

INEC displays credentials of Tinubu, Atiku, Obi, others for 2027

ABUJA The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has published the personal particulars of candidates contesting the 2027 Presidential and National Assembly elections. The publication was carried out at INEC state offices nationwide in accordance with the commission's revised timetable and schedule of activities for the 2027 general elections. The published particulars featured presidential candidate and their designated running mates representing various political parties across the country. According to the details released by the commission, President Bola Tinubu was listed as the presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), with Vice President Kashim Shettima retained as his running mate. The African Democratic Congress (ADC) fielded former Vice President Atiku Abubakar as its presidential candidate, paired with former Minister of Transportation, Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, as his vice-presidential running mate. Similarly, the National Democratic Coalition (NDC) published Peter Obi as its presidential candidate, with former Kano State Governor, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, as his running mate. Other political party flag-bearers and their running mates published by the electoral body include the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) with Sandy Onor as Presidential candidate, and Umaru Bangida as running mate. Also were African Action Congress (AAC): Omoyele Sowore as Presidential candidate, and Garba Magashi as Vice-Presidential candidate; Young Progressives Party (YPP)- Zugwai Chukwu as

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That The People May Know



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Okpebholo showcases Edo's progress in London

● Hails Tinubu's reforms ● Woos Edo diaspora, investors

LONDON Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has credited President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's economic reforms for giving state governments the financial capacity to deliver meaningful development, saying the impact of the President's policies is evident in the transformation currently taking place across Edo State. Addressing Edo indigenes at a diaspora engagement in London themed "Shine Beyond Borders," Governor Okpebholo presented the scorecard of his administration, highlighting achievements in infrastructure, security and governance while urging members of the diaspora to return home as investors, professionals and partners in the state's development. The governor said President Tinubu's bold economic decisions, particularly the removal of fuel subsidies, have strengthened the finances of sub-national governments, enabling them to embark on projects that directly improve the lives of citizens. According to him, "The era of governors queuing up for bailouts in Abuja before they could pay workers' salaries is over. Today, states have more money not only for salaries but enough to undertake infrastructural development as can be witnessed in Edo State in recent times" Governor Okpebholo noted that the visible transformation across Edo State is a practical demonstration of how the Federal Government's economic reforms are translating into development at the state level. He pointed to landmark projects such as the Ramat Park Flyover in Benin City, the reconstruction of the Ekpoma-Auchi section of the Benin-Okene Highway with concrete pavement, the extension of the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway through Edo State, and ongoing improvements in security through the establishment of an Army Forward Operational Base, the siting of the MOPOL 82 Squadron, the recruitment of 500 Forest Guards and the approval of a new Army Division for Edo State. The governor said the administration's SHINE Agenda is de-

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LONDON ENGAGEMENT: Gov. Monday Okpebholo (right) presenting branded T-shirts, face caps and other souvenirs to members of the Edo diaspora during the Shine Beyond Borders engagement in London, on Friday July 31, 2026.

Terrorism: Former AG, others back full sentence for convicts

LAGOS the possibility of convicted terrorists being granted amnesty on executive orders. The former AG consequently, said there was the need for an amendment of the Act to ensure that convicted terrorists do not enjoy such clemency. "Given the devastating impact of terrorism related activities across the country, public concerns about the fate of those arrested, prosecuted and convicted in connection with terrorism and terrorism financing activities have heightened. "It has become pertinent to recommend that the Terrorism (Prohibition and Prevention) Act 2022 be further amended. According to him, given the devastating impact of terrorism activities in the country, there has been public concerns about

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NEWS



PROMOTION:
NDLEA EDO State Commander Mitchell Ofoyeju PhD (right) decorating Hope Aigbogun with her new rank of Commander of Narcotics together with the newly promoted Commander of Narcotics Adeola Salaudeen(left) at the ceremony



RECOGNITION OF INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS:
NDLEA Edo State Commander Mitchell Ofoyeju PhD (right) decorating Anavi Jimoh Samuel with his new rank of Commander of Narcotics together with his wife Mrs Anavi Omoye Theresa (left) at the ceremony.

NUJ Warri Chapel raises concerns over bad roads, insecurity, flooding

BENIN CITY
BETTY IDIALU

The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Warri Correspondents' Chapel, has called on the Delta State Government and relevant agencies to urgently address the deteriorating condition of the Effurun/Sapele Road, worsening insecurity, flooding and traffic congestion in Warri and Effurun through proper drainage and flood control measures, while also expressing concern over rising political violence in the state.

The Congress urged governments at all levels to prioritize infrastructure development, youth empowerment, environmental sanitation and public safety as sustainable solutions to unemployment and insecurity.

The Chapel reaffirmed its commitment to responsible journalism, press freedom, good governance and promoting policies that foster peace, accountability and development.

enforcement of traffic regulations and the removal of illegally parked vehicles.

On security, the Chapel condemned the rising cases of cult-related killings and other criminal activities, urging security agencies to intensify intelligence gathering and bring perpetrators to justice.

The journalists further called for urgent intervention to tackle recurring flooding in Warri and Effurun through proper drainage and flood control measures, while also expressing concern over rising political violence in the state.

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DECORATION CEREMONY:
NDLEA EDO State Commander Mitchell Ofoyeju PhD (right) decorating Adeola Salaudeen with the new rank of Commander of Narcotics together with the newly promoted Commander of Narcotics Hope Aigbogun at the ceremony(left).

Edo police dismiss five officers, declare inspector wanted

BENIN CITY
MIKE OSARO GIAGBON

The Edo State Police Command said it has dismissed five police officers over their alleged involvement in a criminal syndi-

cate accused of abducting and extorting unsuspecting members of the public in the state capital.

The Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Eno Ikoedem, disclosed this during a press briefing, stating that the syndicate operated around the Teboga

axis, off Aduwawa, where victims were allegedly intercepted under the guise of official police operations.

According to her, the victims were forced into commercial buses, driven around the city, and compelled to withdraw money through Point-of-Sale operators before being released.

Mordi Philip, Destiny Emmanuel, Uwatse Emmanuel, Okon Elvis, and Samuel David Obeten, who will be charged before a court of competent jurisdiction for their alleged involvement in the criminal activities. Inspector Ehubariemen Wisdom, meanwhile, was reduced in rank from Inspector to Sergeant following disciplinary proceedings.

The PPRO also declared Inspector Enahoro Nicholas, attached to Police Mobile Force Squadron 60, wanted after he allegedly absconded and was declared a deserter, with efforts ongoing to apprehend him.

She warned that the command would not shield any officer found culpable of criminal activity, stressing that the action aligns with the directive of the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Olatunji Rilwan Disu, that the era of impunity within the force has ended.

EDO NDLEA uncovers 3 warehouses, intercepts two

BENIN CITY

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Edo State Command has announced the discovery of three illicit drug warehouses, interception of two vehicles and the arrest of 49 suspected drug traffickers with 2,596.29kg of drugs in a renewed effort to tackle the drug problem in the state.

Commander of Narcotics Mitchell Ofoyeju, PhD, the Edo State Commander, gave the impres-

- **Arrests 49 suspects with 2,596kg of drugs**
- **Decorates 73 newly promoted officers**

sive July 2026 operational scorecard at the decoration ceremony of 73 newly promoted officers.

"We have observed that females top the list of persons arrested, with 29, while males are 20. This is concerning, as it highlights a shift in the socio-economic vulnerability of women and a breakdown of traditional family stability. The command is strategising on family value re-orientation to address this negative development," the commander noted.

He added: "The assessment of the seizures clearly shows that NDLEA in Edo is winning the war against narcotics with unprecedented harvest of arrests and seizures.

"The optics are good with three warehouses detected in the month, two in Benin City and one at Illushi. Two vehicles, a Toyota Sienna with registration number Ondo NND 975 AG and a Toyota Camry registration number Edo BEN 503 BK used in transporting cannabis were equally intercepted.

Cannabis led the seizure list with 2,588.4 kilograms, psychotropic substances 6.13 kilograms, cocaine 0.071 kg, heroin 0.005 kg, and methamphetamine 1.68 kg.

NEWS

Atiku replies Obasanjo, says criticisms won't erase third term agenda

ABUJA

Amid renewed public exchanges between former President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Presidential Candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, the ADC boss has fired back at Obasanjo's latest remarks against him.

In a statement by his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communication, Phrank Shai-bu, the former Vice President

said criticisms won't erase the history of his opposition at the time against the controversial third-term agenda during Obasanjo administration.

According to Atiku, Obasanjo's comments were not only another unsuccessful attempt to distort historical facts but to diminish his (Atiku's) role in defending Nigeria's democracy.

He maintained that his position at the time against the controversial third term agenda was guided by constitutional principles and commitment

to democratic governance.

The ADC presidential hopeful insisted that he viewed the former president's comments with disappointment rather than anger, saying they reflect deep seated personal grievances rather than an objective account of events.

He disclosed that the root cause of the strained relationship between them could be traced to his refusal to support the controversial bid to extend Obasanjo's tenure beyond its constitutional limit.

The former vice president further noted that he remained proud of his role during the period, adding that he never regretted standing against the third term project despite the attempts of Obasanjo to reinterpret past events.

He argued that while political disagreements were not unusual, efforts to re-write well documented episodes in the nation's political history would not succeed because facts remained stronger than personal sentiments.

UNIBEN Elevates Edo Polytechnic Acting Rector, Arodoye to Associate Professor

BENIN CITY**BENEDICT OKATE**

The Senate of the University of Benin (UNIBEN) has promoted the Acting Rector of Edo State Polytechnic, Usen, Dr. Nosakhare Liberty Arodoye, to the rank of Associate Professor of Economics, in recognition of his outstanding academic contributions and research excellence.

Findings by our correspondent revealed that the promotion followed a rigorous academic assessment in which Dr. Arodoye reportedly received the highest commendation from all three external assessors, a feat described by colleagues as a reflection of his scholarship, research productivity and commitment to higher education.

