

FGN re-opens 3 bonds valued at ₦1.2 trillion for subscription

ABUJA

The Debt Management Office (DMO), on behalf of the Federal Government, has re-opened three FGN bonds valued at ₦1.2 trillion for subscription.

According to a statement by the DMO, the first offer is a Jan. 2035 FGN bond (10-year re-opening), valued at ₦400

billion, and at interest rate of 22.60 per cent per annum.

The second offer is a 2028 FGN bond (15-year re-opening), valued at ₦400 billion at 15.45 per cent per annum.

The third offer is a 2037 FGN bond (20-year re-opening), also valued at ₦400 billion.

According to the DMO, the auction date is July 20, while the settlement date is July 22.

It said that the bonds were offered at ₦1,000 per unit, subject to a minimum standards subscription of ₦50 million and in multiples of ₦1,000 thereafter.

"For re-openings of previously issued bonds, successful bidders will pay a price corresponding to the yield-to-maturity bid that clears the volume being auctioned, plus any accrued interest in the instrument.

"Interest is payable semi-annually, and bullet repayment is on the maturity date," the office said. The DMO said that FGN bonds, like other Federal Government securities, are backed by the full faith and credit of the Federal Government and charged upon the general assets of Nigeria.

"They qualify as securities in which trustees can invest under the Trustee Investment Act.

"They qualify as government securities within the meaning of the Company Income Tax Act and Personal Income Tax Act for exemption for pension funds, amongst other investors.

"They are listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange and FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange Limited, and they qualify as liquid assets for liquidity ratio calculation for banks," it

said. Recall that FGN Bonds are long-term debt securities issued by the Nigerian government through the DMO.

Subscription to FGN bonds means one is lending money to the Federal Government, which agrees to pay interest (coupon) at regular intervals and to repay the principal when the bond matures.

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That The People May Know

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Agriculture, Technology: Edo moves to meet int'l best practices

- **Okpebholo signs bill into law**
- **Rebranded college to operate 3 campuses**
- **Upgrades institution into College of Agric, Science and Technology**

RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo state has signed a bill amending

the name and governing structure of the state school of Agriculture, which is currently being operated in three campuses.

Okpebholo signed the bill into law when he received the

Speaker of the Edo State House of Assembly, Mr Blessing Agbebaku on a courtesy visit to Government House, Benin City.

According to the bill recently passed by the house of

Assembly, the school will now be known as the Edo state College of Agriculture, Science and Technology.

The newly rebranded College of Agriculture, Science and

Technology will operate across 3 Campuses with Iguoriakhi the main campus focusing on Agric technology, Uromi Campus for Forestry and Agenebode campus for Aquaculture.

Speaking before the governor assented the bill, Agbebaku noted that the amendment will

ensure global best practices and proper training of students.

He assured that the amendments in the bill will ensure students from the institution will have practical and innovative agriculture skill to ensure food sufficiency.

According to him, we are here to present to you the Col-

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AGRIC BILL:

The Speaker, Edo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Blessing Agbebaku (standing, about to present the Agric Bill recently passed by the Assembly to Gov. Monday Okpebholo (middle) for his assent in Government House, Benin City, on Tuesday while some law makers and others look on.

Police rescue 3 kidnapped AAU students, kill one suspect

RICHARD EWEKA

EKPOMA

The Edo State Police Command has rescued three students of Ambrose Alli University (AAU), Ekpoma, who were kidnapped by gunmen in Ekpoma, Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State.

The students were abducted on Sunday, July 12, 2026, during an attack in the Ujemen G.T. Extension area of Ekpoma. One student, Peter Ekpen, a 24-year-old 300-level undergraduate, was killed during the attack.

The rescued students were identified as Praise Obagbalu, 18, Favour Okoroji, 21, and Balogun Precious, 19.

State Commissioner of Police, Mr Monday Agbonika, disclosed the development on

Tuesday while briefing journalists at the Nigeria Police Divisional Headquarters in Ekpoma.

Represented by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), ASP Eno Ikoedem, the commissioner said the command received a distress report that armed men suspected to be kidnappers had attacked the area and abducted the students.

The PPRO said the commissioner immediately ordered the deployment of tactical teams for a joint rescue operation involving the Nigerian Army, the Edo State Security Corps (ESSC) and local hunters.

According to the police, the rescue operation was carried out on Tuesday at the kidnappers' hideout in the Erah Forest, where security operatives

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NEWS

Tinubu's state police bill push reshapes NASS agenda

ABUJA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's push for the creation of State Police has dramatically altered the legislative roadmap at the National Assembly, with the House of Representatives withdrawing its own constitutional amendment bill to clear the way for the President's Executive Bill.

The decision, taken during Tuesday's plenary in Abuja, effectively halts the House's earlier constitutional amendment process and shifts legislative attention to the Executive proposal, which lawmakers believe offers a broader framework for establishing State Police Service

across the federation.

The House had previously passed its version of the Constitution Alteration Bill on June 11, 2026, and, on July 9, constituted a 12-member Conference Committee to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions of the legislation.

However, the arrival of President Tinubu's Executive Bill prompted lawmakers to rethink the process, concluding that allowing separate constitutional amendment tracks to continue simultaneously could create duplication and complicate efforts to produce a unified legal framework.

The turning point came after the House adopted a motion

● **As Reps withdraw own bill, fast-track executive proposal**

sponsored by the Chairman of the House Committee on Rules and Business, Rep. Francis Waive (APC, Delta), seeking the rescission of the earlier resolution that approved the House's version of the State Police Bill and the dissolution of the Conference Committee.

With the motion adopted, Lawmakers formally rescinded the earlier legislation and dis-

solved the committee, clearing procedural hurdles for the Executive Bill to take centre stage.

The Executive proposal, titled the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (Alteration) Bill, 2026 (HB. 2797), immediately passed its First Reading before lawmakers proceeded to approve its Second Reading after a debate led by House Leader Julius Ihonvbere.

The bill has now been referred to the House Committee on Constitution Review for detailed legislative scrutiny, setting the stage for what is expected to be an intensive examination of the legal, administrative and operational framework for State Police across Nigeria.

House Leaders were quick to clarify that the withdrawal of the earlier bill should not be

interpreted as a retreat from the long-standing campaign for State Police. Rather, they described the move as a strategic legislative decision designed to ensure that the constitutional amendments emerging from the National Assembly are comprehensive, coherent and aligned with the Federal Government's broader security agenda.

Tinubu promises clean water supply to all area councils in FCT

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu has promised that the ongoing provision of clean water by the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) would be extended to all the area councils of the territory.

Tinubu, represented by the First Lady, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu, gave the assurance while inaugurating the newly constructed Bwari Water Supply Network, in Bwari on Tuesday.

He said that for years, residents of Bwari, Ushafa, and surrounding communities have relied on water from untreated boreholes and streams.

He said that the inauguration of the water supply project was in fulfilment of his administration's promise under the Renewed Hope Agenda, describing it as "not merely a slogan but a contract".

"As we mark our third anniversary in office, we are here today to celebrate the fulfillment of that promise right here in Bwari.

"Water is life. Clean water is dignity; it is a fundamental right, not a luxury and today, we are inaugurating this massive, state-of-the-art 198-kilometre water pipeline network.

"By linking Bwari township and its environs directly to our major treated water source at the Lower Usuma Dam, we are ending waterborne diseases and the constant, expensive digging of individual boreholes.

"Last year, it was the Lower Usuma Dam Phase II rehabilitation; last month, it was the Karu Water Network; today it is Bwari.

"I assure you, by the grace of God, before our tenure is through, this water revolution will fully cover Kuje, Kwali, Gwagwalada, and Abaji," he said.

FG launches 3 digital reforms tools to strengthen public service monitoring

ABUJA

The Federal Government on Tuesday launched three digital platforms aimed at strengthening public service reforms, improving accountability and enhance service delivery across Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

The platforms are the Reform Tracker Dashboard, Knowledge Repository and the National Strategy for Public Service Reform (NSPSR) Dashboard.

Launching the platforms in Abuja, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Sen. George Akume, said the tools would provide an integrated digital ecosystem for monitoring, documenting and communicating reforms across the public service.

Represented by his Senior Technical Adviser, Prof. Bernard Bolaji, Akume said the reform tracker dashboard would provide a credible mechanism for monitoring reform milestones,

timelines and key performance indicators across MDAs.

According to him, the knowledge repository will serve as the Federal Government's central digital library for reform policies, strategies, reports, guidelines and other knowledge products.

He added that the repository would preserve institutional memory, reduce duplication and promote evidence-based policymaking and continuous learning within the public service.

The SGF also said the NSPSR dashboard would provide real-time monitoring of the implementation of the National Strategy for Public Service Reform, enabling government to identify implementation gaps, track progress and make informed policy decisions.

He said the platforms underscored the Federal Government's commitment to building a transparent, accountable, technology-driven and results-oriented public service in line with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda.



EKPOMA ABDUCTION:

The rescued students (backing the camera) while the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Edo State Police Command, ASP Eno Ikoedem, displays the arms and ammunition recovered from suspected kidnappers at the command headquarters in Benin City on Tuesday.

Alleged fake agency: Police arrest Adeniyi Adeyemi, as Judge issues warrant against him

ABUJA

Police, on Tuesday, arrested Adeniyi Adeyemi barely hours after Mohammed Umar of the Federal High Court in Abuja issued a warrant against the alleged Director-General (DG) of non-existing Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC).

Justice Umar gave the order following an oral application by counsel for the police, Wisdom Madaki, after Adeyemi failed to appear in court for his arraignment.

The News Agency of Nigeria

(NAN) reports that Adeyemi and his co-defendants were scheduled to take their plea in the eight-count charge preferred against them by the police.

The police, in the fresh court document marked: FHC/ABJ/CR/562/2025, charged the defendants on allegations bordering on forgery, impersonation, among others.

While the Federal Republic of Nigeria is listed as the complainant, Adeyemi, Femi Surname Unknown" and "Anu Surname Unknown" were named as first to third suspects.

The charge was filed on Nov.

27, 2025, by Wisdom.

When the case was called, none of the suspects were in court.

Madaki then applied to the court to issue a bench warrant for Adeyemi's arrest following his absence.

Responding to the application, Adeyemi's lawyer, Genesis Francis, told the court that his client feared for his life and had written a letter to President Bola Tinubu.

He added that Adeyemi wants to stay alive to face his trial.

In response, the judge said the court would "help him to stay alive."

After taking arguments from the lawyers, Justice Umar directed all security agencies to arrest Adeyemi anywhere he is sighted.

Judge adjourned the case until Sept. 30 for arraignment.

NAN reports that on June 16 when the case came up for the suspects to take their plea, Adeyemi was said to be indisposed and Justice Umar adjourned the matter.

