

OSUN 2026: Adeleke wins re-election, jubilation in Osogbo

OSOGBO

MATTHEW OKAGHA AND
MARYAM SAIDU, WITH
AGENCY REPORT

Governor Ademola Adeleke of the Accord Party has been declared winner of the 2026 Osun State gov-

ernorship election, securing a second four-year term after defeating his closest challenger, Bola Oyebamiji of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared Adeleke winner in the early hours of Sunday after the final collation of results from

the 30 local government areas of the state.

The State Returning Officer, Prof. Joshua Ogunwole, Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti, said Adeleke polled 511,067 votes, while Oyebamiji scored 444,815 votes, giving the incumbent governor a winning

margin of 66,252 votes.

The candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Najeem Salaam, came third with 17,180 votes. According to the Returning Officer, a total of 1,005,800 votes were cast in the election, out of which 985,079 were valid, while 20,721 votes were rejected.

Declaring the result, Ogunwole said Adeleke had satisfied the requirements of the law and was therefore returned as the winner of the election.

Adeleke won in 19 of the state's 30 local government areas, while Oyebamiji secured victory in the remaining 11 LGAs.

The victory marks Adeleke's return for a second term in office. He won his first term in 2022 on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), but contested the 2026 election under the Accord Party after leaving the PDP.

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That The People May Know

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#200

OUR STANCE

Free and Fair Osun Election: Tinubu Deepening Democracy

The just-concluded governorship election in Osun State has once again placed Nigeria's fledgling democracy on the front burner of public debate.

Beyond the immediate excitement over the outcome and the victory of the candidate declared by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the election offers a

broader lesson about the evolving character of Nigeria's democratic experience.

In an election where political parties and their candidates fought fiercely for the mandate of the people, the real winners may, in a broader democratic sense, not be the governor-elect, Ademola Adeleke, alone. The electorate, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and INEC

all have legitimate claims to victory for different reasons.

For the people of Osun State, the election represented an opportunity to exercise one of the most fundamental rights in a democracy—the right to choose their leaders. Their participation demonstrated that, despite widespread cynicism about elections in Nigeria, the electorate has not completely

lost faith in the ballot box.

The significant voter participation also sent a message to political actors that elections remain ultimately about the people. Political parties may deploy enormous resources, mobilise influential personalities and deploy sophisticated campaign machinery, but the final expression of democratic authority resides with the voters.

This is perhaps one of the most important lessons from Osun.

TINUBU AND THE 'FEDERAL MIGHT'

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu also deserves credit for what appears to have been a conscious decision not to deploy the much-feared "federal might" to influence the outcome of the election.

In Nigeria's political history, the relationship between the federal government and state-level elections has often generated controversy. There has long been a perception that the party controlling the centre possesses enormous institutional and political advantages which can be brought to bear during elections in the states.

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OSUN STATE ELECTION:

INEC Ad-Hoc Officials at Polling unit 1, Ogooluwakitan Atajo Osogbo, during the Osun State Governorship Election in Osogbo on Saturday.

Edo Govt gives MDAs 14 days to close separate revenue accounts

Centralises revenue collection under EIRS

BENIN CITY

MATTHEW OKAGHA

The Edo State Government has given all Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Parastatals (MDAs) 14 days to close their separate revenue bank accounts and transfer all balances into the approved Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) Account in line with the newly enacted Edo State Revenue Consolidation Account (Establishment and Operation) Law, 2026.

The government said the law, signed by Governor Monday Okpebholo on August 12, 2026, was aimed at strengthening transpar-

ency and accountability in the management of public funds, eliminating revenue leakages and improving fiscal discipline in the state.

The announcement was contained in a statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government, Umar Musa Ikhlor, Esq.

Under the new law, all MDAs are required to disclose to the Ministry of Finance all revenue bank accounts held in their names or under their control, transfer the balances in such accounts to the approved IGR Account and subsequently close the accounts.

They are also prohibited from maintaining or operating

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Edo, Kogi Police chiefs strengthen border security against kidnappers —Pg 2

Medical academics issue 21-day ultimatum to FG over outstanding demands —Pg 6

Morocco detains dozens of migrants trying to cross into Ceuta, reports say —Pg 9

At last, Cameroon wins WAFCON trophy, beat Malawi 3-0 —Pg 11

NEWS

Free and Fair Osun Election...

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Against this background, the Osun experience becomes significant.

President Tinubu's decision, as perceived by many observers, not to use the machinery of the Federal Government to skew the election in favour of his party's candidate represents an important contribution to democratic consolidation.

Democracy is strengthened not only when a government wins an election but also when it is prepared to accept an outcome that may not favour its political interests.

That distinction is important.

The true test of democratic leadership is not the ability to win every election. It is the willingness to create conditions in which the electorate can freely determine who governs them.

If the Federal Government deliberately allowed the Osun electorate to speak without undue interference, it is a development that should be acknowledged and encouraged.

For a president who has himself risen through the highly competitive and often bruising terrain of Nigerian politics, allowing the democratic process to take its course sends a powerful signal to political actors at all levels.

INEC and the Test of Institu-

tional Credibility

The election also provided another important opportunity for INEC to demonstrate its institutional independence.

The commission has, over the years, faced enormous public scrutiny. Questions surrounding electoral logistics, voter accreditation, technology, result transmission, voter intimidation and the conduct of electoral officials have continued to test public confidence in Nigeria's electoral process.

The Osun election therefore presented INEC with another opportunity to reassure Nigerians that the electoral process can work.

Despite the challenges associated with organising elections in Nigeria, the commission's adherence to established procedures and its eventual declaration of the result are important components of the democratic process.

But INEC must not rest on this achievement.

Every election is a new examination.

The credibility of the commission will ultimately be determined not by how it conducts one election, but by whether Nigerians can consistently trust it to conduct elections transparently, impartially and professionally.

The commission must therefore continue to strengthen its logistics, improve voter accreditation and result management,

Edo, Kogi Police chiefs strengthen border security against kidnappers

● *Inspect Agomi Forest, hotspot along Abuja-Okene Highway*

OKENE

RICHARD EWEKA

The Commissioners of Police in Edo and Kogi States, CP Patrick Daaor and CP Naziru Kankarofi, have strengthened their collaboration to combat kidnapping and other criminal activities in border communities between the two states.

The two police chiefs, accompanied by senior officers from their respective commands, agreed to deepen intelligence sharing and joint

operational strategies to dislodge criminal elements operating within the border areas.

The Edo State Police Commissioner was accompanied to Okene, Kogi State, by the Edo State Police Public Relations Officer, the Area Commanders of Auch and Agenebode, and other senior officers of the command.

The Kogi State Commissioner of Police, Area Commander, Okene, and the state's Police Public Relations Officer received the Edo delegation before the officers proceeded to Agomi Forest, a suspected

hideout of kidnappers along the Abuja-Okene highway.

Briefing the two commissioners at the entrance to the forest, the Area Commander, Okene, Nosa Onukwube, said kidnappers operating along the route often target long-distance travellers.

According to him, most of the reported kidnapping incidents along the route occur between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., when unsuspecting travellers are vulnerable.

He explained that victims are usually taken deep into the forest, where the kidnappers

keep them while negotiating ransom with their families.

Speaking to journalists inside the forest, the Kogi State Commissioner of Police, CP Naziru Kankarofi, commended the collaborative efforts of the Kogi State Governor, Usman Ododo, and his Edo State counterpart, Senator Monday Okpebholo, to tackle criminal activities across the two states.

He said the commitment of the two governors had further encouraged the police commands to intensify their operational cooperation.



STRATEGIC COLLABORATION:

Edo State Commissioner of Police, CP Patrick Daaor (left) and Kogi State Counterpart, Naziru Kankarofi at the entrance of Agomi forest along Abuja/Okene highway during a press briefing.

Adeleke wins re-election...

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JUBILATION IN OSOGBO

Meanwhile, there was widespread jubilation in Osogbo, the Osun State capital, shortly after INEC declared Adeleke the winner.

Supporters of the governor, many of whom had gathered around the INEC collation centre from the early hours of Sunday, broke into celebration following the announcement.

The supporters danced, sang victory songs and waved party insignia as the result confirming Adeleke's re-election filtered through the city.

Residents and supporters were also seen riding motorcycles and driving through major streets of

Osogbo, honking their horns and celebrating the outcome.

The atmosphere remained festive as groups of Adeleke supporters gathered at different locations across the state capital to celebrate what they described as a decisive electoral victory for the incumbent governor.

The result brings to an end months of intense political campaigning and a keenly contested race involving 15 political parties.

With his re-election secured, attention will now shift to the governor's second-term agenda and the expectations of the electorate, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, economic development, workers' welfare and improved public services.

Edo Govt gives MDAs 14...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

separate accounts for the collection, retention or expenditure of government revenue.

The government further directed all MDAs to submit hard and soft copies of their revenue statements of account and supporting records covering the period from January 1, 2025, to the commencement of the law to the Ministry of Finance, the Auditor-General for the State and the Edo State Internal Revenue Service (EIRS) for a comprehensive revenue audit.

The law also centralises the coordination and supervision of revenue collection in the EIRS.

Consequently, MDAs are re-

quired to obtain prior written approval from the Executive Chairman of EIRS before undertaking any revenue enforcement activity.

They are equally barred from initiating, establishing or using mobile courts for the enforcement of revenue-related offences without prior approval from the EIRS chairman in collaboration with the Edo State Judiciary.

The government also directed MDAs to stop appointing, authorising or engaging revenue agents, consultants or other persons or entities for the collection or management of government revenue without the collaboration of EIRS and prior written approval of the governor.

Edo to set up taskforce to check Okada operations

BENIN CITY

RICHARD EWEKA

The Edo State Government is set to establish a task force to check the activities of commercial motorcycle operators, popularly known as Okada riders, in the Benin metropolis as part of measures to strengthen security and curb criminal activities.

The Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr. Kassim Afegbua, disclosed this to journalists in Benin City during the ministry's monthly media brief-

● *Afegbua insists ban remains in Benin City*

ing held at the conference room of the Ministry of Information and Strategy along Sapele Road.

Afegbua said the increasing activities of Okada riders in the Benin metropolis had become worrisome, particularly as some operators had continued to defy the government's ban on commercial motorcycle operations within the city.

He insisted that the ban remained in force, stressing that it was introduced primarily for security reasons.

"Okada as a means of trans-

portation remains banned in Benin City. We are not pretending about it. The reason why the ban was done in the first place was for security reasons," he said.

The commissioner expressed concern over reports linking some motorcycle operators to kidnapping and robbery, alleging that some riders take unsuspecting passengers to isolated locations where they are robbed of their belongings.

"These days, the reports we get are worrisome as people use Okada to kidnap and engage in robbery. The riders take pas-

sengers to dark spots and bring out dangerous weapons to dispose them of their belongings, and this will no longer be tolerated," Afegbua said.

He warned that anyone caught violating the ban would be arrested and prosecuted in accordance with the law.

"If you are caught, you will be arrested and made to face the law. There will be a task force on that, as the governor is working very hard to improve security in the state and ensure that all Edo citizens are safe," he said.

