

FG to partner Edo Govt to unlock tourism potential —NTDA boss

BENIN CITY

The Director-General of the Nigeria Tourism Development Authority (NTDA), Dr Ola Awakan, has assured the people of Edo of the Federal Government's commitment to partnering with the state government to unlock and develop its vast

tourism potential.

Awakan gave the assurance on Monday in Benin at the opening of the two-day Tourism Summit, Exhibition and Fashion Show organised by the Edo State Tourism Agency.

He said Edo's abundant tourism resources could only be fully harnessed through strategic collaboration among

government, the private sector, and other critical stakeholders.

"The tourism potential in Edo can not be harnessed in isolation. Strong synergy is required, particularly with the private sector. We must work together to unlock the immense opportunities within the sector," he said.

Awakan noted that Nigeria's rich cultural heritage presents

a unique opportunity to reshape the country's image on the global stage.

"Nigeria is not a country defined by violence or insecurity. We are a people blessed with rich culture, enduring traditions, and remarkable artistic heritage.

"We must work together to change the negative narrative about our country by telling our

stories through arts and culture. I am confident that this summit will produce a practical master plan that will drive tourism development," he said.

He described tourism as one of the world's fastest-growing economic sectors, noting that it contributes significantly to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings,

infrastructure development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.

In her keynote address, the Director-General of the Edo State Tourism Agency, Mrs Vivian Elabor, said participants, investors, tourists and cultural ambassadors had

CONTINUES ON PG 4»

The Nigerian OBSERVER

That The People May Know

f t i g NigerianObserver @Nigerian_Observer @NigerianObserver www.nigerianobservernews.com

PUBLISHED SINCE MAY 29, 1968

VOL. 47, NO. 1,296

TUESDAY 30TH JUNE, 2026.

#200

Take charge of security in your states, Okpebholo tells colleagues

● Says Tinubu critics are Nigeria's enemies

IRRUA

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has urged the 36 state governors to take greater responsibility for tackling secu-

rity challenges in their respective states protecting lives and property.

The governor made the call during an All Progressives Congress (APC) stakeholders' interactive session held at the

Okaijesan Town Hall over the weekend in Irrua, Esan Central Local Government Area of Edo State

Okpebholo said addressing insecurity across the country requires a collective effort from all levels of government, adding that President Bola Ahmed

Tinubu cannot be physically present in all states at the same time.

He described those blaming the President alone for the nation's security challenges as unfair, saying such critics were failing to recognize the responsibilities of state governments.

"President Bola Ahmed Tinubu cannot come to Edo or visit all the states at the same

time because he is just one person. If I protect Edo State and every other governor protects their states, insecurity will become a thing of the past," he said.

The governor also criticised opposition politicians who previously served as vice president or state governors for accusing the current administration over insecurity, ques-

tioning what measures they took while in office to address similar challenges.

"Many governors are working hard to solve security challenges across the nation. Governors should take charge of their various states and address the security situation. This is what is called sub-national responsibility, and it will help solve the problem," Okpebholo added.

Benin monarch sets template to curb insecurity

MONDAY OISE

BENIN CITY

Omo N' Oba N' Edo, Uku-Akpolokpolo, Ewuare II, Oba of Benin has set the template for grassroots security across the various Communities in the seven local government areas of Edo South Senatorial District.

Speaking at a strategic meeting with youth leaders at the Oba palace in Benin City, Edo State, Oba Ewuare II directed youth leaders (Okaighele) to appoint between five to ten member Advisory Committees and evolve strategies that would complement the government efforts in combating emerging security challenges.

The meeting with the revered monarch, was a follow-up meeting to a similar one with native doctors, traditional Priests and Priestesses

in Benin, where he emphasized the need to unleash a spiritual warfare to curbing banditry.

He clarified that the individuals concerned would report security matters directly to their Coordinator, Chief Emmanuel Iyase, Okao N' Ore-guae in charge of Ologbo and Ehor Dukedom in Benin periodically and thereafter brief the appropriate authority.

The royal father said, the mode of the security operation, anchored on the traditional neighborhood watch system, is meant to secure homeland from bandits and he warned that the initiative should not give anyone or groups the right to either misbehave, oppress or sell communal land indiscriminately.

"We do not want you to fight yourselves or kill people. The purpose is to promote peace in our communities.

"Edo people are not scared

CONTINUES ON PG 4»



EDO TOURISM:

Moses Obakpolor, Director of Protocol, Edo State Government House (2nd left); Mrs. Uyi Malaka, former Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Tourism, Edo State (3rd left); Saturday Uwulekhue, Commissioner for Transport (2nd right), and Mrs. Deborah Okunbo, CEO, Edo State Public Procurement Agency (right), during first discussion and panel session of Edo State Tourism Agency, organized Summit, Exhibition and Fashion Show 2026 in Benin City on Monday.

NELFUND condemns alleged unethical practices by some tertiary institutions

—Pg 6

Resident doctors extend the warning strike by 4 weeks

—Pg 8

Europe's heatwave linked to 1,300 deaths, WHO says, as Germany hits record 41.7C

—Pg 15

Amusan storms to Diamond League victory, sends strong Commonwealth Games warning

—Pg 22

NEWS

Stakeholders step up preparations for this year's Edo Carnival

BERNADETTE IDALU

BENIN CITY

Preparations for this year's Edo Carnival are being stepped up as Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo unveiled the carnival theme.

Members of the creative community and entertainers lit the Protea Hotel Marriott in Benin City on Sunday in Benin City with incisive and creative ideas targeted at launching the rich cultural heritage of Edo State to the world.

Governor Okpebholo said the theme of the 2026 upcoming edition of the Edo Carnival, "The Spirit of Edo," is a reminder that culture is not just merely a reflection of our past, it is an investment in our future.

The governor, represented by his Deputy, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, stressed that critical thinking and action of cultural stakeholders were decisive factors in putting the people and the state on a world stage.

This, according to him, is to enable the economic potentials, cultural history of Edo State people, its cuisines and tourism potentials attain its full potentials through being opened to the world.

Okpebholo thanked members of the creative community, entertainers, cultural aficionados and representatives of the Benin Monarch, Oba Ewuare for finding common ground to congregate, network and forge means to promote the rich cultural heritage, and cuisines of the State to the world.

The governor, who highlighted the cultural gains of the maiden edition of the cultural fiesta in 2025, thanked organisers, members of the creative community, cultural ambassadors, corporate partners and all stakeholders for their commitments which made that edition a resounding success.

He told the cultural ambassadors: "Together, you have demonstrated to Nigeria and to the world that Edo State, is not

only the heartbeat of culture and history, but also, a destination of creativity, talent and limitless possibilities.

"The Edo Carnival is more than a carnival. It is a celebration of who we are. It is a powerful expression of identity. Our

heritage. Our resilience, and, our aspirations as a people.

"Edo is blessed with a rich and glorious history. From the ancient Benin Kingdom renowned for its artistry, governance and craftsmanship, to the achievements of our sons and

daughters across the world. Our story is one of excellence, innovation and greatness.

"Edo Carnival provides a platform to tell that story proudly and boldly to the world. As we unveil the theme for the 2026 edition, let us re-

member that culture is not just merely a reflection of our past, it is an investment in our future. "The creatives and culture industry have become powerful drivers of economic growth, tourism, job creation and global engagement."



HOMELAND SECURITY:

A cross section of heads of traditional priests, priestesses and traditional doctors in Edo South during their strategic meeting with OMO N' Oba N' Edo, Uku Akpolokpolo, Ewuare 11, Oba of Benin, in Oba Palace, Benin City, Edo State, on Monday.

Stock market: Introduce fiscal incentives to boost NGX listing, experts task FG

ABUJA

The Capital Market Academics of Nigeria (CMAN) has urged the Federal Government to introduce fiscal incentives to encourage more companies to list on the Nigerian Exchange (NGX).

The President of CMAN, Prof. Uche Uwaleke, made the recommendation on Monday in Abuja at a World Press Conference organised by the association ahead of its second Biennial Conference.

Uwaleke said the incentives should target large indigenous companies and government-owned commercial enterprises to encourage public listing.

He proposed temporary tax incentives for companies undertaking Initial Public Offerings during the early years after listing.

According to him, CMAN also recommends reducing the Company Income Tax for listed companies from 30 per cent to 25 per cent to encourage more public listings, strengthen corporate governance and improve transparency.

He said the proposed incentives would deepen the capital market, expand investment opportunities for Nigerians and enhance corporate disclosure and accountability.

Uwaleke commended the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the NGX for reforms aimed at modernising the capital market.

"We applaud the successful transition to the T+1 settlement cycle, which aligns Nigeria with international best practices by improving market efficiency, reducing settlement risk and enhancing investor confidence.

"These reforms demonstrate the commitment of the regulators and market operators to building a globally competitive capital market capable of supporting Nigeria's long-term development aspirations," he said.

He however, said more needed to be done to improve market liquidity.

"In this regard, we encourage a review of existing free-float requirements, where appropriate, alongside other measures capable of increasing the volume of tradable securities and enhancing market depth," he said.

Brimoh hails Okpebholo, Aigboboh's grassroots empowerment

BENEDICT OKATE

BENIN CITY

The Special Adviser on Public Affairs to the Edo State Governor, Hon. Haruna Brimoh, has commended Governor Monday Okpebholo and the Deputy Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Edo

State, Hon. Sylvester Aigboboh, over their unwavering commitment to strategic interventions and grassroots economic empowerment aimed at improving the welfare of ordinary Edo people.

Brimoh particularly applauded Governor Monday

ASUU Fumes over non-implementation of agreement by varsities in N/East

YOLA

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has demanded full implementation of Consolidated Academic Tools Allowance (CATA), Earn Academic Allowance and Professorial Allowance (EEA) in state owned universities in North East.

Mr Dani Mamman, Yola Zone Union Coordinator of ASUU, made the call at a press conference on Monday in Yola.

Mamman said that the call was necessary in order to alert the general public and all rel-

evant stakeholders that the patience of its members in the zone comprising Adamawa, Borno, Taraba and Yobe states has been severely tested.

He urged for immediate government action on the non-implementation of the 2025 FG-ASUU negotiated agreement in the affected states.

According to him, the continued refusal of relevant authorities to implement Consolidated Academic Tools Allowance, Professional Allowance and Earn Academic Allowance (EAA) in the state owned universities in the north east is unacceptable.

He listed the affected state universities to include Adamawa, Borno, Taraba and Yobe state universities.

Mamman explained that the 2025 FG-ASUU negotiated agreement was expected to address the lingering problems affecting university education in the country which include the welfare of academic staff and funding of the universities among others.

He lamented that despite the understanding reached between the union and respective states governments, the government on their side had failed to implement the agreement.

"This failure is unacceptable,

provocative and dangerous for the future of university education in the country. The continued failure to implement the 2025 FG-ASUU agreement demonstrates a profound disregard for the principles of collective bargaining and lack of seriousness about public universities in the country," he said.

On the state of public universities, he said the system itself was already under immense pressure, with the facilities overstretched and struggling with outdated laboratories due to poor services.

He noted that any government genuinely committed to development must prioritise education.

Nigeria's foreign trips for foreign investments, wasteful —Oye

LAGOS

The Chairman of the Alliance for Economic Research and Ethics LTD/GTE, Dele Oye, has decried Nigeria's ongoing spree of foreign investment and diplomatic trips, noting that they are unstrategic, wasteful, ineffective and have consistently failed to deliver measurable economic benefits despite heavy public spending.

Oye made the remarks in a policy document made available to newsmen and titled "The Cultural Key: Why Nigerian Businesses and Government Delegations Fail Abroad – and How to Master Cross-Cultural

Commerce,"

According to him, successive Nigerian delegations travel abroad with optimism, ceremonial ambition, and large entourage, but return home with little to show beyond photographs, signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs), and diplomatic handshakes.

He argued that many of these agreements rarely translate into actual investments or long-term partnerships, describing the pattern as "predictable and wasteful."

"At Alliance for Economic Research and Ethics LTD/GTE, we have observed with growing concern the persistent pattern: Ni-

gerian delegations travel abroad with little more than optimism and ceremonial ambition.

"The results are predictable handshake photographs with foreign officials that yield no memoranda of understanding; MOUs signed in glittering hotel ballrooms that collapse within months; investment "roadshows" that consume hundreds of millions of Naira and return with nothing but jet lag and duty-free shopping.

"This article is not merely a critique. It is a compulsory intervention. We examine the cultural architectures of the world's major economies, correcting common misconceptions, deep-

ening shallow understandings.

"More importantly, we offer a framework for how Nigerian organisations can navigate these waters with the sophistication of our nation's potential demands by seeking professional guidance before embarking on international engagement.

The former NACCIMA boss also highlighted cultural illiteracy as a major factor undermining Nigeria's global economic engagements, noting that countries such as Japan, Germany, China, Tokyo, Canada, and the United States operate with deeply structured and often contrasting business cultures, which require preparation, patience, and adaptation.

CONTINUES ON PG 3

NEWS

State Police, child of necessity, says Senate Leader

ABUJA

Senate Leader, Sen. Opeyemi Bamidele, has defended the passage of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Alteration) (State Police) Bill, 2026, describing it as a child of necessity rather than political expediency.

Bamidele, in a statement issued in Abuja by his Directorate of Media and Public Affairs, said the proposed legislation was the outcome of years

of consultations, national consensus and growing concerns over insecurity, rather than a partisan political agenda.

Bamidele maintained that the proposal to establish state police was of urgent public importance and should not be sacrificed because of political ambitions.

Part of the fears expressed by the critics, Bamidele said, was that state police could revive the shortcomings associated with regional policing under the 1963 Constitution.

He said that while the concerns had enriched the national debate, they should not overshadow the urgent need for strengthening security across the country.

Bamidele explained that the proposal for state police had undergone extensive scrutiny as part of the ongoing constitutional review process, with memoranda received from stakeholders across the federation.

He said that the National Assembly consulted widely with the executive arm, the

Nigeria Governors' Forum, the Conference of Speakers of State Legislatures and the leadership of the Nigeria Police Force before the bill was passed.

Bamidele added that public hearings conducted in all the six geo-political zones in July 2025 recorded overwhelming support for the establishment of state police.

The senate leader further disclosed that the Nigeria Police Force submitted a comprehensive memorandum backing the proposal.

"It included recommendations that helped lawmakers incorporate accountability and oversight mechanisms to guard against possible abuse by political actors," he stated.

The senator also said that support for the bill cut across party lines, noting that lawmakers from opposition parties, including PDP, ADC, NDC and Labour Party, voted in its favour.

According to him, 84 of the 109 senators participated in the clause-by-clause voting

and supported the bill, representing a 77.06 per cent approval rate in the senate.

Bamidele urged political leaders to treat security as a national priority rather than a partisan issue.

He said that opposition parties should bring ideas that would improve the legislation instead of opposing it for political reasons.

He added that the bill was aimed at strengthening security and protecting lives and property across the country.

**APC STAKEHOLDERS INTERACTIVE:**

R-L: Senator Clifford Odiah, Edo Central Senatorial leader; Gen. Cecil Esekhaigbe, Gov Monday Okpebholo; Deputy Chairman, APC, Sylvester Aigboboh; Secretary to Edo State Government, Musa Ikhiloh Esq; member representing Esan North-East/Esan South-East Federal Constituency, Odianosen Okojie, at APC stakeholders interactive session in Irrua, Esan Central Local Government Area.

FG bans motorcycles on coastal highways

LAGOS

The Federal Ministry of Works has announced a ban on commercial motorcycles and tricycles on the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway.

The Federal Controller of Works in Lagos State, Mr Olufemi Dare, announced the restriction, which takes effect this week, in a statement.

According to him, the decision was introduced to protect

the newly constructed super-highway from misuse and deterioration.

He explained that the measures were necessary to preserve the road and ensure its long-term sustainability.

The Federal Controller also warned that indiscriminate parking of trucks and articulated vehicles would no longer be allowed.

According to him, the restriction applies to the coastal highway and all bridges across

Lagos State.

The ministry, he said, also prohibits the indiscriminate disposal of refuse along highway corridors, describing the practice as unacceptable.

Dare who warned that offenders would face strict enforcement measures as authorities move to maintain order disclosed that signage indicating the restrictions had already been installed along the highway.

He added that task force

officials would be deployed to strategic locations to ensure compliance on the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway which is a "world-class infrastructure" requiring proper maintenance and protection.

The official urged all road users to comply with the directives in the interest of public safety, stressing that preserving the facility would enhance its lifespan and maintain its value to Nigerians.

FRC approves snakebite centre, N93.9bn health interventions

ABUJA

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) on Monday approved four major health initiatives worth about N93.9 billion to strengthen healthcare delivery, disease control and emergency medical services nationwide.

Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, disclosed this while briefing State House correspondents after the FEC meeting in Abuja, presided over by President Bola Tinubu.

Pate said FEC approved upgrading the Kaltungo Snakebite Treatment Centre into the National Snakebite Research and Medical Centre.

He said the centre would provide specialised treatment, research, training and sustainable access to quality antivenom.

"Snakebite remains a significant yet neglected public health challenge, especially among farmers, herders, hunters, women and children," he said.

According to him, Nigeria records over 43,000 snakebite cases yearly, causing deaths, disabilities and severe socio-economic consequences.

"This will be the first specialised snakebite research and treatment centre in Nigeria and the sub-region," Pate said.

The minister said FEC also approved procurement of 10 compressed natural gas-powered blood donation mobile clinics for the National Blood

Service Agency.

He said the project, valued at about N6.9 billion, would improve blood collection, storage and distribution nationwide.

"We require about 1.8 million units of blood annually but currently collect only about 25 to 30 per cent," he said.

Pate said the mobile clinics would support maternal healthcare, trauma management, surgeries and cancer treatment across the six geopolitical zones.

FEC also approved N62 billion for procuring tuberculosis commodities to strengthen Nigeria's response to one of the world's highest TB burdens.

"Nigeria is among countries with the highest tuberculosis burden. Government is now

taking responsibility for procuring these commodities," he said.

He said the approval would reduce dependence on foreign donors and pave the way for local production of tuberculosis medicines.

The minister said FEC equally approved procurement of reproductive health and family planning commodities through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency.

He said the initiative, valued at about N25 billion, would improve maternal healthcare and voluntary family planning services nationwide.

"The commodities will be distributed through primary healthcare centres while supporting future local manufacturing," Pate said.

Don't trivialise First Lady's advice on petty businesses, APC chieftain warns

ABUJA

An All Progressives Congress (APC) chieftain, Kehinde Olaosebikan, has said the recent call by First Lady, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu, urging Nigerian women to embrace productivity through small businesses should not be trivialised.

Olaosebikan said the First Lady's message underscored the importance of entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic empowerment, self-reliance and national development.

In a statement issued on Sunday in Abuja, Olaosebikan described her recommendation that women engage in businesses such as akara, kulikuli and corn roasting as appropriate, practical and deeply patriotic.

He said that many of Nigeria's biggest eateries and food brands started from humble beginnings as hawking ventures, with operators gradually expanding into successful enterprises through hard work and perseverance.

According to him, while some entrepreneurs sold akara on street corners, others hawked bread, amala or even "eba kolobe", eba without soup, before growing

their businesses into thriving commercial ventures.

"Those little drops have built empires. Take Ibadan, for instance. Amala Sky, now one of the most popular amala joints in the country and located in elitist Bodija, did not start in a glass building.

"It started as a hawker inside Bodija Market. Mama Ope, another big eatery in the city, followed the same path.

"Like Amala Sky, she was simply hawking cooked rice in Mokola Market. I watched both women grow from trays and small stalls into entrepreneurs with branches stretching as far as Abuja today.

"The North tells the same story with kulikuli and corn roasting. In Kano, Kaduna and Zaria, women who began frying small batches of kulikuli by the roadside now run packaged food businesses that supply supermarkets across the country," he said.

Olaosebikan, who is also the Chief Executive Officer of Midas Communications Ltd., said such trades still possessed the capacity to create wealth and transform livelihoods when pursued seriously and scaled with dignity.

Braimoh hails Okpebholo, Aigboboh's...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 2

Okpebholo for prioritizing inclusive economic growth that deliver tangible benefits to the people, describing the Governor's leadership as people-oriented and focused on improving livelihoods across Edo State.

"Governor Monday Okpebholo has demonstrated that governance is meaningful only when it improves the lives of the people. His focus on women and youth empowerment reflects a practical commitment to ensuring that development reaches every community in Edo State," he said.

The Governor's spokesman highlighted the administration's proposed N2 billion intervention fund for market women as a clear demonstration of the government's deliberate commitment to strengthening the informal sector, widely regarded as the backbone of the state's economy.