According to the court documents, witnesses listed in the case are the Chief of Staff to the President, Mr Femi Gbajabiamila; Paul Emmanuel, Jeremiah Imoukhede and Ituah Sylvester.

2027 Polls: INEC seeks increased funding, better staff welfare from RMAFC

The Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Joash Amupitan, SAN, has called for increased and sustained funding, improved staff welfare, and greater investment in electoral infrastructure ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Prof. Amupitan made the appeal on Tuesday during a courtesy visit to the Chairman of the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), Dr. Mohammed Bello Shehu, in Abuja, saying the engage-

ment was aimed at strengthening collaboration between the two federal institutions.

The INEC Chairman said the Commission's constitutional responsibilities extend beyond conducting presidential, governorship and legislative elections to include continuous voter registration, political party registration, and the management of election-related litigation.

He noted that the cost of conducting governorship elections now exceeds that of the presidential and National Assembly elections combined,

while INEC also shoulders the financial burden of pre-election and post-election activities, including election petitions arising from party primaries.

Amupitan explained that the Commission maintains offices in all 36 states, the Federal Capital Territory and the 774 local government areas, with the Federal Government funding its nationwide operations.

He stressed the need for improved remuneration and welfare packages for INEC staff, warning that the Commission has continued to lose experi-

enced personnel due to inadequate pay, with many seeking opportunities elsewhere.

According to him, the trend, coupled with the impending retirement of many experienced officials, could create a significant skills gap if urgent measures are not taken.

He also advocated increased investment in electoral technology, infrastructure and personnel training, describing them as critical to preserving institutional capacity and enhancing the credibility of future elections.

NEWS

Import duty exemptions hit ₦34 trillion in 2025

ABUJA

Comptroller-General, Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Adewale Adeniyi, says the value of Import Duty Exemption Certificate (IDEC) approvals for imported goods and equipment rose to N34 trillion in 2025.

The Senate Committee on Finance also threatened the heads of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria

(SMEDAN) etc. with sanctions for failing to appear before it.

Speaking during the committee's investigative session with revenue-generating agencies on Monday, Adeniyi said government policies had, at different times, affected the revenue-generating capacity of the NCS, both positively and negatively.

According to him, Customs would have generated significantly more revenue over the years if not for certain government policies and other external factors that

constrained its operations.

He identified the Import Duty Exemption Certificate (IDEC) scheme, introduced in March 2020, as one of the major policies affecting Customs' revenue.

"IDEC approvals reached about N34 trillion in 2025, with about 60 per cent granted for military hardware procurement due to Nigeria's prevailing security challenges.

"Other government-backed waivers covered the importation of Compressed Natural

Gas (CNG), electric and hybrid vehicles, healthcare equipment and medical supplies, industrial machinery and manufacturing inputs, as well as food import intervention programmes," he said.

Adeniyi, however, stressed that fiscal policy should not be assessed solely from the perspective of revenue generation but also by its broader economic and social impact.

He urged the government to establish stronger monitoring mechanisms to evaluate whether

beneficiaries of duty waivers were delivering the intended outcomes, including lower prices, increased production and improved access to healthcare.

Earlier, Adeniyi disclosed that out of the N11.04 trillion revenue target for 2026, the NCS had generated N4.5 trillion as of June 30, leaving about N7 trillion to meet its annual target.

Also speaking, Bello Gulumare, representing the Fiscal Responsibility Commission (FRC), alleged that the NCS had

an outstanding liability of N8.9 billion in an unremitted operating surplus to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) as of 2019.

The committee, chaired by Sen. Sani Musa (APC-Niger), directed the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), the FRC and the committee to reconcile the figures to determine the actual outstanding balance.

"We expect a detailed report on the outcome of the reconciliation meeting within the next two weeks before another interface with the CAC.

**AGRO-TRADE MARKET:**

From left, Brazilian Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Andre Carlos Alves de Paula Filho; Vice President Kashim Shettima and Gov AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara, during a High-Level Nigeria Brazil Agro-Trade Market meeting with Brazilian delegation at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Tuesday.

Apapa Customs intercepts ₦26.5bn Cannabis Indica concealed in vehicles

LAGOS

The Nigeria Customs Service, Apapa Area Command, has intercepted cannabis indica worth N26.5 billion concealed in a 1x40ft container during a joint examination with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

The Public Relations Officer of the Command, Chief Superintendent of Customs, Isah Sulaiman, disclosed this in a statement issued in Lagos on Tuesday.

The Customs Area Controller, Comptroller Emmanuel Oshoba, said the seizure involved 4,143.5 kilograms of cannabis indica.

He said the drugs were dis-

covered on Friday, July 10, 2026, following credible intelligence that prompted a thorough examination of container number FANU1933352.

Oshoba said officers found three used vehicles inside the container: a red 2015 Nissan Micra, a black 2019 Toyota Corolla S, and a gray 2015 Toyota Corolla.

He added that a detailed search revealed 162 bags containing 8,287 parcels of cannabis indica, with each parcel weighing 500 grams.

"The drugs were carefully concealed within the container to evade detection by security agencies," he said.

Oshoba stated that four bags

were concealed inside the red Nissan Micra, while the remaining 158 bags were recovered from the container floor and in spaces between the vehicles.

He noted that no illicit substances were found in the black Toyota Corolla S or the gray Toyota Corolla.

"The drugs were strategically packed to maximise concealment while using the vehicles as cover," he said.

The CAC said the seizure reflected the command's vigilance and commitment to intercepting prohibited items, especially illicit drugs that threaten public health, safety and national security.

He noted that the operation aligned with the zero-tolerance di-

rective of the Comptroller-General of Customs, Dr Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, against all forms of illicit trade in Nigerian ports.

Oshoba reaffirmed the command's resolve to facilitate legitimate trade while strictly enforcing laws against the importation of prohibited and restricted goods through Apapa Port.

He commended officers of the Command for their diligence and professionalism during the examination, stressing that synergy with NDLEA was critical to the successful interception.

"This seizure demonstrates our commitment to ensuring only lawful trade thrives at Apapa Port. We have made this port a no-go area for anything forbidden by our laws," Oshoba said.

CHANGE OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **EZINANDO-UGORJI CHINAZOM LAWRENCIA**, and not **EZINANDO CHINAZOM LAWRENCIA**. All former documents remain valid authorities and the general public should please take notes.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **OMAMEH CHUKS** now wish to be known and addressed as **OMAMEH IFECHUKWUDE PETER**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take notes.

Family lauds Edo govt for rescuing mentally ill woman

BENIN CITY

The family of Madam Egbu Eguasa has commended the Edo Government for intervening in her rehabilitation after she reportedly lived with mental health challenges for about 16 years.

The family gave the commendation on Tuesday during a visit to the Edo Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Benin to appreciate the government's support.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Mr Lugard Eguasa said years of efforts to secure treatment for his sister were hampered by financial constraints and other challenges.

He thanked Gov. Monday Okpebholo and the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Euginia Abdallah, for facilitating the intervention that had im-

proved her condition.

According to him, madam Eguasa, born in 1964, lived in Italy for several years before returning to Nigeria under difficult circumstances.

Eguasa said her mental health condition began about 16 years ago after a series of traumatic experiences, including separation from her only daughter.

He explained that the family had earlier taken her to a neuropsychiatric hospital for treatment but could not sustain the process because of inadequate resources.

"We appreciate the Edo Government for coming to our aid. We are hopeful that with the care she is receiving, she will recover and be reintegrated into society," he said.

Responding, Abdallah assured the family that the ministry would continue monitoring madam Eguasa's progress and provide the necessary support throughout her rehabilitation.

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Mentors corps members as future leaders, Edo Govt urges employers

BENIN CITY

The Edo Government has urged employers of NYSC members in the state to mentor them as future leaders by providing meaningful responsibilities, professional guidance and a conducive work environment.

Mr Charity Amayaenbo, Commissioner for Youth Affairs, made the call on Tuesday in Benin at the 2026 National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Employers' Workshop titled: "Fine-Tuning Stakehold-

ers' Collaboration to Enhance Corps Members' Welfare and Workplace Experience".

Amayaenbo said the success of the NYSC scheme depended not only on the management of the scheme but also on the commitment of organisations where corps members were deployed.

"As employers, you are not merely supervisors; you are mentors, trainers and partners in nation-building.

"The quality of supervision, guidance and workplace expo-

sure you provide will significantly influence the professional competence, confidence and career trajectory of every corps member under your care," he said.

The commissioner urged employers to integrate corps members into organisational activities, assign them meaningful responsibilities, encourage innovation and provide opportunities for professional development.

According to him, stronger collaboration among government institutions, private organisations

and educational institutions will create an enabling environment for young graduates to thrive.

"The theme of this workshop is both timely and relevant. Corporate collaboration among stakeholders is essential to improve corps members' welfare, workplace experience and productivity."

Earlier, the NYSC state Coordinator, Mr Fasina Adedotun, described corps employers as indispensable partners whose support had sustained the scheme over the past 53 years.

Edo Govt assures welders of business friendly environment

RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

Gov. Monday Okpebholo of Edo state has assured members of the Welders Association in Edo of his administration readiness to continue in creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive.

Okpebholo disclosed this while addressing Mr Peter Osagie, the President of Edo Chapter of Welders Association, who led other members on a courtesy visit to Government House, Benin City.

According to him, I am ready to partner with you, we are already working on the epileptic power supply affecting your businesses.

"We are already working on it. A 100 megawatt is already on the pipeline. They have been building it, and I am sure between now and November, that will be power on.

"We will be using it here in Edo, and that is going to be one of the biggest watt in our state and is here in Ologbo.

"We are also trying to repeat the same between Edo North and Central to help decentralised the power system in the two Senatorial districts.

"That is why you people voted for us to make life comfortable for you people. The roads

we're constructing today are for the people," he said.

The governor assured the group that his administration would complete the rehabilitation work on the Benin-Sapele road, adding that the work was 90 percent completed.

"For me, I have decided that I will leave Edo better than I met, in terms of infrastructure and security, we now have Edo of all inclusiveness, where everybody will be living together equally.

"There is something that will come up very soon, we are going to see different things in Edo, all the local government will be using new cars, government is going release about 200 busses for people to pay back insurmentally.

"I heard my brother talking about 2.5 million votes, let those who are saying it is not possible to know that we are ready to make it happen. I am not the one preaching it now. It's the Welders association that is preaching it.

"President Bola Tinubu is the best president that has ever happened to Nigeria, he removed the fuel subsidy that many were eating fat on, and the proceed is the development we are seeing across Edo," he added.

Speaking on the tax reform of the president, he noted that it was meant to benefit the low income earners.

He appealed to the associ-

ation to support the current government, saying that the government belongs to the people, as he warned them not to allow themselves to be used negatively during the election.

Mr Peter Osagie, President of

Edo Chapter of Welders Association, thanked the governor for creating an enabling environment for business to thrive.