The development has elicited widespread commendation within the Edo State Polytechnic community, with staff describing the promotion as well deserved and a source of pride for the institution.

Reacting to the development, the Head of the Department of Business Administration and Management, Dr. John Amawu, said the elevation was a clear affirmation of Dr. Arodoye's academic competence and professional accomplishments.

According to him, "The decision of the University of Benin Senate to promote Dr. Arodoye to the rank of Associate Professor is a testament to his dedication to scholarship, quality research and academic

excellence. It is a well-deserved recognition that will inspire academics and students to strive for excellence in their respective fields."

Amawu added that under Dr. Arodoye's leadership, Edo State Polytechnic has continued to witness reforms aimed at strengthening academic standards, institutional development, digital transformation and innovation.

Other members of staff also congratulated the Acting Rector, expressing confidence that the promotion would further enhance the profile of Edo State Polytechnic and reinforce its drive towards academic excellence.

They also appreciated Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo for appointing Dr. Arodoye to lead the affairs of the state's only polytechnic, expressing optimism that his academic pedigree and administrative experience would continue to impact positively on the institution.

Speaking on the recognition, Dr. Arodoye described the promotion as a humbling milestone in his academic journey.

"I am deeply honoured by this elevation. It is a recognition of years of commitment to teaching, research and community service. I dedicate this achievement to God, my family, mentors, colleagues and the entire Edo State Polytechnic community whose support has been invaluable. This honour will further motivate me to contribute more meaningfully to scholarship and to the advancement of higher education in Nigeria," he said.

**PAN-AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY:**

Director-General, Maryam Babangida National Center for Women Development (MBNCWD), Dr Adedayo Benjamins-Laniyi; Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Imaan Suleiman-Ibrahim and others at the exhibition stand during the celebration of the 1st Nigerian Pan-African Women's Day organized by MBNCWD in Abuja on Friday.

Edo community leader backs Okpebholo's anti cultism war

BENIN CITY**BENEDICT OKATE**

A Benin-born philanthropist and community leader, Ambassador Charles Eghaghe, has issued a seven-day ultimatum to individuals accusing him of cultism to publicly retract the allegations or face legal action.

Eghaghe, alongside his legal counsel, Barrister Andrew Bello, announced the ultimatum during a press briefing in Benin City, describing the allegation as false, defamatory and damaging to his reputation.

Eghaghe said he was shocked when the allegation was reportedly raised during a meeting with the Special Adviser to the Edo State Governor on Security.

"I was taken aback when I was accused of being a cultist during a meeting with the Special Adviser on Security. I have never belonged to any cult group or any organisation associated with cultism. My re-

● *Seeks retraction over cultism claims*

cord speaks for itself," he said.

The philanthropist maintained that he has consistently supported the Edo State Government's campaign against cultism and other violent crimes, stressing that he has been one of the staunch supporters of Governor Monday Okpebholo's efforts to restore peace and security across the state.

"I have always stood firmly against cultism and every form of criminality. It is therefore surprising and unfortunate that anyone would attempt to associate my name with such activities," Eghaghe stated.

He specifically alleged that one Mr. Osahon Imaru was responsible for the accusation for personal reasons and called on him to substantiate the claim within seven days or withdraw it and tender an apology.

"If the allegation cannot be substantiated within the seven-day period, I will have no option but to seek legal redress

to protect my integrity and reputation," he added.

Eghaghe's counsel, Barrister Andrew Bello, described the allegation as defamatory and warned that his client was prepared to pursue all available legal remedies if the matter was not resolved.

"Our client's reputation has been unjustly brought into question. Allegations of this nature, particularly when made in the presence of senior government officials, are serious and carry significant consequences. If those responsible fail to retract the statement, we will not hesitate to institute legal proceedings," Bello said.

However, reacting to the development, Mr. Osahon Imaru denied making a direct allegation against Charles Eghaghe. He explained that the issue arose from a petition that was read during the meeting, adding that his position had been misconstrued.

Benin residents flag reckless driving routes, call for action

BENIN CITY**BENEDICT OKATE**

Residents of Benin City have identified several major roads in the Edo State capital where they say commercial bus drivers frequently engage in reckless driving, calling on traffic authorities to intensify enforcement and strengthen road safety awareness.

Speaking during a vox pop survey conducted across the city, Mrs. Grace Omoregie, a trader at New Benin Market, identified Sapele Road as one of the most problematic routes. "Many commercial bus drivers on Sapele Road are always in a hurry. They stop abruptly to pick up passengers, overtake carelessly and sometimes ignore pedestrians trying to cross the road. Every day, you see people shouting at drivers," she said.

A university student, Michael Osas, expressed simi-

lar concerns about Ugbowo Road, particularly during rush hours. "The competition for passengers is too much. Some drivers weave from one lane to another without indicating, a practice that puts passengers and other road users at risk," he said.

Commercial activities around Ring Road also came under criticism from residents. According to Mrs. Evelyn Igbinovia, a civil servant, "Ring Road is always busy, but what makes it worse is that some commercial drivers lack patience. They stop indiscriminately, obstruct traffic and create confusion."

For Mr. Samuel Aigbogun, a motorcycle spare-parts dealer, Airport Road has become another area requiring closer monitoring. "You find buses racing each other just to pick up passengers. Some even drive against traffic for short distances. It's dangerous, especially during the evening rush," he said.

Most respondents also identified the Sokponba-Upper Sokponba Road axis as the area where commercial drivers exhibit the most reckless behaviour. "They have total disregard for traffic rules and other road users," said Mr. Lucky Ojo, a businessman.

The respondents also appealed to commercial drivers to prioritize the safety of passengers and other road users over the pursuit of daily earnings. They stressed that patience, adherence to speed limits and compliance with traffic regulations would help save lives and improve public confidence in transportation across Benin City.

They therefore passionately appealed to the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), the Nigeria Police Force and the Edo State Traffic Control and Management Agency (EDSTMA) to enhance traffic enforcement, sanction erring motorists and strengthen public education on road safety.

Edo Govt equips market women with digital skills, formalises businesses

OSEMUDIAMHEN FAITH

BENIN CITY

In a major push toward gender-inclusive economic growth, the Edo State Government has launched an empowerment initiative designed to equip market women with digital literacy skills and facilitate formal business registration.

The sensitisation programme, held at the John Odigie Oyeogun Public Service

Academy in Benin City, was organized by the Office of the Special Adviser to the Governor on Markets in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, and the Ministry of Business, Trade and Investment. The event drew market leaders from across the state alongside government and private sector representatives.

During the event, the Commissioner for Business, Trade and Investment, Hon. Omoh

Anabor, reaffirmed the state's commitment to driving micro, small, and medium-scale enterprise (MSME) growth. To encourage formalisation, Anabor announced the donation of nine free business registration slots to selected market women.

Adding to the initiative, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Hon. Bisi Idaomi, pledged an additional 10 free business registration slots, noting that benefi-

ciaries would be selected through the Office of the Special Adviser to the Governor on Markets.

Further support came from the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), a key partner in the project, which offered free registration to 30 additional market women.

The effort aims to help informal enterprises transition into the formal sector, granting them access to credit facilities, government interventions, and

broader market opportunities.

Speaking on behalf of the Commissioner for Communication and Digital Economy, Hon. Ohimai Ehijimotor, Mr. George Iyoha highlighted the administration's vision for a digitally inclusive state economy.

Participants received practical training on leveraging digital tools—including online marketing strategies, electronic payment systems, and basic digital literacy—to enhance op-

erational efficiency and reach wider customer bases.

Participants expressed gratitude to Governor Monday Okpebholo for prioritizing trader welfare and creating actionable paths toward economic self-reliance.

The initiative aligns with the Okpebholo administration's broader SHINE Agenda, which emphasizes digital inclusion, entrepreneurship, and sustainable economic development across Edo State.

Showcases Edo's progress...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

livering measurable progress in infrastructure, security, health-care, education and economic development, making Edo increasingly attractive to investors.

He urged Edo professionals, entrepreneurs and investors living abroad to partner with the government by bringing home their expertise, technology, global networks and investments to accelerate development.

Rather than delivering a formal speech, Governor Okpebholo described the gathering as a family conversation, reflecting on the enduring bond between Edo people abroad and their homeland.

"Some of you left Edo as children. Some of you have never even seen Edo, but you grew up hearing the names of your communities from your parents. That is true love that has survived oceans," he said.

He added: "To those of you here who have never seen your ancestral

home, I invite you to come back, not as visitors, but as owners."

Governor Okpebholo also appealed to the diaspora to judge his administration by its performance rather than social media narratives.

"Judge our administration by our performance and not from online mischiefs and propaganda," he said.

He encouraged them to become ambassadors of Edo State by projecting its strengths and investment opportunities.

"Avoid always speaking negatively about the land of your forefathers because there is no place like home," he added.

As part of the engagement, the governor presented branded face caps and other souvenirs bearing the image of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to members of the Edo diaspora, reinforcing the administration's support for the President's Renewed Hope Agenda.



STAKEHOLDERS COLLABORATION:

The Executive Director of the Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo (middle), representative of Onogie of Igueben, High Chief Hilaryl Ekhoje (right) and the Pentecostal Archbishop of Esan Land, Archbishop Dr. Anthony Okosun at the Closeout meeting of the Act Against Child Trafficking in Nigeria (AACTING) Project and commemoration of 2026 World Day Against Human Trafficking, organized by Uromi JDPCI in Uromi, Edo State.

INEC displays credentials...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

Presidential candidate, and Egbeola Martins as VP.

Social Democratic Party (SDP)- Adewole Adebayo as Presidential candidate and Bujgaje Mohammed as VP; African Democratic Party (ADP): Abbas-Bin Aliyu (Presidential candidate), Ike Chinazam (VP); National Democratic Congress (NDC)- Fredrick Okwori as Presidential candidate, Anthony Chukwuemeka as running mate.