He explained that the inter-

vention consists of N1 billion approved by Governor Monday Okpebholo, with an additional N1 billion expected through the support of the First Lady of Nigeria during her planned visit to Edo State in September.

"The Governor's intervention is a clear demonstration that this administration understands the central role market women play in driving commerce, supporting families, creating jobs and sustaining local economies. Empowering them is not just social support; it is a strategic investment in sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction," Braimoh stated.

Expressing confidence in the impact of the intervention, Braimoh said the initiative would stimulate commercial activities, strengthen small-scale enterprises, improve household incomes and reinforce the administration's vision of building a resilient and prosperous Edo economy.

Tinubu swears in new NPC, RMAFC commissioners

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu on Monday swore in six newly appointed Federal Commissioners of the National Population Commission (NPC) and two Federal Com-

missioners of the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC).

The commissioners were inaugurated at the State House, Abuja, following their confirmation by the National Assembly.

The ceremony took place shortly before the commencement of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting presided over by the President.

The six NPC commissioners inaugurated are Kolawole Alabi (Ekiti), Nasiru Mu'azu (Zam-

fara), Dr Isaka Yahaya (Kwara), Prof. Sadiq Radda (Katsina), Chiso Dattijo (Sokoto) and Suleiman Umar (Jigawa).

The two RMAFC commissioners sworn in are Hajiya Amina Gamawa, representing Bauchi State, and Abdullahi

Mukhtar, representing Kaduna State.

The commissioners took their oaths of office before officially assuming their responsibilities.

Present at the ceremony were Vice President Kashim

Shettima, Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Akume, Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Didi Walson-Jack, among other top government officials.

Oloton accepts apology as Court strikes out cyberstalking case against Ex-NBA Chairman

BENIN CITY

The Chief Executive Officer of Uyi Technical Ltd, Elder Francis Omoruyi Oloton, has accepted an apology from a former Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Benin Branch, Ede Ase-noguan, leading to the striking out of a criminal case instituted against him.

At the resumed hearing of Suit No. FHC/B/121C/2025, the Police Prosecutor, P. O. Odion, informed the court that the defendant had written a letter of apology to the nominal complainant, Oloton which was accepted.

Consequently, the prosecutor applied to discontinue the case, while counsel to the nom-

inal complainant, E. O. Afolabi, SAN, alongside Douglas Ogbankua Esq. and H. E. Edobor, as well as counsel to the defendant, F. I. Esegbile, supported by I. E. Iguodala and Adesuwa Ediae, raised no objection to the application for the discontinuance of the matter.

The prosecutor recalled that at the previous adjourned sitting, both parties had indicated their willingness to explore an out-of-court settlement and sought an adjournment to enable them to conclude discussions.

In his ruling, the presiding judge, Justice B. O. Quadri, struck out the case.

The Police had instituted a four-count charge against Ase-noguan and Jessica Iguodala

Oghomwen, who is said to be at large, over allegations bordering on cyberstalking, cyberbullying and perversion of justice.



INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE:

L-R: Miss Edo International 2026, Bossey Vivian, Senior Special Assistant to the Edo State Governor, Hon. Andrew Efe, Barr. Nimata Ikhilior, wife of Secretary to Edo State Government, Mitchell Ofoyeju, Ph.D., NDLEA Edo State Commander, and Miss Debby Benson, Director Miss Edo Beauty pageant in Government House, Benin City to commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

FG to partner Edo Govt to unlock...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

gathered with a shared vision of unlocking Edo's immense tourism potential.

She noted that Edo has long been recognized as a leading destination for culture, heritage, investment, and sustainable development.

According to her, the state is endowed with a rich history, remarkable cultural heritage, world-renowned arts and crafts, historical monuments, colourful festivals and unique ecological attractions, all of which provide a strong foundation for a vibrant tourism economy.

"The summit is designed to promote meaningful dialogue on digital transformation, investment opportunities, community partnerships, sustainability and innovation in tourism development.

"The partnerships forged here will play a significant role in shaping the future of tourism in Edo State," she said.

Elabor commended Gov. Monday Okpebholo for his un-

wavering support for the tourism sector and for recognising its strategic role in achieving economic diversification under the SHINE Agenda.

She urged investors and development partners to take advantage of the opportunities available in the state.

"I encourage investors and development partners to see Edo as a land of opportunities.

"We are open to collaboration and committed to creating an enabling environment for tourism and the creative economy to thrive," she added.

Also speaking, the Secretary to the Edo State Government, Mr. Musa Ikhilior highlighted the state's numerous tourism assets and stressed the need to harness and digitise them to enhance their visibility and economic value.

He urged residents to become tourism ambassadors by promoting Edo's historical monuments, cultural heritage, and tourist attractions, noting that such efforts would inspire more visitors to explore the state and boost its tourism industry.

Benin monarch sets template to...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

of battles. Our ancestors fought wars, liberated our people and conquered territories in the past with our youths. Those ganging up against Edo people are doomed. We do not curse, but communicate with our ancestors. Killings and kidnappings have no place here.

"We advise herdsmen, armed robbers, and others to stop their devilish activities. Edo State must be habitable for our children and people, including non-indigenes and investors to dwell peacefully," he declared.

The Oba offered prayers to almighty God and his Royal ancestors for peace across Edo State and Nigeria.

Also speaking, Chief Osaigbovo Osamwonyi, the Akenuwa of Benin, charged persons engaged in the scheme to discharge their assignments with a high sense responsibility, especially in the selection process.

He tasked the youth leaders to search for fearless men of integrity who have in-depth knowledge of their terrains to embark on this assignment.

"We won't cede any portion of Edo land. We want our people to be safe," he added.

CJN mandates Judges to eliminate pro-longed litigation

● Says justice delayed translates into justice denied

ABUJA

The Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, has mandated judges nationwide to adopt active case management strategies to eliminate prolonged litigation and restore public trust in the judiciary.

Kekere-Ekun made the call at the opening of the National Workshop on Case Management for Judges of the Superior Courts of Record, organised by the National Judicial Institute in Abuja.

The workshop, she explained, was designed to equip judges with practical strategies on docket control, electronic case management, scheduling practices, judgment delivery time-

lines and other measures aimed at enhancing justice delivery.

She said the effectiveness of the judiciary is measured not only by the quality of its judgments but also by the speed and efficiency with which cases are concluded.

The CJN stressed that prolonged litigation, repeated adjournments, procedural abuse and poor scheduling practices continue to undermine access to justice, increase the cost of litigation and weaken public trust in the courts.

"To the ordinary litigant, justice delayed often translates into justice denied and delays also create uncertainty for businesses and investors while eroding confidence in the rule of law.

"Kekere-Ekun noted that ef-

fective case management has become a defining indicator of judicial performance worldwide, urging judges to exercise greater control over proceedings, enforce timelines and make effective use of pre-trial procedures to reduce case backlogs.

She encouraged judicial officers to embrace technology, including electronic filing, virtual hearings, digital case-tracking systems and automated scheduling tools.

She described them as essential instruments for improving efficiency while maintaining fairness and due process.

Drawing lessons from jurisdictions such as the United Kingdom, Singapore and South Africa, she said active judicial leadership and struc-

tured case management have significantly improved court efficiency and reduced delays.

She acknowledged that increasing commercial activities, constitutional litigation and rising public expectations have placed greater demands on Nigeria's judicial system, making continuous reforms and procedural discipline imperative.

Kekere-Ekun therefore urged participants to reflect on existing practices, identify procedural bottlenecks and embrace reforms that promote efficiency without compromising fairness.

She expressed confidence that the workshop would provide practical solutions for reducing delays, improving judicial productivity and building a judiciary that is efficient, technologically responsive and worthy of public trust.

Warrake, Ivbiaro, Ihievbe communities decry unlawful disconnection, petition BEDC

OWAN EAST

The people of Warrake, Ivbiaro and Ihievbe communities, Owan East Local Government Area of Edo State have expressed displeasure over the incessant electricity blackout and arbitrary billing by the Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC).

The residents made their concerns known in a letter to the company through a Consumer Protection Advocacy Organisation known as Electricity Consumer Protection

Advocacy Centre, Abuja.

The communities alleged abuse of Market power, unlawful over-billing, violation of Customer Service Standards, and unlawful disconnection among other accusations.

In the letter signed by the Executive Director Electricity Consumer Protection Advocacy Centre, Abuja, Chief Princewill Okorie, the organisation accused BEDC of violating the Consumer protection regulations 2023 of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC).

The organisation alleged that the three Communities had made investment in infrastructure to the tune of ₦13,880,000 in 2023 without signing Third Party Investment Policy, yet the communities have been forced to repair the transformers and replace fallen poles without getting any refunds.

According to the letter, at a meeting held on May 13, 2026 with BEDC Auch Regional Office, representatives of the Communities had informed the DisCo authorities of High Tension Poles that required re-

placement, but they were told that unless the Communities pay 70% of the one point zero seven six Bn debt they owed among other conditions the poles replacement or electricity restored to the community.

Elucidating on the issue, the Executive Director, Electricity Consumer protection Advocacy Centre In Abuja, Chief Princewill Okorie, decried the gross violations of the law by the Benin DisCo and called on Edo State government to investigate the matter with a view to providing a lasting solution.

NEWS**Edo best in e-governance, Okungbowa dedicates award to Okpebholo****BENIN CITY**

The Head of Service of Edo, Dr Anthony Okungbowa on Monday described Edo as the leading state in e-governance among the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

Okungbowa made the remarks while addressing Permanent Secretaries, Directors, and members of staff of the

Edo Civil Service in Benin.

The event was a homecoming reception organised in Okungbowa's honour to celebrate his Nigerian Public Service Award, presented by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR).

He expressed gratitude for the honour, describing the award as a product of years of dedicated service and Governor Monday Okpebholo's unwavering commitment to pub-

lic service reforms.

"I am deeply encouraged by this pleasant surprise, and I thank God for this opportunity. Most importantly, I dedicate this award Okpebholo.

"This recognition is not only the result of years of hard work but also a reflection of our governor's commitment and passion for excellence in the civil service.

"We went to Abuja and returned with the top award in

Institutional Leadership and Public Service Reforms.

"This achievement was deliberate because the Bureau of Public Service Reforms is the apex reform body in the country.

"For the bureau to recognise Edo means our public service is among the best in Nigeria.

"This award is a call for greater commitment, renewed passion, and improved service delivery as we continue to transform the

civil service for the benefit of our people," he said.

Okungbowa also appreciated the governor for providing an enabling environment that has positioned the Edo Civil Service for national recognition.

Dr Efosa Aisien, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, while speaking on behalf of Permanent Secretaries, Directors, and members of staff of the Edo civil service, commended Okpebholo for creating the conducive

environment that made the achievement possible.

Aisien described the award as a national validation of the years of dedication and reforms undertaken by the Edo civil service under the leadership of the Head of Service.

In a goodwill message, Mr Nyamali Joseph described Okungbowa as an exceptional public servant who has consistently demonstrated remarkable knowledge, professionalism, and excellence at engagements both within Nigeria and abroad.

**COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT:**

L-R: Team Lead, Secured Lending Product, First Bank Plc; Mr Musiliu Olokodana; Rotary District 9111 Governor 2025-2026, Henry Akinyele; Director, Lagos State Mass Education; Mrs OluwaKemi Kalesanwo, and District Governor 2026-2027, Bukola Bakare, during the First Bank Plc sponsored Rotary International District 9111 Community Empowerment of 140 beneficiaries in Lagos on Monday.

Development finance remains vital for growth, Uwaleke tells CBN**ABUJA**

The President of the Capital Market Academics of Nigeria (CMAN), Prof. Uche Uwaleke, has urged the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) not to abandon development finance but channel such interventions through specialised development finance institutions.

Uwaleke made the appeal on Monday in Abuja at a World Press Conference organised by CMAN ahead of its second biennial conference.

He said the CBN should, rather than directly administer intervention programmes, provide strategic support through institutions with the expertise

to finance agriculture, manufacturing, housing, exports and small businesses.

According to him, the apex bank occupies a unique position in Nigeria's economy and can continue to support output expansion and employment generation without compromising its primary mandate of ensuring monetary and price stability.

"Economic growth must become more broad-based.

"Nigeria recorded a Gross Domestic Product growth rate of 3.89 per cent in the first quarter of 2026, an improvement over the corresponding period of 2025.

"This is encouraging and reflects increasing resilience within the economy.

"However, in our assessment, this growth remains modest and somewhat fragile," he said.

Uwaleke said agriculture and manufacturing continued to grow below the levels required to generate adequate employment and substantially reduce poverty.

According to him, government policies should prioritise infrastructure development, productivity enhancement, industrialisation, agricultural value chains and an enabling business environment to achieve more inclusive economic growth.

He noted that the CBN had reaffirmed its decision to refocus on its core mandate of monetary and price stability by discontinuing direct development finance interventions.

He recalled that the CBN

Governor, Mr Olayemi Cardoso, had said the bank would instead support institutions with the capacity and expertise to implement such interventions.

On capital inflows, Uwaleke said available data showed that more than 95 per cent of the over 10 billion dollars recorded as capital importation in the first quarter of 2026 comprised foreign portfolio investments.

While acknowledging that such investments support market liquidity, he warned that they remained short-term and could leave the economy quickly in response to changes in global conditions.

He said foreign direct investment, which creates jobs, transfers technology and expands productive capacity, remained low.

He also clarified that the NS-SRCC programme had been decentralised successfully from the Abuja headquarters down to sub-centres across all 36 states and 774 local government areas.

"The NSSRCC manages the National Safe School Integrated Command & Intelligence System (NSS-ICIS), which registers, maps, and calculates the School Vulnerability Index (SVI) for schools nationwide.

"Till date, the system has mapped and registered over 169,000 schools into its data infrastructure and has successfully averted dozens of active security threats and pre-emptive interventions, particularly in high-risk zones.

sonnel at every school.

"This is because perpetrators live within host communities, and community leaders, traditional rulers and other citizens hold the key to early indicators," he said.

The PRO added that when citizens actively utilise the, "see something, say something" protocol, it bridges the gap and allowing security agencies mobile patrols to intercept threats before they reach school gates.

He clarified that the NSCDC played host to the NSSRCC which is situated at the NSCDC National Headquarters in Abuja as protection of schools remained a top national priority.

Safe school initiative on course —NSCDC**ABUJA**

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), says the National Safe Schools Initiative programme is still on course.

The NSCDC Public Relations Officer (PRO), Babatunde Afolabi, disclosed this during an interview with newsmen on Monday in Abuja.

The programme was initiated by the Federal Government in 2014 after the abduction of some Chibok girls from their school.

Afolabi responding to recent surge in abduction of school children from their schools in some

parts of the country said that delays by communities in reporting early warning signals to the National Safe Schools Response Coordination Centre (NSSRCC) could slow down physical response times of operatives.

According to him, the NSSRCC remains fully operational, highly active and functional 24/7 as an integrated intelligence hub with dedicated desk officers from several security agencies.

He however said that citizens were the absolute cornerstone of the entire safe school programme as adequate school security could not solely rely on physical presence of per-

Nigeria, others renew push to end GBV through male champions**ABUJA**

Nigeria and other West African countries have renewed their commitment to ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) by empowering male champions and traditional and religious leaders to transform harmful social norms and advance gender equality.

The renewed commitment was made at the close-out high-level convening of the Leadership, Engagement, Action and Prevention (LEAP) Project, a Ford Foundation-supported initiative implemented by UN Women on Monday in Abuja.

Hajiya Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, Minister of Women Affairs, said the three-year initiative had demonstrated the transformative role of traditional and religious leaders in preventing violence against women and girls.

Sulaiman-Ibrahim, represented by Mrs Blessing Anunike, Director Women Development, said the project had empowered

community leaders to challenge harmful social norms, strengthen accountability and promote positive masculinity.

"The role of traditional and cultural leaders is indispensable as primary mentors of positive masculinity.

"By redefining what it means to be a man, shifting the narrative from dominance to protection and from aggression to emotional intelligence, our leaders are raising young men to become champions of peace rather than perpetrators of violence," she said.

According to her, the Federal Government remained committed to sustaining the gains of the LEAP Project through stronger partnerships with development partners, the private sector and international organisations.

She urged traditional institutions to deepen women's participation in community decision-making, saying communities where women's voices were heard were more peaceful, stable and resilient.

FG orders marketers to reflect global oil price drop in PMS prices**ABUJA**

Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, has directed petroleum marketers to immediately reflect the recent decline in global oil prices by reducing the pump prices of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and other petroleum products.

Lokpobiri, gave the directive at the 2026 Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) General Counsel and Legal Advisers Forum on Monday in Abuja.

The forum is themed "Beyond Compliance Certainty and Investment Confidence in Nigeria's Petroleum Sector."

Lokpobiri said that with the de-escalation of tensions between Iran and the United States, there was an expectation that the prices of PMS and other petroleum products would be adjusted downward accordingly.

He expressed concern that the anticipated reduction had yet to be reflected at the pumps,

stressing that while market forces under the deregulated regime would ultimately restore price equilibrium, marketers should not exploit the situation to make excessive profits.

The minister said the regulator had a statutory responsibility to ensure that deregulation did not become an avenue for profiteering, adding that this must be carried out in line with the provisions of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA 2021).

"For too long, the dominant question in our regulatory conversations has been: are operators complying? That question matters. It will always matter. But it is no longer sufficient.

"The more consequential question today is this: are our regulatory authorities doing their job? Is it clear, consistent and predictable enough to give investors the confidence they need to commit capital, not just for one cycle, but for the long term?

"Compliance is the foundation. Regulatory certainty is the ceiling we must now be building toward," he said.

Open defecation contaminates water, fuels disease outbreaks —Expert

LAGOS

A medical practitioner at the General Hospital, Oron, Akwa Ibom, Dr Edet Effiong, has warned that open defecation contaminates drinking water sources and exposes communities to preventable diseases.

Effiong gave the warning in an interview with newsmen on Monday in Lagos.

He said human waste deposited in open spaces was of-

ten washed into rivers, streams and drainage channels during rainfall or seeped into underground water, contaminating wells and boreholes.

According to him, once drinking water becomes contaminated with harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites, entire communities are exposed to serious health risks.

He identified cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, diarrhoea, hepatitis A and intestinal worm infections as

common diseases associated with poor sanitation.

Effiong said children were particularly vulnerable because their immune systems were still developing.

"Children are more likely to come into contact with contaminated soil, water and surfaces, making them vulnerable to severe illness, dehydration and death," he said.

The physician said poor sanitation could trigger public health emergencies, especially in

densely populated communities.

"A single contaminated water source can expose hundreds of people within a short period and overwhelm health facilities," he said.

Effiong added that recurrent waterborne diseases increased healthcare costs, disrupted livelihoods and placed vulnerable groups at greater risk.

He warned that repeated exposure to contaminated water could have lasting consequences for children, including

malnutrition, stunted growth, weakened immunity and poor cognitive development.

Recalling previous cases, he said hospitals often recorded spikes in diarrhoea and typhoid cases after heavy rainfall, with investigations sometimes tracing infections to wells and boreholes located near areas where open defecation was prevalent.

He also recalled treating children admitted for severe dehydration after consuming contaminated water.

"These are illnesses that could have been prevented through proper sanitation and access to safe drinking water," he said.

Effiong urged governments to expand access to public toilets, safe drinking water and sanitation infrastructure, while strengthening enforcement of sanitation regulations and sustaining public awareness campaigns.

He also called on communities to embrace proper hygiene practices and eliminate open defecation to safeguard public health.

Gov Oborevori congratulates Dein of Agbor Kingdom at 49

ABUJA

Governor Sheriff Oborevori of Delta has described the Dein of Agbor Kingdom, Benjamin Ikenchukwu, as a visionary traditional ruler whose reign has been marked by peace, unity and sustained progress.

The governor stated this while extending his warm felicitations to the traditional ruler, the Keagborekuzi I, on the occasion of his 49th birthday.

Oborevori's felicitations is contained in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Sir Festus Ahon on Monday in Asaba.

He commended the revered monarch for his exemplary leadership and immense contributions to the growth and development of Agbor Kingdom, Delta State and the nation.

He said that the royal father's commitment to the welfare of his people had earned him admiration and respect far

beyond his kingdom.

"The monarch's dedication to preserving the rich cultural heritage of Agbor while promoting development and harmonious coexistence made him worthy of celebration.

"On behalf of the Government and people of Delta State, I warmly felicitate with His Royal Majesty, Benjamin Ikenchukwu, Keagborekuzi I, CON, the Dein of Agbor Kingdom, on the occasion of his 49th birth anniversary.

"You have continued to lead your people with love, wisdom and compassion, and your exemplary leadership has endeared you to your subjects and many others beyond your kingdom.