Osagie revealed that the association had put a design in place to construct bus terminals

along the ongoing reconstruction road work on the Benin-Sapele.

He highlighted their major challenges to be epileptic power supply, appealing for a welder village that could accommo-

date his members.

He commended the governor in his fight against insecurity in the state, just as he assured the governor of his association commitment to fighting out of school children.



COURTESY VISIT:

The President of Edo chapter of Welders Association, Mr. Peter Osagie (2nd right), presenting a souvenir to Governor Monday Okpebholo (3rd right) when Osagie led members of the association on a courtesy visit to the governor in Government House, Benin, on Tuesday.

Edo moves to meet int'l best...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

lege of Agriculture bill that the house has just passed.

"Agriculture has gone scientific, we decided to reamend the bill to so that we can push agric into the system scientifically.

"The bill was first name, College of Agriculture and National Resources, now it has been amended by your instruction to be called College of Agriculture, Science and Technology, because agric has gone scientific," he said.

In his remarks, Okpebholo noted that the signing of the bill into law was a new dawn for the school and the state at large.

"Today, is a new dawn for Edo State College of Agriculture, that the amended law will bring about a lot of improvement in

the school and the state would benefit from this development.

"This new changes will improved the students capacity in the school, this amended bill is coming at the right time when every state of the federation is charged with the responsibility of meeting its food consumption rate.

"We want to be able to produce at least 95 per cent of what we consumed as a people, we want to use agric to increase our Internally Generated Revenue.

"This present law will help us creates jobs opportunity to our teeming youths, in terms of livestock rearing and agricultural husbandry.

"This sector would educate our youths to focus on the breeding, care, and daily management of livestock to produce meat, milk, fiber, and eggs.

Police rescue 3 kidnapped...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

engaged the suspects in a fierce gun battle.

One of the suspected kidnappers was neutralised, while another was arrested with gunshot injuries. The three abducted students were rescued unharmed.

The police said the operation led to the recovery of three AK-47 rifles, three magazines, 36 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, five mobile phones, two power banks, a charger, a lady's handbag and other incriminating items.

Agbonika commended the bravery, professionalism and resilience of officers and personnel of the Edo State Police

Command, the Nigerian Army, the Edo State Security Corps and local hunters whose joint efforts led to the successful operation.

He also appreciated the support of the Edo State Government and members of the public for providing timely and credible information that aided the operation.

Speaking to journalists after their rescue, the three students said they were held in the forest by their captors, who repeatedly moved them from one location to another while demanding that they contact their relatives to raise ransom.

They said they were eventually rescued by the joint security team without any ransom

RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

Edo State Task Force has apprehended two male car theft suspects, who specialised in receiving stolen cars from other states, changing their chassis number and selling them off.

The task force also recovered 3 vehicles from the main suspect, including one Toyota Camry, Toyota Sienna, and a Toyota Corolla.

Mr Rufus Johnbull, the Edo State Task Force Station Officer, while briefing newsmen at the task force office inside Govern-

ment House, said the cars were stolen from Anambra State and brought to Benin.

Johnbull thanked Edo People who had confidence in their operation and availed them the credible intelligence that led to the recovery.

According to him, "we received credible intelligence about this gang and we have been working on it for the past 2 weeks, we finally got a break on July 12, where we arrested the ring leader.

"The ring leader specialises in receiving stolen vehicle from other states and selling them here in Benin.

"We were also able to ar-

rest the panel beater who has been collaborating with him to change chassis number of vehicles, making it impossible for the owners to recover them.

"The suspects will be handed over to the Police for further investigations and prosecution," he said.

Speaking with Journalists, the ring leader in the crime, one Uyi Osazuwa denied knowledge about the ownership of the vehicles, insisting he bought them from a car dealer from Anambra.

Narrating his involvement, Uyi noted, I was arrested yesterday for receiving a car they said was a stolen car which I bought

from a car dealer in Anambra.

"I was not aware it was a stolen car, because I bought the car for one point five million for the Camry and the Sienna one point six million Naira.

"I was giving the necessary documents and to my understanding, I checked them out as okay, the person who was selling is based in Anambra, is somebody I have known over the years who is into sales of cars.

"I bought the car that cheap because of the fault the car had. I had to do body work, work on the engine and some other things," he said.

BOI commits €85m facility to drive cocoa processing, lift farmers

ABUJA

The Bank of Industry (BoI) has committed to unlocking €85 million in long-term, affordable financing to move Nigeria's cocoa sector away from raw bean export and into local processing.

The Managing Director/CEO of BOI, Dr Olasupo Olusi, made the commitment on Tuesday at the Cocoa Value Addition Summit 2026 in Abuja.

Olusi at the conference with the theme, "From Bean to Brand" maintained that "financing must follow value addition, not just production."

He said the €85 million European Investment Bank – The Bank of Industry (EIB-BOI) facility, backed by the European Union under the Global Gateway initiative, was designed specifically to strengthen Nigeria's cocoa value chain.

He stated that the bank would prioritize lending to processors,

cooperatives and MSMEs that add value locally, rather than only to traders exporting raw beans.

"We are particularly focused on cocoa value chains, which provide livelihoods for thousands of Nigerians.

"Through this initiative, we aim to enhance productivity, value addition, and market

linkages that will directly improve the incomes of farmers and processors."

He explained that at least 70 per cent of the facility would target cocoa and dairy, because those sectors hold the fastest path to jobs and forex retention.

The managing director said the era of celebrating volume of

raw exports must end, stressing that Nigeria loses billions by shipping beans and importing finished chocolate.

He noted that "financing alone is not enough, so BOI will pair the loans with technical assistance on compliance, climate standards, and access to the EU market."

Appointment of Sen Alimhikhe well deserved, says Oghieaga of Ibvie

LAMAI CASSIUS

AGANEBODE

The Oghieaga of Ibvie, in Etsako East Local Government Area, HRH Mallam Ali D Sulayman, has described the appointment of Senator Francis Alimhikhe as the Okumagbe of Wanno Clan as such that will bring peace and accelerated development to domain.

According to him, the new Okumagbe of Wanno will bring to the throne, his wealth of experience in public service and leadership to bear the manage-

ment of the affairs of his people.

This was contained in his message of felicitation to the new monarch and made available to The Nigerian Observer yesterday in Aganebode.

"As a retired army officer, an exemplary leader who is committed to peace, unity and the socio-cultural advancement of the Wanno people, the people will be the better for it", the Ibvie monarch explained.

The Oghieaga expressed optimism that the new monarch would usher in greater harmony, sustained development

and enduring progress for the kingdom.

He however prayed for divine wisdom, sound health and a prosperous reign, as he prepare for the ascension to the revered Wanno ancestral throne.

It will be recalled that the newly appointed Okumagbe of Wanno Clan, His Royal Highness, Senator Francis Alimhikhe, was formally issued a letter of appointment by the state government following the affirmation by the court of his selection as the Okumagbe of Wanno Clan.

NEWS

UNDP inaugurates solar-powered cold room in Lagos fishing community

LAGOS

The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP), implemented by UNDP, on Tuesday inaugurated a solar-powered cold room in Sagbokoji, Lagos, to improve fish preservation.

Sagbokoji is a riverine community in Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area, opposite Tin-Can Island.

The GEF-SGP UNDP Programme Assistant, Mrs Rose Agbo, said the project upgraded the solar energy infrastructure earlier installed in the community by adding a

three-horsepower solar-powered cooling system.

Agbo said the intervention followed requests from women fish processors, who complained that the existing freezers could no longer meet growing demand.

According to her, the cold room now runs entirely on solar energy, supported by battery storage and inverter systems, enabling beneficiaries to preserve larger quantities of fish.

She added that GEF-SGP currently supports more than 200 community-based environmental and livelihood projects across over 30 states in Nigeria.

The Chairman of the Nige-

ria Energy Forum (NEF), Dr Daniel Adeyui, said the project reflected the forum's commitment to translating discussions on clean energy into practical interventions.

According to him, the upgraded facility will strengthen the community's cold chain,

reduce post-harvest losses and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Adeyui called for stronger collaboration among communities, development partners and project developers to ensure the sustainability of similar initiatives.

Also speaking, Co-Chair of the NEF and former President of the Nigerian Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (NIEEE), Mr Adekunle

Makinde, expressed satisfaction with the community's positive response to the project.

Makinde said the beneficiaries demonstrated that the facility was functioning effectively and pledged to use it responsibly for the benefit of the association.

The President of NIEEE, Mr Felix Adeboye, urged organisations, philanthropists and development partners to replicate

similar interventions in other underserved communities.

Adeboye commended the Sagbokoji community for embracing the project, noting that some communities had previously rejected similar initiatives.

Speaking on behalf of the beneficiaries, the leader of the Fish Sellers Association, Mrs Jiselle Azankpo, expressed appreciation to GEF-SGP and its partners for expanding the facility.

Police arrest 4 suspected cultists in Delta

WARRI

The Police Command in Delta has arrested four suspected cultists in Oghara, Ethiope West Local Government Area of the state.

Spokesman for the command, SP Bright Edafe, disclosed this on Tuesday in Warri.

Edafe said the suspects were apprehended on Sunday by the police operatives attached to the Oghara Division.

According to him, one locally made cut-to-size gun and a live cartridge were recovered from the suspects.

"The police team was on a surveillance patrol, when they intercepted a Lexus RX330 SUV conveying the suspects.

"The four occupants were subjected to a search during which one locally made cut-to-size gun and one live cartridge were recovered from the vehicle," he said.

According to him, the suspects are in the custody of command and investigation in the matter is still on course.

The police spokesman said that Mr Yemi Oyeniyi, the Commissioner of Police (CP) in charge of the command had reiterated the command's commitment to dismantling criminal networks in the state.

Edafe said that the CP had also reemphasised the command's readiness to sustain intelligence-led and proactive policing operations, aimed at combating cultism and curbing proliferation of illegal firearms across the state.

He urged members of the public to continue to support the police with timely, credible and actionable information.

"The command remains relentless in its efforts to safeguard lives and property throughout the state," Edafe said.

Mutilated female corpse discovered, Police commence investigation in Ondo

AKURE

The police say a dismembered body of an unknown young lady was on discovered at the GRA, off Barrack's Road, Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State.

DSP Abayomi Jimoh, Spokesperson of the Police Command in Ondo, who confirmed the incident to newsmen on Tuesday in a statement, said full investigation had been commenced to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Jimoh explained that the command commenced a full-scale investigation following the discovery of the mutilated body of an unidentified woman along Barracks Road, near the GRA Roundabout in Ondo Town.

"On Monday, July 13 at about 9:40 a.m., the command received a report regarding the presence of a lifeless body at the location.

"Acting swiftly on the report, a team of police operatives were immediately deployed to

the scene.

"Upon arrival, the officers discovered the headless body of a female victim. Preliminary observations revealed that several parts of the body had been mutilated.

