Shettima, Okonjo-Iweala, Lumumba Storm Asaba for landmark Delta Investment Summit

ASABA

Hassan Daisy

Delta State on Monday assumed the spotlight as Nigeria's economic and investment community converged on Asaba for the highly anticipated Delta State Economic and Investment Summit, with Vice President Kashim Shettima, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, and renowned Pan-African scholar Prof. PLO Lumumba leading an impressive array of distinguished guests.

The arrival of the prominent personalities signaled the commencement of what has been described as one of the most significant economic gatherings in the South-South region, drawing governors, federal lawmakers, diplomats, captains of industry, development partners, entrepreneurs and foreign investors eager to explore the vast investment opportunities available in Delta State.

The summit, organised by the Delta State Government, is aimed at showcasing the state's economic strengths, attracting both local and international investors, promoting public-private partnerships and unveiling strategic initiatives capable of accelerating industrialisation, job creation and sustainable economic growth. Participants are expected to engage in robust discussions on investment, infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, technology, energy, tourism and the digital economy.

Vice President Kashim Shettima, who represented President Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the event, reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive across the country. He noted that state governments have a critical role to play in driving economic transformation through policies that encourage investment, innovation and pri-

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That The People May Know

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National Economic Council tracks legacy projects in Edo

Richard Eweka

BENIN CITY

● *Lauds Okpebholo over reconstruction of Oba Market, others*

The Deputy Team Lead of the National Economic Council (NEC) implementation monitoring committee (IMC), Busayo Awotunde, has commended Governor Monday Okpebholo for the reconstruction of the Oba Market affected by fire in June 2020 and a subsequent fire outbreak in October 2025.

Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo, has embarked on the reconstruction of the market and equipping it with modern facilities that will positively affect the economic and commercial life of Edo people.

Speaking to journalists at the Conference room of the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning at the State Secretariat, along Sapele road, in Benin City, the Deputy Team Lead, NEC IMC, Busayo Awotunde, said the team is in Edo State for the purpose of visiting and tracking the level of implementation of NEC resolutions and Legacy projects in the state.

"This is a monitoring exercise to look at how the Edo State Government has been able to align and implement the NEC resolution. We are aware that the state is doing a lot in terms of projects.

"We commend the governor for rebuilding the Oba Market which was completely raised down by fire. We are impressed with the job. We are here to determine the level of implementation of NEC resolution in Edo State, also to note the challenges faced.

"We will be visiting other legacy projects of the governor, and we appeal for cooperation and access to information to enable us achieve our aims and the government to showcase their achievements".

The Commissioner for Budget and Economic planning Dr. Elizabeth Ebosele said the Edo State Government recognizes that effective implementation of national economic policies and resolutions require strong coordination, prudent resources management, transparency and continuous monitoring.

"The government of Senator Monday Okpebholo has remained committed to translating government policies and programmes into tangible outcomes that improve the lives and livelihood of our people.

"This is an opportunity to showcase the progress recorded by Edo State, receive constructive feedback, and identify areas where additional support and intergovernmental collaboration may be required.

Edo Govt rallies health insurance stakeholders for universal health coverage

BENIN CITY

Edo State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomhole, the Federal Ministry of Health and the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) have called for accelerated health insurance enrolment, stronger health information systems and sustained investments in healthcare as critical drivers for achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Edo State.

The call dominated deliberations at the two-day Edo State Joint Annual Review (SJAR) held at the John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy, Benin City, where government officials, development partners and health stakeholders evaluated the state's health sector performance, identified implementation gaps and adopted strategies to improve healthcare delivery.

Addressing participants, Dr. Oshiomhole described the annual review as a vital accountability mechanism for measuring progress, strengthening evidence-based planning and driving reforms that will guarantee equitable access to quality healthcare. He reaffirmed the Edo State Government's commitment to sustained collaboration with the Federal Government and development partners to improve health outcomes through efficient implementation of health programmes.

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NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL VISIT:
Edo State Commissioner for Budget and Economic Planning Dr. Elizabeth Ebosele (middle), the team lead of NEC, IMC, Busayo Awotunde (2nd left), with other members of the monitoring team in Benin City Edo State, on Monday.

Edo receives medical equipment to boost healthcare delivery —Pg 2

London Forum: Okpebholo positions Edo as investment destination, credits Tinubu's reforms —Pg 4

Iran denies Trump's claim of new talks commencement date —Pg 14

Gov Diri Raises Scrabble Classic Prize Money —Pg 22

NEWS

Edo receives medical equipment to boost healthcare delivery

OLIVER IJIOGBE

BENIN CITY

The Federal Government has donated a wide range of medical equipment to General Hospitals across the three senatorial districts of Edo State as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen healthcare service delivery under the Renewed Hope Agenda of president Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

The intervention, facilitated by the Federal Ministry o f Health and Social Welfare through the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) Programme, is aimed at enhancing the capacity of healthcare facilities to provide quality emergency, maternal and newborn healthcare services.

Presenting the equipment on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, an official of the ministry Andrew Osunde confirmed the successful delivery of the consignment to Edo State and commended Edo State Government for prioritizing health care in the state.

Receiving the equipment on behalf of the Edo State Government, the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomhole, expressed profound appreciation to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for prioritising the health sector through the Renewed Hope Agenda. He also commended the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Professor Muhammad Ali Pate, for his unwavering commitment to expanding access to quality healthcare and strengthening the nation's health system.

Dr. Oshiomhole further lauded Governor Monday Okpebholo for his sustained investment in the healthcare sector, stating that the administration's SHINE Agenda has continued to transform healthcare delivery by improving infrastructure, equipping health facilities and enhancing access to essential health services across Edo State.

The medical equipment donated include blood bank refrigerators, oxygen concentrators, multiparameter patient monitors, defibrillators, suction machines, laboratory microscopes and other critical medical devices.

The equipment will be strategically deployed to designated General Hospitals in Edo South, Edo Central and Edo North Senatorial Districts to strengthen emergency response capacity, improve maternal and neonatal health outcomes, and enhance the overall quality of secondary healthcare services in the state.



THREE-DAY SUMMIT:
Officials of the Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO) at the Delta State Investment Development Agency (DIDA) exhibition stand during the ongoing 2026 Delta State Economic and Investment Summit in Asaba, Delta State, reinforcing inter-state collaboration and promoting Edo State's investment opportunities at the three-day summit, which commenced on Monday, August 3, 2026.

Edo residents urge Okpebholo to extend crackdown to drug peddlers

BENIN CITY

● *Alarmed over illicit use*

BENEDICT OKATE

Some residents of Edo State have called on Governor Monday Okpebholo to extend his administration's hardline approach against cultism and kidnapping to individuals and syndicates involved in the sale and distribution of illicit drugs across the state.

The concerned residents, who spoke separately in Benin City and in some other parts of the state, said the increasing circulation of hard drugs was destroying the lives of many young people and contributing to rising cases of criminality.

One resident, Mr. Osahon Egharevba, said the governor's decisive actions against kidnappers and cultists had sent a strong message that crime would not be tolerated.

"We commend Governor Okpebholo for taking bold steps against kidnappers and cultists. We are appealing to him to adopt the same level of determination against those dealing in illicit drugs because they are destroying the future of our youths. Many of the crimes we witness today are fuelled by drug abuse," he said.

A community leader at Ekpoma, Pa Osahon Abhulimen, noted that drug trafficking had become a serious social challenge in several communities.

"Our appeal is that government should not stop at fighting cultism and kidnapping. Drug dealers should also be identified and dealt with according to the law. If properties are being used as centres for the sale and distribution of dangerous drugs, appropriate legal action should be taken against those responsible. Saving our young people from substance abuse is as important as tackling violent crimes," he stated.

Similarly, a youth advocate based in Auchi,Comrade Peter Oshioke, urged the state government to strengthen collaboration with security agencies and relevant anti-drug authorities to dismantle drug distribution networks operating within the state.

Tributes as Edo Commissioner, Paul Ohonbamu buries mother

Edo state Deputy Governor, Hon. Dennis Idahosa and other government officials, traditional Rulers and leaders of the All Progressives Congress, APC joined the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy affairs, Hon Paul Ohonbamu Esq. and family to honour their late mother with a befitting burial at the Weekend.

According to the Deputy Governor during a reception to climax the burial activities in Benin city, Mama lived a successful life at the age of 85.

"We thank the family and Paul Ohonbamu who is one of the most outstanding Commissioners in the state for giving their mother a befitting burial," he said.

The Chief of Staff to Governor Monday Okpebholo, Hon Yakubu Musa who also commended the children said the burial is celebration of life and he prayed for God to grant her eternal rest and that the children should emulate the footsteps of Mama who was an educationist and retired headmistress.

On behalf of his siblings, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy affairs, Hon Paul Ohonbamu thanked everyone that joined the family to honour and celebrate the life of their mother, which according to him was in fulfillment of the Scripture.

"Mama was a mother more than a mother who taught us a lot. We will continue to honour her.

"Everything I am today is because of her prayers and sacrifices. She taught me that to serve the people is to serve God. We will miss her, but we thank God for a life well spent," he added.

Shettima, Okonjo-Iweala, Lumumba...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

vate sector participation.

Shettima commended the Delta State Government for organising the summit, describing it as a bold step towards unlocking the state's enormous economic potential. He urged investors to take advantage of the opportunities available in the state, assuring them of the Federal Government's continued support for initiatives that promote inclusive growth and national development.

In her remarks, WTO Director-General, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, highlighted the importance of positioning Nigerian states to compete effectively in the global economy. She stressed that improving infrastructure, strengthening institutions and enhancing the ease of doing business remain essential to attracting sustainable investments and expanding access to international markets. She also encouraged policymakers to focus on value addition, export promotion and innovation as key drivers of economic prosperity.

Delivering his thought-provoking address, Prof. PLO Lumumba challenged political leaders, policymakers and business executives to embrace visionary leadership, accountability and integrity in governance. According to him, Africa possesses abundant human and natural resources capable of transforming the continent into a global economic powerhouse, provided leaders prioritise transparency, productivity and long-term planning over short-term political interests.

Edo Govt rallies health insurance...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

Representing the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Technical Assistant to the Federal Ministry of Health, Mrs. Igbigbi Jacinta, commended the Edo State Government for institutionalising the review process, describing it as an important platform for accountability, performance assessment and evidence-based decision-making. She reaffirmed the Federal Ministry's commitment to supporting Edo State's drive towards Universal Health Coverage.

Representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO), Global Health Supply Chain–Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM), Data.FI and Corona Management Systems also pledged continued technical support to strengthen healthcare service delivery across the state.

A major highlight was the presentation by the Edo State Health Insurance Commission (EDOHIC), which reported progress in expanding health insurance coverage through the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), extending protection to vulnerable groups, establishing a corporate office in Irrua, implementing the Philanthropist Initiative and deploying digital innovations to improve service delivery.

However, the NHIA expressed concern over low health insurance enrolment, inadequate vehicular logistics and delays in the release of the State Equity Fund, urging EDOHIC to intensify advocacy, strengthen stakeholder engagement and expand enrolment across the state.

Sectoral presentations recorded gains in HIV treatment and viral suppression, GeneXpert expansion for tuberculosis diagnosis, free weekly hypertension and diabetes screening, routine immunisation, primary healthcare revitalisation, digital health information management and health workforce recruitment.

Dep Gov. unveils bold youth agenda in Benin

BERNADETTA IDALU AND HASSAN DAAISY

BENIN CITY

Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, has reaffirmed the state government's commitment to youth development, urging young people to embrace discipline, integrity and hard work as the foundation for a brighter future.

Speaking while chairing the 2026 Youth Harvest of St. Paul Catholic Church, Benin City, Idahosa said the administration remains focused on implementing policies that will equip youths with the skills, opportunities and support needed to become productive citizens and future leaders.

Addressing hundreds of worshippers, church leaders, community stakeholders and youths at the event, the Deputy Governor described young people as the greatest asset of Edo State, stressing that the success of any government depends largely on how well it invests in its youth population.

He called on youths to reject cultism, drug abuse, internet fraud, violence and other forms of social misconduct, noting that such activities only destroy dreams and hinder national development. Instead, he encouraged them to pursue quality education, acquire vocational and digital skills, build strong moral character and remain committed to serving humanity.

According to Idahosa, the present administration is committed to expanding opportunities for young people through programmes that promote entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and skills acquisition.

'Your economic policies, data, are outdated,' Presidency fires back at Atiku

ABUJA

The Presidency on Sunday dismissed former Vice President Atiku Abubakar's criticism of President Bola Tinubu's economic policies, describing his arguments as outdated and disconnected from realities.

Presidential Spokesperson, Mr Bayo Onanuga, stated this in a statement titled, 'Facts, Not Fear: A Point-by-Point Response to Atiku Abubakar on Nigeria's Reform Journey.'

Onanuga said Atiku's assessment relied largely on 2024 economic data and ignored gains recorded in 2025 and 2026 under Tinubu's reform agenda.

"Atiku's economic arguments remain anchored in 2024, even as Nigeria's economy has rebounded sharply in both dollar and naira terms," he said.

According to him, Nigeria's dollar-denominated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose from about 253 billion dollars after the exchange-rate reset to roughly 377 billion dollars.

He said the increase represented a 49 per cent recovery, while GDP in naira terms expanded from N314 trillion to about N530 trillion.

The presidential spokesman said the naira-denominated GDP growth reflected a 69 per cent increase since the reforms began.

"Rather than engaging with today's realities, the former vice president relies on frozen snapshots of history while ignoring measurable progress achieved through ongoing reforms," he said.

Onanuga described the administration's policies as necessary structural reforms aimed at correcting distortions inherited from previous governments.

He argued that many of Nigeria's economic challenges predated the Tinubu administration and required bold corrective measures.

"The reforms are necessary structural adjustments designed to correct long-standing distortions that persisted through earlier administrations, including the 1999-2007 Obasanjo-Atiku years," he said.

Addressing concerns over borrowing, Onanuga maintained that Nigeria's debt profile remained sustainable when measured against economic output and revenue performance.

He said Nigeria's debt-to-GDP ratio stood at about 40 per cent, below South Africa's 85 per cent, Egypt's 80 per cent and Kenya's 75 per cent.

He said the ratio also remained significantly lower than those recorded by advanced economies, including the United States and the United Kingdom.

"Debt must be assessed relative to economic capacity and revenue performance, not through alarmist rhetoric detached from fiscal realities," he said.



CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION:
A cross-section of participants at the 49th Nigeria Annual International Conference and Exhibition 2026 organised by the Society of Petroleum Engineers in Lagos.

DMO offers two savings bonds for subscription at N1,000 per unit

ABUJA

The Debt Management Office (DMO), on behalf of the Federal Government, has announced an offer of two FGN bonds for subscription at N1,000 per unit.

According to the DMO, the first offer is two-year FGN Savings Bond due Aug. 12, 2028 at interest rate of 13.96 per cent per annum.

The second offer is a three-year FGN Savings Bond due in Aug. 12, 2029 at interest rate of 14.96 per cent per annum.

It said that the opening date for the offer is Monday (today), while closing date is Aug. 7, settlement date is Aug. 12, while coupon payment dates are Nov. 12, Feb. 12, May 12 and Aug.12.

"Subscription is N1,000 per unit subject to a minimum subscription of N5,000 and in multiples of N1,000 thereafter, subject to a maximum subscription of N50 million.

"Interest is payable quarterly, and bullet repayment is on the maturity date," the DMO said.

The DMO added that the FGN savings bonds, like all other Federal Government securities, were backed by the full faith and credit of the federal government and charged upon the general assets of Nigeria.

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

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

"They are listed on the Nigerian Exchange Ltd., and they qualify as liquid assets for liquidity ratio calculation for banks," it said.

Delta unveils financial lifeline for victims of S/Africa xenophobic attacks

VICTOR AJUWA

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has approved a comprehensive support package for indigenes of the state evacuated from South Africa following the recent wave of xenophobic attacks.

The intervention includes a 2 million grant for each affected family, alongside monthly financial assistance aimed at helping the returnees rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society.

Under the initiative, each returnee will receive a monthly stipend of 200,000, while every affected family will also be paid 300,000 monthly, beginning in August 2026 and continuing until the end of the governor's current tenure on May 29, 2027.

Governor Oborevwori announced the measures during a reception organized for the returnees at the Unity Hall, Government House, Asaba. Represented by his Chief of Staff, Hon. Johnson Erijo, the governor described the attacks as unacceptable and a violation of the victims' fundamental rights.

He sympathized with those affected, noting that many suffered emotional trauma, physical harm and financial losses as a result of the violence. He stressed that no one should be subjected to discrimination or attacks because of their nationality.

The governor also commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for facilitating the safe evacuation of Nigerians trapped in South Africa, describing the Federal Government's swift intervention as commendable.

Northern Christian group urges FG to appoint aides on religious affairs

ABUJA

The Northern Christian Religious Leaders Assembly (NOCRELA) has called on the Federal Government to appoint Senior Special Assistants (SSAs) on Christian and Muslim Religious Affairs to bridge gaps and build grassroots trust.

The Secretary-General of the association, Rev. Simon Dolly-Kif, who made the call in a statement on Monday in Abuja, said such would help foster unity and peace in the country.

Dolly-Kif noted that appointing dedicated aides would represent a strategic national necessity to harness the moral authority of faith institutions in solving everyday human challenges.

According to him, at a time when economic pressures, insecurity, and social tensions are testing the resilience of families across Nigeria, such appointments are far more than mere political gestures.

He noted that, "in many communities across the country where government presence is minimal, churches and mosques serve as primary lifelines for ordinary citizens by running health clinics, community schools, and welfare programmes.

"Religious leaders command moral authority and have deep reach into communities where formal government structures are thin.

"Engaging them through credible advisers can enhance public trust and reinforce the message that every Nigerian is valued, regardless of faith," he said.

He emphasised that dedicated presidential aides on Christian and Muslim affairs would act as vital human bridges to facilitate constructive interfaith dialogue and mediate local conflicts before they escalate.

Edo Joins Delta Investment Summit, Strengthens Collaboration Among Sub-National Investment Agencies

BENIN CITY

ABDUL-KADIR ABDULLAH

The Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO), Ease of Doing Business Secretariate on Monday joined investment promotion agencies, policymakers, development partners and business leaders from across Nigeria at the 2026 Delta State Economic and Investment Summit in Asaba, reaffirming its commitment to fostering collaboration among sub-national governments to drive investment, industrialisation and economic growth.

The three-day summit, themed "Harnessing Our Strengths, Unlocking Our Potentials," provides a platform for states to showcase investment opportunities, exchange ideas and strengthen partnerships aimed at improving Nigeria's business environment.

Representing Edo State at the summit, the ESIPO delegation led by the Facilitation Officer, Adaba Habib, said participation underscores ESIPO's commitment to be part of the active drivers of emerging best practices while promoting inter-state collaboration that will enhance investment attraction and economic development across Nigeria.

Delivering the keynote address, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, commended the Delta State Government's deliberate focus on developing Special Economic Zones, describing them as one of the most effective tools available to governments for accelerating industrial development.

"The Delta State Government's focus on developing the Special Economic Zones makes sense. In fact, a new report by the World Bank on industrial policy specifically identifies Special Economic Zones as one of the best available tools for government. Government can improve infrastructure and regulatory frameworks in a specific location, which in turn allows for the pooling of labour, inputs and ideas," she said.

She added that successful industrial parks require critical infrastructure, including reliable 24-hour electricity, quality road networks, water supply and information technology connectivity.

Vice President of Nigeria, Senator Kashim Shettima, also used the occasion to highlight the positive impact of the Federal Government's economic reforms under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Commending the President's economic team, particularly the Governor of Anambra State, Professor Chukwuma Soludo, for providing insight into Nigeria's economic journey, Shettima said the country had made significant progress despite global economic challenges.

"Professor Soludo, you have done a lot for the Federal Government, especially in informing Nigerians where we are coming from. From reserves of about three billion dollars, when we were experiencing capital flight and capital scarcity, we are now witnessing capital inflows, with our foreign reserves rising to over 52 billion dollars despite a turbulent global environment. I think the President deserves commendation, not condemnation," the Vice President stated.