"As you celebrate your 49th birthday, it is my prayer that Almighty God will continue to bless you with sound health, wisdom and strength to provide purposeful leadership for your people.

"I also look forward to your continued invaluable contribu-



THANKSGIVING CHURCH SERVICE:

L-R: Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Mrs. Didi Esther Walson-Jack; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Dr Magdalene Ajani; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Mr Olumuyiwa Abel, and other Permanent Secretaries, during the Thanksgiving Church Service to mark the 2026 Civil Service Week at the Family Worship Center, Wuye, Abuja on Sunday.

Ondo: Zakat foundation donates N3m cash, items to 18 widows, less-privileges

AKURE

Zakat and Sadaqat Foundation (ZSF), Ondo State Chapter, has empowered 18 widows and other less-privileged people with cash and items worth N3 million in the state.

The ZSF, an Islamic foundation, distributed sewing machines, grinding machines, deep freezers, refrigerators, among others.

Alhaji Abdulwas' Aliu, the foundation's State Coordinator, at the distribution on Monday in Akure, said the gesture was to wipe out poverty in the society and country at large.

The theme of the event was "Zakat Social Responsibility: Strengthening Economic Se-

curity, Community Cohesion, and National Peace".

Aliu said the foundation had been in existence for more than 25 years in the country and 10 years in the state.

The state coordinator appreciated the donors from Nigeria and diaspora.

According to him, the foundation as a charity organisation, collects zakat (alms) from those who have and give to the less-privileged in society.

"We collect from the people that have mercy for the less-privileged after we have conducted thorough interviews to know and identify their real needs.

"We have about 18 that benefitted. The widows take the

largest percentage of the items and the cash to mark the their week celebration," he said.

In his welcome address, Prof. Isiaq Amoo, ZSF State Grand Patron, urged the attendees to give their zakat and contribute to the development of the society.

Amoo, who said the cash and items distributed yearly was increased, called for more donors to enable the foundation do more for the people in the state.

"ZSF is not only giving out cash or items alone, they are doing numerous programmes including back to school, student scholarship, community support and many others," he said.

Similarly, Ustadh Abdulwas' Yusuf, Acting Imam, Government House Mosque, Akure, who delivered the lecture, admonished individuals, organisations, and

philanthropists to support government through empowerment for the betterment of the country.

Yusuf, who described alms as protection and security for individuals, said it would also contribute to the economy of the society.

"It's very important for philanthropists to understand that Allah gave them the resources, not for them alone but also to give out to the needy.

"Allah says we should take good care of those who are close to us, our families, co-workers, and neighbours. By the time you continue to do this, it will restore peace into the society."

"If you give back to the society, you are contributing to the betterment of the society, to the peaceful coexistence, economic stability of the society, and it will also provide security for you," he said.

Kaduna: NDLEA seizes 12,724kg of illicit drugs, arrests 1,107 suspects in 1yr

KADUNA

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Kaduna Command, has said it seized 12,724.652 kilogrammes of assorted illicit drugs and psychotropic substances and arrested 1,107 suspects between June 2025 and June 2026.

The State Commander of NDLEA in Kaduna, CN Maijama'a Muhammad, disclosed this on Monday in an interview with newsmen in Kaduna.

Muhammad said the seizures reflected the command's sustained commitment to disrupting drug supply networks and preventing harmful substances from reaching communities.

According to him, the seized drugs comprised 9,091.974kg of cannabis sativa, 0.004kg of heroin, 0.315kg of cocaine, 2.949kg of methamphetamine, 301.852kg of tramadol and 3,345.558kg of psychotropic substances.

He said the command also intensified intelligence-led

operations, surveillance and enforcement activities across the state, leading to the arrest of 1,107 suspects for various drug-related offences.

"The breakdown shows that 1,075 of the suspects were males, while 32 were females," he said.

The commander further disclosed that 297 suspects were charged to court during the period under review, while 251 convictions were secured through collaboration with the judiciary.

He said the convictions underscored the agency's determination to ensure offenders faced justice and served as deterrence against illicit drug trafficking.

On drug demand reduction and rehabilitation efforts, Muhammad said the command admitted 94 clients into treatment and rehabilitation programmes, comprising 88 males and six females.

He added that 78 persons were successfully rehabilitated, while 1,458 individuals received brief interventions, including 1,413 males and 45 females.

NELFUND condemns alleged unethical practices by some tertiary institutions

ABUJA

The Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) has condemned alleged reports that some tertiary institutions are delaying or refusing to refund students whose tuition fees had already been paid before the NELFUND's disbursement.

This is contained in a statement issued on Monday in

Abuja by the Director of Strategic Communications of NELFUND, Mrs Oseyemi Oluwatuyi.

Oluwatuyi also expressed concern over alleged reports that some institutions have arbitrarily increased tuition fees and other charges.

She said the student loan scheme, introduced by the administration of President Bola Tinubu, was established to re-

move financial barriers to higher education and not to create additional burdens for students.

She said NELFUND was already engaging the affected institutions and relevant authorities to ensure that eligible students received refunds of tuition fees already paid before the loan disbursements.

According to her the engagement is also aimed at ensuring that tuition fees and other in-

stitutional charges remain fair, transparent and in line with the objectives of the scheme.

Oluwatuyi reaffirmed NELFUND's commitment to protecting the interests of students and preserving the integrity of the scheme.

She urged all participating institutions to uphold the objectives of the initiative and ensure that students fully benefit from the intervention.

NEWS

FCT senatorial ticket dispute: Court okays substituted service on Ireti Kingibe

ABUJA

The Federal High Court in Abuja on Monday granted an order of substituted service of court processes to be served on Sen. Ireti Kingibe, the lawmaker representing the FCT Senatorial District on the platform of African Democratic Party (ADC).

Justice Salim Ibrahim gave the order following a motion ex-par-

ty moved by the plaintiff's lawyer, Moses Awuru, to the effect.

Awuru, who said all efforts to serve Kingibe were unsuccessful, said their application sought an order serving the senator by substituted means through her legislative aide.

He said the motion was filed on June 26 and prayed the court to grant their application.

Justice Ibrahim consequent-

ly granted the motion ex-parte and adjourned the matter until July 21 for further mention.

While ADC was represented in court by Mohammed Ishaq, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had no legal representation.

The plaintiff, Mubarak Tijani, has prayed the court to nullify the purported result of the FCT Senatorial primary election that produced Kingibe as

candidate of the ADC for the 2027 poll.

Tijani, an aggrieved aspirant, in a suit filed by his lawyer, Kolawole Olowookere, SAN, also urged the court to restrain ADC from forwarding Kingibe's name as party's candidate to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The aspirant further sought an order, restraining INEC from accepting, recognising and publishing Kingibe's name as ADC candidate, arising from the purported primary election of May 21.

The plaintiff stated that the primary poll allegedly held on May 21 was not in compliance with the Electoral Act, 2026 and the ADC's Constitution and Guidelines for the Conduct of Primary Elections for the Nomination of Candidates for the 2027 General Elections.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **GREAT EHI GBADAMOSI**, not **GREAT OKOJIE GBADAMOSI**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **MISS USIOBAIFO EFE**, now wish to be known as **MRS OSHIEGBU EFE**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

REMOVAL OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **AGBONKHESE MIRIAM** and **AGBONKHESE TANIMOLA**, are one and same person. Henceforth, I wish to be known as **AGBONKHESE MIRIAM**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take notes.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **WEALTH OKOJIE GBADAMOSI**, not **OKOJIE WEALTH GBADAMOSI**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **IDEHO CATHERINE EKI** and not **AIWEHO IDEHO CATHERINE**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **AGBOR EUNICE OSARIEMEN**, not **FLORENCE UMWENI**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **PETER DESTING UDO**, now wish to be known as **UDOH JOY PETER**. Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public take note.

RE-ARRANGEMENT OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct and well-arranged name is **EJEMEARE JOHNSON MOMODU**, not **MOMODU EJEMEARE JOHNSON**. Which was wrongly written in my BVN. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take notes.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **POWELL EHI GBADAMOSI**, not **OKOJIE POWELL GBADAMOSI**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE EDO STATE OF NIGERIA
PROBATE REGISTRY, BENIN CITY

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died testate on the date and at the place stated in the column;

AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration (Will Annexed) of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration (Will Annexed) will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. SIR. CHIEF ALEXANDER BELLO TSADO (A.K.A) ALEX BELLO ISADO late of Agenebode, Etsako East L.G.A., who died on the 27th day of August, 2023 in Abuja.	PED/738/2024 Dr. Gregory Ikhamate Tsado and Mr. Aloysius Oshoma Tsado of No 2, Greg Tsado Avenue, Off Uyi Aigbogun Street, 2nd Ugbor Road, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
---	--

DATED THIS 29TH DAY OF JUNE, 2026.


B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
PROBATE REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE EDO STATE OF NIGERIA
PROBATE REGISTRY, BENIN CITY

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and at the place stated in the column;

AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. DR (MRS). JULIAN EZEIMWENGHIAN OBANO , late of Uvbe, Uhumwonde L.G.A., who died on the 22nd day of February, 2026 in Benin City.	PED/458/2026 Miss. Osatohanmwene Aigbekaenosa Obano, Mr. Eloghosa Ozemwogie Obano and Mr. Osarenren Oghoghosa Obano of No 6, Amaiyanvbo Street, Off Okhun Road, Iguosa, Benin City, daughter and sons respectively of the deceased.
--	---

DATED THIS 29TH DAY OF JUNE, 2026.


B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
PROBATE REGISTRAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

MISSING TITLE DOCUMENT

The general public is hereby notified that the certificate of occupancy registered as **No. 14, Page 1 In Volume 2** of the Digital Certificate of Occupancy registry at EDOGIS, belonging to **Mr. Francis Aziegbemhin Uujanhan**, Managing Director of **FEMOSON INVESTMENT DYNAMIC LTD**, is missing.

The document was recently was discovered missing, and while all efforts are on to locate it, the general public and concerned authorities take note.

Signed:
OSARETIN DANIEL



EDO STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD

Education Hub, Iyaro, Benin City, EDO STATE

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

1.0 INTRODUCTION
Edo State Universal Basic Education Board on behalf of Edo State Government is desirous of carrying out procurement of construction and renovation of school buildings for basic school delivery. Consequently, the Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (ESUBEB) now invites interested bidders to submit bids.

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK
Scope of Work for the Construction and Renovation of School Buildings at Oshin Oshin day School, Egor Oko, Edo State. The work includes the following:
Renovation of a block of 4 classrooms with hall and 2 storey construction of a block of 4 classrooms with office and toilet. Construction of a block of 4-unit toilet. Construction of a block of 4-unit toilet and security post. Construction of a block of 4-unit toilet.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
You are required to submit detailed profile which should contain the following:
a. Certificate of incorporation/registration of the Company in the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)
b. Certificate of registration of the Company in the Edo State Public Procurement Commission
c. Certificate of payment of tax by the company for the period up to and including 2023/2024/2025
d. Company's audited financial accounts (including turnover) and funding information over the past 3 years enclosed by a firm of chartered accountants.
e. Company profile including organisational structure, key professional staff with their names and registration with appropriate regulatory bodies (e.g., CAC, CAC, CAC, CAC) and with their current practicing licenses.
f. Evidence of previous similar work done in the past three (3) years showing the following:
i. Letter of Award of the previous work done.
ii. Completion certificate of the previous work done.
g. A sworn affidavit stating that:
i. None of the Directors of the Company have been convicted in any court for any criminal offence including fraud and financial irregularity.
ii. The Company is not in receivership, insolvent or bankrupt.
iii. No officer of the Company is a former or present Director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the company.
iv. Bank references.

All documents for submission must be submitted to the company's letter head paper bearing all necessary stamps, equipment and be clearly marked with evidence of ownership of work.
Letter of consent to all communication of documents is submitted.
Letter of consent of a non-returning tender or the offer of \$0.00 only.

4.0 COLLECTION OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS
Bidding documents can be obtained upon payment of \$100,000.00 (One Hundred Thousand Naira Only) to the following Edo State Government Internal Revenue (IGR) bank account located at the following bank:
Bank Name: Premium Trust Bank
Account Name: 0000000000
Account Number: 0000000000
Account: Edo State Internal Revenue AC

All bids shall be submitted in a sealed envelope, addressed to the Executive Chairman, Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (ESUBEB) and marked clearly as the right-hand corner "BID FOR CONSTRUCTION" and to be submitted at the address below. All bids are to be submitted on or before 12:00 noon, 15th July 2026.

5.0 OPENING OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS
Bidding documents will be opened immediately in the presence of the bidder's designated representative and anyone who wishes to attend at the address below after the close of bid submission on the date by 10:00 noon, 15th July 2026.

6.0 NOTE TO FOLLOW-UP
i. Electron bid will not be permitted.
ii. Late submission of bid will not be accepted.
iii. This invitation shall not be construed to be a contract on the part of Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (ESUBEB) for contract award nor shall it create the right to make any claim whatever and shall not be a contract on the part of the Board by virtue of having responded to this advertisement.

7.0
This notice is issued to inform the public of the procurement process for the construction and renovation of school buildings at Oshin Oshin day School, Egor Oko, Edo State.

Signed: Hon. Sonia Ebanahita Omonzane
Executive Chairman

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **IDONUAGBE DIVINE GRACE**, not **IDONUAGBE DIVINE GRACE**. Also, my correct date of birth is **11-11-2005**, not **11-11-2002** as was wrongly captured on my BVN. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take notes.

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, formerly known as **ABRAHAM ISHIOMA GEORGE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EBINUM ABRAHAM ISHIOMA**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME/ CORRECTION OF DATE BIRTH

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **ABAWEL MERVELOUS**, not **ABAWEL MARVELLOUS**, as was wrongly written on my BVN. Also, my correct date of birth is **28/5/2005**, not **24/4/2004**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

REMOVAL OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **BENEDO KENNETH** and not **BENNDU. E. KENNETH** as wrongly captured in my BVN. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **OSAGIEDE JEFFERY EDEHIA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **SBABI JEFFERY EDEHIA**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take notes.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **CORAL AIZENOSE GBADAMOSI**, not **OKOJIE CORAL GBADAMOSI**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

Resident doctors extend strike ultimatum by 4 weeks

ABUJA

The Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) has extended by four weeks its expired 21-day ultimatum to the Federal Government, warning that it may embark on industrial action if its demands remain unmet.

The decision was contained in a communiqué issued at the end of the association's Extraordinary National Executive Council (E-NEC) meeting, held virtually at the weekend.

The communiqué was jointly signed by the NARD President, Dr Mohammad Suleiman; Secretary-General, Dr Shuaibu Ibrahim; and Publicity and Social Secretary, Dr

Abdulmajid Ibrahim.

NARD said the extension followed a review of government compliance after the 21-day ultimatum issued during its May Ordinary General Meeting (OGM) expired without full implementation of its demands.

The association explained that the additional four-week window would allow the Federal Government to address its outstanding demands before its July National Executive Council (NEC) meeting scheduled for Gombe State.

However, NARD declared an industrial dispute with the Federal Government over unresolved welfare and professional issues affecting resident doctors across the country.

It warned that it could no longer guarantee industrial harmony beyond the additional four-week period if the government failed to address the outstanding concerns.

"Consequently, the E-NEC mandated the National Officers' Committee (NOC) to activate all necessary processes in preparation for appropriate industrial action should the government fail to demonstrate satisfactory compliance within the stipulated period."

The association said its deci-

sion followed extensive deliberations on reports presented by the NOC on engagements with relevant ministries, departments and agencies of government.

It said that although progress had been recorded in some areas, critical welfare issues remained unresolved in spite of repeated assurances from the Federal Government.

According to NARD, the unresolved issues include the non-disbursement of the 2026 Medical Residency Training Fund, delayed payment of house

officers' salaries and outstanding entitlements in several centres.

Other concerns include unpaid 25 and 35 per cent CON-MESS upward review arrears, outstanding 19-month professional allowance arrears, and unpaid salary and promotion arrears owed to doctors.

The association also demanded accelerated implementation of the Medical and Health Workers' Collective Bargaining Agreement and recommendations of ministerial committees on healthcare

workers' welfare and safety.

"The association remains committed to constructive engagement while reserving the right to take appropriate action should the outstanding issues remain unresolved upon expiration of the additional engagement period."

NARD had, at its May 2026 OGM, issued a 21-day ultimatum to the Federal Government to address unresolved welfare and professional concerns affecting resident doctors nationwide.

Hold leaders accountable, Nigeria will survive- ex-presidential aspirant urges

AKURE

Mrs Abisayo Busari-Akinnadeju, an ex-presidential aspirant of the Democratic Leadership Alliance (DLA), says Nigeria cannot survive without holding leaders accountable.

Busari-Akinnadeju, in a statement made available to newsmen on Monday in Akure, said citizen's accountability was key to the country's survival.

She explained that the country might not survive its travails if citizens abandoned their civic obligations and responsibilities.

"Nigeria will not be rebuilt by government alone. It will be rebuilt when citizens refuse to co-operate with evil, refuse to excuse failure, and refuse to normalise the destruction of their own future."

"Nigeria will not fail if we hold our leaders accountable and also hold ourselves accountable for the society we are producing."

"The work of national renewal does not begin only at

the ballot box, it begins at the dinner table. It begins in the conversations we avoid."

"It begins when a mother says, 'Not in my house, or when a father says, 'This family will not live on dishonour."

"It begins when citizens say, 'This country belongs to all of us, and we will not watch it collapse," she said.

According to the ex-presidential aspirant, Nigeria can rise, but first, conscience must rise and it must begin from every home.

Busari-Akinnadeju said holding leaders accountable did not mean insulting them, but meant asking questions, demanding transparency and voting with conscience.

"It means rejecting violence. It means refusing to defend incompetence because of tribe, religion, friendship, party, or personal benefit."

"It means remembering that leadership is a public trust, not a private reward. Nigeria will not fail if citizens wake up. It will not fail if women rise."

Medical expert cautions against self-medication

DUTSE

A medical practitioner at the Federal Medical Centre Birnin Kudu, Dutse, Dr Ibrahim Ahmad on Monday, cautioned the public against the growing practice of self-medication.

Ahmad, who is resident doctor at the hospital's Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, described self-medication, as a dangerous practice that often expose individuals to avoidable complications.

He said the practice could lead to organ failure, drug addiction and sudden death.

According to him, self-medication is costly, adding that many people purchase unnecessary drugs instead of seeking proper medical care.

He noted that indiscriminate use of drugs especially

antibiotics, had contributed significantly to the emergence of antimicrobial resistance.

"People usually buy antibiotics and take only one or two doses before stopping treatment. Later, when they genuinely need the drugs, the organisms have become resistant," he said.

Ahmad warned that excessive use of certain medications could permanently damage vital organs such as the liver and kidneys.

He said that when paracetamol is taken in excess, it could permanently damage the liver, adding that unchecked use of certain analgesics could cause kidney injury, stomach ulcers, and in severe cases, kidney failure.

The medical practitioner consequently, cautioned against repeated use of pain-relieving drugs without prescription and medical supervision.



2025 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT:

Cross-section of beneficiaries of the Rotary International District 9111 Nigeria's empowerment programme for participants from Lagos and Ogun states as beneficiaries of their 2025 Community Empowerment Programme, sponsored by First bank in Lagos

Navy intercepts 22,870 litres of illegal diesel in Rivers operation

PORT HARCOURT

The Nigerian Navy has disrupted the movement of illegally refined petroleum products in Rivers through an intelligence-led operation conducted under Operation DELTA SENTINEL.

This was contained in an operational report issued by the Director of Naval Information, Capt. Abiodun Folorunsho, in Abuja.

Folorunsho said the operation was carried out by personnel of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) SO-ROH deployed to the Orashi

Forest area of Okolomade Community in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers.

He said the area borders Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa, where the naval team conducted the intelligence-led operation.

According to him, the naval team acted on credible intelligence indicating the movement of illegally refined petroleum products through creek channels in the area.

"On arrival, the patrol team intercepted a wooden boat conveying 36 sacks of suspected illegally refined Automotive

Gas Oil (AGO) along an adjoining creek.

"To further exploit the intelligence, aerial surveillance was conducted using a drone, leading to the identification of additional concealed stockpiles hidden under vegetation and inside ponds within the general area."

"A detailed search subsequently led to the recovery of an additional 45 sacks of suspected illegally refined AGO concealed at different locations, bringing the total recovery to 81 sacks containing approximately 22,870 litres," he said.

Folorunsho added that the operation also denied criminal elements the use of the intercepted wooden boat for transporting

illicit petroleum products.

He said the recovered products and the wooden boat were handled in line with extant anti-crude oil theft procedures, further disrupting the logistics network supporting illegal refining activities in the Niger Delta.

