



Tinubu, Okpebholo, APC family celebrate First Lady @ 66

ABUJA

MATTHEW OKAGHA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, and the leadership and members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) have celebrated First Lady Senator

Oluremi Tinubu as she clocks 66, extolling her as a devoted wife, compassionate leader and strong advocate for women, children and vulnerable Nigerians.

While President Tinubu described his wife as his “truest friend and confidante,” praising her patience, courage, faith and steadfast support through the years, Governor Okpebholo hailed her contributions to women’s development, economic empowerment and inclusive governance.

The APC national leadership, speaking on behalf of the party’s wider family, also praised the First Lady’s humanitarian interventions through the Renewed Hope Initiative and other platforms, particularly in education, healthcare, youth and women empowerment and support for vulnerable Nigerians.

The tributes, which cut across the Presidency, Edo State Government and the APC family nationwide, came as the First Lady marked her 66th birthday, with well-wishers highlighting her roles in public service, family, humanitarian intervention and advocacy for women and the underprivileged.

In a deeply personal birthday message, President Tinubu expressed appreciation for the First Lady’s unwavering com-

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#200

Shettima takes Nigeria’s case to UNGA

Seeks global institutional reforms, stronger voice for developing nations

NEW YORK

Vice President Kashim Shettima has arrived in New York to lead Nigeria’s delegation to the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), with the Federal Government set to push the country’s national interests and demand reforms of global institutions.

Representing President Bola Tinubu at the high-level gathering, Shettima said Nigeria’s participation would be anchored on its commitment to multilateralism and the need for international institutions to reflect contemporary economic and demographic realities.

Voice of Nigeria +1

“Our message in New York is clear. Nigeria believes in multilateralism, but the institutions that govern our world must become more representative, equitable, and responsive to the realities of today,” the Vice President said.

He said Nigeria would engage its international partners firmly from the standpoint of national interest while advancing President Tinubu’s advocacy for a global system in which developing countries have a stronger voice and fairer opportunities to prosper.

Shettima arrived in New York alongside Rivers State Governor Siminalayi Fubara, Minister of State for Budget and Economic Planning, Doris Uzoka-Anite, and other senior government officials. He was

received by Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the Vice President, Ibrahim Hadejia; Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu; Minister of Women Affairs, Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim; Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dele Alake; Nigeria’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Jimoh Ibrahim, among others.

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Ex-NACCIMA boss hails AGF’s role in saving Nigeria ₦14bn from arbitration claims

ABUJA

EKHABAFE BELOVED

Former NACCIMA president and chairman of the Alliance for Economic Research and Ethics, Dele Kelvin Oye, has commended the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi, for his role in protecting Nigeria from more than \$14 billion in international arbitration claims.

Oye made the commendation in a tribute titled “When the Republic Found Its Voice,” where he highlighted Fagbemi’s handling of major international disputes involving Nigeria.

According to Oye, the cases involving Process and Industrial Developments (P&ID), Sunrise Power and European Dynamics collectively represented more than \$14 billion in stated claims or potential financial exposure.

He said the outcomes of the cases demonstrated a stronger legal defence of Nigeria’s economic interests and helped protect public funds from potentially huge liabilities.

Oye particularly pointed to the P&ID case, where Nigeria successfully challenged an arbitration award that had grown

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81ST UNGA: Vice President Kashim Shettima being welcomed on arrival in New York to lead Nigeria’s delegation to the 81st United Nations General Assembly.

CNG: Tinubu targets cheaper transport from October

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MDAs’ foreign trips gulp ₦50billion

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Three arrested in South Africa over the murder of a woman

—Pg 15

U-20 Women’s World Cup: NFF hails Falconets performance despite Quarter-final elimination

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NEWS

**CATARACT SURGERIES:**

A patient undergoing surgery during the free cataract surgeries held in Benin City by the Edo State Government in collaboration with the African Cataract Eye foundation.

Tinubu, Okpebholo, APC family celebrate First Lady @ 66

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panionship throughout their years together, recalling the difficult moments, sacrifices, prayers and triumphs they had shared.

The President said Oluremi had remained a source of strength and stability to him, particularly during periods when the demands of public life became overwhelming.

He said the burdens he carried often found their way onto her shoulders, while thoughts he could not easily express somehow found their way to her.

“In difficult times, when the future was uncertain, you stayed calm beside me and prayed with me,” Tinubu said.

According to the President, the First Lady possessed a unique understanding of him, often knowing when he needed counsel before he asked.

“More often than not, you sense when I need counsel before I ask. There have been nights when your presence alone was counsel enough,” he said.

Tinubu described Oluremi as his “truest friend and confidante,” particularly appreciating her willingness to tell him the truth even when it was uncomfortable.

The President also paid tribute to her commitment to their family, saying their children and grandchildren had grown under the shelter of her prayers and had carried forward her values of faith, kindness and compassion.