London Forum: Okpebholo positions Edo as investment destination, credits Tinubu's reforms

BENIN CITY

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has urged Edo indigenes in the Diaspora to mobilise support for the delivery of 2.5 million votes to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, saying the visible transformation across Edo State is driven by the President's bold economic reforms.

The governor made the call on Friday at the "Shine Beyond Borders" London Executive Forum, organised by the Edo State Government through a delegation led by the Special Adviser to the Governor on Diaspora Affairs, Mr. Goddy Francis Okoyo, alongside the Director-General of the Edo State Diaspora Agency (ESDA), Dr. Loretta Oduware Ogboro-Okor, and the Senior Special Assistant on Diaspora Matters, Hon. Osarodion Osagie.

The forum, which concluded a week-long UK diaspora engagement tour across Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and London, was themed "Edo SHINE 2026: Shining Beyond Borders." Organised by the London Professional Training Centre (LPTC) with the support of the Edo State Government, EDODIASPORA, EDIDAN and Heartbeat of the Diaspora, it aimed to strengthen engagement with Edo professionals abroad, promote investment, knowledge transfer and strategic partnerships for the state's development.

Addressing Edo professionals, entrepreneurs and investors, Governor Okpebholo said President Tinubu's reforms, particularly the removal of fuel subsidy, have enhanced states' financial capacity to deliver impactful projects.

"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," he said.

He cited major projects including the Ramat Park Flyover, the reconstruction of the Ekpoma–Auchi section of the Benin–Okene Highway with concrete pavement and the extension of the Lagos–Calabar Coastal Highway through Edo State. He also highlighted security gains through an Army Forward Operational Base, MOPOL 82 Squadron, 500 Forest Guards and the approval of a new Army Division.



BURIAL RECEPTION:
From Left- The Deputy Governor of Edo State, Rt. Hon Dennis Idahosa, Former Deputy Governor Pius Odubu and Hon Yakubu Musa, Chief of Staff to Governor Monday Okpebholo during the burial reception for the Mother of Hon Paul Ohonbamu, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy affairs in Benin City.

BPP tasks SSDC on compliance with procurement act

ABUJA

Dr Adebowale Adedokun, Director-General, Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP), has urged the South-South Development Commission (SSDC) to strictly comply with the Public Procurement Act, 2007.

This is contained in a statement issued by Zira Nagga, BPP's Head of Media and Public Relations, in Abuja on Monday.

According to Nagga, Adedokun gave the charge while delivering a virtual lecture at a two-day induction programme for members of the SSDC Board and Senior Management.

He said the programme was organised by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) and the SSDC.

Adedokun, who spoke on the theme, "Essentials of the Public Procurement", described procurement as a strategic instrument for national development rather than merely a purchasing function.

"Public procurement is the bridge between budget approval and service delivery.

"It is one of the most powerful instruments of governance for delivering public value, driving economic growth, and ensuring prudent management of public resources," he said.

The director-general urged the commission to uphold the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability, open competition, value for money, efficiency and effectiveness in all procurement processes.

He warned against common procurement violations, including defective bidding processes, manipulation of bid evaluations, bypassing BPP oversight, misuse of emergency procurement provisions, poor record-keeping and failure to comply with bid-opening timelines.

"There is no provision for urgent procurement outside the exceptions provided by the law," he said.

Nigeria secures UN TOSSD steering committee seat over TAC contribution

ABUJA

Nigeria has secured membership of the United Nations Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) Steering Committee, following international recognition of its 38-year Technical Aid Corps programme.

The Director-General of the Nigerian Technical Aid Corps (NTAC), Hon. Yusuf Yakub, disclosed this on Monday during a debriefing for 14 medical professionals who returned from Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone after completing their 24-month volunteer assignments.

The returning volunteers, comprising doctors and nurses, were deployed under the Technical Aid Corps (TAC) Scheme to provide medical services in the two West African countries.

Yakub said Nigeria recently reactivated its membership of TOSSD, a United Nations framework that tracks official support for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He said Nigeria's contributions to sustainable development in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) countries were presented at the organisation's recent meeting, earning widespread commendation.

"After a thorough briefing on what Nigeria has been doing in contributing to the SDGs in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific countries, we were applauded.

"It came as a surprise to many that a Black African country is not only a beneficiary but also a contributor to sustainable development.

"Nigeria was immediately voted into the 28-member Steering Committee. Of the three active African countries in the association, Nigeria is now one of them.

"This is soft power diplomacy that has existed for 38 years. We have deployed more than 10,000 experts to over 40 ACP countries in service to humanity," he said.

Yakub attributed the feat to President Bola Tinubu's foreign policy agenda, which he said had strengthened Nigeria's international humanitarian engagement through technical cooperation.

He said the scheme continued to record remarkable achievements, including the recent deployment of 18 Nigerian professors to tertiary institutions in The Gambia.

NERDC disowns fake funding request for revised basic education curriculum

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has disowned a fake document soliciting financial support for the production, printing and nationwide distribution of the Revised Basic Education Curriculum for 2026/2027.

The Executive Secretary of NERDC, Prof. Salisu Shehu, made this known in a statement issued on Monday in Abuja.

Shehu described the purported correspondence as fictitious, frivolous and unauthorised, stressing that the council did not issue any letter requesting financial assistance from any institution for the exercise.

"Our attention has been drawn to fake documents and letters claiming to be from the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).

"The fake documents are asking for financial support to produce, print and distribute the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) for the 2026/2027 academic session.

"The management of NERDC hereby strongly and unequivocally disclaims any document or correspondence, under any guise or arrangement, requesting support from any institution for the production, printing and distribution of the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (BEC)."

Shehu explained that adequate arrangements had already been made for the production, printing, dissemination and distribution of the revised curriculum through the appropriate federal and state education authorities, agencies and departments.

He urged government agencies, educational institutions, development partners, stakeholders and the general public to disregard any correspondence purportedly issued by NERDC requesting financial support for the exercise.

The executive secretary assured stakeholders that the council remained committed to ensuring diligence in its official communications and protecting the integrity of Nigeria's national curriculum.

90 CSOs urges NASS to reject bill threatening civic space, democratic freedom

ABUJA

No fewer than 89 Civil society organisations (CSOs) have urged the National Assembly to reject bills capable of threatening civic space, constitutional freedoms and democratic governance in Nigeria.

The CSOs stated this at a joint news conference on Monday in Abuja over what they described as growing restrictive and repressive legislative proposals before the national assembly.

The statement read at the joint news conference was signed by Executive Director, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Auwal Rafsanjani; Director, Centre for Democracy and Development, Dr Dauda Garuba, and the Country Manager, Global Rights, Olubunmi Aweda, among others.

They warned that the proposed laws would expand executive control over civic life and undermine freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, media independence and democratic participation.

The CSOs argued that the pending bill formed part of a broader legislative effort to tighten executive control over civil society, independent media and digital spaces.

According to them, the proposals could create fear and self-censorship ahead of the 2027 general elections instead of encouraging open democratic participation and accountability.

The organisations particularly opposed the Foreign Aids (Regulation, Transparency and Disclosure) Bill, saying it grants excessive powers over organisations receiving foreign assistance.

According to them, the bill seeks to establish a Foreign Aid Regulatory Commission, with powers duplicating existing agencies, including Corporate Affairs Commission and EFCC.

"Mandatory registration, extensive reporting requirements, audits and sanctions under the bill can undermine civil society independence and legitimate humanitarian activities," the CSOs said.

NEWS

First Lady commends Wike for transforming FCT

ABUJA

The First Lady, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu, has commended the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, for transforming Abuja's City Gate into a major recreational and environmental landmark.

The First Lady on Monday at the State House honoured Wike and awarded him a Certificate of Commendation for carrying out remodelling works across the territory, saying, "Posterity will judge you well for the development of FCT.

The First Lady commended the FCT Administration for its environmental efforts, which she said were in line with the just-concluded category of the ongoing Green Nigeria Challenge of the Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI).

Tinubu, however, urged State governments to emulate Wike by engaging the Youth in Environmental Protection.

She said she was impressed by the transformation of the City Gate, describing it as "unbelievable," in spite of a N50 million cash prize to be won by the best state that would carry out the challenge.

According to the First Lady, the RHI Green Challenge was to encourage states to reclaim abandoned spaces and dumpsites and turn them into recreation centres.

"Unfortunately, no state entered for that category of the competition.

"It was a 50 million prize money, and they didn't enter. This was supposed to get our youth involved," she said.

"This was to turn abandoned spaces around, but for the Minister, when I saw what he did with the city gate, it was unbelievable.

"I want to thank him; he has done very well in transforming the city. I am using this occasion to appeal to our governors' wives to get our young children to key into our green environment club.

The First Lady explained that the initiative was designed to encourage states to convert neglected public spaces into clean and attractive environments.

"The transformation reflects the vision behind the just concluded Community Category of the Challenge, which was designed to encourage youth groups to transform degraded public spaces, including dumpsites and abandoned areas, into green parks, gardens and other eco-friendly spaces.

"Our goal is to complement the government's effort in beautifying our environment and promoting healthier communities towards improving the quality of life of our people.

"The remodelled Abuja City Gate is an excellent example of what abandoned public areas can become: a transformed key national landmark that warmly welcomes all Nigerians and visitors to our nation's capital.



PRESENTATION:
The First Lady, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu presents a certificate of commendation to the Minister of FCT, Nyesome Wike at the State House, while Hajia Hajia Nana Shettima, Wife of the Vice President, (L) and Dr Mariya Mahmoud, the FCT, Minister of State (R) look on.

Defence college hosts conference on restorative justice for victims of violent extremism

ABUJA

The National Defence College, Nigeria on Monday hosted a landmark two-day international conference on Restorative Justice for Victims of Violent Extremism.

The conference, themed "Restorative Justice and Management of Victims of Violent Extremism in Africa", took place at the NDC premises in Abuja.

The conference was organised in collaboration with the Centre for African Peace and Conflict Resolution, California State University, Sacramento, USA, and the Ambassador Bulus Lolo Centre for Diplomacy, Conflict, Peace and Plural Studies, Bingham University, Nigeria.

The Commandant of the NDC, Rear Adm. Abdullahi Ahmed said that the conference could not have come at a more appropriate time.

"Across Africa violent extremism, insurgency and communal conflicts have left deep physical, psychological and social scars on individuals and communities.

"While security operations remain indispensable in confronting these threats; sustainable peace demands much more than military success. It requires healing, justice, reconciliation, community resilience and the restoration of human dignity.

"These are the ideals that define restorative justice and make this conference both timely and strategically important," he said

According to the commandant, the NDC recognises that security challenges are increasingly complex and interconnected.

He said that as Nigeria's premier institution for strategic military education, NDC remained committed to developing leaders capable of integrating security, governance, justice and development into comprehensive responses to contemporary threats.

"It is therefore gratifying that this conference brings together distinguished scholars, policymakers, security practitioners, judicial officers, humanitarian actors, development partners and the 2026 Africa Peace Fellows," he said.

He noted that the gathering aimed to collectively examine practical pathways for managing victims of violent extremism and strengthening peace building across the African continent.

"I am particularly delighted that the programme combines high-level policy dialogue, expert presentations, interactive discussions, practical workshops and cross-country learning experiences.

"I am confident that these engagements will generate innovative ideas, strengthen professional networks and produce actionable recommendations that participants will adapt within their respective institutions and countries", he said.

He appreciated the collaborators, noting that the partnership demonstrated the power of international collaboration in building the next generation of African peace leaders and advancing sustainable peace on the continent.

Man jailed 240 days for stealing cables valued ₦2million

ABUJA

A Magistrate's Court in Kubwa, Abuja, on Monday sentenced a 29-year old man, Emmanuel Monday to 240 days imprisonment for stealing cables valued N2 million.

The court convicted Monday after he pleaded guilty to a two-count charge of theft and mischief.

Earlier, the prosecuting counsel, Mr John Okpa told the court that the complaint, Danfestus Majid, reported the matter at the Byazhin Police Station on July 22.

Okpa said that the defendant, who worked as a carpenter at a construction site in Kubwa stole cables belonging to

Emmanuel Mgbeodimma.

The prosecutor further said that during police investigation, Monday confessed to committing the offences.

He said that the offences contravened Sections 327 and 289 of the Penal Code.

The Magistrate, Mrs Kejeh Nneka said that the period the convict had already spent in detention should form a part of the sentence.

APC Etsako Central extols Sadoh's election, says she's uniting force

EDO

Lamai Cassius

The Chairman-elect of Etsako Central Local Government Area, Hon. Dame Vera Sadoh has been described as a beacon of hope for the transformation of the council area given her ability to provide good governance to the grassroots.

The party also expressed confidence in her ability to unite members of All Progressive Congress (APC), and the people of the local government area.

This was contained in a birthday congratulatory message signed by the local government APC publicity secretary, Mr Joseph Aidudo and made available to the Nigerian Observer, describing the birthday as marking significant milestone in her life.

The party prayed God for wisdom, good health, strength and many more years of impactful service to the people and humanity.

We are also optimistic that you will move with the APC ideology, leadership and unwavering commitment to run inclusive government at the grassroots to boost the electoral fortune of the party ahead of the 2027 general elections".

The party further reiterated its profound gratitude to the state and local government party leadership for giving a woman the chance to become the next council chairman which incidentally would be the only chairperson in the state.

It stated further that her birthday and victory would not be an end but the beginning of victories and a means to prove a selfless, responsive and accountable service to the people at the grassroots.

The party therefore urged her to use her new age and position to build bridges of unity, cohesion and development as well as uplifting and promoting the welfare and well-being of the people.

It however promised to give every support, encouragement and cooperation she deserves to ensure her administration succeeds.

Anambra Govt. urges Nnewi communities to comply with planning regulations

AWKA

The Anambra Government has urged communities in Nnewi North and Nnewi South Local Government Areas to comply with town planning regulations to accelerate the ongoing urban regeneration of the state.

The Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Mr. Chijioke Ojukwu, made the call on Monday at the August general meeting of Nzuko-Ora Nnewi in Nnewi.

Ojukwu said compliance with planning regulations would complement the state's urban renewal efforts and make governance more effective.

"There is the need for the people to support government by complying with town planning regulations.

"The attention given to Nnewi by Gov. Chukwuma Soludo, requires corresponding support through strict adherence to planning regulations to fast-track the ongoing urban regeneration," he said.

Earlier, the President-General of Nzuko-Ora Nnewi, Mr Jude Osumuoh, commended Soludo and the Chairman of Nnewi North Local Government Area, Mr Echezona Anazodo, for implementing development projects and programmes in the area.

Also speaking, Anazodo reaffirmed the council's commitment to complementing the state government's development agenda and addressing the needs of the people.

The Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Media, Mr Ebuka Onyekwelu, urged residents to support the government's Public-Private-Community Partnership (PPCP) development model, describing development as a collective responsibility.

Several speakers at the meeting commended the governor for ongoing infrastructure projects, particularly road construction and other urban renewal initiatives across Nnewi.

They also appealed to the state government to expedite action on all ongoing projects in the area.

NEWS

Group urges faith, cultural leaders to champion breastfeeding

KADUNA

Faith and cultural leaders have been tasked on their vital role as critical partners in promoting breastfeeding and reducing maternal and infant mortality in Kaduna State.

The call was made during a breastfeeding awareness programme organised by Al-Manar Women Association (AMSA) in partnership with Faith and Cultural Champions (FCC) and Medical Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN).

The community engagement was held at Kudansa Palace, Maraban Rido Ward, Chikun Local Government Area to commemorate the 2026 World Breastfeeding Week.

Speaking at the event, the Project Manager of Faith and Cultural Champions (FCC), Mrs Rabiat Sodangi, said trusted community leaders enhance acceptance of health interventions.

She said faith and cultural leaders enjoy community trust, influence and authority, making them effective advocates for positive health practices.

According to her, the breastfeeding project is being implemented in six local government areas across Kaduna State.

She said the initiative aims to improve maternal, newborn and child health while reducing maternal and infant deaths.

Sodangi said proper breastfeeding produces healthier, better nourished and more intelligent children.

She urged mothers to exclusively breastfeed infants for six months before introducing complementary feeding while continuing breastfeeding for two years.

Earlier, Dr Fatima Abdullahi, a paediatrician at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria, advocated exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life.

She said breastfeeding strengthens mother-child bonding and promotes healthy physical and cognitive development.

According to her, exclusive breastfeeding protects babies against diarrhoea, pneumonia, allergies and other childhood illnesses.

Abdullahi said breastfeeding also reduces mothers' risks of postpartum bleeding, breast cancer and endometrial cancer.

She urged governments and employers to provide paid maternity leave, workplace crèches and breastfeeding breaks.

The paediatrician advised families, especially husbands, to provide emotional, nutritional and practical support for breastfeeding mothers.

within one hour after birth.

Also speaking, the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) Consultant, Joro Adam, called for greater involvement of fathers in breastfeeding education.

Adam said fathers play important roles in encouraging successful breastfeeding practices at home.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that participants received health talks, breastfeeding demonstrations and interactive question and answer sessions.



BREASTFEEDING:
World Breastfeeding Week 2026: Empowering Mother to Give Children the Best Start in Life.

Gunmen attack Enugu church as security operatives intensify abducted victims rescue

ENUGU

A joint security team in Enugu State has intensified trail of armed men alleged to have abducted three persons in a church at Inoyi, Affa Community in Udi Local Government Area on Sunday.

The joint security team comprised police operatives, Forest Guards, and members of the Neighbourhood Watch Group.

This is contained in a statement issued by the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Daniel Ndukwe on Sunday in Enugu.

Ndukwe said that the operatives, while closing in on the fleeing suspects, forced them to abandon one of the victims, who was rescued unhurt.

According to him, the assailants, however, escaped with the remaining two victims.

Ndukwe said that the Commissioner of Police in the state, Mr Mamman Giwa, had directed the Area Commander, Oji-River, and the Head of the Command's Violent Crime Response Unit (VCRU) to further intensify ongoing operations.

The police commissioner directed them to deploy all available operational assets to ensure the safe rescue of the remaining victims and the apprehension of the suspects.

He said that the commissioner also directed the Assistant Commissioner of Police in-charge of the State Intelligence Department (SID) to immediately generate actionable human and technical intelligence in support of the operation.

Ndukwe said that the command would be activating the surveillance and technical capabilities of the Enugu State Command-and-Control Centre to bolster the ongoing rescue efforts.

FG begins assessment of flood-affected sections on Benin-Sagamu Expressway

ORE (ONDO)

The Federal Ministry of Works has begun an assessment of flood-affected sections along the Benin-Sagamu Expressway following recent torrential rainfall that disrupted movement on parts of the highway.

The Minister of Works, Engr Dave Umahi stated this on Monday while inspecting the affected sections at the Ore corridor in Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

According to Umahi, the three major flood-prone locations along the Ondo section of the expressway are; Agofure at Km 100, Adolak Junction near Ore Flyover Bridge at Km 107, and the Agric Section at Km 117.

He said the ministry was proposing targeted engineering interventions at the identified locations to prevent future flooding and improve safety along the highway.

Umahi, who was represented by the Federal Controller of Works in Ondo State, Engr Olajide Hussein, said the inspection was to identify flood-prone locations along major road corridors and find possible solutions.

The minister said the recent intense rainfall had resulted in flooding in several communities and road corridors across the country, adding that the ministry had commenced technical evaluation to address the challenge.

He disclosed that the ministry was currently examining the causes of the overflow through hydraulic evaluation of existing culverts and drainage channels.

"The recent intense precipitation across the country has caused widespread flooding in various communities and along major road corridors, a phenomenon widely attributed to ongoing climate change impacts.

"We are currently tracing the sources of the overflow to implement proactive solutions, including the potential resizing of cross-culverts and desilting blocked channels," the minister said.

Abducted Kebbi High Court judge regains freedom- Police

BIRNIN KEBBI

The Kebbi Police Command has confirmed the release of kidnapped High Court Judge, Justice Faruk Bunza, who was abducted from his residence in Bunza Local Government Area of the state.

This was contained in a statement issued in Birnin Kebbi on Monday by the Public Relations Officer, SP Bashir Usman.

Usman said that the judge regained his freedom after spending about one week in captivity.