The naval spokesman reaffirmed the Navy's commitment to sustaining intelligence-driven operations aimed at dismantling crude oil theft networks, denying criminal elements freedom of action on the nation's waterways and protecting Nigeria's strategic economic assets, freedom of action on the nation's waterways and protecting Nigeria's strategic economic assets.

Regulatory failure behind Alakija building collapse, expert says

LAGOS

An environmentalist, Mr Philip Jakpor, has described the collapse of a three-storey building in the Alakija area of Lagos as evidence of persistent regulatory failure in Nigeria's construction sector.

Jakpor, who is the Executive Director of Renewlyn Development Initiative, made the assertion in an interview with newsmen on Monday in Lagos.

He said the incident reflected a pattern of building collapses recorded across the country over the past two decades, often resulting in loss of lives and property.

According to him, the use of substandard building materials, poor structural designs and weak enforcement of building regulations remain major causes of the recurring incidents.

"Nigeria will continue to witness building collapses unless authorities prioritise compliance with standards and quality assurance measures," he said.

Jakpor said the Federal Government had the primary responsibility of regulating imported and locally produced building materials to prevent

substandard products from entering the market.

He also faulted state governments for inadequate monitoring and enforcement of building regulations.

According to him, state authorities should ensure strict compliance with approved building standards throughout the construction process.

Jakpor noted that the Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development was in existence when the collapsed building was constructed.

He said the ministry should explain how the structure es-

caped effective regulatory scrutiny if contravention notices had previously been issued.

The environmentalist called for stricter enforcement of building codes and greater accountability among regulatory agencies.

He said preventing future building collapses would require coordinated action by federal and state authorities to ensure compliance with safety standards.

The three-storey building in the Alakija area of Lagos collapsed on Thursday, killing nine persons.

A total of 27 persons were

NEWS

Gombe group disburses N290m education grant to indigent students

GOMBE

The Velocity Humanitarian Foundation, says it has disbursed N290 million grants to indigent students in Gombe State.

Its Founder, Aliyu Mohammed, stated this in Monday during the disbursement of N10 million grant to 100 students schooling in various tertiary institutions outside the

state.

Represented by his associate, Adamu Ibrahim, the founder said the initiative was aimed at providing financial assistance to indigent students in the state.

Mohammed said that each of the beneficiaries received N100,000, to support them to focus on studies and ease their burden.

He said that the foundation

had been rendering a lot of services in different communities in the state, including payment of school fees, medical bills, among others.

Mohammed said the foundation had earlier disbursed N280 million to students of Gombe State University, and Federal University, Kashere, who were unable to pay their school fees for the 2024/2025 academic session.

"Today, we came to give

some tokens to Gombe State indigenes who are schooling outside the state," he said.

Mohammed urged the beneficiaries to use the money judiciously for their studies so that they could become great in the future.

Ms Faith Joel, a 300 level student of Federal University, Wukari in Taraba, lauded the gesture, adding that it would assist to off set her departmental

dues which has been pending for months.

Another beneficiary, Mary Maida, a student of Modibbo

Adama University in Adama, commended the foundation for its support to students at a high time.

**INSTALLATION:**

L-R: Wife of former Chairman, Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Oyo State Council, Mrs Monsurat Babalola, Baale Beyioku, Ibadan, Timothy Adeleke, and immediate past NUJ Chairman, Oyo State Council, Chief Ademola Babalola, during his installation as Apesinola and his wife Yeye Apesinola by Baale Beyioku Ibadan, on Monday.

5 die, 8 injured in Niger road crash

AGAIE (NIGER)

Five persons have been confirmed dead, while eight others sustained critical injuries in a road crash that occurred on Sunday in Agaie, Agaie Local Government Area of Niger.

Mr Hussaini Guregi, Desk

Officer of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in Agaie LGA, confirmed the incident to newsmen.

Guregi said the accident involved a trailer conveying about 40 passengers and a tanker.

He explained that the trailer

was travelling from Gusau in Zamfara to Shagamu in Ogun State when the crash occurred.

According to him, five persons died on the spot, while the injured were taken to the General Hospital, Agaie, for treatment.

"The accident was caused by a faulty tanker stationed on the

road and an attempted overtake by another trailer.

"As the trailer conveying the passengers attempted to avoid the tanker, it lost control and crashed," he said.

Guregi added that the remains of the deceased had been deposited at the General Hospital, Agaie, morgue.

CCSI-FCC Project intensifies campaign against maternal deaths through child spacing in Kaduna

KADUNA

The Centre for Communication and Social Impact (CCSI) through the Faith and Cultural Champions Project (FCC) has intensified efforts to reduce maternal and newborn mortality in Kaduna State.

The effort channelled through community sensitisation on child spacing and maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) is being implemented under the Faith and Cultural Champions (FCC) Project in partnership with Ummulkhairi Foundation, targeting young but married adolescent girls and boys, mothers-in-laws, husbands, as well as traditional and religious leaders.

Speaking during a sensitisa-

tion programme in Karatudu community on Monday, the Chairperson of Ummulkhairi Foundation and one of the Implementing partners of Faith and Cultural Champions (IFCC), Hajiya Maryam Sani, said the engagement was designed to educate residents on the importance of childbirth spacing and accessing healthcare services.

She said the programme was aimed at addressing the rising cases of maternal and newborn deaths associated with poor health practices and inadequate access to healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth.

According to her, women who do not practice childbirth spacing often face severe health challenges, while children born under such conditions may also suffer adverse health outcomes.

Sani noted that complications

such as prolonged labour and obstetric conditions including vesicovaginal fistula (VVF) could be reduced through proper spacing of pregnancies and increased hospital deliveries.

"We are encouraging women to visit health facilities and also seeking the support of traditional and religious leaders because they influence decisions affecting women's health and wellbeing in the community," she said.

She explained that the Karatudu community was selected because of existing structures and prior engagement with residents, adding that previous interactions revealed recurring concerns around maternal and family health issues.

Sani said early outcomes of the intervention had been encouraging, citing strong community participation and posi-

tive feedback from local leaders.

According to her, although the programme initially targeted about 80 beneficiaries comprising men and women, turnout exceeded expectations.

Also speaking, a member of the Advisory Faith and Cultural Champions (AFCC) Team, Dr Zainab Muhammad-Idris, said the initiative seeks to reduce maternal and newborn deaths to the barest minimum through awareness creation on childbirth spacing.

Muhammad-Idris commended community leaders for embracing the programme, describing their support as an indication of commitment toward improving family health outcomes.

She said healthier families would contribute to long-term community development and produce responsible future generations.

Protect public infrastructure, NSCDC urges FCT residents

ABUJA

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), FCT Command, on Monday urged residents to actively participate in protecting public infrastructure.

Corps Commandant, FCT Dr Olusola Odumosu said that government could not safeguard critical national assets alone.

He noted that security is every Nigerian's responsibility and harped on the need for residents to have a sense of collective ownership.

"Security operations are intelligence-driven, therefore, we rely heavily on credible information from members of the public.

"Whenever residents notice suspicious movements or activities around critical infrastructure, such information should promptly be reported to the NSCDC," he said.

He said that because issues of vandalism pose serious threat to national development, the corps is focused on

tackling same diligently.

"As the lead agency responsible for protecting Critical National Assets and Infrastructure (CNAI), we are always ready to respond swiftly once credible information is received," he said.

According to Odumosu, the Federal Government through the FCT Minister, Mr Nysom Wike, is investing significantly in upgrading infrastructures across the territory.

"We cannot allow criminal elements to sabotage these efforts by destroying public facilities.

"I want to make it clear that the FCT is no longer a 'safe haven' for vandals; They should either desist from these criminal acts or be prepared to face the full weight of the law.

"We are maintaining 24-hour surveillance across the territory, and anyone apprehended for vandalising public infrastructure will be prosecuted," he said.

Odumosu noted that the corps does not tolerate illegal operations, adding that it will not compromise on its stand.

NUJ urges Kogi Govt. to provide insurance cover for journalists

LOKOJA

The Kogi State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has called on the state government to establish a comprehensive insurance scheme for practising journalists in the state.

The council made the call following a road accident involving members of the Correspondents' Chapel on the Obajana Road on Saturday while they were returning from an official assignment.

The appeal was contained in a statement jointly signed by the council's Chairman, Mr Ademola Haruna, and Secretary, Dr Atuluku Samuel, and made available to newsmen in Lokoja on Monday.

The council described insurance cover for journalists as a necessity, considering the occupational hazards associated with the profession.

It noted that journalists, as members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm, play a critical role in promoting democracy, accountability and national development, and therefore deserve adequate welfare and protection through a structured insurance policy.

According to the council, the state government should, as a matter of urgency, establish a comprehensive insurance scheme for practising journalists in the state.

It said the initiative would boost the morale, commit-

ment, courage and professionalism of media practitioners in the discharge of their constitutional responsibilities.

"It has become imperative to appeal to the Kogi Government to give serious consideration to insurance cover for practising journalists.

"No investment is too much when it comes to safeguarding the lives of media professionals who work tirelessly, often under hazardous conditions, to keep society informed.

"Such a policy would further demonstrate government's commitment to the welfare of journalists and strengthen its cordial relationship with the media," the statement said.

The council thanked God for sparing the lives of members of the Correspondents' Chapel involved in the accident and prayed against a recurrence.

It also urged the relevant authorities to intensify efforts to check the activities of heavy-duty truck drivers operating on the Obajana Road.

The council expressed concern over what it described as the reckless driving habits of some truck drivers, saying their actions had continued to endanger the lives of other road users.

"It is important for the appropriate authorities to address the alarming rate of recklessness among some truck drivers."

Borno begins documentation for 1,066 newly recruited teachers

BORNO

Borno has commenced the documentation process for 1,066 newly recruited teachers following the release of the list of successful candidates for employment

into the Borno State Senior Secondary School Education Board (BSSEB).

The development follows the completion of the recruitment exercise, including the competency test conducted on April 11.

This was contained in a statement issued by Mr Malah Abatcha, the Board's Secretary on Monday in Maiduguri.

It directed all successful candidates to report to the BSSEB headquarters between June 29 and July 11, for documentation and verification before assuming duty.

According to the statement, the recruitment exercise was designed to address the shortage

of teachers in public secondary schools across the state and improve the quality of education.

It explained that the selection and deployment of successful candidates were based on staffing requirements identified through school-specific needs assessments, with priority given to qualified personnel from the local communities where the schools are located.

The board stressed that appointments and postings were made strictly according to the schools indicated on the list, warning that requests for transfers from assigned duty stations would not be considered.

It added that candidates unwilling to serve in their designated schools should decline the offer.

The statement noted that

acceptance of the appointment signifies readiness to work in the assigned locations.

The board congratulated the successful applicants and expressed optimism that the newly recruited teachers would strengthen the education sector by filling critical vacancies, particularly in underserved local government areas across the State.

Delta govt urges exploration of business opportunities in state

AJUWA VICTOR

ASABA

The Delta State Government has called on local and foreign investors to take advantage of the state's vast investment opportunities, particularly in sectors where public policy, private capital, and local enterprises can work together to drive economic growth, create jobs, and deliver sustainable returns.

Governor Sheriff Oborevwori made the call during a town hall meeting organised in Asaba by the Delta State Government in collaboration with the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) as part of its nationwide engagement with members of the organised private sector.

Represented by the Commissioner for Finance, Sir Fidelis Tiliye, the governor said his administration had implemented far-reaching reforms to improve the ease of doing business in the state.

He noted that the reforms cover key areas such as land administration, investment facilitation, public-private partnerships, revenue administration, security, and dispute resolution.

He explained that the state had digitally indexed and archived

Certificates of Occupancy issued between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2024, to enhance efficiency in land administration.

He also disclosed that the government had issued an Executive Order institutionalising the Framework for Responsible and Inclusive Land-Intensive Agricultural Investment (FRILIA) and automated the central billing system for taxes, levies, and other government collections across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies.

According to him, the state has also strengthened its legal framework through the implementation of the Delta State Anti-Kidnapping Law, 2016, and the establishment of Small Claims Courts to ensure commercial disputes are resolved within 60 days.

He said the reforms were designed to create a more transparent, efficient, and investor-friendly business environment, assuring prospective investors that Delta remains peaceful, secure, and ready for investment.

In her address, the Director-General of the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), Princess Zahra Mustapha Audu, highlighted the critical role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in driving economic development.



NIGERIAN ARMY DAY CELEBRATION:

Wife of GOC, 6 Division, Nigerian Army, Port Harcourt, Mrs Manfan Ejim-Emekah, her husband, Maj.-Gen. Emmanuel Emekah, and other senior Army officers, during the 163rd Nigerian Army Day Celebration Church Service at St. Mathew Military Catholic Chaplaincy Headquarters at 6 Division in Port Harcourt.

Oborevwori commends police over arrest of electric cable vandals

AJUWA VICTOR

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has commended the State police command for the arrest of two suspected electric cable vandals and the recovery of vandalised cables, describing the operation as a major step in protecting critical public infrastructure across the state.

In a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Sir Festus Ahon, Oborevwori praised the Commissioner of Police, CP Yemi Oyeniyi, officers and men of the command for their prompt response and sustained commitment to combating criminal activities, particularly the vandalism of government facilities.

He also commended the local vigilante groups for their support and cooperation with security agencies in the state, adding that the arrest demonstrated government's resolve to safeguard public assets and ensure that investments in in-

frastructure continue to serve the people without disruption.

The police in a statement by its public relations officer, SP Bright Edefe, said operatives of the Kwalla Police Station, working in collaboration with members of a local vigilante group, acted on credible intelligence on June 25, 2026, and stormed the Ibabu-Ugiliama Road where suspected vandals were allegedly dismantling and stealing electric cables.

The suspects reportedly attempted to flee on sighting the security team, but were apprehended during the operation. He said one of the suspects sustained injuries and is currently receiving treatment at a hospital, while the other remains in police custody.

The suspects were identified as Osakwe Sunday, 28, and Ekene Obocha, 34. The vandalised electric cables were recovered as exhibits.

Commending the operation, the governor urged residents to continue supporting security agencies by providing timely and credible information that would aid in the fight against crime.

KADUNA

The Police Command in Kaduna State has detained a couple over the alleged death of a teenage boy following an incident in the Kurmin-Mashi area of Kaduna metropolis.

The spokesman of the command, DSP Mansir Hassan, confirmed the development and said investigation had commenced to determine the

circumstances surrounding the death of the boy.

Hassan said the incident occurred on Sunday night along Dahiru Road in Kurmin-Mashi and involved a boy identified as Sadiq.

According to him, preliminary information indicated that the teenager was allegedly subjected to punishment by his mother and stepfather over a dispute relating to missing money.

He said the police received

reports that the boy had been sent to withdraw money from a Point-of-Sale (PoS) operator before questions later arose over the transaction.

"The suspects are currently in police custody while investigation is ongoing to establish the circumstances surrounding the incident and determine the next line of action," he said.

Residents of the area told our Correspondent that the incident had generated concern within the community.

Some witnesses alleged that neighbours and community

members attempted to intervene during the incident and appealed for restraint.

Others said efforts were also made to resolve the matter peacefully.

The residents expressed shock over the teenager's death and called for a thorough investigation into the matter.

Police authorities urged members of the public to remain calm and allow investigators to conclude their findings, assuring that appropriate action would be taken in line with the dictates of the law.

Police probe teacher's death after alleged school assault

LOKOJA

The Police command in Kogi has launched an investigation into the death of a nursery and primary school teacher in Ugdamaka.

The deceased, identified as Maryam Usman, 30, reportedly died after an alleged assault by parent of ward over a disciplinary action she had taken against the child.

The Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Afusat Saliu, disclosed this in a statement in Lokoja.

She said the incident was reported at the Olamaboro Divisional Headquarters on June 25.

According to her, the teacher was allegedly attacked for disciplining a pupil at Brains Minds Nursery and Primary School.

Saliu said preliminary investigations revealed that Abdullahi Ishaka and two women allegedly stormed the school.

"The trio allegedly assaulted Maryam Usman over her decision to discipline a pupil," she said.

She added that the victim sustained serious injuries during the reported attack.

The police spokesperson said Usman was initially treated at a hospital in Ugdamaka.

She was later referred to Iko-Ojo Hospital, Okpo, for further medical attention. "However, she succumbed to her injuries and died on June 25," Saliu stated.

She said following the report, officers from Olamaboro Division visited the school and the deceased's residence.

The Command spokesperson said necessary documentation had been completed as part of the investigation process.

She added that arrangements were underway to convey the corpse to General Hospital, Ankpa.

Saliu said the facility would

conduct medical examination and autopsy to determine the cause of death.

The spokesperson stated that the suspects fled before police officers arrived at the scene. "Efforts are ongoing to apprehend them," she said.

Saliu added that the case would be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department after arrests.

The police promised a "discreet and comprehensive investigation" into the circumstances surrounding the death.

The identities of the two women and the pupil involved have not been disclosed.

PERSPECTIVES

Poor light: How blackouts affect student life in Abraka



Isoko light protester



Students without light

ANGEL EGHAREVBA OSARETIN,

It is 7:12 p.m. in Site II, Abraka. The whole lodge is dark again. NEPA has been off for three days. In Room 3, Faith holds her phone torch while copying notes from a coursemate's notebook. The torch flickers. Her phone battery is at 6%. "If light no come tonight, I no go submit assignment tomorrow," she mutters.

Faith is a 200-level Mass Communication undergraduate at DELSU. Her test is by 8 a.m. the next morning. Her power bank died yesterday, and her neighbour's generator is "for sale, not for use" because fuel now costs about N1,300 per litre. This is more than an inconvenience. It is how blackouts are stealing sleep, grades, and money from many young people in Abraka.

A walk around Campus Site III at night reveals a different side of university life. Whenever there is electricity on campus, the new lecture halls become "night clubs" — not for partying, but for studying and charging devices. From 7 p.m., the halls are packed with undergraduates struggling for available sockets because, as many say, "na there light dey sure."

For practical courses, unstable electricity means wasted laboratory hours. The university generator operates for only a few hours daily. The

timetable may say 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., but reality is often different. Sometimes power comes on by 7:15 p.m. and goes off by 7:45 p.m. By the time laptops are connected, the electricity is gone again.

The cost goes beyond academics. It affects finances as well. Most residents of the university town live off campus. Landlords charge between N200,000 and N350,000 for a bed-sitter, while self-contained apartments cost between N500,000 and N800,000. Yet electricity is rarely guaranteed.

As a result, many depend on generators. A small "I better pass my neighbour" generator can consume about N2,000 worth of fuel in three hours. That amounts to roughly N14,000 weekly just to charge phones and iron clothes.

Blessings, a 300-level undergraduate and nail technician, relies heavily on electricity for her business. "My ring light needs NEPA," she says. "Phone torch no fit show nail designs well." Last week, she lost a customer because her product photos were too dark. "N8,000 gone," she laments. She now wakes up at 1 a.m. whenever there is electricity to photograph her work. "Sleep? Wetin be that?" she asks jokingly.

Health has also become a casualty of the power crisis. Malaria cases tend to increase whenever outages persist. "No fan, no net. People sleep

with windows open. Mosquitoes enter," one resident explains. During one lecture, I met Favour, a 200-level applying eye drops. "I read till 1 a.m. with my Infinix torch," she says. "Now my eyes dey pain me."

Security concerns also increase whenever electricity goes off. Areas such as Ekrejeta Road, NUT, Station Road, and FSP have little or no street lighting. Those returning from evening lectures often walk through complete darkness. Many female residents now move in groups, while male colleagues escort them home. Some have stopped attending night fellowships altogether. The situation creates opportunities for thieves to snatch phones and rob passers-by. "It

is safer to move in groups and avoid lonely roads at night,"

Yet, despite the challenges, people continue to adapt. This is Abraka, where survival itself has become a skill. In Campus Site III, charging spots have become thriving businesses. One shop owner charges N250 per phone and N300 for power banks. Her generator runs from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily. "If light no come, I be the NEPA," she laughs. Study groups now gather under mango trees during day time study. At night, many head to Awoko, where solar-powered lights provided by the university allow them to read until morning. "Better than candle," one reader remarks.



This is Abraka, where survival itself has become a skill. In Campus Site III, charging spots have become thriving businesses. One shop owner charges N250 per phone and N300 for power banks. Her generator runs from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily. "If light no come, I be the NEPA"

University authorities maintain that the problem is beyond their control. "We need a dedicated electricity line for the campus and surrounding student areas," a source noted. "No power supply means no future."

So what is the real cost of these blackouts?

Is it the 4.0 student whose CGPA drops because she cannot study effectively. It is the small business owner who loses customers because products cannot be photographed properly. It is the extra money spent on fuel, charging devices, and alternative sources of energy.