Beyond her role as wife and mother, Tinubu highlighted the First Lady’s humanitarian activities and her concern for vulnerable Nigerians.

He recalled her work through the New Era Foundation and the Renewed Hope Initiative, saying the programmes had provided support to young people, widows, elderly citizens, women farmers and other vulnerable groups across the country.

He also acknowledged her advocacy for Nigerians affected by tuberculosis and other dis-

eases, describing her compassion as one that transcended ethnic, regional, political and religious boundaries.

“I know the prayers you offer for people whose names you may never know. I also know many whom you have helped without ever meeting them,” the President said.

“For you, compassion has never recognised the boundaries of tribe, region or religion.”

Tinubu said the First Lady’s commitment to humanity had remained consistent with her public service, adding that her interventions had given hope and support to people facing difficult circumstances.

Reflecting on their life together, the President said their journey had been marked by difficult decisions, sacrifices, laughter and prayer.

He thanked his wife for the life they had built together and prayed that God would grant her many more years in good health, joy and fulfilment.

In Edo State, Governor Monday Okpebholo joined the birthday tributes, describing the First Lady as a strong advocate for women’s development, economic empowerment and inclusive governance.

The Governor, in a birthday message issued by his Chief Press Secretary, Dr Patrick Akhere Ebojele, commended Oluremi Tinubu’s years of public service and her contributions to issues affecting women, children and vulnerable groups.

Okpebholo also acknowledged her legislative experience and advocacy for greater participation of women in politics and public affairs.

He described her as a political figure who had distinguished herself through conviction, commitment and quality of service.

“Senator Remi Tinubu is that rare political figure—someone who has earned her place not through proximity to power,

but through the sheer force of her convictions and the quality of her work,” the Governor said.

He noted that her years in the Senate provided her with a platform to contribute to debates and legislative initiatives on social policy, education, women’s economic participation and financial inclusion.

“In a Senate chamber that has historically been dominated by men, she did not merely occupy a seat, she did so with ideas, with presence, with moral authority,” Okpebholo stated.

The Governor said the First Lady’s advocacy for greater participation of women in politics and public affairs would continue to encourage younger women aspiring to leadership positions.

He also commended her support for the administration of President Tinubu, particularly its economic reform programme and efforts aimed at addressing poverty and improving social welfare.

“Senator Remi Tinubu is not merely a supporter of Mr President’s agenda—she is an active participant in its advancement,” he said.

Okpebholo further highlighted the First Lady’s engagements in women’s welfare, youth development and community support, saying she had demonstrated that the responsibilities of high office could be combined with concern for ordinary Nigerians.

He wished her good health, wisdom and strength as she continues her responsibilities as Nigeria’s First Lady.

Similarly, the National Chairman of the APC, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda, also congratulated Oluremi Tinubu, describing her as a compassionate leader whose interventions had touched Nigerians across political, ethnic, religious and geographical boundaries.

Yilwatda, in a birthday message issued on Monday on behalf of the party’s National Working Committee, leaders and mem-

bers, said the First Lady’s work through the Renewed Hope Initiative and other intervention platforms had focused on education, healthcare, women and youth empowerment and assistance to vulnerable Nigerians.

He described her as a “true mother of the nation,” saying her activities had demonstrated that leadership could be used to restore dignity, rekindle hope and give people confidence in a better future.

The APC chairman noted that the First Lady’s interventions had extended beyond political considerations, with programmes targeted at Nigerians in need irrespective of their backgrounds.

He commended her commitment to initiatives designed to improve the welfare and prospects of women and young people, while supporting vulnerable citizens across the country.

APC women across the country also joined the celebration, using the occasion to acknowledge the First Lady’s advocacy for women’s participation in governance, economic empowerment and community development.

The women, drawn from the party’s structures across the states and at the national level, celebrated Oluremi Tinubu as a source of encouragement to women seeking greater opportunities in public service, politics and leadership.

They also acknowledged her support for women-focused initiatives and programmes aimed at improving the welfare and economic prospects of families and communities.

The birthday celebration therefore provided an occasion for members of the APC family to highlight the First Lady’s contributions to the party’s women and youth agenda, as well as her humanitarian engagements outside partisan considerations.

For the President, however, the occasion remained deeply personal.

Shettima takes Nigeria’s...

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At the General Debate, Shettima is scheduled to deliver Nigeria’s national statement, outlining the country’s positions on major international issues, including peace and security, economic development, global cooperation and sustainable growth. He is also expected to hold high-level meetings and bilateral engagements with world leaders, international organisations and development partners.

Nigeria is expected to use the engagements to press its positions on reform of the international financial architecture, sustainable development, climate finance, technology access and stronger African representation in global decision-making.

The 81st UN General Assembly’s high-level week runs from September 22 to 28, under the theme, “Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All.”

