nation.

## Stakeholders demand FG action as cement prices worsen housing crisis

ABUJA

Stakeholders in Nigeria's construction sector have called for urgent Federal Government intervention to curb rising cement prices, warning that escalating costs are deepening the country's housing crisis.

Industry players said increasing prices of cement, iron rods, and other materials were placing developers under severe pressure and making home ownership more difficult.

President of the Organisation of Youth in International Trade and Commerce, Chinedu Amadi, linked the trend to high energy costs, foreign exchange pressures, and logistics challenges.

He noted that reliance on diesel, poor road networks, and security concerns had sig-

nificantly increased transportation costs.

Founder of Africa Women in Housing and Construction Network, Flora Anne, said energy accounts for up to 40 per cent of cement production costs, further driving price increases.

She stressed the need for stable energy supply, policy incentives, and decentralisation of cement production to ease supply constraints.

Construction expert, Joseph Aregbesola, warned that rising material costs were already pushing up rents in major cities, with significant increases recorded in Lagos, Abuja, and other urban centres.

Stakeholders urged government to support local manufacturing, improve infrastructure, and explore alternative building materials to stabilise the sector and improve housing affordability.

## Nigeria receives 800 deportees from Niger Republic

ABUJA

Nigerian security forces have received 800 deportees from the Niger Republic at the Jibia-Magama border in Katsina, an operational report disclosed on Sunday.

The deportees, comprising men, women, and children, arrived around 9:30 a.m. aboard

eight buses.

They are currently undergoing profiling by officials from the Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigeria Customs Service, the Police, and other intelligence agencies to ensure proper documentation and security screening.

Following profiling, the deportees will be moved to Kano State for further necessary action.

# FG strengthens airport security with joint screening system

## ABUJA

The Federal Government has ordered the implementation of a one-stop joint-interest screening system

to bolster security at Nigerian airports.

Mr Ahmadu Danjuma, Acting Regional Manager for North Central at the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria

(FAAN), told journalists on Sunday in Abuja that the Office of the National Security Adviser issued the directive to prevent herdsmen and hoodlums from gaining access to airports.

The joint-interest screening system combines immigration, customs, and security checks into a single, centralised checkpoint for passengers, cargo,

and staff, improving efficiency and reducing duplication.

Danjuma said FAAN had also stepped up surveillance, deployed additional personnel, and installed modern equipment, including X-ray and L3 scanning machines at major airports.

"We maintain constant patrols along our perimeter fences and collaborate with other

security agencies to assure the public that airports are safe. To God's glory, there have been no major security breaches this year, even during festival periods," he said.

The acting manager added that FAAN has invested in training, technology integration, and intelligence gathering to meet international standards. Security personnel have

been authorised to carry arms, and all aviation security staff are required to complete the Basic STP123 AVSEC course, covering threat detection, passenger screening, emergency response, and inter-agency coordination.

Danjuma said the measures reflect the government's commitment to safe and efficient airport operations nationwide.

## Rainstorm ravages Osogbo

### ● Adeleke assures victims

## OSOGBO

Governor Ademola Adeleke of Osun has expressed sympathy with residents affected by Saturday night's devastating rainstorm in Osogbo and surrounding areas.

In a statement on Sunday, the governor said the state government, through the State Emergency Management Agency, would assist victims

and directed the Ministry of Works to clear damaged roads.

The storm destroyed rooftops, damaged shops, brought down electric cables, streetlights, and a billboard, and caused traffic disruption. Residents reported fleeing their homes in fear of collapse and losing personal property.

Adeleke assured that emergency response measures were in place and urged affected residents to take precautions.

## Rising transport fares strain FCT households

## ABUJA

Rising fuel and transport costs in the Federal Capital Territory are forcing commuters to adjust work patterns and cutting into household incomes.

Residents told journalists on Sunday that fuel prices have surged from around N875–N880 per litre to between N1,335 and N1,400, driven in part by international tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

Commuters report spending significantly more on travel, affecting productivity and

daily expenses.

Civil servant Abdul Daniel now pays N1,700 for his commute to work, up from N1,000–N1,200, while traders like Ms Ugochi Ugochukwu have reduced non-essential trips to cope.

Many residents are combining trips, carrying passengers to offset costs, or leaving home earlier to avoid peak fares.

Economic expert Chimezie Okorobia called for urgent government intervention to ease the burden on households and maintain affordable transportation.

## NiMet forecasts dust haze, sunshine across Nigeria this week

## ABUJA

The Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) has forecast dust haze and sunshine from Monday to Wednesday across the country.

In its Sunday outlook, NiMet said moderate dust haze is expected over parts of Kebbi and Kano States on Monday, with horizontal visibility ranging between two to five kilometres.

Other northern states will experience sunny and hazy skies.

The central region, including the Federal Capital Territory and Niger State, will see similar conditions, while southern states are expected to enjoy sunny skies with occasional cloud patches, along with afternoon and evening thunderstorms in Bayelsa, La-

gos, Cross River, and Akwa Ibom States.

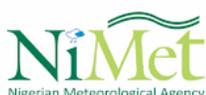
On Tuesday, slight dust haze will persist in Kano and Kebbi, central states will remain sunny with isolated thundery activity in Plateau, and southern states will experience thunderstorms in Ogun, Ondo, Edo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Lagos, Cross River, and Akwa Ibom.

Wednesday will bring sunny and hazy conditions across northern and central regions, while southern areas may experience afternoon or evening thunderstorms with light rain in Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Edo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Lagos, Delta, Cross River, and Akwa Ibom.

NiMet advised the public, especially those with asthma or respiratory conditions, to take precautions, urged drivers to be careful during rainfall, and advised airline operators to consult airport-specific weather reports.

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as OKAH MARIS, now wish to be known and address as EHIGUESE MARIS OSEMUDIAMEN. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public please take note.



### STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT:

National President, Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Comrade Alhassan Yahya Abdullahi; Chairman of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Dr Musa Aliyu; representative of the Minister of Information and National Orientation Agency, Mr Jibril Baba-Ndace; representative of the Chairman, Senate Committee on Anti-Corruption and Financial Crime, Mr Emeka Ubong, during the ICPC and the NUJ stakeholders engagement organized by ICPC in Abuja recently.

## Arewa group prays for Tinubu's 2027 victory

## KADUNA

The Arewa Think Tank group held a special prayer session on Sunday to mark President Bola Tinubu's 74th birthday and pray for his success in the 2027 general elections.

The event at Arewa House, Kaduna, drew religious lead-

ers, political stakeholders, and group members.

Convener Muhammad Alhaji Yakubu said the prayers were intended to seek divine guidance for the nation and its leadership amid current challenges.

Yakubu praised Tinubu as a courageous leader tackling long-standing economic issues, including the removal of

fuel subsidies and the unification of the foreign exchange system. "Reforms are not always comfortable, but they are essential for sustainable growth. Those promising easy solutions without sacrifice are not being sincere," he said.

Kaduna State Governor Uba Sani, represented by his Special Adviser on Stakeholders' Rela-

tions, Abdul Ishaq, commended the organisers, highlighting the importance of prayers for national peace and development.

Former Zamfara State Governor Abdulaziz Yari, represented by Sen. Tijjani Yahya, urged Nigerians to remain patient and supportive of the administration's reform agenda.

## HCSF urges newly promoted directors to uphold leadership standards

## ABUJA

Mrs Didi Walson-Jack, Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, has charged newly promoted directors to sustain ongoing reforms and uphold accountability in the Federal Civil Service.

Speaking at a recognition din-

ner for 338 directors at the weekend, Walson-Jack, marking her final event in the role, said the future of the civil service now rests on their shoulders.

She emphasised the importance of performance management, digitalisation, innovation, and staff welfare under the Federal Civil Service Strategy and Implementation Plan 2021–2025.

Prof. Tunji Olaopa, Chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission, commended the directors for being the first cohort promoted via computer-based tests, enhancing transparency and efficiency.

He highlighted challenges such as skill gaps, manpower imbalances, and declining core competencies but expressed

optimism that ongoing reforms and human resource audits would address these issues.

Six civil servants kidnapped during the promotion exams were automatically promoted on compassionate grounds.

Olaopa encouraged directors to embrace their roles as change agents in national development.