In Abraka today, shouting "Up NEPA!" is no longer a celebration. It is a brief moment of relief. People rush to pump water, iron clothes, charge devices, and pray the electricity stays long enough.

Back in Site III, it is now 1:25 a.m. Angel power bank has finally died. She closes her GST textbook, spreads a wrapper on the cold floor, and prepares for another restless night. Undergraduates are not simply studying to pass examinations. They are fighting a battle they never signed up for. Every night, they face an opponent that never sleeps: darkness. And for now, the blackout seems to be winning. Until reliable electricity becomes a reality, universities will not only produce graduates. They will continue to produce survivors.

ArtsWorld

with Francis Odupute
08023680030

Ken Dickens Nwabuku's Alphabasics spark new conversations

“Any authentic work of art must start an argument between the artist and his audience” -Rebecca West (1892-1983).

The alphabet as a communicative medium is basically used for writing (written word) and speech (spoken word). However, the alphabets also have creative potentials (design word) and possibilities inherent in them. An examination of the English alphabet has revealed that these design potentials and possibilities have not been given adequate attention over time by artists particularly, design professionals.

Contemporary Nigerian artist and lecturer, Dr. Kennette Dickens Nwabuku of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), after a series of research, has formulated a system and concept which has sparked fresh conversations on alphabetical manipulation of the principles of basic design for concept derivation and production packaging.

Speaking with his audience during his solo art exhibition held at the Prof. John Ogene Drawing Studio, Department of Fine and Applied Arts, UNIBEN, the artist cum researcher enthused his audience with lucid explanations:

“This is a marriage of the English alphabet and the principles of basic design. Basic designs, as we know, are the principles on which art is built

“I have formulated a concept whereby basic design principles, coupled with English alphabets, combining English alphabets and basic designs I have formulated a concept whereby every branch of art, irrespective of discipline, art can be generated.

“We know before now that English letters are used either for writing or for speaking, but I have formulated a system whereby it will go beyond writing and speaking but go into design. If you go to the dictionary definition of the alphabet, it is a system for writing and speaking. But by the discovery I have made, I have come to add that the English alphabet or alphabet as it were, can be used for writing, speaking and for making art. That is the concept of alpha-basics.

“This is where I started from. Now as you go through the exhibits, you will realize that it's difficult to identify a particular letter. So I have systematically, under tutelage, formulated a system whereby you can start from the known and end up in the unknown. As you can see, pick a particular letter - for instance, letter K. At the end of the analysis you'd find out that it's no longer letter K but it has become a design principle. That is the beauty of alpha-basics,” Dr. Nwabuku stated.

According to Professor John Ogene, DVC Emeritus/Professor of Graphics and Art History,

supervisor of the project and mentor to the artist, “Today, we are all here once again to witness another journey into the world of the alphabet as a creative model, as presented in this exhibition, aptly titled: ALPHABASICS:

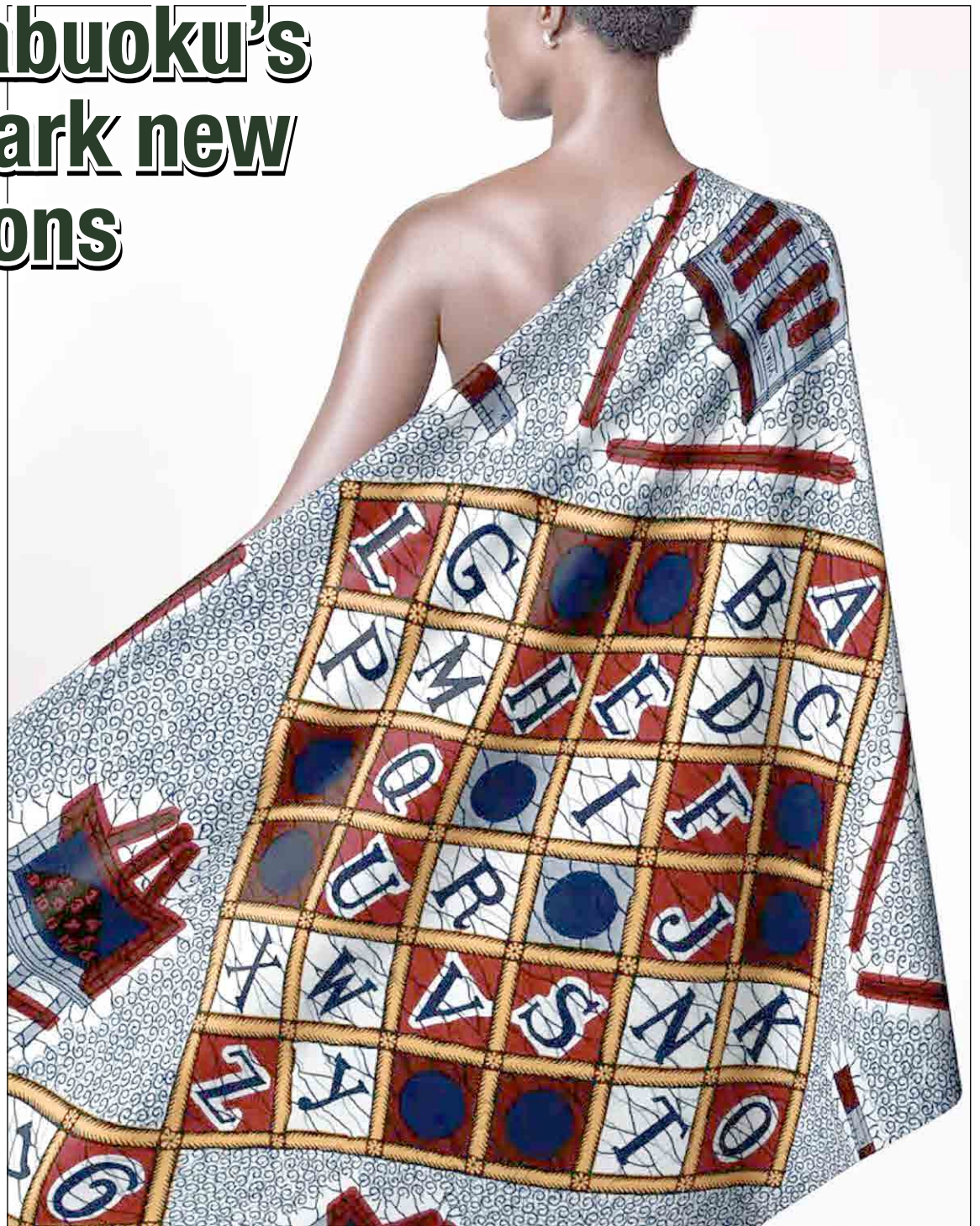
Using the English alphabet for design purposes as can be observed in this exhibition, can be a creative and effective way to communicate messages, express artistic vision, or simply add visual interest

Alphabetical Manipulation of the Principles of Basic Designs for Concepts Derivation and Product Packaging. Dr. Dickens, though majoring in Graphic Design and Communications, however, his experimentation in this regards has successfully bridged the gap between creative disciplines, because as can be observed in this outing, his coinage “Alpha-Basics” which is a dynamic collaboration between the letters of the Alphabet and the principles of Basic Designs, can be seen covering vast areas including Ceramics, Textiles, Interior Decoration and much more.”

Also lending his voice to the conversation at the exhibition, Dr. Kennedy Jude Eweka, H.O.D, Department of Fine and Applied Arts, UNIBEN, said “ALPHABASICS: Alphabetical Manipulation of the Principles of Basic Designs for Concepts Derivation and Product Packaging”, is a vibrant showcase of artistic expression and creativity. This exhibition brings together a diverse collection of works that explore the creative impulse inherent in the letters of the English Alphabet. Through various mediums and styles, Dr. Kennette Dickens Nwabuku invites you to experience his unique perspectives and visions. This collection of art works explores the intersection of the principles of Basic Design such as line, balance, emphasis, contrast, movement, proportion, repetition, rhythm, space, pattern, unity, variety, colours fused with the diversity of the letterforms in the English alphabet.

“Using the English alphabet for design purposes as can be observed in this exhibition, can be a creative and effective way to communicate messages, express artistic vision, or simply add visual interest. In fact, the possibilities are endless, and the use of the English alphabet in design can lead to innovative and visually striking creation,” Dr. Eweka posited.

Other dignitaries at the ALPHABASICS solo art exhibition included Prof. and Mrs. Manasseh E. Imonikebe (chairman of the occasion); Prof. and Mrs. E. I. Ononeme; Prof. Mrs. Theresa U. Osaigbovo; Dr. Felix Osaigbovo (Deputy Dean); Mr. Felix Umukoro.



Entertainment

— with Davidson Imosime Izegaegbe —



The wild timeline of Nigerian cinema

It is globally believed that a photo tells more than a thousand words. If that is so, now we can begin to understand why few frames of edited footages attract millions of views same way a drop of honey attracts a colony of ants. We all know that, long before our streaming algorithms curated our weekend watchlists, and decades before Nollywood took centre stage as a global buzzword, the seeds of Nigerian cinemas were already planted in the most unexpected ways.

The history of filmmaking in Nigeria, is not the usual boring textbook timeline most of us are used to, it is also not that sound from a village bell cutting through the silent night to alert all. It is a high-stake film, filled with imperial propaganda, that artistic rebellion, economic crashes, and legendary entrepreneurial hustle. Now let us all, together, picture this: It's now many years ago in the heart of Lagos. The cool quiet air inside the iconic Glover Memorial Hall is thick like ants wrapped round a cube of sugar, with great anticipation. The legendary nationalist Herbert Macaulay has just pulled off a major cultural coup by inviting Balboa and Company, a traveling exhibition outfit touring West Africa, just to show Nigerians something they had never seen before: moving pictures.

The crowd watched in awe as quiet silent, flickering black-and-white images danced across a makeshift screen. During this period, there were no complex story plots or star-studded casts, attracting paparazzi like it is nowadays, but just short newsreels and documentaries. Audiences at that time were mesmerized and carried away by simple footage of a steamer cutting through open water, as well as

the grand coronation of King Edward VII. This was not Hollywood, but, the cinematic spark had just officially been lit in Nigeria.

By the 1920s, the British colonial administration immediately realized the impact film can make. They just got to know also that film production was beyond mere entertainment. They knew from the reactions of the diverse audiences that film was a powerful tool of influence on the minds of the people. British filmmakers ultimately began shooting on Nigerian soil, churning out educational documentaries, health parables, and many overt imperial propaganda to make us, the negroes as they call us, to begin to see and accept things from their own myopic perspective. To turn this into a well-oiled machine, the British government during that moment of brainstorming, launched the Colonial Film Unit (CFU) in 1939. We should also not forget as well, how that era birthed two massive milestones for local representation: *The Blueprint* (Palaver, 1926): Directed by British filmmaker Geoffrey Barkas. This, I would say, was the ball that set Nigerian filmmaking rolling. "Palava" was the very first feature-length movie made in Nigeria. However, even though this film was undeniably framed through an organized but biased, paternalistic colonial lens, the film made history by giving indigenous Nigerian actors, like Dawiya and Yilkuba a great opportunity of speaking roles for the first time. Did you know the film "Palava" was shot in the Northern part of Nigeria?

Also, remember that the film "Palava" was shot in Black and White and so were films around the globe at that era. A period, however, came

Looking at the filmmaking journey from the Colonial Film Unit to the Nigeria Film Unit, can we now bold say it was Grace to Grass or the die hard mindsets of a people who looked beyond the ashes of economic scarcity, to see only a multi-billion-dollar empire film industry now called Nollywood?

for improvement in filmmaking as liked minds carved a part for movies to advance from Black and White to coloured. As Nigeria moved toward independence, film director Sam Zebba dropped the movie "Fincho", in 1957. This unique landmark project was the first Nigerian film to be shot entirely in vibrant colour as well as officially copyrighted to the newly minted Nigerian Film Unit from the Colonial Film Unit. The future, viewed from the filmmaking journey from "Palava" to "Fincho" looked bright, colorful, and independent at that moment.

Remember also that these feats happened under the colonial rule and influence. I believed Nigerians learnt so much from the Colonial filmmakers and this was reflective in the

manner indigenous filmmakers stood up as soon as the Union Jack came down in 1960. The filmmakers move was creatively fierce and was a brilliant wave toward filmmaking mindset. These Nigerian filmmakers were greatly determined to snatch the camera back from the colonialists with the sole intention to tell authentic and uncompromised African stories on gorgeous, cinematic celluloid film.

This spectacular era after Nigeria independence fast forward into overdrive with Francis Odele's "Kongi Harvest" (1970), a bold big-screen adaptation of Wole Soyinka's legendary play. After this era, Nigeria witnessed a new breed of creative pioneers as they boldly stepped into the filmmaking spotlight. There were also, great film directors like Ola Balogun and Eddie Ugbomah whose films cut through creative boundaries. Do we still remember iconic theater maestros like Hubert Ogunde and the hilarious Moses Olaiya, aka Baba Sala, who successfully transitioned their massive stage productions to the silver screen?

The plot twist in 1972, however, was the Indigenization Decree passed by the Nigerian government which ultimately demanded that foreign-owned cinemas should be handed over to Nigerians. Also do not forget that money truly does magic and with the roaring 1970s oil boom, it then enabled a huge move from the packed-out theater culture to the cinema culture. There was something unique that happened in Nigeria when there was a loud 'interregnum' between celluloid and the VHS Revolution in the 1990s. By the late 1980s, a harsh economic downturn and rising insecurity problems boldly kept people indoors. This was

during the military junta after the toppling of President Shehu Shagari's government. The grand cinemas around Nigeria emptied out, as film projectors gathered dust, and the celluloid era totally collapsed. During this VHS era, the cinema culture was known to have died and homes were then glued to movies and indigenous programs shown in Nigeria local television station. This was what actually created the easy acceptance of home video, which created a boom for VHS players and cassettes importers to Nigeria.

This sudden chameleonic adaptability by Nigerians, simply showed that, nothing can suppress Nigerian creativity. Instead of Nigeria filmmakers and cinema lovers to give up hopes, the filmmakers completely re-engineered and restructured their filmmaking mindsets in regards to the game. Armed with the presence of cheap and accessible VHS and Video CD (VCD) technology, filmmakers cleverly bypassed the theater entirely and took their movies straight to the people's living rooms. The home video presence and acceptance was however sealed in 1992 by electronics merchant Kenneth Nnebue who then was looking for a creative way to sell piles of overstock blank VHS tapes at his warehouses. He saw an opening and quickly grabbed it by financing a gritty, unique supernatural Igbo story titled "Living in Bondage".

Looking at the filmmaking journey from the Colonial Film Unit to the Nigeria Film Unit, can we now bold say it was Grace to Grass or the die hard mindsets of a people who looked beyond the ashes of economic scarcity, to see only a multi-billion-dollar empire film industry now called Nollywood?

NEWS**Foreign****VENEZUELA RESCUE MUM:**

When I saw my son I felt like I was born again, I couldn't believe it", Gerson said.

Pakistani strikes kill dozens in Afghanistan

Pakistan launched air strikes and sent ground troops into Afghan provinces along its border on Sunday, killing dozens.

At least 36 civilians, including women and children, have been killed and more than 160 others wounded, says Afghanistan's Taliban government, and has condemned it as a "cowardly act" and "a crime and atrocity".

Pakistan's information minister Attaullah Tarar said 29 militants were killed in strikes targeted at their hideouts, adding that the strikes were a response to "recent terrorist attacks against innocent people".

Pakistan has long accused Afghanistan of harbouring

terror groups that carry out cross-border attacks, a claim the Taliban government rejects.

The two countries had agreed to a ceasefire last October following weeks of deadly clashes. As with past internationally-mediated truce deals, however, that ceasefire has since fallen apart.

The BBC has not independently confirmed the casualty figures claimed by the Pakistani and Taliban governments in the latest attacks.

Afghanistan's Taliban government says the strikes hit civilian homes, while Pakistan says they were targeted at militant hideouts in Afghanistan's Paktia, Paktika and Kunar

provinces.

Casualties were concentrated in Mandokhail, a village in the Paktika province, Taliban officials say.

The attacks on Sunday come a day after three members of the Sindh Rangers, a Pakistani paramilitary force, were killed at their headquarters in Karachi, according to Pakistan's military. Three militants also died in the suicide attack, and Pakistani officials said they had arrested a fourth, who was an Afghan.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a splinter faction of the TTP, claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack.

Both the TTP, also known as the Pakistan Taliban, and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar are banned

in Pakistan, and by the United Nations, because of their involvement in past attacks.

Intermittent border clashes and airstrikes in the border area have killed dozens of people in recent months, according to officials in both countries.

In February, clashes between the two countries left dozens of people dead. In March, a Pakistani strike on a drug rehabilitation centre in Kabul killed hundreds.

Earlier in June, Pakistan launched deadly air strikes that killed 26 militants. Afghanistan's Taliban government said 13 people, mostly children, were also killed in the strikes.

US says it has agreed to 'stand down' after exchange of strikes with Iran

The US and Iran have agreed to "stand down" following an exchange of strikes over the past few days, media reports cite a US official as saying.

It comes after several attacks in and around the Strait of Hormuz, with both nations accusing each other of violating their ceasefire.

The US official told the BBC's US partner CBS News on Sunday that vessels would be able to move through the Gulf waterway "freely", and that talks on a deal to permanently end the war would continue.

On Monday, Deputy Iranian Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi denied that there were plans for technical talks this week. But US President Donald Trump said a meeting would be held in Qatar's capital

at Iran's request.

"IRAN HAS REQUESTED A MEETING. IT WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW IN DOHA," he wrote on Truth Social, without giving any details.

On 17 June, the US and Iran signed a 14-point Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which included an "immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts".

As part of the MoU, Iran agreed to use its "best efforts for the safe passage of commercial vessels with no charge for 60 days".

But the ceasefire agreed less than two weeks ago has been under threat in recent days because of renewed attacks by both sides.

Strikes resumed on Thursday after an Iranian projectile hit a cargo ship in the Strait of

Hormuz.

Over the weekend, the US retaliated with a series of strikes on Iran, hitting multiple targets in what US Central Command (Centcom) called a direct response to the "continued aggression" against commercial shipping.

On Saturday, Iran responded with strikes on US bases in Kuwait and Bahrain. The US has said none of these attacks reached their targets, and there were no casualties or damage.

The Strait of Hormuz is a key waterway for oil and gas shipments, and was effectively closed by Tehran after the US and Israel launched attacks on Iran at the end of February.

On Friday, the US also mediated the signing of a framework agreement between Israel and Lebanon aimed at paving the way to a lasting peace.

Due to ongoing fighting between Israeli forces and the Iranian-backed armed group Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, that ceasefire also looked shaky.

The leader of Hezbollah rejected the agreement and accused the Lebanese government of undermining Lebanon's sovereignty.

On Sunday, two days after the agreement was signed, the Israeli army said it had struck a 200m-long tunnel used by Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, which it said contained hundreds of weapons.

The US was informed ahead of the attack, according to a statement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz.

Tehran says hostilities in Lebanon must stop for a wider ceasefire deal to stick.

Mum rescued from Venezuela rubble with newborn baby tells how he helped her survive

A mother who was pulled from the rubble of her wrecked home in Venezuela with her 18-day-old baby has told the BBC of how her son helped keep her alive.

Dayana Patino said her son Juan David gave her "motivation to be awake and alert".

"As long as he was alive, I was going to be alive. Every now and then I was touching his nose for proof that he was still breathing," she said.

Footage of the rescue has been shared around the world, with Juan David becoming a symbol of hope in Venezuela, which has been devastated by the twin earthquakes that hit the country on Wednesday - killing at least 1,450 people.

Tens of thousands more are missing in what the country's interim president has described as the "most brutal natural catastrophe" in Venezuela's history.

Search efforts are continuing, but hopes are diminishing that more survivors will be found.

At a clinic in the Venezuelan capital Caracas on Sunday, Dayana told the BBC of the terrifying hours she had spent underground, holding her tiny son close and praying that they would be saved.

She had been doing the washing up in her eighth-floor apartment in the northern coastal region of La Guaira when the earthquakes hit. She instantly rushed to cradle her son, thinking it would be "only a light tremor".

"I felt like I was flying. After that, I felt like I was sinking in water and dirt, and then I fell into the pit where I remained. I don't know how I didn't let go of my baby because I was flying. I got crushed against furniture," she said.

Instantly, she said she started to scream but soon realised that no one could hear her.

"When I saw my son I felt like I was born again, I couldn't believe it", Gerson said.

"I said to myself I'm not going to waste my energy - I'm going to scream when it's needed, when I hear voices or steps nearby," she said.