Ex-NACCIMA boss hails...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

to more than \$11 billion with interest. The award was later set aside by an English court following findings relating to fraud and abuse of the arbitration process.

He also cited the Sunrise Power arbitration concerning the Mambilla Hydroelectric Power Project. The International Chamber of Commerce tribunal in Paris rejected Sunrise Power’s claims, which had exposed Nigeria to potential claims of more than \$3.38 billion.

Oye further mentioned the

European Dynamics arbitration, where claims of about \$6.2 million against Nigeria over the national e-procurement project were dismissed.

He said the cases were significant not only because of the money involved but also because they helped protect national projects and strengthened Nigeria’s position in international dispute resolution.

Oye therefore praised Fagbemi’s contribution to the government’s efforts to protect public resources and defend Nigeria’s interests in international legal disputes.

Edo Govt, partners begin free cataract surgeries for residents

OLIVER IJIOGBE

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government, in collaboration with the African Cataract Eye Foundation and other private-sector partners, has commenced free cataract surgeries for residents, with more than 200 people benefiting from the ongoing intervention.

The surgeries are being conducted at the Edo Specialist Hospital, along Sapele Road, Benin City, as part of efforts to restore the sight of residents affected by cataract and improve access to specialised healthcare services.

The Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomhole, said the initiative was in fulfilment of the commitment of Governor Monday Okpebholo to improving access to quality and affordable healthcare for residents of the state.

Oshiomhole commended the African Cataract Eye Foundation and its partners for supporting the state government’s healthcare initiatives, stressing that public-private partnerships remained critical to expanding access to quality healthcare.

He also disclosed that free malaria treatment was available at government hospitals and selected private hospitals across the state, urging residents to take advantage of the intervention.

Speaking on the cataract programme, Dr. Mejuya Okorodudu of the African Cataract Eye Foundation said the foundation, with sponsorship from

Tantita and Jovason Group, had planned to provide 200 cataract surgeries in Edo State.

He explained that the intervention followed the commissioning of a hospital built by the Jovason Group in Orogbu, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area, where 138 cataract surgeries were performed the previous week.

According to him, an additional 50 cataract surgeries were offered to the Edo State Ministry of Health through the partnership, bringing the intervention to more residents in need of the procedure.

Okorodudu said cataract-induced blindness was reversible through surgery, noting that restoring the sight of affected persons, particularly those with limited financial resources, could help them regain their independence and return to productive activities.

He urged residents suffering from cataract not to be apprehensive about the procedure, describing cataract surgery as a relatively simple operation that does not take much time, with patients often beginning to experience improved vision shortly after surgery.

The foundation representative also commended the Commissioner for Health for what he described as a proactive approach to healthcare delivery, expressing optimism that sustained collaboration between government and private-sector organisations would facilitate more interventions for residents in both urban and rural communities.

CNG: Tinubu targets cheaper transport from October

OSAHENIRO OFUWENGBE

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu has directed state governments to accelerate the rollout of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and electric-powered transport systems, with the aim of reducing transportation costs for more Nigerians from October 1, 2026.

Tinubu gave the directive following discussions with the 36 state governors, saying the Federal Government and states must ensure that savings from

cheaper alternative energy are reflected in transport fares paid by commuters.

The President said an implementation committee had been established under the Nigeria Governors' Forum to coordinate the National Affordable CNG Transit Programme and identify key transport routes where interventions are most needed.

Tinubu said the Federal Government had invested heavily in developing Nigeria's CNG transport infrastructure over the past three years. According to

him, more than 120,000 vehicles have been converted to CNG, while over 400 certified conversion centres and more than 90 refuelling stations are now operating nationwide.

He also cited existing examples of cheaper transport fares in several states. In Oyo, for instance, he said CNG buses deployed by Pacesetter Transport reduced the Lagos-Ibadan fare from about N8,000 to N3,200 during the initial rollout.

The President further disclosed that CNG and alternative-energy transport services

had produced fare reductions in Borno, Adamawa, Enugu, Plateau, Kaduna, Niger, Abia and parts of Abuja, with some commuters reportedly paying substantially less than commercial fares.

Tinubu urged state governments to work with transport unions and commercial operators, support vehicle conversions and expand the infrastructure required to make CNG-powered transportation more accessible. He stressed that the savings from cheaper fuel must reach commuters

through lower fares.

The President said Nigeria, as a gas-rich country, could reduce its exposure to fluctuations in global petrol and diesel prices by expanding alter-

native-energy transportation. He urged states to maintain momentum ahead of October 1 so that more Nigerians can begin to benefit from reduced transportation costs.

Economist proposes increased fuel supply to cushion effect of high prices

ILE-IFE

Dr Nathaniel Oladunjoye, an economist, has urged the Federal Government to increase fuel supply to cushion Nigerians from rising petrol prices.