"Investigations have commenced to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident and identity of the deceased, apprehend those responsible and establish the motive behind the gruesome act," Jimoh said.

The spokesperson condemned the barbaric act and assured the public that no effort would be spared in bringing the perpetrators to justice.

"Members of the public who may have useful information that could assist the investigation are urged to report to the nearest police station or contact the command through its emergency lines.

"The area remains calm and adequate security measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of residents while investigations continue," he said.



AGRO-TRADE MARKET MEETING:

From left, Brazilian Ambassador to Nigeria, Carlos José Areias Moreno Garvete; Brazilian Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Andre Carlos Alves de Paula Filho; Vice President Kashim Shettima; Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the Vice President, Sen Ibrahim Hadejia and Gov Umar Namadi of Jigawa, during a High-Level Nigeria Brazil Agro-Trade Market meeting with Brazilian delegation at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Tuesday.

ITF begins nationwide screening of 225,000 artisans under SUPA

JOS

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF), has commenced the nationwide screening of 225,000 practising artisans under its Skill Up Artisans (SUPA) programme to boost skills, certification and employment opportunities.

Mrs Nancy- Ndiemaka Ekong, Director of ITF's Technical and Vocational Skills Training Department, said this on Tuesday in Jos, during the screening process.

Ekong said the exercise was being conducted simultaneously across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) as part of efforts to im-

plement President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda by strengthening the nation's skilled workforce and improving artisans' livelihoods.

She explained that the programme was specifically designed for practising artisans and should not be mistaken for an empowerment scheme.

"This programme is not an empowerment programme. It is meant for practising artisans who already possess skills.

"Whether you are a tailor, plumber, electrician or engaged in any other trade, we are helping you improve your competence and become globally competitive," she said.

She noted that while many

Nigerian artisans possessed technical skills, they often lacked the work ethics, customer relations and professional standards required to compete effectively in today's labour market.

"Our goal is to improve, not only their technical competence but also their attitude to work and professionalism so they can compete favourably with artisans anywhere in the world," she added.

Ekong said participants would undergo a three-and-a-half-month training programme free of charge, with the ITF paying the master trainers and providing transportation stipends to beneficiaries throughout the training period.

She said successful partici-

pants would earn internationally recognised certification to enhance their employability within and outside Nigeria.

According to her, beneficiaries will exit the programme through three pathways: business incubation with technical and financial support, job placement with employers within Nigeria, and overseas employment opportunities where skilled artisans are in demand.

"Some participants will have their businesses incubated and supported financially and technically.

"Others will be linked with employers of labour, while some will have opportunities to work outside Nigeria because many countries require skilled artisans," she said.

Stakeholders blame poor planning, waste for recurring Lagos flood

LAGOS

The Association of Scrap and Waste Pickers of Lagos (ASWOL) has identified poor drainage maintenance, indiscriminate waste disposal and weak land-use enforcement as major drivers of recurring flooding across Lagos.

The President of ASWOL, Mr Friday Oku, disclosed this in an interview with newsmen on Tuesday in Lagos while assessing factors responsible for persistent flooding during the

peak of the rainy season.

He said heavy rainfall only exposed longstanding weaknesses in drainage infrastructure, environmental management and urban planning.

According to him, many drainage channels are undersized, ageing and poorly maintained, reducing their capacity to accommodate increasing stormwater volumes.

Oku said weak enforcement of physical planning regulations had encouraged construction on drainage channels and floodplains, obstructing natural water flow and worsen-

ing flooding.

He added that infrastructure development had failed to keep pace with Lagos' rapid population growth, making many areas vulnerable even during moderate rainfall.

He also warned that rising sea levels and tidal influences were increasing flood risks in coastal communities across the state.

Oku urged the government to adopt an integrated flood risk management approach rather than relying mainly on emergency responses after flooding.

He advocated stricter enforcement of land-use regula-

tions and called for the integration of informal waste pickers into the state's waste management system to improve refuse collection in underserved communities.

According to him, waste pickers can complement Private Sector Participants, particularly in inner communities where regular waste collection remains inadequate.

Oku also recommended regular drainage maintenance, stronger early warning systems and greater investment in retention ponds, permeable surfaces and urban green spaces.

N/Delta stakeholders back Diri's infrastructure drive, advocate protection of public assets

YENAGOA

Niger Delta stakeholders at the Bayelsa Infrastructure Rebirth 2.0 Breakfast Roundtable on Tuesday, endorsed Gov. Douye Diri's infrastructure development agenda and called for stronger protection of public assets.

The endorsement was contained in a communiqué issued

after the roundtable in Yenagoa and signed by the Convener of the South South Reawakening Group, Elder Joseph Ambakederimo.

Participants urged the state government to sustain investment in quality infrastructure, describing it as a key driver of economic growth, investment and improved living standards. They passed a vote of con-

fidence on Diri's administration for executing ambitious infrastructure projects, despite Bayelsa's challenging riverine terrain.

The communiqué said ongoing projects had dispelled the long-held belief that the state's difficult geography makes major infrastructure development impossible.

The stakeholders, however,

expressed concern over the vandalism of critical public infrastructure, particularly the recent attack that disrupted gas supply to the state's new power plant.

They condemned the sabotage and urged security agencies, host communities and relevant authorities to strengthen measures to protect strategic public infrastructure.

According to the communiqué, safeguarding critical infrastructure is vital for uninterrupted power supply, economic stability and sustainable development.

The roundtable also called for the institutionalisation of the state's infrastructure development agenda through a framework that would ensure continuity beyond the current administration.

Participants said integrating

infrastructure planning into long-term development policies would preserve existing gains and guide future governments.

The convener, Ambakederimo underscored the need for sustained engagement between government and citizens on governance and infrastructure development.

He said continuous dialogue would promote transparency, strengthen accountability and



COURTESY VISIT:

Gov Ahmed Ododo (right) receives a plaque from the NYSC Director-General, Brig.-Gen. Olakunle Nafiu, when he hosted the DG in his office in Lokoja on Tuesday.

Ebonyi PDP governorship candidate dismisses cyberbullying allegation

ABAKALI

Chief Ifeanyi-Chukwuuma Odii, 2027 governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Ebonyi, has dismissed allegations of sponsoring cyberbullying against Ebonyi government.

Odii, business Mogul, popularly known as "AnyiChuks" in a statement to journalists in Abakaliki on Tuesday, described the allegation as baseless and an attempt to crimi-

nalise legitimate criticism and divert attention from issues of governance in the state.

The member representing Ikwo/Ezza South Federal Constituency, Mr Chinedu Ogah, had recently accused Odii of cyber bullying the government of Ebonyi State and sponsoring a propaganda campaign against Governor Nwifuru.

He maintained that demanding accountability from elected public officials was a constitutional right of citizens and should not be misconstrued as

cyberbullying or cyberstalking.

"Since when did asking questions become cyberbullying? Since when did demanding a scorecard become cyberstalking?" Odii asked.

He said Ebonyi people deserved to know how public resources allocated to the state had been utilised, insisting that citizens had the right to demand transparency and good governance.

According to him, criticism of government policies and performance is an essential feature of democracy and should not be interpreted as an

attack on any individual.

Odii also responded to Ogah's challenge on his contributions to the development of Ebonyi, saying his philanthropic interventions through the Odii Foundation and private investments had positively impacted residents across the state's 13 local government areas.

He pointed that he had empowered more than 20,000 youths and women through grants, vocational training and start-up support, while over 5,000 students had benefited from local and foreign scholarships in various disciplines.

Nsit Ubium community receives ₦153.2 million Renewed Hope Cash Transfer from FG

Nsit Ubium (Akwa Ibom) Nsit Ubium Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom has received N153.2 million Renewed Hope Cash Transfer from the Federal Government.

Ms Emem Ibanga, the state Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs disclosed this during the commencement of the programme in Ikot Edibon Headquarters in Nsit Ubium on Tuesday.

Ibanga said that the intervention was part of President

Bola Tinubu's Social Investment Programme designed to cushion the economic hardship faced by vulnerable Nigerians.

She said that 2,043 verified beneficiaries have received debit cards under the federal government's renewed hope conditional cash transfer programme.

According to her, each of the verified beneficiaries received a debit card preloaded with N75,000.

The commissioner explained

that the cards were issued free of charge to those captured in the state social register.

She commended Gov. Umo Eno for ensuring that Akwa Ibom people benefited fully through a transparent and seamless process.

"Beneficiaries should not pay anyone to get these cards and must not reveal their PINs. This programme is 100 per cent free and meant to directly improve your livelihood," she warned.

In his remarks, the Chairman of Nsit Ubium Local Government Council, Mr Alfred

Charles, described the initiative as a "life-changing intervention that has brought hope and relief to many families".

He thanked the Nigerian president and the state governor for ensuring that the people of the state were not left out.

Meanwhile, Mr Thomas Ekefre, speaking on behalf of the beneficiaries, expressed appreciation to the federal and the state governments for the timely support.

Ekefre said the money would put food on his table and promised to vote for Tinubu come 2027 election.

Ododo reaffirms commitment to corps members' welfare in Kogi

LOKOJA

Governor Ahmed Ododo of Kogi has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to improving the welfare and security of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and staff serving in the state.

Ododo gave the assurance on Tuesday in Lokoja while receiving the NYSC Director-General, Brig.-Gen. Olakunle Nafiu, during a courtesy visit.

The governor recalled his experience as a corps member in Imo during the 2002/2003 service year.

He said the challenges he encountered strengthened his resolve to ensure a more rewarding service experience for corps members posted to Kogi.

Ododo said the state government had continued to support corps members through transportation to their places of primary assignment and augmentation of camp feeding.

He added that the government also supported Community Development Service (CDS) projects and maintained sustained security measures across the state.

Ododo announced plans to undertake a comprehensive

renovation of the NYSC Permanent Orientation Camp at Asaya in Kabba, rehabilitate the NYSC Kogi Secretariat and provide utility vehicles to enhance the scheme's operations.

He also appealed to the NYSC management to deploy more professionals to Kogi, assuring the scheme of sustained government support and improved welfare packages for corps members.

Responding, Nafiu commended the Kogi Government for its consistent support for the NYSC, particularly in the areas of security, welfare and logistics.

He said the inauguration of the NYSC State Governing Board would further strengthen collaboration between the scheme and the state government in advancing the objectives of the service corps.

Nafiu reaffirmed the NYSC's commitment to sustaining its partnership with the Kogi Government and pledged to deploy more corps members to support the state's socio-economic development.

The Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Mr Monday Anyebe, and the Governor's Special Adviser on Security, Mr Jerry Omodara, attended the meeting.

Expert seeks stricter building standards to curb windstorm damage

DUTSE

Civil Engineer, Mr Abdurashid Ahmad, has urged authorities to prioritise preventive building inspections and strict enforcement of construction standards to reduce the impact of windstorms in Jigawa.