For Labour Party (LP)- Chibu-

zo Okereke (Presidential candidate), Bintu Konto (VP); New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP)-Mohammed Dikwa (Presidential candidate), Isah Abubakar (VP); Action Alliance (AA).

Also published were the details of candidates for the senate and the House of Assembly

INEC noted that the display of personal particulars allowed the public and political stakeholders to inspect the candidates' credentials and lodge any valid claims or objections as provided by the Electoral Act.

Former AG, others back full...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

to exclude persons convicted of terrorism or anti-terrorism offences from benefiting from presidential clemency or any legal mechanism that may enure in their favor during the pendency of their jail term," he said

According to him, there is also the need to ensure that the provisions on the Prerogative of Mercy under section 175 of the constitution, be amended to exclude the exercise of that power in favour of persons convicted of terrorism or terrorism related offences.

"The justification for this recommendations stem from the need to tighten the booze around perpetrators of terrorism against the nation and its citizens.

"The National Assembly should therefore waste no time to carry out this legislative en-

deavor in this urgent task to fight terrorism and stamp same out of our body polity," he said

On his part, a former Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association Young Lawyers Forum (NBA-YLF) Mr. Uwomano Aki described terrorism as a direct attack on the sovereignty, security and collective existence of the nation which ought to be tackled firmly.

"Terrorism is not an ordinary criminal offence; it is a direct attack on the sovereignty, security, and collective existence of the nation.

"Where a competent court, after a full and fair trial, has found an accused person guilty beyond reasonable doubt and determined that the individual poses a threat to national security, the suggestion that such a person should later benefit from executive clemency is, in most cases, difficult to justify," he said

Uromi JDPCI calls for sustained stakeholders' collaboration to end Child trafficking

UROMI

JUDE EHEBHA

The Uromi Justice Development, Peace and Caritas Initiatives (JDPCI) has once again emphasized the need for sustained collaboration among stakeholders to combat child trafficking and uphold the dignity of the human person.

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, made the call during the closeout meeting of the Act Against Child Traf-

ficking in Nigeria (AACTING) Project and the commemoration of the 2026 World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, held in Uromi, Edo State.

Fr. Arhedo described human trafficking as not only a crime against humanity but also a grave sin against God because it violates the sacred dignity bestowed on every human life.

He stressed that no child or adult should ever be treated as a commodity to be bought, sold, or exploited, noting that protecting the dignity of the human person is a shared responsibility

that requires the commitment of all stakeholders, not just one institution.

According to him, the event marked the successful completion of a three-year intervention that has significantly strengthened efforts to combat child trafficking in Edo Central Senatorial District.

He expressed appreciation to the implementing partners, ECPAT France and Luxembourg, and the donor agency, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), for the confidence reposed in Uromi JDPCI throughout the implementation of the AACTING Project, which ran from August 2023 to July 2026.

The Executive Director also commended the contributions of government institutions, law enforcement agencies, traditional and religious leaders, schools, community structures, civil society organisations, the media, parents, caregivers, and other partners for working together to strengthen the child protection system during the project period.

Speaking on the theme of the 2026 World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, "Trapped Behind the Scam," Fr. Arhedo said the theme draws attention to an emerging and rapidly growing form of human trafficking that many people fail to recognize.

Troops rescue 34 kidnap victims, arrest ISWAP informant, recover arms

ABUJA

Troops of the Nigerian Army, rescued 34 kidnap victims, apprehended suspected ISWAP informants and recovered arms, ammunition in co-ordinated operations nationwide.

This was contained in an operational report made available to newsmen on Sunday.

The report said that troops of Operation HADIN KAI rescued 31 kidnap victims from terrorists along the Buratai-Kamuya road in Biu Local Government Area of Borno.

It said the rescue followed a swift response after troops of 135 Special Forces Battalion detected ISWAP/JAS terrorists abducting civilians from four vehicles through CCTV surveillance.

According to the report,

troops immediately deployed a quick reaction force, engaged the terrorists and forced them to abandon the victims and flee with one motorcycle left behind.

"In another operation, troops of 145 Battalion conducted a

fighting patrol to the Turoh general area of Damasak in Mobbar Local Government Area.

"The terrorists reportedly fled on sighting the troops, leaving behind two motorcycles and illicit drugs recovered

during exploitation of the area.

"Also, troops of 232 Battalion Tactical apprehended a suspected ISWAP informant at Garaha Market in Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa," it said.

NDLEA intercepts China, Italy-bound cocaine in Lagos, nabs bandits' supplier in Zamfara

ABUJA

Operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have intercepted consignments of cocaine to China and Italy respectively through a logistics company in Lagos.

This was contained in a statement by the Director, Media and Advocacy, NDLEA, Mr Femi

Babafemi on Sunday in Abuja.

Babafemi said that the drugs were concealed in local mortar and the false bottom of a backpack packaged for shipment.

He said that the seizures were made by NDLEA officers of the Directorate of Operation and General Investigations (DOGI) on Thursday.

This, he said, included 250grams of cocaine factory fitted into the

base of a local mortar packed in a carton for export to China.

"Others are 500grams of the same class A drug hidden in the false bottom of a backpack being shipped to Italy," he said.

Meanwhile, NDLEA operatives in Rivers state have arrested a 38-year-old notorious drug dealer at Eagle Island Port Harcourt, following credible intelligence.

NEWS

Auchi Poly makes history, graduates first NSQ students in Nigeria

LAMAI CASSIUS

AUCHI

The Rector of Auchi Polytechnic, Dr Salusi Shehu Umar has said the Polytechnic has graduated 6,600 students from the federal government newly introduced National Skills Qualification (NSQ) initiative program.

Dr Umar who disclosed this over the weekend during the maiden graduation ceremony held at the school's Auditorium, said the Polytechnic is the first

in the country to implement the programme.

He said the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) is a federal government initiative being implemented by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

According to him, the programme's primary objective is to equip beneficiaries with practical skills and thereby boosting the employability of the country's working population both locally and internationally.

He said other nations have

been running the dual certification programs for some time, but Nigeria has just begun. He added that Auchi Polytechnic is the first institution to implement the initiative in the country.

The Rector also disclosed that the school run the program through the Centre for Innovation and Skills Acquisition

(CISA) in collaboration with the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CEDAP), saying that the training is mandatory for ND and HND students and also interested individuals amongst the general public.

While encouraging eligible young men and women to take advantage of the government laudable initiative to acquire double certificate in any of the skills of choice available in the polytechnic, the Rector noted

that at the completion of both ND and HND, the student would have completed not less than NSQ6 which is HND/BSc equivalent.

He also stated further that the program offers about sixty-one different skills which includes automobile mechanic, cosmetology, computer hardware maintenance, electrical installation, photography and cinematography, plumbing and piping, welding and fabrication, refrigerator

and air conditioner repairs, food and beverage production, leather works, traditional medicare practice, furniture making, solar system installation, paint production, fish farming practice etc.

The Rector however appealed to the Federal Ministry of Education to approve the skills Acquisition Centre to a Grade A status under the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education.

**INAUGURAL LECTURE:**

From left: Registrar, Yakubu Gowon University (UNIABUJA), Malam Alkasim Umar; Professor of Medical Law/Dean Faculty of Law, UNIABUJA, Prof. Uwakwe Abugu; Vice-Chancellor, UNIABUJA, Prof. Hakeem Fawehinmi; Bursar, UNIABUJA, Mrs. Shiva M'ovul-Kondoun; and the University Librarian, Ms Rose Lade Mommoh, during the 52nd Inaugural Lecture of the University, in Abuja.

Marwa urges use of afrobeats to combat drug abuse

ASABA

The Chairman, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), retired Brig.-Gen. Buba Marwa says Afrobeats can drive campaigns against drug abuse and human trafficking.

Marwa said this on Saturday while speaking as Chief Guest of Honour at the maiden Afrobeats Cultural Carnival organised by the Gateway to Better Life Foundation in Asaba, Delta.

The NDLEA boss was represented at the event by the Delta Commander of the agency, Halilu Hamidu.

Marwa described the initiative as an innovative platform combining entertainment, African cultural heritage and public enlightenment to educate young people, discourage substance abuse and promote responsible citizenship across

communities.

According to him, drug abuse remains a major threat destroying families, schools and communities, stressing that effective responses must combine law enforcement with education, rehabilitation, compassion and cultural engagement.

Marwa said Afrobeats, as a globally recognised music genre embraced by young people, possessed enormous potential to influence positive behaviour and discourage drug abuse, trafficking and other social vices.

"Afrobeats is more than music. It is the heartbeat of a generation.

"When we use that same powerful voice to warn against the dangers of drug abuse and human trafficking, we are not just entertaining; we are educating and protecting," he said.

REDAN seeks good standing certificate for estate developers

ABUJA

The Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN) has proposed a Certificate of Professional Good Standing for real estate developers to strengthen industry regulation.

The President of REDAN, Oba Akintoye Adeoye, made the proposal during the National Housing Data Programme Workshop organised by the Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in Abuja.

A copy of the paper presented by Adeoye, the traditional ruler of Okeigbo community in Ondo state, was obtained by the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Sunday.

Adeoye said the certificate should become a prerequisite for the issuance and periodic

renewal of developers' licences under the emerging statutory or policy framework.

He said the proposal would require appropriate legal and regulatory architecture with final decisions resting with the Federal Executive Council and the National Assembly.

Adeoye said the certificate should represent more than payment of membership dues.

"Membership alone is not proof of compliance with regulatory standards.

"The proposed certificate can confirm verified corporate information and beneficial ownership information where required.

"It can also verify responsible principal officers and compliance with membership standards," he said.

Adeoye said the certificate would cover completed continuing professional develop-

Lagos CP probes viral video of police officers assaulting gold seller

LAGOS

The Police Command in Lagos State has begun an investigation into allegations of assault by some of its officers following the circulation of a viral video on social media.