EDSG intensifies fight against child defilement, Says Abdallah

BENIN CITY

RICHARD EWEKA

The Edo State Government has intensified efforts to combat child defilement and other forms of abuse against children across the state, Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs. Eugenia Abdallah, has said.

Abdallah, who spoke to journalists in Benin City on

the activities of the ministry, expressed concern over the increasing cases of child sexual abuse, particularly those allegedly perpetrated by fathers.

She disclosed that 72 cases of child abuse had been recorded in Edo State from January 2026 to date, noting that about 50 per cent of the reported cases involved alleged abuse by the victims' fathers.

The commissioner described the development as disturbing,

assuring that the state government would not allow such cases to be swept under the carpet.

According to her, the government would pursue reported cases to their logical conclusion, including through the judiciary, to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Abdallah disclosed that one of the victims currently under the care of the state government is a 14-year-old girl who is eight months pregnant after she was allegedly sexually

abused by her father.

She said the case came to the attention of the ministry through a neighbour who raised the alarm over the girl's condition.

The commissioner said the girl initially claimed that her father was dead and pleaded with authorities not to arrest him, despite the fact that he was believed to be the only person capable of providing vital information about her circumstances.

NEWS

UBTH breathes life into 40-year-old health centre, targets 5,000 beneficiaries

HASSAN DAISY

UDO

The University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH) has commenced the revitalisation of a 40-year-old Community Health Centre (CHC), in a move aimed at strengthening primary healthcare delivery and improving access to quality medical services for residents within its host communities.

The initiative, which is part of the hospital's efforts to extend healthcare services beyond its main facility, is expected to provide relief to thousands of residents who may face challenges accessing affordable and quality medical care. As part of the programme, UBTH has set a target of providing free medical services to about 5,000 people in the community.

The revitalisation of the health centre is expected to improve the condition of the facility and make it more suitable for the delivery of essential healthcare services. The centre,

which has served the community for about four decades, is expected to provide residents with easier access to medical attention without having to travel long distances to seek treatment.

The free medical outreach is also expected to focus on early detection and prevention of diseases. Residents will have the opportunity to receive medical consultations and basic health assessments, while those requiring further medical attention may be referred to appropriate healthcare facilities for comprehensive treatment.

The development is particularly significant at a time when the rising cost of healthcare has continued to place financial pressure on families. By providing free medical services, UBTH is expected to reduce some of the financial burden on residents and encourage more people to seek medical attention when necessary.

The hospital management noted that strengthening community-based healthcare remains important to achieving

better health outcomes. According to the management, primary healthcare facilities play a critical role in preventing diseases, promoting healthy living and ensuring that medical services are accessible to people at the grassroots.

Residents of the affected community have expressed optimism over the development, describing the revitalisation of the centre as a welcome intervention. They said the facility has the potential to improve healthcare delivery in the area, especially for elderly people, children, pregnant women and other residents who require regular medical attention.

The project is also expected to strengthen the relationship between UBTH and the communities around it. Through the initiative, the teaching hospital is demonstrating its commitment to its social responsibility by taking its expertise and services closer to the people.

Health workers are expected to play a major role in the success of the programme by providing medical advice, screen-

ing residents and educating them on disease prevention and healthy lifestyle practices. The initiative could also help residents better understand the importance of regular health checks and early treatment.

With a target of 5,000 beneficiaries, the free medical programme is expected to have a significant impact on the community. Beyond the immediate provision of treatment, the initiative is aimed at promoting a culture of preventive healthcare and encouraging residents to make better use of available primary healthcare services.

The revitalisation of the 40-year-old Community Health Centre therefore marks another step in UBTH's efforts to improve healthcare delivery and strengthen community outreach. Stakeholders hope that the upgraded facility will be properly maintained and continue to serve residents for many more years.

**MEDICAL OUTREACH:**

The Chief Medical Director of UBTH, Prof. Idia Ize-Iyamu, and other dignitaries during the UBTH outreach in 40-year-old Comprehensive Health Centre (CHC) in Udo Community, Ovia South West LGA, Edo State, recently.

Agbebaku engages with APC ward chairmen, reaffirms commitment to Owan West development

**WARD MEETING:**

The Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Blessing Agbebaku (in blue T-shirt) with Owan West LGA 11 APC ward chairmen shortly after their meeting at his Uhunmora country home at the weekend.

UHUNMORA

OSAHENIRO MIRACLE

The Speaker of the Edo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Blessing Agbebaku, has met with the 11 ward chairmen of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Owan West Local Government Area, as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the party's grassroots structure and promote greater coordination among stakeholders.

The meeting, which was held at the Speaker's residence in Uhunmora, focused on strengthening party structures, enhancing grassroots mobilisation and reviewing the implementation of people-oriented programmes across the local government area.

Speaking during the meeting, Agbebaku commended the 11 ward chairmen for their commitment to the growth of the APC and for their efforts in sustaining peace, unity and

stability within the party at the grassroots.

He charged the ward leaders to remain proactive in mobilising party members across their respective wards and to strengthen communication between the party, elected representatives and the people.

The Speaker also stressed the importance of ensuring that government policies and programmes are effectively communicated to residents at the grassroots, noting that closer engagement between political leaders and the people remains critical to achieving meaningful development.

Agbebaku reiterated his commitment to delivering the dividends of democracy to the people of Owan West, stressing that effective synergy between party leadership at the ward level and elected representatives would be crucial to achieving the developmental goals of the local government.

He noted that a strong, united and well-coordinated grass-

roots structure would not only strengthen the party but also enhance the impact of government programmes and initiatives across the various communities in Owan West.

The meeting also provided an opportunity for discussions on grassroots mobilisation, party organisation and the need for continued cooperation among party stakeholders ahead of future political engagements.

In their response, the 11 APC ward chairmen pledged their loyalty and support to the Speaker and the APC administration. They assured him of their continued commitment to grassroots mobilisation and promised to work toward strengthening the party in their respective wards.

The ward chairmen also expressed their readiness to sustain peace and unity within the party while ensuring that government policies and programmes are properly communicated to the people at the grassroots.

Edo Consolidates Public Revenue as Governor Okpebholo Signs Landmark Fiscal Law

BENIN CITY

DIVINE OSHONE

Edo State Governor Monday Okpebholo has signed a new finance law to stop government agencies from keeping separate bank accounts and spending public revenue without proper oversight.

The new law, titled the Revenue Consolidation Ac-

count Law of 2026, directs all ministries, departments, and government agencies to hand over their bank accounts to the Ministry of Finance within 14 days.

Every money collected by these agencies will now go into one main government account, after which the old separate accounts must be closed.

STRICT PUNISHMENT FOR DEFAULTING AGENCIES

According to a statement by the Secretary to the State Government, Umar Musa Ikhilor, any head of an agency who fails to meet the 14-day deadline will be suspended immediately and investigated.

Government officials who spend state revenue without permission will also be made to pay back the money from their own pockets.

The law also stops individual agencies from collecting tax-

es on their own, setting up mobile courts, or hiring revenue collectors. From now on, only the Edo State Internal Revenue Service (EIRS) has the power to handle tax collection and enforcement in the state.

CHECKING THE BOOKS

To clear up past records, all agencies must submit their financial statements from January 2025 until now. The government will inspect these

documents to track down missing funds and check for financial wrongdoings.

State officials assured the public that essential services in places like public hospitals and state schools will not be disrupted while the bank accounts are being merged. Agencies will still get the money they need to run their daily operations.

WHY THIS MATTERS

This change is aimed at helping Edo State generate more internal revenue, cut waste, and depend less on monthly money allocations from the federal government.

Whether this law achieves its goal will depend on how well it is enforced over the coming months. But for now, the state government is making it clear that all public money belongs to the state, not to individual agencies

Wike signs 26,272 C of Os in 3 years of Tinubu's administration – Aidea

ABUJA

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Mr Nyesom Wike, has signed 26,272 Certificates of Occupancy (C of Os) in the first three years of President Bola Tinubu's administration.

Mr Lere Olayinka, Senior Special Assistant to the minis-

ter on Public Communications and Social Media, disclosed this in a statement on Sunday.

Olayinka said the move was aimed at improving ease of doing business in the FCT, in line with Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda.

He said the figure surpassed the 8,697 C of Os produced and signed between 2010 and 2023.

According to him, 5,500 C of Os were signed during the five-and-a-half-year administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, while 3,197 were produced and signed during the eight-year administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

He said many allottees who benefited from the 26,272 C of Os obtained their land allocations more than 10 years ago.

Olayinka said C of Os served as collateral for commercial loans, mortgages and

business expansion.

He said the inability of property owners to obtain C of Os when needed remained a challenge for small and medium-sized businesses, as it restricted access to funding.

"To address this challenge, the FCT Administration under President Tinubu has streamlined the process to enable land allottees receive their documents within two weeks of completing payments.

"The moment necessary payments are made, land allot-

tees can now get their C of O within two weeks.

"Also, automated notifications have been introduced to ensure that land allottees are informed when their documents are ready for collection," Olayinka said.

He attributed previous delays to inefficiencies that discouraged landowners from completing their payments.

Olayinka said, in addition to the 26,272 C of Os, the FCT Administration granted 2,521 Consents to Assign and 177

Consents to Mortgage in the last three years.

He said this compared with 753 Consents to Assign and 180 Consents to Mortgage granted during the Jonathan administration, and 684 Consents to Assign and 164 Consents to Mortgage under Buhari.

He explained that Consent to Assign was a legal document required for the transfer of property ownership, while Consent to Mortgage was required before a property could be used as collateral for a loan.

Take NNPC to capital market, expert urges FG

LAGOS

An energy development economist, Prof. Ken Ife, has called on President Bola Tinubu to take the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Ltd. (NNPC) to the capital market.

The expert made the call in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Sunday in Lagos, following the Federal Government's plan to invest in the refineries.

Ife, Development Economist and Lead Consultant, ECOWAS Commission, said that more public ownership and market discipline would improve transparency, accountability and efficiency in the oil company.

Ife said NNPC had, for decades, contributed to the nation's economic challenges, including fiscal pressures, import dependency, foreign exchange crises and environmental degradation in the Niger Delta.

NAN reports that President Tinubu, on Aug. 13, assured Nigerians that the country's refineries would be revived.

The President said the Federal Government was undertaking a comprehensive reset, restructuring and technical assessment to ensure that the facilities became productive and profitable.

Ife, however, advised the President against further government intervention in the reconfiguration of NNPC and its refineries, saying the market should determine the value and future of the company's assets.

"Let the market allocate and reallocate NNPC assets and rationalise its operations by simply taking NNPC to the capital market," Ife said.

According to him, offering substantial controlling shares of NNPC to the public would help address long-standing concerns over transparency and accountability.

Others, he said, include prudent management, efficient utilisation of dormant assets and other deadweights, citizen participation, sustainability and professionalism.

Ife said the operations of Nigeria LNG Ltd. (NLNG) provided a useful comparison, adding that the company should also consider listing on the capital market.

The expert cited Saudi Aramco as an example of how capital-market participation could unlock value and improve efficiency.

He noted that Saudi Arabia valued Saudi Aramco at about 1.5 trillion dollars in 2018 and subsequently sold five per cent of the company rather than relying entirely on additional borrowing.