Ahmad made the call in an interview with newsmen on Tuesday while reacting to the recent windstorm that caused widespread destruction to homes and infrastructure.

According to the Jigawa State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), the disaster claimed three lives and affected 5,403 residents across 120 communities in 13 Local Government Areas of the state.

He said the incident underscored the need for stricter enforcement of approved building standards, noting that many affected structures suffered severe damage due to poor construction practices.

"Windstorm damage is often caused not only by the strength of the wind but also by poor

roof anchorage, weak structural connections, substandard materials, inadequate bracing and failure to comply with approved building standards."

Ahmad described the foundation as the backbone of every building and emphasised the importance of designing structures to suit the nature and condition of the soil.

"Every soil type requires a suitable foundation. Qualified professionals must first assess the soil before determining the type of structure it can safely support."

He advised prospective homeowners and property developers to engage qualified professionals and ensure strict compliance with approved engineering standards throughout the construction process.

The engineer also urged the government to establish monitoring committees to inspect construction sites, enforce building regulations and improve drainage infrastructure to reduce structural failures.

"Government should not wait until buildings collapse before taking action."

NEWS**JUDICIARY**

Cyberbullying not protected by free speech, lawyers warn

LAGOS

Some lawyers on Tuesday said cyberbullying was an offence under Nigerian law and was not protected by constitutional provisions on freedom of expression.

They stated this in separate interviews with newsmen in Lagos.

According to them, online abuse does not constitute a constitutional right, although

the constitution guarantees citizens the freedom to hold opinions.

A former Chairman of the Young Lawyers Forum (YLF), Mr. Anthony Aki, said the 1999 Constitution, as amended, allowed citizens to impart ideas and information but imposed clear limitations.

Aki said individuals were free to hold and express opinions, but such rights were not absolute and ended where the

rights of others began.

He cited Section 39(1) of the Constitution as guaranteeing freedom of expression, including the right to receive and impart ideas and information.

The lawyer, however, noted that Section 45(1) permitted restrictions reasonably justifiable in a democratic society to protect public order, morality and the rights of others.

Aki said citizens enjoyed freedom of expression, but

such freedom did not extend to acts or conduct capable of causing injury to other persons.

A member of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Mrs Elizabeth Chiozor, said provisions of the Cybercrimes Act criminalised online conduct intended to insult, harass or threaten individuals.

She said many people overlooked the existence of legislation prohibiting online abuse,

adding that communications aimed at causing fear, harassment or threats amounted to offences.

Chiozor said where law enforcement agencies established an intention to harm or intimidate a victim, the offender could be prosecuted under the Cybercrimes Act.

Also speaking, founder of the MAEF Foundation for Indigent Inmates, Mr Anthony Makolo, said certain comments against individuals or organisations remained lawful in spite of being harsh or critical.

Makolo said such expressions could constitute legitimate criticism and might not necessarily amount to offences under the Cybercrimes Act or other applicable laws.

He, however, urged individuals to exercise caution in expressing opinions, noting that freedom of expression should be exercised responsibly to avoid legal consequences.

"Not all criticisms offend the provisions of the Cybercrimes Act, but there is only a thin line between lawful criticism and unlawful conduct," Makolo cautioned.

**COURTESY VISIT:**

Managing Director, News Agency of Nigeria, Ali M Ali (M) and the visiting Managing Director, Zamfara State Media Corporation, Alhaji Bello Gusau and Managing Director, Zamfara State Hotel Tourism Board, Alhaji Abba Bello at the NAN Headquarters in Abuja on Monday

Court strikes out breach of trust charges against businessman

ABUJA

A Life Camp Magistrates' Court in Abuja, has struck out breach of trust and cheating charges preferred against a businessman, Afolabi Olajide.

The Magistrate, Hauwa Aboki, struck out the charges and discharged the defendant followed an application by the defense counsel, Lillian

Ibrahim that the parties had reached a settlement.

The counsel had prayed the court to strike out the case, as both parties had reached an out-of-court settlement and that the complainant had lost interest.

The Magistrate said, "Having heard the defense application, the case as a result of lack of interest and settlement reached by both parties in the matter is hereby struck out," she

said.

Following the lack of interest and settlement, the court struck out the First Information report (FIR) against the defendant.

According to the charges, Olajide, of New Nyanya, Abuja was accused of breach of trust, cheating.

According to the FIR, on Oct 7, 2024, the defendant was entrusted with the complainant's Honda Accord to sell at

the sum of N2.2 million.

However, the defendant fraudulently sold the car to one Innocent Onuh at the sum of N1.4 million and used the money for personal purposes.

During police investigation, the defendant gave a confessional statement admitting to the offence.

The offence contravened the provision of Sections 312 and 322 of the Penal Code.

Man to sweep court premises for 40 days for stealing mattress

KADUNA

A Kaduna Chief Magistrates' Court has sentenced a 45-year-old man, Dennis Dogo, to 40 days of sweeping court premises for stealing a mattress valued at N206,000.

Dogo, a resident of Ungwan Pama, Kaduna, was charged with criminal conspiracy and stealing.

The Magistrate, Ibrahim Emmanuel, sentenced Dogo after he pleaded guilty to theft.

Emmanuel held that the court was lenient on the convict because he did not waste the judge's time by pleading guilty.

He advised Dogo to desist from committing crime and

look for something meaningful to do, rather than indulge in crime.

He added that "the court will not be lenient with you if you continue with the life of crime."

Earlier, the Prosecutor, Insp. Chidi Leo, had told the court that the matter was reported by one Mary Samson on July 8.

Leo said Dogo and two others at large, broke into Samson's shop located at Sabon Tasha, Kaduna, and stole a Mouka mattress valued at N206,000.

He said the convict was caught and handed over to authorities by a security guard, while the two others fled.

The prosecutor said the offences contravened the Kaduna State Penal Code, 2017.

Labourer jailed 3 years for stabbing man with knife

JOS

A Jos Magistrate's Court on Tuesday sentenced a 22-year-old labourer, Yahuza Suleiman to three years in prison for stabbing a man with a knife.

The convict pleaded guilty to the charge of causing hurt brought against him by the Police.

The Magistrate, Mrs Irene Pati sentenced the convict to three years in prison with an option of fine of N200,000.

She also ordered him to pay a compensation of N100,000 and in default,

spend additional four months in prison.

While reviewing the facts, the prosecutor, Insp Ibrahim Gokwat told the court that the case was reported on May 31, at the Nassarawa Gwong Police Station by one Ahmad Abdullahi, the complainant.

Gokwat said the convict met the complainant by the roadside, demanded N40,000 and, before he could respond, stabbed him with a long knife, injuring his right hand and neck.

He said the offences contravened the Plateau Penal Code Law.

Trader sentenced to 12 months in prison for stealing phone

JOS

A Jos Magistrate's Court on Tuesday sentenced a 22-year-old trader, Nanzing Solomon to one year in prison for stealing a phone.

The convict pleaded guilty to the charge of theft brought against him by the Police.

The Magistrate, Mrs Irene Pati sentenced the convict to one year in prison with an op-

tion of N50,000 fine.

While reviewing the facts, the Prosecutor, Ibrahim Gokwat told the court that the case was reported on June 17, at the Laranto Police Station by one Julius Friday, the complainant.

Gokwat said the convict stole the phone, but it was recovered from him during police investigation.

He said the offence contravened the Plateau Penal Code Law.

Kogi chief judge appoints vacation judge

LOKOJA

Judges of the Kogi High Court of Justice would on 20th commenced their 2026 annual vacation.

This is contained in an Order by the state Chief Judge, Justice Josiah Majebi, on Tuesday in Lokoja.

The order is pursuant to Order 10 Rule 4(2) of the Kogi High Court (Civil Procedure) Rules, 2025.

According to the order, Justice Hawa Yusuf has been appointed as the "Vacation Judge" and will sit in Lokoja throughout the vacation period.

Yusuf will attend to criminal matters and urgent civil mo-

tions arising from all parts of the state, subject to the leave of the court."

Majebi said that only urgent matters would be entertained during the vacation.

He added that the annual vacation would end on September 18, while normal court sittings would resume on September 21.

The chief judge assured litigants and members of the public that other services provided by the High Court would not be disrupted during the vacation.

He also said that all lower courts across the state would continue to sit and render adjudicatory and other judicial services throughout the vacation period.

FOREIGN

NEWS

Colombian national killed by ICE agent during operation in Maine

An ICE agent has fatally shot a Colombian national during an immigration enforcement operation in the US state of Maine, a week after the agency used deadly force against another migrant in a Texas traffic stop.

In the latest incident, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said agents were watching an address for a person with a final order of removal in Biddeford at around 07:00 EDT (11:00 GMT) on Monday.

When ICE tried to stop someone driving from that address, "the vehicle attempted to flee the scene and, fearing for public safety, an officer discharged his weapon", ICE said, adding "the driver of the vehicle was struck".

Dozens of demonstrators gathered in Biddeford afterwards.

ICE did not share details on why the officer feared for safety.

Maine's top prosecutor said the incident involved an officer from ICE's Enforcement Removal Operations department, and the agent has been placed on leave pending an investigation.

Initial statements indicate "the subject attempted to flee in a vehicle in the direction of the officer and was fatally shot", said Maine's Attorney General Aaron Frey, a Democrat.

The name of the deceased man is not being released until he is formally identified

and his family are notified, the statement added.

The inspector general's office for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees ICE, is taking over the investigation, according to Senator Susan Collins, a Republican representing Maine.

Fellow Maine Senator Angus King, a political independent, said he was initially told by DHS chief Markwayne Mullin that the person who was shot dead was a target of an arrest warrant in an immigration operation.

But hours later, King said Mullin called him to say the man was actually not the target of a warrant, his office told the BBC.

Maine Governor Janet Mills said the death of a man the government was not even looking for "makes this tragedy even more disturbing and infuriating".

"It underscores the reckless and haphazard manner in which immigration enforcement operations are being conducted in Maine and across the country," she wrote on X.

The person who was killed was a Colombian national, the Embassy of Colombia confirmed.

The Embassy said it has "requested information and clarification" from DHS "regarding the circumstances surrounding this lamentable death and will continue to follow the case closely as the investigation progresses".



ICE SHOOTING:

Civil rights organisations had filed a lawsuit against their operations, alleging aggressive tactics by federal agents during enforcement surges.

Yemen's Houthis launch missiles at Saudi Arabia after strikes on Sanaa airport

Yemen's Houthis said they launched missiles at Abha airport in south-western Saudi Arabia on Monday in response to air strikes on Sanaa's airport that they blamed on the kingdom.

The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, which backs the country's internationally-recognised government, said its air defences "dealt with" the missiles and no casualties were reported.

The Houthis, who control north-western Yemen and are backed by Iran, earlier accused Saudi Arabia of "blatant aggression", saying it had struck the runway of Sanaa's airport.