Oladunjoye, a Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, made the call in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Sunday in Abuja.

He said government's intervention was necessary because rising petrol prices were worsening poverty and reducing welfare of Nigerians.

"Once the policy of the government is driving people into poverty, penury, and driving people into multidimensional poverty, then the government must take caution.

"Nigeria, as an oil-producing country, should ensure that its citizens remain primary beneficiaries of the nation's natural resources.

"As such, government policies should improve citizens' welfare rather than make vulnerable Nigerians worse off," he said.

According to the economist, the government can intervene without necessarily returning to the previous petrol subsidy regime.

"If the government does not want to reintroduce subsidy, fine. But the government can also oversupply.

"The federal government can increase the quantity of petroleum supplied to the Dangote Refinery while requiring the product to be sold at an agreed price.

"The relief is coming in the form of more supply of the product to Dangote than pushing the continuous increase to the income of the citizens," he

said.

He said such intervention would provide relief to households already facing declining incomes and increasing transportation and living costs.

Oladunjoye also urged the government to strengthen border controls and provide relevant agencies with equipment and personnel to tackle fuel smuggling.

He said government should not transfer the cost of porous borders to Nigerians through higher petrol prices.

"Rising petrol prices have broad effects because transportation costs influence the prices of food and other goods.

"The resulting increases can worsen poverty, inequality and unemployment while placing further pressure on households.

"So, let us address the issue of poverty. Let us address the issue of inequality. Let us address the issue of unemployment," he said.

He said government's primary responsibility was to improve citizens' welfare and prevent policies that would make vulnerable Nigerians worse off.

He said that Nigerians should be primary beneficiaries of the country's oil resources, particularly given the relatively low income levels of many citizens.

"How can a worker earning N77,000 minimum wage cope when petrol costs more than N1,400 per litre.

"The government should intervene when essential commodity prices rise excessively, because even capitalist countries intervene in their economies.

"There is no more rational justification when the welfare of the people keeps declining," Oladunjoye said.

**INDUCTION CEREMONY:**

From left: Company Secretary, Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX Group), Izuchukwu Akpan; Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX), Jude Chiemeka; President, Chartered Institute of Stockbroker (CIS), Fiona Ahimie and the former CIS President, Ariyo Olusheku, during the Induction Ceremony of Authorised Dealing Clerks in Lagos.

Fuel hike: Tricycle operators raise fares across FCT

ABUJA

Some commercial tricycle operators in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have increased fares on some routes following the rise in petrol prices to between N1,410 per litre and N1,450 per litre.

The latest adjustment followed an N85 increase in Dangote Petroleum Refinery's gantry price, from N1,265 per litre to N1,350 per litre, amid a surge in global crude oil prices.

Brent crude is currently trading at 103.21 dollars per barrel, down 1.2 per cent from previous levels, while U.S. crude West Texas Intermediate (WTI) was around 100 dollars per barrel.

The increase has added to the financial pressure on commuters already facing rising transportation costs.

Checks by the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Sunday in Abuja showed that fares on several routes had increased.

The fare from Gudu to Lokogoma Junction, previously N200, is now N300, while the fare from Kabusa junction to Apo Roundabout has risen from N300 to N400.

From Dutse express to Tipper Garage junction, the fare increased from N400 to N500, while the Dutse express to Sokale roundabout rose from N300 to N400.

In Nyanya, the fare from Nyanya junction to City college

is now N500. In Lugbe, the fare from Chika bridge increased from N100 to N200, while the fare from Kubwa village junction to Byazim is now N400.

A tricycle operator in Kubwa, Mr Saidu Mohamed, said the increase was due to the rising cost of petrol, as well as higher maintenance and spare-parts costs.

Another operator in Dutse, Mr Haruna Abdullahi, said he bought petrol at N1,430 per litre, lamenting the growing financial pressure caused by the increase in fuel prices.

Mr Ibrahim Dauda, a tricycle operator in Kabusa, said he bought petrol at an AY Shafa filling station for N1,430 per litre, which he said had con-

tributed to the fare increase.

He said the impact of rising fuel costs extended beyond transportation to other aspects of daily life.

A commuter in Kubwa, Mr Daniel Aaron, said the fuel price increase had made it difficult for many people to move around and earn a living.

"I find it very difficult to move around for my daily bread again because of the increase in transportation," he said.

Another commuter, Mr Tony Akinbode, said he hardly went out anymore and was finding it increasingly difficult to feed his family because of the high cost of transportation.

2027: Explain your fuel subsidy plan, APC PCC tells Atiku

ABUJA

The All Progressives Congress Presidential Campaign Council has asked African Democratic Congress (ADC) presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar to explain the legal, fiscal and operational framework for his proposed fuel subsidy.