## PDP Convention: Wike-backed bloc demotes Damagum, ratifies congresses

## ABUJA

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), backed by Federal Capital Territory Minister Nyesom Wike, on Sunday reversed the status of its immediate past National Chairman, Umar Damagum, redesignating him as Deputy National Chairman (North) at its 2026 national convention in Abuja.

The resolution formed part of key decisions reached at the convention, where a motion for the reversal was moved by former House of Representa-

tives member Tajudeen Yusuf and seconded by party stalwart Bello Bichi.

While presenting the motion, Yusuf recalled that Damagum had earlier been appointed substantive national chairman following the PDP's 102nd National Executive Committee meeting in 2025.

The convention also ratified recently conducted ward, local government and state congresses across Abia, Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, Edo, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Kwara, Kogi, Ogun, Osun, Nasarawa, Niger, Rivers

and the Federal Capital Territory.

Delegates further endorsed the party's zonal congresses in the North-East, South-South and North-Central, following a motion moved by Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan and seconded by Zainab Baku.

In another development, the convention ratified the dissolution of the Alhaji Abdulrahman Mohammed-led National Caretaker Working Committee to pave the way for the emergence of new party executives.

Meanwhile, the National Secretary of the dissolved

committee, Senator Samuel Anyanwu, stirred fresh debate by claiming possession of the party's original registration certificate.

Anyanwu made the assertion while presenting the committee's report, describing his role as a bridge between the 2021 National Working Committee and the current transitional leadership.

"I want to show you that I have the original copy of the PDP certificate," he said, framing the claim as a symbol of continuity and legitimacy amid ongoing leadership disputes.

## NEWS

## JUDICIARY

## Bauchi JUSUN chairman pledges better welfare and court facilities

**BAUCHI**  
The newly elected Chairman of the Judiciary Staff Union of Nigeria (JUSUN), Bauchi Chapter, Mr Mohammed Shehu, has promised to prioritise improved

welfare and upgraded facilities for judiciary staff.

Speaking in his inaugural address after being sworn-in at the weekend, Shehu said his administration would focus on rehabilitating courtrooms and providing modern facilities to enhance

effective justice delivery.

"Conducive working environments are critical to boosting staff productivity and ensuring timely dispensation of justice," he said.

He emphasised improving members' welfare through bet-

ter salaries, allowances, housing, and official vehicles, explaining that enhanced welfare packages would help reduce corruption and strengthen efficiency across the judiciary. Shehu reaffirmed the union's commitment to protecting members' rights while

promoting professionalism, fairness, and accountability, and pledged to work with government agencies to ensure full implementation of judiciary financial autonomy at federal and state levels. Mahmud Ibn-Amin, JUSUN National Adviser and Chief Returning Officer, announced that Shehu secured

445 votes to defeat Mohammed Jaja, who polled 75 votes, describing the election as peaceful, transparent, and credible.

Abdulhamid Waziri was elected secretary as the new leadership assumed responsibility for advancing members' welfare and strengthening the state's justice system.

**CITIZENS GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT FORUM:**

Members of the Josemaria Escrivá Foundation (JOEF) and Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room in a group photograph at the end of Citizens Government Engagement Forum on Policy Issues, Service Delivery and Local Government Governance Enhancement, held under the Enhancing Citizens Engagement in Governance across selected LGAs in Edo State (E-CEGALE) Project.

## Daudu blames "Winner-Takes-All" politics for voter apathy

**ABUJA**  
Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Mr Joseph Daudu, has warned that Nigeria's declining voter turnout stems from the "winner-takes-all" mentality of political leaders

and poor governance.

Daudu, Coordinator of the Rule of Law Development Foundation (ROLDF), spoke after the foundation's 16th webinar in Abuja at the weekend.

He urged politicians to adopt an inclusive approach to restore public trust and encourage electoral participation.

"Politics should not be about wealth acquisition; it should be about the people," he said.

Daudu cited a steep decline in voter participation over the years, noting that in 2015, 68,833,476 registered voters cast 29,432,000 ballots; in 2019, 82,344,107 registered and 28,600,000 voted; and

in 2023, only 24,900,000 of 93,470,000 registered voters cast ballots.

He called for nationwide formal, religious, and civic education to rebuild citizen engagement, warning that laying the foundation for a new Nigeria would take at least 25 years

## APC aspirant Dagogo rejects alleged suspension

**ABUJA**  
Amb. Fubara Dagogo, aspirant for National Vice Chairman, South-South, in the upcoming APC national convention, has dismissed reports of his suspension by his Ward 4 executive committee in Bonny, Rivers State.

The committee had reportedly suspended Dagogo over his legal action against the party, accusing him of gross misconduct and anti-party activities.

Ward Chairman Richard Ibani conveyed the decision following a March 16 meeting. Dagogo described the report as "untrue" and reaffirmed his sta-

tus as a founding member and critical stakeholder of APC.

He said any executive action must comply with the party's constitution and emphasised that he fully supports President Bola Tinubu's presidential candidature, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda as APC National Chairman, and other aspirants.

He explained that he had

exhausted all internal party mechanisms before seeking judicial intervention, stating, "At the moment, that suspension is not for me because we have so many Fubaras and Dagogos."

"I still remain a bonafide, founding member of APC and a renewed hope founding associate of Mr President and a legacy ally of this party."

## 21yr-old docked for midnight burglary in Ikeja

**IKEJA**  
Hassan Saliu, 21, has been arraigned before an Ikeja Magistrates' Court for conspiracy, burglary,

and theft.

Prosecutor SP Josephine Ikhayere said Saliu, alongside others still at large, broke into a store on February 28 at 2:25 a.m. at No. 97 Sobo Arobio-

du Street, GRA Ikeja, stealing items valued at N5 million, including seven boxes of inverter batteries, two flat-screen monitors, and two radio base sets.

Saliu pleaded not guilty. Magistrate Mr Lateef Owolabi granted him N400,000 bail with two sureties and adjourned the case to April 3 for further hearing.

## Tinubu at 74: Sultan leads nationwide prayers for President

**ABUJA**  
The Sultan of Sokoto, represented by the Yahaya Abubakar, on Sunday led special prayers for President Bola Tinubu as he marked his 74th birthday in Abuja.

The prayer session, held at the National Mosque, drew traditional rulers, Islamic scholars and political leaders

from across the country.

According to presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga, the President attended the gathering and observed the Asr prayer afterwards.

Clerics and worshippers offered supplications for divine guidance, wisdom, good health and strength for the President, alongside prayers for national peace, unity and development.

Describing the event as a solemn spiritual exercise rather than a celebration, the Etsu Nupe emphasised the need for sustained prayers for Nigeria's progress and cohesion.

The Emir of Keffi, Chindo Yamusa, commended the administration's economic reforms, noting that interventions in salaries and infrastructure were yielding positive out-

comes in Nasarawa State.

More than 300 Islamic scholars from various sects recited the Holy Qur'an 111 times, offering prayers for national stability and long-term prosperity.

Deputy Senate President Barau Jibrin conveyed the President's appreciation, thanking attendees for their goodwill and urging continued prayers for the administration's success.

## Lawyer urges stronger cybersecurity, data protection laws

**IBADAN**  
Legal practitioner Mr Olakunle Akintola has emphasised the need to regularly update Nigeria's data protection and cybersecurity laws to tackle emerging technological threats.

Speaking at the weekend, Akintola, a former Secretary of the Nigerian Bar Association, Ibadan Branch, said that although Nigeria's legal framework is fairly strong, rapid technological changes require flexible, responsive laws.

He urged regular review of the Cybercrimes Act and the

Nigeria Data Protection Act, the creation of an expert advisory panel of legal and technological professionals, and ratification of international treaties on cybercrime and data protection. He also advocated bilateral and multilateral legal assistance agreements.

"Clear frameworks must be developed for cross-border data transfers to ensure Nigerians' data are protected both at home and abroad," he said.

He welcomed the amendment of the Nigeria Police Act as a shift towards a service-oriented, rights-based policing system.

## NDLEA arraigns 2 for transporting tramadol, rubnol

**IBADAN**  
The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Oyo State Command, has arraigned Babatunde Awoyemi, 63, and Banke Adigun, 50, before a Federal High Court in Ibadan for allegedly transporting 770 grams of Tramadol and 47 grams of Rubnol.