He added that a further valuation in 2021 placed the company at about 2.3 trillion dollars, making it one of the world's most highly capitalised companies at the time.

Ife urged the Tinubu administration to raise funds through the capital market to finance major infrastructure projects, including the proposed Bonny-Port Harcourt-Maiduguri rail line, other critical rail projects, power infrastructure and highways.



VISIT TO THE NCS DELEGATION:

Managing Director, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Ali M Ali (M); Editor-In-Chief of NAN, Aliyu Adiza (3rd R); Service Public Relation Officer, Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS), Jane Nkechinyere-Osuji (3rd L) and others, during visit of the NCS delegation to NAN headquarters in Abuja on Friday.

FG reaffirms commitment to prioritizing security, Nigeria diaspora

ABUJA

The Federal Government has reiterated its commitment to prioritising security and harnessing the Nigerian diaspora as a critical asset for national development.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Sola Enikanolaiye, reiterated the commitment in a statement by Richard Eleshio, his Special Assistant on Media and Strategic Communications.

Enikanolaiye spoke at the Nigerian Diaspora Economic

Conference on Saturday night in Toronto, Canada.

He also expressed the Federal Government's pledge to deepen strategic partnerships anchored on mutual respect and trust to achieve the desired goal.

According to the Minister, security remains a major challenge, and government is willing to do everything humanly possible to contain the scourge in multifaceted manner.

He said that Nigeria was entering new era of partnership of stra-

tegic autonomy with key international partners, including the U.S.

"I came in from Washington only yesterday. I was privileged to have been part of the team meeting with the Americans.

"This engagement is aimed at delivering core, concrete, positive outcomes for Nigerians in terms of security, in terms of prosperity, in terms of defence and the welfare of the Nigerian people," he said.

On the Nigerian diaspora, the minister said that under the leadership of President Bola Tinubu, government

viewed Nigerians abroad not as a burden, but as vital contributors to national progress.

"For this government, Nigerians in the diaspora are critical assets of national development.

"We see you as vital human resource capacity for Nigeria which government is trying to harness, in terms of our national development priorities," the Minister said.

He reiterated the need for stronger unity among Nigerians at home and abroad, urging citizens to break down barriers of ethnicity, religion, and tribe.

NSUBEB chairman empowers 75 vulnerable persons

LAFIA

Dr Kassim Mohammed-Kassim, Executive Chairman, Nasarawa State Universal Basic Education Board (NSUBEB), has empowered 75 vulnerable persons with N18.75 million.

Each beneficiary from Nasarawa North Senatorial District received N250,000 to establish or expand small businesses and improve their livelihoods.

Mohammed-Kassim disclosed this on Sunday during the flag-off of the distribution exercise in Akwanga Local Government Area (LGA).

He said the initiative was designed as business support for beneficiaries to establish new ventures or strengthen existing businesses.

The beneficiaries were se-

lected across the 35 electoral wards in Akwanga, Nasarawa-Eggon and Wamba LGAs.

"I do not know any of the beneficiaries personally, and this is not because of any election," Mohammed-Kassim said.

He explained that the selection process was not conducted along political party lines, but focused on supporting less privileged members of society.

"It is designed to provide direct support to the less privileged members of the society to start up a business," he said.

He added that the funds would also enable beneficiaries to strengthen existing businesses and cushion the prevailing economic challenges.

Mohammed-Kassim urged beneficiaries to invest the money wisely, grow their businesses and create greater pros-

perity for their families.

Flagging off the distribution, Gov. Abdullahi Sule said the intervention would strengthen small businesses and improve traders' access to capital.

Sule said the initiative would also stimulate grassroots economic growth across Nasarawa North Senatorial District.

The governor commended Mohammed-Kassim for giving back to society and urged the beneficiaries to make judicious use of the funds.

Sule advised the beneficiaries to ensure the money was invested strictly for the purpose for which it was provided.

Speaking on behalf of the beneficiaries, Usman Mohammed, Peter Joe and Ahmed Yusuf appreciated Mohammed-Kassim for remembering vulnerable members of the society.

NDLEA intercepts large consignments of opioids, others in 6 states

ABUJA

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has intercepted large consignments of opioids and others in Kano, Kwara, Edo, Plateau, Oyo, and Delta states.

The Director, Media and Advocacy, NDLEA, Mr Femi Babafemi stated this in a statement on Sunday in Abuja.

Giving the breakdown, Babafemi said that in Kwara, two suspects were on Thursday arrested at Kam Wire area of Ilorin with 55.96kg skunk in a truck marked DKA 350 XL recovered.

He said two other suspects were nabbed by NDLEA officers on patrol along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, Ibadan,

Oyo state on Wednesday.

"Recovered from their Toyota Sienna vehicle marked FFA-115KA, include: 52,000 ampoules of pentazocine injection and 6,000 ampoules of tramadol injection.

"A total of 124,100 pills of tramadol; 786 bottles of codeine syrup; 2,598 tablets of rohypnol; 4,800 tablets of diazepam; 470 ampoules of pentazocine injection and 200 ampoules of tramadol injection were recovered from two suspects."

He said another interception took place along Onitsha/Asaba expressway on Thursday.

"Another suspect was nabbed with 1,244 pieces of cartridges and monetary exhibit of eight million naira (N8,000,000) only along Kwale/Ozoro expressway on Wednesday, August 12," he said.

Meanwhile, Babafemi said that a Toyota Corolla car with registration number MKD 341 EA was intercepted by NDLEA operatives along Riyom-Jos road.

This, he said, was where 239,490 caps of tramadol, a brand of tramadol, were recovered and a suspect arrested.

In Kano, six suspects were arrested on Aug. 10 by NDLEA operatives on patrol along Zaria-Kano road.

Babafemi said that large consignments of opioids were recovered from them including 728,958 pills of tramadol, rohypnol, and others as well as 360 grams of cocaine.

"Others include 99.8 grams of methamphetamine, 50 bottles of codeine syrup and 2.7 kilograms of Loud, a synthetic strain of cannabis.

NEWS

NYSC hails corps members' discipline during Osun governorship election

OSOGBO

The Osun Coordinator of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Mr Eke-Eng Kubianga, has commended corps members deployed as ad hoc staff for Saturday's governorship election for their discipline and commitment to duty during the exercise.

This was contained in a statement made available to newsmen by the Spokesperson for the scheme, Mrs Catherine Otemuyiwa, on Sunday in Osogbo.

Otemuyiwa said that Kubianga monitored some selected polling units across Ede South, Ede North, Olorunda, Osogbo and Egbedore Local Govern-

ment Areas of the state where corps members were deployed.

She listed other polling units visited by the state coordinator to include Alajue 1 and Alajue 2, Akoda/Oloki, Isibo/Buhari-Isola wards and some parts of Osogbo, where he assessed the safety and welfare of the corps members.

Otemuyiwa quoted the state

coordinator as expressing satisfaction with the conduct of the corps members.

He said that they adhered to instructions, operational guidelines and safety advisories issued during the sensitisation tour of the local government areas.

"I am glad that corps members also complied with directives from the NYSC National Directorate Headquarters and the South-West Area Office 1.

"Corps members were safe

and discharged their responsibilities without fear, intimidation or undue interference," he said.

Kubianga commended the officers who manned the Situation Room as well as Zonal Inspectors and Local Government Inspectors for their effective coordination and monitoring of corps members throughout the exercise.

He also appreciated security agencies for their efforts in protecting corps members deployed for election duties across the state.

The state coordinator expressed appreciation to INEC

officials for their prompt response to issues reported from the field.

He acknowledged the co-operation among the various stakeholders, particularly under the Inter-Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES), describing it as a significant factor in ensuring a peaceful and orderly election.

Kubianga reiterated NYSC's commitment to the safety and welfare of corps members, urging them to continue to uphold the ideals of the scheme, professionalism and national service in the discharge of their responsibilities.

**COURTESY VISIT:**

Managing Director of the Edo State Public Building and Maintenance Agency Arc. Emmanuel Fashanu (4th R) flanked by the Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of Building, (5th L) Bldr Idahosa Evans and his Vice, Bldr. Samson A.O and other members of the institute's delegation during a courtesy visit to EDPUBMA recently.

EDPUBMA partners Nigerian Institute of Building to enforce standard in Edo

The Edo State Public Building and Maintenance Agency, EDPUBMA, has pledged to collaborate with the Nigerian Institute of Building to uphold quality and safety standards in public building projects execution across the state.

The commitment was made during a courtesy visit by the leadership of the Nigerian Institute of Building to the Agency's office in Benin City recently.

During the visit, the Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of

Building, Bldr. Idahosa Evans, presented the the body of builder's Policy Document to the Managing Director of EDPUBMA, Arc. Emmanuel Fashanu.

Bldr. Idahosa explained that the document was prepared by Registered Builders of the Institute and is designed to guide all contractors engaged by the Agency on health and safety as well as Quality Assurance.

In his response, Arc. Fashanu welcomed the delegation and commended the Institute

for the initiative. He stated that the partnership would further strengthen the state government's agenda to eliminate quackery, reduce the unscrupulous acts of cutting corners in project execution, and promote a better built environment.

The Managing Director further noted that most of the Agency's building staff were already registered members of the Institute and expressed its readiness to engage the Institute in projects that required their professional expertise.

The Vice Chairman of the In-

stitute, Bldr. Samson A.O, while appreciating the Managing Director's response, appealed to the Edo State Government to ensure the Builder's Policy Document is made available and applied for all government contracts to facilitate seamless execution.

Bldr. Idahosa Evans thereafter presented sample copies of the policy document to Arc. Emmanuel Fashanu, who described the document as a working template to kick-start the collaboration between EDPUBMA and the Institute.

Security remains bedrock of economic growth – CP tells NIPSS delegation

KANO

The Commissioner of Police, Kano State Command, Mr. Ibrahim Adamu-Bakori, has identified security as the bedrock of economic growth.

Adamu-Bakori stated this when he received a delegation from the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, Jos, Senior Executive Course 48, 2026, on a study tour.

The delegation was led by Brig.-Gen. L.A. Jimoh (rtd).

The Command's Public Relations Officer, SP Abdullahi Haruna-Kiyawa, said in a statement on Sunday in Kano that the visit was part of the delegation's one-week study tour to Kano State.

The theme of their study is: "Economic Diversification and National Development: Lever-

aging the Orange Economy and Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Growth in Nigeria."

Adamu-Bakori emphasised that no form of economic diversification "can thrive without security."

According to him, Kano, as the commercial and cultural hub of Northern Nigeria, requires a policing model that protects both traditional commerce and emerging creative industries such as Kannywood, fashion, music, crafts, and digital content.

The commissioner highlighted that on his assumption of duty, the command identified key threats across the 44 Local Government Areas of the state.

"They include thuggery and phone snatching in the metropolis, trans-border crimes in border areas, and farmers/herders

clashes in rural communities," he said.

He stated that in line with the directives of the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Olatunji Disu, the command adopted intelligence-led policing, enhanced community policing, and capacity building.

Other strategies, he said, included synergy with sister agencies, expansion of the Cybercrime Unit, public enlightenment, and "Operation Kukan Kura", all aimed at effectively tackling violent crime.