An X user, identified by the handle @ChuksEricE, shared a video in which a man alleged that he was assaulted by police officers in the Festac area of

Lagos.

In the video, the victim, a gold seller, claimed he was on his way to deliver a necklace when he was stopped and searched by the officers.

According to him, although nothing incriminating was found during the search, the officers allegedly discovered a scale he uses to weigh gold and accused him of using it to measure cannabis.

The man alleged that the

officers ordered him to accompany them to the police station, but he refused, insisting that he had committed no offence.

He further claimed that the officers, who were allegedly not properly dressed in police uniforms and arrived in an unregistered bus, attempted to force him into the vehicle.

According to the victim, one of the officers struck him on the head with a gun before he was allegedly beaten.

Reacting to the viral video, the command said in a state-

ment posted on its X handle, @LagosPoliceNG, on Saturday that it had commenced an investigation into the incident after reviewing the footage.

The command said the officers involved had been identified as personnel attached to Area E Command.

It added that the state Commissioner of Police, Mr Fatai Tijani, had directed the Area Commander to immediately produce the officers at the command Headquarters for further investigation and appropriate disciplinary ac-

Electricity subsidy benefits wealthier households than low-income communities- Expert

ABUJA

Mr Ewah Eleri, the Executive Director of International Centre for Energy, Environment and Development (ICEED), says the current electricity subsidy regime benefits wealthier households than low-income communities.

Mr Eleri said this during an interview with newsmen on Thursday in Abuja.

He said Federal Government spent more than 10 billion dollars on electricity sub-

sidies over the past year yet the benefits had largely gone to high-income households.

Eleri explained that 10 per cent of households received more than half of the government's electricity subsidy, estimated at about N3trillion, while 40 per cent benefited marginally.

"Subsidies are intended to support vulnerable communities and make electricity affordable, but the current framework largely benefits those who consume the most electricity," he said.

The expert said that existing subsidy structure discouraged investment in renewable energies conventional electricity sources, gas-fired generation, artificially cheaper than cleaner alternatives such as solar power.

"As a result, renewable energy becomes less competitive, limiting the diversification of Nigeria's energy mix, making it more difficult to meet climate change commitments," he said.

He urged that similar reforms in the electricity sector

could deliver comparable environmental and economic benefits while improving fairness in electricity pricing.

"We need to remove harmful subsidies that ultimately hurt the poor, constrain electricity expansion and discourage investment in renewable energy.

"Whichever way you look at it the current system leaves everyone worse off," he said.

On the role of regulators, Eleri highlighted the opportunities created by the Electricity Act, which empowered state governments to regulate electricity supply within their jurisdictions.

Africa is rich, doesn't need aid – Jimoh Ibrahim

ABUJA

Senator Jimoh Ibrahim, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN, says Africa is a rich continent that does not require aid from other continents to develop.

Jimoh spoke at a reception in honour of Nigeria's Ahunna Eziakonwa who was appointed a Senior Adviser on Africa to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Nigerian diplomat criti-

cised the perceptions of Africa as a beggarly continent for aid.

"Africa consists of 25 per cent of the world population. The future of the world is in Africa. That's something to talk about," Jimoh said.

"I will not be part of the people that are talking about aid to Africa.

"Africa is made up of sovereign nations; we are independent, and we cannot afford to trade our sovereignty for aid."

According to him, what Afri-

ca needs is trade, collaboration, cooperation and partnership.

"I must thank President Donald Trump for initiating trade and investment as replacements for aid.

"Fantastic programme, so that we can actually capture the essence of our sovereignty and independence.

"I won't be here to plead for any aid to any African country. We don't need it. We need collaboration and cooperation and partnership towards human

and material development."

Africa's participation in the U.S. government's new "Trade over Aid" programme remains noticeably low.

Of the nearly four dozen signatories, only six African nations have joined the scheme, with Nigeria taking a prominent but measured role.

Jimoh also expressed concerns over Africa's absence on the permanent seats of the UN Security Council.

He noted that Africa was

not on the table when nations were negotiating the power make-up of the UN in 1945 as African countries were still being colonised.

"We agreed but over the past 60 years, Nigeria has been a member of the United Nations, we have spent 60 years here, but we haven't got this permanent seat.

"Africa doesn't have a per-

manent seat and Africa is about 25 per cent of the entire world population.

"If you talk about insecurity, maybe because Africa is not on the permanent seat of the United Nations."

Jimoh underscored the importance of Eziakonwa to lend her voice to a legitimate permanent seat or seats for Africa in the UN Security Council.



CONDOLENCE VISIT:

Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri (M), with Mrs Miriam Isoun (R), Widow of the former Minister of Science and Technology, Late Prof Turner Isoun, and their son, Mr Diseye Isoun, during the governor's condolence visit to the family in Abuja.

EBSIEC set to deliver free, credible Local Govt polls in Ebonyi

MAXWELL OKECHUKWU

ABAKALIKI

The Ebonyi State Independent Electoral Commission (EBSIEC) has declared its readiness to deliver a free, fair, transparent, and peaceful election on August 22nd 2026

This assurance was given by the commission during a stakeholders' engagement meeting in Abakaliki the Ebonyi State capital, which brought together represent-

atives of political parties under the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), security agencies, the National Orientation Agency (NOA), civil society organisations, traditional institutions, media, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, and the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD).

Speaking to participants, The Chairman EBSIEC, Hon. Enyi Patrick Chibuike, assured that all necessary operational and administrative preparations had been concluded.

He cautioned against electoral violence, including ballot box snatching, voter intimidation, and other illegal acts, emphasising that violators would be promptly arrested and prosecuted.

"We want Ebonyi people to vote freely and without fear. Whoever the people elect will be declared the winner. We are open to constructive observations from stakeholders because no institution is above improvement, but we are determined to conduct an election that will stand as a model for other

states," Chibuike declared.

The EBSIEC boss commended Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for supporting the commission to execute its mandate independently and effectively.

Providing details on operational preparedness, the Head of Information, Voter Education and Publicity, Hon. Collins Agbo, noted that the commission strictly complied with the law by publishing the official election notice 360 days before the poll.

High outdoor campaign billboard, poster fees, undemocratic, unconstitutional – Stakeholders

ENUGU

Some stakeholders in Enugu State have decried the high fees imposed by some governments for outdoor campaign posters and billboards ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The stakeholders, who spoke in separate interviews with newsmen on Saturday in Enugu, described the fees as "executive rascality" and an attempt to stifle opposition parties as well as democratic principles.

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Administration on Fri-

day fixed N750 million as permit fee for presidential campaign billboards and posters in Abuja, while Enugu State Government set its fee at N150 million.

In Abia, the government fixed permit fees at N200 million for presidential candidates, N150 million for governorship candidates, N100 million for senatorial candidates, N50 million for House of Representatives candidates and N20 million for House of Assembly candidates.

Similarly, the Anambra State Government fixed N50

million for presidential candidates seeking outdoor campaign permits, while senatorial candidates are expected to pay N20 million.

Reacting to the development, a human rights lawyer, Mr Awforkansi Nnadiume, described the policy as "political hostility" capable of undermining the country's democratic process.

According to him, the fees are inconsistent with the spirit of the Electoral Act, which prescribes spending limits for election campaigns.

"When governments impose

such huge amounts for campaign posters and billboards, they are effectively denying opposition parties the opportunity to communicate their manifestoes to the electorate.

"This amounts to stifling freedom of expression and free speech guaranteed under Chapter Four of the Nigerian Constitution.

"It is one of the strategies capable of pushing Nigeria towards a one-party state because only those in power will dominate public spaces with campaign materials," he said.

Ebonyi Govt committed to welfare of persons with disabilities, says Chief of Staff

MAXWELL OKECHUKWU

ABAKALIKI

The Chief of Staff to Ebonyi State Government, Prof. Emmanuel Echiegu, has assured Persons With Disabilities, PWDs, in the state of improved welfare under the administration of Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru.

Prof. Echiegu gave the assurance in his office at the New Government House, Centenary City, Abakaliki while addressing journalists following a peaceful protest by members of the Joint National Association of people with Disabilities (JONAPWD) Ebonyi State.

Prof. Echiegu Reacting to questions on the Disability Bill, said, "Gov. Nwifuru had approved the assent to the bill and the process would be completed soon"

He further disclosed that the Commissioner for Health Dr. Moses Ekuma, before their peaceful protest informed him that over 300 persons with

disabilities have been enrolled in the Ebonyi State Health Insurance Agency for free medical services.

"As government is working to address the concerns raised by the group, including accommodation and welfare. I will meet with the leadership of the PWDs, the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Moses Ekuma, and the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Barrister Mrs Cecilia Nwankpuma, to find lasting solutions and ensure their welfare receives adequate attention,"

He added, "earlier Leonard Osi, reporter with Radio Nigeria said the visit was to seek clarification on the PWDs' peaceful protest. The protesters are demanding monthly subventions, welfare support, assent to the disability bill, and reversal of vacation order by the ministries of Health and Women Affairs and Social Development directing them to vacate their office without alternative accommodation" Chief Echiegu stated.

Rep facilitates fertiliser support for farmers in Lagos

IKORODU

No fewer than 500 farmers in Ikorodu Federal Constituency in Lagos State have received free 50kg bags of fertiliser under a Federal Government agricultural intervention programme.

The distribution was held on Saturday at the iCare Foundation office in Ikorodu under the National Agricultural Development Fund (NADF).

The programme forms part of the Federal Government's Renewed Hope agricultural support initiative aimed at boosting food production and supporting smallholder farmers. Beneficiaries were drawn from the six Local Government and Local Council Development Areas within Ikorodu Federal Constituency.

Speaking at the event, Director-General of Jimi Benson's iCare Foundation, Mr Deen Sanwoola, said the intervention demonstrated efforts to ensure federal programmes reached grassroots communities.