The strike was claimed by Yemen's government, which said it wanted to prevent an Iranian plane from landing.

It was the most significant escalation in the largely dormant conflict between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia

since an informal truce took effect four years ago.

Yemen has been devastated by a civil war that began in 2014, when the Houthis ousted the government from Sanaa, the capital. The conflict escalated in 2015, after the Saudi-led coalition of Arab states intervened in an attempt to restore the government's rule.

The fighting has reportedly left more than 150,000 people dead and triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with more than 22 million people in need of some form of aid, according to the UN.

On Monday afternoon, footage on social media showed plumes of smoke rising above rooftops in Sanaa after the strikes at the city's international airport.

The Houthis' al-Masirah TV said the "departure and land-

ing runways" were targeted.

The internationally-recognised Yemeni government, which is based in the southern port of Aden, said its forces had carried out the strikes amid a dispute over the plane used by a Houthi delegation returning from Iran after the funeral of the late supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"The terrorist Houthi militias, backed by the Iranian regime, prevented Yemeni national aircraft from landing at the airport in the capital, Sanaa, while insisting on allowing an Iranian plane to violate Yemeni territory; consequently, the airport runway was targeted," the Yemeni defence ministry said.

The Iranian plane had to divert and later landed in the Red Sea city of Hudaydah, about 150km (93 miles) to the south-west, according to the Houthis.

For more than a decade, aircraft entering Yemeni airspace have required clearance from the Saudi-led coalition, which says it is acting at the Yemeni government's request.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree accused Saudi Arabia of being behind the Sanaa strikes, which he said had ended "the de-escalation phase" of their conflict and would not go "unanswered or unpunished".

Saudi authorities did not comment on the strikes before Saree announced on Monday evening that the Houthis had launched a number of ballistic missiles and drones at Abha International Airport "in response to this criminal Saudi aggression".

He also warned airlines against flying through Saudi airspace "until the blockade on Sanaa International Airport is lifted".

Hungary parliament votes to remove president from office

The Hungarian parliament has voted to remove President Tamás Sulyok from office, who was widely seen as a loyalist of former prime minister Viktor Orbán who lost power in April after 16 years.

Prime Minister Péter Magyar's Tisza party used its two-thirds majority to steamroll through the 17th amendment to the constitution, ending the term of Sulyok and the head of the Constitutional Court Péter Polt.

It was the most dramatic day in parliament since the new government took office in early May, after its surprise landslide victory against Orbán's Fidesz party on 12 April.

Sulyok now has five days to sign the amendment - his own political death warrant - or refer it to the Constitutional Court.

If Sulyok refers it to the court, Magyar has said he will launch impeachment proceedings against him, which would suspend him from office automatically.

Another option would be to simply resign to avoid a constitutional crisis in the interest of the country, as the new government has been urging him to do.

Deputies of the now opposition Fidesz party walked out of parliament before Monday's vote, accusing the Tisza party of building a tyranny.

Fidesz argues that the

amendment grants the government the arbitrary power to dismiss any public official from office, with immediate effect.

"The great irony of the situation is that Fidesz have fallen foul of their own concept of power," Péter Rona - a former opposition presidential candidate - told the BBC.

The 2011 constitution, written by Orbán's government, enshrined the principle that "the winner takes all".

In office from 2010 until 2026, Fidesz reshaped the Hungarian state to its own will, and filled supposedly independent state positions with party loyalists - using its own two-thirds majority.

The 141 Tisza deputies in parliament gave a standing ovation as the results of the vote were announced.

The amendment also removes Constitutional Court judges who are over the age of 70, and forbids deputies who have served three terms in parliament from standing again - which applies to more than half the current Fidesz deputies.

"I quite agree with the removal of the president," András Baka, former head of the Supreme Court, told the BBC.

Hungary was governed by the rule of law from 1989 to 2010, he argued. After that, Fidesz captured state institutions and created an authoritarian state.

Bangkok fire investigation finds locked doors and flammable decor as deaths climb to 30

Thai authorities are investigating if negligence was what led to the deadly inferno at a Bangkok bar late on Sunday, as survivors reported doors being locked and the lack of signage demarcating emergency exits.

The use of flammable materials as decoration may have facilitated the rapid spread of the fire, which originated near the stage, police say.

This "indicates a lack of caution and disregard for the safety of the patrons," Police General Kittiratt Phanphet said on Monday.

The blaze has left at least 30 people dead and dozens more injured. First responders found many of the victims in the restrooms at the end of the bar, from where experts believe

they tried to flee - but couldn't.

The fire broke out late on Sunday and has left at least 30 people dead.

As of Tuesday morning, 27 of the deceased victims have been identified, authorities said. More than 70 people are injured, 24 of them critically.

Preliminary investigations suggest the blaze was caused by a short circuit in an air conditioner, which quickly cut power throughout the bar.

But several people who had visited the bar earlier have described it as a dark room even in its original state. Phatsara Khamloet, who visited in May, told BBC Thai she had to navigate a "winding route" to reach the bathroom, and noted that the exits were not well marked.

Busakorn Saensuk, a fire safety expert from the Engineering Institute of Thailand who inspected the aftermath at Rong Beer Na Lat Phrao, said the door near the restrooms was locked, while the two doors at the entrance were partially obstructed by furniture and other objects.

Customers would instinctively have run away from the fire, towards the back where the restrooms were, Busakorn tells BBC Thai.

"But once they reached the back, they couldn't get out.

"If the emergency signs were lit, people would have been able to see how the door was locked and may have been able to unlock it," she says.

Busakorn also noted that the stage was decorated using

highly flammable materials such as plastic flowers, while the ceiling was plastered with combustible foam.

Survivors have described the stage being engulfed in flames within seconds. Thai indie band Thotsakan, which was performing when the fire broke out, has lost two members to the tragedy.

Worsak Kanok Nukulchai, a professor specialising in structural engineering, believes many people would have died by inhaling toxic smoke "even before getting burned".

The first flames would have reacted with the flammable materials to produce carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide, often known as the "toxic twins" of fire smoke, he explains.

NEWS**FOREIGN**

US inflation rate eases to 3.5% as gasoline prices fall

Inflation in the US eased last month as the cost of energy and filling up at the pumps fell, official figures show.

Prices rose 3.5% in the year to June, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), down from 4.2% recorded in May.

Gasoline prices decreased 9.7% last month, but are still much more expensive than a year ago. On Tuesday, the national average had risen to \$3.86 a gallon from \$3.79 a week ago, according to motorist advocacy group AAA.

While the rate of inflation has fallen more than expected, the easing of price rises could be short-lived due to the renewed conflict in the Middle East sending global oil prices up again.

The price of a barrel of Brent crude, which is the global

benchmark for oil, hit \$87 on Tuesday, an increase of almost \$10 in the space of 24 hours.

The spike in the price of the commodity came after the fresh military strikes on Iran by the US this week, with President Donald Trump declaring a new naval blockade in the Strait of Hormuz and a 20% charge on all cargo being shipped through the key waterway used for global trade.

The escalation has already led analysts to predict that inflation will rise in the coming months and that interest rate cuts are unlikely anytime soon.

"Gasoline prices are already back above June levels, meaning the next inflation report will heat up again," said Ipek Ozkardeskaya, senior analyst at Swissquote Bank.

Ahead of his first address

to the US Congress later, newly appointed Federal Reserve chairman Kevin Warsh said his committee had "no tolerance for persistently elevated inflation".

"We share a resolute commitment to restoring price stability," he said in prepared comments.

The Fed held US interest rates between 3.5% and 3.75% at Warsh's first meeting in June and some analysts suggest rates could be raised in the coming months.

President Trump pushed Warsh's predecessor, Jerome Powell, to cut interest rates, and has made it clear he expects Warsh to fulfil his demand for reductions in borrowing costs for Americans.

But Lindsay James, investment strategist at wealth management firm Quilter, said despite Warsh having got his "feet

under the table, it does not mean rate cuts are looming in order to appease President Trump".

"Instead, we are likely to see a conservative outlook from the Federal Reserve when it meets in a fortnight," she added.

Warsh to review how Fed works after holding US interest rates at first meeting

While energy prices fell 5.7% last month, food price inflation increased further, with the cost of meat, poultry, fish and eggs going up, along with dairy products and cereals.

However, eating out remains more expensive, with meals on average costing 3.7% more than they did last year.

While the overall inflation rate fell in June, lower inflation does not mean that prices are getting cheaper, it is just that they are rising at a slower pace.

So-called core inflation, which strips out food and energy prices that are seen as volatile, remained unchanged in June at 2.6%.

That figure is what will be closely monitored by the Fed when it comes to deciding whether to cut, hold or raise interest rates.

Stephen Brown, chief North America economist at Capital Economics, suggested the latest figure would "all but rule out an interest rate hike this month, but we still see reason to expect the Fed to hike interest rates later this year".

Federal Reserve governor Christopher Waller warned on Monday that policymakers would have to consider raising rates.

"If we get another hot reading on core inflation this week, then the FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) will need to consider tightening monetary policy in the near term," Waller told the New York Association for Business Eco-

nomics.

"Sternly staring at inflation until it melts before our withering gaze is not an option."

The theory behind increasing interest rates to tackle inflation is that by making borrowing more expensive, more people will cut back on spending and that leads to demand for goods falling and price rises easing.

But it is a balancing act, as high interest rates can harm the economy as businesses may hold off from investing in production and jobs. Interest rate cuts, which Trump has called for, can boost the economy by lowering borrowing costs and encouraging spending and investment.

On Tuesday, more than a fifth of small business owners in the US reported that inflation was their "single most important" problem, the highest amount for almost two years, according to the National Federation of Independent Business.



PROCESSING MACHINE:

A front-loader loads dirt and crushed rock into a processing machine used to separate gold-bearing material in Sudan

Israeli strike on police post in north Gaza kills seven, officials say

An Israeli air strike on a post belonging to Gaza's Hamas-run police force has killed at least seven people, including a senior officer, health and police officials say.

Witnesses said that an Israeli drone fired four missiles at the post near a busy market in the Jabalia area of northern Gaza.

The Palestinian territory's Hamas-run interior ministry said the head of the local police station, Col Mohammed Marwan Salem, and several other officers were among those killed in what it condemned as a "massacre".

An Israeli military official confirmed it had carried out a strike in the area and said it had targeted "terrorists".

Another two people were reportedly killed by Israeli fire in southern Gaza on Tuesday.

An air strike killed a man

and injured three other people in the Khan Younis area, medics told Reuters news agency.

The Israeli military said it struck a Hamas operative.

In nearby Rafah, a 10-year-old boy named Muataz Abu Shaar was killed by Israeli gunfire, according to the medics.

The Israeli military has not yet commented on that incident.