The CP further disclosed that through the command's departments, 78 Divisions, 11 Area Commands, 5 Tactical Units, and 2 PMF Squadrons, over 4,000 suspects had been arrested for various offences within the period under review.

Residents seek completion of Ayegun-Olomi Road in Oyo

Residents of Ayegun-Olomi Community in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State have appealed to the Federal Government to urgently resume reconstruction of their road.

The residents made the appeal in separate interviews with newsmen in Ibadan on Sunday.

They lamented that prolonged abandonment of the project had subjected residents, commuters and businesses to severe hardship.

The road connects Ibadan with Ijebu-Igbo in Ogun and neighbouring communities, serving thousands of residents, commuters, traders and commercial transport operators.

The residents said completing the federal highway would strengthen transportation, facilitate agricultural activities and stimulate economic development across affected communities.

Alhaji Sulaiman Ibrahim, Chairman, Irorun-Oluwa Com-

munity Landlords' Association, Fatusi, said the abandoned project had subjected residents and travellers to untold hardship.

Ibrahim said avoidable road crashes had become frequent, while motorists spent huge sums repairing vehicles damaged by the deplorable road.

Mr Mutiu Akanni, a motorist, said prolonged neglect had left the road riddled with deep potholes, failed sections and severe erosion.

"The deplorable condition has made it increasingly difficult for motorists to navigate the road," Akanni said.

He also expressed concern over deteriorating bridges, warning that they posed serious risks to motorists, motorcyclists and pedestrians during the rainy season.

Another resident, Mrs Adejoke Basiru, a trader, said the road's poor condition had negatively affected commercial activities across the area.

Idofian community hands over ₦15.58m office building to NDLEA in Kwara

Idofian (Kwara) Idofian Community in Ifelodun Local Government Area of Kwara has handed over an office building valued at ₦15.58 million to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to strengthen the fight against drug abuse in the area.

The facility, comprising three offices and a counter, was handed over to the NDLEA Kwara Commander, Mrs Fatima Popoola, during a ceremony on Saturday in Idofian.

Speaking at the handing-over, the Chairman of the Community Infrastructure Committee, Mr Ganiyu Olajide, said the facility was built to strengthen the security architecture of the community.

Olajide said the community had embarked on various development projects over the years, including providing befitting accommodation for government agencies operating in the area.

He said that the gesture was aimed at enabling the NDLEA to operate in a conducive environment without inconvenience.

"Idofian Community has al-

ways been supportive of government agencies.

"We have renovated the Forest Guard offices, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) office, Area Court and Police Station without bothering the government because we are concerned about the security and safety of our people.

"We have spent over ₦15 million on the NDLEA office. Thank God, we are handing it over to the State Commander today.

"It is our hope that the commandant will use her good office to assist us in requesting for reimbursement, which will enable us to embark on other developmental projects in the town," he said.

Responding, the NDLEA Commander, Mrs Fatima Popoola, commended the Olu-Idofian-in-Council for their cooperation and efforts toward providing a standard office for the agency.

She urged the traditional council and other community leaders to continue to partner with the agency to ensure effective operations to curb drug abuse in the area.

Medical academics issue 21-day ultimatum to FG over outstanding demands

ILORIN

The Nigerian Association of Medical and Dental Academics (NAMDA), University of Ilorin Branch, have declared support for the national body's decision to give the Federal Government a fresh 21-day ultimatum.

The branch declared its support in a communiqué issued on Saturday in Ilorin and signed by the Branch Chairman, Prof. Mohammed Abdulkadir, and Secretary, Dr Adebayo Oloko.

According to the communiqué, the decision was reached by Congress after it reviewed developments on the outstanding demands of its members and the resolutions of the Emergency National Ex-

ecutive Council (NEC) meeting of NAMDA.

It said that the 21-day ultimatum was to address the long-standing concerns of medical and dental academics in the country and that the ultimatum, would expire on August 31.

The branch expressed dissatisfaction over what it described as the government's slow pace and lack of urgency in concluding negotiations and resolving the issues affecting medical and dental academics in tertiary institutions and teaching hospitals.

The communiqué listed key demands of the association to include delays in concluding negotiations with NAMDA and implementing agreed resolutions.

"There is poor prioritisation of medical and dental education, training and research in spite of Nigeria's severe shortage of doctors and dentists.

"We also have brain drain of trained medical professionals and academics to other countries, with implications for un-

dergraduate and postgraduate training and healthcare delivery," it said.

The association also lamented the welfare and working conditions of medical and dental academics, which it said must be improved to retain staff and sustain the quality of medical education.

"Members have demonstrated considerable patience

and restraint in the interest of maintaining stability within the university system and protecting the education of students," the communiqué stated.

The branch acknowledged interventions by the Department of State Services and other stakeholders, but insisted that such interventions must now yield "concrete, measur-

able and time-bound outcomes."

The union, however urged the federal government and relevant authorities to use the 21-day window to conclude negotiations and resolve the outstanding matters.

It warned that failure to do so would leave the association with no option but to act in line with directives from the national leadership.

Cannabis farms catalyst for insecurity, says Ofoyeju

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Edo State Commander, Mitchell Ofoyeju has raised the alarm over the escalating threat posed by cannabis cultivation in Edo State, describing it as a catalyst for kidnapping, arms proliferation, cultism and youth exploitation.

This position was disclosed at the Edo Central Senatorial District Town Hall Meeting organised recently by Senator Joseph Ikpea in Uromi.

Speaking at the stakeholders' engagement, Commander Mitchell presented a comprehensive assessment titled "Cannabis Cultivation and Rural Insecurity in Edo Central", warning that forestlands once meant for agriculture have been converted into cannabis plantations.

"What started as hidden plots has grown into large-scale cannabis farms and a chain of insecurity. Where cannabis takes root, crime follows, and where cannabis grows, development dies. An effective drug control will reduce the problem of crime by fifty percent because most criminal acts are perpetrated

under the influence of drugs," the commander stressed.

According to the NDLEA commander, cannabis cultivation has created a violent ecosystem that threatens the very fabric of rural communities. The presentation highlighted a troubling nexus between cannabis farms and criminal enterprises, including arms proliferation, displacing legitimate food farming, and exploiting vulnerable youths.

Senator Ikpea, who is the Senate Committee chairman on Drugs and Narcotics, thanked the commander for the insightful presentation. "I am delighted with this presentation on a topical issue affecting all segments of society. While my committee is working hard to address the drug problem in the country, I will ensure that my constituency is free from the ravaging effects of drugs," Ikpea stated.

The commander noted that legitimate farmers in the State live in constant fear of attack, preventing them from accessing licit farmlands. The result has been a dangerous abandonment of food production in favour of cannabis cultivation, coupled with significant envi-



TOWN HALL MEETING:

NDLEA Edo State Commander, Mitchell Ofoyeju PhD addressing participants which included the Chairman, Senate Committee on Drugs and Narcotics, Senator Joseph Ikpea, sitting (1st R) and others during the Town Hall meeting in Uromi.

Niger boosts school agriculture through Nourishing Nigeria Project

MINNA

The Niger State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MOBSE) is strengthening school-based agriculture, nutrition and livelihood education through the Nourishing Nigeria Project.

The project is being carried out in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS).

Speaking during an engagement with FAO and FMAFS officials on Saturday, Dr Hadiza Mohammed, the Commissioner for Basic and Secondary Education, described Niger's

selection as a pilot location.

Mohammed also described the selection as a significant opportunity for the education sector and reaffirmed the state government's commitment to the successful implementation and sustainability of the project.

She said the initiative aligned with the administration's drive to equip young people with practical, market-oriented skills that could improve livelihoods and strengthen food and nutrition security.

"The project will enable students to acquire hands-on agricultural skills and see agriculture as a pathway to entrepreneurship, self-reliance and economic empowerment," she said.

She pledged the state government's support for the sustainability and expansion of the initiative, including exploring opportunities to replicate the programme in another school in the state.

The commissioner also commended FAO, FMAFS and other stakeholders for their collaboration in promoting practical skills development among young people.

Also, FMAFS Director and National Coordinator of the project, Mr Nuhu Kilishi, commended MOBSE, the project committee and other stakeholders for their commitment.

Kilishi said that the programme had recorded encour-

aging progress, particularly in stakeholder participation and ownership in Niger State.

On his part, Mr Isiaka Ibrahim, Nutrition and Food Systems Specialist at FAO and Project Manager of the project, said the initiative was being implemented under the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

According to him, the aim is to address identified development gaps and strengthen institutional capacity at the state level.

He stressed the importance of exposing young people to practical approaches to agriculture, nutrition and food systems as a means of preparing them for sustainable food production and resilient livelihoods.

Police detain 14 kidnap suspects, recover cache of arms, ammunition

ENUGU

The Enugu State Police Command says it has 14 kidnap suspects in its custody, following intelligence-led operations, which busted major kidnap syndicates operating in the state.

The Commissioner of Police in the state, Mr Mammen Giwa, disclosed this in Enugu at a news briefing on Friday.

Giwa spoke on the recent successes recorded by the command against coordinated kidnap syndicates.

He said that the command recovered some weapons, including five AK-47 rifles, two pump-action guns; one locally-fabricated firearm, 310 rounds of live 7.62 x 39mm ammunition; eight live cartridges and seven AK-47 empty magazines.

He said that in separate joint operations, recently, security operatives rescued kidnap victims at Ogbozara Community in Nsukka LGA and Owukpa Community in Ogbadibo LGA of Benue, with several exhibits of recovered items, including

live ammunition.

According to him, one of the victims abducted in a Church at Inoyi, Affa Community in Udi LGA, was rescued on Aug. 2.

"A joint, intelligence-led operation subsequently led to the rescue of the remaining two victims, the arrest of three suspects, the neutralising of one suspect, and the recovery of ransom money, firearms, ammunition and other incriminating exhibits.

"Further intelligence-led operations by the command's Anti-Kidnapping Violent Crime

Response Unit led to the arrest of two additional male suspects linked to the Affa Church kidnap.

"The duo, who fled to Port Harcourt, following the operational pressure mounted by joint security operatives, were traced and arrested in Port Harcourt and brought back to Enugu.

"Preliminary investigation reveals that after fleeing Enugu, the suspects regrouped with their cohorts in Port Harcourt and abducted another victim, who was released after a N5 million ransom was paid," he said.

The commissioner further said that in a sustained offensive against kidnapping and other violent crimes, 12 additional suspects were earlier arrested through human and technical intelligence-led operations conducted in different parts of the country.

He said that the suspects were arrested at different times in June, July and August 2026 in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Enugu, Kogi, Nasarawa, Rivers, Kwara and Taraba States.

Giwa said that investigation

revealed that the suspects were members of an organised criminal network operating from different parts of the country.

He explained that they usually converged on Enugu State to plan and execute kidnap operations before returning to their respective locations.

He said that the network was aided by an Enugu-based member, who operates a tri-cycle and provides transportation for the gang members, their firearms and other criminal implements to and from operational locations.

NEWS**Our alliance respects power rotation between North, South – Kwankwaso****ABUJA**

Vice-Presidential Candidate of National Democratic Congress (NDC), Sen. Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso has said that the alliance between him and Mr Peter Obi, the party's presidential candidate, is designed to respect the principle of power rotation between the North and South.