"I don't know how I kept

so calm because my left leg was trapped under concrete. I couldn't move. My temple was pressed against a rock."

Dayana said she found hope when she felt a bible beneath her.

"There began my journey of survival," she said.

In the darkness of the rubble, she could see a "pinprick of light that looked like the moon".

She said her rescue came after she heard her brother calling her name.

"I said to myself, this is my only chance. From the top of my lungs I cried out... I screamed 'Here I am' with all my might, and he said 'I found you, and I promise you that I won't leave until I get you out.'"

He kept that promise, and a delicate rescue operation followed to bring both mother and baby out of the rubble on Thursday night.

Dayana suffered injuries to both of her legs when the earthquake hit, while Juan fortunately only sustained minor injuries.

Dayana's husband Gerson had just returned home and parked the car when the earthquakes hit. He managed to jump over a fence to safety.

When he saw what had become of their apartment building, he feared the worst.

The moment of his baby and wife's rescue was "a miracle", he said.

In widely shared footage of the rescue, Gerson can be seen clenching his eyes shut and tilting his head back to the sky as he embraces his son, overwhelmed with emotion.

"It was indescribable. I thought they were dead. And when I saw my son I felt like I was born again. I couldn't believe it... I felt the life come back to me," he told the BBC of that moment.

Gerson and Dayana's home has been destroyed, along with all their possessions, and they are devastated that their pet dog is still missing, but they say they will now "begin from scratch".

"We lost almost everything but here we are.... We will rebuild everything we lost," Gerson promised.

Five dead following shooting at youth centre in Stade, Northern Germany

Five people are dead following a shooting at a youth centre in Stade, northern Germany, police have said.

Two people have been arrested, one of whom is a suspect, a police spokesperson told the BBC.

They have not provided information on the age of the victims or the possible motive

of the perpetrator.

A number of people were also injured in the shooting but police said there is no further threat to the public.

Large numbers of emergency personnel are at the scene. Police have advised people to avoid the area.

Stade has a population of around 50,000 people and is west of Hamburg.

ForeLign

NEWS

Senior South African police officer survives assassination attempt

One of South Africa's most senior police officers has survived an attempted assassination in Johannesburg, police say.

Suspended deputy crime intelligence boss Maj-Gen Feroz Khan was shot on Sunday evening as he was driving home and has since been rushed to hospital for emergency surgery, local media say.

The shooting comes just days before Khan was due to testify at a public inquiry set up to investigate criminality in South Africa's police force.

Khan, alongside two other people, was arrested in May for alleged illegal gold dealing. He has not commented.

South African police spokesperson Brig Athlenda Mathe said in a statement released on Monday that police were investigating Khan's shooting.

"It is premature and irresponsible to speculate on any possible motive or to conclude that the incident is linked to his anticipated appearance before the [inquiry]," she said.

The inquiry, known as the Madlanga commission, was set up after senior police officer Lt-Gen Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi alleged last July that organised crime groups had infiltrated the government.

Khan was called to testify at the inquiry after his name came up several times, including in relation to a botched drug bust that took place in Johannesburg in 2021.

Local online publication

Daily Maverick says Khan was expected to be questioned on his alleged ties to firebrand politician Julius Malema and political fixer Brown Mogotsi.

Khan has not commented.

Earlier this month, Khan asked the Johannesburg high court to block the inquiry from accessing electronic devices seized from him when he was arrested. He also wanted his testimony heard behind closed doors but later abandoned both bids.

This is the second time a witness linked to the Madlanga commission has come under attack. In December, a witness was killed in front of his family just three weeks after he gave testimony at the inquiry.

Khan, another senior police officer and a businessman were arrested last month for alleged illegal dealing in, and unlawful possession of, precious metals.

This stems from a 2021 incident when the businessman was found with unwrought gold weighing 75.9g (2.7 oz) at Johannesburg's OR Tambo international airport.

When questioned, the businessman claimed he was acting as an undercover agent for senior police officers.

Investigators later found that "no authorised undercover operation involving precious metals existed at the time" but that Khan, and another officer had "instructed officers" to release the businessman, prosecutors said in May.

Biden blasts Trump 'vanity projects', calling him a 'loser' at fundraising event

Former US President Joe Biden launched a sweeping attack on President Donald Trump, during a gala event at the weekend - labelling his successor "a loser" on account of his "vanity projects" in Washington DC.

At a Democratic Party fundraiser on Saturday, Biden attacked Trump's plans to construct a ballroom and the approach he has taken to renovate the city's Reflecting Pool.

The BBC has contacted the White House for a response to Biden's remarks.

Trump has repeatedly criticised Biden's track record while in office, and his opponent has responded in kind. But Biden's 10-minute remarks at Saturday's event in Hanover, Maryland, amounted to one of his bluntest critiques yet.

"It's not just his vanity projects, tearing down the East Wing of the White House making room for his ballroom, putting his name on the Kennedy Center, building an arch in his own honour, even hiring his own pool guy to fix the Reflecting Pool," Biden said.

"Woah! What a loser," he added.

Biden was making reference to Trump's effort to get his name

added to the front of the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts - which a court has since ordered to be removed.

Regarding the ballroom, Trump has defended his \$400m (£300m) efforts to demolish parts of the East Wing and build the new facility - saying it is necessary for national security and to host state guests.

The US president also spent \$14.7m to re-colour and restore the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. The effort sparked its own controversy after the pool subsequently became plagued with algae growth and other issues - for which Trump and the US National Parks Service have blamed vandalism.

Biden was also quoted by US media criticising Trump's defence of his supporters who stormed the US Capitol building in 2021.

He said: "What makes me angry is that Trump wants to give taxpayers' money, your money, to the January 6th insurrectionists."

His comments appeared to refer to the Trump administration's recent attempt to compensate individuals who claim they were unfairly targeted or investigated by the government - which was later dropped and blocked by a judge.

Europe's heatwave linked to 1,300 deaths, WHO says, as Germany hits record 41.7C

Europe's unprecedented early summer heatwave may be responsible for hundreds of excess deaths, according to the head of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Temperature records were broken across the continent again on Sunday - including in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic - as the extreme heat continued to move east.

In a post on X, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said more than 1,300 excess deaths had been recorded since 21 June "linked to high temperatures in Europe".

"Heat stress is often called the 'silent killer' - and European homes, workplaces and schools were not built for these temperatures," he said.

On Sunday morning, France's national health ministry said there had been around

1,000 more deaths than expected in the country since Wednesday.

Many of the extra fatalities are among those aged 65 over, the agency said, after logging a 40% rise in the number of people dying at home.

"Europe is the fastest-warming continent on Earth, heating at twice the global average," Tedros warned.

Millions of people across the continent are currently "living under extreme heat, hundreds have died, schools are shut, grids are buckling", he added.

On Sunday, Germany experienced its hottest-ever day for the third consecutive day after 41.7C was recorded in the east of the country, preliminary data showed.

A station in Coschen, near the Polish border in eastern Brandenburg, recorded 41.7C

at around 16:00 local time.

The Czech Republic set its second temperature record in two days, recording 41.1C at Doksany, north of Prague, the meteorological institute CHMI said.

CHMI said it expected the heat to peak on Sunday, with storms forecast for western areas later.

Poland also broke its all-time temperature record with 40.5C in the town of Slubice, a spokeswoman for the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW) told the AFP news agency on Sunday.

Climate change was responsible for the extreme weather, Tedros said, warning that Europe was warming at "twice the global average".

"Driven by climate change and global warming, the phenomenon of the 'once-in-a-gen-

eration' heatwave is now occurring nearly annual," he said.

He called on European countries to "implement heat health action plans", as part of a push to safeguard health in the face of climate change.

The extreme weather has led European authorities to take drastic measures to prevent heat-related illnesses.

On Thursday, the Dutch music festival Defqon.1 was cancelled following an unprecedented code red warning for extreme heat.

In Paris, officials banned drinking takeaway alcohol in public and cancelled the city's pride march to help stretched emergency services.

The ban began at noon on Friday local time ahead of France's World Cup match with Norway and lasted until Sunday morning.



EUROPE'S HEATWAVE:

Poland recorded an all-time record temperature of 40.5C on Sunday as the heatwave move eastwards.

Indian journalists condemn 'denial' of voting and passport rights of prominent editor

A leading journalist's body in India has condemned what it says is the denial of voting and passport rights to a former editor.

Rajagopal, who worked at The Telegraph newspaper, says his passport renewal was held up after his name was removed from the electoral roll in West Bengal during a controversial voter list revision.

Known as the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the exercise is being carried out by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to identify ineligible voters. Critics say it has wrongly removed millions of eligible voters, a charge the ECI rejects.

In a statement on Sunday, the Editors Guild of India said Rajagopal's case "highlights

the misery that millions of Indians are being put through" because of the SIR exercise.

It added that if an influential public figure like Rajagopal could be stripped of his voting rights, the plight of ordinary Indians was likely to be far worse.

The ECI has not publicly responded to the specific allegations about Rajagopal. The BBC has reached out to officials for comment.

Since the SIR exercise began on 4 November 2025 across 12 states and federally administered territories, about 60 million names have been removed from the electoral rolls.

Around nine million of those were in West Bengal. Rajagopal is among the thou-

sands who have appealed the decision in court.

Another phase of the exercise is under way in 16 states and three federally-administered territories.

In an article published by news website The Wire, Rajagopal wrote that despite living in Kolkata's Ballygunge constituency for more than 25 years, his name was removed because neither his nor his father's name could be found in the 2002 electoral rolls.

The SIR process verifies current voter records against the 2002 electoral rolls, the last time such a nationwide revision was carried out.

Rajagopal wrote that his name had been removed despite being a voter since 2010 and serving as editor of the

Kolkata-based The Telegraph for seven years.

"No reason was furnished for my exclusion [from the voters' list] even after I submitted my matriculation certificate, and my appeal is now pending before one of the tribunals constituted pursuant to the Supreme Court's directions," he alleged in the article.

He said authorities later told him police verification for his passport renewal could not be completed because his name had been removed from the electoral roll.

"I was puzzled because I could not find any public document that listed the voter identity card as a mandatory document for passport renewal," he wrote.

Feature



NIGERIA POLICE

State Police and Nigerian federalism

CHINEDUM ANAYO

After decades of debate, arguments, and political hesitation, Nigeria has taken a historic step toward deepening its federal structure.

With the passage of the State Police Bill by the Senate on June 24, 2026, the country appears set to embark on one of its most significant governance reforms since the return to democratic rule in 1999.

For years, security experts, legal scholars, governors, and citizens have argued that a centralized policing system is increasingly inadequate for a nation of over 200 million people with diverse security and social challenges.

However, as with many reforms in Nigeria, the true test lies not in legislation but in implementation.

The concept of state policing is not unique to Nigeria.

It is a common feature of federal systems across the world.

In the United States, for example, law enforcement operates at multiple levels.

Local police departments, county sheriffs, state police, and federal agencies each possess distinct jurisdictions and responsibilities.

A crime committed within a state is primarily investigated by state or lo-

cal authorities, while federal agencies intervene only when federal laws are implicated.

Similarly, countries such as Canada, Germany, Australia, and India maintain policing structures that allow subnational governments to play significant roles in maintaining law and order within their territories.

These arrangements are based on the principle that security challenges are often local in nature and are best addressed by authorities familiar with the culture, language, geography, and peculiar realities of their communities.

A true federation is one in which power is constitutionally shared between the central government and constituent units, with each level exercising meaningful authority over matters within its own jurisdiction.

Such federations recognize that governance is most effective when decisions are made as close as possible to the people affected by them.

Nigeria has long described itself as a federation, although many have argued that its security architecture remained largely unitary.

The existence of a single centrally controlled police force meant that states often lacked the authority to directly address unique security concerns within their territories, despite

bearing the political and economic consequences of insecurity.

The introduction of state police therefore represents a movement toward a more practical and balanced federal system.

It acknowledges a simple reality: crimes are largely territorial in nature. Where a crime occurs should ordinarily determine the primary law enforcement authority responsible for responding to it.

Evidently, the Senate's approval of the State Police Bill is more than a symbolic victory.

The 25-clause constitutional amendment establishes a dual policing structure, creating both a Federal Police Service and State Police Services that can be established by individual states through legislation passed by their respective Houses of Assembly.

Under the proposed framework, each state will have the authority to establish and manage its own police service, while the Federal Police Service will retain responsibility for national security matters such as counterterrorism, border security, organized crime, and other issues of national importance.

State police, if properly structured, can improve intelligence gathering, response times, community engagement, and accountability.

Meanwhile, enthusiasm must be tempered with caution.

The greatest concern among Nigerians is not whether state police should exist but how they will be used.

Critically, there's this fear that state governments could weaponize state police against political opponents, suppress dissent, intimidate critics, or interfere with democratic processes.

Such fears are not unfounded and must be addressed through robust legal safeguards.

For state policing to succeed, clear constitutional limits, independent oversight mechanisms, transparent recruitment processes, professional training standards, and strong judicial protections must accompany its implementation.

It is important to note that the bill also contains safeguards aimed at preventing abuse by political office holders.

State Police Commissioners will be appointed by governors, subject to legislative confirmation, while provisions have been included to prohibit the use of state police against political opponents, critics, or dissenting voices except in accordance with due process and the law.

There must also be effective coordination between federal and state security agencies to prevent jurisdictional

conflicts and ensure national security interests remain protected.

The success of state police will ultimately depend on whether Nigeria builds institutions stronger than the individuals who temporarily occupy public office.

While the reform holds great promise, its benefits can only be realized through the effective enforcement of these safeguards because without them, new challenges may emerge.

However, with proper implementation, it could become one of the most consequential steps toward strengthening security and advancing genuine federalism in Nigeria.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria has chosen reform over stagnation.

The responsibility now falls on lawmakers, governments, security institutions, and citizens to ensure that this historic reform achieves its intended purpose.

The passage of the bill is only the beginning.

State police can bring government closer to the people, but only responsible implementation will determine whether it becomes a tool for security or a weapon of political control.

Chinedum Anayo is a Political Commentator and can be reached via neduum@aol.com

The unfinished federation (I)



”
Northern Nigeria, despite producing many national leaders, continues to grapple with poverty, educational deficits and insecurity on a scale that defies easy explanation.

LANRE OGUNDIPE

How the Constitution Turned Abuja into Nigeria's Greatest Prize

Every election in Nigeria now resembles a referendum on survival.

Political parties do not merely seek victory; they fight as though defeat would amount to political extinction. Regions scrutinise every appointment for signs of inclusion or exclusion. Every administration is accused, sooner or later, of favouritism. Every transition of power revives old fears of domination, marginalisation and injustice.

The familiar explanation is that Nigeria is divided by ethnicity, religion and geography.

There is truth in that.

But it is not the whole truth.

For more than six decades, we have argued endlessly over who has dominated Nigeria while paying far less attention to what makes domination appear so consequential.

Perhaps we have been asking the wrong question.

The more profound question is this:

Why has Nigeria's constitutional arrangement made the control of Abuja appear more important than the development of the federating units themselves?

That question deserves careful reflection because it shifts our attention from personalities to institutions, from ethnic arithmetic to constitutional architecture.

Across the country, competing historical narratives continue to shape

political opinion. The South-West remembers the imprisonment of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and the collapse of the First Republic. The South-East recalls the Civil War and decades of perceived exclusion. The South-South questions a fiscal order that centralises resource revenues while local communities struggle with environmental degradation. The Middle Belt laments insecurity and repeated attacks on rural communities. Northern Nigeria, despite producing many national leaders, continues to grapple with poverty, educational deficits and insecurity on a scale that defies easy explanation.

Each narrative contains legitimate grievances.

None, however, fully explains why every election now carries the emotional weight of a struggle for national survival.

The answer may lie less in our diversity than in the constitutional incentives we have created.

Nigeria calls itself a federation. Yet much of its constitutional practice reflects an extraordinary concentration of authority at the centre.

The Federal Government controls security, policing, major mineral resources, substantial taxation, aviation, railways and an extensive Exclusive Legislative List that leaves comparatively little room for genuine constitutional autonomy by the states.

Whether this arrangement evolved by deliberate design or historical circumstance is a debate for another day.

Its consequences, however, are no longer in doubt.

When so much constitutional authority resides in one government, every election inevitably becomes a contest over access to power, resources and influence. Losing the Presidency is therefore perceived not merely as electoral defeat but as exclusion from the commanding heights of national life.

That perception has profoundly shaped Nigerian politics.

It explains the intensity of zoning debates.

It explains why coalition-building often eclipses ideological competition.

It explains why political defections occur with astonishing frequency.

It explains why appointments are examined through regional and religious lenses before competence is even discussed.

Above all, it explains why every region eventually develops its own vocabulary of grievance.

The South speaks of marginalisation.

The North speaks of demographic rights.

The Middle Belt speaks of neglect.

The South-East speaks of exclusion.

The South-South speaks of resource justice.

Different languages.

A common constitutional anxiety.

Ironically, Nigeria once embraced a different philosophy.

The constitutional arrangements that culminated in the Republican Constitution of 1963 assigned considerably greater responsibilities to the regions. Agriculture, education,

health and economic development largely reflected regional priorities. Competition among the regions encouraged innovation, while the centre performed functions more consistent with classical federalism.

The federation was far from perfect. Political crises, minority fears and electoral controversies persisted.

But constitutional incentives rewarded productivity more than dependency.

Military intervention altered that trajectory.

Over successive years, powers accumulated at the centre. Revenue became increasingly centralised. States multiplied, but constitutional authority narrowed. The military eventually departed, yet much of its constitutional architecture survived the return to civil rule.

That inheritance continues to define the politics of the Fourth Republic.

This is why the debate over restructuring refuses to disappear.

Chief Obafemi Awolowo warned repeatedly against excessive centralisation in a plural society. Decades later, Chief Afe Babalola, Chief Emeka Anyaoku and Professor Ben Nwabueze, despite approaching the issue from different perspectives, each questioned whether Nigeria's constitutional balance adequately reflects the principles of a healthy federation.

Their common concern was not sectional advantage.

It was institutional equilibrium.

Unfortunately, our national conversation often reduces restructuring to an ethnic contest rather than a con-

stitutional one.

That is a mistake.

A federation should never compel its constituent units to depend perpetually upon the centre for initiative, innovation and survival. Nor should one government exercise such overwhelming constitutional authority that every presidential election becomes a battle for the political soul of the nation.

This is not an argument for weakening Nigeria.

It is an argument for strengthening the federation by restoring confidence in its constituent units.

For as long as Abuja remains the principal repository of political power, fiscal authority and institutional influence, every election will continue to generate fear disproportionate to democratic competition.

The question before Nigeria, therefore, is not simply who should govern from Abuja.

It is whether Abuja should continue to possess so much constitutional power that every region regards its control as indispensable to its own future.

Until we answer that question honestly, accusations of domination will continue to outlive the politicians against whom they are directed.

Because the deeper problem may not be the occupants of power.

It may well be the architecture of power itself.

• **Ogundipe, Public Affairs Analyst, former President Nigeria and Africa Union of Journalists writes from Abuja.**

FEATURE

The role of public relations in strengthening Nigeria's democracy

● Focus on strategic and ethical communication practice

OTONO MOMODU

Public relations in Nigeria has evolved from being seen as mere publicity management to a strategic function that shapes public opinion, builds trust, and mediates between government, institutions, and citizens. In a democracy, communication is not a luxury but the lifeblood of participation, accountability, and legitimacy. Strategic and ethical communication practice by public relations professionals therefore plays a decisive role in strengthening Nigeria's democratic process. By managing information flows, facilitating dialogue, and upholding truth, PR contributes to a political culture where citizens are informed, institutions are transparent, and governance is responsive.

At the core of democracy is the principle of informed citizenship. Citizens cannot meaningfully participate in elections, policy debates, or governance processes without access to accurate and timely information. Public relations professionals in government ministries, political parties, civil society organizations, and the media act as conduits of this information. Through strategic communication planning, they translate complex policies into accessible messages, anticipate public concerns, and provide platforms for feedback. In Nigeria, where misinformation and rumor often spread rapidly through informal channels, PR practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that official communication is credible, clear, and consistent. When citizens trust the information they receive, they are more likely to engage constructively in democratic processes such as voting, advocacy, and civic oversight.

Strategic communication also enables dialogue between government and the governed. Democracy is not merely about periodic elections; it is about continuous engagement between leaders and citizens. Public relations practice provides the tools for stakeholder mapping, audience analysis, and two-way communication. In Nigeria's diverse socio-political environment, where ethnic, religious, and regional identities influence political attitudes, PR helps identify common ground and frame messages that resonate across divides. Town hall meetings, social media engagement, press briefings, and community outreach programs are examples of how PR facilitates deliberative communication. By creating channels for listening as well as speaking, PR reduces the distance between rulers and citizens, fostering a sense of inclusion and shared ownership of the democratic process.