The Council's Spokesperson, Mr Dele Alake, made the demand in a statement

on Sunday in Abuja, following Abubakar's recent advocacy for targeted support for locally refined petroleum products.

The council said the former vice president's proposal raised questions over how government support to domestic refiners would translate into lower pump prices under the existing petroleum-sector framework.

It asked Abubakar to clarify whether refiners receiving the proposed subsidy would be re-

quired to sell petrol at prescribed prices and identify the legal framework for such conditions.

"If the answer is yes, he should identify the legal framework under which the government would impose that price condition and explain how it would operate consistently with the Petroleum Industry Act.

"If the answer is no, he should explain how public support to refiners would guarantee lower prices at filling stations."

Presidential Campaign Council: We don't need your validation, OK Movement tells NDC

ABUJA

The Obidient-Kwankwaso (OK) Movement has said that it does not require the personal validation or approval of any individual within the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) before exercising its legitimate organisational functions in accordance with established processes.

The OK Movement National Secretary, Saadatu Sani, stated

this in a statement on Sunday in Abuja.

Sani rejected a statement credited to the party's National Chairman, Sen. Moses Cleopas, urging him to familiarise himself with NDC's constitution before making assertions.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that OK Movement had, on Thursday, unveiled a 59-member presidential campaign council, with John Ughulu as National

Director-General and Saadatu Sani as National Secretary.

However, NDC, in a statement issued on Saturday, dissociated itself from the purported presidential campaign council, calling on the public to disregard it.

The Obidient-Kwankwaso (OK) Movement has said that it does not require the personal validation or approval of any individual within the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) before exercising its legitimate organisational functions in accordance with established processes.



MOWAA PUBLISHES
AUDITED ACCOUNTS
CLARIFIES INSTITUTE FUNDING



<https://wearemowaa.org/press>

The Museum of West African Art (MOWAA) has published its audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025, providing a transparent record of its funding, expenditure, assets, programme activity and investment in cultural infrastructure.

Introduction

MOWAA IS
A NIGERIAN
NOT-FOR-PROFIT
CULTURAL
INSTITUTION

Established to advance research, conservation, archaeology, education and international exchange around West Africa’s art, history and material culture. The MOWAA Institute, which opened in November 2025, is the first completed facility within that wider vision and the only completed part of the wider MOWAA campus.

Ernst & Young audited MOWAA’s financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 and concluded that they give a true and fair view of MOWAA’s financial position and performance. MOWAA has paused further construction on the wider campus while outstanding matters with the relevant stakeholders are resolved. Our commitment to good governance, responsible stewardship and transparency remains unwavering.

2025 headline financials
Audited figures at a glance

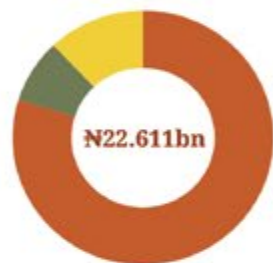
Total revenue



Donations **₦7.908bn** 56.4%
Grants **₦5.985bn** 42.7%
Other revenue **₦0.118bn** 0.8%

Donations and grants together represented approximately 99% of total revenue.

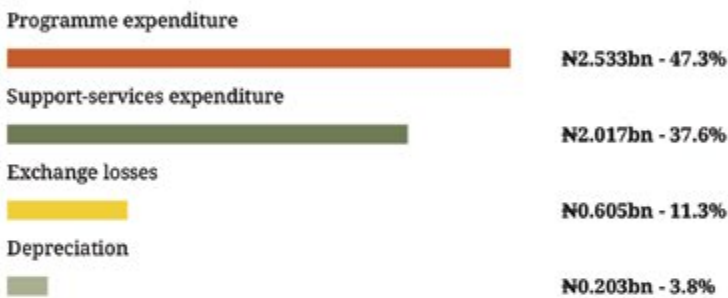
Total assets



Work in progress **₦18.058bn** 79.9%
Other PPE **₦1.829bn** 8.1%
Current assets **₦2.723bn** 12.0%

Includes **₦19.887bn** in property and equipment at year-end.

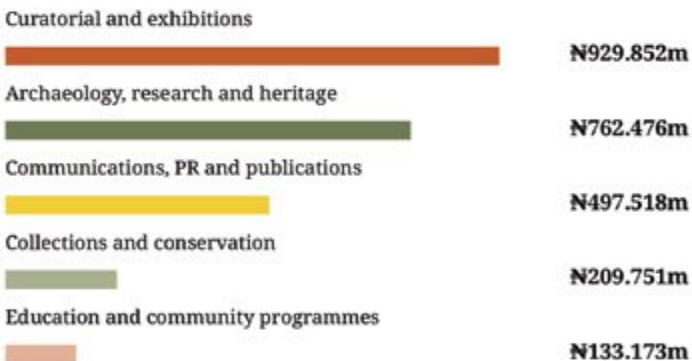
Total expenditure



Programme spending covered research, heritage, exhibitions, conservation, education and communications.