Sanwoola, who represented the lawmaker, Mr Babajimi Benson, described agriculture as a critical sector for national development and food security.

"This fertiliser distribution is more than an empowerment programme; it is an investment in our farmers, our food security and our collective future," he said.

According to him, supporting farmers would help strengthen food security, stimulate economic activities and improve livelihoods across communities.

NEWS**JUDICIARY**

\$4.4bn FX weekly turnover exposes vulnerability of Nigeria's Foreign Exchange Market, says Oye ● *warns against dollarisation of the nation's economy*

LAGOS

The Chairman of the Alliance for Economic Research and Ethics (AERE), Dele Oye, has said that the record \$4.375 billion recorded in Nigeria's foreign exchange market within a single week has exposed the vulnerability of the country's currency market and highlighted the need for better transpar-

ency and deeper structural reforms.

Oye, in a statement titled, "What a Record FX Week Really Reveals About Nigeria's Market," argued that the surge in turnover should not be mistaken for evidence of a stronger and more resilient foreign exchange market.

Oye explained that although the development demonstrated the market's capacity to process

a high volume of transactions, it did not necessarily indicate stronger liquidity, increased reserves or broader access to foreign exchange.

He said, "Nigeria's foreign-exchange market recorded total spot and derivatives turnover of \$4.375 billion in the week ended

July 24, 2026, the first week-ly reading above \$4 billion this year. The figure was 83.38%

higher than the \$2.386 billion reported in the preceding week, according to the FMDQ data reported by Nairametrics.

"The headline deserves attention. Yet it should not be read too quickly as proof that Nigeria's FX market has become deep, stable, or broadly accessible. A market can generate unusually high turnover because it is liquid and well diversified; it can also gen-

erate it because a few large participants suddenly need to buy, sell, settle, or hedge dollars. Available evidence points to the need for caution before choosing between those interpretations."

According to him, unusually high turnover could reflect a temporary increase in activity triggered by a few large transactions rather than sustained improvements in market fundamentals.

**COURTESY VISIT:**

Head of Lagos Operations, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Mrs Ifeyinwa Omowole (L) and the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, Fatai Tijani during Omowole's courtesy visit to the Commissioner in Lagos on Saturday.

Military pressure forces IPOB/ESN fighters to surrender arms in South-East

ABUJA

Sustained military operations have forced some members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its armed wing, the Eastern Security Network (ESN), to begin surrendering their weapons in the South-East, military authorities say.

This is contained in a military operational report made available to newsmen on Sunday.

The report said the sustained logistics strangulation and offensive operations by Operation UDO KA (OPUK)

in Ohaji-Egbema and Orsimumghu general areas had compelled some fighters to capitulate and surrender their arms.

It said the development resulted in the recovery of three rifles, six magazines, 99 rounds of ammunition, four locally made guns and one improvised explosive device (IED).

It said a militant leader identified as "Comedy" voluntarily disclosed to the Imo State Amnesty Committee the location where his weapons had been buried following sustained operational pressure mounted by troops of the 34 Artillery Brigade.

According to the report, a recovery team led by the committee exhumed and handed over the cache to the brigade.

The recovered items included one AK-47 rifle, two AK-47 magazines, 54 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition and four locally made guns.

The report said military authorities assessed that the development would encourage other militant groups to voluntarily surrender their illegal arms.

It added that other IPOB/ESN elements were already seeking safe channels to hand over their weapons, even as

troops continued to maintain operational pressure and monitor their movements.

The report further disclosed that troops of Sector 5, Operation UDO KA, also carried out a follow-up operation after a viral video by the Anambra Vigilante Group showed the recovery of two General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs).

The operation led to the recovery of two GPMGs, 45 rounds of 7.62mm x 51 ammunition and one improvised explosive device.

According to the report, all recovered weapons and ammunition are in military custody for further action, while operations continue across the South-East.

Lawyers push for awareness of deed poll 6 years after Supreme Court judgment

LAGOS

Some Nigerian lawyers on Sunday called for public sensitisation on the legal requirement of a deed poll for a change of name, six years after a judicial pronouncement on the subject.

The lawyers, who spoke in separate interviews with our correspondent said that even though the procedure for a change of name now included a deed poll and publication in the official gazette, many individu-

als and entities appeared to be ignorant of the procedure.

A deed poll is a formal legal document prepared by a lawyer for a single person, binding them to a specific action. It is most commonly used to officially change a person's name.

It serves as a personal declaration rather than an agreement between multiple parties.

Until the Supreme Court's 2020 decision in the case of PDP v. Biobarakuma Degi-Eremienyo & Others, persons who wished to change their

names merely deposed to an affidavit for name correction, confirmation, or rearrangement and published a notice to that effect in a newspaper.

However, in the above-mentioned case, the apex court held that procedure to be invalid.

According to the court, for a person to validly change their name for the purpose of updating official records, they must execute a deed poll and then proceed to the Nigeria Civil Registry or the National Population Commission to have the new name

published in the official gazette.

Reacting to the development, a Lagos-based social critic, Mr Spurgeon Ataene, underscored the need for public enlightenment on the procedure, noting that it had added a new dimension to the otherwise simple process of changing a name.

He noted that the court should have considered the peculiar circumstances in Nigeria before deciding that, unless a name change was effected through a gazetted deed poll, it remained invalid.

Lawyers say ban on 'Barrister' title good move

LAGOS

Some Lagos-based lawyers have described the recent ban by the Supreme Court, on the use of 'Barrister' as prefix in legal documents, as a welcomed development in line with legal rules.

The word Barrister often used as prefix by Nigerian lawyers is unprofessional and not in conformity with the standard of legal ethics.

Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, had by a circular dated July 13, signed by the Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court, Mr Kabir Akanbi, directed lawyers and court officials to stop using the title "Barrister" as a prefix to their names in all official engagements at the Supreme Court.

The circular addressed to litigation staff, legal practitioners, court registrars and lawyers, said the order took immediate effect and formed part of efforts to uphold professional standards within the apex court.

Reacting to the directive, the immediate past Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Ota branch, Mr Wale Adegoke said that by the provisions of section 24 of the Legal Practitioners Act 2004, every person called to the Bar in Ni-

geria, is a "barrister and solicitor" of the Supreme Court.

He, however, noted that this title has become a ground for professional discipline following unethical usage of the prefix.

"For decades, it was normal to see the prefix on letterheads and signposts; The position however, changed with the Supreme Court judicial pronouncement in the case of Nigerian Bar Association vs Ofomata (2017) 5 NWLR (PT. 1557) 128.

"In that case, the court held that prefixing "barrister" is unprofessional and improper for lawyers.

"The honourable court in its ratio stated that the use of 'Barrister' as a title is unknown to our legal tradition and smacks of self-aggrandizement," he said

Adegoke noted that the supreme court rooted the prohibition in the common law tradition as well as NBA regulations, and treated compliance as a requirement of professional ethics.

"The apex court decision in Ofomata, was followed by the disciplinary case of LPDC vs Chief Ladi Rotimi-williams (2019) LPDC/2019 where the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee reprimanded a senior lawyer for persistently using the title "Barrister" as prefix.

Rainy season: Lagos residents count cost of staying afloat

LAGOS

Persistent rainfall across Lagos is forcing residents to change daily routines as they battle flooding, traffic, rising transport costs and threats to property.

From commuters leaving home before dawn to traders protecting their goods, residents are finding different ways to cope with the prolonged persistent rains.

Umbrellas, raincoats, waterproof sheets and weather forecast gadgets have become essential tools for many residents.

The experiences align with the Nigerian Meteorological Agency's 2026 Seasonal Climate Prediction, which projects a longer-than-normal rainy season and delayed cessation of rainfall in Lagos.

For Mrs Shola Opeyemi, an Aguda resident, coping with the rains means leaving home much earlier to avoid being trapped in traffic.

She said carrying a backpack had become essential because it contains her rain boots and raincoat for an unexpected downpour.

Opeyemi added that getting caught in the rain often meant

spending almost twice her daily transport budget because fares usually increased.

"Leave home early to avoid getting stuck in traffic. I always carry a backpack containing my rain boots and raincoat because you can never predict the weather.

"Whenever I am caught in the rain, I spend almost double my transport budget for the day because fares usually increase," she said.

Mrs Cecilia Uwadi, who lives in Ogba, has also adjusted her routine, saying surviving the rainy season requires careful planning and personal sacrifice.

She said she leaves home by 4:00 a.m., uses Google Maps after work or remains in the office until 9:00 p.m. to avoid a gridlock.

Uwadi lamented that prolonged traffic during rainfall increased her fuel consumption and reduced the number of days a full tank could serve her.

"A full tank lasts me about 10 days during normal weather, but when it rains continuously, it doesn't even last up to seven days because of traffic," she said.

FOREIGN

NEWS

Trump cancels Iran strikes subject to deal being made 'rapidly'

Donald Trump sitting at a US cabinet meeting at Camp David on 31 July, wearing a dark blue suit, a lighter blue tie with black horizontal stripes, a white shirt and a badge of the US flag pinned to his jacket. Reuters

Trump at a cabinet meeting at Camp David on Friday

Donald Trump says he has cancelled strikes against Iran, provided a deal is struck "rapidly" with the country.

In a post on Truth Social, the US president said he had been asked by Iran and other countries in the Middle East to "hold off" on any attack as the "perimeters" of a deal had been agreed.

Trump's comments came after reports that the US and Israel may have been planning new, intense strikes on Iran.

It is not the first time that Trump has issued apocalyptic warnings, only to subsequently insist that diplomacy was being given a chance.

Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency denied that Teh-

ran had asked the US to hold off on further military action, saying Trump's claims were "nothing but a new lie".

Iran's acting Defence Minister Majid Ibn al-Reza said Tehran viewed every threat from its adversaries as "real and credible" even if it formed part of psychological warfare.