"Though the abductors demanded a ransom during the period of captivity, the command maintained its firm position against the payment of ransom to criminals.

"The police and other security agencies have stepped up investigatiion to track down the perpetrators and bring them to justice," he said.

Usman appealed to members of the public to support the ongoing investigation by volunteering credible information that could lead to the arrest of the suspects.

He assured residents that all information provided would be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Breastfeeding boosts health, economy, environment — Plateau Commissioner

JOS

Dr Nicholas Ba'amlong, Plateau Commissioner for Health, says breastfeeding significantly improves maternal and child health while delivering economic and environmental benefits, describing it as one of the most effective and affordable public health interventions available.

Ba'amlong said this on Monday in Jos during the 2026 World Breastfeeding Week celebration, themed: "Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works," emphasising its importance to child survival and development.

According to him, exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life significantly reduces childhood illnesses, including diarrhoea, pneumonia and malnutrition, while improving growth outcomes and strengthening the overall wellbeing of children.

He added that continued breastfeeding alongside appropriate complementary feeding up to two years and beyond helps reduce the risk of obesity and other non-communicable diseases later in life for children.

Ba'amlong said breastfeeding offered important health benefits to mothers, including faster recovery after childbirth, reduced postpartum bleeding and natural child spacing through the Lactational Amenorrhea Method under appropriate conditions and circumstances.

He further said that breastfeeding lowered mothers' risk of developing breast and ovarian cancers, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, making it a critical component of long-term maternal health promotion.

The commissioner said breastfeeding benefited families economically by reducing expenditure on infant formula and treatment of childhood illnesses, thereby easing financial burdens and improving household welfare and stability nationwide.

According to him, breastfeeding also supports environmental sustainability by eliminating manufacturing, packaging and transportation requirements for breast milk substitutes, thereby reducing pollution, waste generation and carbon emissions significantly.

NAICOM confirms 43 insurers, reinsurers meet NIIRA 2025 capital requirements

The National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has confirmed that 43 insurance and reinsurance companies have complied with the new minimum capital requirements stipulated under the Nigerian Insurance Industry Reform Act (NIIRA) 2025.

The commission madel this known in a public notice on Monday in Lagos.

According to the regulator, the verified companies comprise life, non-life, composite insurance firms as well as reinsurance operators that have successfully met the statutory capital requirements.

The commission listed the compliant firms as Zenith General Insurance Company Ltd., Leadway Assurance Company Ltd., Custodian Life Assurance Ltd., Custodian and Allied Insurance Plc, NEM Insurance Plc, AIICO Insurance Plc, CHI Life Assurance Ltd., Heirs General Insurance Ltd., FIN Insurance Company Ltd., Cornerstone Insurance Plc and Mutual Benefits Assurance Plc.

Others are Heirs Life Assurance Ltd., Tangerine General Insurance Ltd., Capital Express Indemnity Insurance Ltd., Continental Reinsurance Plc, FBS Reinsurance Ltd., Sanlam-Allianz General Insurance Nigeria Ltd., Prudential Zenith Life Insurance Ltd., Consolidated Hallmark Insurance Plc, Stanbic IBTC Insurance Ltd., Sanlam-Allianz Life Insurance Nigeria Ltd., Sterling Assurance Nigeria Ltd., AXA Mansard Insurance Plc and Unitrust Insurance Company Ltd.

Also on the list are Capital Express Life Assurance Ltd., Mutual Benefits Life Assurance Ltd., NSIA Insurance Ltd., Rex Insurance Ltd., LASACO Assurance Plc, Linkage Assurance Plc, Anchor Insurance Company Ltd., Enterprise Life Assurance Company (Nigeria) Ltd., SUNU Assurances Nigeria Plc, KBL Insurance Ltd., International Energy Insurance Plc, Veritas Kapital Assurance Plc, NPF Insurance Company Ltd., Fortis Global Insurance Plc, Coronation Life Assurance Ltd., Industrial and General Insurance Plc, Coronation Insurance Plc, Prestige Assurance Plc and Great Nigeria Insurance Plc.

FBN reinforces commitment to women entrepreneurship with ₦10million grants

First Bank of Nigeria Ltd. (FirstBank) has reinforced its commitment to women entrepreneurship with the inauguration of "Spark A Gem Challenge", awarding N10 million in grants to outstanding women-owned businesses.

A statement by the bank in Lagos, said the initiative was a flagship programme under its "Women Preneur Pitch-A-Ton" programme and "First-Gem" proposition.

It said the initiative was designed to provide women entrepreneurs with business training, mentorship, networking opportunities and funding support.

According to the bank, the programme attracted 356 applications from women-owned businesses operating in agriculture, education, healthcare, food services and other sectors of the economy.

It added that after a rigorous selection process, eight finalists underwent a four-day capacity-building programme before pitching their business ideas to an independent panel of judges.

It said Mrs Onyinye Obayi, founder of Honeypot Confections Ltd., emerged as the overall winner, receiving a N5 million grant.

It also said that the first and second runners-up received N3 million and N2 million, respectively, bringing the total grant disbursement to N10 million.

The bank further said that all applicants had been integrated into its FirstGem ecosystem, giving them access to banking services, advisory support and future credit opportunities.

Mr Chuma Ezirim, Group Executive, e-Business and Retail Products at FirstBank, said the initiative reflected the bank's commitment to supporting women beyond providing finance.

"When women thrive, economies thrive. Women entrepreneurs play a critical role in driving economic growth, job creation and community development.

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Navy recovers 61,000 ltrs of petroleum products from reactivated illegal networks in Rivers

ABUJA

The Nigerian Navy has recovered 61,000ltrs of petroleum products in Rivers through the disruption of a reactivated illegal refining structure.

This is contained in an operational report by the Director of Naval Information, Capt. Abiodun Folorunsho on Sunday in Abuja.

According to Folorunsho, the navy, through the operation, sustained its operational momentum against crude oil theft and illegal refining activities under Operation DELTA SENTINEL, while recording another significant success in Rivers.

"The operation, conducted by personnel of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) PATHFINDER within the Ogba-Egbema-Ndoni axis of Rivers, led to the discovery and deactivation of three newly established illegal refining sites linked to ongoing crude oil theft activities in the area."

He said during the operation, personnel recovered approximately 43,000 litres of products suspected to be stolen crude oil and 18,000 litres of suspected illegally refined Automotive Gas Oil (AGO) concealed in 12 dugout pits and reservoirs.

"The sum of both illegal refined products recovered brings the total volume of recovered petroleum products to 61,000 litres", he said.

He said that the latest discovery highlighted the continued attempts by criminal elements to reactivate and expand illegal refining operations despite sustained enforcement efforts.

The captain recalled that similar illegal refining infrastructure was dismantled within the same general area in July 2026, underscoring

Nigerian commodity firm, Neveah bags ISO certifications

ABUJA

Neveah Limited, a Nigerian commodities export and recycling company, has achieved Integrated Management System (IMS) certification for ISO 9001 for Quality Management, ISO 14001 for Environmental Management and ISO 45001 for Occupational Health and Safety.

Mr Ibidapo Lawal, the company's Managing Director, announced this in a statement on Sunday.

According to Lawal, these certifications mark a significant milestone in Neveah's journey towards operational excellence, sustainable manufacturing, and global best practices.

He said the feats reflected the company's continued commitment to delivering high-quality products, protecting the environment, and ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for its employees, contractors, partners and stakeholders.

"Securing these ISO certifications is an important validation of the systems, discipline and culture we are building at Neveah.

"As we continue to scale our recycling and manufacturing operations, our focus

remains clear: to operate responsibly, deliver consistent value to our customers, protect the environment, and provide a safe workplace for our people.

"This milestone strengthens our position as a trusted Nigerian company competing to global standards," he said.

Lawal said the certifications came at a pivotal time for Neveah as the company continues to deepen its investment in recycling, metals processing and value-added manufacturing.

According to him, with growing demand for responsibly sourced and sustainably produced materials, the certifications further enhance the company's credibility with customers, financial institutions, development partners, regulators and international stakeholders.



MEDIA BRIEFING:
Director of Defence Information, Maj.-Gen. Samaila Uba with other senior officers and Defence Correspondents, during end of the month media briefing by the Director, Defence Media Operations on operational successes of the Armed Forces across the nation in Abuja.

NUPRC seeks deeper industry collaboration to strengthen Nigeria's energy future

LAGOS

The Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) has urged stronger collaboration among government and industry stakeholders to build a resilient, globally competitive petroleum sector to drive Nigeria's economic growth and energy security.

Mrs Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan, Chief Executive of NUPRC, made the call at the ongoing 49th Society of Petroleum Engineers Nigeria Annual (SPE), International Conference and Exhibition (NAICE 2026) on Monday in Lagos.

Eyesan, in a keynote address, said sustained dialogue and partnerships remain critical to positioning Nigeria to thrive amid the rapidly evolving global energy landscape.

She described the conference as one of Africa's foremost technical and strategic energy platforms.

She noted that since its inception in 1976, it has continued to bring together policymakers, regulators, industry leaders, researchers, innovators, and young professionals to shape the future of the oil and gas industry.

According to her, this year's conference theme, "Thriving in the Evolving Global Energy Landscape: Collaborative Growth and Resilience," reflects the realities confronting the industry.

"For us in Nigeria, this conference is much more than another annual event. It is an important platform where ideas are transformed into action," she said.

Eyesan noted that many of the reforms currently transforming Nigeria's upstream petroleum sector were influenced by recommendations and technical contributions from industry engagements such as the SPE conference and similar professional forums.

NEWS

Corruption, weak institutions hindering Nigeria's progress – Eichie

ABUJA

A legal practitioner, Mr Christopher Eichie, has said that corruption, weak institutions and declining ethical values remain major obstacles to Nigeria's development.

Eichie said this at the investiture of Rotarian Nosa Ayemien as the 12th President of the Rotary Club of Abuja Kubwa, in Abuja.

The text of his lecture, titled, "Creating Lasting Impact Through Leadership, Integrity and Service: A Nigerian Perspective," was made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Monday.

Echie said Nigeria had abundant natural resources, a youthful population and entrepreneurial resilience, but continued to face developmental challenges undermining national progress.

According to him, weak institutional accountability, abuse of public trust and insecurity have constrained development despite the country's enormous human and economic potential.

"The absence of integrity remains one of Nigeria's greatest developmental challenges.

"Leadership, integrity and service are inseparable pillars upon which enduring national development rests. Remove one pillar, and the structure becomes unstable," he said.

Eichie attributed corruption and financial crimes to eroding ethical values.

He explained that integrity encompassed honesty, transparency, professional ethics, respect for the rule of law and prudent resource management.

The lawyer said that governments alone could not transform Nigeria, urging ethical leadership across sectors.s

Eichie stressed that leadership should reflect vision, courage, accountability, empathy, service and measurable impact.

He called for stronger institutions, saying nations progressed when systems remained stronger than individuals and consistently rewarded integrity instead of dishonesty.

Eichie advocated greater investment in education, mentorship and skills development, while urging leaders to promote national unity through inclusion, tolerance and mutual respect.

He commended Rotary International's humanitarian initiatives and said, "Leadership without integrity becomes oppression. Integrity without service becomes self-righteousness. Service without leadership lacks direction."

Eichie urged Nigerians to embrace ethical leadership, integrity and selfless service, expressing confidence that collective commitment would build a stronger, more peaceful and prosperous nation.

In his acceptance speech, Ayemien said that rotary is made up of professionals who put their resources together to help the less privileged in the society as well as provide basic amenities for rural communities.

"Rotary bridges the gap between government and the people as the government cannot do it alone," he said.

There were goodwill messages from the District Governor, Rotary District 9127, Sikiru Owonikoko as well as past presidents of the club.

The past presidents included Rotarians Obas Ekeinde, Mike Idemoh, Idowu Olayemi and Shittu Hakeem among others.

Highlight of the occasion was the conferment of award of excellence on some Nigerians who have contributed immensely to the development of their communities.

Fertility expert advocates culturally responsive reproductive healthcare in Africa

ABUJA

A Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Dr Richard Ajayi, has called for culturally responsive reproductive healthcare across Africa.

Ajayi, Founder and Executive Vice Chairman of Bridge Clinic Fertility Centre, Lagos, made the call on Monday, in an interview with newsmen.

He said that healthcare providers, policymakers and investors must reflect on the continent's cultural and religious diversity in the design and delivery of specialised medical services.

He also said that treating Africa as a single healthcare market overlooked the continent's diverse cultural, religious and social realities, particularly in specialised areas such as reproductive medicine.

According to him, healthcare systems that fail to recognise these differences risk losing public trust and limiting access to quality care.

"When global investors and health system architects look at the African continent, they often treat it as a single, homogeneous market destination.

"That is a significant structural error because Africa is not a monolith, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the deployment of specialised medicine."

The consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist noted that nearly three decades of experience in fertility care had shown that patients' beliefs, expectations and treatment preferences varied significantly across different regions.

He explained that while consultations in many parts of Southern Nigeria often focused on educating patients about infertility, reproductive biology and treatment options, clinical practice in parts of Northern Nigeria required greater sensitivity to religious beliefs that influenced healthcare decisions.

According to him, treatment options such as donor eggs, donor sperm and gestational surrogacy may not be acceptable to some patients because of their religious convictions.

"In such settings, there is little value in recommending options that patients consider religiously unacceptable.



GRADUATION CEREMONY:
One of the graduating Student, Rukayya Abdulazez (L); receiving best in weapons handling award from Gov. Uba Sani of Kaduna State, during the graduation ceremony of forest guards, at the Department of Security Service (DSS) training School Afaka area of Kaduna on Sunday

Kefas signs 3 EOs to tackle political thuggery, illegal mining

JALINGO

Governor Agbu Kefas of Taraba has signed three Excutive Orders aimed at tackling political thuggery, illegal mining and drug abuse in the state.

This was contained in a statement issued by the Commissioner for Information and Re-orientation, Ms Zainab Jalingo.

Signing the Executive Orders on Sunday in Jalingo, Kefas noted the alarming rise in substance abuse and its correlation with criminality, violence and social disintegration in the society.

"Drug abuse remains one of the greatest threats to the future of our young people. It fuels insecurity, destroys families,undermines productivity, and exposes communities to various forms of crime.

"The Executive Order provides stronger legal backing for relevant authorities to prevent, monitor, and prosecute activities related to drug abuse while supporting efforts geared towards public enlightenment, rehabilitation, and youth development," Kefas said.

On the executive order prohibiting political thuggery, the governor said the decision was informed by the approaching political campaigns and the need to preserve the peace currently being enjoyed across the state.

He recalled the efforts made by his administration to restore peace and security, stressing that his government would not allow anyone to disrupt public order or undermine the stability of the state.

"The Executive Order prohibits the recruitment, sponsorship, financing, harbouring, or use of political thugs by any individual, group, or political interest.

"It is intended to discourage violence, intimidation, destruction of property, and other unlawful acts often associated with electoral contests"

Fire: FMBN assures of uninterrupted services, says investigation ongoing

ABUJA

The Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) has assured customers and stakeholders that its operations remain unaffected in spite of the fire incident that damaged parts of its headquarters over the weekend.

The bank, in a statement on Monday, by the Group Head, Corporate Communications, Joe Abuku, said the fire broke out on the second floor of its head office on the night of Saturday, August 1, but was swiftly contained.

According to Abuku, the incident resulted in damages to office furniture, equipment and appliances in the affected area.

"The fire was successfully contained and prevented from spreading to other parts of the building.

"While there have been some damages to office furniture, equipment and appliances in the affected areas, we are grateful to report that official documents that were affected are securely backed up electronically, with cloud storage.

"This is thanks to technology. Investigations and evaluations to establish the cause of the fire are still ongoing."

He added that in spite of the incident, the bank had put measures in place to ensure that normal operations continue without significant disruption.

"The office remains open for normal business, and customers can continue to access the bank's services as usual," he said.

He commended the prompt intervention of the Federal Fire Service and the Nigeria Police Force, members of staff and other stakeholders whose coordinated response helped bring the situation under control and prevent further damage.

"We will continue to keep the public informed as investigations progress and more details become available," Abuku assured.

Women's active participation in politics key to sustainable national devt – Expert

ABUJA

A gender advocate, Hajiya Hadiza Abdullahi, has called on Nigerian women to actively involved in politics, saying sustainable national development depends on the active participation and contributions of women in all sectors.

Hajiya Abdullahi said this at the National Convention/ Award Presentation, organised by the Nigerian Women of Integrity Per Excellence Paragon Association in Abuja.

The theme of the convention was "Women in Politics (Merit and Demerit)."

Hajiya Abdullahi, who was also guest speaker at the convention, who said women have a vital role to play in nation building, urged them to take up leadership responsibilities in their communities and across the country.

According to her, sustainable national development depends on the active participation and contributions of women in all sectors.

She urged women to become actively involved in politics, stressing that meaningful representation in governance would enable them to contribute more effectively to policy formulation and decision-making.

According to her, women remain the bedrock of society and possess the capacity to drive positive change.

Hajiya Abdullahi also encouraged women to be exemplary in character and conduct wherever they find themselves.

She advised them to uphold integrity, diligence, and compassion, saying that their actions should inspire others and reflect the values they wish to see in society.

She further described women as the pillar of every society, highlighting their indispensable roles in nurturing families, promoting peace, and fostering national development.

She called on women to remain united, confident, and committed to making lasting contributions to the growth and progress of the nation.

Crime with Mike Osarogiagbon

Edo strengthens security Architecture, trains 497 Forest Guards, Mandates CCTV, intensifies crackdown on cultism and drug trafficking

The security landscape in Edo State witnessed a fresh offensive this week as the government and security agencies stepped up efforts to tackle kidnapping, cultism, drug trafficking, violence and the vandalism of critical infrastructure.

From the forests to the cities and troubled communities, the message from the authorities was clear, criminal elements will have fewer places to hide as security operations are intensified across the nooks and crannies of the state.

As the saying goes, "prevention is better than cure." This appears to be the thinking behind the deployment of 497 newly trained forest guards to secure ungoverned forest areas, often regarded as safe havens for kidnappers and other criminal elements.

The forest guards passed out on Wednesday, July 22, 2026, at the Police Training School, Ogida Barracks, Benin City. Governor Monday Okpebholo, represented by his Chief of Staff, Musa Yakubu, charged them to protect the state's forests and work with conventional security agencies.

The guards are expected to be deployed across Edo's 18 local government areas, with particular attention to ungoverned forests. The initiative is significant because "when the roots of a tree are deep, there is no reason to fear the wind."

The governor Okpebholo-led government is determined to strengthen the foundation of its security architecture before criminal networks can take deeper root.

But securing the forests alone may not be enough. In the urban areas, the Edo State House of Assembly has moved to strengthen surveillance by passing for first reading an executive bill seeking to make Closed-Circuit Television cameras mandatory in designated public places and strategic locations.

The Speaker, Hon. Blessing Agbebaku, said the move would enhance crime prevention, detection and investigation, while expressing the lawmakers' support for Governor Okpebholo's security agenda.

Indeed, the importance of CCTV in modern policing cannot be overstated. "The eyes that watch are often the first line of defence." If effectively implemented, properly maintained and integrated into security operations, the proposed surveillance network could provide security agencies with valuable evidence for tracking criminals and investigating offences, as is the practice in more developed societies.

While the state government is tightening its security net, the Police Command has also moved to contain violence in Iyanomo Community following reports of unrest and a viral video depicting alleged acts of violence.



Arms reportedly recovered from suspected cultists during a security operation at Egbaen, Benin City.



Forest guards during their passing-out parade after completing training to provide security in Edo State forests.

The Command commenced a joint security operation in the community on July 20, 2026, involving personnel of the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

According to the Police Public Relations Officer, Edo Command, ASP Eno Ikoedem, the personnel have been deployed to strategic locations and will remain in the community for as long as necessary to restore peace and protect residents.

The development is a reminder that "peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice and security." Beyond deployment, however, the success of the intervention will depend on identifying the causes of the clash and bringing those responsible to justice.

During the week under review, another significant development was recorded, the Edo Special Criminal Court in Benin remanded 55-year-old Glory Ikpomwonsa at the Benin Correctional Centre over alleged kidnapping, conspiracy, attempted murder, armed robbery and unlawful possession of firearms.