Kwankwaso, a former governor of Kano State, said the decision to run with Obi in the presidential election was influ-

enced by the need to allow the South to retain the presidency for another four years before power returns to the north.

He made the assertion while featuring on the News Agency of Nigeria Personality Interview Series on Sunday in Abuja.

Kwankwaso said the arrangement was part of the understanding reached between him and Obi, and witnessed by their respective supporters ahead of the 2027 general elections.

According to him, the ar-

angement will provide political balance and strengthen confidence among supporters in both regions.

"The bigger picture now is for us to allow the south to produce president for one term, to make it balanced, considering the fact that the incumbent president from the south came into office in the year 2023," he said.

Kwankwaso said the agreement was that Obi would serve one term, after which the presidency would return to the north.

He said the arrangement was informed by the political history of Nigeria, where leaders from different regions had worked together to achieve national political balance.

The former Minister of Defence said the ticket also reflected the need to bridge religious and regional differences by pairing a southern Christian presidential candidate with a northern Muslim vice-presidential candidate.

He said the alliance was not merely about sharing politi-

cal offices, but about building confidence across Nigeria and ensuring that no section of the country felt marginalised.

Kwankwaso expressed the confidence that Obi would respect the agreement, saying he had a high level of trust in the former Anambra governor.

He said their administration,

if voted into office, would focus on security, education, agriculture and infrastructure while addressing other challenges confronting Nigerians.

Kwankwaso added that the alliance was committed to fairness, justice, equity and maintaining the indivisibility of Nigeria as a country.

**ONGOING HIGHWAY PROJECT:**

Works Minister David Umahi (4th R) with his team of inspectors at the ongoing Trans-Sahara Highway project in Ebonyi state at the weekend.

Works minister assures quality of Trans-Sahara Highway project, commends contracting firm**ABAKALI**

MAXWELL OKECHUKWU

The Minister of Works, Senator Dave Umahi, has expressed satisfaction at the pace and quality of on the Trans-Sahara Highway project, linking Calabar thorough Ebonyi to northern Nigeria.

Umahi said that work on the corridor which has reached 45 per cent completion, has also created jobs for over 2,000 people.

The minister disclosed this during an inspection tour of the project with newsmen at

Nwedeoga Ndidenyi Ishieke section of the Calabar-Ebonyi-Benue-Nasarawa-Abuja highway project, where he commended the contractor, Infioquest International, for the pace and quality of work in the corridor.

He further said the project is one of the Federal government's strategic infrastructure interventions aimed at opening up the Southeast to greater economic opportunities, improving security and strengthening inter-state connectivity.

"Section One is about 40, I will give them 45 per cent in completed. The quality of

the concrete pavement is top-notch," Umahi said.

He added that the first section covers about 125.5 kilometres, beginning from the Ndibe Beach axis and passing through communities including Akpoha, Abomege, Amudo and Onueke, as well as parts of Ezza North and Ebonyi Local Government Areas.

Meanwhile some portions of the alignment were being dualised to accommodate growing economic activities and urban development, citing the 8.9-kilometre stretch around Afikpo and a two-kilometre

section at Abomege among areas receiving special attention.

He again disclosed that Section Two, which extends into Benue and other states, covers about 173.6 kilometres and has a contract value of approximately N683 billion, adding that the Federal Government had already paid 30 per cent of the contract sum.

"There is nothing stopping the contractor from working," he said, stressing that the project would ultimately provide a major transportation corridor linking the Southeast with other parts of the country.

Defense college holds shooting tournament to boost marksmanship, fitness**ABUJA**

The National Defence College (NDC) has organised a shooting tournament for the graduating course – 34 participants to test, boost their marksmanship and foster team spirit.

The shooting competition, which is the first of its kind in the history of the college, took place at the Moshood Abiola Stadium on Saturday in Abuja.

The tournament featured a 50m Rifle section and a 25m pistol section.

In his remarks, the NDC Commandant, Rear Adm. Abdullahi Ahmed, said that the college does not only focus on academic activities and excellence but also physical fitness and mental well-being.

"Shooting is a sport that demands discipline, concentration, precision, and harmony between the mind and body, reflecting the very qualities we seek to cultivate in strategic leaders.

"Beyond the competition itself, today provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen comradery, renew friendships, and deepen the professional bond forged over the past 10 months among the participants," the commandant said.

Ahmed encouraged the course -34 participants to set aside the rigorous demanding academic programme, relax, compete in the true spirit of sportsmanship and enjoy the memorable occasion.

He reiterated his commitment to promoting the physical well-being of the entire college community through regular sporting activities.

He said that such events not only provided opportunities for healthy recreation but also an avenue for interaction, teamwork, and enduring friendship.

"It is, therefore, my hope that today's competition will be remembered not only for the fun of it, but also for the friendship strengthened and the enjoyable moments shared," he said.

Also, the Chief of Defence Administration, Defence Headquarters, Rear Adm. Gideon Kachim, pointed out that the skills required for shooting could also be applied in daily lives.

"Shooting is more than a sporting activity, it is a discipline that demands concentration, patience, precision and sound judgment – qualities that are indispensable in strategic leadership and decision making.

FG reaffirms commitment to prioritising security, Nigeria diaspora**ABUJA**

The Federal Government has reiterated its commitment to prioritising security and harnessing the Nigerian diaspora as a critical asset for national development.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Sola Enikanolaiye, reiterated the commitment in a statement by Richard Elesho, his Special Assistant on Media and Strategic Communications.

Enikanolaiye reportedly spoke at the Nigerian Diaspora Economic Conference on Saturday night in Toronto, Canada.

He also expressed the Federal Government's pledge to deepen strategic partnerships anchored on mutual respect and trust to achieve the desired goal.

According to the Minister, security remains a major challenge, and government is willing to do everything humanly possible to contain the scourge in multifaceted manner.

He said that Nigeria was en-

tering new era of partnership of strategic autonomy with key international partners, including the U.S.

"I came in from Washington only yesterday. I was privileged to have been part of the team meeting with the Americans.

"This engagement is aimed at delivering core, concrete, positive outcomes for Nigerians in terms of security, in terms of prosperity, in terms of defence and the welfare of the Nigerian people," he said.

On the Nigerian diaspora, the minister said that under the leadership of President Bola Tinubu, government viewed Nigerians abroad not as a burden, but as vital contributors to national progress.

"For this government, Nigerians in the diaspora are critical assets of national development.

"We see you as vital human resource capacity for Nigeria which government is trying to harness, in terms of our national development priorities," the Minister said.

Lagos APM guber candidate says outcome of Osun poll victory for democracy**LAGOS**

The Lagos State Governorship Candidate of the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), Prince Laja Adeoye, has congratulated Gov. Ademola Adeleke on his victory in the just-concluded Osun governorship election.

Adeoye, in a statement on Sunday, described Adeleke's re-election as a triumph of the will of the people over what he described political tyranny.

The APM candidate said

Adeleke's victory over his closest challenger, Mr Bola Oye-bamiji of the All Progressives Congress (APC), demonstrated the power of the people's votes.

According to results announced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Adeleke polled 511,067 votes, while Oyebamiji scored 444,815 votes.

Adeleke won in 19 of the 30 Local Government Areas, while Oyebamiji won in 11, giving the incumbent a margin of 66,252 votes.

Adeoye said the people of Osun remained resolute despite what he described as heavy militarisation, intimidation of voters and deployment of huge financial resources during the election.

"The people of Osun stood firm. They defended their mandate and voted massively for the man they trust to continue leading them," he said.

Adeoye said the outcome of the election was a reminder that determined citizens could resist attempts to undermine

their democratic choices.

"The outcome of this election is a powerful reminder to the ruling APC that a determined people cannot be defeated.

"Even if all the funds in the nation's treasury are expended and every apparatus of the state is deployed against the will of the people, that will shall still prevail.

"The Osun electorate has shown Nigeria once again that votes, when protected and courageously cast, remain the ultimate weapon against political tyranny," Adeoye stated.

FOREIGN

NEWS

Thousands displaced by deadly Indonesia earthquake as rescue efforts continue

Around 5,000 people have been displaced by a powerful earthquake in Indonesia that has caused at least 53 fatalities.

Rescuers continue to search for survivors of the shallow magnitude 7.7 quake, which struck the island of Flores shortly before 05:00 local time on Saturday (22:00 GMT on Friday).

Preliminary reports indicate more than 900 homes and hundreds of other buildings have been severely damaged by the tremor and 341 subsequent aftershocks, the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) said.

The full scale of the disaster is still being uncovered, with news of a second magnitude 6.9 earthquake elsewhere in Indonesia serving as a reminder of why this region is called the ring of fire.

The initial earthquake, which occurred just 15km below the surface, was the south-east Asian nation's deadliest since 2022, when hundreds of people were killed in West Java.

Tremors were reportedly

felt by residents as far west as Bima, the BNPB said, but the Manggarai province was among the most affected.

Abdul Muhari, deputy for the BNPB, confirmed 25 deaths had been recorded there, as well as 20 fatalities in East Manggarai province, four in Sikka province, two in Ende and at least one person in both the Nagekeo and West Manggarai provinces.

A total of 3,356 people had been displaced in Sikka, with a further 2,078 evacuated in Manggarai, the agency said.

Thirty-six people were seriously injured in East Nusa Tenggara province, while 77 suffered minor injuries, Deputy Health Minister Benjamin Paulus Octavianus said.

It will take time to assess the full extent of the destruction in the region, which is remote and mountainous.

The area is mountainous and the assessment will take time, officials say

However, early reports indi-

cate that, in addition to damaged homes, dozens of schools, healthcare facilities and government offices had also been severely damaged.

Ruteng Regional Hospital in Manggarai was among them. Images show operating theatre and clinic ceilings caved in, requiring patients to be treated in tents.

"We heard that medical assistance would be provided, but nothing has arrived yet," hospital spokesperson Rista Mari told BBC Indonesian. "We hope that assistance will arrive soon."

The BNPB said "meeting basic needs and providing logistics for evacuees has become one of the top priorities of the emergency response", adding it had dispatched tonnes of emergency supplies to Manggarai.

Video taken at the port in Maumere - the largest town in Flores - showed large chunks of concrete breaking off the terminal building onto passengers waiting to board an inter-island ferry. Some were thrown into the sea when the

gangway to a ship collapsed.

Emanuel Melkiades Laka Lena, governor of East Nusa Tenggara province, told a news conference that several of the victims had been killed in their sleep by collapsing rubble.

Others, like Arnold Welianto, who lives in Talibura, a village near the coastline in Sikka, East Nusa Tenggara, were shaken out of their beds.

"I was startled awake and immediately went to my child's room," he said.

He also told the BBC that many people had already fled into the hills because the sea had also receded.

While a tsunami warning was initially issued - leading some 2,000 people to self-evacuate - it was lifted around three hours after the initial jolt, when no significant sea level rise was detected.

Landslides, however, did block access to some villages but the experienced rescue teams worked tirelessly through the day to free those trapped under the rubble.

Five killed as Russia launches fresh aerial attacks across Ukraine

At least five people have been killed and more than 10 injured in Ukraine in the latest wave of Russian strikes, officials have said.