"We will neither be caught off guard nor remain passive," he added.

The raised tones followed reports in the US media that the US and Israel were planning what would be one of the harshest bombing campaigns to date against energy infrastructure targets in Iran.

The plan came up during Trump's cabinet meeting on Friday, sources told CBS News, the BBC's News partner in the US.

The US government had also urged Americans across the Middle East to be alert and ready to leave "should there be escalation" in the region.

In his post on Saturday, Trump said the US was "locked

and loaded and ready to go against the Islamic Republic of Iran, at levels of Military Terror, Strength, and Power not seen since World War II".

He said cancelling the attack would be "for the future benefit of the world and, likewise, the survival of a successful and prosperous Iran".

Back on 7 April, the US president warned that "a whole civilisation will die tonight" if Iran refused to engage in peace talks. He threatened to destroy civilian infrastructure and power plants, a move that many said would be a war crime.

That threat did result in historic face-to-face talks in Pakistan, led by Vice President JD Vance.

For supporters of the president, it was vindication. Bell-cose threats - often referred to as the "Madman Theory" - resulted in talks with the Iranians.

The issue with that view, however, is that those talks ended without a deal. There were simply too many competing red lines that

could not be reconciled, even with the threat of civilisation erasure.

Location of large (1,000 MW and over) power plants in Iran.

During the Friday meeting, CBS News reported Trump was heard saying while reporters were still in the room: "We'll be hitting them [Iranians] very hard. At some point, they're going to say, 'We just can't take it anymore.'"

A day later, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman had a call with Trump, aimed at reducing regional tensions, the kingdom's official SPA press agency reported.

"His Royal Highness emphasised the necessity of prioritising dialogue to reduce tensions and the importance of exerting all possible efforts to achieve a truce that paves the way for diplomatic solutions."

The US's Gulf Allies hold concerns that, while the American mainland is out of reach of Iranian missiles, countries like Bahrain, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates are not - with their critical infrastructure such as water desalination plans being prime targets.

Five dead, 41 missing, after Indonesia ferry caught fire

Five people have been found dead and 41 are missing after an Indonesian ferry carrying at least 250 people caught fire while at sea, officials say.

The captain of the ship reported the fire - off Madura island - as the vessel sailed from the country's second-largest city, Surabaya in East Java, to Makassar in South Sulawesi, according to Basarnas, the National Search and Rescue Agency.

Footage played by local Indonesian news outlet iNews shows large numbers of people in life jackets on what appears to be a lifeboat.

Other clips show people climbing down from the ferry that has flames and plumes of smoke coming from the top of

the vessel.

Basarnas posted a video to its TikTok, with a statement saying at 08:24 (02:24 GMT) the Surabaya Search and Rescue office received information that passenger ship KMP Mutiara Sentosa 2 was on fire.

"Based on information from the shipping company, the fire occurred at around 06:00-07:00 (00:00-01:00 GMT)."

Later, Basarnas said it got confirmation the ferry "was almost entirely engulfed in flames" as "passengers held on in the ship's bridge and bow while awaiting rescue".

In some of the footage, can be seen jumping into the sea, with crowds of people in life jackets gathering and lifebuoys being thrown to some before they are carried into a rescue ship.

Tourist plane crashes in Peru, killing 13

A small plane carrying tourists has crashed in Peru, killing all 13 people on board, according to local news reports and Peruvian officials.

The aircraft, a Cessna Caravan C-208, had been flying over Nazca Lines archaeological site when it went down on Saturday. Eleven passengers and two pilots were on board.

The passengers included two German, two Spanish and seven Italian tourists, Peru's state news agency reported. The cause of the crash is not yet clear.

The Nazca Lines is a popular tourist attraction and Unesco World Heritage site in southern Peru that features ancient drawings of animals in desert sand. Tourists often fly in small planes to see the extent of the drawings.

"Given the severity of the accident, there are no survivors. We have recovered four bodies so far," Police Major Jorge Andrade said, according to AFP.

The crash happened around 13:00 local time (19:00 BST) in the Pueblo Viejo region af-

ter the plane departed from an airport in Pisco, Peru.

Video from Reuters news agency shows firefighters spraying water at the scene as smoke rises from the wreckage.

In a statement in Spanish posted online by the Municipalidad Provincial de Nasca, officials expressed "deep sorrow" for the accident and extended "heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased".

The statement said the plane belonged to local Peruvian airline Aerodiana.

In a statement, the airline said it would "assess its flight schedule in accordance with the directives of the relevant authorities", according to Reuters.

The BBC has contacted the airline for comment.

This isn't the first plane to crash over the famed site in the past few decades.

In 2022, another small tourist plane crashed during a flight over the Nazca Lines site, killing seven on board.

And in 2010, a tourist plane went down over the site, killing six people on board.



MIGRANTS BY SEA:

A migrant looks at the sneakers on the water following mass crossings of migrants on foot and by sea from Morocco into Spanish territory.

How Spain's migrant crisis created a political storm - whipped up by social media

Most of the tens of thousands of migrants who swam into the Spanish exclave of Ceuta on Thursday have now returned to Morocco, escorted to the border by Spanish soldiers and police.

But the extraordinary surge of arrivals has left at least 72 people dead, their bodies pulled from the sea where they floated alongside abandoned rubber rings and flippers.

This week's events have also shaken Europe politically, once again exposing divisions over the sensitive issue of migration.

And they've left lingering questions about what sparked the sudden influx: whether social media posts promising an easy path to Europe just went vi-

ral or this was something more deliberate, even organised.

The politics

Whatever the cause, Spain's socialist prime minister is angry with the response.

Pedro Sanchez has hit out at some in the EU for "attacking" Spain in this crisis, playing politics instead of showing support.

He meant Italy, above all.

Fratelli d'Italia, the hard-right party of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, had been quick to post images of migrants racing through the streets of Ceuta.

"This is the Sanchez model the Italian left wing likes so much," the caption crowed.

Meloni then announced she was suspending Italy's Schen-

gen agreement with Spain that allows for the free movement of people, citing a security threat.

Madrid is fuming.

The way Spain sees it, the crisis has been contained and Ceuta is not in the Schengen zone so Moroccan migrants were never going to head for mainland Europe, unchecked.

Meloni knows that.

But she faces elections next year with her coalition losing ground to a new and virulently anti-immigrant party. This was a chance to sound tough herself and claw back votes and she leaped on it.

Soft touch Spain?

Italy is not the only country to see Spain as soft on migration, though.

Meloni's call for an urgent

meeting of interior ministers to be held on Tuesday was signed by almost two dozen EU heads of state, calling for the elimination of all policies that could be "pull factors" to Europe.

Above all, they mean Spain's controversial move to allow hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants apply for residence and work permits and "regularise" their status.

The government's pragmatic: Spain is ageing and needs workers.

But those who flocked to the beaches of Ceuta this week were not heading to sign up for a campaign that's already closed.

Sanchez himself points instead to a recent ruling by

Spain's Supreme Court: it said those who enter by sea cannot be pushed back immediately.

The prime minister argues that was misrepresented by smugglers to promise an easy path to Europe.

The crowd heading for Ceuta didn't need to pay smugglers, though, because most were Moroccan and the route is well known.

The message was actually spread online.

Migrants have shown social media posts to reporters with people shouting that "Spain is Open" and jumping into the sea.

Multiple accounts we've checked ourselves show young people in wetsuits and flippers, or filming themselves already swimming, mixed with pictures from inside Ceuta itself.

Some have only been active for weeks. Several have tens of thousands of likes.

All their promises were false.

The crowds who made it to kiss the shore in Ceuta with joy were met with nothing. Without food or shelter, and with no way on to continental Europe, most quickly turned back.

So what was it all about?

So have migrants been "weaponised" as happened a few years back in Belarus, for example?

If so, who did it?

For now we only see those enjoying the results.

The global right wing are "hyperventilating with happiness", as journalist Andrea Rizzi wrote in Spain's El Pais newspaper.

NEWS**FOREIGN**

Three killed after bomb detonated at Moscow restaurant, state media say

At least three people have been killed and 21 injured after a homemade explosive device was detonated at an Italian restaurant in Moscow, Russian state media reports, quoting security officials.

The blast happened at about 20:00 local time (17:00 GMT) on Kudrinskaya square near the city centre.

The National Anti-Terrorist Committee said a woman carrying the explosives tried to enter the restaurant but was stopped by a security guard.

The device detonated, killing the woman, the guard and a visitor to the Balzi Rossi restaurant, which had been holding a private function.

Authorities have not said who they believe was the target, but many Muscovites will suspect a link to the war in Ukraine.

The mayor of Moscow, Sergei Sobyanin, said the blast was "a cruel act of terror which took human lives".

He gave no other details, other than to say law-enforcement agencies were working to establish what had happened.

In recent years, several senior Russian military figures have been assassinated in and around the Russian capital.

Moscow has blamed Kyiv for those attacks.

Initial reports said the blast happened in the establishment's kitchen but the restaurant later issued a statement saying "there was a problem outside".

The restaurant is located in one of Moscow's famous Stalin-era skyscrapers, with roads around the square briefly closed.

Dozens of cyclists had been gathering nearby for an evening ride through the city but the event was cancelled.

Video released by Russia's RIA news agency showed heavily armed law enforcement officers at the scene, which had been closed off to members of the public.

The Balzi Rossi restaurant apologised on social media for its initial post after the explosion, saying it had been removed "as it was highly inappropriate given the circumstances".

State media reported that it had originally posted on Instagram that everything was safe on the premises.

The restaurant said it had taken measures to ensure it would not happen again, and said staff were focused on assisting guests and emergency services at the time.

Guinea opts out of planned ECOWAS single currency, the eco

Guinea says it's opting out of the ECOWAS single currency.

The 12 member West African economic bloc is set to launch the monetary union and eco currency in July 2027.