The police prosecutor, Emmanuel Ekibade, told the court that Ikpomwonsa allegedly conspired with others still at large to kidnap Imagbovumwan Egharevba in September 2021 at Alor Community along the Benin-Auchi Expressway.

The victim, according to the prosecution, has not been seen since the alleged abduction. Ikpomwonsa was also accused of attacking one Osazee Ovie with a gun in February at Alor Community.

The suspect is facing an eight-count charge. His counsel, Emmanuel Afolabi, SAN, did not oppose the remand application, while Justice Terry Momodu ordered that he be remanded for 14 days pending legal advice from the Edo State Ministry of Justice.

The case, which was adjourned until August 5, highlights the long shadow cast by unresolved kidnapping cases. Justice delayed may not always be justice denied, but every unresolved disappearance leaves a wound in the heart of a family.

Meanwhile, the fight against cultism recorded another success in Egbaen Community, Ovia North-East Local Government Area, where four suspected cultists were arrested during an early-morning raid.

The operation, conducted by the Edo State Special Security Squad, codenamed Operation Flush Out Kidnappers and Cultists, reportedly followed intelligence that suspected members of the Black Axe group planned to carry out an initiation ceremony in the area.

The raid, led by the Principal Security Officer, Saturday Okoh, led to the recovery of four locally made pistols, a cut-to-size gun, a Beretta pistol and a machete.

Although the suspects denied ownership of the weapons, they allegedly confessed to membership of the Aiye Confraternity. The squad's coordinator, Noah Idemudia, credited members of the public with providing intelligence that led to the crackdown.



Suspected cultists arrested during an early-morning raid at Egbaen, Benin City.

Court remands 3 over alleged cultism in Edo

A Benin High Court on Monday ordered the remand of three persons in police custody over alleged cultism in Edo.

The defendants are Sunday Stephen, 29; Destiny Omogiaho, 22; and Ebenezer Aboiralor, 26.

The trio are facing two-count charge of conspiracy and belonging to a secret cult.

The order followed an ex parte motion filed by the police prosecutor, Emmanuel Ekibade,

Ekibade, after citing relevant sections of the law, prayed the court to remand the defendants in Edo Police Command custody for an initial period of 14 days, pending the conclusion of investigations.

He alleged that the three suspects, on or about Dec. 25, 2025, at Ogueka Community, within the Benin Judicial Division, did conspire among themselves to belong to a secret cult known as the Marphite and Black Axe Secret Cult Supreme Confraternity.

He said the charges contravened Section 412(1) and Section 4(1) of the State Criminal Law, 2022, and is punishable under Section 12(1) of the Edo State Secret Cult and Similar Related Offences Prohibition Law, 2025.

Ekibade noted that the suspects would not suffer any prejudice if the application was granted

The presiding Judge, Justice Williams Azeigbemhin, accordingly granted the prayer and issued the remand order.

He subsequently adjourned the case until Aug. 18.

Horror as jealous lady severs boyfriend's genitals over plan to marry another woman

Operatives of the Kano State Police Command have arrested a 25-year-old lady, Maimunatu Idris, for allegedly stabbing her boyfriend and severing his genitals during a violent confrontation in the Badawa area of Kano State.

The incident occurred around 12:50pm on Monday, July 27, at Durbar Hotel, Badawa, following an argument allegedly triggered by the victim's plan to marry another woman.

The command's spokesperson, CSP Abdullahi Kiyawa, confirmed the incident in a statement shared on X on Tuesday.

According to the police, the hotel management alerted security operatives after the confrontation, prompting the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Badawa Division to mobilise detectives to the scene.

The suspect was arrested at the scene, while the knife allegedly used in the attack was recovered as evidence.

The victim, who sustained severe injuries, was rushed to Abubakar Imam Urology Hospital, where he is currently receiving treatment.

CSP Kiyawa said detectives had commenced a comprehensive investigation into the incident.

The Commissioner of Police, Ibrahim Bakori, condemned the attack and urged members of the public to resolve personal disputes through lawful means.

CP Bakori reportedly stressed that violence was never an acceptable way to settle disputes, warning members of the public against taking the law into their own hands.



2027: APC needs presidential campaign DG with national appeal – Group

ABUJA

The All Progressives Congress (APC) Integrity Group, says the success of the party's 2027 presidential campaign will depend on the emergence of a Director-General with broad national appeal.

National Coordinator of the group, Alhaji Ibrahim Mamman, said this in a statement in Abuja.

Mamman also said that such individual must have proven capacity and unquestionable loyalty to the party, as the task ahead required experience, character, and proven leadership.

He noted that the group had carefully followed the growing discussions and consultations surrounding the appointment of the Director-General of the APC Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) ahead of the 2027 general elections.

He also said the group acknowledged that several distinguished party leaders and loyal stakeholders who had shown interest possessed the requisite credentials to serve in such a strategic position.

"We however believe that the best person for the position should be a leader with proven capacity, unquestionable loyalty to the party, broad national appeal and a political record free from divisive controversies,* he said

The coordinator further said that after a thorough assessment of the personalities being considered, the group was convinced that Sen. Tanko Al-Makura, a former governor of Nasarawa State stood out as the most suitable candidate for the position.

"The task ahead requires experience, character, and proven leadership. Sen. Al-Makura embodies these qualities and remains our preferred choice for the position," Mamman said.

He added that Al-Makura a former senator who epresented Nasarawa South, remained one of the few founding fathers of the progressive movement whose political journey had been defined by discipline, integrity, humility, and service.

According to him, Al-Makura's role in the growth and consolidation of the APC, particularly in the North- Central and across the country is well documented.

"He has consistently demonstrated commitment to the ideals of the party and maintained cordial relationships across political, ethnic, and religious divides.

"At a time when the APC is preparing for another critical electoral contest, the party requires a campaign manager who can unite all tendencies within the fold.

"The party also requires an individual who can coordinate stakeholders effectively and inspire confidence among party members as well as the general electorate. Al-Makura possesses these qualities in abundance.

"Importantly, his reputation as a bridge-builder and a leader without political baggage makes him a compelling choice.

"He commands respect among party leaders, governors, legislators, youth groups, women organisations, and grassroots supporters."

Mamman therefore appealed to the APC leadership and all relevant stakeholders to consider Al-Makura for the position of the director-general of the party's PCC.

He expressed confident that his appointment would strengthen party cohesion, energise the campaign structure, and enhance the APC's prospects of securing a resounding victory in the 2027 presidential election.

He said the group was committed to the unity, stability, and electoral success of the APC.

Osun 2026: I'll restore dignity to public service, ensure prompt salary payments — Oyebamiji

OSOGBO

The governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Osun, Bola Oyebamiji, has pledged to restore dignity to the state's public service, ensure prompt payment of salaries and improve workers' welfare if elected.

Oyebamiji made the pledge while unveiling key aspects of his campaign manifesto, tagged "Prosperity Agenda", on Sunday in Osogbo.

He described the agenda as a practical blueprint for accelerating economic transformation, promoting inclusive governance and delivering sustainable development across the state.

Oyebamiji assured civil servants that his administration would prioritise their welfare through regular salary payments, improved working conditions and policies to enhance productivity and professionalism in the public service.

The APC candidate also promised to tackle unemployment through public works programmes, enterprise support initiatives and strategic investments aimed at creating sustainable jobs, particularly for youths.

Oyebamiji also said that his administration would strengthen the State Investment Promotion Agency, establish industrial parks with modern infrastructure, improve the ease of doing business and position the state among Nigeria's leading investment destinations.

He said strategic economic assets, including the Dagbolu Dry Port, Osun Free Trade Zone, Osun-Osogbo Grove, Oba Hills National Park and the Ido-Osun Airport, would be revived and developed to boost commerce, tourism, entrepreneurship and employment.

According to him, reviving the Dagbolu Dry Port and the Osun Free Trade Zone would improve trade facilitation, strengthen logistics services and position Osun as a competitive industrial and export hub.

"We will resuscitate strategic economic assets that have the capacity to transform Osun's economy, stimulate private sector investment and create wealth for our people," he said.

He also pledged greater support for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through improved access to microcredit, grants and business development services.

On education and healthcare, Oyebamiji promised to modernise school infrastructure, recruit and train teachers, strengthen technical and vocational education, expand apprenticeship opportunities and upgrade healthcare facilities across the state.

He added that his administration would leverage strategic partnerships to advance universal health coverage and improve access to quality healthcare for residents.

Oyebamiji said the "Prosperity Agenda" represents a covenant with the people of the state to deliver economic growth, social inclusion and lasting development through prudent leadership, strategic investments and private sector-driven development.

SCSN urges caution, wider consultations on state police

KADUNA

The Supreme Council for Shariah in Nigeria (SCSN) has cautioned against rushing the creation of State Police, urging comprehensive national consultations.

This was contained in a statement by the council's Secretary General, Nafiu Baba Ahmad, in Kaduna .

The council said Nigeria's worsening insecurity required urgent attention but warned that State Police should not be seen as a quick solution.

It noted that insecurity had claimed thousands of lives, displaced millions and disrupted agriculture, businesses and livelihoods across the country.

The council attributed security failures to inadequate funding, corruption, poor welfare, obsolete equipment, weak intelligence and ineffective coordination among existing security agencies.

It urged government to prioritise reforms through improved funding, recruitment, intelligence gathering, border security, accountability, professionalism and deployment of modern technology.

The council expressed concern over what it described as the hurried constitutional amendment process on State Police.

It said security related constitutional reforms required transparent public hearings, broad consultations and genuine national consensus before implementation.

Kebbi varsity faces indefinite strike as ASUU issues 2-week ultimatum

BIRNIIN KEBBI

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Abdullahi Fodio University of Science and Technology, Aliero (AFUSTA) has issued a two-week ultimatum to Kebbi Government to address its demands or face an indefinite strike.

This was contained in a statement on Sunday jointly signed by Dr Isah Musa-Fakai and Dr Gado Abubakar, the Chairman and Secretary of the union respectively.

The union said the ultimatum is a reminder to stakeholders and all concerned authorities to do the needful regarding the lingering demands.

It added that the government's failure to address the issues affecting the university would compel the union to down tools.

According to the statement, the union will proceed on a total, comprehensive, and indefinite strike until all outstanding issues are completely resolved.

"This press release is to inform the university community, the people of Kebbi, and the general public about the position of our union regarding the persistent non-implementation of the FGN/ASUU 2025 Agreement.

"The agreement became effective on January 1, 2026, as well as other lingering welfare issues affecting members of our branch," the statement added.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **IGIEWE OROBOSA** now wish to be known and Addressed as **OMOMA OROBOSA**. all former document remain valid concerned Authorities and general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME/CORRECTION DATE OF BIRTH

I formerly know as **ISIDAHOME PRECIOUS** now wish to be known and Addressed as **ISIDAHOME PRECIOUS ALHOMON**. and my correct dàte of birth is 18th day of August 1996. Not 18th day of August 1993 . which was wrongly capured on my BVN. All former Document remain Valid Concerned Authorities and general public should please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is here by notified that **KELVIN UYI EVBADAZEHI** and **UWAGBOE UYI EVBADAZEHI** are one and same person.hence now wish to be called **KELVIN UYI EVBADAZEHI**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAMES

The general public is here by notified that **JEGEDE JULIANA EGBERANMWEN** and **JEGEDE EGBERANMWEN EGBE** are one and same person. Henceforth,now wish to be known and addressed as **JEGEDE JULIANA EGBERANMWEN**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note

CORRECTION OF NAME/DATE OF BIRTH

The general public is here by notified that **AKINYANJU TUNDE AYOTUDE** and **AKINYANJU AYOTUNDE NERRY** are one and same person hence forth now wish to be addressed as **AKINYANJU AYOTUNDE NERRY**. And my correct date of birth is 5th of may,1995 and not 5th may 1986 as wrongly written on my international passport. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **Rev. LAURIE OSARIEME WHETSONE-IDAHOSA** now wish to be known and Addressed as **Rev. LAURIE LYNN IDAHOSA**. All former document remain valid concerned Authorities and general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OMOLUWABI BIDEMI ESTHER** now wish to be known and Addressed as **AGBEDOR BIDEMI ESTHER**. All former Document remain valid concerned Authorities and general public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is here by notified that Mr. Isaac Erhunmwunosere Okhovbemina is the rightful owner of a property lying and situate at No 20 1st Uwa lane Ivbiotor quarters off sapele road, Ikpoba Okha Iga, Benin city. That I Mr Omoregie Isaac Erhunmwunosere Okhovbemina is the second son of late Mr Isaac Erhunmwunosere Okhovbemina, that I have the consent and authority of my elder brother the first son, Mr Agbongiazowenaghaze Isaac Erhunmwunosere Okhovbemina and the other of my siblings to depose to this affidavit that our father died on the 1st day of July, 1976 leaving behind the said property for his children to inherit, that the house landed and house documents have been going from one elder family members hand to another during and after the burial of their father, during that process the property was shared among the children the documents got missing and lost. All effort to search and look for the documents proved abortive, hence this publication for record purposes, concerned authorities and the general public take note.

Signed: **Mr. ISAAC ERHUNMWUNOSERE**

LEGAL NOTICE

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and at the place stated in the column;
AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. **PRINCE JOSEPH UWAGBAI AIGBOKHAODE**, late of Iraokhor, Etsako Central L.G.A., who died on the 8th day of July, 2025 in Iraokhor.	**PED/547/2026** **Mrs. ROSELINE INETUNE AIGBOKHAODE** and **Mr. VALENTIN ELOADOGIE AIGBOKHAODE** of No 49, Ewah Road, Benin City, widow and son respectively of the deceased.

DATED THIS 3rd DAY OF AUGUST, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

The Nigerian OBSERVER

FEATURE

Economic Benefits of Governor Okpebholo's 'Shine Beyond Borders' Interaction with Edo in Diaspora

Dr. Patrick Akhere Ebojele



GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO

Rather than a ceremonial gathering full of speeches last weekend, EdoSHINE 2026 UK Executive Forum held in London under the theme, "Shine Beyond Borders" was an ambitious economic engagement that sought to reconnect one of Nigeria's most influential diaspora communities with the future of their homeland, Edo State.

Edo State governor Senator Monday Okpebholo's decision ab initio was to personally engage Edos in Diaspora as professionals, entrepreneurs and investors in the United Kingdom, in a marked departure from the traditional relationship between government and the diaspora. Instead of treating Edo people abroad as cultural ambassadors whose contributions end with remittances and home visits, the governor presented them as strategic partners capable of driving industrialisation, innovation and sustainable development back home.

The Governor's vision was straightforward: attempt to create structured channels through which diaspora capital, technical expertise and global business networks can support critical sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure, healthcare and technology in Edo State. By allowing potential investors to engage him personally and directly, ask questions and understand government policies without bureaucratic bottlenecks, he used the forum to remove barriers that have often discouraged serious investment.

Secretary to the Government, Umar Musa Ikhilor, who outlined the philosophy behind the SHINE Agenda, argued that the administration's approach goes beyond infrastructure. He described it as "practical governance."

that places Edo people at the centre of government decisions. He also noted that Governor Okpebholo has since recognised the strategic importance of Edo citizens abroad. This he said informed his establishment of the Edo State Diaspora Agency, appointment of a Special Adviser and a Senior Special Assistant on Diaspora Affairs,

"The second highest foreign revenue into Nigeria's economy is diaspora remittances. You contribute about $21 billion annually. As a community, you are not just important to Nigeria; you are important to Edo State and to the agenda of Senator Monday Okpebholo", he said.

The SSG said the Governor inherited a government heavily dependent on consultants but chose to redirect public funds towards improving workers' welfare and strengthening institutions. According to him, contract workers earning meagre salaries were absorbed into government employment, teachers under the EdoSTAR programme received improved conditions of service, while funding to Ambrose Alli University increased significantly after consultant-managed arrangements were discontinued.

Perhaps more telling, he recalled proposing a multimillion-naira media campaign to counter political attacks against the administration. But the governor said, "I am not going to use Edo people's money for that. I can stand at Ring Road and let them abuse me rather than waste public funds.' That is the philosophy of practical governance."

The Governor's UK outreach also drew comparisons with one of the world's most admired development stories. Popular comedian and philanthropist, I Go Die likened the initiative to Singapore's transformation under Lee Kuan Yew, who deliberately sought global expertise to modernise his country.

"Your Excellency, you have made the right move by coming to London because development is a collective responsibility. No leader can do it alone," he said.

"Just as Lee Kuan Yew travelled around the world to attract the best brains that helped transform Singapore, you have taken that same strategic step by reaching out to Edo people in the diaspora. This is how nations build lasting prosperity."

Beyond the symbolism, I Go Die said his admiration for the Governor was reinforced by a personal experience in which the governor assured him that justice over a disputed parcel of land would extend to every affected resident, not just to him. He also praised the administration's infrastructure drive, saying visible projects such as the Benin City flyover has strengthened public confidence in government.

The forum's significance was further underscored by the former Governor of Edo State, and serving Senator representing Edo North Senator Adams Oshiomhole, who openly admitted that although he served eight years as governor, he never conceived the idea of convening Edo stakeholders in the United Kingdom.

"I was governor for eight years unbroken. I did not think of coming to the United Kingdom to account to Edo stakeholders. This is a fundamental shift."

For Senator Oshiomhole, the London engagement reflected a governor willing to account for hisq stewardship while inviting Edo people abroad to become active partners in building the state's future rather than distant observers.

He challenged members of the diaspora to move beyond applauding government efforts and begin investing in the opportunities emerging across Edo State. While government, he argued, has the responsibility to provide roads, infrastructure and security, sustainable economic growth can only be driven by private enterprise.

"Government cannot build factories. Government creates the enabling environment necessary to attract investors, retain investments and encourage more investment in Edo State," he said, citing the transformation of the cement industry through private investment as evidence that business, not government ownership, ultimately drives industrial growth.

According to him, the area has abundant oranges, pineapples and other fruits capable of supporting a thriving juice-processing industry, yet farmers continue to lose value because there are no processing facilities.

"We have more than enough raw materials, but we don't have a factory for processing. Build this factory with government money, put shares on it and we will buy the shares. We are not asking you to build it for free; we want to work with you."

He estimated that the project could create about 2,000 direct jobs and another 3,000 indirect jobs, transforming agriculture into an industrial value chain while encouraging skilled Edo indigenes abroad to return home with their expertise and investment.

His proposal illustrated one of the forum's central objectives—moving beyond goodwill to structured diaspora investment partnerships capable of stimulating economic growth and creating employment.

That call found immediate expression in a practical proposal from one Prince Ogioba, who resides in the UK and spoke on behalf of Edo professionals in the diaspora. Rather than making broad appeals, he presented a detailed investment plan for a fruit processing factory in Ehor, Uhunmwode Local Government Area.

Former Edo State Deputy Governor Chief Lucky Imasuen also used the occasion to rebut claims that development under Governor Okpebholo was concentrated in only a section of the state. Drawing attention to completed and ongoing projects across Edo South, Edo Central and Edo North, he cited the payment of outstanding pensions and gratuities for workers of the College of Education, Ekiadolor, funding for the College of Agriculture, Iguoriakhi, salary interventions at Edo State Polytechnic, Usen, road construction across the three senatorial districts and scholarship programmes benefiting students statewide.

"Any person who says the Governor is concentrating only in one part of the state is lying," he declared.

He added that projects such as the Evbuotubu-Asoro Road, the Okhun Road linking the Benin-Lagos highway to Iguobazuwa, ongoing work on Ekenwan Road and other infrastructure projects demonstrate an administration pursuing balanced development rather than sectional politics.

Beyond roads and public infrastructure, the forum highlighted emerging opportunities in engineering, renewable energy, healthcare, project management, export logistics and agribusiness. By bringing investors into direct contact with policymakers, the Governor created a platform where concerns over regulations, financing and government policies could be addressed openly. That level of engagement, many participants agreed, is essential for attracting serious investment and building long-term confidence.

For Edo professionals abroad, the message was clear. The state no longer sees them merely as citizens who send remittances home but as partners whose expertise, innovation and financial capacity can accelerate development. From agro-processing and healthcare to construction and technology, the SHINE Agenda offers opportunities that extend far beyond philanthropy.