The attacks caused fires across the capital, Kyiv, including at a book market, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said, accusing Russia of targeting civilian infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Moscow's mayor said about 600 Ukrainian drones were launched towards the city overnight. A warehouse belonging to Russian online retailer Wildberries was hit. Seven people have died across Russia, officials said.

Russia has intensified aerial attacks across Ukraine in recent weeks, while Kyiv has stepped up attacks on Russian logistics hubs, aiming to disrupt military supplies.

Air-raid sirens have sounded four times since Saturday night in Kyiv. At least six people, including a child, were reportedly injured, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

The mayor of Kryvyi Rih said a 44-year-old man earlier reported missing had been found dead in rubble. Another person

was killed and 14 workers of a steel plant were wounded there.

Two people in their 60s were killed when a house was destroyed in Zaporizhzhia, while a person was also killed in Sumy, according to the Ukrainian president.

Zelensky said the cities of Kremenchuk and Kryvyi Rih were hit by ballistic missiles, adding: "Wherever the Russians can reach with their ballistic missiles, they strike civilian infrastructure."

Russia said its attacks on Kyiv on Saturday night targeted a FirePoint facility producing parts for Ukrainian Flamingo missiles and a factory making components for drones.

A book market in the city's Pochayna district was damaged in the strikes. Burnt books could be seen lying on the ground, while firefighters continue to douse the flames.

Sixty-nine-year-old Valentina's husband owned a market stall.

Looking through the rubble, she told the BBC: "All these books in the street were from my husband's stall in the market - I recognise them on the floor."

Twelve killed as Polish bus veers off Hungarian motorway

Twelve people were killed and dozens more injured when a bus carrying Polish pilgrims veered off a Hungarian motorway and into a ditch.

Police said the bus overturned after coming off the M3 motorway, which connects Hungary's capital Budapest with the north-eastern city of Nyíregyháza, at around 01:00 local time on Sunday.

Officers believe the driver fell asleep at the wheel. He has been taken into custody.

Thirty-five out of the 57 passengers and two drivers onboard have been rescued by firefighters so far, state media reports.

Emergency services had been attempting to lift the rear axle of the 24-tonne bus to remove the people trapped underneath before cranes arrived to lift the whole vehicle, according to Hungarian news agency MTI.

Hungary's ambulance service said it had treated one person with life-threatening injuries, nine people with serious injuries and a further 37 people with minor injuries.

The country's Prime Minister Péter Magyar offered his "sincere condolences" to the families of the victims and wished those injured a speedy recovery.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk echoed his sentiments, adding he had decided to send a "special" Polish aircraft with foreign ministry officials and medical services.

"We are together in this difficult moment," he added.

The bus had been returning from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and had been carrying pilgrims from Poland's southernmost region of Podkarpatie, according to Polish news agency PAP. Poland's Foreign Minister Ra-

dosław Sikorski said his Hungarian counterpart had told him police had already begun questioning the bus driver. Thousands displaced by deadly Indonesia earthquake as rescue efforts continue

Around 5,000 people have been displaced by a powerful earthquake in Indonesia that has caused at least 53 fatalities.

Rescuers continue to search for survivors of the shallow magnitude 7.7 quake, which struck the island of Flores shortly before 05:00 local time on Saturday (22:00 GMT on Friday).

Preliminary reports indicate more than 900 homes and hundreds of other buildings have been severely damaged by the tremor and 341 subsequent aftershocks, the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) said.

The full scale of the disaster is still being uncovered, with news of a second magnitude 6.9 earthquake elsewhere in Indonesia serving as a reminder of why this region is called the ring of fire.

The initial earthquake, which occurred just 15km below the surface, was the south-east Asian nation's deadliest since 2022, when hundreds of people were killed in West Java.

Tremors were reportedly felt by residents as far west as Bima, the BNPB said, but the Manggarai province was among the most affected.

Abdul Muhari, deputy for the BNPB, confirmed 25 deaths had been recorded there, as well as 20 fatalities in East Manggarai province, four in Sikka province, two in Ende and at least one person in both the Nagekeo and West Manggarai provinces.



INDONESIA EARTHQUAKE:

The area is mountainous and the assessment will take time, officials say

Hurricane Lala sparks flash floods in Hawaii as strong winds and rain persist

Hawaii is facing flash floods that may have swept some homes away after category one Hurricane Lala skirted Big Island, as it continues to grapple with strong winds and torrential rain.

Tens of thousands of properties have been left without power and officials have warned people to prepare for "life-threatening" conditions, including mudslides, as the storm continues moving westward to the south of Hawaii.

Lala gained hurricane strength on Saturday, with wind speeds since peaking at 91mph (147km/h). It could dump up to 35in (89cm) of rain in places.

Hawaii Governor Josh

Green said on Saturday that one person had died in a weather-related car accident on Big Island, where many roads have been impacted.

Hawaii County said that as of 01:00 local time (12:00 GMT) on Sunday, two areas on Big Island had been hit by flash flooding, adding "several occupied homes may have been swept off their foundations".

Mayor Kimo Alameda said the county's civil defense agency had initiated a search and rescue operation to find people whose homes may have been swept away in the floods.

"What makes this very challenging is that there's rushing water, there's debris, there's

boulders on the road, and it's dark," he explained.

Videos posted by Hawaii's Department of Transportation show roads flooded with fast-moving water and blocked with fallen trees.

Green warned residents to brace for "an incredible amount of water".

"Please be very safe... you do not want to be out on the roads," he said in a video update on social media.

At Ellison Onizuka Kona International - Big Island's largest airport - 40% of flights were grounded on Saturday, according to tracker FlightAware. Some 80% of flights were called off at its other main air-

port, Hilo International.

The most dire forecasts from the National Weather Service (NWS) have been issued for areas within Big Island's south-east, which came closest to the hurricane's centre.

"Major rainfall flooding may prompt many evacuations and rescues," the NWS said, adding that rivers and tributaries "may rapidly overflow their banks in multiple places".

Nearly 115,000 customers had lost electricity on Hawaii as of Sunday morning local time, according to tracker PowerOutage.

Green said three hospitals had also lost power but had backup generators.

NEWS**FOREIGN****Qatar denies capturing three Iranian pilots after downing fighter jets**

Iran has called for the release of three pilots it said were captured by Qatar after two of its fighter jets were hit by air defences during a military operation at the start of the US-Iran war.

In a letter to the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Iran's Brig Gen Mohammad Bagherzadeh claimed the pilots - Javad Salehi, Abdul Majid Dashtian and Imran Behroshian - had been held captive for six months.

He said the body of a fourth pilot, Majid Kazemi, had been returned after he was killed in the same operation on 2 March 2026 - the third day of the war.

Qatar "categorically denied" Iran's claims and said it was "surprised by these misleading statements".

Bagherzadeh said the three pilots had been captured by Qatar after they ejected from their jets during a combat mission targeting a Qatari military base.

In the letter to ICRC chief Mirjana Spoljaric, published by Iranian media, he accused Qatar of violating "the inalienable rights of these prisoners, contrary to all international laws and regulations".

The letter also claimed the

three pilots had not been allowed to meet or contact their families.

Qatar's foreign affairs spokesperson Majed Mohammed Al Ansari said contact had been made with the pilots "after they violated Qatari airspace", but that it had not received a response.

"The necessary measures were taken to defend our territory in accordance with international law," he added in a statement on X.

Al Ansari said Qatar's search and rescue teams "carried out their duties to the fullest extent in searching for the pilots' remains", adding the Gulf nation had contacted Iran "co-ordinate the handover of the remains of one of the pilots that were recovered".

Bagerzadeh later told the semi-official Tasnim news agency on Sunday that Qatar should allow an Iranian fact-finding team into the country to investigate what had happened, claiming one had been denied entry for months.

Al Ansari said an invitation for an Iranian team to visit Qatar to review the findings of its search and rescue operation had been extended in April but Tehran had yet to respond.

Chad opposition figure, Succes Masra, calls for reconciliation after his release

Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Deby has pardoned jailed ex-prime minister and leader of the main opposition party Succes Masra and eight other opposition leaders.

Deby has led Chad since 2021 after taking charge of a military transition following the death of his father, who was killed by rebels after 30 years leading the central African country.

Masra, one of the president's fiercest critics, was sentenced to 20 years in prison a year ago, convicted of hate speech, xenophobia and having incited a massacre.

The eight other party leaders all belonged to the Political Actors' Consultation Group (GCAP), the main opposition coalition, which was dissolved by the Supreme Court in April.

They were jailed in May for eight years after being found guilty of inciting an insurrection.

The presidential pardon entails a "full remission of custodial sentences for the convicted", according to a decree

published on the presidency's Facebook page.

"We thank the president of the republic for having braved the obstacles and chosen to move forward in the spirit of national unity that is now coming into being," Ndolembai Sade Njesada, vice president of Masra's The Transformers party, said.

"We hope at last to sit down around a table to move peace forward," he added.

Like other opposition figures, Masra, 42, an economist, had fled Chad after the army and police opened fire on demonstrators protesting an extension of the political transition under the Deby-led ruling junta in October 2022.

Masra returned from exile and signed a reconciliation deal with Deby before being named prime minister five months ahead of the 2024 presidential election.

Deby was elected head of state with just over 60 percent of the vote, in a contested ballot boycotted by a majority of opposition parties.

**DETAINED MIGRANTS:**

Migrants are detained by Moroccan security forces after attempting to cross from the border town of Fnideq to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026

Morocco detains dozens of migrants trying to cross into Ceuta, reports say

Moroccan authorities have intercepted dozens of migrants seeking to cross into the Spanish North African exclave of Ceuta, reports say.

More than 100 people were blocked trying to make their way to the border on the outskirts of the town of Fnideq, according to Moroccan security sources cited by Spanish media and news agency Reuters.

It comes a fortnight after roughly 78,000 migrants arrived in the exclave by sea in a matter of hours - 100 of whom died, according to the city's mayor, who also said the vast majority of arrivals had returned to Morocco.

Security had been stepped up in the area after the influx and amid suggestions on social media of a second mass crossing attempt this weekend.

The security sources said 111 people had been detained in or around Fnideq - known in Spanish as Castillejos - about 3km (1.8 miles) from the border, the majority of whom were from sub-Saharan Africa.

Moroccan police - including some in riot gear - reportedly used tear gas to disperse groups of migrants gathered on nearby hills.

Earlier this week, Morocco's government said it was monitoring "the circulation of social media posts and messages of unknown origin" calling for a mass crossing on Saturday, and warned that it would prosecute organisers and participants.

Spain has deployed more than 1,500 officers to patrol the area

Security at the breakwater entrance was "10 times stronger than the previous day", Spanish newspaper El Pais reported.

Morocco had dispatched army officers, navy speedboats and drones to the border on Saturday, it said.

Meanwhile, Madrid deployed more than 1,500 security officers to patrol the area.

Spain has also installed a metal fence and a floating barrier following last month's influx.

The crisis had calmed since breaking out in late July, but it has sparked tensions between EU nations that share open borders as well as criticism of

the Spanish government.

Italy suspended the 29-member Schengen arrangement of free movement with Spain and introduced border checks on arrivals from Spain.

Italy was backed by Finland and Denmark, while the Czech Republic called for Spain's membership to be temporarily suspended.