Programme and community investment

₦2.533bn programme expenditure



Edo State donation

₦3.95bn total documented cash donation

10.4% of the approximately **₦38bn** raised from MOWAA’s inception to 31 December 2025 for the full campus and wider institutional programme.

17.7% of the **₦3.95bn** total cash donation as a proportion of the **₦22.26bn** cost of building and equipping the MOWAA Institute.

Of the **₦3.95bn** total, **₦3.8bn** supported civil and mechanical works on the MOWAA Institute, while **₦150m** supported earlier pre-construction work for the wider campus vision, including concept design, fundraising and environmental impact assessment.

The State also supported MOWAA through the allocation of land and by helping to create the enabling environment for the institution to be established in Benin City. This non-cash support is acknowledged separately and is not included in the **₦3.95bn** cash figure.

Principal Donors and Grant-Makers since Inception

Funding, development, programming and operations made possible by many including:

Federal Republic of Germany	A.G. Leventis Foundation
Individual Directors and Trustees of MOWAA	Ford Foundation
British Museum	Gerda Henkel Foundation
Mellon Foundation	Edo State Government
German Archaeological Institute / DAI	Getty Foundation

In 2025, **₦7.118 billion** came from sources classified within Nigeria and **₦6.893 billion** from outside Nigeria.

MOWAA is a Nigerian not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It has no shareholders and does not distribute profits. Its resources are applied to its cultural, educational, research and public-benefit mission under board oversight and applicable Nigerian reporting requirements.

Phillip Ihenacho
Executive Chairman, MOWAA

Oreoluwa Disu
Director, MOWAA

Kingsley Odigie
Director, Finance and Administration, MOWAA

ADVERTORIAL



https://wearemowaa.org/press

MOWAA publishes 2025 audited accounts and reaffirms commitment to transparency and collaboration

MOWAA publishes audited accounts, clarifies Institute funding and pauses construction pending resolution with Edo State.

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA. [21/09/2026]

Following the completion of its 2025 audit, and in light of recent public statements concerning the cost of the MOWAA Institute and the extent of the Edo State Government's support, the Museum of West African Art (MOWAA) has published its full 2025 annual report and audited financial statements, together with supporting information on what has been built and how it has been funded.

Through this publication, MOWAA seeks to place the relevant facts in the public domain, support informed discussion and create a stronger basis for constructive engagement with relevant stakeholders. MOWAA remains committed to working respectfully with the Edo State Government, the Benin Royal Palace and other stakeholders. Our commitment to good governance, responsible stewardship and transparency remains unwavering.

The MOWAA Institute and its West African mandate

MOWAA is a Nigerian not-for-profit cultural institution established to serve as a platform for West Africa: advancing research, conservation, archaeology, education, professional development and international exchange around the region's art, history and material culture.

The MOWAA Institute, which opened in November 2025, is the first major facility delivered within that wider vision. It is an archives, research and education centre supporting archaeology, materials research, conservation, learning and the preservation and interpretation of West African art and culture. The MOWAA Institute is intended to serve museums and heritage institutions across the continent, as reflected in its ongoing partnerships and programmes. It is not the entirety of the proposed MOWAA campus, nor should the cost of the Institute be confused with the funding or completion requirements of the wider campus.

What the audited accounts show

Ernst & Young (EY) audited MOWAA's financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 and issued an unmodified opinion, the formal term for a clean audit opinion. In plain English, EY concluded that the accounts give a true and fair view of MOWAA's financial position and performance and comply with the applicable accounting standards.

MOWAA reported total revenue, principally from donations and grants, of ₦14.011 billion in 2025, compared with ₦12.530 billion in 2024. Total expenditure was ₦5.358 billion, comprising ₦2.533 billion in programme expenditure, ₦2.017 billion in support-services expenditure, ₦605.095 million in exchange losses and ₦202.816 million in depreciation.

The resulting surplus, meaning the amount by which income recognised during the year exceeded expenses, was ₦8.653 billion. As a not-for-profit organisation, MOWAA does not distribute profits; the surplus is retained within the institution to advance its mission, programmes and long-term development, including investment in the Institute and other institutional assets.

At 31 December 2025, MOWAA reported cash and cash equivalents of ₦2.704 billion and total assets of ₦22.611 billion. Those assets included ₦19.887 billion in property and equipment, of which ₦18.058 billion was recorded as work in progress. These figures reflect the scale of MOWAA's investment in long-term cultural infrastructure.

Programme spending covered archaeology, research and heritage, curatorial and exhibition work, collections and conservation, education and community programmes, and communication and publications. Within this expenditure, ₦133.173 million was directed to education and community programmes, representing direct investment in cultural capacity, public learning and community benefit. MOWAA's work has also created jobs and expanded specialist cultural capacity in Benin City. In 2025, MOWAA engaged 87 people through direct employment and consultancy roles.