In many respects, the London forum represented more than an investment conference. It reflected a governance philosophy that places accountability, dialogue and partnership at the centre of development. By presenting his administration's scorecard before Edo citizens overseas, listening to their concerns and inviting them to participate directly in the state's economic future, Governor Okpebholo demonstrated a leadership style that values engagement over distance.

That approach earned praise from across the spectrum of speakers, from Oshiomhole's acknowledgement of the Governor's unprecedented outreach, to Prince Ogioba's commitment to invest, Chief Lucky Imasuen's defence of the administration's record and I Go Die's comparison of the Governor's diaspora strategy to Lee Kuan Yew's global engagement model.

The significance of EdoSHINE 2026 lies in its attempt to redefine the relationship between Edo State and its global community. With the momentum generated in London, the forum may well be remembered as the moment Edo's diaspora ceased to be spectators in the state's development story and became active partners in building a more prosperous economy.

For Governor Monday Okpebholo, it was not simply a visit to the United Kingdom; it was a deliberate effort to take Edo's development conversation beyond borders and invite the world back home.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Ebojele, PhD in Public Administration, is the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.

FEATURE

The Genesis and Growth of Museums in Nigeria

Osumah Augustine

The genesis of museums is often traced to ancient Greek civilisation, but chroniclers argue that shrines akin to museums also existed in Nigeria in that era. Museion is the Greek word changed to museum. The museion was a temple of goddesses called muses. In old Greece, muse means the giver of inspiration. Zeus was king of the gods and goddesses. Nine muses were born by Zeus and Mnemosyne known as the goddess of memory. Each muse had specific inspiration. Euterpe presided over music. Erato handled love poems. Calliope produced heroic poems. Clio was in charge of history. Melpomene managed tragedy. Thalia controlled comedy. Polyhymnia tackled hymns. Terpsichore was in command of dance. Urania headed astronomy.

In Nigeria, the genesis of modern-day museums dates back to the period of colonialism. In that inventive phase, assorted items of cultural values like engraved ivory, bronze and wooden objects were preserved because they were very useful and symbolic. Havens for relics were christened colonial museums during colonial time. The surfacing of the colonial museums in Nigeria is traceable to 1913. In that period the political memorandum composed by Sir Lord Lugard acknowledged the necessity of permanent reserves that would improve the inclement climatic condition; conserve the fast fading reserve of flora and fauna; preserve the visual quality and aesthetics of the landscape; and make playing fields available.

K.C. Murray, E.H. Duckworth, J.D. Clarke, B.E.B. Fagg, Hunt-Coole and S. Milburn initiated the growth of modern museums in Nigeria. K.C. Murray took the following giant strides in 1927. First was to compile works of arts. Second was to persuade the government to enact laws that put a stop to illegal export of artefacts. Third was to convince the government to create museums in Nigeria. Soon after the abovementioned moves, the Antiquities Commission was established. Antiquities Commission was once headed by K.C. Murray, K.O. Dike, and Bernard Fagg as Directors. Via their headship, museums in Nigeria improved. Regulations and reforms were enforced to help develop the way museums should be operated.

There were Antiquities Ordinance No. 7 of 1953 and Antiquities (amendment) Decree of 1969. Antiquities Ordinance No. 7 of 1953 gave rise to the Department of Antiquities. The other rules were the Antiquities (Prohibited Transfers) Decree No. 9 of 1974 and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments NCMM) Decree No. 77 of 1979. About thirty museums were founded in Nigeria between 1945 and 1985. The Federal Government achieved this feat via agencies named the Department of Antiquities and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments. Both agencies united to set up viable museums in Nigeria.

The earliest national museums in Nigeria were founded in 1945 and 1946 in Esie (Kwara State) and Benin (Edo State) respectively. Additional ones were built in later years. Fifty two national museums currently exist in Nigeria. The said museums with different forms and features are subsumed under two key groups namely, private and public. In Nigeria, private and public museums exist side-by-side. Private museums are established and owned by individuals while public museums are founded by government as part of its onus to deliver services to the general public. Both categories of museums operate within the domain of public laws.



National Museum in Benin City



Each national museum in Nigeria is named according to its feature. Hence there are military and war, archaeological, historical, zoological, architectural, and ethnographic museums. In the military and war museums, objects put on show represent military histories, as well as the past civil and world wars Nigerian soldiers joined in fighting. Archaeological museums for the most part exhibit any excavated artefacts. History museums preserve for future generations all the remains of outstanding phenomena which were experienced in the previous ages. Zoological museums include collections of assorted animals for public viewing.

> Private museums are established and owned by individuals while public museums are founded by government as part of its onus to deliver services to the general public.

Architectural museums put relics of local architecture on display. Ethnographic museums furnish the public with the diverse ideas about human cultures across the globe.

It is the exclusive responsibility of the Federal Government to establish and regulate national museums in Nigeria. The NCMM is the department the Federal Government established and entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the affairs of all national museums. It is the duty of the NCMM to convert the people's vast heritage resources into abiding wealth for the country. Decree No. 77 of 1979 conferred authority on the NCMM to grant approval to any museums privately established, owned and maintained, and at whatever time withdraw such approval if there is a proof of constitutional breach. This is done to make the private museums comply with the statutes guiding and regulating the operations of national museums.

The fifty two (52) national museums in Nigeria include the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Abuja; National Museum of Colonial History, Aba; National Museum, Abakaliki; National Museum, Abeokuta; National Museum, Akure; National Museum, Asaba; Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Mausoleum, Bauchi; National Museum, Benin; Rock Art Interpretive Centre, Birnin Kudu; National Museum, Calabar; Slave History Museum, Calabar; National Museum, Damaturu; National Museum of Unity, Enugu; National Museum, Esie; National Museum, Gombe; and National Museum, Hong.

Others comprise National Museum of Unity, Ibadan; National Museum, ICT Centre; National Museum, Igbo-Ukwu; National Museum, Ile-Ife; National Museum, Ilorin; National Museum, Jalingo; and National Museum, Jos; Museum of Traditional Nigerian Architecture (Motna), Jos; Zoological Garden, Jos; Centre for Earth Construction Technology (CECTECH), Jos; Institute of Archaeology and Museum Studies (IAMS), Jos; National Museum, Kaduna; Gidan Makama Museum, Kano; National Museum, Kanta; National Museum, Katsina; National Museum, Koko; National Museum, Lafia; and National Museum, Lagos.

Last of all are National Museum of Colonial History, Lokoja; National Museum, Maiduguri; National Museum, Makurdi; National Museum, Minna; National Museum, Nok; National Museum, Ogbomosho; National Museum, Oron; National Museum, Osogbo; National Museum, Owerri; National Museum, Owo; National Museum, Oyo; National Museum, Port Harcourt; National Museum, Sokoto; Interpretation Centre, Sukur; National War Museum, Umuahia; National Museum, Uyo; National Museum, Yenagoa; and National Museum, Yola.

FEATURE

When the mob becomes Judge: The rise of jungle justice in Nigeria

Bagudu Mohammed



JUNGLE JUSTICE

When our choices begin to dictate our actions, and condonation masquerades as justice, we slip quietly into what can only be called jungle justice.

A viral video now making the rounds shows an attack on a Tinubu supporter in Delta. Mr. Tempo Mudi, described as a Protocol Officer to the Delta State Governor, was set upon by some youths while campaigning for President Tinubu's re-election at the Petroleum Training Institute Conference Centre in Effurun. The clip spread not because Nigerians needed information, but because outrage travels faster than context. It spreads because some people have learned that fear is a currency. Instill withdrawal, paranoia, and the illusion that liberty can be revoked by a crowd, and you do not need a courtroom to govern. You only need a mob.

What we are witnessing is less a protest and more a contest for supremacy. State actors and non-state actors are both reaching for the same weapon: coercion. Each wants their version of truth to stand as absolute, and each is willing to use self-help to enforce it.

Political theorists from Hobbes to Weber warned us about this exact drift. Hobbes called it the state of nature, where life becomes nasty and short once the monopoly of violence fractures. Max Weber reminded us that the state is legitimate precisely because it claims that monopoly. When citizens and officials alike abandon that boundary, we do not get more democracy. We get a marketplace of intimidation where physical strength, ridicule, and bullying are sold as patriotism. Sociologist Charles Tilly once observed that politics is organized crime with better branding. In Nigeria today, the branding is slipping.

The irony is brutal. Many of the same voices who demand free speech, fair hearing, and due process, who accuse leaders of capturing the National Assembly, the judiciary, INEC, and the security agencies, are quick to pick up the same tools of strongman rule the moment they feel strongest. They become accuser, prosecutor, and judge in one breath.

The problem is not simply that a Tinubu supporter was attacked. The problem is that we have normalized a logic where popularity becomes evidence and sentiment becomes sentence. Research on vigilantism across Africa by scholars like Daniel Smith and Lars Buur shows a consistent pattern: when people lose faith in institutions, they do not abandon justice. They privatize it. And privatized justice is always cruel, because it answers to no appeal.

Consider the condemnation that followed. Even ADC presidential aspirant Atiku Abubakar rightly denounced the Delta attack. Yet condemnation alone cannot cauterize the deeper wound, which is the chaos that convinces ordinary people to act as courts. If we enshrine this standard, how do we then protect an Atiku supporter in a place where he does not command popular sentiment? How do we protect a Peter Obi supporter where the crowd has decided otherwise? The rule cuts both ways. And at the center, the APC controls the police and security architecture. If state actors choose to mirror the same logic of force that citizens use on the streets, the result will not be order. It will be escalation.

Jungle justice is never honorable, whether it comes from the street or from the state. It is the same impulse in different uniforms. The tragedy is that many groups have come to believe they benefit from an atmosphere of anxiety, paranoia, and subjugation. Political scientist Jean-Paul Azam's work on conflict economies explains why: chaos creates opportunities for extraction. When institutions are weak, violence becomes a shortcut to relevance. And so a norm is inherited. Citizens learn it from leaders who bypass procedure. Leaders learn it from citizens who bypass the law. Each teaches the other how to win without rules.

Three days ago in Jos, that lesson turned fatal. The Cable reported on July 29, 2026 that Ibrahim Mabaye, a 25-year-old political science student and model at the University of Jos, was tortured to death around Ring Road in Jos North over an alleged stolen iPhone 12. Two of four suspects told police they beat him with planks and canes after tying him with ropes. Emmanuel Newyear said he hit Mabaye three times because he wanted the phone's location. Teslor Joshua said he only held the legs. The owner of the phone, Rinji Daniel, said Mabaye had slept in his room after an event and disappeared by 4am. By the time colleagues rushed him to JUTH, he was gone. Social media erupted, but outrage did not resurrect him.

> Jungle justice is never honorable, whether it comes from the street or from the state. It is the same impulse in different uniforms. The tragedy is that many groups have come to believe they benefit from an atmosphere of anxiety, paranoia, and subjugation.

Weeks earlier, a schoolteacher, Maryam Usman, was attacked in Kogi for disciplining a child. In Kaduna state, a woman was burned to death on suspicion of child theft. These are not isolated outbursts. Criminologists call this "expressive violence," where punishment is performed publicly to reassert community control. It feels like justice to the crowd, but as legal scholar Jeremy Waldron argues, it strips individuals of the dignity of being judged by law rather than by rumor.

And the state is not innocent. On July 30, 2026, Platinum Post reported that a House of Representatives Ad Hoc Committee probing the Presidential Foreign Investment Promotion Council found that the signature on Adeniyi Adeyemi's appointment letter as DG did not match nine other correspondences from the Office of the Chief of Staff. Hon. Yusuf Adamu Gagdi told the hearing, attended by Head of Service Didi Esther Walson-Jack, that only that letter looked different. Adeyemi was arrested on July 14 by the Police IRT in Osun. The Accountant-General, Shamseldeen Ogunjimi, testified that a response letter was intercepted before it reached the State House. Meanwhile, a viral video quoted President Bola Ahmed Tinubu expressing absolute confidence in Chief of Staff Femi Gbajabiamila and urging critics to stop the "campaign of calumny," even as a committee investigates. If the head has already delivered the verdict, what room is left for the report? If that is not state condonation mirroring jungle justice, what is it?

Even in Kano, the private and the public collapse into each other. A Kano High Court sentenced Saudat Jibril to death by hanging for allegedly killing her husband nine days after their wedding in Farawa. The prosecution called three witnesses; the defense called only her. Justice Maryam Sabo found the evidence sufficient. In another case, police arrested 25-year-old Maimunatu Idris for allegedly attempting to sever her boyfriend's genitals at Durbar Hotel after learning he planned to marry another woman. The law moved here, slowly, formally. But the public imagination had already tried and sentenced both women long before the gavel fell.

All of this points to one uncomfortable truth. When we allow choice to dictate action without law, we do not get freedom. We get fear dressed as freedom. We do not get accountability. We get performance. The social contract frays not with a bang, but with a thousand small permissions: a slap here, a forged signature there, a viral video that decides guilt before trial. Political theorist Achille Mbembe describes this as "necropolitics," the power to decide who may live and who must die in public view. That power is no longer reserved for the state. It has been democratized, and that is precisely the danger.

This is how our choices dictate our actions. This is how condonation becomes indistinguishable from jungle justice. And until we return the authority to judge to institutions bound by evidence, appeal, and time, any of us can become the next suspect, the next video, the next name read out in a press statement.

Bagudu can be reached via bagudumohammed15197@gmail.com or 07034943575.

NEWS

FOREIGN



IRAN WAR:
US President Donald Trump and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Iran denies Trump's claim of new talks commencement date

Iran has denied Donald Trump's claim that new talks on ending the conflict would begin on Monday, after the US president called off what he said would have been "massive" strikes on the country.

Speaking on board Air Force One on Sunday, he said Iran "knew the extent of the attack because they saw it forming", adding: "We're talking to them in the form of a negotiation. It begins tomorrow afternoon."

In an earlier post on Truth Social, Trump said he had been asked by Iran and US allies in the Middle East to "hold off" as the "perimeters" of a deal had been agreed.

But on Monday Iran's foreign ministry denied they were negotiating with the US, or that there were any plans to do so.

Spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei added that Tehran was negotiating with Oman to reach "an understanding over a path to ensure the security of shipping passage through the Strait of Hormuz".

Earlier talks between the US and Iran have been facilitated through mediators.

Trump has repeatedly vowed that a negotiated end to the war is near, only for tit-for-tat strikes to resume.

In his remarks on Air Force One, Trump declined to outline a deadline for a deal to be struck with Tehran, adding: "We'll just see how it is. We're ready to go anytime we want... I'm not looking to kill people."

The US president did not specify where the talks on Monday would be held or who would attend.

Trump added that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman - as well as US partners such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar - had urged him against conducting strikes over the weekend.

"We were all set to go," Trump said. "The reason they asked is [that] they think there's a deal," he said. "There's a deal on Hormuz, and there will be a deal on the nuclear."

Global oil prices fell on Monday morning in Asia trading after Trump's announcement. Brent Crude oil was down by 4.5% at $83.98 (£62.26), while US-traded oil was 4.6% lower at $80.74 (£59.85).

Energy prices have fluctuated since the conflict started on 28 February as traders reacted to disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

Around 20% of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) usually flows through the strait.

Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency denied that Tehran had asked the US to hold off on further military action, saying Trump's claims were "nothing but a new lie".

During his remarks on Air Force One, Trump said that the planned strikes would have been "the biggest attack since World War Two", and could have derailed prospects of a negotiated end to the months-long war.

Trump declined to answer if he had been planning to strike Iranian energy infrastructure, which international law experts have said could constitute a war crime.

Iran's acting Defence Minister Majid Ibn al-Reza earlier 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.

In his post on Saturday, he 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".

But he added 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. At the time, he also threatened to destroy civilian infrastructure and power plants.

Two crew killed after firefighting helicopters collide in Greece, as British pilot survives

Two crew members have been killed after two helicopters collided mid-air in Greece while battling wildfires.

The fatalities were a Danish pilot and a Greek fire service liaison officer. A British pilot and another Greek co-ordinator on the second helicopter survived.

Video of the incident some 65 km (42 miles) west of the capital Athens shows one of the two Bell helicopters hitting the rotors of the other, which bursts into flames and crashes in a ravine. The other aircraft made an emergency landing.

Wildfires have broken out in Greece this week, prompting mass evacuations. Other European states have also suffered devastating blazes during prolonged heatwaves.

According to the Greek Fire Service, the two Bell helicopters leased from Australian company McDermott Aviation collided on Sunday while taking part in efforts to tackle a large wildfire burning on the Attica-Boeotia border.

The crew members of one aircraft were rescued alive, while the second crew were recovered unconscious and later pronounced dead.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis expressed his "deepest sorrow" over the accident.

In a post on X, he said the loss of the Greek coordinator and Danish pilot "fills us all with grief". He also sent condolences to their families.

According to protocol, all Bell helicopters across the country have been grounded, a source from the civil protection ministry told the BBC.

The source added that the second Bell helicopter involved in the collision made an emergency landing in an area of low vegetation.

"The two people on board, a British pilot and a Greek fire service liaison officer - escaped with minor injuries," the source said.

"Both remained conscious and have been admitted to hospital, where they will remain under observation for 24 hours as a precaution."

The source also told the BBC the British survivor was a private pilot hired for the wildfire season.

He was not part of any exchange between the UK and Greece, and there was no request for assistance from Athens.

Meanwhile, Greece's Ekathimerini news website said the two survivors immediately reported the collision, guiding rescuers to the crash site.

Massive Attack respond after Singapore ban over Palestine display

Massive Attack have said they were "surprised and disappointed" by their treatment by Singaporean authorities after expressing pro-Palestine sentiments during a performance in the city-state.

The group wrote on Instagram on Sunday that its members were "detained by the police, isolated and separately questioned", with some subject to hotel room searches and temporary passport confiscation.

The band's two members held up a Palestinian flag during its 29 July show there and shouted "free Palestine" alongside members of the audience.

Singapore, which has stringent rules on public speech and assembly, subsequently said it had indefinitely banned Massive Attack from returning to the country.

A police spokeswoman told the BBC on Friday that the two band members would not be allowed to re-enter Singapore and were barred from performing there.

Robert Del Naja and Grant Marshall were "given stern warnings" concerning alleged offences under two laws that restrict the public display of foreign flags and regulate political expressions at public events.

Massive Attack said that before the show and again at the end "large sections of the auditorium organically led chants of 'Free Palestine', presumably aware but undeterred that this spontaneous expression alone could violate their government's censorship laws".

The band did not address the ban directly, but described the situation as a "surreal experience" and said they "did not imagine that merely holding up the flag of a sovereign state recognised by 157 countries would violate any law".

They added that they were "proud to have made the impromptu expression" with fans in Singapore, who "clearly felt a moral imperative to show solidarity with the people of Palestine".

The band's Instagram post, which has been liked by 146,000 users, was flooded with supportive messages from fans.

"Many of us in Singapore have grown up learning to be careful with what we say, how loudly we say it, and when it's safer to stay silent," wrote one Instagram user.

"Thank you for standing with Palestine... and for showing us that integrity can still take centre stage."

Crystal Lim-Lange, a content creator in Singapore who attended the concert, wrote in an Instagram post that this was a "complex issue".

She said she believed "artists should respect the laws of the countries they perform in".

"However, I also believe art has always challenged ideas, reflected society and sparked difficult conversations. Trying to separate art from politics has never been straightforward."

Massive Attack are known for openly expressing their political stance on a range of issues, including the war in Gaza.

Malaysian boy on trial for allegedly murdering girl in school

A teenage boy in Malaysia is on trial for allegedly killing a female schoolmate, in a high-profile case that has sparked debate about the effects of social media on children.

The boy is accused of murdering 16-year-old Yap Shing Xuen last October. The girl was found fatally stabbed multiple times in a toilet at their secondary school on the outskirts of the capital Kuala Lumpur.

The boy, who was 14 at the time, has pleaded not guilty. If convicted, he could spend decades in prison.

Police previously said they suspected social media could have influenced the boy.