Ethical communication is equally critical to the health of Nigeria's democracy. The credibility of democratic institutions depends on public trust, and trust is eroded when communication is manipulative, deceptive, or self-serving. Ethical PR prac-



CASTING VOTE

tice is guided by principles of honesty, transparency, fairness, and respect for public interest. The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Code of Ethics emphasizes accuracy, avoidance of false claims, and respect for the dignity of individuals and communities. When PR professionals adhere to these standards, they help check the spread of propaganda and disinformation that can undermine electoral integrity and social cohesion. Ethical communication ensures that political actors are held accountable not only for their actions but also for the truthfulness of their public statements.

Transparency and credibility are central to winning the people's trust in a democracy. Public officials who are given the mandate through the ballot to occupy public office and superintend the people's commonwealth hold a position of public trust. Citizens expect that decisions, budgets, and policies affecting the commonwealth will be communicated openly and truthfully. Public relations plays a crucial role in institutionalizing this transparency by ensuring that information on governance is accessible, verifiable, and timely. When public office holders communicate openly about challenges, achievements, and resource allocation, they demonstrate respect for citizens as stakeholders rather than subjects. Credibility is built when words align with actions, and when officials acknowledge mistakes and outline corrective measures. In Nigeria, where skepticism toward government is high, consistent transparency in communication

can gradually restore confidence and reduce the perception of governance as opaque or self-serving. PR professionals therefore serve as guardians of credibility by advising leaders against selective disclosure, spin, and evasive messaging that damage long-term trust.

Moreover, public relations contributes to conflict prevention and management in Nigeria's often volatile political environment. Elections, policy reforms, and resource allocation frequently generate tensions that can escalate into violence if not properly managed. Strategic PR interventions involve early identification of grievances, framing issues in non-inflammatory language, and facilitating mediated dialogue among stakeholders. For example, during electoral periods, PR teams can work with the Independent National Electoral Commission, political parties, and civil society to promote peaceful conduct and manage expectations. By focusing on interests rather than positions and by providing accurate information on electoral processes, PR reduces suspicion and the likelihood of conflict. In this way, communication becomes a tool for democratic stability rather than disruption.

Another vital role of public relations is in building institutional reputation and legitimacy. Democratic institutions such as the legislature, judiciary, and anti-corruption agencies rely on public confidence to function effectively. When these institutions are perceived as opaque, unresponsive, or corrupt, citizens withdraw

cooperation and trust. Strategic PR helps institutions communicate their mandates, achievements, challenges, and reform efforts in a way that is open to scrutiny. Regular reporting, stakeholder engagement, and crisis communication protocols enable institutions to manage their reputation proactively rather than reactively. In Nigeria, where institutional distrust remains high, consistent and ethical communication can gradually rebuild legitimacy and encourage civic cooperation.

Public relations also strengthens democracy by amplifying the voices of marginalized groups. A healthy democracy requires the inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and rural communities in public discourse. PR professionals working with civil society and development organizations design communication campaigns that bring these voices into national conversations on policy and governance. Through targeted messaging, community radio, and participatory communication methods, PR ensures that democracy is not dominated by elite interests alone. In Nigeria, initiatives that use PR to promote women's political participation or youth engagement in governance demonstrate how communication can broaden the democratic base and enhance representation.

However, the potential of public relations to strengthen democracy is contingent on professionalism and independence. When PR is reduced to propaganda, image laundering, or the suppression of dissent, it under-

mines democratic values. The challenge in Nigeria is to professionalize PR practice through education, certification, and enforcement of ethical standards. The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations has a critical role in regulating the profession, sanctioning unethical conduct, and promoting continuous training on strategic and ethical communication. Universities and polytechnics offering mass communication programs must also emphasize the democratic responsibilities of PR practitioners, not just their technical skills.

In conclusion, public relations is a democratic infrastructure. Through strategic and ethical communication practice, PR professionals in Nigeria can inform citizens, facilitate dialogue, prevent conflict, build institutional trust, and amplify marginalized voices. The emphasis on transparency and credibility is particularly vital, as it determines whether those entrusted with public office can maintain the trust of the people they serve. As Nigeria continues to consolidate its democratic experience, the quality of public communication will determine the depth of public engagement and the legitimacy of governance. Strengthening PR as a profession committed to truth, transparency, and public interest is therefore not just a professional imperative but a national necessity for democratic consolidation.

• Otono Momodu is a lecturer in the department of Mass Communication, Auchi Polytechnic Auchi.

Living to Impress: The danger of peer pressure and lifestyle competition

EJEMOGO REBECCA ANWURI

We live in a society where peer pressure and the pressure to live a competitive lifestyle have become prominent practices, especially among the younger generation. As a result, many people engage in all manner of nefarious activities just to measure up to the standard of their neighbour next door. It is the same drive that propels a student to inflate the cost of textbooks when asking his parents for money, so that he can be identified as one of the “happening guys” in school, or to engage in cybercrime otherwise known as “Yahoo” in order to park his Mercedes-Benz GLK in front of his department just to flaunt that he has made it big at a young age. These situations and many more reveal how peer pressure and lifestyle competition subtly influence many people today.

Peer pressure, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is the feeling that one must do the same things as other people in one's age group or social circle in order to be liked or respected by them. Many youths dress, behave, spend, and adopt certain orientations just so they do not feel left out among their peers and can gain their acceptance.

Lifestyle competition, on the other hand, can be seen as the unhealthy desire to constantly compare one's standard of living with others in order to gain attention, acceptance, or validation from society. It is a situation whereby people tend to portray a particular image or lifestyle that does not actually reflect who they are. For example, purchasing expensive phones beyond their current financial capacity, flaunting fake online lifestyles, chasing fashion trends, and attending events they know will strain their bank account balance. This raises an important question: Should people's lifestyles be influenced by what others will say, or should they stick to their current financial capacity without pretense?

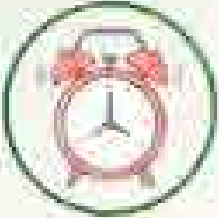
There are many possible causes of why people live to impress others, and peer pressure is a major fuel. One of the major causes is social media influence. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook have enhanced interactivity and connectivity across people from diverse geographical locations. These platforms have now become tools used to portray false realities, also known as “fake life,” where people appear to be living perfect lives. As a result, many begin to envy others and feel pressured to buy bone-straight hair, cars, and other luxuries.

In addition, the interactive features on these platforms encourage people to post content that will give them social media presence, especially when their peers are receiving massive likes and followers. Many now take pictures with other people's cars or in front of beautiful gates that are far from where they actually live. Unknown to them, this sends a signal to others who then use them as a yardstick to imitate the same lifestyle.

Aside from social media, celebrity lifestyles constitute another crucial cause of competitive living. This

UNDERSTANDING & HANDLING PEER PRESSURE

POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE (Motivating Growth)

- 
Develop Discipline
Developing discipline
- 
Focus on Studies
Focusing on studies
- 
Respect Rules
Respecting rules
- 
Stay Active
Physical activity & fitness
- 
Traffic Safety
Traffic and personal safety

NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE (Strategies to Resist)

- 
Say, “No!”
(No, thanks / No way)
- 
Walk Away
(Don't hang around)
- 
Ignore
(Pretend you don't hear)
- 
Make an Excuse
(Get out of the situation)
- 
A Better Idea
(Suggest a safer activity)

comes from constantly watching and monitoring celebrities show off their luxurious lifestyles — big houses, expensive cars, vacations, outfits, and so on. Because many are die-hard followers, they are constantly exposed to content that arouses the desire to copy these celebrities' fashion, gadgets, and mannerisms. For example, when a favourite Nollywood actor or actress like Funke Akindele wears a particular outfit in a movie, fans who later see a similar dress may purchase it so that people will see them as that celebrity.

Another cause of a competitive lifestyle is low self-esteem. People who suffer from low self-esteem often use the validation and compliments of others to fill the gap of their insecurities and make themselves feel better. As a result, they do things just to belong and be accepted. For example, research into why young people join

cults in universities often reveals that beyond outward boldness and physique, low self-esteem plays a significant role. To belong and be feared, many join secret cults.

Similarly, due to the fear of rejection, many people change their lifestyle, renounce their faith, or abandon their opinions just to avoid being seen as the odd one out.

Furthermore, materialism is another major cause. In contemporary times, people often acquire things not because they need them, but because they do not want others to outdo them in the contest of owning the latest phones, designer clothes, or cars. They constantly strive to project the image that “I have made it” to family and friends.

Striving to become a “people pleaser” takes a heavy toll on anyone who chooses to live a competitive lifestyle filled with strife and deception.

The danger of living such a lifestyle includes financial problems and debt. The pressure to maintain a certain image often leads to reckless spending and borrowing. For example, a student who sees his friends with the latest iPhone may use his school fees to buy one out of greed and fear of being left out, eventually ending up in debt to the school.

It can also lead to crime and fraud. When people live to impress others, there is a high possibility of engaging in criminal and fraudulent activities just to keep up appearances. This has led many into armed robbery, cybercrime (Yahoo), prostitution, or hookup culture.

Poor academic performance is another serious danger. A student whose parents have invested heavily to ensure a smooth semester may become distracted by the luxury his or her friends enjoy. This shift in focus often results in poor grades, showing that

every action whether good or bad has consequences.

In addition, anxiety and depression often set in, especially when the person becomes financially broke and can no longer meet the demands of the lifestyle they projected. They begin to hide from friends and family, constantly worried about “what people will say,” and desperately devise ways to maintain high expectations. Other effects include addiction to validation, unhealthy relationships, and loss of identity.

Although peer pressure and lifestyle competition may appear harmless on the surface, they subtly destroy true happiness, self-esteem, trust, and inner peace. In this technology-driven world, people should learn to “cut their clothes according to their sizes.” True success is not measured by appearances or public validation, but by dignity, integrity, and hard work.

FROM APARTHEID TO XENOPHOBIA

Why Nigeria must reclaim the diplomacy of reciprocity

LANRE OGUNDIPE

There are moments in the life of a nation when old questions return demanding fresh answers.

The recurring xenophobic attacks against Nigerians in South Africa constitute one of such moments.

Every few years, the same disturbing scenes replay themselves. Nigerians are assaulted. Businesses are looted and destroyed. Families are displaced. Fear spreads through communities. Diplomatic protests are lodged. Assurances are given. The outrage subsides. Then the cycle returns.

The tragedy is not merely that these attacks occur.

The greater tragedy is that they continue to occur despite everything Nigeria once did for the liberation of Southern Africa.

This is not a debate about vengeance.

It is a debate about memory, reciprocity, national dignity and the purpose of foreign policy itself.

For decades, Nigeria stood at the forefront of the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. While many nations expressed sympathy, Nigeria committed resources. While others issued declarations, Nigeria made sacrifices.

Through the Southern African Relief Fund, launched during the apartheid years, ordinary Nigerians contributed financially to the liberation of Southern Africa. Students, workers, professionals and market women donated towards a cause they believed transcended national boundaries. Scholarships were offered to South Africans in exile. Diplomatic campaigns were financed. Liberation movements received support. International pressure was mobilised against the apartheid regime.

Various studies have estimated that by the collapse of apartheid in 1994, Nigeria had committed resources running into billions of dollars in support of Southern African liberation causes and the Frontline States. Whether measured in financial terms, diplomatic exertion or moral leadership, few countries invested more heavily in the struggle than Nigeria.

The expectation was not gratitude. The expectation was fraternity.

The expectation was mutual respect among peoples who had shared a common struggle.

History, however, has a way of testing assumptions.

Today, citizens of post-apartheid South Africa periodically turn against fellow Africans, including Nigerians, in episodes of xenophobic violence that have become disturbingly recurrent since 2008. Businesses have been attacked. Lives have been lost. Communities have lived in fear. Yet after each cycle of violence, little appears to change fundamentally.

This is why the current moment demands more than outrage.

It demands reflection.

Long before these attacks became recurring headlines, some of Nigeria's most distinguished foreign affairs



XENOPHOBIA PROTESTERS

thinkers had already identified the weaknesses in the country's diplomatic philosophy.

General Joseph Garba belonged to a generation that viewed Nigeria as Africa's natural leader. It was a noble vision. Nigeria's size, population and resources imposed obligations beyond its borders. The country became a defender of liberation struggles and a champion of African causes.

Yet beneath the idealism lurked a troubling question.

How long can leadership remain sustainable if it continually requires sacrifice without measurable strategic return?

Garba's era exposed the first weakness in Nigeria's foreign policy architecture: leadership without sufficient reward.

Professor Bolaji Akinyemi confronted that contradiction more directly.

He understood that international relations are ultimately driven by interests. Friendship matters. History matters. Shared struggles matter. But interests matter most.

His response became known as the Doctrine of Reciprocity.

Nigeria, he argued, should stop behaving like Father Christmas.

Goodwill should attract goodwill.

Respect should attract respect.

Benefits should flow in both directions.

If Nigeria opens its markets, there should be reciprocal opportunities elsewhere.

If Nigerians are treated fairly abroad, Nigeria should respond in kind.

If they are mistreated, there should be consequences.

Akinyemi was not advocating hostility.

He was advocating balance.

Years later, Chief Ojo Maduekwe would revisit the same challenge from the perspective of the ordinary Nigerian.

His doctrine of Citizen Diplomacy remains one of the most profound ideas ever introduced into Nigerian

foreign policy.

Maduekwe posed a simple but uncomfortable question.

What value is foreign policy if it cannot protect the ordinary citizen?

Why should diplomatic success be measured solely by summits, communiqués and state visits while Nigerians abroad suffer indignities and insecurity?

Maduekwe insisted that the Nigerian citizen must become the focal point of diplomatic engagement.

Foreign policy, in his view, should not merely serve governments.

It should serve Nigerians.

In reality, Akinyemi and Maduekwe were pursuing the same objective.

Akinyemi supplied the doctrine.

Maduekwe supplied the human face.

Together, they challenged the culture of diplomatic charity that had long characterised Nigeria's continental engagements.

Unfortunately, neither doctrine was fully institutionalised.

Successive administrations continued to speak the language of continental solidarity while often neglecting the practical interests of Nigerian citizens abroad.

The result is the contradiction confronting Nigeria today.

South African businesses operate successfully across Nigeria.

MTN stands as perhaps the most visible example.

The company entered Nigeria in search of growth opportunities beyond South Africa's borders. Today, Nigeria has become one of the most important contributors to MTN Group's profitability. Recent financial reports indicate that Nigeria contributes a substantial share of the group's earnings and remains one of its most strategic markets.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

Investment should be welcomed.

Profits legitimately earned should

be respected.

Economic cooperation should be encouraged.

Yet reciprocity compels us to ask legitimate questions.

How many Nigerian companies enjoy comparable access and success in South Africa?

How many Nigerian investors can scale their operations there under similar conditions?

Do Nigerian entrepreneurs face barriers that South African businesses do not encounter in Nigeria?

Are opportunities flowing in both directions?

These are not questions of resentment.

They are questions of policy.

The generation that fought apartheid understood something many contemporary policymakers appear reluctant to acknowledge.

Diplomacy is not merely about friendship.

Diplomacy is also about leverage.

Indeed, Nigeria once demonstrated this principle with remarkable courage.

When international pressure mounted against institutions associated with apartheid South Africa, Nigeria took decisive action against Barclays Bank. The Nigerian government eventually took control of Barclays Bank Nigeria, a process that ultimately led to the emergence of Union Bank.

That action was not merely economic.

It was political.

It was moral.

Most importantly, it demonstrated that there are moments when principles must be backed by consequences.

Contrast that assertiveness with today's hesitant responses to recurring xenophobic violence.

One cannot help but wonder whether Nigeria has gradually lost confidence in the diplomatic instruments it once wielded with such conviction.

This does not mean Nigeria should

embrace retaliation.

Far from it.

Neither confiscation nor economic adventurism offers a sustainable path.

What Nigeria requires is something far more sophisticated.

A recalibration.

Nigeria must not abandon Africa.

Nigeria must not renounce solidarity.

Nigeria must not become hostile to South Africa.

But solidarity must not become servitude.

Partnership must not become dependency.

Generosity must not become weakness.

The most uncomfortable truth is that South Africa is not the real subject of this conversation.

Nigeria is.

South Africa merely provides the mirror through which Nigeria is compelled to examine itself.

For decades, Nigeria pursued an Afrocentric foreign policy animated by noble ideals. It invested heavily in liberation struggles, championed sanctions against apartheid and shouldered responsibilities that few others were willing to bear.

Yet history teaches a sobering lesson.

Sacrifice alone does not guarantee reciprocity.

Good intentions do not automatically translate into influence.

Generosity, however noble, is not a substitute for strategy.

The recurring xenophobic attacks against Nigerians in South Africa are therefore not merely security incidents.

They are reminders that foreign policy must continually evolve to protect contemporary interests and contemporary citizens.

This is where Joseph Garba, Bolaji Akinyemi and Ojo Maduekwe converge.

Garba questioned leadership without reward.

Akinyemi challenged diplomacy without reciprocity.

Maduekwe challenged foreign policy without citizens.

Three generations.

Three doctrines.

One enduring message.

A nation must never become indifferent to the dignity of its citizens.

Nigeria does not need a foreign policy of anger.

Neither does it need a foreign policy of perpetual charity.

What it requires is a foreign policy anchored on reciprocity, national dignity and citizen protection.

The question is not whether South Africa owes Nigeria gratitude for yesterday.

The real question is whether Nigeria is prepared to demand respect for Nigerians today.

History has already done its duty.

Policy must now do its own.

• *Ogundipe, Public Affairs Analyst former President Nigeria and Africa Union of Journalists writes from Abuja.*

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

Bendel Insurance FC mourn former coach Lawrence Akpokona

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Bendel Insurance Football Club mourns former coach Laurence Ak-

pokona as Edo and Nigerian football community are in sad mood following the death of great football tactician.

Akpokona passed away on

Friday, June 26, 2026 after battling with a protracted illness that left him bedridden for months.

In a condolence message signed by the General Manager Bendel Insurance FC Charles Ihimekpen to the family and friends, Bendel Insurance FC management expressed sadness over the passing of their former coach.

The Benin arsenal highlights the achievement of late coach Lawrence Akpokona to include two WAFU cup and CAF cup, saying that the narration of the club's history and achievement will not be complete without mentioning coach Lawrence Akpokona.

His tactical brilliance and dedication brought incredible pride to the "Benin Arsenal" and Nigerian football as a whole. His achievements stand as a permanent testament to his skill and leadership:

Beyond the trophies, his reputation as a "silent achiever," a peace-loving gentleman, and a dedicated developer of talent shows that his influence went far beyond the pitch.

Late coach Lawrence Akpokona Guided Bendel Insurance to continental glory, winning the then CAF Cup on December 4, 1994, after securing regional dominance with two WAFU Cup Titles.

Akpokona also made domestic Impact: in shaping the Nigerian league through his management of prominent clubs like Ocean Boys FC and Julius Berger.

We will surely miss him but we are consoled by his legacy of football talent development in our club and country

"May his soul rest in peace, and may his family, friends, and the entire Bendel Insurance FC find the strength to bear this irreparable loss."



LATE LAURENCE AKPOKONA

SWAN Kano congratulates Sports Commission, Pillars Board appointees

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), Kano State Chapter, has congratulated newly appointed members of the Kano State Sports Commission and the Management Board of Kano Pillars Football Club over their appointments by the state government.

In a statement issued on Friday in Kano, SWAN described the appointments as well-deserved, noting that they reflect recognition of the appointees' competence, experience and integrity.

The association commended the appointments made by Gov., saying the decision demonstrated the administration's commitment to repositioning sports development in the state.

SWAN said the inclusion of diverse stakeholders into the leadership of the and the Management Board of was a strategic move aimed at strengthening administration and improving performance.

According to the association, the appointments come at a critical time in the history of sports administration in Kano State and present an opportunity for renewed professionalism and improved results across the sector.

It urged the appointees to justify the confidence reposed in them by working collaboratively, upholding transparency, and adopting innovative approaches to talent discovery, youth engagement and sports infrastructure development.

SWAN further expressed confidence that the new leadership would bring renewed energy and commitment to the development of sports in the state.

Lastly, SWAN urges the Kano State Government to provide adequate funding to both Kano Pillars FC and the Kano State Sports Commission, and to also upgrade sports facilities in the state to help identify and harness young, talented athletes.



KANO PILLARS FOOTBALL CLUB BOARD APPOINTEES

Dynamic Athletics meet to feature West African athletes

The organisers of the Dynamic Athletics Meet have confirmed that athletes from five West African countries will compete in the event.

The competition is expected to feature athletes from Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria.

Convener of the meet, Olabanji Ayegbusi, in a statement on Monday said the championship would hold in mid-August at Yabatech Sports Complex, Lagos.



DYNAMIC ATHLETICS

Ayegbusi said the World Athletics-listed event had generated strong interest across the region.

"The contest has received entries from athletes in participating countries, showing their readiness through various communication channels," he said.

He added that the meet would provide competitors an opportunity to end the 2026 season strongly.

"The athletes are ready for

outstanding performances, personal bests and improved world rankings," Ayegbusi stated.

He said the competition had produced world-leading marks, records and personal bests over the years.

Ayegbusi noted that the 2026 edition would continue supporting elite and emerging athletes.

"The official competition date and registration details will be announced soon," he said.

He urged stakeholders, including the Athletics Federation of Nigeria and National Sports Commission, to support the event.

"The backing of relevant bodies will contribute to athletics growth in Nigeria and West Africa," he added.

Ayegbusi described the meet as a collective platform for athletes, coaches, officials, media practitioners and supporters.

"We all have a role to play in making it bigger and better," he said.



CANADA VS SOUTH AFRICA

Canada sneak past South Africa 1-0 to reach round of 16

Canada defeated South Africa 1-0 in the opening match of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Round of 32, securing their place in the Round of 16 after a dramatic stoppage-time winner.

The encounter was evenly balanced for most of the game, with South Africa producing a disciplined defensive display and frustrating the Canadian attack.

Canada controlled possession and pushed forward in search of a breakthrough, while South Africa looked dangerous on the counterattack and appeared set to force the contest into extra time.

Canada's Nathan Saliba was shown a yellow card during the tense encounter as both teams battled fiercely for a place in the next round.

Just as the match seemed destined for an additional 30 minutes, Canada found the decisive goal in the second minute of added time.

Stephen Eustaquio struck in the 90+2nd minute to break South African hearts and hand the North Americans a hard-fought victory.

The late goal underlined Canada's persistence and determination in a contest where chances were limited.

2026 NHSL: Delta Queens target super league final, coach says

Ade Jacobs, head coach of Delta Queens Hockey Club has expressed confidence that his team will reach the final of the ongoing 2026 Nigeria Hockey Super League in Abuja.

Jacobs stated this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) after their second match on Sunday in Abuja.

He said his team remains focused on reaching the final stage of the league in spite of playing out a draw in their second match.

Jacobs said that although his players were below their usual standard, he was confident they would improve in

subsequent games. "It has been fine so far. We won our first match 5-0, and this second match ended in a 1-1 draw.

"Well, it's one of those things that happen sometimes in matches because most of my girls looked a little bit heavy. I don't know why.

"We intend to improve on that. In our next match, against I-G Babes on Tuesday by 11 a.m., they will come out better, and I can assure you of that," he said.

The Delta Queens coach reiterated the team's ambition, recalling their third-place finish in the 2025 Nigeria Hockey Super League.



DELTA QUEENS

Bromell stuns Lyles in Paris as Duplantis, Werro shine with record performances

American sprinter Trayvon Bromell produced the biggest upset of the Paris Diamond League on Sunday, defeating reigning Olympic champion Noah Lyles to claim the men's 100m title in an impressive 9.91 seconds.



TRAYVON BROMELL

Bromell's victory handed Lyles his first defeat of the 2026 season, underlining the fierce competition in the men's sprint event ahead of the major championships.

Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs, the Tokyo 2020 Olympi

pic 100m champion, finished third in a season's best 9.96 seconds, while South Africa's Akani Simbine placed fourth in 9.97 seconds.

In the field events, world record holder Armand Duplantis once again demonstrated his dominance in the men's pole vault.

The Swedish star cleared a meeting record of 6.13m before making three unsuccessful attempts at a new world record height of 6.32m.

The men's 400m also produced a memorable performance as Botswana's Busang Collen Kebinatshipi stormed to victory in a Diamond League record of 43.54 seconds.

Olympic champion Marileidy Paulino of the Dominican Republic continued

her outstanding form by winning the women's 400m in a world-leading time, reinforcing her status as the athlete to beat this season.

Switzerland's Audrey Werro delivered one of the standout performances of the meeting, clocking a Diamond League record of 1:53.80 to win the women's 800m.

Her remarkable run ranks as the third-fastest time in history and further fuels expectations that the long-standing world record could soon come under threat.

The Paris Diamond League delivered a series of world-class performances, with records falling across multiple events as athletes continued their preparations for the season's biggest competitions.

NPFL: Joseph, Shimagande join Bendel Insurance FC

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Bendel Insurance have secured the signatures of Niger Tornados forwards Godstime Joseph and Shimagande Terdoo.

The duo penned down two years contract each that will keep them in Benin till the end

of 2028 football season. They are expected to arrive in Benin to resume with the Benin Arsenal's next week.

The versatile strikers who signed from Niger Tornados, as free agent have been considered fit into the ambitious plans of the Benin Arsenal for the 2026/27.

2026 CAVB Africa Nations Cup: NVBF invites 20 players to camp

The Nigeria Volleyball Federation has invited 20 players to execute qualification matches for the 2026 CAVB Africa Nations Cup, scheduled to hold in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, from July 13 to July 23.

The Federation confirmed the list of the 20 invited players in a statement by its Chairman, Media and Publicity Committee, Godspower Odede, on Sunday.

He said the national coaching crew selected a balanced 20-man squad after extensive scouting in the first phase of the National Premier Volleyball League.

"Following a successful first phase of the 2026 National Premier Volleyball League and an extensive scouting exercise, the national coaching crew has selected a balanced squad.

"The squad comprised the country's finest talents, including experienced foreign-based professionals, to represent Nigeria at the crucial qualifying tournament," he said.

According to the Chairman of the Technical Committee of the Federation, Tunde Omosore, the squad selected has the ability to secure qualification for the Africa Nations Cup.

"The technical crew has assembled a solid team with the right blend of home-based talents and foreign-based professionals.

"We are confident that this team has what it takes to qualify for the

Africa Nations Cup," he said.

"The quality displayed during the first phase of the National Premier Volleyball League gave us an excellent platform for player assessment and selection," he added.

The invited players will be camped in a secure facility in Abuja for intensive preparations. The team will train at the Package B Sports Complex, Abuja, ahead of their departure for Cote d'Ivoire.

THE PLAYERS ARE:

Setters

Bruno Ibeh (COAS)
Adeniyi Favour (Customs)
Elisha Anebi (CNS)

Outside Hitters

Jaiyeola Abdulquadri (Customs)
Lucky Palmer (Kano Pillars)
Ogunshina Obayemi (NPF),
Izuchukwu Oforah (NSCDC)
Emmanuel Udah (Customs)
Anachuna Chukwuemeka (NPF).

Opposites

Vincent Mathias (COAS)
Oyedepo Dhikirullahi (NSCDC)
Armstrong E. Udoka (Light Spikers)
Okonkwo Kingsley (Customs)

Middle Blockers

Anele Timothy (Customs)
Pascal Ozokoye (NSCDC)
Mora Jibril (CNS)
Army Ferdinand (CNS)
Kazeem Mutiu (NCS).

Werro eyes historic 800m world record after Paris win

● Says Hodgkinson rivalry can inspire record-breaking run

Swiss middle-distance runner Audrey Werro believes the long-standing women's 800 metres world record is finally within reach and says a head-to-head battle with Olympic champion Keely Hodgkinson could provide the perfect platform to rewrite history.

Werro strengthened her credentials with a stunning victory at the Paris Diamond League on Sunday, clocking one minute 53.80 seconds despite Hodgkinson's absence from the field.

The 22-year-old improved on her previous personal best of 1:53.98, set earlier this month in Stockholm, and be-

came the first woman to break the 1:54 barrier on two separate occasions.

Both Werro and Hodgkinson have openly targeted the

women's 800m world record of 1:53.28, set by Czech great Jarmila Kratochvilova in 1983, the longest-standing world record in track and field.



AUDREY WERRO



NBBF unveils D'Tigers squad for Angola World Cup Qualifiers

The Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF) has unveiled a 12-man D'Tigers squad for the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 African Qualifiers in Luanda, Angola.

The qualifiers, tagged Window Three, will hold from July 2 to July 5, marking the beginning of a new era under Head Coach David Fizdale.

A statement from the NBBF yesterday said Fizdale will make his competitive debut as D'Tigers coach, bringing decades of NBA coaching experience and expertise in developing elite basketball talent.

"The coach will lead a blend of experienced internationals and emerging players as Nigeria pursues qualification for the 2027 FIBA Basketball World Cup.

"The squad comprises Uchenna Ireogbu, Ikenna Ireogbu, Caleb Agada, Martins Igbanu,

Paul Dibal and Stanley Okoye.

"Others are Daniel Utomi, Chimezie Metu, Wesley Iwundu, Christian Mekowulu, Kaodirichi Akobundu-Ehiogu and Michael Eric," the statement said.

Nigeria will compete in Group C alongside Guinea, Rwanda and Tunisia in the decisive phase of the qualification campaign.

It stated that NBBF President, Ahmadu Musa Kida, expressed confidence in the team and welcomed Fizdale to his first official assignment with Nigeria.

"Kida described Fizdale as an experienced coach with the leadership qualities required to guide D'Tigers to greater success in Africa and globally.

"He congratulated the selected players and urged them to represent Nigeria with passion, pride and professionalism throughout the qualifiers," it said.

It quoted Kida as saying, "the federation remains committed to attracting world-class coaches and sustaining a high-performance environment for the national teams.

"Fizdale's appointment followed the successful tenure of former coach Mike Brown, who elevated Nigeria's profile in international basketball," he said.

Kida expressed confidence that experienced players, emerging talents and quality coaching would strengthen Nigeria's qualification campaign.

Amusan storms to Diamond League victory, sends strong Commonwealth Games warning



TOBI AMUSAN

Nigerian sprint hurdles sensation, Tobi Amusan delivered another world-class performance, claiming victory in the women's 100m hurdles at the Paris Diamond League, on Sunday, with an equal Season's Best of 12.27 seconds (+0.7m/s).

Amusan finished ahead of Grace Stark, who placed sec-

ond in 12.38s, while Alaysha Johnson completed the podium in 12.39s. Remarkably, this marks the third time in the 2026 season that Amusan has produced a blistering performance in the 12.27-12.28s range, underlining her outstanding form as the athletics season gathers momentum.

Last week, Tobi Amusan

was listed as one of Nigeria's representatives to the 2026 Commonwealth Games taking places in Glasgow, Scotland, from July 23rd - August 2nd. She is expected to once again defend her 100mH crown which she won in Gold Coast, Australia and Birmingham, UK in 2018 and 2022 respectively.

Africa's World Cup revolution: A new era of global competitiveness

VICTOR OKOYE

For decades, African football pursued global relevance through isolated achievements rather than sustained collective success.

From Egypt's pioneering appearance in 1934, Africa has evolved into one of world football's fastest-growing regions.

The continent's progress reflects decades of investment, improved coaching, stronger domestic leagues and increased international exposure.

Before the 2026 FIFA World Cup, African nations had made 49 team appearances at the finals.

Only 11 of those appearances produced knockout-stage qualification, representing a success rate of 22.4 per cent.

Put differently, nearly 78 per cent of Africa's previous World Cup campaigns ended in the group stage.

The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, however, signaled a changing narrative.

African teams recorded seven group-stage victories, their highest collective total before the tournament's expansion.

Morocco and Senegal reached the Round of 16, meaning 40 per cent of Africa's five representatives progressed.

Morocco then shattered another barrier by becoming Africa's first World Cup semi-finalists before finishing fourth.

The expanded 48-team tournament in North America accelerated Africa's remarkable rise.

CAF received 10 places, double its previous allocation of five guaranteed slots.

Africa responded with its finest collective performance in World Cup history.

Nine of the continent's 10 representatives progressed to the Round of 32.

The feat produced an unprecedented 90 per cent qualification rate, more than four times Africa's historical average of 22.4 per cent.

Only Tunisia failed to progress, meaning just 10 per cent of Africa's representatives exited at the group stage.

Even after South Africa's Round of 32 defeat to Canada, 80 per cent of Africa's original representatives remained in contention.

No previous World Cup has witnessed such collective dominance by African teams.

Morocco again spearheaded Africa's charge, finishing second in Group C with seven points behind Brazil.

The Atlas Lions secured another place in the knockout stage, reinforcing their status as the continent's current standard-bearers.

Cote d'Ivoire produced their best World Cup campaign by reaching the knockout stage for the first time after collecting six points in Group E.

Egypt underlined their resurgence by finishing second in Group G with five points.

Cape Verde emerged as the tournament's fairy-tale story, advancing from Group H on their World Cup



debut.

Senegal, Ghana, DR Congo and Algeria also qualified as four of the tournament's best third-placed teams.

South Africa contributed to the historic qualification record before bowing out in the Round of 32.

Tunisia finished bottom of Group F without a point, becoming Africa's only group-stage casualty.

Africa's remarkable rise has been built on several landmark achievements spanning more than nine decades.

Egypt became Africa's first World Cup representative in 1934.

DR Congo, then Zaire, became the first sub-Saharan African nation to qualify in 1974.

Tunisia recorded Africa's first

World Cup victory by defeating Mexico in 1978.

Morocco became Africa's first nation to progress beyond the group stage in 1986.

Cameroon reached the quarter-finals in 1990 after defeating defending champions Argentina in the tournament's opening match.

Senegal matched that feat in 2002

after stunning defending champions France.

Ghana equaled the achievement in 2010, missing a historic semi-final place by the narrowest of margins.

Morocco eventually broke the continental barrier in 2022 by becoming Africa's first World Cup semi-finalists.

Cameroon remains Africa's most frequent World Cup participant with eight appearances.

Morocco and Tunisia follow with seven appearances each.

Nigeria remains one of Africa's most consistent performers, reaching the Round of 16 on three occasions.

South Africa remains Africa's only FIFA World Cup host after staging the tournament in 2010.

African teams have also produced memorable victories over reigning world champions.

Cameroon defeated Argentina in 1990.

Senegal stunned France in 2002.

Tunisia overcame France during the 2022 group stage.

Those victories reflected Africa's growing confidence and ability to challenge football's traditional powers.

The 2026 campaign has transformed that promise into collective excellence.

According to CAF, the achievement marks the beginning of a new era of sustained global competitiveness.

The numbers underline the scale of Africa's progress.

The continent's knockout qualification rate has risen from a historical average of 22.4 per cent to 90 per cent in 2026.

That represents an increase of 67.6 percentage points.

In relative terms, Africa's progression rate is now more than four times its historical average, representing an improvement of over 300 per cent.

Whatever the final outcome, the 2026 FIFA World Cup has already become a defining chapter in African football history.





Dr. Abubakar Kuso assumes duty as Niger Tornadoes Chairman

Dr. Abubakar Abdullahi Kuso (Dan Wadatan Nupe), has officially assumed office as the Chairman of Niger Tornadoes Football Club following the presentation of his appointment



DR. ABUBAKAR ABDULLAHI KUSO

letter by the Permanent Secretary, Niger State Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Dr. Nuhu Garba Ngaski, at the Ministry's headquarters in Minna on Monday.

During the presentation ceremony, Dr. Nuhu Garba Ngaski warmly welcomed Dr. Kuso to the Ministry and congratulated him on his well-deserved appointment. He urged the management and staff of Niger Tornadoes Football Club to accord the new Chairman their maximum support, cooperation, and loyalty to enable him to effectively discharge his responsibilities and reposition the club for greater success.

He also charged the new Chairman of guiding the club to a top-three finish in the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) and securing a continental ticket at the end of the season.

"We want to see Niger Tornadoes

finish among the first three teams in the league. That is the challenge before this management. The Niger State Government has consistently supported the club, and that support will continue," he said.

Dr. Ngaski expressed confidence in the capacity of the new chairman to deliver on the mandate and urged members of the management committee to work collectively towards achieving the club's objectives" he said.

He further stated that the expectations of Nigerlites and football enthusiasts were high, stressing that the state government would continue to provide the necessary support for the club. He advised the chairman to uphold transparency and assemble a competitive squad capable of making the state proud. He congratulated the newly constituted management committee and wished them a successful tenure.

EPL: Man City Appoints Enzo Maresca as new manager



ENZO MARESCA

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Manchester City have announced the appointment of former Chelsea coach Enzo Maresca as their new head coach on a three-year deal.

Enzo Maresca steps in as direct replacement for Peo Guardiola who stepped down as Manchester City coach at the end of 2025/26 season after a successful stay with remarkable achievements.

Chelsea FC received £17m compensation fee from Enzo Maresca-Manchester City deal.

"In the circumstances and given the mutual respect between clubs, a confidential settlement has been reached with Manchester City, which includes the payment of compensation".

"A confidential settlement has also been reached with the former Head Coach under which he will pay Chelsea official statement read.

CAF/NFF D Licence refresher course commences in Asaba

Technical Director of the Nigeria Football Federation NFF, Mr. Austine Eguavoen has revealed that the Nigeria football governing body was ready to partner with stakeholders towards developing the game of football in Nigeria.

Mr. Eguavoen stated this during the opening ceremony of the maiden CAF/NFF D Licence Coaching Course held at the Patrick Okpomo House, Headquarters of the Delta State Football Association.

The former Super Eagles Coach said there was the need for coaches yet to get the CAF D Licence to do so as it was key to helping them attain the knowledge needed to re-vamp football in the state as well as enhancing the opportunity to becoming professional coaches.

Eguavoen revealed that the 5-day course aimed at giving the coaches in the state an opportunity to improve their knowledge of the game while assuring them that the CAF D LICENCE would give them a pathway to becoming better coaches.

The Chairman of the Delta State Sports Commission, Mr. Onoriode Oborevwori represented by the Director General of the Commission, Emuobo Egalase averred that the commission would continue to seek avenues aimed at enhancing sports development in the state, stressing that the Governor Sheriff Oborevwori administration was keen on putting Delta State on a higher sports pedestal.

The Chairman of the Delta State Football Association, Chief Godwin Adode revealed that the DFA was committed to repositioning the state's football sector asserting that the 5-day coaching course would impact on the

football sector in the state.

Chief Adode lauded Governor Oborevwori for his commitment to sport development even as he commended FPG Energies for their continued partnership with the DFA and assured that the DFA would continue to work towards stamping the states authority in football through the discovery of talented footballers.

The Coaches were later taken through a drill by former Super Eagles player Edema Fuludu at the



CAF/NFF D LICENCE

Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana athletes set for Dynamic Athletics meet in August

Athletes from Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and host nation Nigeria are gearing up for the highly anticipated Dynamic Athletics Meet, scheduled to take place in mid-August at the Yabatech Sports Complex in Lagos.

Dynamic Athletics founder and meet organiser, Olabanji Ayegbusi, confirmed that the World Athletics-listed competition has already

generated strong interest across West Africa, with athletes from the participating countries indicating their readiness through emails and other communication channels.

With the 2026 athletics season gradually drawing to a close, many competitors see the meet as an ideal opportunity to round off their campaigns on a high note by producing outstanding performances,

achieving personal bests and improving their world rankings.

The Dynamic Athletics Meet has built a reputation for producing high-quality performances over the years, including world-leading marks, meeting records and numerous personal bests.

This year's edition is expected to continue that tradition by providing a competitive platform for both elite and emerging athletes. The official competition date and registration details will be announced soon.

Speaking ahead of the event, Ayegbusi appealed to stakeholders for increased technical and financial support to ensure the successful staging of the championship.

According to him, the meet plays a crucial role in expanding competition opportunities for athletes while offering a platform for both established and up-and-coming talents to showcase their abilities.



Cape Verde hero excited to come face-to-face against Messi

Cape Verde veteran goalkeeper and captain Vozinha has expressed immense pride in the team's achievement ahead of facing the global icon Lionel Messi.

He highlighted the technical quality and tactical dominance his side displayed during their final group clash versus Saudi Arabia, while looking forward to the Round of 32 clash against reigning champions Argentina.

Vozinha stated: "None of us dreamed of this, but we know we have quality and, when we got to the World Cup, perhaps many thought we wouldn't win any games. We have a great team and quality players."

"It's gratifying to have qualified for the next phase and facing Argentina will be very good. It's a dream for any footballer to play against Argentina and Lionel Messi."

"We didn't come here to secure a draw. We always sought to win. We knew it wasn't going to be easy."

"Saudi Arabia also have a lot of quality and is used to these kinds of matches. We tried everything to score, but we couldn't. Everyone saw that we had more possession, more balls, and more opportunities. We deserve congratulations."