MOWAA's funding base is diverse and overwhelmingly philanthropic. The audited revenue categories comprised ₦7.908 billion in donations, ₦5.985 billion in grants and ₦117.697 million in other revenue. Donations and grants together represented approximately 99 per cent of reported revenue. The accounts record ₦7.118 billion from sources classified within Nigeria and ₦6.893 billion from outside Nigeria. This philanthropic support, including funding from MOWAA's Directors and Trustees, together with careful stewardship of those funds, is essential to sustaining the institution's development, operations and programmes. Without it, MOWAA's income would not cover the cost of its work.

The Institute cost and Edo State's support

MOWAA acknowledges and is grateful for the Edo State Government's ₦3.95 billion cash donation to the development of MOWAA. This comprised ₦3.8 billion towards the civil and mechanical works required to construct the MOWAA Institute and an earlier ₦150 million donation towards pre-construction work for the wider campus vision, including concept design, fundraising and environmental impact assessment. The State also supported the institution through the allocation of land and by helping to create the enabling environment for MOWAA to be established in Benin City. This non-cash support is acknowledged separately and is not included in the ₦3.95 billion cash figure.

Against the approximately ₦38 billion raised from MOWAA's inception to 31 December 2025 for its full campus and wider institutional programme, Edo State's total cash donation represented approximately 10.4 per cent. As a measure of scale, the same cash donation was equivalent to 17.7 per cent of the ₦22.26 billion cost of the MOWAA Institute, the facility that has been built. The remainder of MOWAA's funding came through donations and grants from other Nigerian and international partners.

The approximately ₦4.1 billion figure cited in public discussion does not represent the total cost of delivering the MOWAA Institute. That figure comes from an early bill of quantities for the first phase of civil construction only. It excluded later civil works, mechanical and electrical systems, fit-out, lighting, specialist research and conservation equipment, storage, professional services and the substantial foreign-exchange variations experienced during the construction period.

The total cost of building and equipping the MOWAA Institute was ₦22.26 billion. Edo State's ₦3.95 billion cash donation was important and valued. The figures also make clear that the State provided some, but not all, of the funding for the Institute and did not fund MOWAA as a whole.

Actions now under way

To support a constructive resolution, MOWAA is taking three immediate steps. First, it has published the full 2025 annual report and audited financial statements, together with a plain-English explanation of the principal figures.

Second, MOWAA has paused further construction on the wider campus until outstanding matters are resolved. This pause does not affect the operations of the MOWAA Institute or its continuing research, conservation, education and public-interest work.

Third, MOWAA continues to pursue respectful engagement with relevant stakeholders to resolve these matters and establish a stable and trusted basis for its long-term work in Benin City.

MOWAA has deep respect for the Edo State Government and His Excellency Senator Monday Okpebholo, Governor of Edo State. MOWAA also holds His Royal Majesty Omo N'Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, and the Royal Court in the highest regard, and recognises the profound significance of the Palace to the heritage and identity of the Benin Kingdom.

MOWAA believes that the State, the Kingdom, donors, institutional partners, cultural professionals and the institution share a fundamental interest: ensuring that Nigerian and West African heritage is researched, preserved and presented with integrity, for public benefit and for future generations.

The full audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 are available at <https://wearemowaa.org/press>.

Questions may be directed to press@wearemowaa.org.

SIGNED

Kingsley Odigie

Director, Finance and Administration

NEWS

Dangote acquires 4,000 machines for refinery expansion

LAGOS

Dangote Industries Limited has acquired an additional 4,000 pieces of construction equipment for the expansion of its Lekki refinery to 1.4 million barrels per day, bringing its fleet to 6,500 machines.

The Group Vice President, Oil and Gas and Fertiliser, Devakumar Edwin, disclosed this Friday while briefing editors during a tour of the refinery in Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos.

Edwin said the company in-

itially acquired 2,563 pieces of equipment after Julius Berger and other contractors indicated that they lacked the capacity to construct the main factory buildings of the refinery.

"We ended up buying 2,563 pieces of equipment. We became the second largest company in the world in terms of construction equipment. Today, we are the largest because of the expansion. We have bought 4,000 more pieces of equipment; we have 6,500 pieces of construction equipment. We bought 330 cranes," he said.

He explained that the decision to acquire the equipment rather than engage foreign engineering, procurement and construction contractors was taken by the President of the Dangote Group, Aliko Dangote, after the company found that hiring overseas contractors would significantly increase the project cost.

"If I bring in a foreign contractor, I'll have to ship in all his equipment, and I'll have to ship back all his equipment, and those guys will also try to depreciate their equipment by

adding it to our cost. By the end of the day, we end up paying a lot of money. So my president said, very well, let's go and buy all the construction equipment," he said.