Police also confirmed a note was found on him at the time of his arrest. Reports about the note's alleged content have fueled the wider discussion about the role of social media.

Under Malaysian law, the boy cannot be publicly identified as he is still a minor.

His young age also means he will not face the death penalty if found guilty. However he could still face 30 to 40 years in jail, and he could also be flogged. The age of criminal responsibility in Malaysia is 10 years old.

The case has profoundly shocked the country and triggered a nationwide conversation about the negative effects of social media on children, particularly exposure to the manosphere and incel culture.

Some have compared the case to the Netflix series Adolescence, which explores similar themes involving teenage boys, online radicalisation and violence.

Last year Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was asked about the case as well as other recent cases of violence in schools.

He was quoted by local media as saying that "almost all of these issues stem from the use of mobile phones and social media", and vowed to look into stricter measures.

Authorities have since put in place new rules which they say will protect children and reduce their exposure to harmful online content.

Since June, Malaysia has banned all children under the age of 16 from having accounts on major social media platforms.

FOREIGN NEWS



EARTHQUAKE-HIT AEON MALL:
Two store employees were killed after a blast tore through the earthquake-hit Aeon Mall in Kumamoto.

Sudan army drone strike on court session kills 35, rights group says

Thirty-five people were killed in a drone strike by the Sudanese army on a traditional court session in the north of the Darfur region, a local rights organisation has said.

Dozens more were reported injured in Sunday afternoon's attack.

The Emergency Lawyers Group, which monitors violence against civilians, said the attack occurred in Ghara al-Zawiya village that is controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The army has not commented.

The RSF holds most of Darfur, in the west of the country, as the two sides continue to fight in the three-year-long civil war that has devastated the country, killed tens of thousands of people and forced millions from their homes.

Sunday's "court session was being held under a tree with the participation of local community leaders," a witness is quoted by the AFP news agency as saying.wa

Four tribal leaders and two RSF commanders were among those killed in the attack, according to the witness.

The privately owned Darfur 24 website quoted a local resident who said that two drones flew over the town "before launching more than four missiles".

The Emergency Lawyers Group called for an investigation into the drone strike and condemned the targeting of the court saying that attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are a "grave violation of international humanitarian law".

It also noted that drones are being increasingly used "to target civilian areas and gatherings, which exacerbates the risks faced by the population".

The RSF has also been accused of war crimes including drone attacks on civilians over the past three years.

The paramilitary group's siege and attack on el-Fasher, one of Darfur's main cities, last year bore the "hallmarks of genocide" according to a UN fact-finding mission.

The RSF has denied the accusations.

A map of Sudan showing about half of the inhabited area under RSF control, in the west, and the rest under army control in the east. There are also pockets of areas controlled by other armed groups on both sides.

Two workers killed in blast after re-entering quake-hit Japan mall on boss' order

Two store employees were killed after a blast tore through the earthquake-hit Aeon Mall in Kumamoto

Two workers who died in a shopping mall explosion that followed a powerful earthquake in Japan last week were asked by a boss to re-enter the building to secure cash.

Their employer, general goods store Habita, has apologised for the "loss of two precious lives".

The two were among 38 people who died in the magnitude 6.8 earthquake in Kumamoto prefecture on 28 July. Seven of the fatalities were from Aeon Mall.

"The instructions given at the time were inappropriate, and I truly regret them," Habita sales director Goji Yuse said, NHK reported.

One of two workers has been named as 22-year-old Kurumi Otake. The identity of the other deceased employee has not been made public.

Otake's family told local media that she ran into a relative outside the Aeon Mall after the earthquake.

She told the relative that she had to go back in because her company had asked her to move money from the cash register into a safe.

This was confirmed by two company representatives, who attended Otake'a wake on Sunday and apologised to her family.

He added that the company was considering how to proceed with the matter, NHK reported.

"Looking back now, it was not worth a life," Yuse told reporters at the wake, Kyodo reported.

Otake's relative described her as someone with a "strong sense of justice". She had supported her mother after her father died three years ago, Asahi Shimbun reported.

"If she hadn't gone back inside the store at that time, Kurumi would still be with her family today," the relative said.

While most people in Aeon mall had evacuated shortly after the earthquake, some employees were still in the building about an hour later, when an explosion ripped through the mall.

"My daughter is not coming back," local media reported her mother as saying.

Habita, founded in 1976 and operates more than ten stores across several prefectures.

Washington state wildfires force 60,000 people to evacuate homes

Over 60,000 evacuated from wildfire danger, says Spokane mayor Lisa Brown

Wildfires have forced around 60,000 people to evacuate parts of Washington state, destroying hundreds of buildings and leaving thousands without power.

Three major blazes continued to burn around the city of Spokane on Monday, with officials warning that the fires had not been contained.

Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown described the situation as "the worst natural disaster our region has faced", adding that authorities were assessing the extent of the damage and were "still discussing the potential for lives to be lost".

No deaths or injuries have been confirmed.

The fires in Spokane are among a total number more than a dozen wildfires in the state including 10 large ones, according to the dashboard on the state's department of natural resources.

The National Weather Service (NWS) had warned of "extremely critical" fire weather over the weekend, with strong winds and unusually dry conditions helping the flames spread rapidly.

Scientists have said that human-induced climate change makes the warm, dry conditions that lead to wildfires more likely - as well as leading to more frequent and intense heatwaves, and potential summer droughts.

Thousands of people have been forced from their homes in the city of Spokane

Videos from Spokane - the second most populous city in the state - show huge plumes of smoke and roaring fires close to nearby houses, as helicopters fly above working to put out the flames.

The fires have destroyed around 600 buildings, including homes and businesses. More than 10,000 electricity customers have been left without power, according to Avista Utilities.

Washington State Governor Bob Ferguson has declared a statewide emergency and told a news conference on Sunday that he had requested federal assistance after speaking to US President Donald Trump.

Speaking to BBC News, Mayor Brown said: "The most important thing is that people need to remain vigilant and be patient and comply when we ask them to be ready to evacuate or when we say it's time to evacuate".

She added: "Although people are very generous and engaged and our first responders are working around the clock - we need help in order to really meet the magnitude of the displacement and the lack of housing and the need for essential living supplies".

Morocco says 11 died in Ceuta crossing attempt, while Spain puts it at 72

Morocco's interior ministry on Sunday issued its first toll for those who died trying to reach Spain's North African enclave of Ceuta last week, saying 11 people had died.

The figures are significantly lower than those issued by Spain, which says at least 72 people died.

Tens of thousands of would-be migrants crossed into the territory between Wednesday and Friday, sparking a diplomatic row within the European Union as some member states criticised Spain's migration policies.

Rachid El Khalfi, a spokesman for Morocco's interior ministry, said that of the 11 who died, 10 had drowned, while an eleventh person fell from a rocky area.

Morocco was working with Spain to check the toll figures and to identify bodies found on Spanish territory.

The ministry blamed the sudden surge on the "malicious exploitation" of social media and the "spread of misleading information".

But it also cited the "misinterpretations of legal provisions" -- a reference to a July 8 Spanish Supreme Court ruling that migrants arriving by sea should not be returned as quickly as others.

The ministry said there had been 40,000 attempts to cross into Ceuta illegally.

Hundreds flee fighting in northern Ethiopia as fears rise of return to civil war

Hundreds of Ethiopians from the Tigray region have crossed into neighbouring Sudan following fighting between regional forces and the Ethiopian army over the weekend.

In one of the most serious confrontations since the end of the civil war in the area four years ago, intense clashes broke out on Saturday morning in Shererina, near the border with Sudan.

A member of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) said the violence, which continued into Sunday, involved heavy artillery and drones.

The two-year civil war in northern Ethiopian between the TPLF and the federal government, which led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, ended with an African Union-brokered peace deal in 2022.

But there are fears there could be a return to full-scale conflict as the deal has not been fully implemented and the TPLF is back in control of Tigray after pushing out the interim administration that was created as part of the resolution of the conflict.

There are also concerns that the fighting could become a proxy for the Sudanese civil war, with accusations that the warring parties there are backing opposing sides in Ethiopia.

Both the TPLF and the federal authorities blamed each other for Saturday's clashes.

The TPLF-led regional administration accused the federal government of launching an "open war" in the Shererina area. It said the offensive violated the peace agreement and was aimed at "subjugating and dividing" the people of Tigray.

The federal government and the federal army have not issued an official statement but minister Abraham Belay confirmed that clashes had occurred.

In a social media post, he accused the "TPLF clique" of starting the fighting and warned of "worse consequences" if the conflict continued.

The minister also called for dialogue, saying disputes should be resolved through peaceful negotiations rather than war.

FEATURE

Domestic violence, why do women stay?



Aishat Muhammed

Domestic violence is one of the most misunderstood social issues of our time. When stories of abuse surface, a familiar question often follows: "Why doesn't she just leave?"

It sounds simple but it isn't. Leaving an abusive relationship is not an event — it is a process, and for many women, that process is shaped by fear, psychology, finances, culture, and survival.

Understanding why women stay is essential if society hopes to support them effectively. The reasons are complex, layered, and deeply human. Some of the reasons are:

1 FEAR: Most women often get scared of what happens when they try to leave abusive marriages or after they leave. Fear is the most powerful barrier abusers use. They often threaten to harm their partners, their children, or themselves if the woman tries to leave. Many abuse survivors report that the most dangerous time is when they make an attempt to escape. Leaving the marriage can escalate the violence, and for some women, staying feels like the safer or best option.

2 Financial Dependence: Many women stay because they have no financial safety net. Abusers often control money, restrict the women access to their bank accounts, sabotage jobs, or forbid work. Leaving may mean homelessness, hunger, or losing custody of children. For a mother with limited resources, the fear of not being able to provide outweighs the fear of staying.

3 Normalized Abuse: If someone grew up in an abusive environment, or where abuse is common, they may not know what healthy relationships look like. As a result, they may not recognize that their partners' behaviors are unhealthy or abusive.

4 Shame: Most times, it is difficult for victims to admit that they've been or are being abused. They may feel that they've done something wrong, that they deserve the abuse, or that experiencing abuse is a sign of weakness. Also, blame-shifting is a common tactic that their partner may use and can reinforce a sense of responsibility for their partners' abusive behaviors.

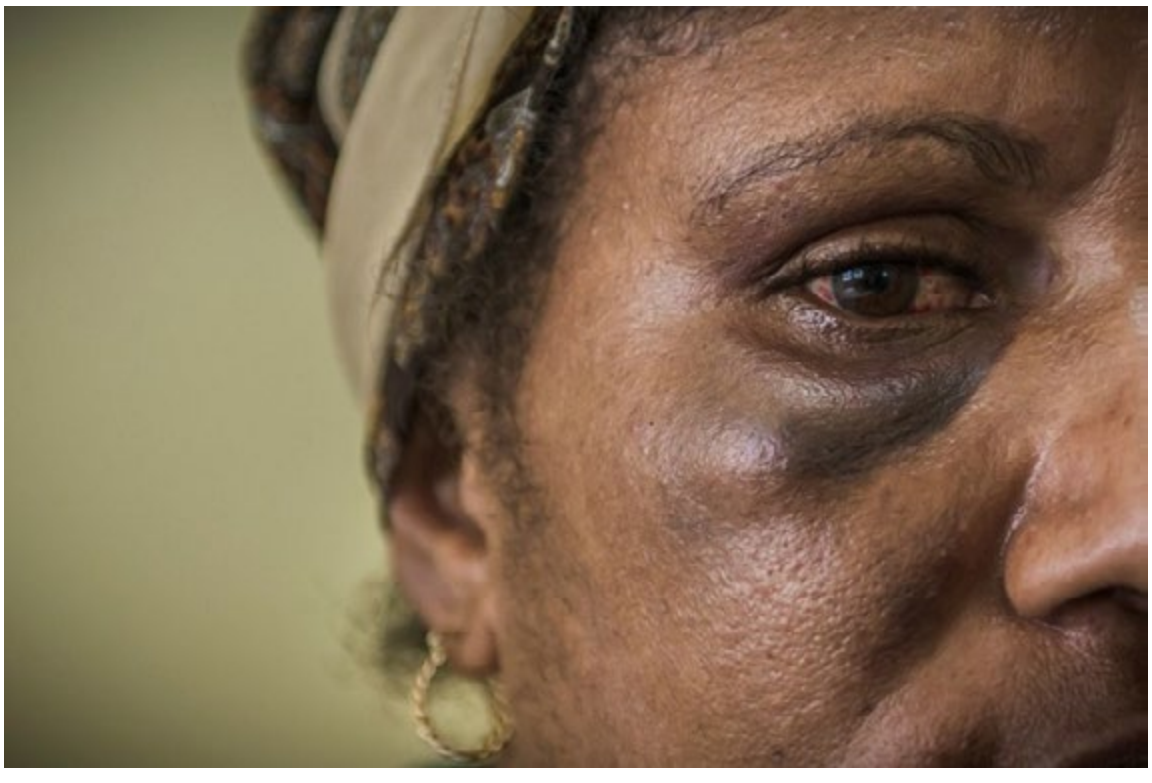
5 INTIMIDATION: Survivors may face intimidations thereby making them stay in the relationship by threats. These threats can be verbal or physical or threats to spread information including secrets or confidential details.

6 LOW SELF-ESTEEM: Survivors who have experienced verbal abuse or blame for physical abuse, can easily believe those sentiments. They may believe that they're at fault or responsible for their partners' abusive behaviors. Thereby making them have low self-esteem.

7 CULTURAL CONTEXT: Traditional customs or beliefs may influence the victim's decision to remain in an abusive situation, whether held by the survivor or by their family and community. Religious beliefs may discourage divorce. Families may urge women to "pray through it" or "stay for the children."

8 CHILDREN: Many survivors may feel guilty or responsible for disrupting their familial unit. Keeping the family together may not only be something that a survivor may value but may also be used as a tactic by their partner to guilt or trap a survivor into staying.

9 LOVE: Survivors may be experiencing abuse and at the same time feeling genuine care for their partner who is causing them harm, and this is not mutually exclusive. Often times, survivors still have strong, intimate feelings for their abusive partner. They may have children together, want to maintain or keep their family, or the person abusing them may simply be charming (especially at the beginning of a relationship) and the survivor may hope that their partner will return to being that person.



10 HOPE THAT THINGS WILL CHANGE: Abusers often promise to change. They apologize, cry, and beg for forgiveness. Women who remember the loving version of their partner or are too emotionally attached to them may cling to hope that the relationship can return to what it once was.

Hope is powerful — and sometimes blinding.

The real question should be: "How do we help women leave safely?"

Instead of asking "why does she stay?"

Society must ask:

"What barriers are preventing her from leaving, and how can we remove them?"

Survivors need:

- Safe housing
- Financial Support
- Legal protection
- Emotional counseling
- Community understanding
- Non-judgmental listening

Leaving is not a moment of weakness — it is an act of courage. And courage grows when women know they are supported, believed, and safe.

Women stay in abusive relationships for reasons rooted in fear, survival, love, culture, and psychology. Their decisions are not signs of weakness but reflections of the complex realities they face. To truly help, we must replace judgment with empathy and build systems that empower women to leave safely — and rebuild their lives with dignity.

> Most women often get scared of what happens when they try to leave abusive marriages or after they leave.

FEATURE

Evaluating Edo's new anti-crime crackdown

Imelda Osayande, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)



Governor Monday Okpebholo, addressing The Nigreia police Edo State Command, Benin City.

After leaving church on June 14, 34-year-old Mrs Precious Oseghale visited Benin City's Airport Road Vegetable Market.

By midday, Oseghale was accosted by unknown assailants, blindfolded, forced into a waiting vehicle, and driven into the bush. After three days in captivity, her family paid a ransom to secure her release on June 17.

The abduction in broad daylight, inside a market where mothers buy tomatoes and yams, became a tipping point for Edo.

Within weeks, the Edo Government, the Judiciary, the Department of State Services (DSS), the police, civil society groups, local councils, and the Oba of Benin Palace moved in a coordinated push to reclaim the streets from kidnappers, cultists, and bandits.

Witnesses said the abductors operated with speed and precision while her husband, Mr Oseghale, narrowly escaped with their two children.

Mr Oseghale later identified one female suspect he saw during ransom collection near Brother Pius School on Akenzua Road, Benin.

The news spread fast. Traders locked stalls. For days the market that feeds half of Benin's GRA axis looked deserted.

"If they kidnapped someone inside the market, where are we safe?" a trader asked.

The Edo House of Assembly captured the mood on June 15.

Speaker Blessing Agbebaku condemned the "security breach" by "marauders" and urged vigilance.

"Watch your surroundings; check side mirrors; avoid late nights; and report suspicious persons to Police, DSS and other agencies.

"Community vigilance is critical," he said.

Mrs Maria Deko, representing Esan North II and Chair of the House Committee on Security, called on security agencies to "get to the root of the matter so residents will not live in apprehension."

Gov. Monday Okpebholo's administration moved quickly.

In a statement by the Chief Press Secretary, Dr Patrick Ebojele, the governor condemned the kidnap as "unacceptable and a direct attack on innocent residents."

He directed the Commissioner of Police to commence a swift investigation and secure the victim's rescue.

"The government will not tolerate any act that threatens public safety," he said.

On June 18, Okpebholo appeared at the Police Command in Edo for the parade of suspects.

"We are going to set up a special court to prosecute kidnappers and cultists.

"Within two weeks, the court will conclude proceedings; I will sign your execution warrant.

"We will take you to Ring Road roundabout so Edo people can watch. I will have no regrets."

He said one suspect was arrested, one was neutralised, while two were at large.

"They will have no peace in Edo; you will be arrested; we are working day and night to make this land safe."

To motivate the operatives, he presented N10 million to the police team and implored residents to "steer clear of criminal activity.

"It is cheaper to live within one's means than to gamble your life on crime," he said.



The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, ASP Eno Ikoedem, said the Anti-Kidnapping Unit was trailing the gang.

On June 18, Commissioner of Police Mr Monday Agbonika confirmed ongoing investigations to track the remaining members.

He said items recovered from the arrested suspect included a red Lexus RX 350, EKP 848 AE, a pump-action shotgun, two live cartridges, a motorcycle, and cash suspected to be proceeds of crime.

Agbonika thanked the governor and IGP Olatunji Disu, and reaffirmed commitment to protecting lives and property.

It is worth noting that the first institutional response was the activation of Special Criminal Court in Benin.

On June 26, Chief Registrar Benson Osawaru announced the establishment of a special court to expedite trials for cultism and kidnapping, which was constituted at the governor's request.

On July 17, four suspects were arraigned before Justice Terry Momodu and they pleaded not guilty to an 11-count charge of kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, and unlawful possession of firearms.

Solicitor General Stephen Okoror led prosecution with five witnesses.

Mrs Oseghale testified via adopted statement.

Three other victims described earlier abductions by the same gang.

Blessing Nosa said she was kidnapped March 8 at Oreoghene Street, off Siluko Road.

The prosecution also alleged the defendants kidnapped Lawan Alex on March 26 at Ekehuan Road, and robbed Idehen Paul of his Lexus 350 on April 23 before collecting ransom.

The Attorney General and the Commissioner for Justice, Prof. Roland Otaru, also called the two Investigating Police Officers, Insp. Udeme Otite and Insp. Jimoh Oisaikhoba, to testify before prosecution formally closed its case.

Oisaikhoba, in his testimony, explained how statements were obtained from the defendants during the investigation and tendered several exhibits, including a Lexus Jeep allegedly recovered from the first defendant.

He alleged that the vehicle belonged to one of the kidnapped victims and that the first defendant had changed its number plate and repainted it from grey to red.

Momodu subsequently adjourned the continuation of the hearing to allow defendants to open defence.

To aid operations, Egor LGA Chairman, Mr Osaro Eribo, donated 12 motorcycles on July 14 to the Police, Ugbowo Division, and Edo Security Corps.

"Egor will not be a safe haven for kidnappers, bandits, or cultists. These motorcycles will help operatives monitor security more effectively," he said.

Days after court proceedings began, a coalition of CSOs staged a solidarity protest in Benin carrying placards with the inscriptions: "Say No to Cultism," "Kidnapping is Not Business," "If You See Something, Say Something."