Both Israel and Hamas have

accused each other of near-daily violations of the ceasefire that took effect in the Palestinian territory last October.

Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry has said at least 1,110 people have been killed by Israeli fire since then, while the Israeli military has said four of its soldiers have been killed in Palestinian attacks.

The war was triggered by the

Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023, in which about 1,200 people were killed and 251 others were taken hostage.

Israel responded to the attack by launching a military campaign in Gaza, during which more than 73,230 people have been killed, according to the territory's health ministry.

EU bans purchase and import of Sudanese gold in bid to curb war economy

The European Union is banning the purchase, import and transfer of Sudanese gold in a bid to curb sources of financing for the country's devastating conflict.

The measure announced by the European Council on Monday also bans the sale, supply, transfer and export of

mercury and cyanide to Sudan, chemicals used to mine the precious metal.

The decision includes targeted exemptions, such as goods intended for humanitarian purposes, public health emergencies and disaster response.

Gold has become a major source of revenue in sustaining

the war between the Sudanese Armed Forces and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

Since fighting broke out in 2023, tens of thousands of people have been killed and millions have been displaced, triggering what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Several found dead in lift shaft after fire in central Brussels building

Several people have died in a fire at a building under construction in Brussels on Tuesday, local authorities have said.

The cause of the fire at the Oxy tower in the centre of the city is unclear, with officials saying at least six people are missing.

While it was put out quickly, when firefighters entered the building they discovered it had spread to the lift shafts, where two lifts were stuck.

They were able to pry one open and found "several victims - we don't yet know exactly how many," said Brecht Speybrouck, spokesperson for the Brussels Labour Prosecutor's Office.

"It could be the six missing people, but there could also be more in the other lift, or elsewhere," he added.

The mayor of Brussels, Philippe Close, thanked the emergency services who "did an exceptional job" in "particularly difficult circumstances."

Prime Minister Bart De Wever arrived at the scene and Philippe, King of the Belgians, is expected later, Belgian outlet RTBF said.

Local media said two people were already taken to hospital with serious burns, while a firefighter was treated at the scene after being exposed to high temperatures.

The Oxy tower is still under construction and will eventually house flats, a hotel, restaurants and bars.

It is located 500m (0.3 miles) from the Grand Place, Brussels' central Baroque square.

Libya's rival military chiefs meet to discuss reunification of armed forces

Top military leaders from Libya's rival armies met in Sirte on Sunday to discuss ongoing efforts to reunify the military.

Eastern forces Chief of Staff Khaled Haftar and his western counterpart Salah al-Din al-Namroush met alongside representatives of the UN Support Mission in Libya.

Without providing details, a statement issued by the eastern forces said the meeting was "constructive."

The north African country plunged into chaos after the ouster of longtime leader Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

It's since been run by two governments: Abdulhamid Dbeibah's internationally recognised

Government of National Unity in the west, and Khalifa Haftar's rival Government of National Stability in the east.

Talks to reunify the country reportedly began late last year, when both Libyan sides asked Pakistan to mediate. The US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey are all said to support the process.

A proposed reunification plan would create a 36-month transitional power-sharing setup, with Dbeibah as prime minister and Haftar's son Saddam leading a presidential council.

The plan also gives Haftar's faction budget authority due to its control of the country's major oilfields and infrastructure.

Sports

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

Barcelona can't get Alvarez, Atletico Madrid say he is going to Arsenal

Atletico Madrid are not keen to negotiate with Spanish LaLiga rivals Barcelona for the transfer of striker Julian Alvarez. According to journalist



JULIAN ALVAREZ

Graeme Bailey, Atletico are only interested in talking to Arsenal if they are ready to make a move for the player who is with the Argentine team at the World Cup. The Premier League champions are actively exploring attacking reinforcements and believe they have a realistic opportunity if Barcelona are ultimately unable to complete a deal. Alvarez has made it known that his preferred club is Barcelona, if he had to leave the Wanda Metropolitan side. Atletico's perspective, selling one of their biggest stars abroad is far more appealing than allowing him to strengthen a direct La Liga title rival. Meanwhile Barcelona president Joan Laporta said they have made bid for Alvarez, but will not wait for too long for Atletico. "We're not going to dance to anyone's tune. We set the pace here. We've made an offer, but it's not an open-ended offer, it's not an unlimited offer. We'll see how long it remains valid. We've already expressed our intention to sign the player the coach and the technical staff have requested. We like him a lot and I think he's a fantastic player," he added.

Tinubu's ₦12bn 2025 Nations Cup intervention to NFF causing ripples at National Assembly

The National Assembly is in a state of confusion over alleged discrepancies in the disbursement of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's ₦12bn intervention fund to the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) for the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON).

A member of the Green Chamber of the National Assembly, who prefers to remain anonymous, has alleged discrepancies at how the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) disbursed the whopping ₦12 billion intervention funds for the Super Eagles after the 34th edition of the African Cup of Nations in Cote d'Ivoire, for payment of outstanding bonuses and allowances.

The legislator revealed that the National Assembly received petitions on the NFF every day, while accusing the federation of allegedly misapplication of fund and diverting the money for other purposes.

According to the Honourable member, the claim by the football house that it used huge part of the money in settling accommodations is unacceptable, arguing that the federation will need to explain how they disbursed the said amount.

But a board member of the NFF, who also pleaded anonymity, as he wasn't authorised to speak on the issue, dismissed the allegation, stating that it was some National Assemblymen that over-

stayed (30 days) in Cote d'Ivoire that stretched the budget.

"We have appeared before the Sports Committee on this matter, and we have provided how this money was spent. All this noise is because of the forthcoming NFF election," he said.

The NFF board member further spilled the beans when he disclosed to www.sportsunlimited.ng that the controversial FIFA Forward 0.2 Goal Project, which has faced with so much criticisms is being handled by a contractor from Lagos State.



PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

Nigerian footballers need financial education from grassroots, says Austria-based player

Austria-based Nigerian footballer, John Ejoor has called for structured financial education for young footballers from the grassroots.

According to him, many African players are unprepared for the sudden wealth and fame that comes with professional careers. He told journalists in an in-



JOHN EJOOR

terview on yesterday in Lagos that many Nigerian footballers often started the game as a hobby, rather than a profession.

According to Ejoor, who currently plays for ATSV Wolfsberg in Austria, the situation leaves them without the financial discipline needed to manage their earnings.

He stressed that football only offered a short term playing career, making financial planning essential, for life after retirement.

"Football is a very short term career, but life after football is the hardest. You cannot depend only on your salary or the money in your bank account. You have to plan for life beyond the game," he said.

Tobi Amusan qualifies for 2026 Diamond League final in Brussels

Nigerian sprint hurdler Tobi Amusan has officially secured her spot in the prestigious Diamond League Final, scheduled to take place in Brussels on September 4-5, 2026.

The 100m hurdles specialist earned a total of 28 points across five Diamond League meets this season, comfortably meeting the qualification criteria for the championship final.

Her consistent performances have positioned her among the top athletes vying for hon-

ours in the event. Amusan, a former world champion and Commonwealth Games gold medalist, has been a dominant force in women's hurdling.

Her qualification adds to Nigeria's growing presence on the international athletics stage and sets the stage for what promises to be a highly competitive showdown in Brussels later this year.

Further details on the full list of qualified athletes are expected to be released by World Athletics in the coming weeks.



TOBI AMUSAN

2026 Commonwealth Games: NSC begins payment of camp allowances

Team Nigeria's preparations have reached an advanced stage, with the delegation steadily coming together ahead of the Opening Ceremony on 23 July 2026.

With just nine days to the start of the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, Nigerian athletes have started receiving their camping allowances as part of ongoing efforts to ensure optimal preparation and welfare before competition.

According to a statement issued out by the S.A Media to the Director General National Sports Commission, Kola Daniel, several athletes based in the United States, including Kayinsola Ajayi, have arrived in the United Kingdom, where Nigeria's pre-Games training camp is underway.

He confirmed that Nigeria's 3x3 basketball team, are currently camping in Amsterdam, and have

played the first of two scheduled international friendly matches as part of its final build-up to the Games. The second friendly will further sharpen the team's readiness before it joins the rest of the delegation in Scotland.

Stressing that additional Team Nigeria delegates are expected to arrive in Aberdeen over the weekend, completing the team's assembly ahead of the Games.

"The 2026 Commonwealth Games will take place from 23 July to 2 August 2026, bringing together athletes from across the Commonwealth to compete in 11 days of world-class sporting action."

"Team captains stated that Nigerian athletes remain focused, determined, and committed to delivering outstanding performances and making the nation proud on the Commonwealth stage." He said



TEAM NIGERIA

NIS resumes full academic activities for Basic Certificate Course across three centres

The National Institute for Sports (NIS), under the leadership of its Director General and Chief Executive Officer, H.E. Philip Shaibu, has recorded another significant milestone with the successful resumption of full academic activities for the Basic Certificate Course across three strate-

gic centres in Nigeria.

The programme is currently underway at the South-South Centre in Edo State, the North-West Centre in Kaduna State, and the Athletes Development Centre in Abuja, reaffirming the Institute's commitment to strengthening sports education and human capacity develop-

ment nationwide.

The resumption marks a renewed drive by the NIS leadership to ensure aspiring coaches, sports administrators, physical education instructors, and other sports professionals have access to quality training in line with global best practices.

Speaking on the development, the management of the Institute described the resumption as a major step toward revitalizing sports education and producing a new generation of competent sports personnel capable of contributing meaningfully to Nigeria's sporting growth.

Sports



Super Falcons will not underestimate any opponent at WAFCON, says Nnadozie

Super Falcons goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie says Nigeria will approach the 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) with a disciplined, match-by-match



CHIAMAKA NNADOZIE

mentality as the reigning champions begin their title defence in Morocco.

Speaking to thenff.com, the three-time reigning African Women's Goalkeeper of the Year said the team's priority is to remain focused throughout the tournament while pursuing two key objectives: retaining the WAFCON title and securing qualification for the FIFA Women's World Cup.

Nigeria, a record 10-time African champion, will compete in Group C alongside Egypt, Zambia and tournament debutants Malawi at the competition, scheduled to take place from July 26 to August 16 in Morocco.

"We will take it one match at a time because we cannot afford to stumble at any stage as a result of overconfidence," Nnadozie said. "Our focus is firmly on achieving our two goals—winning the trophy again and qualifying for the FIFA Women's World Cup."

The Paris FC goalkeeper welcomed the expansion of the tournament from 12 to 16 teams, describing it as a positive development that will raise

the level of competition across the continent.

"It is exciting to see more teams at the finals. It will certainly make the competition more competitive, but we remain calm and focused regardless of the number of teams involved," she said.

Nnadozie also dismissed suggestions that some groups are significantly stronger than others, insisting that the growing standard of women's football in Africa means every opponent deserves equal respect.