Spain reacted angrily, with Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez noting Ceuta was not part of the Schengen area - and the migrants, therefore, had not arrived on the Spanish mainland and could not travel to any other European country.

It urged Italy to drop its bor-

der controls - and introduced its own when Rome refused, citing the possibility of a new influx on 15 August.

On Saturday, Italy's Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said his country had been afraid of a "risk of a new wave of arrivals in Ceuta".

"We're not waging any kind of 'battle' against Spain - we're simply carefully controlling arrivals," he said.

"Instead of worrying about us, Spain should worry about Morocco: that's where the problems are coming from, certainly not from our controls."

Observers say Zambia's vote marred by intimidation, counting pause

International observers of Zambia's elections have said the poll was marred by claims of intimidation, abductions and an hours-long pause in the vote count.

Observer missions called for parties to tone down inflammatory statements as the votes cast on Thursday were tallied, and some teams extended their deployment because of the tensions.

President Hakainde Hichilema, 64, is seeking a second term. His main challenger is a 55-year-old former minister in the previous Patriotic Front (PF) government, Brian Mundubile.

The electoral commission suspended vote counting for

around six hours on Friday following reports of violence against polling staff and the alleged theft of ballot papers.

The count resumed after the commission announced the "security threat" had been contained.

The suspension of the count had caused "uncertainty and anxiety", said the observer mission of the regional SADC grouping, led by Samuel Tembenu, a former Malawian justice minister.

"The mission additionally recorded, but could not verify, reports of intimidation, assault, abduction and damage to property in five provinces, some involving reported physical injury and, in one submis-

sion, fatalities," said Tembenu.

Police said nine suspects had been arrested after the killing of a 57-year-old polling agent in a township outside Lusaka on voting day, although they added that the election had generally been peaceful.

"Even one loss of life is one too many," said Reinhold Lopatka, head of the European Parliament's election observers' delegation.

The suspension of counting appeared "disproportionate" as only a small number of the more than 13,000 polling stations had reportedly been compromised, the Austrian politician told reporters.

The mission had been informed that "opposition parties faced intimidation, including by security forces, candidates reportedly withdrawn under pressure, and opposition rallies were ended by violence," he said.

- 'Confidence of voters' -

The election commission started releasing constituency results late Friday, pledging the final outcome would be made public by Monday.

Zimbabwe ferry death toll rises to 80 after Lake Kariba capsizing

The death toll after a ferry capsized on Zimbabwe's Lake Kariba last week has risen to 80 after more bodies were recovered on Sunday, the police said.

The overloaded passenger ferry run by the government's

Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (RIDA) overturned on Tuesday in choppy waters.

Officials say the boat was authorised to carry 90 people but was packed with 114 adults, five crew members and

an unspecified number of children.

The civil protection unit said on Wednesday that 77 people were rescued.

Dozens of mourners gathered for an emotional service on Thursday in the lakeside

town of Kariba, around 400 kilometres (250 miles) west of the capital Harare, before the bodies were buried.

Survivors said they pleaded with the ferry driver to turn back in the rough waters as the vessel had begun taking on wa-

ter soon after departing.

Locals told AFP that such accidents on the lake were rare.

Lake Kariba straddles the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia and is the world's largest man-made lake by volume.

FEATURE

Ending Edo's Public revenue fragmentation through consolidation

DR. PATRICK AKHERE EBOJELE

Governor Monday Okpebholo has renewed his commitment to strengthen financial discipline, reduce revenue leakages and ensure that money generated by government institutions is properly accounted for. This explains his decision for the Revenue Consolidation Account (Establishment and Operation) Law, 2026.

The law is a central part of the administration's effort to tighten control over public revenue and end the fragmentation of government funds across the myriads of ministries, departments, agencies and parastatals in Edo State.

Before now, government agencies across the state operated separate revenue accounts through which they collected licensing fees, permits, fines and several other charges. Such arrangements were necessary for administrative convenience. However they also created gaps in oversight and made it difficult to establish a clear picture of the state's overall revenue position.

Governor Okpebholo has changed that system. Under the legislation, all ministries, departments, agencies and parastatals are required to surrender their revenue bank accounts to the Ministry of Finance within 14 days. Existing balances are to be consolidated into an approved Internal Generated Revenue account, after which the old accounts must be closed.

As explicated in the detailed announcement by the Secretary to the State Government, Umar Musa Ikhilor Esq, this requirement is backed by sanctions. Heads of agencies who fail to comply face immediate suspension pending investigation.

Governor Okpebholo's objective is clear: revenue generated on behalf of Edo State for the people belong to the state and must be subject to a common system of control, rather than remaining under the separate discretion of individual agencies and their management.

The Revenue Consolidation Account law also gives the Edo State Internal Revenue Service a central role in revenue collection and enforcement. Agencies will no longer be able to independently and haphazardly, appoint revenue agents, establish mobile courts or prosecute revenue-related offences without the approval of the EIRS.

This will eliminate parallel revenue collection structures, which have historically made it difficult to track collections and have provided opportunities for leakages and unauthorised deductions.

For Governor Okpebholo, this reform is not simply about moving

money from one bank account to another. It is a deliberate attempt to establish a very disciplined financial system in which the government can know how much revenue is being generated, where it comes from and how it is being spent.

The law therefore mandates agencies to submit revenue statements and supporting financial records covering the period from January 2025 to the Ministry of Finance, the State Auditor-General and the EIRS.

This audit requirement could prove particularly important. By establishing a record of revenue collected and the accounts through which such funds passed, the government will have a clearer basis for identifying discrepancies, recovering funds where necessary and improving future revenue planning.

The new development also changes the relationship between government agencies and the state treasury. Agencies that previously exercised considerable discretion over internally generated revenue will now operate within a more centralised financial framework, with the Ministry of Finance having greater visibility over government cash flows.

That arrangement could improve cash management and planning, but its success will depend heavily on implementation.

The 14-day

deadline, for instance, is to avoid complaints that MDAs with complicated revenue systems and multiple collection points may have challenges. Hospitals, educational institutions, utilities and other

large agencies now have a credible window to reconcile substantial records,

transfer balances and close accounts within a reasonable period.

The government is aware that the consolidation process cannot disrupt essential public services. Agencies can still access funds required for legitimate operations while the process is on.

The legislation introduces personal responsibility for officers who authorise unauthorised revenue spending. Such officers may be held jointly liable with their agencies, strengthening the principle that public officials must account for decisions involving government funds.

This emphasis on individual accountability reflects one of the key objectives of the Okpebholo administration: to move Edo's public finances away from informal and fragmented practices and towards a system based on transparency, control and accountability.

The reform also fits into the wider push for fiscal modernisation in Nigeria, where governments at both federal and state levels are under increasing pressure to improve internally generated revenue, reduce dependence on federal allocations and strengthen public financial management.

For Edo, however, the issue is more practical. The state government wants to know exactly how much revenue its agencies generate and ensure that such funds are captured within the state's financial system.

Governor Okpebholo's consolidation law is therefore a direct attempt to close the gaps created by multiple revenue accounts and competing collection structures. Its success will ultimately be measured not by the signing of the law, but by whether revenue leakages fall, collections improve and government finances become easier to monitor.

In the coming months, the administration will be turning the law into an effective working system, in a way and manner that gives the state stronger control over its revenue, improve accountability and provide a clearer basis for planning and delivering public services.

At its core, the reform reflects Governor Okpebholo's objective of imposing greater financial discipline on the Edo State government machinery and ensuring that public revenue is treated as a collective resource that must be centrally controlled, transparently managed and fully accounted for.

• Ebojele, PhD in Public Administration and is the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.



GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLU

NEWS

Ewu Onogieship Tussle: Court orders Jafaru Isesele, three others to show cause



PRINCE JAFARU ISESELE

BENIN CITY

OUR REPORTER

An Edo State High Court sitting in Benin City has ordered Prince Jafaru Isesele of Ewu Kingdom and three other respondents to appear before it on September 9, 2026, to show cause why they should not be restrained from allegedly violating the right to fair hearing of the applicant.

The applicant, Prince Rasak Yesufu Ogiefu, instituted the action under the Fundamental Rights provisions of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, par-

ticularly Section 36(1) and (5), relating to fair hearing.

The suit, filed by way of Originating Summons and numbered B/185 OS/2026, has Prince Jafaru Isesele, the Attorney-General of Edo State and two other persons as respondents.

In paragraph eight of the Originating Summons, the applicant stated that there is a longstanding substantive dispute concerning the stool, status, rights, interests and entitlements connected with the office of the Onogie of Ewu in Edo State.

The applicant also filed a motion seeking an interim in-

junction, containing three principal reliefs and an alternative prayer.

After hearing arguments on the motion, the court, presided over by Justice A.T. Momodu, granted the first and third reliefs sought by Prince Rasak Ogiefu.

In granting the first relief, the court ordered Prince Jafaru Isesele and the other respondents to show cause why the applicant's motion for interim injunction should not be granted pending the determination of the Motion on Notice for interlocutory injunction.

The order relates specifically

to the applicant's alleged fundamental right to fair hearing in pending contempt proceedings in Suit No. B/457/2001 before the Edo State High Court.

The court subsequently adjourned the matter to September 9, 2026, for hearing of the Motion on Notice and for Prince Jafaru Isesele and the other respondents to show cause as ordered.

The latest development is the newest legal twist in the longstanding dispute surrounding the Ewu traditional stool, with the court expected to consider the parties' respective positions at the next hearing.

Sports

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

National Sports Commission (NSC) backs traditional sports, targets global recognition

The National Sports Commission (NSC) has reaffirmed its commitment to the development, promotion and internationalisation of traditional sports in the country.

Chairman of NSC, Mallam Shehu Dikko gave the assurance during a visit to the Abula venue at the Moshood Abiola

Stadium Package B in Abuja on Friday, August 15, 2026.

Dikko said a dedicated budget line has been created for the sector for the first time in the history of sports administration in the country.

He stated that traditional sports, which include Abula, Dambe, Kokuwa, Langa and

Ayo, are an important part of Nigeria's sporting heritage and deserve sustained investment, wider participation and international exposure.

He said: "For the first time in the history of sports, we have created a specific budget line for traditional sports."

"If you check the budget of the National Sports Commission, you will see a specific budget line meant to advance the cause of traditional sports."

The sports administrator further disclosed plans to encourage the leadership of the Traditional Sports Federation of Nigeria to strengthen engagement with other African countries and promote Nigerian traditional sports internationally.

Dikko explained that traditional sports should go beyond festivals and local competitions

and be developed into internationally recognised sporting disciplines.

He expressed particular optimism about the growing international interest in Nigerian traditional sports, citing interest from investors in Saudi Arabia in Dambe and other traditional sporting disciplines.

Dikko said: "It is not just about having these sports at festivals and local events. We should work to promote them and make them as international as we can."

"I am calling on traditional rulers across the country to play a greater role in promoting traditional sports, as they have to play a collective role with the relevant sports federations to expand the reach of traditional sports, just as they have done in promoting horse racing across the country."



MALLAM SHEHU DIKKO

Lagos Intermediate Games to showcase state's sports investment – Olopade

The Director-General, National Sports Commission (NSC) Bukola Olopade, says Lagos is fully prepared to host the inaugural Intermediate Games in October.