The defendants pleaded not guilty to a four-count charge of unlawful dealing and posses-

sion of narcotics.

Justice Uche Agomoh ordered their remand in Agodi Correctional Facility and adjourned the case until April 27 for hearing on bail applications.

Prosecutor Mrs R.O. Ige said the suspects were arrested on December 8, 2025, along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway with a sack containing the drugs, contravening Section 11(C) of the NDLEA Act Cap N30, Laws of the Federation 2004.

## Man in Ado-Ekiti faces charge for possession of indian hemp

**ADO-EKITI**  
A 34-year-old man, Omate Wale, has been arraigned at an Ado-Ekiti Chief Magistrates' Court for alleged possession of Indian hemp. Wale, who pleaded not guilty, was arrested on March 24 at 3 p.m.

The prosecutor, ASP Akinwale Oriyomi, said the de-

fendant was caught with weeds suspected to be Indian hemp, contravening Section 5(b) of the Indian Hemp Act, Laws of the Federation 2004.

Defence counsel, Mrs Adunni Olanipekun, requested bail, promising Wale would not abscond. Chief Magistrate Mr Abayomi Adeosun granted N100,000 bail with one surety and adjourned the case to May 5.

## Barber Jamiu Badmus jailed for 2yrs over cannabis peddling

**IBADAN**  
Justice Nkeonye Maha of the Federal High Court, Ibadan, has sentenced barber Jamiu Badmus to two years' imprisonment for peddling 220 grams of Cannabis Sativa.

The judge cited Badmus' guilty plea, overwhelming evidence, and remorse, adding that the N143,850 proceeds

from the sale are forfeited to the Federal Government and the drugs will be destroyed by the NDLEA.

Badmus, a first-time offender, told the court he was lured into drug dealing by a man who promised quick money.

Defence counsel Mr Femi Oyinloye appealed for leniency, noting that Badmus is an orphan and family breadwinner.

## Foreign

## NEWS

## Israeli police block Latin Patriarch from Palm Sunday mass in Jerusalem

Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa said the decision was "an extreme departure from basic principles of reasonableness, freedom of worship"

Israeli police have blocked the head of the Catholic church in Jerusalem from entering Christianity's holiest site to celebrate Palm Sunday.

The Latin Patriarch, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, and the Reverend Francesco Ielpo were stopped outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre - believed to be the site of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, and where they planned to hold a mass to mark the start of Holy Week, church authorities said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said worshippers of "all faiths" had been asked not to visit sites in Jerusalem's Old City for safety reasons after recent Iranian attacks.

But the move has drawn strong criticism from global leaders as well as the church.

The US ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, said it was an "unfortunate overreach" that was "difficult to understand or justify".

Cardinal Pizzaballa's office said it was "the first time in centuries" a Latin Patriarch had been turned away from the holy site on Palm Sunday, which marks Christ's fabled return to Jerusalem.

He and Rev Ielpo had been "compelled" to turn back from the church, where Christ was also believed to have been buried and subsequently resurrected, it said.

"This incident is a grave precedent and disregards the sensibilities of billions of people around the world, who during this week, look to Jerusalem," a statement from the patriarchate said.

"This hasty and fundamen-

tally flawed decision, tainted by improper considerations, represents an extreme departure from basic principles of reasonableness, freedom of worship, and respect for the status quo."

The patriarchate said it had followed all "imposed restrictions" and acted responsibly since the war began, adding that Sunday's decision was "a manifestly unreasonable and grossly disproportionate measure".

Netanyahu said police had acted out of "special" safety concerns and that a plan was being drawn up to allow church leaders to worship at the site in the coming days.

The traditional Palm Sunday procession into the city had already been cancelled due to restrictions on public gatherings.

Israeli police said all holy sites in the Old City had been closed to worshippers since the US-Israel war against Iran be-

gan on 28 February for security reasons, and that it had rejected the patriarchate's request for a Palm Sunday exemption.

Netanyahu said holy sites belonging to Christian, Jewish and Muslim worshippers and been "repeatedly targeted" by Iranian missile strikes in recent days.

"In one strike, missile fragments crashed meters from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre," he said in a statement shared on X, adding that Sunday's decision involved "no malicious intent whatsoever".

"As a result, Israel has temporarily asked worshippers from all faiths not to worship at the holy sites in Jerusalem's Old City to protect them."

Huckabee noted the two had attempted to enter the church privately without a procession, and that the current rules concerned religious gatherings of more than 50 people.

## Three Lebanese journalists killed in Israeli strike, say broadcasters

Three Lebanese journalists were killed in a targeted Israeli strike in southern Lebanon on Saturday, their employers have said.

Ali Shoeib, a reporter for the Hezbollah-affiliated Al Manar TV, was killed in the town of Jezzine alongside reporter Fatima Ftouni and her brother, cameraman Mohamed Ftouni, both from the channel Al Mayadeen, according to the stations.

The strike reportedly hit the journalists' car just before noon local time (10:00 GMT).

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) confirmed it had killed Shoeib, describing him as a "terrorist" from Iranian-backed Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force who had "operated for years under the guise of a journalist".

It said he had worked to "expose the locations of IDF soldiers operating in southern Lebanon and along the border", including during the current fighting, and had used his position "to disseminate Hezbollah propaganda materials".

The IDF provided no evidence to support its claim that Shoeib had a military role. It did not comment on the deaths of Fatima or Mohamed Ftouni.

Hezbollah denounced the strike as the "deliberate criminal targeting of journalists".

"The enemy's false claims are nothing but an expression of its weakness and fragility, and a desperate attempt to evade responsibility for this crime," the group said in a statement on Telegram.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun described it as a "brazen crime" that broke the "most basic rules" of international law by targeting reporters, "who are ultimately civilians performing a professional duty".

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam likewise condemned the attack in a statement on X, branding it a "flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and a clear breach of the rules that guarantee the protection of journalists in times of war".

Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said the strike was "clearly a targeted assassination" and an attempt to "silence the voices of truth-tellers".

Lebanon's president said the incident had occurred shortly before noon.

This is the second time Israel has been accused of targeting journalists in Lebanon since the US-Israel war against Iran began a month ago.

On 18 March, Al Manar reported its presenter Mohammad Sherri and his wife had been killed in an Israeli strike in Beirut while they were sleeping.

Responding to Saturday's strike, the Committee to Protect Journalists said Lebanon had become "an increasingly deadly zone for journalists".

"We have seen a disturbing pattern in this war and in the decades prior of Israel accusing journalists of being active combatants and terrorists without providing credible evidence," the US-based organisation's regional director Sara Qudah said.



**THE LATIN PATRIARCH:**

Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa said the decision was "an extreme departure from basic principles of reasonableness, freedom of worship"

## Iranian attacks across Gulf continue as major industrial sites hit

Gulf nations reported a series of attacks as the US-Israel war against Iran entered its fifth week, including strikes on major industrial infrastructure.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) said a number of people had been injured in an Iranian strike on a key aluminium plant in Abu Dhabi, with significant damage reported by operator Emirates Global Aluminium.

Meanwhile, state-controlled Aluminium Bahrain said two employees were wounded by an Iranian attack on one of the world's largest aluminium smelting facilities.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said it had targeted the sites with drones and missiles on Saturday in response to US and Israeli attacks

on its own industrial plants.

In a statement carried by Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency, the IRGC claimed the aluminium facilities were linked to the American military.

It came after Tehran had accused Israel of targeting two steel production sites crucial to its economy.

Elsewhere in the region, Oman said it was investigating "cowardly attacks" for which no one had yet claimed responsibility after a foreign worker was reportedly injured in a drone strike on its southern port of Salalah.

Kuwait's defence ministry meanwhile said the radar system at its international airport had been significantly damaged after being attacked by 15 drones.

With their economies and

way of life on the line, countries in the Gulf insist they must have a say in any future peace talks. But they are split on the way forward - and on what the region's relationship with Iran or the US should look like.

The attacks came as Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis entered the conflict on Saturday, raising fears of further economic disruption should they target shipping in the Red Sea.

The group said it had launched a barrage of missiles against Israel targeting "sensitive" military sites, and vowed to continue such attacks. Israel said it had shot down two missiles coming from Yemen.