The convener, Dr Bright Oniovokukor, said the fight must be collective.

On June 23, Ewuare II, Oba of Benin, summoned native doctors and priests to explore traditional means to complement government's efforts, per a statement by Victor Nosakhare on behalf of the Secretary of the Benin Traditional Council (BTC), Frank Irabor.

On June 24, the Oba met youth leaders, "Okaigheles."

In a statement by the Chief Press Secretary, Osaigbovo Iguobaro, the Oba announced a grassroots security network across Edo South's seven LGAs.

He charged the Okaigheles to set up 5 to 10 member advisory committees and develop strategies anchored on the traditional neighborhood watch.

"We do not want you to fight or kill people. We want our people safe," the Oba said.

He said the committees would report to Coordinator Emmanuel Iyase, Okao N'Oreguae.

The traditional ruler warned against abuse, oppression or indiscriminate land sales.

In a symbolic rite, the Ewaise Palace Group led priests in pouring libations and invoking ancestors against violent crimes.

Osemwonta Iguezigbon and Chief Priest Clement Edegbe said the exercise was necessary because "a lot of kidnappings" had occurred.

Isaac Ogiemwense, Oyeoba of Benin, said the aim was to fortify the land traditionally.

Osaigbovo Osamwonyi, Akenuwa of Benin, urged youth leaders to search for fearless men of integrity who know their terrain.

"We won't cede any portion of Edo land," he declared.

Back at Airport Road, life is slowly returning but traders remain watchful. With patrols increased and vehicles donated to Police, there is cautious optimism.

Mr Oseghale, now a court witness, advocates community intelligence.

"If we all provide information, criminals will have nowhere to hide," he said.

Observers say the June 14 kidnap was not Edo's first but its location, a public market in the capital, and the speed of response made it different.

From the courtroom to the market, and from the palace to the streets, Edo is fighting back.

For Mrs Oseghale and thousands of market women, the question is whether citizens will sustain the momentum so that the Airport Road Vegetable Market returns to being just a market, not a headline.(NAN-Features)

FEATURE

The changing course of climate change

Janine Selendy



Coral Reef and mangroves in Indonesia

CREDIT: ALEX MUSTARD / OCEAN IMAGE BANK

Around the world, extreme weather events are causing the public and scientists to ask, " What is happening to our world?" Torrential floods in Mokwa, Nigeria in 2025 killed more than 700 people as water raged through the center of the city. Ferocious fires still underway today in southwest France have caused more than 300,000 people to evacuate their homes. Extreme droughts "in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia have left 23 million people without reliable access to food and water," according to Islamic Relief Canada.

Such extreme "weather events' are attributed by scientists all over the world as caused by climate change. They now warn that climate change is happening faster than any previous estimates indicated.

On the 18th of June 2026, the United Nations warned that "Millions of people already facing hunger, displacement and economic hardship could soon face another major climate shock... as extreme weather risks are intensifying across some of the world's most vulnerable regions."

The World Meteorological Organization reported that extreme weather and climate events affected more than 13 million people and caused more than 3000 deaths in Africa in 2025.

"Global temperatures have already exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, with extreme weather events becoming increasingly frequent and ecosystems facing unprecedented pressure," warned Professor Spencer C. Nwangwu, Director of the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Igbinedion University.

What is being done against climate change?

On June 6, World Environment Day, Igbinedion University, "reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to climate action and environmental sustainability" and the Vice-Chancellor of the university, Professor Lawrence Ezemonye said that the 2026 global theme, "Now for Climate," is an "urgent call to action."

A wide variety of initiatives are underway throughout the world.

"All the people of the world need to do what they can to act against climate change," said this article's author. She adds: "Together we can change the course of climate change."

Together we can spread knowledge of climate emergencies and of efforts to mitigate climate change with the use of the 7.4 billion smartphones and social media.

We can share immediate knowledge of climate emergencies and of positive actions on an international scale. As people are aware of endeavors underway, they will gain a sense of hope for our suffering planet and be encouraged to do what they themselves can do.

At every scale, from individuals to whole countries, initiatives are underway that can set examples for others for replication in whole or in part.

Even the simplest things can help in the struggle against climate change: avoiding waste, recycling our clothes, biking and walking instead of using a car when it is safe to do so, and establish and participate in recycling centers that take broken items and make them usable.

> Communities across Africa use discarded plastic bottles packed tightly with sand, soil, or clay as low-cost, durable "eco-bricks" to build sustainable shelters.



Seagrass, Isles of Scilly, Cornwall, UK

CREDIT: MICHIEL VOS / OCEAN IMAGE BANK

Here are a few examples of what is being done:

In Benin, partners and locals are working together solutions are together to address challenges to its coastlines.

Video: Between Land and Ocean

This film is a documentary about the West Africa Coastal Areas Management Program (WACA) in Benin, commissioned by Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and co-financed by NDF, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The video was produced by Kerawa Studio.

In Burkina Faso (https://www.unep.org/youngchampions/news/story/weaving-brighter-future-plastic-burkina-faso) Video caption: "Women and youth from the NEERE group weave plastic cloth for clothes and bags." The narrator says, "Plastic is money."

"Communities across Africa use discarded plastic bottles packed tightly with sand, soil, or clay as low-cost, durable "eco-bricks" to build sustainable shelters." Tateh Lehbib a 28-year-old engineer and Sahrawi refugee, sought to provide a shelter for his grandmother in a desert region where the temperature can reach 110 Fahrenheit. He used sand, straw, cement and limestone. His first shelter consisted of 6,000 bottles. (Source: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/plastic-bottle-houses-sahrawi-refugees-algeria/)

Seagrasses and mangroves are vital to protect the coast, they are vital habitats for ocean life and vital to reduce climate change by capture and storage of carbon.

Source: (https://oceanconservationtrust.org/success-for-englands-largest-seagrass-restoration-project/)

In England, in the Plymouth Sound Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Solent Maritime SAC, restored 8 hectares of seagrass.

In Bonaire, mangroves and all its surrounding coastline are protected. This video shows the busy life in the long, twisted roots of the mangrove trees juvenile fish find safety before venturing into the open waters.

(Picture of mangroves and coral reefs)

Countries are setting examples of what can be achieved. Uruguay generates over 98% of its electricity from wind, hydro, biomass, and solar.

Sir David Attenborough's "The Year the Earth Changed," documentary demonstrated what is possible when the whole world is alerted to danger and responds. As he recounted, people throughout the world responded when the World Health Organization called upon all the world to "Stay Home" to avoid getting Covid-19. Within months, carbon dioxide levels were down by over 5% and air pollution was down dramatically. Photographs taken from 200 kilometers away revealed, for the first time in 30 years, the Himalayas. Within days, Los Angeles experienced its best air quality in 40 years.

* ***Janine M. H. Selendy, Founder, Horizon International, based at Yale University, USA, and formerly a Guest of Harvard.***

INTERVIEW

Let us go back to our roots – Princess Eniyemawen Igbinigie

Monday Oise

In this era of over dependency on western culture at the detriment of our own rich cultural heritage, ***Princess Eniyemawen Igbinigie****, Ohen Oloku Nadesevbo from Obagie N' vbosa Ikpoba-Okha local government area of Edo state says , anything that involves the palace is never joked with, and as a destiny child she does not wait to be called upon before doing the necessary things to ensure the society is a better place for all but we must go back to our roots to get it right, She spoke on issues bothering on the spiritual realms, curses against Criminals and others to the* ***NIGERIAN OBSERVER****, Excerpt:*

***DIRECTIVE OF THE OBA TO CLEANSE THE LAND**

The directive given by our great Oba Ewuare II was a very welcome development and it was what was used to chase away evil forces from our communities in the time past for peace and development. The cleansing of the land is very important and again it should be noted that every community has their different deities (gods), these deities are spirit, the spirit speaks through the Ohens and when the spirit directs the Ohen, if he/ she is the one that is called through the gods of the land before anything takes place the spirit will reveal it to the person in charge (Ohen).

The Ohen will now do the rituals and cleanse the land, that is the position of the Ohen.But if it is not the rightful Ohen that is there, the spirit will not appear and nothing will be revealed to him/ her

When our father the great Oba Ewuare II called the native doctors, Igieohen N'Ikpia and Igieohen N Ikhuo , we were all present to do the needful so that the evil people in the society will be driven out for the good ones to live in peace and harmony

*** IMPACTS OF THE CURSES ON CRIMINALS**

The people will feel the impact of the curses placed on those involved in crime and criminality but again before now the Ohens and others should not have waited for our father's directives because we all live in different communities and when things are not going the way it ought to be, the Ohens have the responsibility to do the needful before it gets out of hand

The Oba is our godking, who has placed people in the position of authorities in the various communities, the Enigies, Edionwere and Ohen both male and females. The Ohen are supposed to nip any problem arising in any community in the bud before it gets out of hand, that's why they are there in the first place.

If I am called for help in any community, I will go there to do the necessary cleansing to ensure that everything is okay .Example was one Enogie in a community that was suspended for some years and he was ill and when his people brought him to me, I just told him I am seeing a crown and he admitted that he was an Enogie in a community and I did the necessary rites and he became well

In that process of carrying out the healing, Oruvbie and son Isee appeared to me and told me she saw my efforts in trying to get solutions to solve the problems in the said community. She then said she laid a curse on the land and I replied and pleaded with her on what can be done to solve the problem. She replied that the people did not remember her, and immediately I did the remembrance ceremony of Oruvbie and Isee, I invited Okhun to Utekon community because the crises took place in the community. I did all the necessary rituals and cleansing and as expected peace was restored back to the community

It should be noted that any community that is facing challenges should do the needful for peace to be restored back to such community, it is worthy for the people to note that the daughters of a king are very many , they move from place to place but the royal blood still flow in their veins, they are all over the country.

If we want everywhere to be peaceful we all need to be our brother's keeper like it used to be in those days of our forefathers and our fathers. For example, when some persons are going out they fortify themselves by taking a bath with leaves and rub hands with substances and you expect such a person to come and swear, can that swear work? It will not work , the Bible says the people perish for lack of knowledge. It is the gods that can take control of everything, spiritual takes control of the physical when the spiritual realm is consulted everything will be okay

***THE NEED FOR CLEANSING**

The great Oba was not supposed to call them because he is the godking who appointed the Enigies, Edionwere, Ohens and others in the position they occupied.They are supposed to be the ones that will cry out to the people and inform them on what the spiritual relm have directed them to do, nobody will go to farm, market and others and will also inform the Enogie or Odionwere who will now summon the people and inform them of what the gods said and the necessary cleansing to be carried out on behalf of the people and there will be peace

It is not for our father the great Oba to be stressing himself to be calling them on what to do . All of them are capable of doing the needful but the point here is a lot of people will be saying what they are not supposed to say. They should be informed that the Oba himself is a god. The question here is can the Oba go to the market, it is a No no, the Ohens are the eyes of the gods and the eyes of the spirit , that's the reason they are there as the ohen in their various communities and they all have different deities they serve.

***LEAVING OUR CULTURE AND TRADITION**

Right from day one, we say Osanudazi, Akpama, Oriole - which stands for God the father, God the son and God the holy spirit. If one's hand is not clean you cannot consult the spirit, if your hand is full of corruption and other vices, how do you expect the spirit to speak to you, it is because of these corruptions that they do not want their secret to leak out to the public. You see some persons in the society today, they say they are this and that but secretly they have the idols they are worshipping in their house



Princess Igbinigie

I want you to Know that customs and tradition did not say people should not praise and give glory to God, we also have our ancestral tree called Ikhinwin in our language, like what we hold now, we use it to consult water, just as Pastors baptize their worshipers with water

Some of these things are business which everybody knows, again if they really consult these gods and cleanse it they will perform wonders and it will wipe away all these things that are now taking place. Some families have their deities but the most elderly in the family would not want to do the needful but rather claiming they are Christians and instead of doing the needful for the family to progress, they insist on monetisation, saying they cannot kill either goat or others to do the needful but they are only deceiving themselves because when he/ she participate in the real rituals the spirit will hold him / she responsible.

When they know or have hand in what is happening, that is the reason some of them run away from performing the needful for there to be peace and progress in a family

During our festival performed annually by the great Oba and all Benin, the Igue festival, we pray to God for keeping all of us alive. Before any food is prepared in the morning that very day, youths and the children will carry the firewood and pray that anybody planning evil in the community should be wiped away by the gods of the land. But, nowadays people do not do it again because they consider it to be evil and no native doctor or Pastor can cover the spirit, when it is invoked upon . We all need to partake in our custom and tradition, uphold our rich culture and go back to our roots

All over the world people have their customs and tradition which they follow. If we want peace, it is for us to go back to our root and look for the rightful people in each communities to cleanse the land for peace, harmony to be everywhere. We should not pretend to be what we are not and cover ourselves with one thing and be doing another all in the name of church.

There is a saying that one cannot serve god, deities with unclean mind, such will not work, so that is what we are facing today

If we want everything to be good and we are calling on God for intervention, we should call on him with a clean mind

***OUR CULTURE AND TRADITION**

In those days, you cannot set your fire in the morning without first cleaning it, so that the food you are cooking will be clean. Also, in those days it is a taboo for man and woman to be bathing with the same bowl or bucket, using the same towel and others but it is not so these days because of what it's called Jayzee generation, it's very wrong because we are copying the wrong culture. Our culture is unique and should be dear to our heart.But in today's world we see men doing things that are unclean, doing things that are regarded as abomination , you see men sleeping with women that are seeing their flow and other unimaginable things which are sent by witches and wizards in other world.

When a man indulges in such things he will become powerless because what they use in protecting themselves will then be rendered useless and powerless because the guardian angel going with them is already destroyed. our father did not do such things those days and they lived well and there was peace in the land

***ADVISE/MESSAGE**

We should try as much as possible to go back to our roots, learn and teach our culture and tradition to our children for them to see the uniqueness of our rich culture

To my fellow traditionalist, Ohen priest and priestess we should do the right things instead of engaging in unclean characters. Many have condemned their shrine and things used in protecting themselves and the society. We should try and go back to the old days of our fathers, do things properly and forget about western culture. Men and women should not use the same bucket to bathe, they should not use the same towel no matter the love because of the spiritual undertones. The Ohens should refrain from their negative activities especially sleeping with different women and after that they go into their shrine and sanctuary to perform sacrifices. That will not work because they have done unclean things to themselves. The gods will not answer because the spirits have already left them. They should live a life of holiness and cleanliness

I want to use this opportunity to thank our godking, Omo N' Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo Oba Ewuare II for his unwavering Commitment to the preservation, promotion of our rich Cultural heritage and for ensuring the unity of all benin sons and daughters. May his reign be fruitful and we pray that God and our ancestors continue to give him the wisdom to pilot the affairs of the kingdom . Oba ghator kpere, ise!!!

FEATURE

Gender Issues: Why the WPS and YPS Principles Are Relevant in Checkmating SGBV

Grace Ijeoma Umeh



In Nigeria and across the world, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, SGBV, remains one of the most persistent violations of human rights.

From intimate partner violence to sexual harassment, rape, and harmful traditional practices, SGBV cuts across age, class, religion, and location. Yet the solutions we have tried for decades often treat SGBV as a "women's issue" alone, or as a criminal justice problem to be solved after the damage is done.

This is where the Women, Peace and Security, WPS, and Youth, Peace and Security, YPS, agendas become critical. Adopted through UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 of 2000 and 2250 of 2015 respectively, WPS and YPS shift the conversation. They insist that lasting peace and security — including freedom from SGBV — cannot happen without the full, meaningful participation of women and young people in prevention, protection, and decision-making.

As a Gender Advocate, I have seen firsthand how communities that ignore women and youth in peacebuilding continue to struggle with cycles of violence. Communities that center them, however, begin to see real change.

Why are the WPS and YPS principles not just relevant, but essential, in checkmating SGBV?

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK: SGBV, PEACE, AND SECURITY

SGBV is not separate from conflict. In times of insecurity, displacement, and economic hardship, rates of SGBV spike. Even in "peacetime," patriarchal norms, poverty, and weak accountability create an environment where violence thrives.

The WPS agenda recognizes this link. Its four pillars — Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief & Recovery — directly address the root causes of SGBV.

The YPS agenda adds a generational lens. With over 60% of Nigeria's population under 30, young people are both the most affected by violence and the most powerful agents for change.

When we treat SGBV only as a police matter, we miss the social norms, power imbalances, and exclusion that fuel it. WPS and YPS give us the framework to address those drivers.

PREVENTION: CHANGING NORMS BEFORE VIOLENCE STARTS

One of the biggest gaps in our response to SGBV is that we wait until after someone is hurt. WPS and YPS emphasize prevention.

Women as early warning systems: Women in communities often know first when tensions are rising — when a husband becomes more controlling, when school girls are being targeted, when harmful practices are being revived. WPS calls for their inclusion in community peace structures so this information is heard and acted on.

Youth as norm-shifters: Young people consume and create culture. Through peer education, social media campaigns, and school programs, youth can challenge rape culture, toxic masculinity, and victim-blaming before they become entrenched. The YPS agenda legitimizes youth-led campaigns and funds them as peacebuilding work, not just "awareness."

In Lagos, for example, youth groups using TikTok and WhatsApp to talk about consent have reached audiences that traditional town halls never could. That is YPS in action.

PARTICIPATION: NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

For too long, policies on SGBV have been made _for_ women and youth, not _with_ them.

WPS demands women's participation at all levels — from household decision-making to local government and national security councils. When women sit at the table, budgets shift. We see more funding for shelters, legal aid, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment — all of which reduce vulnerability to SGBV.

YPS demands the same for young people. A 21-year-old survivor or a 24-year-old youth advocate understands barriers that a 60-year-old policymaker may not see: digital harassment, campus SGBV, economic abuse in new relationships. Excluding them means designing solutions that don't fit.

In practice, this means: - 30% representation of women in local security committees- Youth desks in Ministries of Women Affairs and Justice - Funding for women-led and youth-led organizations responding to SGBV

PROTECTION: BEYOND THE POLICE STATION

Protection under WPS and YPS is not just about arresting perpetrators. It's about creating environments where people are safe.

THIS INCLUDES:

Legal protection with fast, survivor-centered justice

Physical protection through safe spaces, shelters, and street lighting

Digital protection against online SGBV, non-consensual sharing, and cyberstalking

Economic protection because financial independence keeps many in abusive situations

Women and youth must co-design these protections. A shelter designed without input from young survivors may not feel safe to them. A reporting app created without women may not protect anonymity.

RELIEF AND RECOVERY: HEALING COMMUNITIES

After SGBV occurs, the recovery process must restore dignity. WPS and YPS call for trauma-informed services led by women and youth organizations who understand the context.e we

Recovery also means accountability. Communities that practice restorative justice with women and youth mediators often see better outcomes than those that rely only on courts.

Information a key element in the fight against Crime and Criminality

Richard Eweka

The role of information is key and can't be overemphasized in the fight against crime and criminality in Nigeria, as credible information helps the relevant security agencies to tackle the rising crime rates and check criminal activities.

The Edo State Special Security Squad codenamed "Operation flush out Kidnappers and Cultists has continued to succeed in all the dangerous operations its members have embarked on across the State. Their mission, is to stop all forms of cult related violence as well as that of kidnapping which before now has placed the State in a bad ranking amongst other States in Nigeria.

Before this present administration led by governor Monday Okpebholo, Edo has been labeled "the home of cultism and cult-related killing" due to the increase in cult killing recorded in the State unchecked by the previous administration.

In time passed, various cult groups had a filled day across streets, communities, villages causing pains, panic, fear, tears as killing almost became a normal activity in the State and Edo State was in the news for the wrong reasons.

Governor Monday Okpebholo came in on November 12th, 2024 and declared a total war on cultism, kidnapping and other violent crimes which has destroyed the image of the people of Edo State.

Through the Edo State special security squad, the Okpebholo led administration is winning the war and the State has become peaceful in the last one year and eight months of this present administration as cultists and kidnappers already know their fate if caught and as some renounced their membership others are very careful in their evil acts knowing what will befall them if caught.

The members of the security squad whose activities and actions are being coordinated by Noah Idemudia have continued to apply civility in its operations ensuring that victimization is never part of the code of operation rather they feed on credible intelligence and the right information to pick on their target as principles are strictly followed not to violate the law.