Olopade stated this in an interview with journalists in Saturday in Lagos.

According to him, the games will provide an opportunity to showcase Lagos as a state prepared for the future, through sustained investment in sports.

He added that it would also demonstrate the quality of leadership and preparation currently driving sports development in the state.

The director general noted that the initiative initially faced some reservations from the state's sports administration, before the governor personally embraced the project.

"When I introduced the Intermediate Games to the Director-General of the Lagos State Sports Commission (LSSC) Lekan Fatodu, he was sceptical," Olopade said.

"So, I went above him and called the governor and said to him 'Excellency, you own this'. And they accepted," he said.

According to Olopade, the Lagos government subsequently gave the games greater

importance than the NSC initially envisaged.

"Today, they have made the Intermediate Games more important than what the NSC made it to be. And I thank them for that," he said.

He commended the Lagos governor for his personal involvement in the preparations, particularly his inspection of facilities ahead of the competition.



BUKOLA OLOPADE

Milo, Ahmed Musa launch U-13 tournament in Kano to discover grassroots talents

The Milo-Ahmed Musa Under-13 Football Clinic and Tournament has commenced in Kano with 16 teams participating in the 17-day event aimed at discovering and nurturing grassroots football talents.

The clinic, holding at the Ahmed Musa Sports Complex, is organised by Milo, a brand of Nestlé Nigeria Plc, in partnership with former Super Eagles captain and Milo brand ambassador, Ahmed Musa.

Speaking at the opening ceremony,

Milo Category Lead, Nestlé Nigeria Plc, Gilbert Tweneboah-Koduah, said the initiative was designed to develop young footballers while promoting the values of teamwork, resilience, discipline and determination.

Tweneboah-Koduah said Milo had supported sports development in Nigeria for nearly three decades, adding that its partnership with Musa was aimed at extending grassroots sports development initiatives to Northern Nigeria.

He said the participants would receive training from professional coaches in areas including shooting, tackling and teamwork, ahead of the tournament final on September 3.



MILO U-13 TOURNAMENT IN KANO

LASG links sports events to boosting tourism goals

Lagos State Government has said international sporting events are helping to drive sports tourism and showcase the state's cultural and tourism potential to global audiences.

Idris Aregbe, Special Adviser to Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu on Tourism, Arts and Culture, stat-

ed this on Friday while speaking with journalists in Lagos.

The governor's aide was reflecting on the successful hosting of the 2026 Commonwealth Fencing Championships in Lagos.

The championships were held at Rugby School Nigeria, Eko Atlantic, attracting athletes

and officials from 20 countries.

Aregbe described the tournament as a destination event that combined sports, tourism and cultural exchange, while promoting Lagos as a preferred destination.

"There's always a beautiful marriage between sports tour-

ism and culture, and I'm happy that is what Lagos is known for," he said.

According to him, international competitions provide visitors with opportunities to experience the culture, values and attractions of the host community.



U-18 beach volleyball title excites coach

Nigeria's U-18 Beach Volleyball coach, John Iwerima, on Friday commended the performance of players, Joy Lawrence and Ifechukwu Odoh, at the Saly, Senegal, championships.

Lawrence and Odoh won the U-18 Beach Volleyball Championship after defeating hosts Senegal 2-0 in Thursday's final.

The Nigerian pair dominated the opening set from the outset,

displaying superior coordination and attacking play to secure a convincing 21-8 victory.

Senegal improved significantly in the second set and attempted to level the contest before their home supporters.

However, Lawrence and Odoh remained composed under pressure and maintained control to seal the set 21-10 and claim the championship.

WAFCON: Algeria beat Morocco on penalties to win bronze

Algeria secured the bronze medal at the 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) after beating hosts Morocco 3-2 on penalties following a 1-1 draw in the third-place match.

Morocco took the lead through Kautar Azraf, whose first-half goal gave the Atlas Lionesses a 1-0 advantage at the break.

Morocco appeared to have doubled their lead in the second half when Maryam Atiq found the net, but the goal was disallowed, leaving the hosts with a narrow advantage.

Algeria continued to press for an equaliser and were rewarded in the 83rd minute when Lina Boussaha scored to bring the match level at 1-1.

Neither side could find a decisive goal before the final whistle, forcing the bronze-medal contest into a penalty shootout.

Algeria held their nerve from the spot, winning 3-2 to secure third place and the bronze medal at the tournament.

The final is scheduled for Sunday between Cameroon and Malawi.



ALGERIA WOMEN CELEBRATING

SPORTS



Community Shield: Arsenal beat Man City 3-0

Arsenal were the better side as the London club beat rivals Manchester City 3-0 in the Community Shield played at Cardiff's Principality



ARSENAL VS MAN CITY

Stadium on Sunday, August 16. The beating for Enzo Maresca in his first test since replacing Pep Guardiola is a painful reminder to Manchester City of

just how tough life is going to be without the Spanish genius.

These two teams were the best in the Premier League last season. But in one game in Cardiff's Principality Stadium, the bitter rivals looked poles apart.

Arsenal ripped City to shreds from start to finish, including an opening goal inside 23 seconds, on an afternoon Maresca will want to forget in a hurry.

But the pressure on the Italian to maintain the incredible standards his predecessor set, will never escape him. As for Mikel Arteta, he waited three years to end his trophy drought, and has now pocketed two inside four months.

Riccardo Calafiori opened the scoring within half a minute – and Arsenal never looked back. Kai Havertz doubled the lead, before the impressive Martin Odegaard completed the rout in style.

There was £125m worth of new talent on show, in the shape of Bruno Guimaraes, Christos Tzolis and Elliot Anderson, while Jack Grealish was named on the City bench.

There was no Rodri for City, though, with the Spanish World Cup winner still at the centre of a transfer saga between his club and Barcelona. And it took Maresca's men just 23 seconds to miss the glue Rodri provides and come unstuck.



JUNIOR D'TIGRESS

Basketball: NSC salutes Junior D'Tigress World Cup spot

The National Sports Commission (NSC) has congratulated Nigeria's U-18 women's basketball team, Junior D'Tigress, for qualifying for the 2027 FIBA U19 Women's World Cup in China.

The commission's commendation is contained in a statement issued on Saturday in Lagos by its Director of Information and Public Relations, Dr Kehinde Ajayi.

NSC Director-General, Bukola Olopade, said the Nigerian girls displayed remarkable resilience in their semi-final

clash against hosts Ivory Coast at the FIBA U18 Women's AfroBasket Championship.

Olopade said the victory secured Nigeria's place at the 2027 World Cup and also earned the team a berth in Sunday's final against Mali.

He described the achievement as worthy of celebration, noting that the players demonstrated determination, discipline and composure under intense pressure.

He highlighted the team's hard-fought 53-50 victory over the Ivorians as evidence of the squad's depth, quality and fighting spirit.

Efunkoya championship discovered future stars, says Foundation

The Efunkoya Foundation National Cadet Championship says it has produced emerging talents capable of replacing Nigeria's table tennis stars.

Lajide Ogunranti, a Foundation Board of Trustees member, said this in an interview with journalists in Saturday in Lagos.

He said the seven-year tournament had produced players who progressed to Nigeria's national teams.

"We are achieving that. Those who were champions in this competition five or six years ago are now in the national team," Ogunranti said.

He said the foundation aimed to produce replacements for Nigeria's national team and restore the country's position in global table tennis.

Ogunranti said 132 players, comprising 81 boys and 51 girls, participated in the five-day championship, which ended on Friday at the National Stadium, Lagos.

He said some former participants had recorded impressive international performances, including Nigerian women who recently defeated Egypt in Ghana.

Ogunranti expressed confidence that the emerging players could conquer Africa and compete globally with proper training and the right attitude.

ing and the right attitude.

Waheed Ekun, former Nigerian national champion and sports administrator, said the tournament remained an important platform for discovering talents and promoting education alongside sports.

Ekun said several players discovered through the competition had progressed to national level, adding that late Adegboyega Efunkoya discovered him during the 1970s.



EFUNKOYA CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

Invest in young squash players, Adekunle Adebisi urges stakeholders

Adekunle Adebisi, Secretary of the Nigerian Squash Players in the Diaspora, has urged individuals,

corporate organisations and other stakeholders to invest in young squash players to help produce future world champions.

Adebisi stated this while addressing newsmen on Friday in Abuja on the sidelines of the ongoing seventh edition of the Squash Ex-Pros in the Diaspora Tournament for U-11, U-13 and U-17 Boys and Girls tournament.

He said grassroots development remained central to the tournament, stressing the need for sustained support to nurture young talents and provide them with competitive opportunities.

"Some of these kids you see selling groundnuts and going about their daily activities could be the next world champion," he said.



ADEKUNLE ADEBIYI

Ulefunta: 48 marathoners participate in 15-Km race in Ondo

The Steering Committee for the 2026 Ulefunta Festival in Akure, the Ondo State capital, says not less than 48 marathoners from Nigeria participated in the festival's marathon as part of cultural events.

The festival was the highest traditional and annual cultural celebration in Akure Kingdom, which marks the symbolic return of Oba Aladetoyinbo Adelus, the Deji of Akure, from seclusion.

XXThe Ulefunta Festival Mar-

athon started from the Imafon axis passing through several parts of Akure and ended at the Deji's Palace.

Mr Adekunle Ajanaku, Chairman of the Steering Committee for the 2026 Ulefunta Festival, while speaking with newsmen, said the marathon was organised to complement the traditional "Owa Oropro Marathon".

Ajanaku revealed that the "Owa Oropro Marathon" was always held annually by palace servants as part of activities

marking the Ulefunta Festival.

He said the initiative was aimed at advancing the traditional festival, discovering new talents and promoting peace and unity among runners and sports enthusiasts across the country with focus on the state.

According to him, the marathon is also intended to give the week-long Ulefunta Festival a major sporting opening and attract participants from beyond Ondo State.

"This is the second edition. There was no edition in 2024

and 2025, so we are trying to put it together again. So far, so good with 48 participants, I think it is good enough and above average.

"Plans are also underway to register the marathon with relevant authorities, particularly the Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN).

"Some of the participants came from Kwara, Kogi and Osun states, while others were drawn from Ifedore, Akure North and other areas of Ondo State.

Grassroots: Sheu close win Lagos street football title

Sheu Close on Saturday defeated Amusa Street 2-0 to emerge champions of the Lagos State Street Soccer Stars Oshodi 2026.

Sheu Close produced a strong performance in the final to secure the title, while Amusa Street settled for the runners-up position.

In the third-place match, Oremoji Street defeated Salawu Street 6-1 to claim the bronze position in the grassroots competition.

Ezekiel Odega was named Man of the Match after helping Oremoji Street secure the convincing victory with an impres-

sive individual performance.

Odega demonstrated determination, good ball control and strong teamwork throughout the encounter, contributing significantly to his team's emphatic victory.

"I feel good. All thanks to God for making this happen," Odega said after receiving the individual award.

He said his expectation had been to reach the final, expressing disappointment that his team failed to achieve the target.

"My expectation was to be in the final, but I am not happy we did not get there," he said.



LAGOS STREET FOOTBALL