Oil and gas prices have already spiked as Iran has effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping route for global energy sup-

plies between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

If the Houthis decided to attack shipping - as it did in support of Hamas after war erupted in Gaza, following the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 - it would risk sending energy prices higher.

Meanwhile, Israel continued its strikes against Lebanon - where three journalists were killed in a targeted Israeli strike on Saturday, according to their employers.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) confirmed it had killed Ali Shoeib, who worked for the Hezbollah-affiliated Al Manar TV, describing him as a "terrorist" from Iranian-backed Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force who had "operated for years under the guise of a journalist".

## Three arrested in Paris after attempted bomb attack outside Bank of America

Three people have been arrested in connection with a suspected foiled bomb attack on the Bank of America's headquarters in Paris, France's anti-terrorism prosecutor's office said.

An initial suspect was detained at the scene after he placed a device containing five litres of liquid, believed to be fuel, and an ignition system close to the bank, a police source said, as reported by AFP.

On Sunday, French security services said two more people had been arrested in connection with the incident, which happened at about 03:30 local time (01:30 GMT) on Saturday in the city's 8th arrondissement, a couple of streets from the Champs-Élysées.

France's Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez said the attempted attack could be linked to the US-Israel war on Iran.

"In this type of conflict, you have a number of Iranian services that are likely to carry out actions such as these through proxies," he said.

"There is a significant suspicion, but it is for the investigation to determine."

The Iranian embassy in France has not commented on Nuñez's remarks.

The initial suspect, who was detained at the scene, was accompanied by a second person, who appeared to be taking photos and videos with a mobile phone, but who fled when officers arrived, according to a police source, as reported by AFP.

"Two further individuals were taken into police custody last night as part of the investigation launched on March 28, 2026 into the offences committed against Bank of America," the prosecutor's office said on Sunday.

The custody of the first suspect, who is a minor, had been extended, it added.

Under French law, suspects in terrorism cases can be held for 96 hours. This period can be extended by a court.

Nuñez claimed similar attacks have been foiled in other European nations, including France, Netherlands, Britain and Norway.

He urged security services to be "extra vigilant" and increase their presence at transport hubs and other locations across the country.

## NEWS

## Foreign

## Congo-Brazzaville court confirms Sassou Nguesso re-election with 95%

Congo-Brazzaville's 82-year-old President Denis Sassou Nguesso secured 95 percent of the vote in an election that extended his rule, the constitutional court said late Saturday.

The March 15 election gave Sassou Nguesso, who has led the oil-rich central African country for four decades, a new five year term.

"Denis Sassou Nguesso won an absolute majority and is elected president with 94.9 percent of votes on a turnout of 65.9 percent," the head of the court, Auguste Iloki, told a public hearing.

The opposition has challenged every election won by Sassou-Nguesso.

Dave Mafoula, one of six candidates who stood against him, formally asked for the election to be declared nul and void but the court rejected the demand.

Sassou Nguesso first led Congo-Brazzaville under a

one-party system from 1979 to 1992 before losing the country's first multi-party elections. He overthrew the winner in 1997 in a civil war.

Since 2002, he has been re-elected five times in votes the opposition has said were neither transparent nor democratic.

The former paratrooper colonel is one of Africa's longest-serving leaders, along with Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo and Cameroon's President Paul Biya.

While he can claim to have brought some stability to the country, rights groups regularly accuse him of persecuting opposition activists.

Two challengers from the 2016 election are serving 20-year jail terms for being a "threat internal security".

The constitution forbids Sassou Nguesso from standing again in 2031, once his fifth term ends.

## Thousands of people marched through New York's Times Square

Getty Images A man holds a sign that says "regime change begins @ home" Getty Images

Many anti-war signs are on display in New York City

The last No Kings rally in October drew crowds of nearly seven million people nationally.

Several US states mobilised the National Guard, but organisers have maintained that the events are peaceful.

Since returning to the White House in January 2025, Trump has expanded the scope of presidential power, using executive orders to dismantle parts of the federal government and deploying National Guard troops to US cities despite objections by state governors.

A crowd made up of American expats and some French nationals protest in Paris' Place de la Bastille

The president has also called on the administration's top law enforcement officials to prosecute his perceived political enemies.

The president says his actions are necessary to rebuild a country in crisis and has dismissed accusations that he is behaving like a dictator as hysterical. "They're referring to me as a king. I'm not a king," he said in an interview with Fox News in October.

But critics warn some of the moves by his administration are unconstitutional and a threat to American democracy.



**THE PROTESTERS:** Protesters gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC

## No kings protesters across the US rally against Donald Trump

Large protests against the Trump administration have taken place in cities across the US, marking the third iteration of No Kings rallies that have previously drawn crowds into the millions.

Organisers say they are protesting against policies imposed by US President Donald Trump, including the war in Iran, federal immigration enforcement and the rising cost of living.

"Trump wants to rule over us as a tyrant. But this is America, and power belongs to the people - not to wannabe kings or their billionaire cronies," organisers said.

A White House spokesperson called the protests "Trump Derangement Therapy Sessions" and said the only people who care "are the reporters who are paid to cover them".

Throughout the day on Saturday, demonstrations took place in nearly every major US city, including New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Boston, Nashville and Houston. Crowds also gathered in smaller cities

and towns across the country.

Rallies took over the streets of downtown Washington DC throughout the afternoon, with throngs of people marching through the nation's capital. Protesters lined the steps of the the Lincoln Memorial and packed the National Mall.

Like in previous iterations of No Kings, protesters held up effigies of Trump, Vice President JD Vance and other officials in the administration, calling for their ousting and arrest.

One of the flagship No Kings protests on Saturday took place in Minnesota, where two American citizens - Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti - were killed by federal immigration agents in January. Their deaths sparked outrage and nationwide protests against the Trump administration's immigration tactics.

Thousands on Saturday filled the streets with signs and a plethora of high-profile Democrats also took a stage outside the State Capitol building in St Paul.

Bruce Springsteen also took

the stage and performed his anti-immigration enforcement song titled, "Streets of Minneapolis".

Protesters rallied outside the Minnesota State Capitol in Saint Paul, the state that became central to the debate over the Trump administration's immigration tactics after two Americans were shot by federal immigration agents in January. Bruce Springsteen performed his protest anthem "Streets of Minneapolis" outside the Minnesota state capitol during the rally there.

Thousands also crowded New York City's Times Square, marching through Manhattan's Midtown neighbourhood. Police had to shut down the normally busy streets to make way for crowds. In October, the New York Police Department said more than 100,000 people had gathered across all five of the city's boroughs.

The protests weren't without incident. In Los Angeles, two people were arrested for assaulting federal law enforcement,

according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In a statement to X, it said that two officers had been hit with the cement blocks and were receiving medical care, after a group of what it described as "1,000 rioters" surrounded the Royal Federal Building and began throwing things at DHS agents.

Elsewhere in the city, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) said "multiple arrests" had been made after protesters did not obey dispersal orders in an area near a federal prison.

Police confirmed that federal authorities used "non-lethal measures" to move crowds in the area, after warning protesters not to "attempt to tear down the gate and not throw items".

Reuters reported that arrests were also made in Dallas, after "minor scuffles erupted" when counter-protesters blocked streets and disrupted the No Kings march.

American expats abroad also gathered for protests in cities such as Paris, London and Lisbon.

## Two Australian states offer free public transport as war pushes up fuel prices

Public transport in two Australian states will be made free to incentivise people not to drive as fuel prices soar due to the war in the Middle East.

Victoria, home to Melbourne, has said it will have free travel throughout April, while Tasmania has said commuters will not need to pay from Monday until the end of June.

However, other state governments have so far declined to follow suit, with New South Wales (in which Sydney is located) indicating it was reserving funds to meet increased demand for public transport.

Australia is among a host of nations that have seen fuel prices increase sharply since the start of the US-Israel war

with Iran and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Follow updates on the Iran war

The near-total blockade of international shipping in the vital waterway - through which around 20% of the world's oil and natural gas flows - has led governments around the world to begin implementing measures to conserve fuel.

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese sought to reassure motorists on Friday following reports of panic-buying and petrol stations running dry.

Victoria Premier Jacinta Allan announced on Saturday that trains, trams and buses in the state would be free for all from Tuesday in a bid to drive down pressure on petrol pumps.

"This won't solve every problem, but it's an immediate step to help Victorians right now," she said.

Meanwhile, the government of Tasmania - an island off the Australian mainland - announced people would be able to take its coaches, buses and ferries without charge for the coming few months.

"We know the rising cost of fuel is impacting the family budget, and that's why we have again taken strong and decisive action to protect Tasmanians," its Premier Jeremy Rockliff said.

Tasmania's transport minister also noted that paid-for school buses would be made free, saving those who use them A\$20 (£10.40) a week.

But other Australian states

have demurred from similar actions.

NSW transport minister John Graham told broadcasters his state was keeping its "powder dry" as "this situation will last more than a month".

South Australia said it was expanding the number of senior travel cards while absorbing higher fuel costs, and a spokesperson for Queensland pointed to it introducing a flat 50-cent fare last February in comments to SBS News.

Similarly, Western Australia Premier Roger Cook said his state had already reduced fares. "Rick Astley was top of the charts when fares were this low in Western Australia back in the 80s," he said.

Australia has seen fuel prices increase sharply since the start

of the Iran war

The average price of petrol in Australia had risen to A\$2.38 a litre as of last Sunday, up from around A\$2.09 when the war began a month ago, according to figures from the Australian Institute of Petroleum.

The Australian government says supply is not an issue - rather, sharp rises in the price of oil on the international market has had a knock-on effect on the price of fuels derived from it.

With only a trickle of cargo ships moving through the Strait of Hormuz without fear of being hit by Iran, there are concerns a prolonged blockage could have a wider impact on the global economy.

These rising costs have already led several other govern-

ments to implement fuel-saving measures.

Shops, restaurants and cafes in Egypt were told to close early from Saturday as part of a raft of measures that also included non-essential workers being told to work from home one day a week and increasing public transport fares.

At the same time, the Ethiopian government told state-owned companies and public institutions to place non-essential staff on leave so they would not travel into work.

On Tuesday, the Philippines declared a national emergency, with its government offering subsidies to transport drivers, reducing ferry services and implementing a four-day work week for civil servants.

# Feature

## Global shockwaves: How rising wars across continents are quietly strangling Nigeria's economy and stability

GENERAL IWU COSMOS JP.

Across the globe today, the drums of war are beating louder than they have in decades. From Eastern Europe to the Middle East and parts of Africa, conflicts are no longer isolated national crises—they are global economic earthquakes with ripple effects reaching as far as Nigeria. For millions of Nigerians already grappling with inflation, unemployment, and a weakening currency, these wars are not distant headlines; they are harsh realities shaping daily survival.

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine remains one of the most impactful global conflicts. Since it began in 2022, it has disrupted global supply chains, especially in energy and food. Ukraine, once a major exporter of wheat and fertilizers, has seen its production severely reduced, while sanctions on Russia have tightened global energy markets.

For Nigeria, which relies heavily on imported refined petroleum products and wheat, the result has been soaring fuel prices and skyrocketing food costs. Bread, once a staple affordable

to the average citizen, is now a luxury for many households.

In the Middle East, the intensifying conflict involving Israel and Gaza Strip has further destabilized global oil markets. The region is critical to the world's energy supply, and any escalation sends shockwaves through oil prices. Ironically, while Nigeria is an oil-producing nation, it has failed to fully capitalize on rising crude prices due to limited refining capacity and ongoing challenges in the oil sector.

Instead of benefiting, Nigerians face increased transportation and production costs, which trickle down to higher prices for goods and services.

Meanwhile, Africa itself is not spared. The conflict in Sudan has displaced millions and disrupted trade routes within the continent. Instability in the Sahel region, including unrest in Mali and Niger, has also heightened insecurity across West Africa.

For Nigeria, which shares borders and economic ties with several of these nations, the consequences are immediate. Increased arms proliferation, refugee movements, and cross-border terrorism have intensified security

challenges, particularly in northern regions already battling insurgency.

Another critical flashpoint is the rising tension between China and Taiwan. While not yet a full-scale war, the situation poses a looming threat to global trade. Taiwan is a key player in semiconductor production, which powers everything from smartphones

to banking systems.

Any disruption could cripple global technology supply chains. For Nigeria, a country increasingly dependent on digital infrastructure and imported technology, such a crisis could slow economic growth and hinder innovation.

The global consequences of these conflicts converge into a single painful reality for Nigeria: inflation. The cost of living continues to rise as imported goods become more expensive. The naira, already under pressure, weakens further as global uncertainties drive investors away from emerging markets.

Businesses struggle with higher operational costs, leading to layoffs and reduced productivity. The average Nigerian is left to bear the burden.

Beyond economics, these wars also influence Nigeria's political and diplomatic positioning. As global alliances shift, Nigeria must navigate a complex international landscape, balancing relationships with Western powers, emerging economies, and regional partners. Failure to do so effectively could isolate the country from critical trade and investment opportunities.

Yet, within this crisis lies a call to action. Nigeria's vulnerability to global shocks highlights the urgent need for structural reforms. Investing in local agriculture can reduce dependence on imported food. Revamping the refining sector can cushion the impact of global oil price fluctuations. Strengthening regional security cooperation can mitigate the spillover effects of nearby conflicts.

The truth is stark: Nigeria cannot control global wars, but it can control its preparedness. The current wave of conflicts is a brutal reminder that in an interconnected world, no nation is insulated from the consequences of war. What happens in Kyiv, Gaza, or Khartoum does not stay there—it travels across borders, markets, and economies, landing squarely on the streets of Lagos, Abuja, and Benin City.

As the world watches these conflicts unfold, Nigeria stands at a crossroads. It can either remain a passive victim of global turbulence or rise with strategic resilience and bold reforms. The choice will determine whether these global shockwaves continue to drown the nation—or become the catalyst for its long-overdue transformation.

*Businesses struggle with higher operational costs, leading to layoffs and reduced productivity. The average Nigerian is left to bear the burden.*

## “Power or progress? Nigeria's defining choice between personal ambition and national destiny”

GENERAL IWU COSMOS JP.

At a time when nations across the world are redefining their futures through bold leadership and people-centered policies, Nigeria stands at a critical crossroads. The question is no longer whether the country has the potential to become a global powerhouse—it undoubtedly does—but whether its political class is willing to place national development above personal ambition.

This is the defining challenge of our time, and the consequences of failure are too grave to ignore.

Nigeria is richly endowed with human and natural resources. From vast oil reserves to fertile agricultural land, from a vibrant youth population to an energetic entrepreneurial culture, the building blocks of greatness are firmly in place.

Yet, despite these advantages, the nation continues to struggle with persistent economic hardship, insecurity, unemployment, and failing infrastructure. The problem is not a lack of potential, but a lack of focused and selfless leadership.

For decades, politics in Nigeria has been driven more by personal ambition than by public service.

Many political actors see power as an opportunity for wealth accumulation and influence rather than a responsibility to serve. Elections are fought with intensity, promises are made with passion, but governance often falls short of expectations.

This pattern has weakened public trust and slowed national progress.

It is time for a fundamental shift in mindset. Leadership must be rede-



PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

efined. Holding public office should be seen as a duty to build, reform, and uplift society. Nigerian politicians must begin to ask themselves not what they can gain from power, but what they can contribute to national development.

True leadership is measured by impact, not position.

Infrastructure remains one of the most urgent areas requiring attention. A nation cannot grow without functional roads, stable electricity, quality healthcare, and a strong educational system. Businesses cannot thrive without reliable power. Citizens can-

not reach their full potential without access to good schools and hospitals.

These are basic responsibilities of government, not optional achievements.

Equally critical is the need to invest in human capital, especially the youth. Nigeria's young population is one of its greatest assets, yet many young people face limited opportunities. Rising unemployment, lack of skills development, and poor access to funding have left many frustrated and uncertain about their future. Politicians must prioritize policies that create jobs, encourage innovation,

and support entrepreneurship. Empowering the youth is not charity; it is a strategic necessity.

Transparency and accountability must also take center stage. Corruption has long undermined Nigeria's progress, diverting resources meant for development into private hands. Leaders must lead by example, demonstrating integrity in both words and actions. Institutions must be strengthened to ensure that public funds are used responsibly and that those who abuse power are held accountable.

Another critical issue is national unity.

Nigeria's diversity is a powerful asset, yet it is often manipulated for political advantage. Ethnic and religious divisions have been used to gain support, creating tension and weakening the nation's collective strength. True leadership requires rising above these divisions and fostering a shared vision that unites all citizens regardless of background.

The responsibility for change does not rest solely on politicians. Citizens also play a vital role in shaping the nation's future. Voters must become more conscious and demand accountability from their leaders. Elections should not be influenced by short-term incentives or empty promises, but by careful evaluation of candidates' competence, integrity, and commitment to development.

Nigeria stands on the edge of possibility. The nation's future depends on the choices made by its leaders today. Will they continue to pursue personal ambition at the expense of national progress, or will they rise to the occasion and lead with purpose and vision? History will not remember titles or political victories; it will remember the legacies of transformation and service.

The path forward is clear. Nigeria needs leaders who are committed to building institutions, investing in people, and creating opportunities for all. It needs politicians who see power not as a prize to be won, but as a responsibility to be honored.

The call to action is urgent and unmistakable: Nigeria must choose progress over power, service over self, and development over ambition. Only then can the nation fulfill its promise and secure a prosperous future for generations to come.



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# Sports

● Football ● Athletics ● Golf ● Basketball ● Tennis ● Boxing

## Super Eagles eye Tuesday win as Chelle tests squad against Jordan

EDWARD OSEGHE

The Super Eagles of Nigeria are set to face Jordan in their second outing of the ongoing four-nation invitational tournament in Antalya, Turkey, on Tuesday, buoyed by a confidence-lifting victory over Iran in their opening match.

Nigeria began the March 2026 international window on a positive note, edging Iran 2-1 in a friendly encounter on Friday. Early pressure paid off when Moses Simon found the net in the sixth minute, while Akor Adams doubled the lead shortly after the restart. Iran responded through Mehdi Taremi, whose goal proved only a consolation.

Head coach Eric Chelle is using the tournament as a platform to rebuild and refine the squad following Nigeria's campaign at the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations. The



THE SUPER EAGLES OF NIGERIA AND JORDAN NATIONAL TEAM

clash against Jordan, scheduled for March 31 at the Corendon Airlines Park, offers another opportunity to assess progress, with kick-off set for 1 p.m. Nigerian time.

The invitational competition, which also features Costa Rica, is

expected to provide valuable insights into the team's tactical evolution. Chelle is particularly keen on integrating new players into his system while experimenting with different approaches on the pitch. Fresh faces such as Emma-

nuel Fernandez and Chibuike Nwaiwu impressed on their debuts against Iran and are tipped to feature again.

Meanwhile, players like Collins Yira Sor and Philip Otele could earn their first senior caps as the technical crew continues to widen its selection pool.

Despite the absence of key figures including Calvin Bassey and Victor Osimhen due to injuries, the squad has demonstrated depth and resilience, giving fans reason for optimism.

Jordan, Nigeria's next opponents, present a unique challenge. Having recently secured qualification for their maiden FIFA World Cup appearance, they are approaching the tournament with serious intent. Their preparations began with a credible 2-2 draw against Costa Rica, underlining their growing competitiveness on the international stage.



U-17 AFCON TROPHY

## CAF picks Morocco to host U-17 AFCON qualifiers

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has selected Morocco as the host nation for the upcoming U-17 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers ahead of the 2026 FIFA U-17 World Cup in Qatar.

The decision is part of CAF's continued effort to ensure a smooth and competitive qualification process for African teams aiming to secure slots at the global tournament.

Morocco, which has recently hosted several major continental competitions, is expected to provide top-class facilities and

organization for the qualifiers, further strengthening its reputation as a reliable host on the African football scene.

Meanwhile, Nigeria national under-17 football team, popularly known as the Golden Eaglets, remain the most successful side in the history of the competition, having won the title a record five times.

The qualifiers will see teams from across the continent battle for places at the U-17 AFCON tournament, which will ultimately determine Africa's representatives at the World Cup in Qatar.

## NPFL26: Bendel Insurance FC forced to 2-2 draw in Benin as visiting Plateau United snatch late equalizer

KEHINDE OSAGIEDÉ

Bendel Insurance Football Club, were on Saturday evening forced to a 2-2 draw by visiting Plateau Utd in a match day 32 fixture of the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL), played at the Samuel Ogbemudia stadium in Benin.

The visiting Plateau United snatched a late equaliser through Vincent Temitope's penalty kick in the 93rd minute of the game, when the hosts were already waiting for the final whistle to keep 2-1 victory.

Plateau Utd striker looked to have been tripped in the box by Insurance FC goalkeeper Joshua Baba and the Center Referee immediately penalized the player for suspected simulation but changed his decision afterwards and awarded him the spot kick which was well converted by Temitope.

The Benin Arsenal took the lead 14 minutes into the game through their fast rising striker Alex Oweifaleya. Alex calmly struck from the arch of the box area after receiving a through pass from Chinedu Nwosu.

As the battle raged with the host having a better share of possession and attack,

Gideon Monday sneaked into Insurance area and jabbed in a soft touch to give coach Gbenga Ogunbote's side an equalizer in the 41st minute.

In the second half, Insurance FC came out better and took the battle to the visitors' gate and the pressure profited them

in the 58th minute when a penalty kick was awarded to them from a hand ball by Plateau Utd defender in the box. The spot kick was well converted by Kayode Oke a minute later to restore Insurance lead.

The late penalty kick converted by Vincent Temitope in the 93rd minute stole the joy of the home fans and Kennedy Boboye's side with the dramatic end of the game sparking heavy debate. Plateau Utd and Bendel Insurance FC first round meeting ended 1-0 in favour of Plateau Utd in Jos last year.



BENDEL INSURANCE FC VS PLATEAU UNITED

## NSC congratulates Samson Adamu on Appointment as Acting Secretary-General of CAF

The National Sports Commission (NSC) warmly congratulates Mr. Samson Adamu on his appointment as Acting Secretary General of the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

The landmark decision,

ratified on Sunday, March 29, 2026, at the Giza Palace Hotel, marked a significant milestone for Nigerian sports administration, as it is the first time in over 70 years that a Nigerian occupies this highly influential position within African foot-

ball.

The Chairman of the Commission, Mallam Shehu Dikko, described the appointment as a proud moment for Nigeria and a testament to the country's growing influence in global sports administration.

"This is a landmark achievement not just for Samson Adamu, but for Nigeria as a whole. His track record within CAF speaks volumes, and we are confident that he will bring excellence, integrity, and progressive leadership to this new role. Nigerians stand solidly behind him and trust that he will represent the nation and the continent with distinction," Dikko stated.

The Director General of the Commission, Hon. Bukola Olopade, lauded the appointment as well-deserved and timely.



SAMSON ADAMU

## Leone Stars boycott FIFA series clash over unpaid allowances

The Sierra Leone national team, the Leone Stars, have reportedly boycotted their FIFA Series fixture against hosts Azerbaijan national team over unpaid allowances.

Reports emerging ahead of the scheduled kickoff indicate that the players refused to honour the encounter, citing outstanding bonuses and allowances owed to them by the football authorities.

The protest is believed to have disrupted final preparations for the game, with the players insisting that their financial entitlements must be settled before they return to action.

Sources close to the team revealed that the situation had been brewing for some time, with repeated appeals to the federation yielding no concrete resolution.

The development adds to the growing concerns over player welfare and administrative challenges affecting some African national teams, particularly during international engagements.

As of the time of filing this report, officials are yet to release an official statement on the matter, while efforts are reportedly ongoing to resolve the impasse and salvage the fixture.



THE SIERRA LEONE PLAYERS

## Sports

The Nigerian  
**Observer**  
...that the people may know

## CAF elevates Adamu to Acting Secretary General, ends Nigeria's 69-year wait

EDWARD OSEGHE

Samson Adamu has been appointed acting Secretary General of the Confederation of African Football (CAF), marking a historic milestone as the first Nigerian to occupy the influential position since the organisation's

establishment nearly seven decades ago.

The decision was ratified on Sunday at the CAF Congress held at the Giza Palace Hotel in Cairo, Egypt, following the resignation of Swiss-Congolese official Veron Mosengo-Omba, who stepped down from the role the same day.

Adamu's emergence comes on the back of his distinguished service within CAF, where he previously served as Director of Tournaments and Events. In that capacity, he played a central role in coordinating and delivering some of the continent's flagship competitions, earning recognition for

his administrative competence and organisational expertise.

His nomination was put forward by the CAF Executive Committee and subsequently endorsed by the Congress, underscoring broad confidence in his ability to steer the administrative machinery of African football.

The position of Secretary General is widely regarded as the operational backbone of CAF, overseeing daily administration, legal affairs, and the execution of policies and decisions of the Executive Committee.

Adamu's appointment not only signals continuity within the governing body but also represents a significant breakthrough for Nigeria, which now secures representation at the highest level of CAF's administrative structure for the first time since the body's founding in 1957.

His tenure, albeit in an acting capacity, is expected to play a key role in shaping the next phase of CAF's organisational and competitive development.



NEW CAF SG SAMSON ADAMU (MIDDLE), AMAJU PINNICK AND MUSA GUSAU

## CAF moves to reform rules after AFCON final controversy

EDWARD OSEGHE

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has unveiled plans to amend its statutes and regulations in the wake of the controversy that marred the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) final in Morocco.

In a statement released on March 29, CAF said the proposed reforms are aimed at rebuilding confidence in its officiating standards and judicial processes following widespread criticism of events surrounding the tournament's climax.

CAF President, Dr. Patrice Motsepe, disclosed that the continental body has engaged leading African and international legal experts to review its regulatory framework and ensure alignment with global best practices.

As part of the overhaul, CAF is also working closely with FIFA to improve the training, professional development, and welfare of referees and Video Assistant Referee (VAR) officials across Africa.

Motsepe stressed that the reforms are necessary to prevent a recurrence of the incidents witnessed during the AFCON final, noting that the integrity of the game remains paramount. He added that the organisation would continue to rely on independent and reputable legal professionals to serve on its Disciplinary and Appeal Boards.

The decision to initiate these changes follows the dramati-

and contentious final at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat, which drew global attention for the wrong reasons.

The match took a chaotic turn in stoppage time when referee Jean-Jacques Ndala awarded Morocco a disputed penalty after a VAR review, citing a foul by Senegal's El Hadji Malick Diouf on Brahim Diaz. The decision came shortly after a Senegalese goal had been ruled out, sparking outrage on the bench.



CAF PRESIDENT, DR. PATRICE MOTSEPE AND SADIO MANE

## Akwa Ibom FA Chairman dismisses stadium funding claims as false

The Chairman of the Akwa Ibom State Football Association, Mr Samuel Umoh, has dismissed as completely false reports claiming that Super Eagles players contributed money for the renovation of the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium.

A post on social media alleged that top Nigerian players donated to support renovation work at the stadium and were unhappy over delays.

Reacting to the claim, Umoh described the report as baseless

and the product of a non-reputable social media handle.

"This information is completely false and did not come from any recognised or credible news platform. It is the product of a non-reputable social media handle, and people should endeavour to rely only on verified sources for accurate information," Umoh said.

He stressed that no Super Eagles player contributed any money towards the maintenance or upgrade of the stadium and urged the public to disregard the report.



AKWA IBOM STADIUM

In a related development, the Akwa Ibom State Commissioner for Sports, Elder Paul Basse, also dismissed the claims, reaffirming that the stadium is fully maintained by the state government.

He added that the stadium continues to meet international standards, with proper maintenance of its pitch, floodlights, dressing rooms and other key facilities.

Also reacting, the Secretary of the Super Eagles, Mr Enebi Achor, described the report as misleading and embarrassing.

"The players were surprised to see such a report. They have never contributed money for the maintenance of the stadium. The publication is false and embarrassing," Achor said.

The Akwa Ibom State Government has already urged the public to ignore the report, describing it as misleading and an attempt to spread false information.



MIRACLE EZECHUKWU

## MTN CHAMPS Jos ends in style Ezechukwu records African outdoor 200m personal best

KEHINDE OSAGIJEDE

It was an electrifying three-day spectacle at the New Jos Stadium as the MTN CHAMPS Continental Relays came to a fitting end in Jos, Plateau State.

The final day was filled with thrilling action, with the 200m and relay finals providing a worthy climax to the competition.

Fresh off her impressive 100m victory in 11.26s, N-Youth Sports' Miracle Ezechukwu returned to the track determined to complete a sprint double in the Junior women's 200m. The national leader emphatically rose to the occasion, storming to a massive Personal Best (PB) of 22.91s to successfully defend her title.

Her performance not only secured the double but also positioned her as the fastest African woman outdoors over 200m in 2026. Remarkably, she becomes the first Nigerian to break the 23-second barrier on home soil since 2021.

Her teammate, Rosemary Nwankwo, found redemption after her 100m disappointment, delivering a strong run to finish 2nd in a lifetime best of 23.17s. Team MTN's Lucy Nwankwo also impressed, dipping below 24s for the first time in her career with 23.76s to place 3rd.

In the Junior men's 200m, Team MTN's Michael Aniche showcased his quarter-mile strength, producing a powerful finish to snatch victory in a PB of 21.84s ahead of teammate Emmanuel Akolo, while Mahamat Sani placed 3rd in 22.19s.

Toheebat Jimoh continued her fine form, claiming her second title and third medal of the meet by winning the women's 200m in a PB of 24.35s. She edged teammate Miracle Uwem Donald by the narrowest of margins, with Donald clocking 24.36s, while Esther Okon finished 3rd in 24.63s.

The men's 200m final produced one of the biggest upsets of the day, as Enoch Dabo surged to a surprise victory in 21.69s, ahead of Team MTN's Ezekiel Asuquo (21.78s) and Showers Ushie (21.82s).

Bernice Onoriode bounced back strongly from missing the

100m final to claim the Youth Girls' 200m title in 24.79s, finishing ahead of Team BPS' Rebecca Enilolobo (24.91s) and Chizoba Onyemauwa (26.47s) of Team MTN. She went on to cap an excellent outing by winning the Youth Girls' long jump as well.

Team MTN's Fervent Edet also completed a double, taking the Youth Boys' 200m title in a PB of 22.32s ahead of Joshua Okon and Zikirullah Ibrahim.

In the Cadet category, Praise Babatunde won the Boys' title in 26.03s, ahead of Kyspan Bitrus (26.92s) and Hamisu Muhammad (27.27s), while Esther Adebayo claimed the Girls' title in 28.36s, finishing ahead of Salama Hata (28.76s) and Chinaza Okoye (28.83s).

### RELAYS

The relay events added another layer of excitement to the finale. GSS Sabon Tasha claimed the Cadet Girls' 4x100m title in 57.81s, ahead of Model Learning Zaria (58.35s) and St. John (58.88s).

In the Youth Girls' category, Sabon Tasha Government emerged victorious in 52.15s, finishing ahead of Foundation Science (54.68s) and Naraguta Grammar (55.95s).

The Youth Boys' 4x100m saw GSS Sabon Tasha complete a sprint relay double, winning in 46.34s ahead of Foundation Science (46.96s) and Vision High (48.60s).

The Junior mixed 4x100m relay brought the curtain down on the competition in style, with Team MTN dominating the podium. Team MTN A claimed victory in 44.64s, followed by Team MTN B (46.17s) and Team MTN C (47.12s)

### NPFL MATCH DAY 32

**RESULTS:**  
Niger Tornadoes 2-0 Wikki Tourists  
Enyimba FC 2-1 Abia Warriors  
El Kanemi Warriors 1-1 Remo Stars  
Shooting Stars 3-1 Rangers Int'l FC  
Ikorodu City 4-3 Warri Wolves FC  
Bayelsa United 4-1 Kano Pillars  
Rivers United 4-2 Kun Khalifat Barau FC 0-0 Katsina United

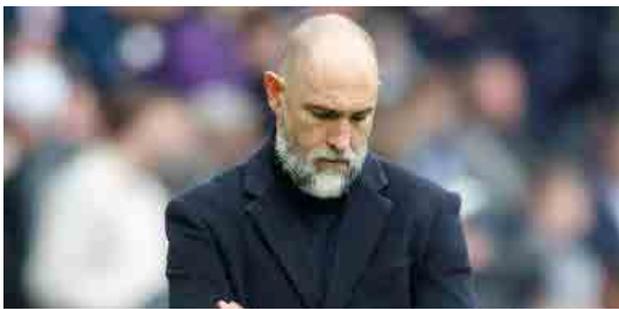
# SPORTS

## Tudor parts ways with Tottenham after dismal six-week spell

EDWARD OSEGHE

Tottenham Hotspur have confirmed the departure of head coach Igor Tudor, bringing an end to his brief and challenging stint at the club.

The 47-year-old leaves by mutual consent with immediate effect, just 44 days after taking



IGOR TUDOR

charge of the North London side. His exit follows a run of poor results that has deepened the club's relegation concerns in the English Premier League (EPL).

Tudor, who was appointed on February 14 as successor to Thomas Frank, struggled to steady the team, recording only one win in seven matches

across all competitions.

Notably, he failed to secure a single league victory during his tenure, with Tottenham slipping to 17th position—just one spot above the relegation zone.

The club's alarming dip in form has seen them endure a 13-match winless run in the EPL, leaving them precariously placed with 30 points from 31 games, only a point clear of 18th-placed West Ham United.

In an official statement released on Sunday,

Tottenham also confirmed the departures of goalkeeping coach Tomislav Rogic and physical coach Riccardo Ragnacci, who both served under Tudor.

"We can confirm that it has been mutually agreed for Head Coach Igor Tudor to leave the Club with immediate effect.

"Tomislav Rogic and Riccardo Ragnacci have also left their respective roles of Goalkeeping Coach and Physical Coach.

"We thank Igor, Tomislav and Riccardo for their efforts during the past six weeks, in which they worked tirelessly.

"We also acknowledge the bereavement that Igor has recently suffered and send our support to him and his family at this difficult time," the statement read.

The club, however, did not disclose who will take charge of the team on an interim or permanent basis.

With seven matches remaining this season, Tottenham face a tense battle to retain their top-flight status, having last secured promotion to the Premier League in 1978.



MEXICO CITY WORLD CUP STADIUM

## World Cup: Fan dies in fall at Mexico City World Cup stadium

A man died in Mexico City's newly renovated Estadio Banorte on Saturday after falling from a box seat area shortly before the stadium's reopening match, security officials said.

The accident occurred just as the venue, known as the Azteca Stadium, hosted a friendly between Mexico and Portugal. The match is intended to serve as a stress test for the facility after an around-the-clock construction push to meet Saturday's deadline.

The stadium, scheduled to hold the opening ceremony on June 11, is to be the first to host matches in three different World Cups.

Authorities said the man was intoxicated. He attempted to jump from the second-level box seats to the first level by climbing along the exterior of the structure before falling to the ground floor, they said.

## Athletes shine in 100m, 400m on Day 1 of MTN CHAMPS continental relays in Jos

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

The cool, humid air at the New Jos Stadium had things under control as Day 1 of MTN CHAMPS Continental Relays in Jos welcomed an array of exciting events, with the 100m and 400m events taking centre stage.

Esther Okon won the first track final of MTN CHAMPS Jos Season 4, racing to a Season's Best (SB) of 53.61s to steal the women's 400m title. Following closely was MTN's Toheebat Jimoh who ran an SB of 53.88s to finish 2nd, crossing the line ahead of her teammate, Miracle Uwem Donald who settled for 3rd with a time of 54.27s.

Team MTN's Ezekiel Asuquo eased through to post the swiftest time in the men's 400m heats in 47.43s, ahead of Mfoniso Frank (47.66s) and Pelumi Emmanuel (48.37s).

Dynamic Kaduna's Faustina Obi was the only athlete to go sub-56 in the heats of the Youth Girls 400m. She ran a Personal Best (PB) of 55.73s, dusting the field as Chioma Edet of Vision High (57.09s) and Oluchi Ezech (57.19s) occupied the next fastest times.

Team MTN's Michael Aniche is hoping to emerge champion in the subsequent legs of MTN CHAMPS Season 4 after his victory in Calabar. He ran a steady 49.22s to lead the charge in the men's Junior heats in front of his teammate Prosper Ushie (49.86s) and Chinedu Victor from Coach Felix Foundation (50.13s).

Team MTN's Chizoba Onyemauwa, Patience Shepnan and Calista Yunana posted the top three times in the Youth Girls' 400m. Nuhu Bamiyan, Zikirullah Ibrahim and Abudmalik Aliyu topped the Boys' division.

The women's junior 100m is building momentum to become one of the highlights of the competition. Chigozie Rosemary Nwankwo of NUT led the event with a marginal wind-assisted PB of 11.46s (+2.1).



MTN CHAMPS JOS SEASON 4

## Senegal stages symbolic trophy parade in friendly against Peru amid CAF sanctions

Senegal publicly presented the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) trophy on Saturday, despite being ordered to return it, ahead of their international friendly against Peru at the Stade de France in Paris.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) overturned Senegal's 1-0 victory over Morocco in the January 18 final, announcing on March 17 that the result would be revised to

a 3-0 win in favor of the hosts. The decision followed disciplinary action stemming from events during the match.

In a symbolic gesture before kickoff, Senegal captain Kalidou Coulibaly led his teammates onto the pitch with the AFCON trophy for a lap of honour. The presentation followed a pre-match performance by renowned Senegalese artist Yousou Ndour, adding a celebratory

atmosphere to the occasion.

Coulibaly, alongside goalkeeper Edouard Mendy, later placed the trophy in the stadium's presidential box, where Senegalese Football Federation president Abdoulaye Fall and other officials were seated.

The controversy surrounding the final arose after Senegalese players temporarily walked off the pitch in protest of a late penalty awarded to Morocco during stoppage time. Captain Sadio Mané eventually persuaded the team to return. Morocco's Brahim Díaz missed the penalty, and Senegal secured victory in extra time through a goal by Pape Gueye.

CAF subsequently ruled that Senegal had violated competition regulations by leaving the field without the referee's authorization, leading to the reversal of the result.



SENEGAL PARADE AFCON TROPHY

## Bayelsa, Ogun bags 2 gold each on Day 3 of Gov Diri Wrestling classics

Team Bayelsa and Team Ogun won two gold medals each at the ongoing 4th Governor Douye Diri Wrestling Classics in Yenagoa on Friday, March 28.

Iniekpoebi Godfrey defeated Ebievin Odubukeme (Dynamite Club) to secure gold in the 44kg men's freestyle (U15), while Righteous Amudukur beat Zikenah Woyinlayefa (Dynamite Club) in the 48kg category.

In the 29kg U15 girls' category, Rokebat Monlowolowo (Ogun State) overcame Mercy Andrew (Ngobere Club), while Oreoluwa Akindipe (Ogun State) defeated Regina Ebisuode (Dynamite Club).

Dynamite Club secured a gold medal in the 36kg U15 girls' category through Profit Bestman, Cross River claimed gold in the 39kg U15, while Oke Tobi (Rivers) won gold in the 42kg U15 girls' event.

Speaking with journalists after her victory, Oreoluwa Akindipe expressed gratitude to her parents and coach.

"I want to thank my parents for allowing me to come for this competition. I also appreciate my coach for believing in me and pushing me to give my best."

The Men's Greco-Roman category commences today, March 28 at the indoor sports hall of Samson Siasia Sports

Complex in Yenagoa. \*Day 3 full results of the 4th Governor Douye Diri Wrestling Classics in Yenagoa:\*

### U15 GIRLS

**29KG-GOLD:** Rokebat Monlowolowo (Ogun State)

Silver: Mercy Andrew (Ngobere Club)

Bronze: Ebiseigha Godstime (Cross Rivers)

Bronze: Heritage Gilbert (Bayelsa State)

**33KG-GOLD:** Oreoluwa Akindipe (Ogun State)

Silver: Regina Ebisuode (Dynamite Club)

Bronze: Migbi Assizecourt (Rivers State)

Bronze: Regina Delight (Bayelsa State)

**36KG-GOLD:** Profit Bestman (Dynamite Club)

Silver: Dorcas Kaliago (Rivers State)

Bronze: Aishat Muritala (Ogun State)

Bronze: Blessing Bideikeb (Ngobere Club)

**39KG-GOLD:** Happiness Peter (Cross Rivers)

Silver: Innocent Ebimobore (Nigeria Customs Service)

Bronze: Excellent Redian (Dynamite Club)

Bronze: Perfect Barasinpre (Chris Club)