The security squad are made up of intelligent men who as soon as information gets to them are assessed carefully to verify the authenticity of the information. When it's certified to be credible, they begin to fix missing pieces of the information through intelligence strategy as the outcome leads them to the target and without wasting time, the team strike without any bias.

Sometimes the operation is carried out intelligently and the Principal security Officer (PSO) who is in charge of the operation splits the entourage into two separate parts. One squad moves ahead as an advance team with fully armed security men made of a joint team of Army, Police, Nigeria Security Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC), Edo State security corp, (ESSC), local hunters if they need calls for it.

They strike the location with purpose ensuring that the target is not missed and suspects apprehended, this is done with precision to ensure the wrong person is not the target or involved in maintaining the laws of engagement.

The engagement with these heartless cultists, kidnappers and criminal elements who enjoy shedding of human blood is most time very dangerous as these criminals will do anything to escape arrest including exchange of gun fire with security agencies to invade arrest.

Suspect in the radar of the team determines the time and level of operation the team will be embarking on. sometimes early in the morning and at other times late into the dead of the night. Members of the squad risk it all to ensure that Edo State is free from crime and criminality as governor Monday Okpebholo has promised Edo people that his administration will fight cultism, kidnapping and other violent crimes to a stand still.

The squad has continued to succeed in every operation not minding the difficult location the suspects hideout is, determination, zeal and courage keeps the team going to accomplish their target at each given time.

It has been a success story all the way without any casualty but rather members that sustain injuries in some operations recovered and bounced back to active duties.

The collaboration of Edo people in giving the team useful and credible information has brought successes to its operations since it was established by governor Monday Okpebholo.

Information has continued to be the map of operation for the squad who appealed for more information encouraging members of the public to come forward providing the needed information to catch these criminals who live amongst the people, noting that collaboration is the only sure way to succeed in the fight to keep Edo safe.

The Noah Idemudia and other members of the security squad work hard day and night to ensure that the mandate of governor Monday Okpebholo is carried out in totality and achieved in accordance with the plan of the SHINE agenda of the administration securing the lives and properties of Edo people.

Law and order have been restored across Edo State by the Monday Okpebholo led administration as violent killing by cultists and kidnappers is now a thing of the pass in the State with Edo people now sleeping with two eyes closed knowing that the Edo Special security squad are watching keenly to ensure a safe Edo State.

FEATURE

The Nigerian OBSERVER

Wanno Kingdom set for historic coronation as Senator Alimikhena emerges new Okumagbe



The new Okumagbe of Wanno Kingdom, Senator Francis Asekhamhe Alimikhena, receiving some dignitaries in his palace in Agenebode recently.



Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo (left) congratulating the new Okumagbe of Wanno Kingdom, Etsako East Local Government Area, Sen. Francis Asekhamhe Alimikhena, on his emergence as a Royal father.

Matthew Okagha

Agenebode, the administrative headquarters of Etsako East Local Government Area of Edo State, is bubbling with excitement as Wanno Kingdom concludes preparations for the coronation of Senator Francis Asekhamhe Alimikhena as the new Okumagbe of Wanno Kingdom.

The epoch-making ceremony, scheduled for Saturday, August 22, 2026, is expected to draw an impressive gathering of traditional rulers, government officials, political leaders, captains of industry, religious leaders, members of the diplomatic community, and sons and daughters of Wanno Kingdom from across Nigeria and the diaspora.

Throughout the kingdom, colourful decorations and other preparations are gradually transforming Agenebode into a fitting venue for what many have described as one of the most significant traditional events in the history of the kingdom.

Chairman of the Coronation Youth Planning Committee, Engr. Paul Aleogho Momoh, said the youths have embraced the coronation as a collective responsibility and are working tirelessly to ensure a peaceful, orderly and memorable celebration.

"We want visitors to experience the warmth, unity and hospitality for which Wanno Kingdom is known. Our youths are fully mobilised to promote peace, maintain environmental cleanliness and support every aspect of the coronation activities," he said.

He appealed to residents and visitors to cooperate with the planning committees by maintaining law and order throughout the celebration, stressing that the event offers an opportunity to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the kingdom.

The emergence of Senator Alimikhena followed the long-established rotational arrangement among the recognized ruling houses of Wanno Kingdom. In accordance with the succession tradition, the Agiode Ruling House was designated to produce the next monarch following the passing of the immediate past Okumagbe, His Royal Highness Dr. George Oshiapi Egabor.

After due consultations and the prescribed traditional selection process, Senator Francis Asekhamhe Alimikhena emerged as the Okumagbe-elect.

A distinguished politician and accomplished public servant, Senator Alimikhena represented Edo North Senatorial District in the Senate,(2015-2023),where he earned recognition for his contributions to legislation, infrastructure development and constituency empowerment. His emergence as the traditional ruler is widely viewed as bringing together public service experience and traditional leadership in the interest of peace, development and the preservation of the kingdom's cherished values.

Historically, Wanno Kingdom was part of the old Weppa-Wanno Kingdom, whose centralized traditional institution was established during the colonial administration in 1939. Following decades of sustained agitation by the people, the Edo State Government.

formally separated Wanno from Weppa in 2018, paving the way for Wanno Kingdom to operate as a distinct traditional institution with its own royal stool.

The title of Okumagbe, meaning "the unifier," remains the highest traditional office in the kingdom and symbolizes unity, justice, peace and the preservation of the people's cultural identity.

Community leaders have expressed confidence that the reign of Senator Alimikhena will usher in a new chapter of progress, reconciliation and socio-economic development. Many believe his wealth of experience in public service, combined with the wisdom of the traditional institution, will strengthen the kingdom's drive for unity and sustainable development.

As the countdown to August 22 continues, expectations are rising across Edo North and beyond for what promises to be a colourful royal spectacle, celebrating not only the ascension of a monarch but also the enduring cultural heritage, resilience and unity of the people of Wanno Kingdom.

NEWS

FG begins assessment of flood-affected sections on Benin-Sagamu Expressway

ORE

The Federal Ministry of Works has begun an assessment of flood-affected sections along the Benin-Sagamu Expressway following recent torrential rainfall that disrupted movement on parts of the highway.

The Minister of Works, Engr Dave Umahi stated this on Monday while inspecting the affected sections at the Ore corridor in Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

According to Umahi, the three major flood-prone locations along the Ondo section of the expressway are; Agofure at Km 100, Adolak Junction near Ore Flyover Bridge at Km 107, and the Agric Section at Km 117.

He said the ministry was proposing targeted engineering interventions at the identified locations to prevent future flooding and improve safety along the highway.

Umahi, who was represented by the Federal Controller of Works in Ondo State, Engr Olajide Hussein, said the inspection was to identify flood-prone locations along major road corridors and find possible solutions.

The minister said the recent intense rainfall had resulted in flooding in several communities and road corridors across the country, adding that the ministry had commenced technical evaluation to address the challenge.

He disclosed that the ministry was currently examining the causes of the overflow through hydraulic evaluation of existing culverts and drainage channels.

"The recent intense precipitation across the country has caused widespread flooding in various communities and along major road corridors, a phenomenon widely attributed to ongoing climate change impacts.

"We are currently tracing the sources of the overflow to implement proactive solutions, including the potential resizing of cross-culverts and desilting blocked channels," the minister said.

He assured road users that the ministry was committed to ensuring the safety and stability of the expressway.

"In light of increasing climate change impacts, all necessary technical steps are being taken swiftly to enhance drainage capacity, mitigate the impact of unprecedented storm runoff and ensure safe, uninterrupted passage along this highway," Umahi said.

Nigeria's energy future: Petroleum engineers urge energy collaboration

LAGOS

The Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) has called for stronger collaboration, innovation and resilience to position Nigeria for success in the evolving global energy landscape.

Mr Francis Nwaochei, Chairman of the SPE Nigeria Council, made the call on Monday at the 49th Nigeria Annual International Conference and Exhibition (NAICE 2026) in Lagos.

The conference is with the theme: 'Thriving in the Evolving Global Energy Landscape: Collaborative Growth and Resilience.'

Nwaochei said Nigeria's energy future would depend on strong leadership, sound policies, technological innovation and sustained collaboration among government, regulators and industry stakeholders.

He described the conference theme as a timely call to action, urging participants to focus on practical solutions to strengthen Nigeria's competitiveness globally.

Nwaochei said: "We gather at a defining moment for the global energy industry.

"The conversations over the next three days must move beyond identifying challenges to developing practical, implementable solutions for Nigeria's energy sector."

Nwaochei welcomed government officials, regulators, industry executives, investors, exhibitors, academics, students and international delegates attending the conference.

He described their participation as a strong vote of confidence in Nigeria's energy industry and its long-term growth prospects.

According to him, SPE remains the world's largest individual-member professional association serving the upstream and broader energy industry.

The SPE Nigeria Council ranks among the association's most vibrant branches, with more than 17,000 members nationwide.

Members are spread across Lagos, Port Harcourt, Warri, Benin, Abuja and Uyo, with support from over 50 student chapters.

Nwaochei noted that NAICE has remained the flagship conference of the SPE Nigeria Council for nearly five decades.

He said the conference had evolved into one of Africa's foremost platforms for technical exchange, policy dialogue and investment promotion.

Sports

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

Gov Diri Raises Scrabble Classic Prize Money

● wants Game Introduced to Bayelsa Schools

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, has announced an increase in the prize money for the Diri National Scrabble Classic.

Speaking during the closing ceremonies of the sixth edition on Sunday night in Yenagoa, the state capital, an impressed Governor Diri announced that the winner of the Masters category in next edition will get N5 million and the total prize money raised to N40 million from N20 million.



XX

The Bayelsa governor also directed the Commissioners for Sports and his Education counterpart to work out the modalities for the game to be introduced in secondary schools in the state, saying it would help develop students mentally.

Senator Diri said scrabble developed his vocabulary, spelling and thinking ability while growing up, noting that it is a mind game that builds the intellect and strategic thinking.

His words: "Scrabble is a game I started playing as a youth and it helped my vocabulary and spelling ability. Today, I am very happy to hear the waves this tournament has made not only in our country but also beyond it and I like to appreciate all of you who have made the game interesting.

"Scrabble is a mind game. It is something that I will personally recommend even for our secondary schools as this is not just a sport, it is also education.

"The importance of scrabble cannot be over-emphasised as it makes you think strategically. We will continue to support the game till I leave office.

"Next year will be the last time I will have this interaction with you. So, in the next edition, the prize money for the Masters winner will be N5 million and the general category will be N40 million."



THE CHAIRMAN, FCT GOLF ASSOCIATION, AKABOM ENEBONG

FCT golf association targets women, schools for growth

The Chairman, FCT Golf Association, Akabom Enebong, has hosted the Head of Service, Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA), Nancy Nathan, to her first golf training in Abuja.

The training took place at the TYB International Golf Resort and Country Club, Abuja, as part of efforts to promote women's participation and grassroots development of golf.

Enebong said that involving decision-makers was critical to expanding the game across the FCT.

"To promote any sport successfully, you must involve decision-makers so they appreciate its value and support its development," he said.

He also said that the association deliberately targeted women because of the enormous opportunities available through sports participation.

"Women are underrepresented in sports in spite of available opportunities. About 80 to 90 per cent of sports scholarships for women in Nigeria remain untapped," he said.

According to him, encouraging more women to embrace golf will improve participation, health, leadership and access to educational opportunities.

Enebong added that the association was also prioritising grassroots development through a Golf STEM academy for schools across the FCT.

Jessica Oji, Miracle Ezechukwu Lead Team Nigeria to Oregon for World Athletics U20 Championships

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Team Nigeria will turn its attention to the next generation of athletics stars as a promising contingent heads to Oregon, United States, for the 2026 World Athletics U-20 Championships, scheduled for August 5-9.

Fresh from representing Nigeria at the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games in Scotland, sprinting sensation, Miracle Ezechukwu and shot put silver medallist Jessica Oji headline the Nigerian team for the global junior championship, where the world's finest emerging track and field talents will compete for honours.

Ezechukwu, who competed in the Commonwealth Games women's 100m semifinal will feature in the women's 100m and 200m and also listed for the women's 4x100m relay, bringing valuable experience from Glasgow, where she was also a part of Nigeria's women's 4x100m team that reached the Commonwealth Games final.

Oji will compete in both the women's shot put and discus throw. She arrives in Oregon with considerable momentum after winning silver in the women's shot put at the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games, an achievement that further underlined her status as one of Nigeria's brightest emerging field event prospects.

The Nigerian contingent features a blend of promising sprint, hurdles, jumps and throws talents seeking to make their mark on the global stage.

In the women's 100m, Ezechukwu will be joined by Rosemary Nwankwo and Lucy Nwankwo, while Success Oyibu and Tejiri Praise Ugoh join Ezechukwu in the 200m.



JESSICA OJI

Glasgow 2026 Marks Nigeria's Greatest Commonwealth Games Campaign, says performance Director

Nigeria's Performance Director and Athletes Liaison, Victor Okorie, has described Team Nigeria's performance at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow as the country's greatest outing in the history of the competition, citing the team's remarkable achievements despite competing in significantly fewer events than in previous editions.



TEAM NIGERIA

Speaking after the conclusion of the Games, Okorie said Nigeria's haul of 10 gold medals represented a historic accomplishment when viewed against the structure of the Glasgow 2026 programme, which featured only 10 sports compared to the 19 or 20 disciplines contested at previous Commonwealth Games.

According to him, the reduced number of medal events made Nigeria's performance even more significant, noting that earlier editions of the Games, which offered almost twice as many opportunities

Tottenham step up Pursuit of Super Eagles Star Osimhen

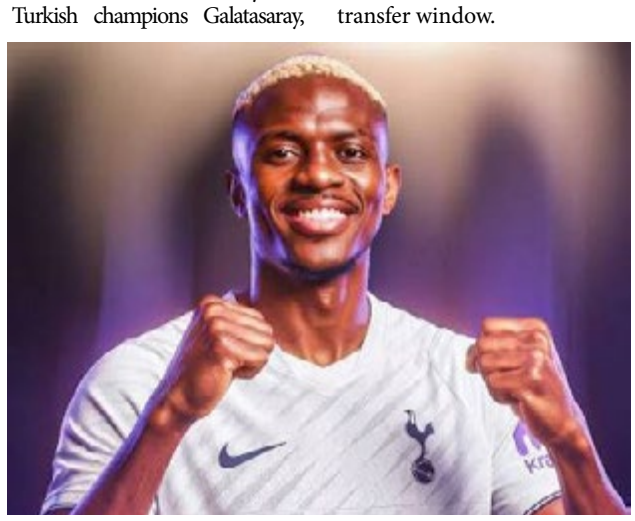
Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur are preparing to intensify their pursuit of Nigeria international Victor Osimhen as they seek to strengthen their attacking options ahead of the new season.

According to reports, Spurs have received internal approval to begin formal negotiations for the Super Eagles striker and are confident that agreeing personal terms with the player will not be a major obstacle.

Osimhen, who is currently with Turkish champions Galatasaray, remains one of the most sought-after forwards in Europe following another impressive campaign.

Galatasaray are reportedly holding out for a transfer fee in the region of £65 million, while Tottenham's initial approaches have been valued between £50 million and £55 million.

Negotiations are expected to continue in the coming days as Spurs look to bridge the gap in valuation and secure the services of the prolific Nigerian forward before the close of the transfer window.



VICTOR OSIMHEN

Solanke Vows to End Age Cheating, Prioritise Young Talents for Nigeria's Football Future

A leading contender for the presidency of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Segun Solanke, has reaffirmed his commitment to restoring integrity to Nigerian football by giving genuine young players the opportunity to excel, describing the fight against age cheating as a top priority of his administration if elected.

Speaking during one of his consultations with football stakeholders, Solanke said Nigerian football can only regain its lost glory by creating a system that identifies, nurtures and promotes talented youngsters based on merit rather than manipulation of age.

According to him, age cheating has denied many gifted young footballers the opportunity to represent Nigeria at youth competitions, while also damaging the country's credibility on the international stage.

"If elected as President of the Nigeria Football Federation, one of my major priorities will be to ensure that our youth competitions truly belong to young players. We must discourage age cheating by building a transparent player development structure that rewards talent, discipline and honesty," Solanke declared.

Sports

The Nigerian OBSERVER

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.



ACCRA YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS



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.

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

Kehinde Osagiede

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 Sefeiya Dikyai
8. Hajara Audu
9. Bose Melaiye
10. Bukky Oluwatosin
11. Sewuese Iorkua
12. George Samson Malaika

In a press statement signed by Godspower Odedede



12 COACHES TO FIVB LEVEL I COACHING CERTIFICATION IN GHANA

Nwabali delivers Man of the Match performance in first competitive game since February

Stanley Nwabali made his Betway Premiership return after winning the Man of the Match award in Chippa United's league opener against Golden Arrows.

The Super Eagles goalkeeper played the full 90 minutes, making six saves, including four from inside the box, while recording 12 recoveries.

It was his first competitive match since February after leaving Chippa United by mutual consent and spending months without a club. He returned ahead of the new season and was back between the posts for the opening league fixture.

Nwabali, who established himself as Nigeria's first-choice goalkeeper during the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, produced one of the game's best performances as Chippa United opened their campaign.

He finished with six saves, four of them from inside the



STANLEY NWABALI

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 Agroterra 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.

According to the statement, the second edition follows the success of the maiden camp, held in August 2025, which attracted more than 450 children at the Agroterra Sports Complex in Joga-Orile in Ogun.

"The post-camp evaluations showed that nearly 60 per cent of the participants tried a new sport for the first time, while confidence levels improved significantly.

"The overall experience received a rating of nine out of 10 from participants," it said.



WAMUFAT SPORTS CAMP

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.

Despite her heroics, Alozie remained modest, attributing the victory to a collective team effort, especially following Nigeria's earlier 3-2 loss to Malawi women's national team.



MICHELLE ALOZIE

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.

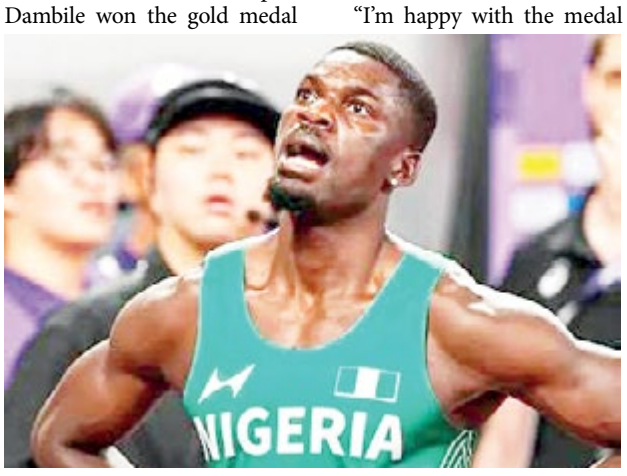
"It is a special moment for me and my country," Nathaniel said after claiming Nigeria's latest gold medal.

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.



EZEKIEL NATHANIEL

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.



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.

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.

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.



ELEGBELEYE

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.

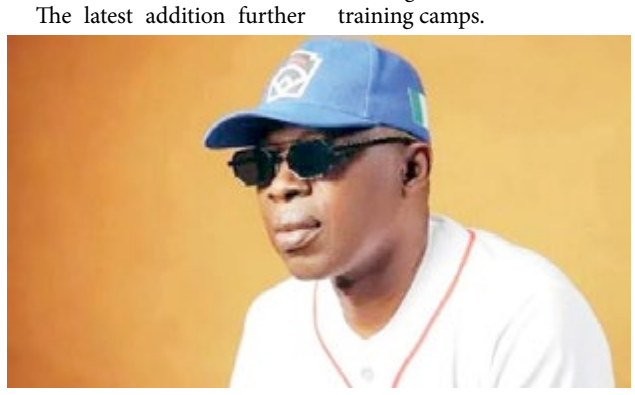
The appointment was conveyed on Saturday in an official letter from the General Manager of the Sports Council, Olubisi Adegoke.

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 Adejoke, 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

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.

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 announcement 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.



GIANNI INFANTINO

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