Last month ECOWAS said it was leaning towards a phased rollout, with countries meeting convergence criteria such as inflation, debt, and monetary stability joining first.

Guinea is the first member state to announce it will retain its national currency, the Guinean franc.

Analysts say the decision is likely due to fears that joining

the monetary union before developing sufficient production capacity could stifle its economy.

The country's major trade partners also lie outside West Africa, with 80 percent of its exports going to Asia. By tying its currency to neighbouring states, Conakry risks losing certain levers of influence, economist Mohamed Camara told RFI.

The bloc is set to meet again in December to resolve outstanding issues, particularly around the future central bank, decision-making rules, and which countries will adopt the eco first.

Authorities in Tigray accuse Addis Ababa of 'launching open war'

Authorities in Ethiopia's Tigray region accused the federal government of launching a military offensive on Saturday, reigniting fears of a return to war.

In a statement, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) said federal forces used heavy artillery against their positions in Western Tigray, near the border with Sudan.

After months of using blockades, sieges, drone strikes and proxy forces against Tigray, the TPLF said, the government had now launched "open war."

Federal authorities haven't commented on the allegations.

Tensions between Tigray and Addis Ababa have been worsening since the 2022 Pretoria Agreement that ended a bloody two-year war between the two sides.

The TPLF called on the international community to intervene, warning of wider consequences if the war expands.

It also urged Tigray residents, security forces, civil society groups, and religious institutions to prepare for what it described as a struggle for "national survival."

**EBOLA VIRUS:**

Uganda said previous outbreaks have taught the authorities how to respond efficiently to Ebola

Why Uganda seems to be winning the battle against Ebola as virus spreads in DR Congo

The Ebola outbreak in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo has become the second-worst on record, with the official death toll passing a grim milestone of 1,500.

Experts believe the true number of fatalities during this outbreak, which was declared in May, is much higher. And in another alarming update, authorities in DR Congo confirmed on Thursday that the virus was spreading much faster than in previous outbreaks.

Next door in Uganda, a country that also reported infections in May, the picture is entirely different.

The country's health minister described a "moment of joy" as the last Ebola patient was released from hospital two weeks ago.

Uganda only ever recorded 20 cases and two deaths from the virus.

According to Dr Kasonde

Mwinda, the World Health Organization's Uganda chief, the relatively low number of casualties was not "by luck or chance".

"It's because people invested in preparedness," she told the BBC.

This outbreak is the 17th to have emerged in DR Congo since Ebola was discovered 50 years ago. By comparison Uganda has had nine since 2000, with officials there saying lessons learnt from past tragedies have allowed them to stop the disease ripping through the country on various occasions.

One example is the case of a 12-year-old girl who arrived at a hospital in the central district of Luwero in 2011.

Her symptoms sparked caution: she was isolated, medics wore personal protective equipment when treating her and when she died three hours later her body was carefully

sealed in a coffin. These precautions were able to halt the spread of what a blood sample later confirmed to be Ebola.

"We know Ebola. It's been here a few times, we know how to deal with it," government spokesperson Alan Kasujja told the BBC's Newsday programme.

Uganda's first known case this time was a man from DR Congo who crossed the border for treatment.

Once health authorities confirmed multiple cases had been imported from DR Congo, they activated a specialist Ebola treatment centre at Mulago hospital, in the capital city, Kampala.

The facility, which was used during an outbreak of Ebola last year, held leftover medical supplies and had an "emergency medical team" on standby, Dr David Kaggwa, head of the facility, said.

"It was a matter of sorting

and ordering a few more supplies, and then actually in one day we were ready to receive the patients. So, it is easy, it's not that we're starting from scratch," he said.

"They said it isn't real: Ebola rumours fuel attacks on health workers

Out of the 20 people who tested positive in Uganda, 15 came from DR Congo.

The first two cases, it is thought, might not have known what condition they had. But after Uganda and DR Congo jointly declared the Ebola outbreak on 15 May, people with symptoms - which include headaches, fever and vomiting - "came direct to the treatment unit," Dr Kaggwa said.

He suspects that because these patients did not pass through general hospitals, and come into contact with those patients and medics, there was little opportunity for community transmission.

Young guns for hire - the teenage hitmen recruited to kill across Europe

In a Stockholm suburb a man dressed in black appeared out of the winter night. Carrying a handgun, he approached 20-year-old Murad Abdelkader, a student on his way back from a shift at McDonald's.

The gunman opened fire, shooting again and again as he approached his target. He fired the last shot into his victim's head as he lay helpless on the ground.

The killer was 18-year-old Atilla Azimov. On that February night last year, he had killed the wrong man.

He had done it for money - hired by the Foxtrot Network, an organised crime group with links to the Iranian regime which has become notorious

for its violence-as-a-service (VaaS) tactics.

Since 2022, the Foxtrot Network is thought to have been responsible for about 35 murders as well as a number of attacks and attempted attacks on Israeli targets in Europe including two involving explosives and hand grenades.

The gang recruits teenagers to carry out the attacks for cash, but it almost never has to pay out as they often get caught.

Like Johannes Natland, a Norwegian teenager who was convicted of conspiracy to murder by a jury at the Old Bailey in London on Wednesday for a planned killing in West Yorkshire.

According to Operational Taskforce (OTF) GRIMM, the

Europol group set up to tackle the problem, the teenage hitmen are recruited on social media, and are given their instructions in a "gamified" way, imitating how computer games work.

Andy Kraag, the head of Europol's European Serious and Organised Crime Centre, calls it the "calculated outsourcing of murder" to vulnerable young people.

OTF GRIMM currently involves 11 countries affected by the VaaS phenomenon - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

The leader of the Foxtrot Network, Rawa Majid, has fled Sweden and his later operating base in Turkey, and is now based in the Iranian capital Tehran. Police believe some of

the VaaS attacks have been carried out for the Iranian regime, including a hand grenade attack on the Israeli embassy in Copenhagen, though other attacks are part of Foxtrot's drugs turf wars.

Diamant Salihu, an investigative journalist for the Swedish broadcaster SVT, has been researching Foxtrot and its Iranian links for three years.

"The regime is ordering the leader of the Foxtrot Network to instigate his network to commit attacks against the Iranian regime's enemies," he said.

"It can be dissidents, journalists that are in the opposition against the regime, and it can also be Israeli targets."

The links to the Iranian regime started after October 2023 when Majid fled to Tehran, Salihu said.

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FP 4X2	73,000	78,475	80,700	86,753	4 X 2	45,260	48,655	34,400	36,980	
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ITTF: Karou hails Accra youth championships, confirms bigger and brighter future

The Vice President, Technical, ITTF Africa, Germain Karou, says the 2026 Africa Youth Championships in Accra has shown that African table tennis talent is not limited to Egypt and Nigeria.

This is contained in a statement by the federation on Sunday in Lagos,

Karou said this on the sidelines of the tournament, held at the Borteyman Sports Complex in Accra.

He said the quality of play at the championships was among the best he had seen, describing the matches as fiercely contested and the standard, remarkably high.

According to him, for many

years, Egypt and Nigeria have dominated African table tennis, with their players regularly topping the podium at continental events.

He said the emergence of young winners from other countries at the Accra championships showed that success in the sport was achievable by any nation willing to invest in its youth.

"Member federations can see from the results that success is not limited to Egypt and Nigeria.

"With hard work and investment in their youngest players, they too can achieve greatness," Karou said.

The vice president said some technical issues arose during the competition, but stressed that they were organisational and not related to the standard of play on court.

"These challenges were quickly resolved, and actions are being taken to ensure they don't repeat," he said.

Karou advised African federations to prioritise age verification for young players, to ensure athletes compete in their correct categories.

He also called for the training of technical staff, to help promising players transition smoothly from youth, to senior levels without losing momentum.

He further emphasised the importance of regular participation in continental competitions, describing the annual championships as a focal point and source of motivation for young players.

"It prepares players physically, technically, and psychologically, and it inspires them to aim higher," he said.



ACCRA YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Nigeria Sends 12 Coaches to FIVB Level I Coaching Certification in Ghana

KEHINDE OSAGIEDÉ

The Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF) has announced that twelve (12) prospective volleyball coaches from Nigeria will participate in the FIVB Level I Coaching Certification Course, scheduled to hold in Accra, Ghana, from August 3 to 8, 2026.

The Nigerian contingent comprises national team players, former international athletes, and coaches from various league clubs across the country. The delegation includes seven (7) female coaches and five (5) male coaches, reflecting the Federation's deliberate commitment to developing a new generation of technically competent coaches, with special emphasis on increasing female participation in volleyball coaching.

The Federation recognizes that the number of qualified female volleyball coaches in Nigeria remains relatively low. This certification programme is therefore a strategic investment aimed at bridging that gap, empowering women in coaching, and strengthening the country's coaching capacity for sustainable volleyball development.

The twelve participants are:

1. Dorothy Egbum – Team Leader
2. Francisca Ikhiede
3. Lydia Ayisa Yakubu
4. Anthony Damilola Taiwo
5. Monday Dada
6. Friday Peter
7. Morris Sefeyia Dikyai
8. Hajara Audu
9. Bose Melaiye
10. Bukky Oluwatosin
11. Sewuese Iorkua



12 COACHES TO FIVB LEVEL I COACHING CERTIFICATION IN GHANA

Anambra screens 350 players for Southeast Intermediate Games football qualifiers

About 350 players on Friday participated in the screening exercise for Anambra's male and female football teams ahead of the Southeast Zonal eliminations for the Intermediate Games.

The screening exercise was declared open by the Commissioner for Sports and Youth Development, Patrick-Agha Mba, at the Awka Township Stadium.

The participants comprised

about 70 female players and 280 male players, aged between 16 and 19 years, drawn from senior secondary schools and sports academies across the state.

The Southeast Zonal eliminations are scheduled to hold in Umuahia, Abia, in August, while the Intermediate Games will take place in Lagos later in the year.