Edwin recalled that Julius Berger, after reviewing the refinery's drawings, declined to undertake the construction of the main process buildings. "They said, sorry, we cannot do any of your factory buildings. We don't have the capacity," he said.

He said the construction firm subsequently handled 43 of about 127 auxiliary build-

ings, including canteens, transformer rooms, control rooms and fire-fighting houses.

According to Edwin, the decision to build the company's own construction equipment fleet was also driven by Nigeria's infrastructure deficit. He recalled that when Dangote built the Apapa sugar refinery in 1998, there were only two large cranes in Nigeria, each with a 150-tonne capacity.

For the Lekki refinery project, the company hired one of only two 5,000-tonne cranes in the world, while also pur-

chasing 330 cranes of its own. "When we are operating in a country with an infrastructure deficit, it takes a lot of time to plan, a lot of money to invest in all these things that industries do not require," he stated.

Edwin said much of the infrastructure developed for the first phase of the refinery would also be deployed for the expansion, reducing the cost and time required for the project.

He listed the existing infrastructure to include a granite quarry with a 10 million-tonne



ACQUISITION:

Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Aneke, during the beam signing ceremony marking a significant milestone in the acquisition of 12 AH-1Z Viper attack helicopters for the NAF, at Bell Textron in USA on Tuesday

NAN-PHOTO

Ex-Kogi Gov candidate mourns Ibrahim Idris

LOKOJA

Ex-governorship candidate in the 2023 election, Alhaji Murtala Ajaka, has expressed deep sorrow over the passing of former Governor of Kogi State, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris, describing his death as a significant loss to his family and the people of Kogi State.

This was contained in a statement issued on Monday by his Head of Media & Public Communications, Prince Tijani Daud.

In the condolence message, Ajaka noted that the former governor occupied an important place in the political history of Kogi State, having served the state for nearly nine years between 2003 and 2012.

He said Alhaji Ibrahim Idris would be remembered for his years of public service and his role as an elder statesman who contributed to the political and devel-

opmental journey of the state.

"This is a painful loss, not only to his immediate family but to the people of Kogi State and everyone whose life he touched during his years of public service.

"His Excellency, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris, served our state at the highest level and remained an important figure in the political history of Kogi State. His passing marks the end of a significant chapter in our state," Ajaka said.

He extended his condolences to the immediate family of the deceased, the people of Omala Local Government Area, the Igala Kingdom and the entire people of Kogi State.

Ajaka prayed to Almighty Allah to forgive the former governor's shortcomings, accept his good deeds and grant him Al-Jannah Firdaus, while giving his family and loved ones the strength to bear the loss.

MDAs' foreign trips gulp ₦50billion

ABUJA

Federal ministries, departments and agencies released at least ₦50.41bn for foreign trips, air tickets, estacode, offshore allowances and overseas training between June 2023 and June 19, 2026, an analysis of government payment records has shown.

The expenditure was recorded in 1,967 transactions involving 129 federal institutions and their agencies, according to data obtained from GovSpend.

GovSpend is a public expenditure tracking platform developed by civic-tech organisation BudgIT to make Federal Government payment records accessible for public scrutiny.

The data was based on 9,305 entries obtained from six GovSpend transaction datasets. After removing 1,001 duplicated entries, the dataset contained 8,304 unique payments. A further 6,337 transactions were excluded because their descriptions did not provide sufficient evidence that they were connected to foreign travel.

Also, the analysis covered payments of ₦5m and above.

This means the ₦50.41bn represents a minimum figure, as thousands of smaller travel-related transactions below the threshold were not captured in the dataset.

Three complete 12-month periods from June 2023 to May 2026 accounted for ₦50.34bn, while another ₦69.88m was released between June 1 and June 19, 2026. The records showed that foreign air tickets constituted the largest component of the spending, accounting for ₦23.70bn or 47 per cent of the total.

Estacode and offshore allowances followed with ₦17.05bn, representing 33.8 per cent. Other foreign-travel expenses, including visas, accommodation, participation fees, foreign exchange, protocol and travel logistics, amounted to ₦5.35bn or 10.6 per cent. Training outside Nigeria accounted for ₦4.32bn, equivalent to 8.6 per cent.

The expenditure rose from ₦16.54bn in the first period covering June 2023 to May 2024 to ₦19.13bn between June 2024 and May 2025. This represented an increase of ₦2.59bn or 15.7 per cent.

It subsequently fell by ₦4.47bn or 23.4 per cent to

₦14.66bn between June 2025 and May 2026.

It was observed that the government recorded 714 foreign-travel transactions in the first year, at an average of ₦23.17m per payment. The number increased to 780 in the second year, with an average value of ₦24.53m.

Transactions fell to 467 in the third year, but the average value rose to ