

ASUU tasks FG on insecurity, economy

JOS

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), has called on the Federal Government to tackle insecurity and the rising economic hardship among Nigerians.

Prof. Jurbe Mwolwus, the

Chairperson of ASUU, University of Jos chapter, made the call during a news conference on Monday in Jos.

Mwolwus, who decried the increasing rate of hunger, malnutrition and poverty among Nigerians, advised the government to take urgent steps to-

wards addressing the menace.

He further said that over the years, insecurity had denied most Nigerians, particularly farmers access to their means of livelihoods.

"The country's socio-political and economic woes are daily compounded by the intractable insecurity problem.

"In the North, the resurgence of Boko Haram and other terrorist activities, the escalation of banditry and the farmer-herder conflicts have led to the killing and kidnapping of many, as well as destruction and desertion of several communities.

"The unknown gunmen phenomenon in the South-East has turned the region into a landscape of terror.

"The South-West and South-South are not shielded from the widespread experiences of banditry, killings and kidnapping for ransom," he said

Mwolwus said that the myriad of security challenges had worsened the living condition of most of Nigerians.

He further advised the federal government to particularly address the rising poverty, hunger, unemployment and inflation in Nigeria.

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2027 Election: INEC appeals judgment voiding timetable

ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has appealed against a Federal High Court's judgment which nullified its revised timetable and schedule of activities for the conduct of the 2027 general elections.

INEC, in a notice of appeal dated and filed on May

25 through its lawyer, Alex Izinyon, SAN, also filed a motion for stay of execution of the judgement, pending the hearing and determination of its appeal at the Court of Appeal.

The electoral umpire, which gave nine grounds for its appeal, argued that the trial judge, Justice Mohammed Umar, erred in law when he failed to pronounce on the

jurisdictional issue of the suit being hypothetical and academic which failure occasioned denial of fair hearing to the commission.

It argued that the trial judge's interpretation of Section 29(1), 82 and 84 of the Electoral Act, 2026 did not permit the restricted narrow interpretation accorded by the court.

INEC further argued that

the trial court misdirected itself in law when it failed to apply the provision of Section 151 of the Electoral Act, 2026 to the appellant's case, among other grounds.

INEC, the appellant, named Youth Party (YP) as respondent in the appeal. The commission also sought two orders, including an order allowing its appeal and setting aside the judge-

ment delivered by Justice Umar on May 20 in suit marked: FHC/ABJ/CS/517/2026 between Youth Party and INEC.

It also prayed the court for an order striking out the suit as the respondent (YP) lacked the locus standi to institute and maintain same and that the suit is academic.

In a related development, INEC, in a motion on notice also filed on May 25 at the FHC, sought an order staying the execution and/or further execution of the judgement pending the hearing and determination of the appeal filed by it.

Justice Umar of FHC in

Abuja had, on May 20, voided the 2027 election timetable issued by INEC.

The judge, in a verdict delivered on a suit brought by YP, held that INEC's action imposed restrictive timeframes on political parties for the conduct of primaries and other pre-election activities contrary to the provisions of the Electoral Act, 2026.

He held that INEC lacked the statutory power to fix or prescribe the timeframe within which political parties must conduct their primaries for the nomination of candidates for the 2027 general elections.



MOST EGALITARIAN FIRST LADY OF THE YEAR:

L-R: Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Mrs. Didi Welson-Jack, presenting an award to the Coordinator, Office of the First Lady of Edo State, Her Excellency Mrs. Edesili Okpbeholo-Anani, as the Most Egalitarian First Lady of the year, 2026, at the weekend in Abuja.

PHOTO BY OMOYE AMINU

Edo: NSCDC deploys over 1,500 Personnel for Sallah celebration

BENIN CITY

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Edo Command, has deployed 1,542 personnel across the state to ensure adequate security during the Eid-el-Kabir celebration.

In a statement, the State Commandant of the Corps, Mr Saidi Akintayo, explained that the deployment was in line with the directive of the Commandant General of the Corps, Ahmed Audi, to ensure a peaceful, safe, and

hitch-free celebration across the three senatorial districts of the state.

Mr. Akintayo said area commanders, divisional officers and heads of formations had been directed to intensify patrols, surveillance and intelligence gathering to prevent any breakdown of law and order during the festive period.

He warned criminal elements to stay away from Edo State, stressing that the command was prepared to deal decisively with anyone threatening public peace

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UBA inaugurates Innovation Hub at UNILAG

LAGOS

United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc on Monday deepened industry-academia collaboration with the inauguration of a four-storey Innovation Hub and Business Office at the University of Lagos (UNILAG).

The facility, located within the university campus, is aimed at promoting innovation, research and youth development.

Speaking at the inauguration, Group Managing Director, UBA, Mr Oliver Alawuba, said the project is a strategic investment in education, innovation and Africa's future.

According to him, more collaboration between universities and industry remains critical to driving economic transformation across the continent.

The facility has two floors

dedicated to UBA operations and two floors for UNILAG activities.

"This building is more than a banking office. It symbolises a renewed and enduring relationship between UBA and the University of Lagos.

"We are investing in African youths and showing the confidence we have in this university," he said.

Alawuba said the innovation hub would serve as a foundation for deeper collaboration in research, education, innovation and technology development.

He recalled that UBA was the first bank to establish a branch in a Nigerian university in 1969, adding that the branch currently serves more than 80,000 customers.

The UBA chief disclosed plans by the bank to improve digital connectivity around the facility through enhanced Wi-

Fi access to support learning, research and innovation.

He also highlighted investments by the UBA Foundation in education through essay competitions, cultural initiatives and book distribution projects across Africa.

According to him, the foundation is considering extending its scholarship and essay competition programmes to tertiary institutions, beginning with UNILAG.

Speaking on technology, Alawuba said Artificial Intelligence (AI) had become central to global economic growth, noting that UBA remained one of Africa's leading banks in AI adoption.

"We live in a world driven by

technology and artificial intelligence.

"We will collaborate with the university in advancing innovation and preparing students for the future," he said.

He urged students to embrace innovation and develop transformative solutions for Nigeria and Africa.

"Your ideas matter, your dreams are valid and your vision is worth investing in.

"Use this environment to learn deeply, innovate and create solutions for society," he said.

Earlier, the Vice-Chancellor of UNILAG, Prof. Folasade Ogunsola, described the project as a major milestone in strengthening collaboration

between academia and industry.

Ogunsola said the facility reflected the long-standing relationship between both institutions and a shared vision of investing in education, innovation and enterprise development.

According to her, universities and industries must work together to drive national development and economic growth.

She commended UBA Group Chairman, Mr Tony Elumelu, an alumnus of the university, for supporting his alma mater through infrastructure development, research partnerships and student-focused initiatives.

The vice-chancellor also highlighted UBA's contributions to the institution, including the professorial chair in finance, the UBA Park and scholarships through the Tony Elumelu Foundation.

Ogunsola called for deeper collaboration through structured internship programmes, joint research in financial inclusion and digital banking, as well as support for entrepreneurship and innovation hubs.

"The inauguration of this facility is not just the commissioning of a building, but the institutionalisation of a partnership aimed at advancing education, enterprise and Africa's economic growth," she said.

Also speaking, President of

Edo Culture Festival attracts 50,000 tourists in Benin City

WARRI

The Edo International Culture Festival closed Sunday in Benin City after attracting over 50,000 tourists and diaspora visitors.

The seven-day event featured Benin bronze art, traditional dance, masquerades, and food fairs. Over 200 artisans sold crafts and beadwork.

Speaking at the event, the state Commissioner for Arts, Uyi Oduwa, said, "we are showing the world Edo heritage be-

yond politics," adding that the festival held at the Oba's Palace grounds and Museum of West African Art attracted performers from Delta and Ondo.

The week-long event which drew Nigerian diaspora from the US, UK, Canada among others, witnessed extra flights from Lagos and Abuja led to several hotels being fully booked.

For Benin youths, the event meant jobs as tour guides, arts vendors and performers as Edo pushes to make culture and tourism an economic driver.



TOWN HALL:

Representatives of the Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of Nigeria (AIDDN), Edo State branch in a group photograph after a Town Hall organized by News Central and TAF Africa in Asaba, Delta State, recently. PHOTO: FRANCIS ODUPUTE.

Passengers decry faulty baggage, body scanners at Benin Airport

BENIN CITY

Passengers flying from the Benin Airport in Edo on Monday, expressed concerns over the physical search conducted at the airport on passengers because the scanners are faulty.

The scanners, according to workers, who spoke on grounds of anonymity, had not worked for a long time, forcing officials to resort to frisking of passengers.

Some of the passengers, who pleaded anonymity, lamented the huge risk posed to the airport for continued operation without the scanners.

A passenger on one of the flights to Lagos, said that with the level of insecurity in Nigeria, it is sad that the scanners were out, as anybody can get items that might be risky to the lives of passengers and crews aboard aircrafts.

"The way people are physically searched, show that somebody can easily smuggle weapons into the planes.

"I don't live in Nigeria. I came to see my people for about a month now, and am on my way to Lagos, from where I will transit to my place of residence abroad. What is going

on here should not happen in this century.

"I think the Federal Government should question those involved, as such breakdown should be given utmost priority."

Another passenger said she was shocked by the lack of scanners while at the airport to board a flight to Abuja.

"The frisking itself is absurd. In fact, most of us discussed it and some resolved to use the Asaba airport next time and then, transit from there to Benin by road.

"The airport itself is run-down. The security is deplorable. As we were coming in, we noticed a football field where youths were playing football with just a wire fence separating it from the airport.

"Anyone can jump through that field into the airport and anything can happen. There is need for the airport authority to sit up," she said.

Also speaking, a passenger, who gave his name as Mr Friday Iyare said: "This airport is a huge security risk. Something must be done and fast.

"There is no justification for airport scanners, to be out of order. We can understand a breakdown of one but not all. This is sad and must be addressed."

Police arrest 2 suspected illicit drug dealers in Delta

WARRI

The Police Command in Delta has arrested two suspected illicit drug dealers in the state.

The command's spokesman, SP Bright Edefe, who disclosed this to journalists on Monday in Warri said that the suspects were nabbed by operatives of the command's Violent Crime Response Unit

(VCRU).

He stated that the suspects, a male and a female, were apprehended on Saturday at their hideout in the Amukpe axis of Sapele, following credible intelligence.

According to Edefe, the police team, acting on the information, stormed the hideout in a targeted operation and effected the arrest.

"The operation resulted in

the arrest of two suspects, one male and one female. A search conducted during the operation led to the recovery of large quantities of suspected illicit and controlled drugs including Tramadol, CSC Codeine, Molly, Swinol, Vagadine, Red Boy, Zaza, Taker, and other substances suspected to be harmful."

Edefe said preliminary investigation revealed that the

suspects were allegedly involved in the sale and distribution of the recovered substances, adding that during interrogation, the suspects confessed to dealing in controlled drugs.

Findings shows the suspects are currently in police custody, while discreet investigation into the matter is ongoing to identify other members of their network.

Nigeria, Türkiye sign MoU on solid minerals development

LAGOS

Nigeria and Türkiye have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on strengthening bilateral cooperation in the solid minerals sector towards strengthening economic ties between both countries.

The agreement was signed by Nigeria's Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr Dele Alake and Alparslan Bayraktar, Türkiye's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources on the sidelines of the Istanbul Natural Resources Summit (INRES).

In a statement issued by the Special Assistant to Alake, Lara

Owoeye-Wise, in Abuja, Nigeria is ready to leverage Türkiye's technological advancement and expertise in mining exploration, training, digitisation, licensing systems and capacity-building to accelerate reforms and growth within the sector.

According to the minister, President Bola Tinubu has given full backing to efforts aimed at strengthening bilateral relations with Türkiye in the mining and energy sectors.

"Nigeria is open to working with the Turkish government to strengthen governance structures, improve technical capacity and advance sustainable mining development in our

country," he said.

He noted that reforms introduced in Nigeria's solid minerals sector had transformed the operating environment and made the sector more attractive to genuine investors.

The minister, who is also the Chairman of the Africa Minerals Strategy Group, said the Federal Government had introduced measures to sanitise the sector, improve ease of doing business and provide incentives for foreign investors interested to build long-term partnerships in Nigeria.

"We have significantly improved the ease of doing business and strengthened institutional support for investors.

"Investors can now repatriate profits after due process, while government incentives have continued to attract serious mining stakeholders into Nigeria," he said.

He said the reforms had already triggered increased inflows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the sector and reassured investors of government's commitment to security and enforcing legal mining operations.

He said President Tinubu's administration created the Mining Marshals unit which had intensified the crackdown on illegal mining activities across the country.

NEWS

Nigeria's GDP grew by 3.89% in Q1 2026 —NBS

OGBEBOR IKPONMWOSA

The Edo State Government has intensified efforts to tackle youth unemployment and deepen agricultural development as the Edo State Oil Palm Programme (ESOPP) launched the second cohort of its Manpower Development Programme, with 100 youths from oil palm-producing communities selected for specialised training and employment opportunities in the sector.

The six-month programme, inaugurated at the Edo State College of Agriculture and Natural Re

Abuja - The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), says Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rate in real terms grew by 3.89 per cent in the first quarter of 2026 on a year-on-year basis.

The NBS stated this in the Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report Q1 2026 released in Abuja on Monday.

The report said the growth rate was higher than the 3.13 per cent recorded in the first quarter of 2025.

However, it was lower than the 4.07 per cent recorded in quarter four of 2025.

It said the agriculture sector grew by 3.15 per cent in the first quarter of 2026, an increase from the 0.07 per cent recorded in the first quarter of 2025.

The report said the Industry sector witnessed a growth rate of 3.50 per cent in Q1 2026, an improvement from the 3.42 per cent recorded in the first quarter of 2025.

It said the Services sector recorded a growth rate of 4.31 per cent, a decrease from the 4.33 per cent recorded in Q1 2025.

The NBS said in terms of share of the GDP, the services sector contributed more to the aggregate GDP in Q1 2026 at 57.73 per cent compared to the 57.50 per cent recorded in Q1 2025.

The report said in Q1 2026, aggregate GDP at basic price stood at N110.79 trillion in nominal terms.

"This performance is higher when compared to the first quarter of 2025 which recorded aggregate GDP of N94.051 trillion, indicating a year-on-year nominal growth of 17.79 per cent," the NBS said.

The report said the oil sector witnessed a growth rate of 2.57 per cent in Q1 2026 on a year-on-year basis, showing an increase of 0.07 percentage points compared to the 1.87

per cent recorded in Q1 2025.

"However, growth decreased in the oil sector by 4.22 percentage points when compared to the 6.79 per cent recorded in Q4 2025."

It said on a quarter-on-quarter basis, the oil sector recorded a growth rate of 9.31 per cent in Q1 2026.

The report said the oil sector contributed 3.92 per cent to the total real GDP in Q1 2026, a decrease from the 3.97 per cent recorded in Q1 2025 and an increase from the 2.87 per cent it contributed in Q4 2025.

It said that Q1 2026 recorded an average daily oil production of 1.55 million barrels per day (mbpd), lower than the daily average production of 1.62 mbpd recorded in Q1 2025 by 0.06 mbpd.

"Also the production volume for Q1 2026 was lower than Q4 2025, which recorded 1.58 mbpd by 0.03 mbpd."

The report said the non-oil sector contributed 96.08 per cent to the GDP in Q1 2026 in real terms.

"This shows an increase from the contribution record-

ed in Q1 2025 at 96.03 per cent and a decrease in Q4 2025 recorded at 97.13 per cent," it said.

The report said the non-oil sector in Q1 2026 was driven mainly by information and communication (telecommunication), agriculture (crop production); trade; manufacturing (cement); finance and insurance (financial institutions).

Others were real estate, construction and transportation and storage (road transport), all accounting for positive GDP growth.

Eid-ul-Adha: FG declares Wednesday, Thursday public holidays

ABUJA

The Federal Government has declared Wednesday and Thursday public holidays to enable Muslims celebrate the Eid-El-Kabir

This is contained in a statement by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior,

Magdalene Ajani, on Monday in Abuja.

According to Ajani, the Minister of Interior, Dr Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, made the announcement on behalf of the federal government.

Tunji-Ojo said that the holiday affirmed the federal government's respect for the faith

and spiritual heritage of Muslims globally.

He urged all Nigerians to use the festive period to pray for Allah's divine guidance in Nigeria, adding that the country remained in pursuit of peace, security and prosperity.

"Eid-ul-Adha is a festival

of deep spiritual significance, grounded in the values of sacrifice, obedience to God and compassion for one's fellow man.

"I send warm felicitations of the federal government to all Muslim faithful in Nigeria and in the diaspora," Tunji-Ojo said.

**MISS EDO INTERNATIONAL PAGEANTRY:**

A cross-section of incumbent beauty pageants of the Miss Edo International Pageantry, during the 5th edition of the cultural and youth empowerment project held in Benin City on Sunday, 24th May, 2026.

PHOTO: Francis Odupute

Ododo salutes Kogi-born creative icon, Nike Davies-Okundaye at 75

LOKOJA

Gov. Ahmed Ododo, of Kogi has felicitated with renowned Nigerian artist and cultural ambassador, Mrs. Nike Davies-Okundaye, on her 75th birthday, describing her as one of Kogi's greatest gifts to the world. Ododo gave the felicitation in a statement by his Special Adviser on Media, Mr. Ismaila Isah on Sunday in Lokoja.

Ododo said Mama Nike's life and achievements have continued to bring honour to Kogi and Nigeria through her commitment to the promotion of African art, culture and empowerment of young people.

The governor noted that from her humble background to becoming a respected global

figure in the creative industry, Mama Nike has remained a shining example of hard work, talent and dedication.

He said her efforts in preserving African culture through textile design, painting, fashion and mentorship from a rare perspective of a quintessential Nigerian have helped to keep the African story alive across the world.

Ododo also praised her role in supporting the growth of arts and cultural education in Kogi, especially with the establishment of the Nike Art and Culture Gallery in Ogidi, Ijumu Local Government Area of the state and the Institute of African Heritage and Museum Studies at the Federal University Lokoja.

According to the governor,

Sallah celebrations: FRSC deploys 30,000 personnel nationwide

ABUJA

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), says it has deployed 30,000 personnel nationwide to ensure safer roads, hitch free movement and prompt emergency response ahead of the Sallah festivities.

This is contained in a statement by the corps Public Education Officer (CPEO), Osondu Ohaeri on Monday in Abuja.

Ohaeri also said that a special patrol consisting of regular and special marshals commenced on Monday (today) and would run till May 31st.

He said the special opera-

tions formed part of the corps' annual strategic intervention during festive periods, aimed at reducing road traffic crashes, fatalities, traffic congestion, and other highway emergencies.

According to him, these emergencies are usually associated with increased vehicular movement during the Sallah celebrations.

"These special operations are designed to guarantee free flow of traffic, strategic management of identified black spots and flashpoints."

The CPEO also said that the operations aimed to ensure prompt rescue services, immediate clearance of obstructions,

and strict enforcement of traffic laws on all major highways and critical corridors nationwide.

He added that the corps had mobilised operational equipment and logistics including patrol vehicles, ambulances, tow trucks, bikes, radar guns, breathalysers, and other traffic control facilities to strategic locations for effective service delivery.

He further said that all Zonal Commanding Officers, Sector and Unit Commanders have been directed to sustain aggressive visibility patrols and ensure full coverage of identified corridors throughout the period of the operations.

"The special patrol will place particular focus on all critical offences responsible for fatal

crashes across the country, which include speeding, dangerous driving, wrongful overtaking, lane indiscipline and overloading.

"It will also check use of phones while driving, operation of mechanically deficient vehicles, driving with expired or worn-out tyres as well as passenger manifest violations," he said.

According to Ohaeri, mobile courts will be in full operation nationwide for speedy prosecution of traffic offenders to strengthen enforcement and compliance.

He also said emergency response and rescue teams have been placed on maximum alert for prompt response to distress situations.

Digital skills key for Nigeria's future —Rep. Olajide

IBADAN

Hon. Adedeji Olajide, the House of Representatives member for Ibadan North-West/South-West, has reiterated the need for Nigerians to imbibe digital skills to succeed in the future.

Olajide said this in Ibadan on Friday at the closing of a 10-day digital training he organised for about 200 unemployed youths from his constituency.

He said that the future demands the ability to think, work, and solve problems using digital tools, technology, and data.

According to him, the training, facilitated in collaboration with the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), is part of his

constituency project, deliberately embarked upon to build a future-ready society.

Olajide, who is also the Chairman, House Committee on Digital, Information Communication Technology and Cybersecurity, said the initiative was conceived as a practical response to the challenge of youth unemployment.

He said the 200 participants, who each received a laptop, were equipped with relevant digital skills to compete in today's evolving technology-driven world.

"Beyond theoretical knowledge, the participants have been exposed to real-life applications in areas such as digital marketing, remote work and technology-enabled entrepreneurship."

NEWS**Lagos disburses N8bn to retirees, expands welfare support****LAGOS**

Lagos State Government has disbursed over eight billion Naira to its retirees under the Contributory Pension Scheme and Defined Benefit Scheme.

This is in an effort to improve workers' welfare and public service delivery.

The Lagos State Head of Service, Mr Bode Agoro, gave the figure on Monday during the 2026 Lagos State Ministerial Press Briefing at Alausa, Ikeja.

The briefing is to commemorate the third year of the second term in office of Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu.

Agoro said that a total of N8,042,264,264.91 had been paid to the retirees, adding that it reflected the government's commitment to the welfare of serving and retired public servants.

According to him, the public service remains the engine room of governance and development in Lagos State.

"The payment of over eight billion Naira to retirees demonstrates unwavering commitment of the Babajide

Sanwo-Olu administration to the welfare of serving and retired public servants.

"Our workforce has continued to demonstrate dedication, resilience and professionalism in sustaining effective governance and service," he said.

The head of service said that the government recorded significant milestones in pension administration, staff welfare, housing support and procurement reforms.

He added that the government achieved much in innovation and workforce development.

He disclosed that 4,837 newly-recruited officers across different cadres had been deployed to relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and their details uploaded on the Soft Suite database.

Agoro added that 38 political appointees were also registered in the system.

According to him, 185 newly-recruited and converted administrative and human resource officers underwent familiarisation tours to deepen their understanding of public

service operations.

He disclosed that the governor approved appointment of 25 substantive directors on grade level 17 as permanent secretaries and tutors-general.

On workers' welfare, the head of service said the government gave its workers N50,000 each as a palliative measure this May.

He added that each pensioner under the Defined Benefit Scheme received N32,000 monthly pension increment.

"We also flagged off the annual health screening tagged 'Public Servants, Know Your Numbers' to encourage regular medical checks among workers for improved productivity and longevity," he said.

Agoro said the 16th edition of the Lagos State Long Service Merit Award honoured 750 public servants who had spent not less than 30 years in service.

He said the beneficiaries included six permanent secre-

taries and 744 officers across various cadres.

According to him, during the state's last annual Public Service Week celebration, 177 outstanding officers received plaques and cash rewards, while five senior officers were presented with brand new cars.

"Five junior officers also received five million Naira each through a transparent ballot system, while the governor approved additional cash gifts totalling N130.5 million for other

outstanding officers," he said.

The head of service said that 17 retired permanent secretaries were celebrated during the 2025 Pens Down Ceremony in recognition of their meritorious service.

Agoro said the state government intensified support for retirees through quarterly training, skills acquisition programmes, health screenings and interactive sessions to prepare officers for productive post-service life.

**INAUGURATION OF COUNCIL:**

Member, Governing Council, Nigerian Police Academy (POLAC), Wudil Kano, Representing South-West, Barr. Toyin Ajibogere (2nd L); Member of the Council Representing South East, Chief Dubem Obaze; and other newly inaugurated members of the Council, during the inauguration of the Governing Council of the Nigerian Police Academy (POLAC), Wudil Kano in Abuja on Monday, 25th May, 2026.

Kwara approves 30% allowance for workers in agencies, parastatals**ILORIN**

Kwara Government has approved 30 per cent peculiar allowance for workers in agencies, parastatals, and media houses yet to benefit from it.

The acting Head of Service, Dr Olufunke Shittu, disclosed this in a statement signed by the Press Secretary, Mr Okanlawon Solomon, in Ilorin on Monday.

The statement said that some workers in the mainstream civil service had been granted earlier.

According to the statement, the approval forms part of the administration's continued commitment to workers' welfare, equity and inclusiveness across the state public service.

It said the implementation of the allowance would take effect from June 1.

According to the statement, the gesture further demon-

strates Gov. AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq's commitment to improving the well-being and morale of workers in the state.

It commended the governor for his consistent support for the workforce and for sustaining policies that promote fairness and productivity within the civil service.

The statement also urged workers in the affected establishments to remain committed, diligent and supportive of government policies and programmes aimed at advancing the state.

It also disclosed that salaries for May had been paid ahead of the Eid-el-Kabir celebration to enable workers to celebrate the festive season comfortably with their families.

Shittu, via the statement, felicitated workers and Muslim faithful in the state on the Sallah celebration and prayed for the state's continued peace, progress and prosperity.

FG committed to boosting small-scale businesses in Nigeria —PEBEC**JOS**

The Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), says the Federal Government is committed to boosting small-scale businesses in Nigeria.

The Director General of PEBEC, Zahrah Audu, stated this during a town hall with business owners and other stakeholders on Monday in Jos.

She particularly said that the new tax reform is aimed at ensuring ease of doing business

for small business owners in the country.

"Tax reform policy is actually very encouraging to small businesses because persons with low income are exempted for paying tax

"The tax reform policy is basically designed to support businesses with less income.

"Also, the Federal Government has empowered Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) to give grants to all nano businesses and govern-

ment has also made it easier for such businesses to be registered.

"Some a lot has been done by the government to help formalise the informal sector and encourage them to gradually scale up.

"The President has always said that there is no gain taxing poverty, as such he is encouraging the smaller businesses to grow and they are free from any tax burden," she said.

Audu explained that the town hall would provide her the opportunity to interface with business owners and understand the peculiarities of doing business in Plateau.

She added that the meeting would also bring the sub-national government closer to business operators.

"Earlier, we had a technical session with the sub-nationals on ease of doing business, chaired by the Secretary to the State Government, we are now here for a town hall with all the organised private sectors.

"The idea is for us to interface with business owners towards strengthening the sub-nationals and ensuring that federal policies are implemented at the state levels," she said.

Audu promised to organise the town hall in all the 36 states

of the federation.

Earlier, Mrs Joyce Yarnap, Plateau Commissioner for Information and Communication, said that the state had made significant progress on ease of doing business.

She, however, said that the state is aiming at creating an enabling environment for agriculture, mining and tourism sectors to thrive.

"One of the main focus of this administration is to develop our economy.

"So, we have paid attention to agriculture, tourism and of course mining, as the economic drivers for us in Plateau.

"At the end of this meeting, we should be able to create enabling environments for our agriculture, mining and of course the tourism sectors to thrive," she said.

PEBEC was established in 2016 to serve as Nigeria's foremost institutional platform for driving business environment reforms and strengthening investors confidence across the federation.

It created to eliminate bureaucratic and legislative impediments to enterprise, improve regulatory efficiency and position Nigeria as a globally competitive destination for investment, innovation and economic growth

Nasarawa: Ex-IGP, Adamu resigns from APC**LAFIA**

Former Inspector General of Police (IGP) and aspirant in the recently concluded governorship primary of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Nasarawa State, Mohammed Adamu, has resigned his membership of the party.

The ex-IGP resigned from APC on Monday in a letter addressed to the Chairman of the party in Makama Electoral Ward of Lafia Local Government Area of the state.

"Today, I address my letter to you the ward executives especially the ward chairman of my decision to resign from the APC with immediate effect.

"This decision was not taken lightly, however, recent developments within the party especially the conduct of the governorship primary in the state has made it difficult for me to continue with my political activities under the APC" he stated.

He particularly decried absence of internal democracy, fairness, transparency and

equal opportunity for aspirants during the party's governorship primary.

"I strongly believe that internal democracy, fairness, transparency and equal opportunity for aspirants and members were supposed to guide the affairs of any democratic political party.

"Unfortunately, the events surrounding the primary did not reflect this principle and have made me to lose confidence in the party's leadership in the state.

"After wide consultations with my supporters, political

associates and family members, I have decided to withdraw my membership of the APC to pursue my political aspirations through another platform.

"Kindly accept this letter as my formal resignation from the party," he said.

Adamu appreciated the party for the opportunity serve and contribute to its growth while he was a member.

He also thanked members of the APC at various levels for the cooperation and support while he was still a member.

Flooding: Niger, Nasarawa, Kogi intensify measures ahead of peak rains

MINNA

Niger, Nasarawa and Kogi states government have intensified proactive measures to mitigate flooding and its impact as the rainy season gathers momentum.

The measures include early warning systems, evacuation protocols, relocation directives for residents in flood-prone communities, inter-agency

collaboration, desilting of waterways and sustained public sensitisation campaigns.

The state governments disclosed these in separate interviews with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) amid concerns over predicted flooding in parts of the country during the 2026 rainy season.

In Niger, Alh. Abubakar Musa, the state Commissioner for Environment and Climate Change, said the ministry had

activated comprehensive strategies to mitigate flooding and its effects across the state.

He said in Minna that the ministry had shifted from reactive disaster response to building structural and community climate resilience.

According to him, one of the major measures adopted is the translation of meteorological forecasts into localised early warning messages for communities.

Musa said the state had also

integrated rainfall tracking and river level monitoring to trigger timely evacuation alerts before water levels become critical.

He added that aggressive desilting and waste management efforts were ongoing through the clearing of drainage channels, canals and major waterways in flood-prone local government areas.

The commissioner said the ministry was strictly enforcing environmental regulations

against indiscriminate dumping of refuse in waterways while intensifying sensitisation campaigns, particularly in riverine communities.

He further disclosed that evacuation protocols had been put in place for the 2026 rainy season, including the establishment of relocation camps on higher ground for affected residents.

Musa said adequate budgetary provisions had also been made in the 2026 budget to provide economic support for residents of vulnerable riverine communities.

He appealed to residents,

especially those living in flood-prone areas, to cooperate with government directives and prioritise their safety.

In Nasarawa State, the government said it would enforce the relocation of residents in flood-prone communities to prevent loss of lives and property.

Princess Margaret Elayo, the Commissioner for Environment and Natural Resources, in Lafia that the government had identified high-risk communities in Doma, Nasarawa, Toto, Awe and Lafia Local Government Areas that experience annual flooding from River Benue and its tributaries.



NSCDC SEAL INNER GALAXY STEEL:

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) Personnel sealing all branches of Inner Galaxy Steel Company and Jiuxing Integrity Industrial Ltd in Nigeria on Monday, 25th May, 2026, in Kaduna.

Truck crushes bus, injures POS operator in Lagos

LAGOS

The Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) has said that a 40-foot container truck lost control, overturned onto a commercial minibus and ultimately crashed into roadside structures, injuring a Point of Sale (POS) operator.

The General Manager of LASTMA, Mr Olalekan Bakare-Oki, confirmed the incident in a statement on Monday in Lagos.

Bakare-Oki said the accident occurred along the service lane near the Police Tactical Team

Station at Second Rainbow inward Oshodi, Lagos.

He said the accident occurred when the driver of the articulated truck, conveying a fully loaded 40-foot container, lost control.

"The truck overturned and fell on a commercial minibus, while also crashing into nearby roadside shops.

"A female POS operator sustained severe injuries to both legs during the incident.

"The injured victim was promptly rescued and taken to a nearby hospital by officers of the Police Tactical Team for urgent

medical attention," he said.

He added that LASTMA operatives swiftly mobilised to the scene to manage traffic, secure the area and support rescue efforts in collaboration with security agencies.

The LASTMA boss said the truck driver was apprehended and handed over to the Nigeria Police Force for further investigation and possible prosecution.

He noted that a recovery vehicle was deployed to remove the overturned truck and damaged bus, while police officers from the Orile-Iganmu Division commenced investigation

into the incident.

Bakare-Oki said in spite of the scale of the accident and damage recorded, traffic flow was largely maintained due to the prompt intervention of LASTMA officials.

He urged operators of articulated vehicles and logistics firms to ensure regular maintenance of their trucks, especially braking systems, to prevent accidents.

"Negligence in vehicle maintenance remains a major threat to lives and property on our roads. There is a need for motorists to adhere to safety standards," he said.

2027: Ex-minister, Nnaji, emerges Enugu PDP governorship candidate

ENUGU

A former Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Chief Uche Nnaji, has emerged the Governorship Candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Enugu State.

Nnaji polled 7,424 votes to defeat Mr Samson Nnamani, who trailed far behind with 600 votes, in a primary election held in Enugu, on Monday.

The reports that the exercise was conducted by the Chairman of the State Gubernatorial Committee of PDP, Mr Austin Nwachukwu.

In an acceptance speech, Nnaji thanked the party members for entrusting him with the mandate, and promised not to take it for granted.

He pledged that his administration would lessen the sufferings of Enugu State residents "by ensuring that they are not overburdened under the guise of taxes".

"I give this victory to the glory of God and our Enugu

people, who have been oppressed in the last three years and being overburdened with excessive, obnoxious taxes.

"Landlords are paying through their nose, hoteliers are crying, commercial motorcyclists (okada riders) are out of existence, even people hawking water pay tax.

"These are the people that we should be giving money. Government should make provision to pay money to the less-privileged.

"And that is the fulcrum of this struggle.

"The struggle to recover Enugu State, the struggle to rebuild Enugu State and the struggle to industrialise Enugu State, so that we will arrest youth restiveness.

"We will build industries to give our people jobs.

"Jim Nwobodo was the only governor in this state that built industries," the former minister said.

He said that the alleged misappropriation of the industries was unacceptable to him.

Abia begins reconstruction of 100-bed General Hospital in Okpuala Ngwa

OKPUALA NGWA

Governor Alex Otti of Abia, on Monday, performed the groundbreaking for the reconstruction of the dilapidated Okpuala Ngwa General Hospital in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Area.

In a speech at the ceremony, Otti said the project would help to restore quality healthcare services to the area.

He described the hospital as one with historical significance to the people of the old Eastern Ngwa and Abia at large.

He said the Abia founding fathers did their best to maintain public health facilities that served the people, but expressed displeasure that their efforts were not consolidated with the facilities abandoned to depreciate.

"In the olden days, this used to be a major hospital in the

whole of Abia and the then Eastern Ngwa area.

"If our forefathers, with limited resources, were able to maintain hospitals like this, it is a shame that we all failed in our time with all the technology, education and money.

"That's why I insisted that I have to perform the foundation laying ceremony," the governor said.

He also said that the project was part of his administration's efforts to rebuild and reposition the healthcare sector across the state.

He disclosed that General Hospitals in Arochuku and Obingwa LGAs had been completed and ready for inauguration.

Otti said that the Okpuala Ngwa facility received special attention because of its strategic importance and assured that the project would be completed within record time.

ASUU faults reversal of mother-tongue policy by FG

JOS

The University of Jos Chapter of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), has faulted the reversal of the mother tongue policy in favour of English language by the Federal Government.

Prof. Jurbe Mwolwus, the Chairperson of the union in the university, said this during a news conference on Monday in Jos.

Mwolwus, insisted that the use of English language for early child education was retrogressive, adding that the move was a great loss of past gains rooted in research.

"ASUU in university of Jos opposes the reversal and insists that using local languages for instruction is a standard and best practice in the technologically advanced nations like China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, among others.

"Children before the age of eight have been found to be able to master six or more languages without hampering their cognitive development," he said

The chairperson called on the federal government to reconsider its decision in order to ensure proper early child development in Nigeria.

Mwolwus also faulted govern-

ment's plan to establish a campus of Conventary University in Nigeria under the Transnational Education framework (TNE).

"ASUU sees TNE as another platform to further undermine and under-develop the country's education for personal benefits of few Nigerians and their foreign collaborators.

"ASUU is calling on the government to make our universities globally competitive to attract foreign students and scholars or retain tested local brains instead of embracing the recolonisation of our education," Mwolwus called.

The chairperson also faulted the move by the Federal Minis-

try of Education to scrap some courses in the university system.

He described the claim by the ministry that some courses, particularly in social sciences and humanities as "irrelevant" and compounding unemployment issues in Nigeria as "unfortunate".

"We make bold to say that every course in the university has its utilitarian values both in personal and societal spheres. "After all, skills, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication and digital literacy are laid by the so-called irrelevant courses like philosophy, religious studies, linguistics, fine arts, among others."

NEWS

WHO releases emergency funds as Ebola response scales in DRC, Uganda

ABUJA

The World Health Organization (WHO) has released 3.9 million dollars from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies and is establishing a continental Incident Management Support Team with Africa CDC to scale response to Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in DRC.

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus said Monday at Africa CDC ministerial briefing that DRC national risk was raised to very high due rapid transmission and absence vaccines therapeutics rare Bundibugyo strain.

Ghebreyesus said the risk was raised to "very high" last Friday, citing rapid transmission and the absence of vaccines or therapeutics for the rare Bundibugyo strain, according to WHO assessment and official statements this week.

WHO is finalising multi-agency Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan aligned with national plans for DRC and Uganda as teams ex-

pand contact tracing treatment centres laboratories community engagement ongoing outbreak response efforts

He reported that "So far, 101 cases have been confirmed in DRC with 10 confirmed deaths. In Uganda, five cases and one death have been confirmed, linked to cross-border movement," he said.

According to him, WHO assesses regional risk as high and global risk as low but warned bordering countries face high risk and should act immediately according to latest WHO update report.

He said response complicated by insecurity in Ituri and North Kivu provinces where fighting displaced more than 100,000 people in recent months ongoing humanitarian crisis affecting outbreak control and surveillance efforts seriously.

The boss said that two security incidents at health facilities were reported in the past week and distrust of outside authorities was hampering community-based interventions according to WHO field reports update.

He said building trust in affected communities was now one of WHO's highest priorities to improve outbreak response effectiveness and community engagement across affected regions in DRC and Uganda urgently required.

"To address lack of countermeasures, WHO convened interim Medical Countermeasures Network last week and recommended prioritising

two monoclonal antibodies for clinical trials," he said according to WHO emergency response update report.

"The agency is also developing a trial for the antiviral obeldesivir as post-exposure prophylaxis for high-risk contacts in partnership with Africa CDC and the Collaborative Open Research Consortium on flaviviruses research.

"Discussions are underway

with partners on candidate vaccines in the pipeline," he said.

He said evaluation of vaccine candidates and strengthening regional preparedness against Ebola outbreaks in DRC and Uganda was currently ongoing

Ghebreyesus said he would travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo on 26 May with Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, Executive Director of WHO's Health Emergencies Pro-

gramme, to directly review ongoing response operations.

He also thanked President Yoweri Museveni for cancelling Uganda's Martyrs' Day commemoration, which attracted up to two million people, as a preventive measure against further spread of the outbreak.

"We are facing an extremely serious and difficult outbreak. It will get worse before it gets better."

**LAUNCHING OF NETWORK OF BOOK CLUBS:**

Coordinator, Nigeria Copyright Commission, Mrs. Oluropo Oke (M); presenting an award of excellence to the Keynote Speaker, Miss Pelumi Nuibi (2nd L); during the launching of Network of Book Clubs and Reading Promoters in Nigeria (NBRP) in Ibadan on Monday, 25th May, 2026. With them are: Secretary of NBRP, Dr. Josephine Nalnel (L); Head National Library of Nigeria Oyo State, Mr Adekoya Osunkoya (2nd R); and the President of NBRP, Prof. Oyinkan Tasie (R).

Navy inaugurates 8 housing units in Calabar

CALABAR

The Nigerian Navy has inaugurated eight units of two-bedroom flats at the Ikot Ansa Senior Staff Quarters as part of efforts to boost personnel welfare and operational efficiency.

Speaking at the event in Calabar on Monday, the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), Vice Admiral Idi Abbas said that similar housing projects would be inaugurated in Port Harcourt and Uyo.

Represented by Rear Adm. Chidozie Okechie, the Flag Officer Commanding, Eastern Naval Command, Abbas said that the navy would always give priority attention to personnel welfare.

He said that the housing units would not only translate

to decent homes for officers but boost their morale for greater efficiency.

"I have repeatedly tied welfare projects to better operational readiness against maritime crimes.

"We are very deliberate about closing the accommodation gaps for officers and ratings," he said.

The CNS recipients of the housing units to ensure good maintenance culture while in occupation.

Abbas reiterated the commitment of the navy to initiate new housing projects while taking steps to complete all pending ones.

"The newly inaugurated units of flats are part of the projects that we inherited from our predecessors," he said.

NSCDC arrests suspected internet fraudster in Edo over N3m vehicle scam

BENIN CITY

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Edo Command, has arrested a 24-year-old suspect over an alleged internet fraud involving a fake online vehicle purchase worth more than N3 million.

The state Commandant of the corps, Mr Saidi Akintayo, disclosed this during a news conference in Benin on Monday.

Akintayo said the case was

reported on February 3, by the complainant, Olanrewaju Nurudeen, of Aduwawa, Benin, who attempted to purchase a 2010 Toyota Corolla through a U.S.-based car auction website.

According to him, the complainant unknowingly transferred N3,005,000 into an Access Bank account belonging to one Oluwafunmilayo Olubode, after the online platform was allegedly compromised by fraudsters.

"After receiving the complaint, I directed the com-

mand's investigative team to immediately track down those involved in the fraudulent act.

"The investigators obtained a court order to access the account details linked to the transaction.

"This led to the arrest of one Momoh Rabi, from Auchu in Etsako West Local Government Area of the state.

"The suspect confessed that his bank account was used by his friend popularly known as 'Destiny Money,' who is cur-

rently at large, to receive the fraudulent funds."

The commandant added that the suspect admitted receiving N277,000 as his share from the proceeds of the alleged fraud.

He said efforts were ongoing to arrest the fleeing suspect, while investigation into the case would continue.

"At the conclusion of investigation, the suspect will be charged to court," he said.

Akintayo reiterated the command's commitment to tackling cybercrime and other forms of criminal activities in the state.

Culture Ministry backs presidential endorsement of national compendium

ABUJA

The Federal Government says it remains committed to ensuring that the compendium containing economic and tourism comprehensive profiles of all the states and the FCT receives the endorsement of President Bola Tinubu.

Hannatu Musa Musawa, Minister of Art, Culture, Tourism, and the Creative Economy, stated this during a courtesy visit by a delegation from the Nigerian Press Council, led by its Executive Secretary, Dr Dili Ezughah, in Abuja.

The minister commended members of the project committee for coming out with the

compendium documenting the economic and tourism profiles of 36 states and FCT.

"June 17 is a Wednesday. But we have to engage with the presidency first to get clearance for that date.

"So, if we're sending out letters to the launchers, then that date has to be available either to the chief launcher or to whoever the chief launcher deems fit.

"First of all, we need to get the endorsement from the presidency and we believe that we will get it," she said.

The minister also emphasised the need for proper official communication among relevant agencies and private sector working toward the suc-

cess of the official launch of the national publication.

Earlier, the Executive Secretary of NPC, Ezughah, said the initiative was conceived following consultations aimed at strengthening collaboration among government institutions to positively project Nigeria globally.

"This project was inspired by the need to synergise efforts across government institutions to project Nigeria positively, and we are pleased that the Vice President has endorsed it as a national initiative.

"We have made substantial progress and are now at the final stage ahead of the official launch," he said.

Ezughah explained that the publication would serve as strategic reference material for investors, diplomatic missions, development partners, chambers of commerce, and Nigerians in the diaspora.

According to him, it will provide detailed economic and tourism information on every state of the federation.

Also speaking, the Lead Consultant for the project, Mr Tajudeen Toyin-oke, disclosed that the compendium contained comprehensive profiles of all the states and the FCT.

According to Toyin-oke, this includes information on investment opportunities, tourism assets, mineral resources,

population data, infrastructure, and business incentives.

"The compendium captures the economic and tourism profiles of all the 36 states and the FCT, including investment opportunities, tax incentives, mineral resources, and tourism assets for both local and international investors.

He added that the publication was designed to become a global reference document for credible information in Nigeria.

According to him, once this book is launched, it's going to be in both soft copies and hard copies.

"It's going to be distributed into all Nigerian embassies all around the world, so that any-

body going into our embassy, they can pick up the book and know specifically what is in a particular state.

"If you are a Nigerian living abroad, you want to see what is in your state, you can be able to pick the book.

"It's also going to be available at all the international airports and all the borders. There will be free copies so that people can pick up a copy and then they'll be able to digest what we have in Nigeria, both in terms of economic and tourism.

"And when I say economy, all the mineral resources that we have, people will be able to have an idea, the population, the demographic and everything."

Military promises safe Eid celebrations in North East

MAIDUGURI

The Headquarters of the Joint Task Force (North East), Operation HADIN KAI, has assured residents of the North-East of adequate security ahead of the Eid-El Kabir celebrations scheduled for Wednesday.

The Theatre Command, in a security advisory issued on Monday by its Media Information Officer, Lt.-Col. Sani

Uba, said troops had been strategically deployed across vulnerable locations within the theatre to ensure peaceful celebrations.

The command, while extending Eid felicitations to Muslim faithful, disclosed that intelligence reports indicated possible attempts by remnants of Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) terrorists to exploit the festive period to attack ci-

vilian targets.

"Terrorists may attempt to deploy suicide bombers and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), particularly in densely populated areas.

"The OPHK assures residents that the threats had been anticipated and necessary preventive measures put in place.

"Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets have been fully activated, patrols intensified, while security forces

are operating closely with sister agencies, the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and community vigilance groups," the military said.

The command advised residents to remain vigilant throughout the festive period and avoid unnecessary exposure to security risks.

It urged worshippers to conduct Eid prayers and celebrations close to their homes and avoid large gatherings where

possible.

The command also advised members of the public to be watchful in crowded places such as markets, motor parks, banks and prayer grounds, while promptly reporting suspicious persons, objects or movements to security agencies.

Residents were further urged to cooperate with security personnel during patrols and screening exercises and refrain from spreading unverified information capable of

causing panic.

Operation HADIN KAI also called on traditional rulers, religious leaders, media organisations and community stakeholders to support on-going security efforts through timely sharing of credible information.

The command reiterated its commitment to denying terrorists freedom of action and ensuring that residents celebrate Eid El Kabir in peace and safety across the North-East region.



DANGOTE SPECIAL DAY:

L-R: Regional Director/Senior Adviser to the President/CE, Dangote Group, Mrs Fatima Abdurrahman; Commissioner for Trade, Investment, Industry and Private Sector Development, Niger State, Alhaji Aminu Takuma; President, Niger Chamber of Commerce Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NCCIMA), Alhaji Suleiman Liman and Commissioner for Homeland Security, Maurice Magaji; during the Dangote Special Day and the just concluded Niger National Trade Fair in Minna, Niger State, on Sunday, 24th May, 2026.

Otti reaffirms commitment to delivering on promises to Abia people

UMUAHIA

Governor Alex Otti of Abia has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to serving God and fulfilling promises made to the citizens of the state at the inception of his government.

Otti said this in Umuahia during an interdenominational thanksgiving service, organised by the Abia Government to commemorate his third anniversary in office.

"We started by taking the state to God in prayers and rededicated the state immediately after we were sworn in.

"Another vow we made is the one we are about to fulfil," he said.

Otti said that thanksgiving and worship remained a personal conviction for him and his family, adding that giving glory to God is necessary for the successes recorded by the administration.

Quoting Joshua 24:15, the governor declared: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

He announced plans to construct an ecumenical centre in Umuahia to be privately funded.

He said that he had already provided the land, which he acquired in 2009, long before he became governor, for the project.

"We vowed that we are going

to build an ecumenical centre in Umuahia for God.

"The ecumenical centre is not going to be built with government money. No dime from the state government will go into it," he said.

The governor also appreciated the President of Living Word Ministries International, Dr Emma Okorie, for his support and prayers over the years.

He recalled that during his 2014 governorship struggle, "some persons in authority allegedly pressured the cleric against associating with me".

According to him, when Okorie refused, his fence was demolished by the authorities at the time.

"He is one of the people that suffered in the hands of the previous administration.

"But all those who did that have been forgiven and because he has forgiven them, we have also forgiven them," the governor said.

Delivering a sermon, entitled "Where there is no vision the people perish", Okorie described the governor as a "God-sent" on a mission to deliver Abia people.

Okorie, who took his scripture reading from Exodus 3:1-10, said that the Israelites spent long years under bondage in Egypt and God sent Moses to deliver them after they cried out to God.

Police detain 3 over firearms, suspected cultism in Enugu

ENUGU

The Police command in Enugu State has detained an alleged firearm repairer and two other suspects over unlawful possession of firearms, ammunition and suspected of being members of a cult group.

Police spokesman, SP Daniel Ndukwe, disclosed this in a statement issued in Enugu.

Ndukwe said operatives achieved the arrests through sustained proactive policing operations across the state.

He said exhibits recovered included three locally-made guns, six live cartridges, a motorcycle and other incriminating items in separate operations within Nsukka and 9th Mile.

Ndukwe said operatives attached to the Okpuje Division Surveillance Team intercepted

Sunday Okwumaji, 23, on May 19 during a stop-and-search duty at Ovogovo.

He said Okwumaji, from Igala-Mela Local Government Area of Kogi, was intercepted along the Nsukka-Enugu-Ezike-Umuopu Road.

"A search conducted on the suspect led to the recovery of one locally-made pistol loaded with one live cartridge concealed in his bag.

"The suspect claimed to be a firearm repairer and stated that the firearm was handed over to him for repairs by its owner," Ndukwe said.

The spokesman said operatives of the Command's Distress Response Squad also intercepted a motorcycle carrying three occupants along Abor/Nsukka Old Road, 9th Mile.

He said the incident occurred at about 5 p.m. on the

same day during a routine stop-and-search operation.

"Upon attempts to search them, two suspects, including the rider, fled, while one Chimbobi Ozo, 27, was detained.

"Recovered from his bag were one locally-fabricated revolver pistol and four live cartridges," he said.

Ndukwe said the suspect confessed to involvement in cult-related activities during interrogation.

"He stated that he and his fleeing accomplices were heading to a secret cult gathering at Ijebuoghene in Udi Local Government Area," he added.

The spokesman also disclosed that operatives attached to the Nsukka Area Command recovered another firearm during surveillance patrol along Amaenu Edem, Nsukka.

He said a male rider abandoned his ladies' motorcycle

and bag before fleeing on sighting the operatives on May 15.

Ndukwe said a search of the bag led to the recovery of one locally-made pistol and one live cartridge.

Other recovered items included four bunches of keys, a tube suspected for illicit drug use, torchlight, spanners and an iron cutter.

"Acting on credible intelligence, the operatives subsequently traced and detained the suspect, identified as Ekene Ugwu, 31, on May 16," he said.

Ndukwe said efforts were ongoing to arrest the fleeing accomplices, while the suspects would be arraigned after investigations.

The Commissioner of Police in Enugu State, Mamman Giwa, commended the operatives for their vigilance and professionalism.

Eid-el-Kabir: NSCDC deploys 2,000 officers across Kaduna for hitch-free celebration

KADUNA

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Kaduna State Command says it has deployed 2,000 personnel to ensure adequate security during Eid-el-Kabir celebrations across the state.

This was contained in a statement issued on Monday in Kaduna by the Command's

Public Relations Officer, Habeeb Badamasi.

Badamasi quoted the State Commandant, Panam Musa saying that the deployment was part of efforts to guarantee a peaceful and hitch-free celebration.

According to him, the deployed personnel comprise 120 senior officers and 1,880 rank-and-file officers stationed at prayer grounds, strategic lo-

cations, recreational centres, highways, and other critical areas across the state.

"The command has directed Area Commanders and Divisional Officers to intensify surveillance, strengthen intelligence gathering, and enforce crime prevention measures within their respective jurisdictions.

"Special attention has been given to major prayer grounds, public gathering points, and

highway patrols through "Operation Fushin Kada," he said.

The commandant assured the command's readiness to collaborate with other security agencies to maintain law and order throughout the festive period.

Musa urged residents to remain vigilant and law-abiding, and to provide credible information to security agencies to facilitate a safe and peaceful celebration.

Etsu Nupe urges Niger residents to register, obtain PVC ahead of 2027 polls

BIDA (NIGER)

The Etsu Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, has urged eligible voters in Niger to take advantage of the ongoing Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) to obtain their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The monarch is the Chairman, Niger Council of Traditional Rulers.

Abubakar made the call during an interview with journalists at the Wadata Palace in Bida while reacting to concerns raised by the State Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) over low participation

in the CVR, particularly in the Niger South Senatorial District.

He noted that the REC had expressed worry during a stakeholders' meeting in the state about the poor turnout for the registration exercise.

The Etsu Nupe urged all eligible citizens across the state to use the CVR window to get their PVCs to enable them participate in the 2027 elections.

While emphasising that voter registration was a civic responsibility, the emir encouraged eligible citizens to take part in the exercise to strengthen democratic participation and ensure their voices are heard during elections.

NEWS

Civil war lessons drive Nigeria's push for homegrown military technology War

ABUJA

Nigeria's military authorities have renewed calls for stronger investment in indigenous defence technology, warning that future wars will depend more on local innovation than imported systems.

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt.-Gen. Waidi Shaibu, made the call at the 7th Nigerian Civil War Symposium organised by the Army

War College Nigeria (AWCN) for participants of Course 10/2026, on Monday in Abuja.

Shaibu was represented at the event by Maj.-Gen. Victor Emah, Deputy Director-General, Nigerian Army Heritage and Future Centre (NAHFC).

He said lessons from the Nigerian Civil War continued to expose the strategic importance of self-reliance, adaptability and innovation in military operations.

Shaibu said battlefield suc-

cess was not determined solely by access to advanced weapons but by the ability of troops to innovate under pressure.

He noted that in spite of the severe technological and logistical constraints during the civil war, both sides deployed locally fabricated solutions and adaptive strategies to sustain operations.

"Operational success is not just about the weapon, but the man behind it and his ability to adapt and improvise.

"Such lessons remain critical as Nigeria confronts evolving threats including terrorism, insurgency and banditry," he said.

The army chief said the Nigerian Army was prioritising research, development and collaboration with local institutions to build a sustainable defence innovation base.

He added that the drive aligned with his command philosophy of transforming the army into a more professional, adaptive and combat-ready force.

Earlier, the Commandant of AWCN, Maj.-Gen. Umar Alkali, said the symposium was deliberately designed to draw strategic lessons from history to address present-day security challenges.

Quoting former Defence Minister, retired Lt.-Gen. T.Y.

Danjuma, Alkali emphasised the need to study the civil war to avoid repeating past mistakes and to strengthen national unity.

"The Nigerian Civil War must be studied so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated," he said.

Alkali said the theme of the symposium, which focused on indigenous technological innovation during the war, highlighted the role of creativity and local solutions in warfare.

NDC Imo aspirants seek clarity on form sales, screening exercise

ABUJA

Concerned aspirants of the Nigerian Democratic Congress (NDC) in Imo have called for more clarity and transparency in the conduct of the party's expression of interest form sales and the recent screening exercise for the Imo State House of Assembly elections.

In a joint statement signed by Onyema Ikechukwu, Emeke Ezech, Chibuike Mbanu, and Marcel Ezenwa on Monday, the aspirants said they participated in the process and observed some concerns regarding aspects of the exercise.

They noted that while the official price of the expression of interest form was set at N1 million, there were perceptions among some participants about possible variations in payments during the process.

The aspirants also stated that they had informed the party's national leadership of their observations, adding that a screening committee was sub-

sequently deployed from Abuja to oversee the exercise.

According to them, participants at the screening expressed mixed views on the criteria used.

Some felt that greater emphasis was placed on financial capacity.

Others, however, believed that party structures, grassroots engagement, and loyalty should also play a key role in candidate selection.

The group called for continued improvement in internal party processes to ensure fairness, consistency, and confidence among members as preparations continue ahead of the elections.

The NDC has fixed the official cost of its Expression of Interest form for State House of Assembly aspirants at N1 million.

The nomination form for the same position is priced at N1.5 million, bringing the total cost to N2.5 million, according to available party fee structures.

The NDC is yet to respond officially to the concerns raised at the time of filing this report.

Group condemns attacks on female politicians

ABUJA

Womanifesto Nigeria, a coalition of more than 250 organisations, has condemned rising cases of violence, intimidation and harassment against women participating in political activities across Nigeria.

The group's Convener, Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, described the alleged assault involving Sen. Ireti Kingibe and officials of the African Democratic Congress in Abuja as disturbing and unacceptable.

In a statement issued on Monday in Abuja, Akiyode-Afolabi said reports from different parts of the country showed women being attacked, threatened and forcefully prevented from participating in party primary elections.

She cited alleged incidents during the APC primaries in Bama/Ngala/Kala Balge Federal Constituency of Borno State,

where women were reportedly kicked, assaulted and violently driven away from polling centres.

"Even more concerning are allegations that security agencies present at some of these incidents failed to intervene or protect the women under attack," she said.

Akiyode-Afolabi added that allegations of compromise or complicity by security personnel raised serious concerns about women's safety in Nigeria's political environment and the commitment of institutions to democratic participation.

"These incidents reflect the harsh reality many Nigerian women face simply for daring to participate in leadership, governance and public service," she stated.

The group warned against what it described as the growing normalisation of political thuggery and gender-based violence within Nigeria's electoral and party systems.



JUSTICE DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE IN COLLABORATION:

Coordinator, Development and Peace Initiative, Fr. Digo Raphael (M), with the Gidan Sarkin Kudansa, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Orphans Children during the Justice Development and Peace in collaboration with Eco-Smile Support and Empowerment Initiative mark 2026 IDPs/Orphans Children Carnival in Kaduna on Sunday, 24th May, 2026.

FRSC begins crackdown on fake diplomatic number plates in Nasarawa

LAFIA

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has launched a special enforcement operation against the use of cloned and unauthorised diplomatic number plates in Nasarawa State.

The Corps Marshal of the FRSC, Shehu Mohammed, disclosed this on Monday in Lafia during the flag-off of the exercise.

Mohammed, represented by Mr Ayengba Gabriel-Okpe,

said the operation was aimed at restoring order on the roads and curbing the abuse of diplomatic privileges by unauthorised motorists.

According to him, intelligence reports indicated an increase in the use of counterfeit diplomatic number plates by private vehicle owners to evade traffic regulations, toll payments and security checks.

"Diplomatic number plates are issued strictly to accredited diplomats and foreign mis-

sions in line with international conventions.

"The abuse of these plates by unauthorised persons undermines national security and public order," he said.

The corps marshal warned that offenders caught with fake diplomatic number plates would face prosecution under the FRSC Act and other relevant laws.

He added that vehicles found with such plates would be impounded for verification

and possible prosecution.

Mohammed urged motorists to desist from the illegal practice and called on members of the public to report suspicious cases to the nearest FRSC command.

He said the exercise would be sustained until sanity was restored on the roads.

Also speaking, Mr Yahaya Sabo-Adikwu, the Nasarawa State Sector Commander of the FRSC, said personnel from various units had commenced stop-and-search operations on major highways and entry points into Lafia and other parts of the state.

ILO, NLC seek worker-centred climate transition

KEFFI

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) have called for a worker-centred approach to climate transition in Nigeria.

Ms Inviolata Chinyangara, ILO Senior Specialist on Workers Activities/ACTRAVCO, Abuja Office, made the call on Monday at a two-day Tripartite Post-COP Review Workshop in Keffi, Nasarawa State.

The workshop was organised by the ILO and NLC.

She said climate change had

become a labour market reality, affecting livelihoods, workplace safety and productivity across key sectors of Nigeria's economy, requiring urgent policy responses.

Chinyangara noted that extreme weather conditions were disrupting agriculture, transport, construction and energy sectors, while increasing occupational health and safety risks for workers nationwide.

According to her, climate policies must prioritise decent work principles to ensure protection of workers during the transition to a sustainable and

inclusive green economy.

"Climate policies are labour policies. The transition to a sustainable economy must ensure that no worker is left behind," she said.

She emphasised the need for Nigeria to align climate strategies with employment creation, social protection frameworks and workers' priorities under the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Chinyangara added that social dialogue among government, employers and workers remained essential for achieving balanced and sustainable climate

outcomes in the country.

She said a just transition should promote decent jobs, re-skilling programmes, social protection and respect for workers' rights in emerging green sectors.

She added that it would continue supporting Nigeria through technical assistance, capacity building and integration of labour issues into climate and development policies.

Also speaking, NLC General Secretary, Mr Emmanuel Ugboaja, called for worker-centred global climate transition policies and fair financing mechanisms for developing countries.

Tinubu wins APC presidential primary for 2027

JIMOH IBRAHIM

KADUNA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has secured the All Progressives Congress presidential ticket for the 2027 general elections in a landslide victory that party officials described as a resounding endorsement of his first-term agenda.

Declaring results Saturday night at the Bola Ahmed Tinu-

bu International Conference Centre in Abuja, Chairman of the APC Primaries Committee, Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, announced that Tinubu polled 10,999,162 votes. His sole challenger, Stanley Osifo, managed 16,504 votes. The margin, Anyim said, reflects "the confidence of party members in the President's leadership and the Renewed Hope Agenda."

The primary, held across 8,809 wards nationwide, was marked

by heavy turnout despite the hot sun and Ramadan fasting period. In Uburu, Ebonyi State, Minister of Works David Umahi said 5,009 party members turned out to vote for Tinubu, describing Ebonyi as "a stronghold of the President and APC." Chief of Staff Femi Gbajabiamila also noted the turnout as proof that Nigerians want continuity.

In his acceptance speech, Tinubu acknowledged the economic pain of the last

three years. "I know many of you have lost sleep. If you lost sleep, I lost some too," he told supporters. "But these reforms are the foundation for a \$1 trillion economy. Give me another term to consolidate."

Political analysts say the victory positions Tinubu as the candidate to beat in 2027, but also raises the stakes. Opposition leaders, including Atiku Abubakar, David Mark, and Rauf Aregbesola, met in

Ibadan over the weekend and vowed to present a united front to block what they called "the imposition of a sole candidate."

For APC stakeholders, the task now is unity. For Nigeri-

ans, the question is whether Tinubu's second-term promise of economic consolidation will translate to lower inflation, food security, and jobs. The campaign officially begins in earnest.

NRC adds more Lagos-Ibadan train trips for Sallah

AMBROSE KATUNG

KADUNA

The Nigerian Railway Corporation has announced a temporary increase in train services on the Lagos-Ibadan corridor to accommodate the surge in passengers ahead of the Eid-el-Kabir Sallah celebration.

In a statement Saturday, NRC Chief Public Relations Officer Callistus Unyimadu said the adjustment will apply on Tuesday, May 26, 2026. Instead of the usual four trips, six trains will operate on the route.

Departures from Lagos will be at 7:45am, 1:40pm, and 4:00pm. From Ibadan, trains will leave at 8:00am, 10:50am, and 4:30pm. "The temporary adjustment is aimed at accom-

modating the expected increase in passenger movement as many Nigerians travel to celebrate with families and loved ones," Unyimadu stated.

The Corporation clarified that the arrangement is strictly for the Sallah period. Normal Tuesday operations of four trips will resume immediately after the celebration. Thursday's schedule is also affected: only four trips will run on May 28 instead of the usual six, before reverting the following week.

In addition, the Osun State Government will operate its annual free Sallah train service on the narrow-gauge corridor. The special train will depart Iddo Station, Lagos, on Tuesday, May 26, for indigenes traveling to Osogbo. The return trip is scheduled for Thursday, May 28.

**SALLAH CELEBRATION:**

Rams displayed for sale at Gbagada ahead of Sallah celebration in Lagos on Monday, 25th May, 2026.

'I have lost some weight, sleep' — Tinubu speaks on economic reforms

ADAM SHERANG

PORT HARCOURT

President Bola Tinubu broke from usual victory rhetoric Saturday night, admitting that Nigeria's economic reforms under his administration have been painful for citizens and for him personally.

"If you lost sleep, I lost some too. If you lost weight, I lost some too," Tinubu said at the APC National Convention. The comment drew a mix of laughter and applause from

party delegates who have endured subsidy removal, naira floatation, and rising inflation since May 2023.

Tinubu's reforms — ending fuel subsidy, unifying exchange rates, and cutting government waste — were meant to stabilize public finances and attract investment. But the impact has been immediate: food inflation at 16.36% in rural areas, transport costs up, and 35 million Nigerians facing acute hunger according to UN data released this week.

"I share in your anguish," the

President said. "But a surgeon cannot heal without cutting. These measures were necessary to stop Nigeria from bleeding." He pledged that a second term would focus on "economic consolidation" — translating macroeconomic gains into jobs, lower food prices, and stable electricity.

Economists are split. The IMF this week downgraded Nigeria's GDP outlook and reported a 2.5% contraction, citing inflation and naira weakness. But the Ministry of Finance says foreign reserves are rising and investors are returning due to policy clarity.

For ordinary Nigerians, the

President's words are being weighed against their daily reality. In Abuja markets, a ram now sells for over N500,000. In Lagos, transport fares have doubled. In Borno, families are reducing meals.

Tinubu's admission is significant because Nigerian leaders rarely acknowledge hardship publicly. Whether it builds empathy or frustration will depend on what happens between now and 2027.

The President ended by asking Nigerians for "patience, understanding, and continued support." The APC base gave him the ticket. The country will decide if the sacrifice was worth it.

35m Nigerians risk acute hunger June-August — UN warns

KATE IYEN

ASABA

The United Nations has raised the alarm that Nigeria is heading into one of its worst "lean seasons" on record, with 35 million people — nearly 1 in 7 Nigerians — projected to face acute food insecurity between June and August 2026.

In a release Friday, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said the crisis is driven by conflict, violence, economic pressure, and unprecedented funding short-

falls. "This makes Nigeria one of the world's largest hunger crises, with the burden falling overwhelmingly on northern Nigeria," OCHA stated.

The UN Humanitarian Country Team estimates that 6.4 million children in the Northwest and Northeast will be acutely malnourished this year. Without urgent intervention, the report warns, families will be forced to reduce meals, sell assets, and withdraw children from school.

The lean season, the period between planting and harvest when food stocks run low, is

worsened this year by insecurity that prevents farming in many communities, and by inflation that has pushed food prices beyond reach. In Abuja, a bag of rice now sells above N120,000. Ram prices for Sallah exceed N500,000.

Funding is a major challenge. The 2026 Nigeria Humanitarian Response Plan requires \$516 million, but only 40% has been received. "Resources from the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund have jump-started the response," OCHA said, "but we need immediate scale-up to

prevent deaths."

Aid workers say malnutrition is already peaking in Borno, Yobe, Sokoto, and Zamfara. Clinics are reporting children with severe wasting, and mothers are skipping meals to feed infants.

The UN appeal comes as the government rolls out social safety net programmes, but critics say the reach is limited and slow. With Sallah approaching and prices rising, humanitarian groups are urging Nigerians to support community feeding and donor agencies to release funds.

ADDITION OF NAME

I, formerly known as **OSEMWENGIE LAWRENCE**, now wish to be known as **OSEMWENGIE LAWRENCE OSADOLOR**. All former documents are valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **MISS OSAGIEDE EDOWAYE JOY**, now wish to be known as **MRS. ALUYI EDOWAYE JOY**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME/DATE OF BIRTH

I, formerly known as **IDUSERI AIWEKHOE KARO**, now wish to be known as **IDUSERI AIWEKHOE CARO**. Also, my correct date of birth is 1/3/46 and not 2/7/59. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **MISS IBOR MARIS EBIUWA**, now wish to be known as **MRS. UMUKORO MARIS EBIUWA**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **OSAYUWA OSAS NOSAKHARE**, now wish to be known as **GODSTIME NOSAKHARE**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **AGBONZE NITTABEATRICE ESEOSA**, now wish to be known as **OTASOWIE AGBONZE NITTABEATRICE**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **MISS OTASOWIE OGHOGHO JANESNACHY**, now wish to be known as **MRS. OSAGUMWENRO-OSUNBOR OGHOGHO JANESNACHY**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **MRS. SINGH RAMAN**, now wish to be known as **MRS. NOSA RAMAN**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public should please take note.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that an **Extra General Meeting (EGM)** of Shareholders of **UDA Microfinance Bank Limited**, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria was held on **3rd March, 2022** and formal proposal for recapitalization and conversion from **State Microfinance Bank** to a unit tier one **Microfinance Bank Limited**, was made known to our shareholders/depositors.

The general public should please take note.

Signed: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NEWS**Tinubu wins APC ticket in landslide, pledges 'economic consolidation'**

MUHAMMED JATO

ABUJA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has secured the APC presidential ticket

for 2027 after polling 10,999,162 votes in Saturday's primary. His sole challenger, Stanley Osifo, got 16,504 votes.

Sen. Anyim Pius Anyim declared the results at the Bola

Ahmed Tinubu International Conference Centre, Abuja, calling it "a resounding endorsement of Renewed Hope."

In Uburu, Ebonyi State, Minister of Works David Umahi said 5,009 members voted for Tinubu, describing Ebonyi as "a stronghold." Chief of Staff

Femi Gbajabamila said turnout showed Nigerians want continuity.

In his acceptance speech, Tinubu admitted hardship. "If you lost sleep, I lost some too. If you lost weight, I lost some too," he told delegates. He said reforms ending fuel subsidy and

unifying exchange rates were painful but necessary to build a \$1 trillion economy.

A second term, he pledged, will focus on "economic consolidation" — jobs, lower food prices, and stable electricity.

Opposition leaders Atiku Abubakar, David Mark, and

Rauf Aregbesola met in Ibadan and vowed a united front to block "the imposition of a sole candidate."

For Nigerians, the verdict will rest on whether inflation slows and food becomes affordable before 2027. Campaign season begins now.

Kano girls' school wins national robotics competition

ABDUL KABIR

KANO

Students of Government Girls College, Kano, have won the 2026 National Robotics Championship in Abuja, beating 42 other schools.

The team of five SS2 girls built a robot that sorts recyclable waste using sensors and AI. Their project, "EcoSort," was inspired by dumpsites in their community.

"I never thought girls from Kano could beat Lagos schools," said team captain

Zainab Musa, 16. "We worked 6 months after class."

Their coach, Mr. Sani, said the girls coded, welded, and tested the robot themselves. The prize: N5 million and a trip to the Africa Tech Fair in Kigali.

Parents and teachers celebrated in Kano Sunday. The state government promised to equip the school with a permanent STEM lab.

For many families, the win is proof that northern girls can lead in tech. "We want to study engineering and build more solutions," Zainab said.

Enugu farmers launch cooperative to beat food inflation

NKECHI ENEH

ENUGU

Farmers in Enugu have formed the "Udi Food Cooperative" to sell yams, rice, and vegetables directly to consumers, cutting out middlemen.

The cooperative has 400 members across 12 villages. They pool produce, set prices, and supply markets in Enugu, Awka, and Onitsha weekly. A bag of rice is sold at N95,000 vs N120,000 in town.

"We were tired of traders buying low and selling high," said chairman Ogbuefi Ikechukwu. "Now we keep the profit."

With support from a local NGO, the group got a truck, storage, and digital records. They also run a weekly "farmers' market" in Enugu city.

Housewives say the market is cheaper and fresher. The cooperative plans to add garri and palm oil next month.

For consumers battling inflation, it's relief. For farmers, it's dignity and fair pay.

Port Harcourt artist paints 100-meter mural on waterfront

UBONG ABERT

PORTHARCOURT

Port Harcourt's waterfront has a new landmark: a 100-meter mural by artist Chima Okorie celebrating Niger Delta culture.

Painted over 3 weeks with 20 assistants, the mural shows fishermen, masquerades, music, and oil history. Chima, 31, used weather-proof paint and local youth labor.

"I wanted our children to see our story on a wall, not just in

books," he said. The Rivers State Ministry of Culture funded the project with N12 million.

Residents gather daily to take photos. Vendors now sell drinks and art prints nearby. Tour guides have added the mural to city tours.

Chima says the work is also a message: "We are more than oil and struggle. We have beauty, music, and pride."

The state plans to commission 5 more murals in 2026. For Port Harcourt, it's color, jobs, and identity on public walls.

Abuja hospital launches free sickle cell screening for 10,000 children

EDITH UKIH

ABUJA

National Hospital Abuja has launched a free sickle cell screening drive targeting 10,000 children under 12 in FCT communities.

The 3-month program started May 20. Nurses visit schools and primary health centers to do finger-prick tests. Parents receive results and counseling same day. Sickle Cell Disorder affects 1

in 50 Nigerian children. Many parents don't know their child's genotype until crisis begins.

"We want early detection so families can manage diet, hydration, and avoid triggers," said Dr. Ngozi Okoro, lead pediatrician. The hospital partnered with Sickle Cell Aid Foundation and UNICEF for kits.

By Friday, 2,100 children had been screened. 180 tested AS, 22 SS. Parents are referred to clinics for follow-up.

**2026 LAGOS STATE MINISTERIAL NEWS CONFERENCE:**

L-R: Permanent Secretary, Environmental Services Office, Dr Omobolaji Gaji; Special Adviser to Lagos State Governor on Environment, Mr Olakunle Rotimi-Akodu; Lagos State Commissioner for Environment and Water Resources, Mr Tokunbo Wahab and Lagos State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Gbenga Omotoso, during the 2026 Lagos State Government Ministerial News Conference in Commemoration of 7th Year in Office of Gov. Sanwo-Olu Administration in Lagos on Sunday (24/5/26).

Oyo kidnappers contact govt, demand talks only with Makinde

FATIMA GARUBA

OYO

Suspected terrorists who abducted over 45 people, including toddlers aged 2 and 3, from Esinele, Yamota, and Alawusa in Oriire LGA have contacted Oyo State Government.

The Yoruba Council of Elders confirmed the May 15 at-

tack. The kidnappers stormed schools and homes, taking pupils, students, and teachers into the forest.

YCE said the abductors called officials and insisted discussions can only be held with Governor Seyi Makinde or his representatives. They rejected mediation by families or security agents.

Parents are camping at po-

lice stations in Oriire. Some sold property to raise ransom, but the kidnappers said money will not be discussed with them.

Governor Makinde has not spoken publicly, but security sources say a discreet negotiation team is being set up. Amotekun and police tactical units are deployed, but forest terrain makes rescue hard.

YCE condemned the abduction and asked President

Tinubu to deploy special forces. "Yorubaland cannot be the next frontier of mass abduction," it said.

In 2025, over 1,200 people were abducted in schools and on highways. Experts say kidnappers target children because governments respond faster.

For families, each day brings fear. Community leaders are appealing for prayers and urgent action. The state and nation are watching.

Nigeria recognised as Commonwealth leader in cervical cancer fight

DANIEL BUARA

LAGOS

Nigeria has been named one of Africa's leading countries in eliminating cervical cancer, a disease that kills over 8,000 Nigerian women yearly.

The recognition came at the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting in London. Nigeria presented its 2024-2030

Elimination Plan: 90% HPV vaccination of girls by age 15, 70% screening of women 35 and 45, and 90% treatment of pre-cancerous lesions.

Health Minister Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate said over 3 million girls have been vaccinated in 16 states since 2023. "We use schools, primary health centers, and religious platforms to reach girls," he said.

Commonwealth officials

praised Nigeria for integrating screening into primary health-care and training 5,000 health workers on VIA and HPV DNA testing.

Cervical cancer is caused by HPV and is preventable. Before 2023, screening rates were below 10% due to cost and stigma.

Civil society groups say the recognition must bring more funding. "We need mobile

screening vans in rural areas and free treatment for poor women," said Lola Salami of CARI.

WHO targets global elimination by 2120. If sustained, experts say Nigeria could cut deaths by 70% by 2035.

For Nigerian women, early detection saves lives. The government's push means more women can access screening without traveling to cities.

24-year-old builds solar-powered kiosk for street vendors

GODWIN ERHA

LAGOS

A 24-year-old Lagos engineer, Tunde Adedayo, has unveiled a solar-powered kiosk that gives street vendors light, phone

charging, and cold storage without fuel.

The kiosk, tested in Yaba Market, uses rooftop panels, a battery, and a small fridge. Vendors can rent it for N2,000 daily. "NEPA takes light, but my customers can still buy cold drinks

and charge phones," said Mama Nkechi, a juice seller.

Tunde, a UNILAG graduate, built the prototype with scraps and a N1.5m grant from a tech hub. He says 50 kiosks will be deployed in Lagos and Ibadan by December.

For vendors, it means higher sales and less spoilage. For Lagos, it's a small step toward renewable energy for informal traders.

"We are not waiting for government," Tunde said. "We are powering our own streets."

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I lost four pregnancies to spouse abuse —Basira Beere

Popular Yoruba actress, Omoshalewa Yusuf fondly known as Basira Beere has finally spoken about her failed marriage. The actress during her appearance on Talk to B podcast accused her now ex - husband of physical abuse. Narrating her experience, Basira Beere who disclosed that she lost four pregnancies to domestic violence,



BEERE

blamed her prolonged stay in the marriage on advice from her parents. According to the actress, "when I was about to get married to him, my friends complained that he was of a lower class than me, but I told them that I also came from nothing before fame. I sponsored about 70 percent of our wedding ceremony, I thought I was assisting my man" "His problem started two days after our wedding, days after the wedding a guy texted me to congratulate me on my wedding and I called him 'dear' and that was when the problem started, it was so tough". "He beat me so much that even our landlord tried to intervene. If I explained what happened to my parents they kept telling me to be patient and endure" "Only my siblings who were living with me could attest to what I went through, he beat me over little things to the point that I lost about four pregnancies"

My greatest regret is using *BBNaija* prize money to support family members instead of investing it —Phyna

Big Brother Naija season 7 winner, Josephine Otabor, popularly known as Phyna has said her greatest regret is using the prize money she won from the show to support family members instead of investing it.

Phyna said she was young and naive when she left the show and didn't manage the prize money she won properly.

Speaking during a recent Lives-tream, the reality star blamed her family members for not giving her good financial advice.

She said instead of encouraging her to invest they were constantly demanding for financial support and even turned against her when she wasn't able to meet their request.

"The mistake I made was using my Big Brother Naija prize money to support family members instead of investing it. I thought I was helping family members and sorting out their debts. I was spending generously on them but they refused to give me financial advice on how to invest or manage the money well"

"All of them were constantly demanding money from me for several stuff. I dug a lot of boreholes for family members. Not knowing that, that was the beginning of my problem with my family members"

"They complain and even call me out in the media whoever I can't meet their demands, but now that the money has finished, I'm the only one facing the reality alone" she lamented.



PHYNA

Onscreen kissing: I'm very conscious of who exchanges saliva with me —Actress Soso

Nollywood actress, Sophia Chisom, popularly known as Soso has said actors are supposed to engage in onscreen kisses solely for professionalism and not seeking pleasure.

The actress stated this while reacting to complaint by some actors that they have never had a good kiss in the movie industry.

Speaking in an interview with TVC, Soso said it is difficulty for any male colleague to get a good kiss from her because she doesn't involve her tongue during on-screen kisses. She explained that she often

closes her teeth and use just her lips when shooting a kissing scene, stressing that she is very conscious of who exchanges saliva with her.

"I dont know if people kiss with their tongues but I do not kiss with my tongue. My teeth are always close during kissing scenes, so it is just the lips, but because it is an act, we have to make it believable"

"Some people kiss with their tongues but I don't think it is okay to swap saliva with every single person that you shoot with. Besides, it is a job, so whenever I see colleague complaining that they didn't get good kiss it is weird" she remarked.



SOSO

How I was able to overcome smoking addiction —Ebuka

Media personality Ebuka Obi-Uchendu has opened up about his struggle with smoking addiction and how he was able to overcome it.

Speaking in a recent episode of the 'MENTality' podcast along with singer

Banky W and social media influencer Aproko, Ebuka revealed that he started smoking in JSS3.

He explained that he smoked for 13 years and was taking two packs of cigarettes daily.

"I smoked for 13 years, by the time I entered the university, I was smoking two packs a day"

Ebuka further stated that he eventually gave up the addiction after making deliberate efforts to overcome it, adding that a lot of people also made the similar mistakes switching to a new addiction in a bid to avoid the previous one.

"Human beings have two ambitions, the first is to avoid pain, while the second is to chase pleasure. A lot of drug use comes because a lot of people are trying to avoid pain" he said.

He concluded by saying that self regulation and self - discovery are important tools for overcoming negative addiction.



EBUKA

My mother's struggle inspired my music journey —Romeeyo

Nigerian rapper, Blaqbonez has revealed why he rejected offer to join Mavin Records despite being allegedly offered one million dollar.

He made this known via a short post on his

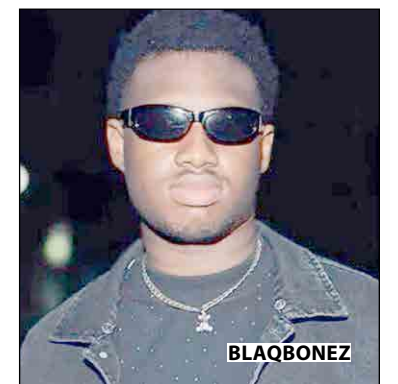
Fast-rising Afrobeats singer, Daniel Oluwatobi Aderibole, fondly called Romeeyo has revealed that his mother played a major role in shaping his music journey and inspiring his rise in the Nigerian entertainment industry.

The singer who disclosed this while speaking about the inspiration behind his debut project and passion for creating emotionally driven music, said watching my mother endure difficult moments while making sacrifices for her family motivated me to pursue success to make her proud.

"My mother's struggle inspired me, and this album is for every woman

who sacrificed everything for their children"

The young artiste explained that his debut music album reflects gratitude, love and appreciation for mothers who continue to support their children despite economic hardship and personal challenges.



BLAQBONEZ

Why I rejected \$1m offer to join Mavin Records —Rapper Blaqbonez

Nigerian rapper, Blaqbonez has revealed why he rejected offer to join Mavin Records despite being allegedly offered one million dollar.

He made this known via a short post on his official X handle.

According to Blaqbonez, "one of the major reasons I declined the offer is because I don't want to enjoy being highly active on social media, constantly engaging fans online which I suggest may not align with the demands of a major Record label.

Said he" I need to get this off my chest before channels drops the reason I didn't sign to Mavin Records, even when they were begging me with a million dollars. I don't really like posting, I prefer I Tweet per year

than engaging my fans, I'm too big for that, I'm mysterious."



BLAQBONEZ

ArtsWorld with Francis Odupte 08023680030

HERITAGE IN BRONZE

Nigeria's cultural significance in Benin

IGEMU EVUOGHENE JEMIMAH

Nigeria's cultural legacy is a treasure trove of artistic expression, with the Benin Kingdom's bronze works being a crowning jewel. For centuries, the Benin Kingdom has been renowned for its exquisite bronze and brass sculptures, which have captivated art lovers worldwide. These intricate works of art are not only a testament to the kingdom's rich cultural heritage but also a reflection of its artistic innovation.

The Benin Kingdom's bronze works are a masterclass in craftsmanship, with each piece telling a story of the kingdom's history, mythology, and cultural values. From the iconic Benin bronzes to the intricate ivory carvings, each art-

work is a window into the kingdom's rich cultural heritage. The lost-wax casting technique used in creating these bronzes is a testament to the ingenuity and skill of Benin's artisans.

The significance of the Benin Kingdom's art extends beyond its aesthetic appeal. These artworks provide a glimpse into the kingdom's past, revealing the complexities of its society, politics, and spirituality. They also showcase the kingdom's rich cultural traditions, including its monarchic system and ancestral worship. As such, they are an invaluable part of Nigeria's cultural legacy, deserving of recognition and preservation.

Despite the looting and destruction of many Benin bronzes during the British punitive expedition of 1897, the

kingdom's artistic traditions have endured. Today, efforts are being made to preserve and promote the Benin Kingdom's cultural heritage, including the repatriation of looted artefacts. These

The Benin kingdom's bronze works are a masterclass in craftsmanship, with each piece telling a story of the kingdom's history, mythology, and cultural values

efforts are crucial in ensuring that the kingdom's rich cultural legacy continues to inspire future generations.

By celebrating the Benin Kingdom's cultural heritage, we are not only preserving the past but also inspiring future generations. The art and culture of Benin continue to captivate audiences worldwide, and it's essential that we continue to promote and preserve this rich cultural legacy. Through education, cultural exchange, and preservation efforts, we can ensure that the Benin Kingdom's artistic traditions continue to thrive for generations to come.

The impact of Benin's art extends beyond the kingdom's borders, with its influence seen in various forms of art across the African diaspora. The intri-

cate patterns, motifs, and techniques used in Benin's art have been incorporated into various art forms, from Afrobeat music to contemporary visual art. This is a testament to the kingdom's enduring legacy and its contribution to the global cultural landscape.

The Benin Kingdom's artistic traditions are a vital part of Nigeria's identity, and their preservation is essential for the country's cultural continuity. As we look to the future, it's crucial that we prioritise the preservation of these artistic traditions, not just for the sake of history, but for the sake of cultural relevance and artistic innovation. By doing so, we can ensure that the Benin Kingdom's legacy continues to inspire and captivate audiences for generations to come.



MISS EDO INTERNATIONAL 2026

Beyond the crown: The quiet work of becoming

GERALD OKAFOR CHUKWUMA

For five years, Miss Edo International has refused to be just another night of lights and applause. It has been a trajectory—an intentional pull upward for young women who arrived unsure of their own voices and left owning rooms they were never meant to enter quietly.

On May 24th, 2026, that trajectory had an audience.

The event drew Edo State's cultural and legal custodians from across the state. Hon. Christopher Ewere

Okaigbe, Commissioner for Arts and Culture, came to witness how heritage is carried when it's lived, not just displayed. Hon. Roland Otaru (SAN), Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Edo State, arrived with a mandate to assess structure and left with a verdict: "This is a robust and wonderful initiative."

The weight of his words wasn't lost on anyone. "Robust" acknowledged the framework beneath the glamour - the mentorship modules, public speaking drills, brand development, and community project requirements that force

contestants to build beyond themselves. "Wonderful" acknowledged what happens when that framework meets a willing mind: hesitation gives way to clarity, and presence becomes purpose. The MD/CEO of EDO JOBS and other leaders joined them, not as ceremonial guests, but as investors in a pipeline they could see working.

The evening refused to choose between substance and spectacle. There were panel discussions that treated ideas as seriously as the runway treated poise. A fashion exhibition that proved Edo creativity doesn't need translation.

Cultural displays from dance troupes across the state, each movement a reminder that identity is carried forward by people willing to carry it well. Between the networking sessions, entertainment, red carpet moments, and awards, the event functioned as both celebration and calibration.

Mrs. Debby Benson, founder of Miss Edo International, framed the platform without ornament:

"This is where a nobody becomes a somebody. Not by chance, but by design."

She spoke of mentorship sessions

that dismantled fear and replaced it with competence. Of contestants who returned to their communities to lead literacy drives, skill workshops, and health outreaches—turning stage training into civic action. Her message to the girls was direct and uncompromising:

"Eliminate fear. Use this opportunity. Use the next one. Use every one. Become leaders, not just queens."

Beyond the Crown is not a theme for 2026. It is a record. Five years of proving that when young Edo women are given structure, mentorship, and the expectation to lead, they do.

Entertainment

— with Davidson Imosime Izegaegbe —

VISITING HOURS

DAVIDSON IMOSIME IZEGAEGBE

The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." John Milton.

We grew up as humans from childhood on the efficacy of spirituality. This has subconsciously become a compass by which the mundane and the spiritual roadmap distances are measured. Again, how would it feel, if we realized that we can be opportuned to have visiting hours, or just an hour, with our loved deceased relatives or friends?

The concept is as intoxicating as it is terrifying. It is the ultimate "what if," a bridge built of longing and impossible physics. If such an hour existed, would it be a sanctuary of healing, or would it simply be the cruelest form of a second goodbye or grief? The film VISITING HOUR, as directed by a medical doctor cum filmmaker, Dr Osaigbovo Eriamiantoe, is a psychological and psychiatric therapeutic experience through the film lenses on a simple knock on the connecting door between the living and the dead. Who says it is not possible?

Perhaps the shifting lines between the living and the dead is the secret utility of the hour. We all know how it is, the first time someone dies; we are often too traumatized to say a proper goodbye. We are either in unreasonable shock, or we are focused on the failed machinery of the hospital, or we are drowning in the logistics of a funeral and self guilt. The movie, Visiting Hour offers a clean attempt at our saying a proper goodbye. It is a departure handled with full consciousness and intentionality.

We have read books and seen movies in cinemas where people cry over dead relatives, friends wishing they could rise from their coffins during burial ceremonies. If this truly happens, would this encounter not immediately strip away the trivialities of our daily lives? If the clock ticks loudly, would the air of silence not likely be thick enough with the weight of things better not said?

For many, the first few minutes of the journey from the living to a place for such a reunion, as seen in the movie, would be consumed by the sheer sensory shock of such a moment. The specific pitch of laughter, the manner of adjusting eyeglasses, and the minds to preserve and portray the impressionistic blurs, to see details rendered seamlessly in high-definition once more before the viewers, would be an overwhelming cognitive overload. In this movie, 'Visiting Hours', the dead are not just mere ghosts or memories; they are participants in communication. They are there to listen, observe, speak, and perhaps most importantly, witness who we have become in their absence.

This film made us realize that most people carry a case file of ledger of regrets following deaths of loved ones. We found ourselves haunted by the "I love you" that were swallowed by time and pride, the apologies that were delayed by the drumbeat of procrastination until the hospital room was silenced. Visiting Hours would ultimately serve as a celestial courtroom for these unresolved debts within us as



human beings. The film which saw a man lucky enough to realize, after his wife's death, that he now had to create time for their only child from the time he never had. Would you use your visiting hour to seek absolution or question the reality of such?

However, there is a secondary, perhaps more beautiful, use for this time: the reporting of sad griefs like, telling fathers about the birth of their child and the death of their wives who left them without a goodbye or never hearing the voice of dead parents anymore from postponed phone calls. We often think of mourning as a process of looking backward, which most times transcends grief to what a one-hour visit to the dead would do to

allow us say our goodbyes properly to enable us turn a static memory into a dynamic relationship, even if only for the duration of a lunch break.

Psychologically, the existence of Visiting Hours as narrated by the storyteller would fundamentally alter the way we live and view life. But again, as humans, if we knew we had a guaranteed hour of contact after death, would we be more devoted or careless with our relationships in the present? Or would the knowledge of that strict, one hour visiting moment make us more intentional?

There is a psychological phenomenon known as complicated grief, or as put by a psychiatrist consultant-pathological grieving- where a person

becomes stuck in a cycle of longing which then prevents such persons from moving forward. Would these people not grab the opportunity of a one-hour visit to their lost ones if given the opportunity? However, it could be a dangerous trap to be able to see loved ones again, to feel the warmth of their hands and hear the clarity of their voices, only to have them snatched away again when the buzzer sounds. Will this not restart the grieving processes from day one again and even worse. Or you do not think so? What if for a visiting hour, one loses a year from one's life; do you not think many grieving persons would rather waste their lives on earth visiting their lost ones till they exhaust their years

and join their departed loved ones?

The cruelty of the hour is in its brevity as it's like a flash in the pan as expressed by the actors played by Seun Kentebe and Angela Edosa. As the end of the visiting hour hits, the desperation and scramble for meaning set in, the clock then ticking faster than the heartbeats as the dead leaves, thereby turning a moment's joy to a stark reminder that the dead are truly gone. Take for instance, the digital age which has already given us a pale imitation of this visiting hour. Imagine the voicemails saved in your phone cloud drives, videos on your social media handles, even your external hard drives for storage that allow us to visit the "dead" in a one-sided loop. The missing link here is the interactive element of Visiting Hours which changes the soul of the experience. It moves from observation with these digital storages to conversation.

Philosophically, this movie ultimately raises questions in our worried minds about the nature of the afterlife itself. If these dead can come back for an hour to meet with the living, where are they, when not visiting, the rest of the time? Are they waiting in a lobby? Are they floating with only them watching us? The "Visiting Hour" is an attempt at imagination on how it can strip away the mystery of the Great Unknown and replace it with a scheduled appointment. For some, this would be a comfort; for the spiritually inclined, it might feel like a sacrilegious reduction of a divine mystery into a calendar event, but is it?

One great thing about the movie is the great realization of how ephemeral life is. In the movie, we notice that as the hour wanes, the tone of the conversation inevitably shifts. The apologies have been made, the news has been shared, and the shock has worn off temporarily. Did you envisage how the final ten minutes before the end of the visiting hour would look like? This is the space for the last Instructions like, "How do I keep going?" "What should I do now all alone with our plans and promises?" "Are you okay without me?" Truly, the "Visiting Hour" is, in many ways, a mirror before us. We are not just visiting the dead; we are visiting the part of ourselves that died with them. Do note, as revealed by the movie, when the visiting hour expires, the dead silence returns. This is the reality of a second parting that creates a unique form of agony, unlike the first death, which is often chaotic, unexpected, or shrouded in the fog of illness and others. No matter what, the end of the Visiting Hour, if as imagined, may be a cold, calculated deadline for self actualisation.

If truly visiting hours with lost ones were real, our world would be a more melancholic place, as we would walk around with a rueful smile knowing that the people we see in around us are all carrying a date in their pocket, a future appointment with a ghost. Again visiting hours is cool but we cannot have it as the laws of physics suggest. Perhaps the exercise of imagining as posited by the film is enough. It reminds us that while we cannot yet visit the dead, we are star

INTERVIEW

The decline of indigenous languages among Nigerian youths

RACHEAL ESEOSE OMIJIE

Since ages past, the concept of tradition has been passed down from one generation to another, with the view that it must preserve the culture, lifestyle of our ancient African forefathers. Before this current generation, this culture and life had been embedded into everyday life and passed down like a generational pattern expected of every parent to fulfill by teaching their children the ways of their fathers. An endless cycle, a structured pattern of preserving culture and tradition.

There is now a new generation, a generation where everything seems seamless and easy, but there is an issue, an issue that slowly kills this ancient tradition. The children of this generation are not being taught what we were taught, what our parents were taught, and this makes us understand that slowly our long-preserved culture, tradition, and lifestyle are going into extinction. This is not caused by any other person except us parents, guardians, and the roles we play in the lives of the younger generation.

The fact that we were colonized by the whites does not mean our culture and tradition should go into extinction. This is not what our fathers wanted, not what our mothers would choose. In Nigeria, one of the major cultural elements slowly dying in our country is language, our mother tongue, the way we speak, and the way we communicate are disappearing, and we do not even seem to notice. I asked a younger Nigerian why she does not speak her native language, and she said, "She was never taught." This and many more are issues which cause a great decline in our mother tongue. Several of them include:

English being a symbol of intelligence and class. Many people associate fluent English with education, sophistication, exposure, and social status. When an individual walks into a place and speaks fluent English, it is often seen as proof of intelligence. Many Nigerians assume that a person who speaks polished English is educated and intelligent, while people who speak their native language are sometimes viewed as local and unexposed. Even though colonialism officially ended, it left a long-lasting effect because English remains dominant in schools, offices, and government institutions, and this affects how many Nigerians view language today.

Speaking English in public spaces is associated with being civilized, elite, and wealthy. Even private schools emphasize English heavily. The native languages are most times treated as inferior. In most schools, native languages are treated as secondary subjects. Most young people even feel that foreign languages are more respectable than African languages. There is an ideology in Nigeria that speaking English guarantees better opportunities, but we forget that language is not only communication; it



MAMA PUT FOOD

carries history, values, memories, and proverbs. Due to the superiority given to English, our mother tongue is slowly dying. Funny enough, the irony of this is quite glaring because many foreigners proudly preserve their languages. For example, Chinese people speak Mandarin, French people speak French, Koreans speak Korean, and even Indians speak their languages, yet with this many young people easily abandon their mother tongue for what we claim is greener pasture.

Another major point is shame and fear of being seen as local. Some people avoid speaking their language in public. Native accents are mocked in schools and online, and this creates fear of appearing unexposed or uncivilized. Worst of all, peer pressure encourages people to "sound foreign." In this day and age, for many people, losing their mother tongue is more acceptable than not being able to speak English, and this has quietly become part of trying to fit into modern society.

Social media and Western influence:

This has become a major force shaping how many young Nigerians think, speak, dress, behave, and even define identity. For many young people today, social media has gone beyond being a communication tool to becoming a cultural environment that constantly influences their daily lives. Young Nigerians consume more foreign content than local cultural content. Many youths spend hours daily on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, and on these apps the most trending content comes from Western culture. Young people are constantly exposed to foreign accents, slang, fashion, music, humor, and lifestyle. Over time, these exposures begin to shape their preferences and behavior. Most viral content is created in English, while indigenous languages are used less frequently except for comedy or stereotypes. This shows that English dominates digital conversations. Social media even creates pressure to fit global standards. Foreign accents sometimes

receive more admiration than authentic local identity. Many youths change their speech and behavior in order to appear more internationally acceptable. Let us not forget how Western entertainment strongly influences identity and how the internet has changed communication patterns.

Traditional greetings are disappearing, face-to-face storytelling and oral traditions are reducing, and global culture now moves faster than traditional culture. Before, culture was transferred through family and communities. Today, algorithms and trends now influence culture. Culture rarely disappears suddenly; it fades slowly through language loss, limited use of cultural practices, and generational disconnect. Social media greatly accelerates this process because it exposes youths to non-stop external influences daily.

Urbanization and mixed cultural environments in cities like Lagos make society highly multicultural. Young people grow up around different tribes and choose English as a neutral language. Sometimes intertribal marriage results in English becoming the household language, and in other cases many Nigerian youths understand their language but cannot speak it fluently. All these and many more causes a decline in language culture.

Our grandparents often passed culture through stories and proverbs, but now technology has replaced many family conversations. Traditional moonlight tales are now disappearing, ancient proverbs and folktales are now fading. Language carries memory, wisdom, and history, and when language fades, culture fades with it.

There are cultural, family, and social consequences to losing native languages, which include:

Communication gap with elders: In many African homes today, grandchildren and grandparents struggle to share meaningful conversations due to language barriers.

Reduced connection to ancestry: Young people know less about their culture and family history.

Indigenous languages may slowly disappear: This is a serious issue because some Nigerian languages already have fewer people speaking them, and due to urbanization and modernization, the use of language reduces. The younger generation may understand the language but not speak it fluently. Due to this, some languages become endangered.

Loss of literature and oral history: Traditional stories may no longer be understood. Proverbs and indigenous wisdom will fade away, and oral history passed down through generations becomes difficult to preserve.

Loss of cultural diversity: Nigeria is rich due to its cultural diversity, and losing languages reduces cultural uniqueness.

So we raise the question: can indigenous languages be revived? Can parents start speaking native languages at home? Can schools take indigenous languages and cultural studies seriously? Can youths stop seeing their native identity as backward?

Because if this continues without stopping, there might be no heritage left to pass down to the next generation.

Traditional greetings are disappearing, face-to-face storytelling and oral traditions are reducing, and global culture now moves faster than traditional culture. Before, culture was

Foreign

NEWS

**DESTROYED BUILDING:**

Russian strikes destroyed several buildings in the Ukrainian capital on Saturday.

Deal with US not imminent, Iran says

Iran says some progress has been reached in talks with the US, but a deal "is not imminent".

Foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqai's remarks came after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said an agreement could possibly be reached on Monday.

"It is correct to say that we have reached a conclusion on a large portion of the issues under discussion," Baqai said in Tehran on Monday. "But to say that this means the signing of an agreement is imminent - no-one can make such a claim."

The memorandum of understanding reportedly involves a 60-day ceasefire extension, reopening the Strait of Hormuz and a plan for further negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme.

At the weekend, President Donald Trump suggested the sides were closing a deal, even though he later said he had instructed negotiators "not to rush into" one.

On Monday, Rubio told reporters in the Indian capital, Delhi: "We thought we might have some news last night. Maybe today."

Cautioning "I wouldn't read too much into it", Rubio said: "It takes a little while to hear back from Iran."

CBS News, the BBC's US partner, has reported that US intelligence believes Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khomeini - who was injured in an Israeli strike on the first day of the war which killed his father and predecessor - is holed up in an undisclosed location, making communication with his envoys difficult and therefore delaying pace of talks with the US.

According to US media, the mooted deal is not a final settlement - instead it leaves some of the thorniest issues to be negotiated later, including the scope and timing of Iranian sanctions relief, the release of frozen Iranian funds, and Washington's demands for Iran

to curb its nuclear ambitions.

"So we have, what I think is a pretty solid thing on the table in terms of their ability to open up the Straits," he said referring to the Strait of Hormuz - the crucial waterway where 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas passes and which Iran has been blocking.

Oil prices fell sharply and Asian stock markets rose on Monday on hopes of an agreement.

The reported deal has split Trump's Republicans, with some publicly arguing it is too lenient on Iran.

Senator Ted Cruz said it would be "a disastrous mistake", while Roger Wicker, who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee, said a 60-day ceasefire would mean "everything accomplished by Operation Epic Fury would be for naught!"

Senator Lindsey Graham, who is a close Trump ally, also criticised any deal that would

leave Iran perceived as being a dominant force in the region.

"It makes one wonder why the war started to begin with," he said.

Trump responded by dismissing his critics as "losers" and saying "the deal with Iran will either be a great and meaningful one, or there will be no deal".

Even in a best case scenario, the effects of a deal are unlikely to be seen right away.

It could be months before the shipping industry will be able to go back to supply chains that are "physically in the same shape as they were before the crisis", Lars Jensen, chief executive of Vespucci Maritime and former director of shipping company Maersk, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

Should a deal between Iran and the US be announced in the coming days, the industry would still remain "cautious and hesitant" to make any "major operational changes", Jensen explained.

Oil prices slide on hopes of US-Iran peace deal

Oil prices have fallen sharply on hopes of a deal that could bring an end to the US-Israel war with Iran.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said negotiators had a "pretty solid thing on the table" and an agreement to end the conflict might be reached on Monday.

On Monday morning, global oil benchmark Brent fell 5.5% to \$97.90 a barrel, and remained around \$97.70 a barrel in the afternoon.

US President Donald Trump said the negotiations were "proceeding nicely" but added it would either be "a great deal for all or no deal at all".

While Iran says progress has been made, a government spokesman added that a deal was "not imminent".

Trump had previously said the deal would include the reopening of the key Strait of Hormuz shipping route, without giving further details.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which around a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) usually passes, has been effectively closed since the conflict started on 28 February.

Earlier on Monday, Rubio said the talks were "still a work in progress."

"As I said, you know, we thought we might have some news last night," Rubio said in the Indian capital, Delhi.

His comments came after Trump said he had instructed negotiators "not to rush into a deal", after earlier suggesting one was close.

Speaking after Rubio's comments, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman, Esmail Baqai, said agreement has been reached on a "large portion of the issues under discussion".

"But to say that this means the signing of an agreement is imminent - no-one can make such a claim," he added.

On Saturday, Trump said that he had had a "very good call" with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emir-

ates, Qatar and others about a "Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to PEACE".

"An agreement has been largely negotiated, subject to finalisation between the United States of America, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the various other Countries, as listed," Trump said on social media.

"Final aspects and details of the deal are currently being discussed, and will be announced shortly."

He also said he had had a call on Saturday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which had gone "very well".

On Monday, Trump said in his discussions with the Gulf leaders and others, including the presidents of Turkey and Egypt, he pushed them to sign the Abraham Accords which are aimed at normalising relations with Israel.

Global energy markets have seen big price swings since early March after Iran threatened to attack ships trying to use the Strait of Hormuz in retaliation for US and Israeli attacks on the country.

While crude oil prices have fallen sharply, they remain significantly higher than before the war. In the lead-up to the conflict Brent was trading at around \$70 a barrel.

A ceasefire was agreed in early April, and since then Washington and Tehran have engaged in talks over a long-term peace deal.

"There is now some light at the end of the tunnel, which will bring some near term oil price relief," Saul Kavonic, head of energy research at MST Financial.

"But even in the most optimistic scenario from here, oil markets will remain tight through 2027 given the time required to normalise oil flows through the Strait, repair damaged oil facilities, and rebuild global oil stocks that have seen record depletion since the war began," he added.

Russia threatens more Kyiv strikes and tells foreign nationals to leave

Russia has threatened to launch a fresh wave of "systematic strikes" against Kyiv, days after carrying out one of its largest attacks on the Ukrainian capital since the start of the war.

The new strikes will target "decision-making centres and command posts", alongside drone manufacturing facilities in the city, Russia's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Moscow has called for foreign nationals and diplomats to leave Kyiv "as soon as possible" and warned citizens to stay away from administrative and military buildings.

Large-scale Russian strikes on Saturday night killed four and injured about 100 people in Kyiv and other areas,

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

Moscow said that barrage and threatened further strikes were in response to what it claims was a deliberate Ukrainian attack on a student dormitory in the town of Starobilsk on Friday, in which Russian officials said 21 people were killed.

Ukraine's military said its forces had struck an elite Russian military drone unit in the area, in Russian-occupied eastern Ukraine, and had not targeted civilians.

Rosenberg: Luhansk strike sparks Russian accusations and vow to retaliate

Russia has launched several waves of deadly missile and drone attacks on Kyiv since a brief ceasefire, that coincided with Moscow's

annual Victory Day parade, expired earlier in May.

Shortly after that, Russian strikes on Kyiv killed 24 people, including three children, in a block of flats.

Days later, Russian officials said three people were killed in a large-scale Ukrainian drone attack on the Moscow region, with Zelensky saying the strikes were an "entirely justified" response to deadly Russian attacks.

Kyiv then suffered one of the biggest aerial assaults of the war overnight on Saturday.

Videos posted on social media showed explosions lighting up the sky throughout the night, and many Kyiv residents reported blasts rocking the city as numerous civilian targets were hit.

White House gunman had previous run-ins with Secret Service, court documents show

The suspect who fired shots outside the White House, striking a bystander before the Secret Service shot and killed him, had previous run-ins with authorities there, court documents show.

Nasire Best, as he has been identified to the BBC by Washington DC's Metropolitan Police Department, previously obstructed a White House entry lane in June of 2025 and told Secret Service agents he was Jesus Christ.

He was sent for a mental evaluation after that incident.

Best is accused of firing shots outside the president's home just after 18:00 EST (23:00 GMT) on Saturday - reporters filming outside ducked and ran for cover inside. US

President Donald Trump was at the White House but was unharmed.

Court documents show that during a June 2025 incident with the Secret Service, Best, of Dundalk, Maryland, told agents he wanted to be arrested.

Despite having a mental evaluation, a month later in July, he again tried to access the White House.

Best was arrested by Secret Service agents after that second incident and charged with unlawfully entering a federally controlled property, according to court records.

He was released after being arraigned on the unlawful entry charge, but in August of 2025, he failed to appear for a status hearing, the documents

show. That led to a no-bond bench warrant, allowing law enforcement to arrest him.

Then on Saturday, less than a year later, he reappeared outside the White House and began firing at a Secret Service checkpoint at the intersection of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, near the Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Secret Service officers posted on the corner returned fire, striking the gunman. Best was taken to hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

A bystander was also wounded in the shooting, but the Secret Service did not give further details on their condition. No officers were injured in the attack.

NEWS**Foreign****Pakistan Bombing: 23 killed near railway station**

At least 23 people were killed and dozens injured in a bomb attack near a railway station in southwest Pakistan Saturday, officials confirmed. The blast targeted civilians waiting for a train in Balochistan province.

Separatist militants from the Baloch Liberation Army claimed responsibility, saying the attack was aimed at "state infrastructure and security forces." The group has intensified attacks in recent months, demanding greater autonomy and control over local resources.

Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif condemned the bombing as "cowardly" and ordered a full investigation. Security forces have launched operations in surrounding areas. Hospitals in Quetta declared an emergency to treat the wounded.

The attack is one of Pakistan's deadliest this year. Balochistan has long faced insurgency, and analysts say economic hardship and perceived neglect have fueled recruitment by separatist groups.

The UN called for protection of civilians and urged dialogue to end the cycle of violence.

Iran-US Tensions: Tehran says no Peace Deal 'On The Table'

Iranian officials stated Sunday that an imminent peace deal with the United States is "not currently on the table," contradicting earlier remarks by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

Rubio had told reporters in New Delhi that a breakthrough to end the three-month US-Iran war could come "maybe today," citing progress on Iran's nuclear stockpile and the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said talks remain "complex" and that Washington must first lift

sanctions and recognize Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy. Tehran also rejected U.S. demands to hand over its highly enriched uranium stockpile.

The standoff has kept the Strait of Hormuz closed, removing 14 million barrels of oil daily from the market and pushing Brent crude to \$103.54. The IEA warned of a "red zone" this summer if the blockade continues.

Negotiations mediated by Qatar continue, but both sides remain far apart on core issues.

Ukraine civilian casualties rise 21% as attacks intensify

Civilian deaths in Ukraine have jumped 21% in the first four months of 2026, the UN Refugee Agency reported Friday.

UNHCR said at least 815 civilians were killed and 4,174 injured between January and April. The rise reflects escalating Russian missile and drone strikes on cities and infrastructure.

"Attacks this week hit Sumy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Odesa and Dnipro," UNHCR representative Bernadette Castel-Hollingsworth told reporters in Geneva.

"We are seeing more people forced to flee their homes."

On May 20, a Russian missile struck a UNHCR-leased warehouse in Dnipro, killing two and destroying \$1 million in aid. It was the first direct attack on a UNHCR facility since the 2022 invasion began.

Nearly 47,000 evacuees have passed through UNHCR transit centers since January. The actual number displaced is believed to be higher. Two clearly marked UN aid convoys were hit by drones near frontline areas last week.

Russia-Ukraine conflict: Ballistic Missile strikes Kyiv, 4 killed

Russia launched a powerful ballistic missile in a mass attack on Kyiv overnight, killing at least four people and injuring several others, Ukrainian officials said Monday. The strike hit residential areas, damaging apartment blocks and power infrastructure. Emergency teams worked through the night to pull survivors from rubble.

The attack comes as fighting intensifies across eastern and southern fronts. Kyiv's air defense systems intercepted some drones, but the missile penetrated defenses.

Following the strike, Russian authorities reportedly advised foreign nationals in Russia to leave the country,

citing "heightened security risks." The advisory has raised alarm among diplomats and expatriates.

UN Secretary-General

António Guterres condemned the attack, calling it a "violation of international law." Ukraine's President Zelenskyy said Russia is escalating ahead

of peace talks. Civilian casualties in Ukraine have risen 21% since January, according to UN data.

FIFA World Cup 2026: Iran moves base to Mexico amid tensions

FIFA has approved Iran's request to relocate its 2026 World Cup team base from the United States to Mexico, citing ongoing geopolitical tensions and visa delays.

Iran qualified for the tournament and is scheduled to play group games in Miami, Dallas, and Los Angeles. But the U.S.-Iran conflict has com-

plicated travel for players, officials, and fans. Several visa applications were stalled, and security concerns were raised.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino said: "We must ensure all teams can prepare in safety and dignity. Mexico offered a viable alternative." Iran will now base itself in Mexico City and travel to U.S. venues for matches.

The decision follows FIFA's earlier confirmation that Iran will participate despite the war. U.S. authorities have pledged to treat the team like any other qualified nation.

For Iranian players, the move eases logistics. For FIFA, it tests its ability to keep politics out of football ahead of the expanded 48-team tournament.



BALLISTIC MISSILE STRIKES:

A view of damage and destruction after Russia targeted the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv with a series of ballistic missile strikes on Sunday, May 24, 2026. Photo by: Arif Murat Kayacan/Anadolu via Getty Images

Everest Record: 274 climbers reach summit in single Day

A new mountaineering record was set Saturday as 274 climbers successfully scaled the south side of Mount Everest in a single day, Nepalese officials confirmed.

The mass ascent was made possible by a rare weather window and improved rope-fixing

by Sherpa teams. Climbers from 32 countries, including guides and support staff, reached the 8,849-meter summit between 5:00am and 2:00pm.

The previous record was 198 summits in one day, set in 2019. Officials say better weather forecasting and commercial

expedition management have made large-scale climbs safer, though risks remain.

Environmentalists raised concerns about overcrowding and waste on the mountain. "Everest is not a race track," said Pasang Sherpa, head of the Nepal Mountaineering

Association. "We need stricter quotas."

The Nepal government earned record permit fees this season. For climbers, it was a historic day. For Everest, it raises fresh questions about sustainability and safety on the world's highest peak.

New Fed Chair Kevin Warsh sworn in amid oil uncertainty

Kevin Warsh was sworn in Friday as Chair of the US Federal Reserve, ending months of speculation over the central bank's direction.

Warsh, 55, former Fed governor and Stanford economist, was confirmed 54-46 in the Senate after nomination by President Donald Trump. He replaces Jerome Powell.

At the ceremony, Trump said he expects Warsh to "maintain the Fed's independ-

ence" while lowering interest rates to support growth. "We need a strong economy," Trump said.

Warsh struck a cautious tone: "My duty is to the American people and to price stability. We will make decisions based on data, not politics."

Markets reacted positively. The Dow posted a record high Friday. Investors expect a 0.25% rate cut at the June meeting.

Warsh takes office as the US faces slowing growth, a \$35 trillion national debt, and oil uncertainty due to the Iran conflict. Brent crude is \$103.54 after Iran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz removed 14 million barrels daily from the market.

Economists will watch Warsh's stance on inflation, which fell to 2.8% in April but remains above the Fed's 2% target. He has criticized

excessive money printing but backed targeted COVID stimulus.

Democrats expressed concern about Fed independence. Senator Elizabeth Warren said Congress will "hold the Fed accountable."

For Americans, Fed decisions affect mortgages, credit cards, and jobs. Warsh said his first priority is a review of the Fed's balance sheet and communication strategy.

**OGIUGO PROGENY**

(OGIUGO DESCENDANTS) "AGBUGO EHAN (SIX CLANS)"

At a meeting of the said family above, held on the 10th of May 2026, the following resolutions were taken in respect of the Estate of **LATE ENGR. CHIEF G.O. AIWERIOBA OGIUGO** of No. 39, Ihama Road, G.R.A. Benin City, Edo State, at multiple family meetings spanning a period of three years, wherein **Mr. EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA** has consistently refused to honour the family invitation.

1. That caveat is hereby issued to the General Public that nobody should deal with the Properties of the said **LATE ENGR. CHIEF G.O. AIWERIOBA OGIUGO** and anyone who has anything to do with the Estate does so at his or her own risk.
2. That the long-standing issue surrounding the paternity of **MR. EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA**, not being the biological son of the said family, has now been resolved and pronounced by the family to wit; that **MR. EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA** is not the biological son of our brother, having been severely deliberated, invited, and refused to honour the family meeting to prove that he is the son of our late brother, including making himself open to a DNA test.
3. That the said **MR. EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA** having not participated in, or played any role in the burial of the said **LATE ENGR. CHIEF G.O. AIWERIOBA OGIUGO** is not recognized by the said family as the son of our said Late brother.
4. That the said **MR. EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA** should immediately vacate their said Late brother's house known as the Igiogbe which he is presently, forcefully occupying at the moment at No. 39 Ihama Street, G.R.A., Benin City.
5. And the said **EDOBOR CHARLES AIWERIOBA** is hereby given two (2) weeks to submit himself to a proper DNA test by the Family.
6. All authorities concerned; the Police Force, DSS and other Security Agencies, including the revered Palace of the Oba of Benin should please take notice of this family resolution for record purpose.

Signed:

By **OKAIGBE** and All Elders of the Ogiugo Family.

Feature

Protecting and empowering the Nigerian girl child in 2026

GRACE IJEOMA UMEH

Anchored on Women, Peace & Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace & Security (YPS) Principles

“Deceptive Lingua: The Sweet Words Stealing Our Girls’ Future

A TRAP IN SUGAR COATING

Across secondary schools in Nigeria today, a quiet crisis is unfolding. It does not come with guns or loud arguments. It comes with smiles, compliments, and words that sound like poetry. We call it *Deceptive Lingua* — the art of using sweet, lying words to manipulate young girls into decisions they regret later.

As a Guidance Counsellor who has sat with hundreds of senior girls, I can tell you this: the damage is real. Teen pregnancy, school dropout, depression, and lost opportunities all trace back to a moment when a girl believed a “sweet word” that was never true.

WPS/YPS Anchor: This is why the UN *Women, Peace and Security* and *Youth, Peace and Security* agendas matter. WPS calls for protecting

women and girls from violence and exploitation. YPS recognizes young people as agents of peace and change. When we teach girls to decode manipulation, we are actively implementing both principles — protecting them and empowering them to lead.

TEACH THE LANGUAGE OF TRUTH

Deceptive Lingua will not disappear. But informed girls will. Your future is too expensive to be bought with empty words. Through WPS protection and YPS participation, we build a generation of girls who are safe, heard, and powerful.

“Beyond Books: Why Skill Acquisition is the New Power for Nigerian Girls”

WHEN EDUCATION MEETS EMPOWERMENT

At the close of our *Deceptive Lingua* workshop at Little Star Academy, over 30 senior girls lined up to write their names for a skill acquisition workshop. Nigerian girls are tired of being told what not to do. They want to be shown what they *can* do.

Books alone are not enough. Skill acquisition is no longer “extra.” It is power. It is protection. It is peace.

WPS/YPS Anchor: Skill acquisition is practical WPS in action. Economic empowerment reduces girls’ vulnerability to exploitation, trafficking, and harmful relationships. It is also core YPS — when young people are productively engaged, they become peacebuilders in their families and communities. A skilled girl is not just surviving; she is leading.

BUILD HER, DON’T JUST WARN HER

A girl with a skill has options. She has confidence. She has a future she controls. The 30+ girls at Little Star Academy are not waiting for “somebody.” Through WPS economic empowerment and YPS leadership, they are becoming somebody.

“Parents as First Counselors: How to Raise a Daughter Who Can Say No”

THE HOME IS THE FIRST CLASSROOM

During our workshop, an SS2 girl said: “Ma, I told my mum about a boy,

and she shouted at me. So I stopped talking.” Her silence cost her 3 months of fear and bad decisions. Parents are the first counselors.

WPS/YPS Anchor: WPS teaches us that protection starts at home. A safe family environment is the first line of defense for girls. YPS reminds us that girls must be engaged, not silenced. When parents listen and guide, they are raising daughters who can participate confidently in school, community, and peacebuilding. The home becomes the training ground for WPS and YPS values.

YOUR VOICE IS HER SHIELD

A boy will whisper “You’re special.” But if you have whispered it louder and longer at home, she will not fall. The girl who can say “No” at home will never have to say “Help me” on the street. That is WPS protection and YPS participation lived out daily.

“From Silence to Strength: Building Peer Support Clubs for Girls in Schools”

GIRLS NEED GIRLS

An SS3 girl asked: “Ma, I now know

what to do. But who will remind me on Monday?” Knowledge without community dies fast. The answer is *Peer Support Clubs*.*

WPS/YPS Anchor: Peer Support Clubs are the clearest expression of YPS. The UN YPS Agenda demands that young people are included in decision-making, leadership, and peace efforts. These clubs give girls that platform. They also fulfill WPS by creating safe spaces where girls protect each other from abuse, bullying, and Deceptive Lingua. When girls mentor girls, we see WPS and YPS working together.

FROM INDIVIDUAL GIRLS TO A MOVEMENT

One girl saying “No” is powerful. Thirty girls saying “No” together is a revolution. Our girls at Little Star Academy now say “Ma, my Big Sister reminded me.” That is strength. That is WPS protection and YPS leadership in motion.

Framework: Aligned with UN Women, Peace & Security (WPS) Resolution 1325 and Youth, Peace & Security (YPS) Agenda

Evbukhu Community applauds Senator Okpebholo’s infrastructure drive, seeks completion of Market Road

GRACE IJEOMA UMEH

Residents of Evbukhu Community in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State have expressed deep appreciation to the Governor of Edo State, His Excellency Senator Monday Okpebholo, for the ongoing construction of the Evbukhu Community Road.

The commendation was contained in an Open Letter of Appreciation signed by *Collins Otoide Ojemoron*, FICA, MCIPAN, MCIBN, ILMMD, MPA, Msc, MA, PhD – (in view), Secretary of the Market-Road Landlords Association, Evbukhu Community, and made available to newsmen on Tuesday.

ROAD WAS A NIGHTMARE, NOW IT’S A LANDMARK

According to the letter, the Evbukhu Community Road, located off Obe, off RCC Junction, Sapele Road, is a critical landmark connecting road that links Sapele Road through Evbukhu Community, Obe Community Old Road, Ohoghobi and Amagba communities.

Prior to the intervention of the Okpebholo administration, which commenced early 2025, the road and its environs were earth roads described as a “nightmare” for residents and commuters. The letter noted that many residents had sustained bone fractures from bike accidents due to the deplorable state of the road.

“With your rescue mission, at least up to 3,000 households have been lifted and liberated from the excruciating and harrowing experiences of the past months and years, and our communities have been opened up to vehicular and lively economic activities,” the letter stated.

FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE AREA SINCE EDO STATE CREATION

The community lauded the quality of the ongoing work, stating that the project is the first of its kind in the area since the creation of Edo State. The road, according to the letter, is being constructed from scratch with solid concrete reinforcements, thick rods, granite, drainages, excavation, and laterite refilling.

“We must commend the quality of the ongoing road work. We hail your commitment to durability and your taste for quality work,” the Secretary wrote. He added that Senator Okpeb-

holo’s developmental strides in road infrastructure and progressive leadership style are visible to Evbukhu Community, neighboring communities, and the entire state.

YOUR NAME IS WRITTEN IN GOLD

The Evbukhu people thanked the Governor for “coming to our rescue and for showing us that it is possible for a Government to feel the pulse of the people.”

“You are indeed a man of integrity and compassion. Your name is written in gold already in the hearts of the

children, youths, men, women, landlords/landladies, tenants, and elders of Evbukhu Community,” the letter read.

REQUEST FOR EVBUKHU MARKET ROAD

While appreciating the ongoing project, the community used the opportunity to appeal for the asphaltting of the popular Evbukhu Market Road. The road, described as about 200 meters long, is expected to serve as a major service road linking Evbukhu Community and Ohoghobi Community if completed with accompanying side drainages.

“We know that you are doing a lot already for our beloved State with the scarce resources at your disposal, for which we are eternally grateful. The popular Market Road... would be the icing on the cake for us in the community, as it would be of great benefit to all residents, market traders and other

commuters,” Ojemoron stated.

PRaise FOR “SHINE AGENDA

The community expressed gratitude to the Governor for “shining your SHINE Agenda torch on our communities and on Edo State at large,” noting that the gesture shows selfless leadership regardless of senatorial district or geographical location.

“We see your hand work, and most importantly, we see the Hand of God at work in you,” the letter concluded.

BACKGROUND

The Okpebholo administration has prioritized road infrastructure across Edo State since assuming office, with several ongoing projects aimed at opening up rural and peri-urban communities to economic activities. The Evbukhu Community Road project is one of the key interventions in Oredo LGA.



SENATOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO



COLLINS OTOIDE OJEMORON

Oba Market reconstruction as proof that promises can still be kept

DR. EBOJELE AKHERE PATRICK

Globally, citizens respond positively when leaders show up, listen, and follow through on commitments. The reason is that public trust is built not only through speeches by these leaders but also through visible action and responsiveness. That is the deeper message from the recent visit of Edo State Governor, Senator, Monday Okpebholo, to the reconstructed Oba Market in Benin City. Beyond the open display of excitement, the songs and the cheers from traders, the visit reflected something many Nigerians from the state are becoming unaccustomed to — the fulfillment of a promise.

For years, the story of Oba Market was one of pain, uncertainty, and disruption. Large sections of the market were destroyed by a fire that did more than destroy buildings and goods. It demoralised citizens, interrupted livelihoods, displaced traders, and created economic hardship for families that had depended on the market for generations. Many traders who once operated comfortably within the walls of the market were forced into temporary spaces, at the mercy of rain and sun, and even miscreants struggling to make a living daily with poor conditions.

When Governor Okpebholo promised to reconstruct the market, many traders had misgivings. Like many victims of public disasters, several of them feared the reconstruction might become another abandoned government promise. There are countless examples of markets, roads, and public facilities left incomplete years after official announcements and groundbreaking ceremonies. This has created deep skepticism among citizens who often hear political assurances but rarely witness full delivery.

That is why the reconstruction of Oba Market at record time carries significance beyond physical infrastructure. For the traders and business owners who gathered during Governor Okpebholo's inspection visit, the completed sections of the market represented proof that the government could still deliver on commitments.

One of the most important aspects of the Governor's visit was its tone and timing. According to the governor, he decided to inspect the market after seeing reports and complaints from traders who were worried about unfinished sections and the lack of adequate spaces for some displaced business owners. Rather than ignoring those concerns or relying solely on official briefings, he chose to visit personally and engage directly with those affected.

Citizens often judge leaders not only by the projects they complete but also by how they respond when problems arise. Public confidence grows when leaders demonstrate willingness to listen and take responsibility. By acknowledging the concerns of traders publicly and outlining immediate steps to address them, Governor Okpebholo projected an image of accessibility and responsiveness that many citizens desire from public office holders.

The Governor's assurance that traders operating outside the market would be accommodated within the completed sections also addressed one of the major anxieties surrounding the reconstruction. Markets are



OBA MARKET WOMAN

highly competitive environments where space determines visibility, customer access, and daily income. For displaced traders, uncertainty over allocation and relocation often creates tension and fear of exclusion.

Perhaps the most widely celebrated announcement during the visit was the Governor's statement that shops would be allocated free of charge to genuine traders and former occupants. In Nigeria's difficult economic environment, where inflation and business costs continue to rise, the removal of financial barriers to re-entry into the market was widely seen as a major relief.

For many small-scale traders, market stalls are not simply business spaces; they are the foundation of family survival. Daily earnings from petty trading support school fees, rent, feeding, and healthcare for thousands of households. Requiring heavy payments for shop allocation after years of displacement would have placed additional pressure on already struggling traders. By promising free allocation, the administration positioned the reconstruction not merely as a commercial project but as a social and economic intervention.

The quality and scale of the reconstructed market also became a major point of discussion during the inspection. Former State Deputy Governor

Dr Pius Odubu described the facility as comparable to modern markets seen internationally, including those in Dubai. While such comparisons may appear symbolic, they reflect an important issue in public infrastructure delivery — the expectation of quality.

As it were, many Nigerians have grown accustomed to poorly executing public projects that deteriorate shortly after completion. Markets in several states continue to suffer from overcrowding, weak structural standards, inadequate drainage, and poor fire safety systems. As a result, traders often work under unsafe and uncomfortable conditions.

The Oba Market reconstruction will change that narrative. Modern stalls, improved organisation, better protection from environmental conditions, and enhanced trading spaces all suggest an effort to create a more sustainable commercial environment. Beyond aesthetics, these improvements have practical implications for economic productivity and public safety.

Former Deputy Governor Lucky Imasuen also highlighted the importance of creating a safer and more comfortable environment for traders. His remarks reflected a broader understanding that infrastructure is not only about physical structures but also about the dignity of citizens who use them.

In many ways, markets represent the heartbeat of urban economic life in Nigeria. They are centres of commerce, employment, and social interaction. When markets function effectively, local economies become more stable. When they decline, the effects are felt immediately by ordinary citizens.

This is particularly important in a state like Edo, where trading remains one of the major sources of livelihood for thousands of residents. Supporting market infrastructure, therefore, goes beyond beautification; it is an investment in economic resilience and social stability.

Another notable aspect of the Oba Market inspection was the visible support expressed by political figures from different administrations and backgrounds. Alongside Governor Okpebholo besides two former Deputy Governors Pius Odubu and Lucky Imasuen was former Senator Mathew Urhoghide and other political leaders.

In Nigeria's political environment, where public projects are often viewed through partisan lenses, such open commendation from former office holders is significant. It suggests that the impact of the reconstruction was visible enough to transcend political divisions.

Mathew Urhoghide's comments during the visit also reflected the emotional importance of the project. He described

the reconstruction as a restoration of pride and life to Oba Market. That observation captures an often overlooked dimension of public infrastructure — its psychological and social value.

For traders who lost shops, goods, and business opportunities after the fire incident, the rebuilding process was about more than returning to commerce. It was about regaining stability, identity, and confidence in the future. Markets are deeply woven into the social fabric of communities. Families build reputations, relationships, and livelihoods around them over decades.

When those spaces are destroyed, the impact extends far beyond economics. Communities lose gathering spaces, long-standing customer relationships are disrupted, and families experience emotional and financial trauma. Restoring such spaces therefore carries symbolic importance. It tells affected citizens that their struggles have not been forgotten.

The Oba Market reconstruction also reflects the broader infrastructure focus of the administration's SHINE agenda, which places emphasis on visible and measurable development. Roads, healthcare facilities, schools, transportation systems, and public markets are all areas where citizens can directly assess government performance.

Unlike abstract policy debates, infrastructure projects are tangible. Citizens can see them, use them, and judge whether they improve daily life. This creates a stronger connection between governance and accountability because completed projects become visible evidence of public expenditure.

However, the true test of governance is not simply the commissioning of projects but consistency in delivery and maintenance. The positive response from traders during the Governor's visit reflected hope that the administration will sustain this approach beyond Oba Market.

Ultimately, the significance of the reconstruction lies in the restoration of confidence between government and citizens. In many parts of Nigeria, public trust has been weakened by years of abandoned projects, delayed interventions, and unmet promises. Citizens have become cautious about political declarations because experience has often taught them to expect disappointment.

That is why the atmosphere at Oba Market mattered. The celebration was not merely about new buildings or improved stalls. It was about the feeling that the government had remembered the people affected by the disaster and acted on their behalf.

The Oba Market story, therefore, stands as more than an infrastructure project. It is a reminder that governance is ultimately about responsiveness, credibility, and trust. Citizens may appreciate speeches and political promises, but they place greater value on leaders who respond when called upon and complete what they begin.

For traders at the Oba Market, the reconstruction represented exactly that — proof that promises can still become reality.

• *Dr. Ebojele is the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo*

FEATURE

Silence at the polls: Why Nigerians must reject political apathy in 2027

EJEMOGO REBECCA ANWURI

Emma! Come over here!"

"Yes, Sir."

"How much did you buy this bread?"

"One thousand naira, Daddy."

Mr. Chinedu's eyes widened. "One thousand naira? For this small, flat thing? You have been cheated!"

"The price has increased, Daddy. I didn't cheat you."

"My God! This same bread was eight hundred naira just last week. This bad government is killing us!"

A voice came from behind the window. "They are not killing you, Mr. Chinedu. You are the one paying for your own choices."*

Mr. Chinedu turned sharply. "What do you mean, Daddy Amina?"

"You didn't vote in the 2023 election, abi?"

"No. How is that my business?"

Daddy Amina laughed softly. "Exactly. That is why the government also thinks your suffering is none of their business."

Mr. Chinedu's story is the story of millions of Nigerians. We shout at the price of bread, fuel, and school fees. We curse bad roads, insecurity, and corruption. Yet many of us were absent on election day. We complain loudest where we are silent most: at the polls.

If Nigeria must change in 2027, we must first reject political apathy. Silence at the ballot is not neutrality. It is surrender.

WHAT IS POLITICAL APATHY?

Political apathy is the deliberate lack of interest in politics and civic duties. It shows up as:

1. Refusing to register for a voter's card.
2. Registering but not voting.
3. Voting but selling your vote.
4. Discussing politics only to complain, never to act.

It is not ignorance alone. It is withdrawal. And withdrawal has consequences.

THE 2023 WARNING: OUR SILENCE IS LOUD

INEC data from the 2023 presidential and National Assembly elections tells a painful truth. Nigeria had 93.47 million registered voters. Only 24.9 million voted. That is 26.72% turnout — the lowest since 1999.

Out of 87 million PVCs collected, 63 million Nigerians stayed home. More people stayed silent than voted.

This means 3 out of 4 registered Nigerians handed power to 1 out of 4. We cannot then be shocked when policies don't reflect our pain. We were not in the room when decisions were made.

Worse, many PVCs now serve as ID cards, bank verification tools, or travel documents. The sacred purpose — choosing leaders — has been reduced to bureaucracy. That is political apathy in action.

WHY DO NIGERIANS STAY SILENT AT THE POLLS?

We must be honest about the causes before we prescribe solutions.

1. Disappointment and Trauma



DAYO SOBOWALE

from Past Leaders

Many Nigerians voted with hope in 1999, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019. They saw promises broken. Roads abandoned. Jobs missing. "If all politicians are the same, why should I waste my time?" they ask.

Pain is real. But using yesterday's betrayal to justify today's silence only guarantees tomorrow's suffering. Corrupt politicians count on your disappointment to win unopposed.

2. Fear of Electoral Violence and Insecurity

From ballot box snatching in Rivers to voter intimidation in Lagos, from thuggery in Kano to attacks in the Southeast, many citizens choose life over voting. INEC recorded over 240 incidents of electoral violence in 2023.

No one should die casting a vote. But if good people stay home, violence wins by default. Democracy is then handed to the violent and the desperate.

3. "My Vote Doesn't Count" Syndrome

This is the most dangerous myth. In 2019, the margin between the winner and runner-up in Osun governorship election was 482 votes. In 2023, several House of Assembly seats were decided by less than 100 votes.

Your vote is not water in a basket. It is a brick. Enough bricks build a house. Enough votes build a government. When you stay home, you don't protest the system — you empower it.

4. Vote Buying and "Business as Usual" Politics

When a politician offers N2,000 for your vote, he is telling you your conscience is cheap. Many Nigerians accept it and then complain for 4 years.

Vote buying thrives because we treat elections as transactions, not re-

sponsibility. If we reject the money, we reject the cycle.

5. Civic Illiteracy

Many citizens don't know what local government chairmen, House of Assembly members, or senators actually do. They don't know that LGs control primary healthcare and basic education. So they say "Abuja is the problem" while ignoring elections that affect their street, market, and school.

Apathy grows where knowledge is absent.

THE COST OF SILENCE: WHAT WE LOSE IN 2027 IF WE DON'T ACT

1. Economic Pain Continues: Policies on fuel subsidy, FX, taxation, and agriculture are decided by elected officials. If we don't choose them, we don't shape them. Bread will not reduce from N1,000 by miracle.

2. Insecurity Persists*: Governors, LG chairmen, and lawmakers control security votes, community policing, and local intelligence. Silence elects leaders who don't prioritize safety.

3. Youth Future is Mortgaged: With 60% of Nigeria under 30, youth unemployment, ASUU strikes, and "japa" crisis are political issues. When youths are apathetic, elders decide their future.

4. Accountability Dies: A government elected by 25% of voters feels no pressure to answer to the 75%. Low turnout is a license for impunity.

5. Women and Marginalized Groups Suffer More: WPS — Women, Peace and Security — principles remind us that when women withdraw from politics, their safety, education, and economic rights are negotiated without them. YPS — Youth, Peace and Security — says when youths are silent, conflict and extremism find recruits. Apathy is not neutral. It is

dangerous.

THE 2027 CHALLENGE: FROM COMPLAINTS TO PARTICIPATION

2027 is not just another election. It is a reset button. Nigeria will decide the direction of the economy, security, education, and democracy for the next decade.

HERE IS WHAT MUST CHANGE:

1. Register and Collect Your PVC — Then Use It

If you are 18 and above, register. If you registered in 2023, confirm your PVC is valid. INEC has made PVC collection easier with CVR centers and online verification. No excuses. A voter's card without voting is like a gun without bullets.

2. Vote Down Ballot, Not Just President

Presidents don't fix your potholes. Governors, LG chairmen, and House of Assembly members do. Research all candidates on your ballot. Attend town halls. Ask: What is your plan for health, education, and jobs? The president is not your only leader.

3. Reject Vote Buying Publicly

N2,000 cannot buy 4 years of good governance. When someone offers money, say "No." Report it. Post it. Shame is a powerful deterrent. A vote sold is a future mortgaged.

4. Become a Polling Unit Agent or Observer

If you fear rigging, don't stay home — stay and watch. INEC allows accredited agents and CSOs at polling units. Join YIAGA, Yiga Africa, or other observer groups. Your presence protects your vote and others'.

5. Engage Before, During, and After

Elections

Democracy is not a 4-year event. Track your representative's performance. Use constituency projects. Attend LG town halls. Send emails. Tweet them. Silence after election is also apathy.

6. Youths Must Lead, Not Just Protest

YPS principles say young people are not just victims of bad governance. They are architects of peace. Run for office. Volunteer. Campaign for credible candidates. In 2023, 25-year-olds won House of Assembly seats. 2027 can produce more.

7. Women Must Turn Out and Run

WPS Resolution 1325 says women's participation prevents conflict and improves governance. Nigeria has one of the lowest rates of women in parliament in Africa. When women vote and run, policies on maternal health, girl education, and gender-based violence improve. Mothers, aunts, sisters — your vote is your voice.

HOW TO STAY SAFE WHILE VOTING IN 2027

1. *Go Early*: Vote between 8:30am-11am. Less crowd, less tension.

2. *Go in Groups*: Neighbors, church members, colleagues. Safety in numbers.

3. *Know Your Polling Unit*: Confirm location early on INEC portal.

4. *Don't Wear Party Colors*: Dress neutral. Avoid arguments.

5. *Report, Don't Fight*: If you see violence, call police 112 or INEC situation room. Film discreetly if safe.

Your life matters. But your vote matters too. Plan for both.

STORIES THAT SHOULD WAKE US UP

1. Kano 2019: A governorship race was decided by 26,000 votes after a re-run. 400,000 PVCs were uncollected in Kano alone.

2. Edo 2020: Youth-led voter education increased turnout by 8% in urban areas. The winner's margin was 84,000 votes. Youth action tipped the scale.

3. Liberia 2017: After civil war, women's voter turnout hit 80% because they linked ballots to peace. Nigeria can do the same with bread, jobs, and safety.

THE BALLOT OR THE BULLETS

Mr. Chinedu cannot curse the price of bread for 4 years if he refused to vote for 4 minutes.

Political apathy is expensive. It costs us our children's schools, our mother's hospital, our brother's job, and our sister's safety.

2027 will not fix itself. Leaders will not fall from heaven. They will emerge from the ballot box.

So I ask you again: Are you willing to use your voter's card?

Democracy does not thrive in silence. It thrives when you show up. When you mark the paper. When you defend your vote.

Nigeria's future is not in the hands of politicians alone. It is in your hands. It is captured in your PVC.

Do not be silent at the polls. Speak

Pressure: A two-edged sword

EJEMOGO REBECCA ANWURI

INTRODUCTION: THE FORCE WE CANNOT ESCAPE

From the SS3 student burning midnight oil for WAEC, to the university undergraduate chasing a 2:1, to the father juggling three jobs to feed his family, pressure is everywhere. It lives in our offices, our classrooms, our homes, and even on our phones.

Many people try to run from pressure. But the truth is simple: pressure cannot be avoided. It is part of the human experience.

Pressure is like a two-edged sword. In the right hands, it cuts through obstacles and builds success. In the wrong hands, it wounds, breaks, and destroys. The question is not whether you will face pressure. The question is: will pressure build you, or will it break you?

What Exactly is Pressure?

In real-time, pressure is a state of urgency created by external expectations, demands, or internal drives. It compels us to think, act, and achieve beyond our normal comfort zone.

External Pressure comes from outside: exams, deadlines, bills, promotion targets, societal questions like “When will you marry?” or “Why are you not a manager yet?”

Internal Pressure comes from within: ambition, perfectionism, fear of failure, and the voice that says “You must prove yourself.”

When managed well, pressure becomes fuel. When mismanaged, it becomes fire that burns.

The Positive Edge: How Pressure Builds You

Though pressure is often spoken of in a bad light, its positive side is powerful. It has shaped leaders, champions, and ordinary people who achieved extraordinary things. Here are 5 ways pressure works for you:

1. Pressure Pushes You Toward Success

Comfort is the enemy of growth. Pressure removes comfort and forces action.

A student who knows that failing a 3-unit course will destroy his GPA will read differently. A trader who knows rent is due in 7 days will sell differently. A young graduate who knows NYSC ends in 6 months will apply for jobs with urgency.

Many successful people will tell you: “I never knew I could do it until I had no choice.” That “no choice” moment was pressure. It pushed them beyond limits they thought were fixed. Without pressure, many of us would settle for less than our potential.

2. Pressure Increases Productivity and Focus

Urgency creates clarity. When a manufacturing company sets a target of 10,000 bags of cement per day, everything changes. Workers extend hours, supervisors tighten checks, and systems improve.

In schools, examination pressure makes students study 8 hours instead of 2. In newsrooms, deadline pressure makes journalists write in 30 minutes what would have taken 3 days.

Without pressure, procrastination wins. With pressure, results multiply. This is why athletes, soldiers, and sur-



geons are trained under pressure. It sharpens focus and kills distraction.

3. Pressure Reveals Your Hidden Strength

You don't know how strong you are until pressure tests you.

A mother who thought she couldn't cope becomes the sole breadwinner after her husband's death. A student who said “I can't pass math” studies under pressure and scores a B. A small business that thought it would close in 3 months pivots under financial pressure and becomes profitable.

Pressure exposes capacity. It shows you that your “breaking point” was actually your “breakthrough point.” Many people only discover their resilience when life leaves them no option.

4. Pressure Builds Discipline, Resilience, and Time Management

Pressure teaches you to plan because you cannot beat a deadline by chance. You must prioritize, organize, and execute.

A worker facing monthly targets learns discipline. A student balancing JAMB, WAEC, and house chores learns resilience. Over time, pressure forms character. It creates people who don't panic when things get hard — they adjust and deliver.

5. Pressure Creates Innovation and Creativity

Necessity is the mother of invention because necessity is pressure.

During COVID-19, Nigerian schools moved online under pressure. Businesses started delivery services under pressure. Many young people started side hustles during the economic pressure of 2023 and 2024.

Pressure forces the brain to find new ways. It kills laziness and births creativity. Some of Nigeria's best innovations were born from lack, limits, and pressure.

The Negative Edge: When Pressure Breaks You

The same pressure that builds can also destroy. When pressure is excessive, constant, or unsupported, it becomes harmful. Here are 5 dangers to watch:

1. Burnout: When You Run Empty

Burnout is the end product of long-

term, unmanaged pressure. It shows up as physical exhaustion, emotional numbness, and mental shutdown.

Consider pure water factory workers who must meet a daily bag target even when sick. Consider bankers who sleep in the office for weeks during year-end. Consider students who study 18 hours daily and collapse during exams.

Burnout does not announce itself. It starts with constant fatigue, irritability, loss of passion, and poor performance. If ignored, it leads to sickness, mistakes, and resignation. A burnt-out person is not productive — they are just present.

2. Depression and Mental Health Crisis

When pressure meets failure, shame often follows. Many people tie their worth to performance: “If I don't get 2:1, I am useless.” “If I'm not married at 30, I am a failure.” “If I'm not rich by 35, my life is over.”

This mindset creates depression. The person feels inadequate, compared, and hopeless. In extreme cases, pressure has pushed students to attempt suicide after poor results. It has pushed young men into money rituals. It has pushed ladies into loveless marriages because “society expects it.”

Pressure without perspective becomes destructive. No job, grade, or title is worth your life.

3. Low Self-Esteem and the Comparison Trap

Social media has weaponized pressure. We scroll and see peers buying cars, traveling, getting married, and building houses. Suddenly, our own progress looks small.

Low self-esteem sets in. We begin to look down on ourselves. “I am behind.” “I am not good enough.” We withdraw, become lonely, and stop trying.

Pressure that makes you compare instead of compete will break your confidence. You start focusing on weaknesses instead of strengths, and productivity dies.

4. Anxiety and Fear of the Future

Anxiety is pressure's loudest voice. It makes your heart race when a deadline is near. It gives you sleepless nights. It makes you overthink every decision.

A 29-year-old lady feels panic because “I'm clocking 30 and not married.” A graduate fears he will never get a job. A father fears he cannot pay school fees.

Constant anxiety affects health: high blood pressure, ulcers, and poor concentration. Fear paralyzes, and a paralyzed person cannot act. Anxiety turns pressure from a motivator into a prison.

5. Costly Mistakes and Poor Judgment

Under extreme pressure, people rush. They cut corners. They sign bad contracts. They marry the wrong person. They cheat in exams. They take loans they cannot repay.

A doctor under pressure may misdiagnose. A driver under pressure may overspeed. A student under pressure may engage in malpractice.

Pressure narrows vision. When you only see the deadline, you forget the consequences. You trade long-term peace for short-term relief.

Pressure in Nigeria Today: Why the Stakes Are Higher

Nigeria in 2026 is a high-pressure environment. Inflation, unemployment, insecurity, and “hustle culture” have raised the stakes for everyone.

Young people face pressure to “blow” before 30. Parents face pressure to provide in an economy where bread moved from N800 to N1,000 in a week. Students face pressure to succeed in a system with strikes, ASUU disruptions, and poor facilities.

This is why we must talk about pressure openly. Silence kills. Many people are suffering quietly because they think “everyone is coping except me.” But everyone is feeling it. The difference is how we handle it.

How to Handle Pressure: 7 Practical Strategies

Pressure is inevitable. Breakdown is not. Here's how to keep pressure on your side:

1. Reframe Pressure as Challenge, Not Threat

Your body reacts the same to excitement and fear — increased heart rate, alertness. The difference is your mindset. Tell yourself: “This is a challenge I can handle,” instead of “This will kill me.” Athletes use pressure to

perform. You can too.

2. Break Big Tasks into Small Steps

Pressure feels heavy when the task looks like a mountain. Break it down. Instead of “I must pass all 9 courses,” say “Today I will master Chapter 1.” Small wins reduce pressure and build momentum.

3. Set Boundaries and Rest Intentionally

You are not a machine. Rest is not laziness — it is maintenance. Sleep 6-8 hours. Take a walk. Pray. Talk to a friend. A rested mind handles pressure better than an exhausted one. You cannot pour from an empty cup.

4. Talk to Someone You Trust

Pressure grows in silence. Share with a trusted friend, mentor, counselor, or pastor. Bottling it up leads to explosion. Venting leads to solutions. Sometimes, saying it out loud reduces its power.

5. Focus on What You Can Control

You cannot control the economy, but you can control your effort. You cannot control the exam questions, but you can control your preparation. You cannot control marriage timing, but you can control your growth. Let go of what is not your business. Energy wasted on worry is energy lost.

6. Detach Your Worth from Performance

You are not your GPA. You are not your salary. You are not your marital status. You are a human being with value before any result. When your identity is secure, pressure cannot define you. You work hard, but you are not enslaved by outcomes.

7. Seek Professional Help When Needed

If pressure is causing panic attacks, prolonged sadness, or thoughts of harm, speak to a mental health professional. In Nigeria, you can call 08062106493 for mental health support. Asking for help is strength, not weakness. You don't have to fight alone.

A Word to Parents, Teachers, and Employers

If you lead others, you influence how they handle pressure.

Parents: Don't compare your child with “Shola next door.” Encourage effort, not just results. A child who is afraid of you will hide mistakes and break under pressure.

Teachers: Set realistic targets. Create safe spaces for students to ask questions without shame. Pressure to learn is good. Pressure to impress is toxic.

Employers: Targets are good, but so is welfare. A worker who collapses cannot meet next month's target. Check on your team's mental health. Healthy pressure produces excellence. Toxic pressure produces casualties.

Conclusion: Choose the Edge You Hold

Pressure is and will always remain an important aspect of human life. It will come as exams, bills, deadlines, expectations, and dreams. You cannot stop the pressure.

But you can decide its effect. Will you let pressure build you into someone disciplined, focused, and resilient? Or will you let it break you into anxiety, burnout, and regret?

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

Jubilation in Enugu as Rangers clinch 9th NPFL title

Football fans in Enugu State on Sunday celebrated the victory of Rangers International FC in the 2025/2026 Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) season.

The jubilant supporters trooped into the streets shortly after the final whistle, chanting "Up Rangers, Up Rangers".

Restaurants, Bars and relaxation spots across the state were filled with fans celebrating the club's success.

A football fan, Sylvanus Okeke, described the victory as well-deserved.

"Rangers is our darling team. We are very happy that the trophy is returning to Enugu. It is a thing of joy," he said.

Another supporter, Ngozi Ugwu, expressed delight over the club's achievement.

"I am so happy for Rangers International FC of Enugu, our darling team.

"We are waiting for their victorious return to the Coal City," she said.

Also speaking, Ibe Nwosu said he was confident Rangers would secure the title because of the club's fighting spirit.



RANGERS JUBILATING

Kaduna govt committed to reviving sports sector –Official

The Kaduna State Director of Sports, Mrs Mary Vayin, has reiterated the state commitment to revival of sports under Gov. Uba Sani administration.

Vayin who spoke to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in an interview in Kaduna said deliberate efforts are being made to upgrade facilities and restore the state's sporting glory nationwide.

She said the measures aim to promote grassroots sports and discover young talents.

According to her, Kaduna remains one of Nigeria's historic sporting centres hence the need to restore the state's reputation through well-organised sporting programmes and infrastructure development.

Vayin said renovation work has commenced at the stadium to provide sports men and women the needed environment for training and competitions.

The director revealed that the state cricket team recently travelled to Ghana for an international sporting engagement, describing it as part of efforts to expose local athletes to global competition and improve their experience.

According to her, the state's karate team also made the government proud after winning a bronze medal at a major championship.

"The development reflects the growing progress of sports development in the state."

She also noted that efforts are

being made to attract private partnerships and encourage investment in sports development in the state.

A cross section of sports fans who spoke on sports development in Kaduna, lauded the renewed commitment to sports by the government.

A football fan, Ibrahim Musa, described the move as a welcome development, particularly with the promotion of Ranchers Bees FC to Premier league.

"Kaduna has produced many

footballers and athletes in the past. If the government continues this support, many talented youths will benefit," he said.

Maryam Suleiman, a volleyball coach, said boosting sports could help reduce social problems among young people.

"Sports keep youths busy and focused. When there are competitions and training programmes, many young people stay away from crime and drug abuse," she stated.

A local coach, Bashir Abdullahi, also praised the renewed

attention being given to sports facilities in the state after years of neglect.

"For years, many facilities were neglected, but now we are seeing improvements. Kaduna can host major competitions again if this continues," he added.

Abdullahi Bulala, the Chairman of Ranchers Bees FC, commended the government for its renewed support toward sports development, describing recent efforts as a major boost to football growth in the state.

Guardiola bids Manchester City farewell after decade as manager

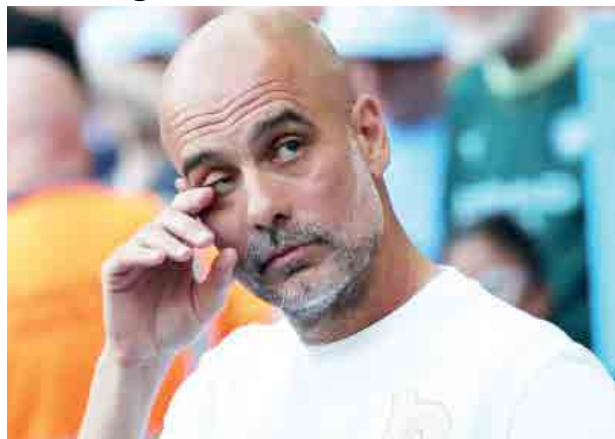
Pep Guardiola said his goodbye to players and fans of Manchester City after his side 2-1 defeat to Aston Villa at the Etihad on Sunday.

Speaking at the post match conference, the Spaniards said he leaves with memories that are more important than the titles he won for the Club.

Guardiola asserted that it was the memories and connections he made, not the silverware, that will define his decade of managing City.

He said: "The luggage of memories I put inside is more than any other (team previously).

"Without 20 trophies they would have sacked me before, but you are not at home and see the trophies and say 'Oh, how happy I am.'



PEP GUARDIOLA

"I don't know, explain to me why the connection I had since day one for the city, but especially with the back-room staff, with the players. I know we were con-

nected."

Guardiola singled out captain Bernardo Silva and defender John Stones who are also leaving the club.

Junior Roland Garros: Nigerian star Ogunsakin set to join main draw



SEUN OGUNSAKIN

Nigeria's rising tennis talent, Seun Ogunsakin, could secure a spot in the Main Draw of the Junior Roland Garros without even playing in the qualifying rounds.

Ogunsakin is currently competing in the ongoing J300 tournament in Charleroi, Belgium, an event that overlaps with the Roland Garros sign-in deadline for juniors.

To avoid forcing players to choose between the two competitions, organizers have introduced a Special Exempt slot.

This provision allows players who advance deep into another tournament—based on their ranking—to bypass qualifying and enter the Main Draw at Roland Garros.

If Ogunsakin progresses far in Charleroi or is the highest-ranked player remaining, he is likely to claim this Special Exempt entry.

Tennis fans in Nigeria are watching closely, as Ogunsakin's potential Grand Slam debut promises to exceed expectations and could mark a historic mile-

Nigeria star picks bronze in Florida Nigeria sports news

Nigeria's rising track sensation Adaobi Tabugbo secured a bronze medal at the Pure Athletics Elite Sprint Meet held in Florida after finishing third in the women's 100m hurdles final.

Tabugbo posted a wind-aided time of 12.93 seconds (+2.8m/s) in a highly competitive race featuring top athletes from across the Americas and the Caribbean.

The event was won by Aasia

Laurencin of Saint Lucia, who crossed the line in 12.73 seconds, while Paola Vazquez of Puerto Rico claimed second position with a time of 12.93 seconds.

Despite the strong tailwind making the times ineligible for record purposes, Tabugbo's performance further underlined her growing reputation on the international athletics scene as she continues to impress in the women's sprint hurdles event.



ADAOBI TABUGBO

WKTT donates equipment to boost Nigerian table tennis

The Nigeria Table Tennis Federation (NTTF) has received equipment support from China-based manufacturer WKTT, which also pledged further assistance for player development across Africa.

At the 2026 WTT Contender Lagos ceremony, WKTT representative, Vera Ruijia Zhao, praised Nigeria's rich table tennis talent, citing stars like Quadri Aruna and Olajide Omotayo.

She said the company remained committed to helping more African players fulfil their potential.

"I brought rubbers, blades, balls and other items from China, sponsored by WKTT, for donation across Africa.

"We want to help African players reach the next level because many young talents lack equipment.

"For young players, equipment is essential. Without it, they cannot even begin playing table tennis," she said.

Zhao said the China-Africa cultural exchange year offered opportunities for Nigeria-China and Africa-China invitational tournaments in China.

She said the tournaments would give African players more opportunities to compete and improve their skills.

Zhao praised the performances of young Nigerian players, including children aged 10 and 11 competing strongly against international opponents.

"This is a positive sign for the future. There are more than 150 talented players here.

"If they maintain their passion and train properly, I hope to bring them to China for camps and tournaments.



NIGERIAN TABLE TENNIS EQUIPMENT

Football followership without hatred: The true spirit of sportsmanship



ARSENAL THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPION (EPL) 2025/26 SEASON

FR. PASCHAL OMONO

As the English Premier League (EPL) 2025/26 season came to an end, one important lesson stands out clearly, that football is meant to unite people, and not divide them.

Sadly, the just-concluded season revealed a growing level of hatred, bitterness, unhealthy rivalry, and antagonistic behaviour among many football supporters home and abroad. This trend is dangerous, not only to sportsmanship but also to human relationships and social harmony within the sphere.

As a passionate supporter of Arsenal, I celebrated my club's success with joy and gratitude. The celebration became necessarily loud for the fact that such feelings have eluded the club and fans for over two decades. However, I have also observed the amount of negativity, false accusations, insults, and unnecessary hostility directed toward Arsenal throughout the season. Football rivalry should never become hatred. Competition should be healthy, while bitterness should be destructive.

Sportsmanship teaches us values

such as respect, maturity, discipline, tolerance, and emotional balance. In every competition, there must always be a winner and a loser. Today it may be Arsenal; tomorrow it could be Tottenham Hotspur, Manchester City, Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool, or any other club. Success in football is temporary and constantly changing.

What becomes most worrisome is when some fans become happier seeing their own club lose simply because they do not want another club to succeed. Such an attitude contradicts the true meaning of loyalty and support. A genuine supporter stands with his or her club in victory and in defeat. Football should inspire healthy competition, not jealousy or hatred.

Even more disturbing is the growing tendency of some individuals to drag religion into football rivalry, making negative prophecies, hostile declarations, and using the name of God to promote division or mock others because of football. God should never be used as an instrument of hatred or rivalry over a game. Football is entertainment, and not warfare.

Interestingly, the footballers them-

selves relate peacefully after matches. They are usually seen greet one another, dine together, laugh together, exchange jerseys and maintain professional respect despite being opponents on the pitch. If the players themselves can coexist peacefully, why then should fans become enemies because of club loyalty?

Beyond the jerseys, beyond the clubs, beyond the rivalries, we remain human beings first. There is life beyond football. There is friendship beyond competition. There is love beyond rivalry. That human dignity and mutual respect be considered ahead of other things.

Let us therefore learn to celebrate with others when they succeed and encourage them when times are difficult. True sportsmanship is not measured only by how loudly we celebrate victory, but also by how respectfully we handle defeat and how humanely we treat others despite our differences.

Football should bring joy, laughter, unity, and entertainment, not division, insults, or hatred. When we inculcate these values, football enthusiasm and social interaction would become healthier for all.



Sports



Fernandes becomes EPL assist record holder

Manchester United's first goal on Sunday against Brighton & Hove Albion to break the premier league assist record.



FERNANDES

United's first goal on Sunday against Brighton & Hove Albion to break the premier league assist record.

Fernandes broke the record when Patrick Dorgu headed home his corner kick in the 32nd minute of United's 3-0 win over Brighton & Hove Albion, marking Fernandez's 21 assist of the season.

The record was jointly held by Arsenal legend Thierry Henry and ex- Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne.

They both bagged 20 Premier League assists in the 2002/23 and 2019/20 seasons respectively.

Fernandes had equalled the assist record when he assisted United's third goal in their previous game against Nottingham Forest.

Manchester United scored

two more goals through Bryan Mbeumo and Bruno Fernandes to end their season with a 3-0 win away from home.

Speaking after the game, Fernandes said joining Henry and De Bruyne in the assist conversation was already special.

"It was already special being in their (Henry and De Bruyne) company.

"We are talking about two players that made the Premier League so great, and they were two of the greatest in the Premier League."

The Portuguese playmaker ended the season with 21 assists and 9 goals, making it a total of 30 goal contribution for the Red Devils.



GOV. SEYI MAKINDE

IFC chair commends Makinde on 3SC's return to continental space

The Chairman, Ibadan Football Council (IFC), Rotimi Alli, has congratulated Gov. Seyi Makinde of Oyo State and the management of 3SC on the club's return to continental competition.

Alli acknowledged the state governor's spirited efforts in a statement he signed and made available in Ibadan on Monday.

He praised Makinde for renovating the Lekan Salami Stadium to international standards, increasing the team's monthly subvention, and positioning the club directly under his office.

"This culminated in the victory being celebrated now," he said.

He also commended the club's management board, headed by

Taiwo Lekan-Salami.

He described Lekan-Salami as an astute football administrator who demonstrated that with focus, dedication and meticulous planning, nothing was impossible.

"These are the factors he used to restore Shooting Stars Sports Club to its rightful place on the African soccer stage within one year of his appointment," he said.

He said Lekan-Salami rekindled the fire that made 3SC the first team to win Nigeria's first continental trophy and a household name in African football of the 70s, 80s and 90s.

Alli commended the players, technical crew, and the supporters/fans for their commitment, devotion and patience.

World Cup 2026: DR Congo reacts to Ebola crisis

The Democratic Republic of Congo Football Federation (FECOFA) under the leadership of Veron Mosenko Omba has reacted to concerns surrounding the Ebola outbreak affecting the country ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

In an official statement released by the federation, FECOFA confirmed that a video-conference meeting was held on Saturday, March 23, 2026, involving FIFA representatives, the federation president and the fourth vice-president to discuss the Ebola epidemic and its possible implications for the DR Congo national team, the Leopards, their technical crew and supporters expected to travel to the United States for the tournament.

According to the statement, FECOFA assured FIFA that all necessary preventive measures had been taken to protect the players and officials from any exposure to the virus while also complying with the health protocols introduced by the United States authorities.

The federation further explained that the majority of the players selected for the World Cup, alongside most members of the technical staff, are based in Europe, reducing concerns over possible infection risks.

FECOFA also disclosed that the Leopards had initially planned to begin their pre-World Cup training camp in Kinshasa before moving to Belgium and later the United States.

However, the Kinshasa phase of the camping programme has

now been cancelled in line with the newly introduced travel and health measures by the American government.

The statement added that members of the technical crew who departed Kinshasa for Belgium on May 20, 2026, will spend at least 21 days in Europe before proceeding to the United States for the World Cup competition.

Following the discussions, both FECOFA and FIFA reportedly agreed that the players and technical staff had complied with the health regulations imposed



DR CONGO TEAM

by the American authorities and should continue their preparations for the forthcoming tournament without disruption.

tions for the forthcoming tournament without disruption.

2026 Unity Cup: Abayomi Ogunjimi leads ANFASSC to London



NIGERIA FOOTBALL AND ALLIED SPORTS SUPPORTERS CLUB

The Authentic Nigeria Football and Allied Sports Supporters Club (ANFASSC) has arrived in London ahead of the 2026 Unity Cup, where Nigeria's Super Eagles will be aiming to successfully defend the title they won last year.

Led by its National President, Prince Abayomi Ogunjimi, the

delegation touched down in London on Sunday ahead of the invitational tournament scheduled to run from May 26 to May 30, 2026.

Nigeria will begin their campaign against Zimbabwe on May 26, with a place in the final up for grabs. Should the Super Eagles overcome Zimbabwe, they will face

the winner of the clash between Jamaica and India in the final.

The supporters club, under the leadership of Prince Ogunjimi, also played a visible role during the 2025 edition of the Unity Cup, where Nigeria emerged champions.

Speaking after arriving in London, Ogunjimi said the decision to travel with members of the supporters club was to ensure the Super Eagles enjoy massive backing throughout the competition.

"We are here because the Super Eagles must never lack support anywhere they play. Every match and every tournament is important to us as supporters, and we are fully ready to stand behind the team once again."

He further assured the players that their "12th man" is fully prepared to provide the energy and motivation needed during the tournament.

Sundowns claim second CAF Champions League Title

South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns have won the CAF Champions League title for a second time after they played out a 1-1 draw with hosts ASFAR of Morocco in the second leg of the final, held at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat on Sunday night.

Combined with a 1-0 win in the first leg in Tshwane last weekend, the Brazilians took the tie 2-1 on aggregate to win the continental championship for a second time, adding to their maiden triumph a decade ago in 2016.

ASFAR started strongly and dominated the opening quarter of the match, though they created only one genuine chance, with Mohamed Hrimat slicing a

shot well wide in the 16th minute after good work down the right flank from Reda Slim and Anas Bach.

Around the midway point of the first half, Sundowns began to find their rhythm, with Kutlwano Lethlaku seeing a low drive saved by ASFAR goalkeeper Ahmed Tagnaouti, before Tashreeq Matthews flashed a long-range effort wide of the mark.

The hosts were awarded a penalty via VAR review in the 37th minute when Divine Lunga was caught out by Slim and fouled the ASFAR no.10 in trying to recover. Hrimat took the spot kick and coolly converted to make it 1-0 in the 40th minute and 1-1 on aggregate.



SOUTH AFRICA'S MAMELODI SUNDOWNS

Remo Stars confirm relegation, shift focus to NNL



REMO STARS PLAYER

Former Nigeria Premier Football League champions Remo Stars have confirmed their relegation to the lower division.

The Sky Blue Stars were relegated on Sunday after playing out a draw against Bendel Insurance in their final league fixture.

Following the outcome, the management of Remo Stars on Monday officially acknowledged the club's drop from the top flight and stated that attention has now shifted to participation in the

Nigeria National League (NNL). Unity Cup updates

The club, which previously enjoyed success in the NPFL, endured a difficult campaign that eventually resulted in relegation despite their efforts to avoid the drop on the final day of the season.

Management is now expected to begin plans toward rebuilding the squad ahead of life in the NNL as they target an immediate return to the elite division

FEATURE



The Quiet Crisis: Why Nigerian youths must learn to manage pressure before it manages them

GRACE IJEOMA UMEH

Chinedu is 19. He is in 100 Level, studying Engineering at UNIBEN. He sleeps 4 hours a night. His phone buzzes with assignment deadlines, family expectations, and WhatsApp statuses of classmates who “blew” on TikTok. Last month, he collapsed in the exam hall. The doctor said “burnout.”

Chinedu’s story is not unique. Across Nigeria, young people are under pressure from all sides: school, family, economy, and social media. The result is a quiet crisis of anxiety, depression, and poor decisions.

Pressure is not new. But in 2026, the intensity has changed. And if we don’t teach our youths to manage it, pressure will manage them — often to their destruction.

WHAT IS PRESSURE IN 2026 NIGERIA?

Pressure is a state of urgency created by external expectations or internal drives that compels you to act beyond your comfort zone.

FOR NIGERIAN YOUTHS, IT LOOKS LIKE THIS:

1. Academic Pressure: JAMB, WAEC, CGPA, strike disruptions, “graduate with first class or be a disgrace.”

2. Economic Pressure: “Japa” or “hustle.” Parents who sacrificed everything and expect returns. No jobs, but bills are waiting.

3. Social Pressure: Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter where 17-year-olds flaunt cars and houses. “Why are you not trending yet?”

4. Cultural Pressure: “At 25 you should be married.” “At 30 you should have a house.” For girls, it is worse.

This is why pressure is called a two-edged sword. It can build you. It can also break you.

The Positive Edge: When Pressure Becomes Power

Not all pressure is bad. In fact, pressure has created Nigeria’s greatest success stories.

1. PRESSURE PUSHES YOU TO SUCCESS

A student who knows that failing a 3-unit course will ruin his GPA studies differently. A graduate who knows NYSC ends in 6 months applies for jobs with urgency. Many youths say, “I never knew I could do it until I had no choice.” That “no choice” was pressure.

2. PRESSURE REVEALS HIDDEN STRENGTH

A girl who thought she couldn’t cope becomes head of her department. A boy who said “I can’t code” builds an



app under deadline. Pressure exposes capacity. Your “breaking point” is often your “breakthrough point.”

3. PRESSURE BUILDS DISCIPLINE

You cannot meet a deadline by luck. Pressure teaches time management, focus, and resilience. A youth who learns this early becomes unstoppable in adulthood.

4. PRESSURE CREATES INNOVATION

Nigeria’s tech startups, content creators, and fashion brands were born from economic pressure. When there are no jobs, youths create them. Necessity is the mother of invention.

THE NEGATIVE EDGE: WHEN PRESSURE BREAKS YOU

But when pressure is excessive, constant, and unsupported, it destroys. Here is what we are seeing in our schools and communities:

1. BURNOUT

This is physical exhaustion and mental shutdown. Students study 18 hours, skip meals, and collapse. Workers sleep in offices. The body gives up. Burnout does not announce

itself — it starts with fatigue, irritability, and loss of passion.

2. DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

When pressure meets failure, shame follows. “If I don’t get 2:1, I am useless.” “If I’m not rich by 25, I am a failure.” This mindset has led to suicide attempts among students. It has pushed young men into money rituals. It has pushed girls into desperate relationships.

3. ANXIETY AND FEAR

Anxiety makes your heart race before exams. It gives you sleepless nights. A 24-year-old feels panic because peers are “ahead.” A 29-year-old lady is sad because “I’m clocking 30 and not married.” Constant anxiety leads to high blood pressure, ulcers, and poor concentration.

4. POOR JUDGMENT

Under extreme pressure, youths rush. They cheat in exams. They take loans they cannot repay. They marry the wrong person. They engage in fraud to “blow.” Pressure narrows vision. You trade long-term peace for short-term relief.

WHY THE CRISIS IS “QUIET”

We don’t talk about it. In our culture, “being strong” means suffering in silence. Boys are told “Men don’t cry.” Girls are told “Pray about it.”

So youths bottle it up. They post smiles online and cry at night. They laugh with friends and feel empty inside. The crisis is quiet because the victims are silent.

7 WAYS NIGERIAN YOUTHS CAN MANAGE PRESSURE

Pressure is inevitable. Breakdown is not. Here’s how to hold the handle of the sword:

1. REFRAME PRESSURE AS CHALLENGE

Your body reacts the same to fear and excitement. Tell yourself: “This is a challenge I can handle.” Athletes use pressure to perform. You can too.

2. BREAK TASKS INTO SMALL STEPS

A mountain looks impossible until you climb it one stone at a time. Instead of “I must pass all courses,” say “Today I will master Chapter 1.” Small wins build momentum.

3. REST IS NOT LAZINESS

You are not a machine. Sleep 6-8 hours. Take a walk. Pray. Rest is maintenance. A rested mind handles pressure better than an exhausted one.

4. TALK TO SOMEONE

Pressure grows in silence. Share with a trusted friend, mentor, counselor, or pastor. Bottling it up leads to explosion. Venting leads to solutions.

5. CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN

You cannot control the economy, but you can control your effort. You cannot control marriage timing, but you can control your growth. Let go of what is not your business. Worry wastes energy.

6. DETACH YOUR WORTH FROM PERFORMANCE

You are not your CGPA. You are not your TikTok followers. You are not your marital status. You have value before any result. When your identity is secure, pressure cannot define you.

7. SEEK HELP EARLY

If you have panic attacks, prolonged sadness, or thoughts of harm, speak to a professional. In Nigeria, call 08062106493 for mental health support. Asking for help is strength, not weakness.

A WORD TO PARENTS, SCHOOLS, AND SOCIETY

We must stop raising children with fear.

Parents: Don’t compare your child with “Shola next door.” Encourage effort, not just results. A child afraid of you will hide problems and break.

Schools: Set realistic targets. Create counseling units that are not just for discipline. Teach students stress management, not just subjects.

Social Media: Stop weaponizing success. Not everyone will “blow” at 20. Your timeline is your own.

CONCLUSION: HOLD THE HANDLE

Pressure will come as exams, bills, expectations, and dreams. You cannot stop it. But you can decide its effect.

Will you let pressure build you into someone disciplined, focused, and resilient? Or will you let it break you into anxiety, burnout, and regret?

Like a sword, pressure has two edges. The edge you hold determines your outcome.

To every Chinedu reading this: You are not alone. You are not behind. You are not a failure. You are under pressure, and you can manage it.

Hold the handle. Use pressure as fuel for growth, not fire for destruction. Because the same pressure that can destroy you is the same pressure that can develop you.