Speaking at the event, Mba said the state government was committed to building competitive male and female football teams capable of excelling at the zonal competition and representing the Southeast with distinction at the national finals.



ANAMBRA SCREENS 350 PLAYERS COMMITTEE

2026 WAFCON: Michelle Alozie undergoes drug test after MVP display in Super Falcons' 1-0 win over Zambia

Michelle Alozie was selected for a routine doping test following her outstanding performance in Nigeria's 1-0 victory over Zambia women's national team in their second Group C match at the 2026 Women's Africa

Cup of Nations.

The 29-year-old defender confirmed after the match that she underwent the mandatory random drug test, a standard procedure in major tournaments.

Alozie delivered a commanding display, playing the full 90

minutes and earning the Woman of the Match award for her defensive brilliance and relentless energy. Her performance was crucial in helping the Super Falcons hold firm despite being reduced to 10 players for over 50 minutes after Blessing Demehin was sent

off for denying Barbara Banda a clear goal-scoring opportunity.

Originally deployed at right-back, Alozie was later switched to the left side in a tactical adjustment and made several key interceptions and clearances. Her efforts ensured that Zambia managed only two shots on target throughout the encounter.



LSSC D-G confirms Lagos as host of 2026 CAF Awards

Lekan Fatodu, Director-General (D-G) Lagos State Sports Commission (LSSC) on Saturday confirmed Lagos as host of Africa's biggest football gala, the 2026 CAF Awards.

Fatodu disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos.

Accordingly, the Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts, formerly the National Theatre, Iganmu, has been pencilled in to host the event.

The occasion celebrates Africa's outstanding footballers, coaches, clubs, national teams and administrators.

Hosting the awards further enhances Nigeria's profile as a destination for major continental sporting events and underscores the country's enduring role in the growth and promotion of African football.

The annual CAF Awards is expected to attract some of the continent's biggest football stars and stakeholders, recognising exceptional performances recorded over the previous year across club and international competitions.

The confirmation of the Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts as the venue also adds another landmark event to the iconic Lagos facility.

Ogun set to host second Wamufat/NSSF sports camp

The Wamufat Youth Community Development Foundation (WYCDF) says it will host the second edition of the Wamufat Sports Camp and 'Run Ogun', from Aug. 3 to Aug. 8 in Ogun.

The event is in partnership with the Nigeria School Sport Federation (NSSF) the U.S.-based Run Your City (RYC) and the Agrotterra Resort.

This is contained in a statement by Fatimoh Muhammed, President of the WYCDF on Sunday in Lagos.

According to the statement, the six-day camp is aimed at empowering young athletes

through sports, mentorship and character development.

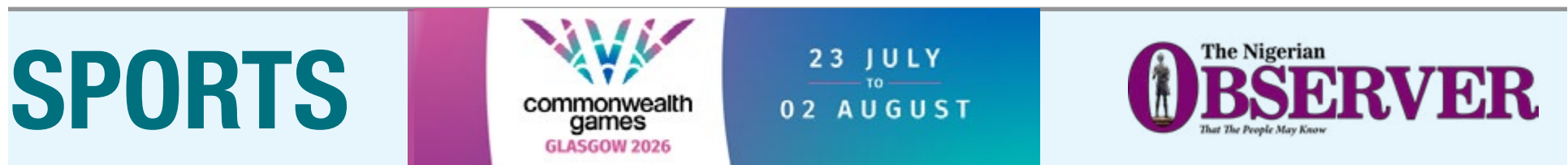
It added that children between the ages of 10 and 16 would receive free coaching in athletics, football, chess, netball, golf, ayo and tennis.

The statement noted that participants would also undergo daily lessons on values such as gratitude, respect, excellence, teamwork, resilience and integrity.

It added that experienced coaches and mentors would also guide participants in building discipline, self-belief and good character before taking part in a community 'Race Day' on Aug. 8.



WAMUFAT SPORTS CAMP



Commonwealth Games: Ezekiel Nathaniel strikes gold as Nigeria shines

Team Nigeria ended Day Eight of the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games on a high, winning one gold and one silver medal to boost its growing medal collection.

The evening belonged to Ezekiel Nathaniel, who produced a commanding performance to win gold in the men's 400m hurdles and become Commonwealth champion.

Nathaniel crossed the finish line in 48.47 seconds, finishing ahead of England's Jake Minshull, who claimed silver in 48.99 seconds.

Jamaica's Assinie Wilson secured the bronze medal after clocking 49.22 seconds in a highly competitive final.

The Nigerian controlled the race from the opening stages and accelerated strongly over the closing hurdles to secure a convincing victory.

Nathaniel's triumph marked a remarkable turnaround from Birmingham 2022, where he finished sixth in the same event.

Four years later, the hurdler returned stronger and more experienced, delivering the performance of his career to stand atop the Commonwealth podium.

"It is a special moment for me and my country," Nathaniel said after claiming Nigeria's latest gold medal.

Nigeria's success continued in the men's 200m final, where sprint star Udodi Onwuzurike delivered an outstanding performance to win silver.

Running from lane eight, Onwuzurike clocked a season's best

of 20.09 seconds to finish second in a fiercely contested race.

South Africa's Sinesipho Dambile won the gold medal

in 19.96 seconds, while Onwuzurike secured Nigeria's sixth silver medal of the Games.

"I'm happy with the medal

and the performance. I gave everything on the track," Onwuzurike said after the race.

Elsewhere, Jami Schlueter completed an impressive Commonwealth Games debut in the men's decathlon, finishing seventh overall with 7,665 points.

Schlueter had occupied fourth position after the opening day and remained among the leading contenders through six events.

The Nigerian eventually secured a commendable top-seven finish in one of athletics' most demanding disciplines, underlining his potential for future success.

Team Nigeria's latest podium finishes increased its medal tally to nine gold, six silver and three bronze medals.



EZEKIEL NATHANIEL

NPFL set for AGM, 2026/27 campaign fixture unveiling in Ibadan

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

The Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) has announced that its Annual General Meeting (AGM) will hold on Friday, August 7, 2026, in Ibadan, Oyo State, as part of final preparations for the start of the 2026/27 football season.

Chairmen, proprietors and other representatives of the twenty premier league club, including NPFL board members, officials of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), key stakeholders, and other football administrators are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting.

As part of the agenda, the big stakeholders are to review the previous season campaign and

finalize plans for the upcoming season (2026/27).

At the AGM, the NPFL will conduct the official draws and unveil the fixtures for the 2026/27 campaign, providing clubs and supporters with the complete schedule for the new season which is scheduled to kick off on August 28.



ELEGBELEYE

The AGM will also give stakeholders the opportunity to address key issues relating to league administration, club licensing, officiating standards, player welfare, commercial growth, broadcasting, and other strategic initiatives aimed at improving the quality and competitiveness of the domestic league.



FIFA succumbs to pressure, cancel plans to sell football

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Football world governing body, FIFA has announced the cancellation of the plans to operate the FIFA Forward Enterprise Project.



GIANNI INFANTINO

The world football governing body in a statement issued through its official communication channels said "The FIFA Forward Enterprise project was intended to provide a basis for further strengthening

of our FIFA Member Associations and our sport worldwide, especially in those countries where support is most needed.

It added "And more so, as we said from the outset, to do this only if a majority of the FIFA Member Associations were in support and always subject to a consultation process with them, the FIFA Council, the Confederations and wider stakeholders.

FIFA stated that "Having listened carefully to all the views, it has become clear that the project has created divisions of a nature that, regardless of the level of support, are no longer in the interest of the objective set out in the first place."

The FFE project since its an-

nouncement has come under immense objections from prominent football quarters, FIFA had described media reports on the subject as inaccurate.

FIFA said "Our purpose has always been – and will always be – to unite and improve.

Adding that "As a result, this proposal will not proceed. Moving forward, my intent is to bring all interested parties back together in the coming days and weeks in the spirit of shared interest in our game, and with the objective to continue growing football everywhere, particularly in those countries that mostly need our support." FIFA boss, Mr Infantino is quoted to have said.



Glasgow 2026: Team Nigeria sets mixed 4x400m games record

Team Nigeria made another emphatic statement at the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games on Friday, setting the first-ever Commonwealth Games record in the Mixed 4x400m Relay.

Kola Daniel, Special Adviser on Media, Office of the Director-General, National Sports Commission (NSC), Bukola Olopade, in a statement also disclosed that the impressive Team Nigeria secured another field event final.

"History was made on the track as the Nigerian Mixed 4x400m quartet of Edidiong Udo, Esther Joseph, Samuel

Ogazi and Patience Okon-George stormed to victory in their heat in a time of 3:14.58.

"The performance established the first-ever Commonwealth Games record in the Mixed 4x400m Relay event.

"The Nigerian team finished comfortably ahead of Australia, who placed second in 3:15.21, to qualify for the final as the fastest team and overwhelming favourites for the gold medal," he said.

Daniel noted that the remarkable performance ensured the quartet became the first athletes to enter the Commonwealth Games record books in the Mixed 4x400m Relay.

Oyo Govt. appoints Laniyan as Baseball and Softball Association Board Chairman

The Oyo State Government has announced the appointment of Kehinde Laniyan as the Chairman of the Board of the Baseball and Softball Association.

The appointment was conveyed on Saturday in an official letter from the General Manager of the Sports Council, Olubisi Adegoke.

The latest appointment came on the heels of Laniyan's recent appointment as a member of the WBSC Africa Baseball Commission.

The latest addition further

underscored Laniyan's growing recognition within the baseball and softball community in Nigeria and across Africa.

According to Adegoke, the appointment is a well-deserved recognition of Laniyan's distinguished service, dedication and leadership in the development of baseball and softball in Nigeria over the years.

The general manager highlighted his immense contributions to grassroots sports development in the state through the organisation of national training camps.



KEHINDE LANIYAN