"I don't believe any group is tougher than another. There are no longer minnows in African women's football," she said. "There will be surprises because the so-called smaller teams are eager to prove themselves. Every team must be respected and taken seriously."

Despite acknowledging the challenges ahead, the 24-year-old expressed confidence in Nigeria's ability to compete for the title.

"We know what we are going for—the trophy and a World Cup ticket. It won't be easy, but we are the Super Falcons of Nigeria."

Samuel Chukwueze impresses Amorim in Milan's first preseason session

Super Eagles' Samuel Chukwueze showcased his impressive skills on the first day of Milan's pre-season training at Milanello, which lasted one hour and ten minutes on Monday, reports.

Returning to the club after a year-long loan at Fulham in the Premier League, Chukwueze joined his teammates after completing the necessary medical and athletic tests.

He was in good spirits as he began training under new manager Ruben Amorim.

Training started at Milanello, with Amorim choosing to rotate the teams for a practice match. The defensive formation was a three-man setup, with Chukwueze playing as a right wing-back in a 3-4-2-1 system.

He was tested on both sides during the small-sided game, always as a wing-back and never in the two behind the striker.

Many observers thought Chukwueze might be sold this transfer window, but Amorim surprised everyone in his press conference:

"Chukwueze will stay with us. We need players capable of one-on-one situations, and he and Saelemaekers can also play on either flank. It doesn't matter where they come from. If they train well and have the right qualities, we'll find a place for them."

Before considering external options, we look internally. Then, we'll make decisions, keeping the budget in mind. We want to do things properly and select the right players."



SAMUEL CHUKWUEZE

2026 FCT FA League: Hypebuzz FA edge Gwarinpa United FC 3–1

Hypebuzz Football Academy produced an impressive second-half comeback to defeat Gwarinpa United FC 3–1 in the opening Group A fixture at the ongoing 2026 Federal Capital Territory Football Association (FCT FA) League in Abuja.

Hypebuzz FA and Gwarinpa United FC began the match brightly, creating several attacking opportunities while pressing high in search of an early breakthrough.

Gwarinpa United FC took the lead in the 25th minute through Bashiru Aliyu, who fired home a spectacular long-range strike from about 35 yards to put his side ahead.

Hypebuzz FA responded with sustained attacking pressure. Sadeeq Khamis delivered

a dangerous corner kick, but the Gwarinpa United goalkeeper made a fine save to keep his team in front.

The pressure eventually paid off in the 31st minute when Ebube Onyeulo displayed great determination to retain possession after nearly losing the ball before calmly slotting home the equaliser to make it 1–1.

On resumption of the second half, Hypebuzz FA returned with renewed energy and took control of the contest.

In the 65th minute, Idris Gambo capitalised on a slow reaction from the Gwarinpa defence, raced into space and finished confidently with his weaker foot to give his side a 2–1 lead.

Gwarinpa United's hopes of a comeback suffered a setback in the 76th minute when

Shuaibu Abdulsalam was shown a straight red card following a collision, reducing the team to 10 men.



Fulham agree personal terms with Nigeria's Chibuike Nwaiwu

Fulham have reached an agreement on personal terms with Nigerian defender Chibuike Nwaiwu over a contract until 2030, according to French outlet Foot Mercato.

The Premier League club will now turn their attention to negotiating a deal with Trabzonspor, who are reportedly demanding at least €30 million for the 22-year-old centre-back.

Nwaiwu joined the Turkish side from Austrian club Wolfsberger AC in January for

around €6 million and quickly established himself as a regular in defence. He made 21 appearances across all competitions, scoring three goals and providing one assist as Trabzonspor won the Turkish Cup and secured a third-place finish in the Süper Lig.

While Fulham have reportedly agreed terms with the Nigeria international, talks with Trabzonspor remain ongoing before any transfer can be completed.

NTTF President Adesoji Tayo says 'Regular Camps will strengthen Nigeria's future in Table Tennis'



ADESOJI TAYO

The president of Nigeria Table Tennis Federation (NTTF), Adesoji Tayo has assured that the nation's emerging players will get regular camping schedules in order to boost their performances and strengthen the country's performances in major competitions.

Sports247 reports that Tayo stated this while commending the camping facilities that were recently enjoyed by some of the country's male and female junior players at Babcock University, ahead of their

participation in three major continental table tennis competitions.

Tayo disclosed that 35 players were camped at the university ahead of the competitions in Ghana and Guinea, where males and females will compete in under-19 and under-14 categories of Africa Hopes Week Challenge, West African Regional Championships and African Youth Championships.

As the training programme that involved 18 girls and 17 boys comes to a close this

week, Tayo asserted that the camp helped too improve the players' skills, experience and confidence ahead of the competitions, even as he expressed confidence that they will do well in Ghana and Guinea.

He also gave words of gratitude to the vice-chancellor of Babcock University, Professor Afolarin Ojewole, for hosting the camp, where he pointed out that the environment provided an ideal setting for the players, with quality accommodation, transport, health care and access to good training facilities.

Tayo emphasised, "Babcock provides good food, proper nutrition and excellent support. The university has taken outstanding care of the players. The equipment is of high quality and that is why we chose Babcock."

"This campus is beautiful and away from the hustle and bustle of cities, making it an ideal environment for these children. Regular camps and quality training programmes will strengthen Nigeria's future in table tennis."



World Cup exploit sends Cape Verde players to top clubs' wish lists

Cape Verde's remarkable campaign at the 2026 FIFA World Cup has transformed the Blue Sharks into one of the tournament's biggest success stories while placing several of their players firmly in the spotlight ahead of

the summer transfer window.

Having secured qualification ahead of Cameroon, Bubista's side surpassed expectations by remaining unbeaten in regulation time throughout the competition. Cape Verde earned impressive draws against Spain,

Uruguay and Saudi Arabia in the group stage before pushing defending champions Argentina to extra time in a thrilling 3-2 Round of 16 defeat.

Their fearless performances have not only earned widespread admiration but have also significantly boosted the market value of several members of the squad.

Veteran goalkeeper Vozinha emerged as one of the tournament's standout performers. The 40-year-old shot-stopper, currently a free agent after departing Portuguese club Chaves, is reportedly attracting interest from several clubs, with Major League Soccer side Inter Miami leading the race for his signature. Teams from Brazil, Paraguay and Mexico

are also believed to be monitoring his situation.

Several other Cape Verde internationals are also generating strong interest. Free agents Jovane Cabral, Yannick Semedo, Willy Semedo, Ryan Mendes and Jamiro Monteiro have all seen their stock rise following their World Cup displays.

Reports indicate that Brazilian giants Grêmio are close to completing the signing of Jovane Cabral on an 18-month contract. Head coach Luis Castro is said to have identified the winger's versatility and international experience as key attributes. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabian club Al-Jabalain are reportedly preparing a lucrative offer for Yannick Semedo.



CAPE VERDE PLAYERS

FIFA controversially grant Argentina special request just days before showdown with England

Ahead of the blockbuster semi final tie between England and Argentina, world football governing body FIFA, has again granted the Lionel Messi's side a special treatment.

By granting the request, FIFA risk upsetting numerous parties after granting Argentina a special request at the World Cup.

Recall that FIFA has faced severe criticism following controversy after controversy in North America, plenty of them concerning the South American side, including the contentious way they eliminated Switzerland in the quarter-finals.

During the final-eight match, Argentina sported black armbands, to pay tribute to Antonio Ubaldo Rattin, one of the country's legendary captains who captained Argentina at the 1962 and 1966 World Cups and is one of the most iconic figures in their sporting history.

The Argentine Football Association (AFA) requested special authorisation from FIFA, which was approved, allowing players and coaching staff to wear armbands throughout the match.

FIFA did the right thing by granting the special request, but not doing so elsewhere has caused controversy.

France similarly applied as they wished to pay tribute to Didier Deschamps' late mother, as the national team head coach missed their match with Norway following her death.

The French Football Federation (FFF) were denied permission by FIFA to wear black armbands in memory of Deschamps' late mother.

Deschamps had returned to France to attend the funeral and was not in the dugout, with his team unable to wear similar armbands to those of Argentina later in the tournament.

Gary Lineker led the backlash against FIFA at the time as he skewered the association for their decision.



MESSI LIONEL

Letexier dropped from 2026 FIFA World Cup officiating after Argentina-Egypt controversy

French referee François Letexier has reportedly been removed from the list of officials for the remainder of the 2026 FIFA World Cup following the controversy surrounding his performance in the Round of 16 clash between Argentina and Egypt.

Letexier came under intense scrutiny after Argentina's dramatic 3-2 victory over Egypt, a match that triggered strong protests from the Egyptian Football Association (EFA).

The EFA submitted an official complaint to FIFA, challenging several key decisions

made during the encounter, including the disallowance of an Egyptian goal and the dismissal of late penalty appeals.

The federation also requested that Letexier and his officiating team be withdrawn from officiating any further matches at the tournament.

The match generated widespread debate across the football community, with Egyptian players and officials maintaining that a number of crucial decisions unfairly influenced the outcome.

Despite the criticism, FIFA's Head of Refereeing, Pierluigi Collina, had defended the officiating team, insisting that the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) protocols were correctly applied and dismissing claims of bias.



FRANÇOIS LETEXIER



LYLE FOSTER

Shocker! another South Africa Star suffers depression, receiving mental health support

Burnley have confirmed that South African striker Lyle Foster is once again receiving specialist care after seeking help for ongoing mental health challenges.

The Championship club announced that Foster is currently under the care of medical professionals and is receiving the support he needs as he continues his recovery.

Burnley added that the 24-year-old has the full backing of his family, teammates and everyone at the club. In a statement, the club requested privacy for Foster and his loved ones, noting that no further updates

will be provided at this stage.

This is not the first time the Bafana Bafana forward has faced such challenges.

Foster previously spoke publicly about his struggles with depression and anxiety, stepping away from football to prioritise his mental well-being before returning to action.

The latest development comes just days after South African football was shaken by the reported death of Bafana Bafana midfielder Jayden Adams, further highlighting the importance of mental health awareness and support within the game.

NIS, UNIBEN seal partnership to transform sports education in Nigeria

The National Institute for Sports (NIS) and the University of Benin (UNIBEN) have entered into partnership agreement to advance sports education, capacity building and athlete development in Nigeria.

The NIS, Director-General Rt Hon Philip Shaibu, and the Vice-Chancellor of UNIBEN, Prof. Edo Omoregie, reaffirmed the commitment during the vice-chancellor's visit to the NIS Athlete Development Centre in Abuja on yesterday.

Omoregie announced that the school's Senate had approved the collaboration between the two institutions, paving the way for the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

He said the MoU, designed to strengthen sports education and professional training, followed extensive engagements between officials of both institutions and reflected the university's commitment to becoming a national hub for capacity building.



HON. PHILIP SHAIBU, AND PROF. EDOBA OMOREGIE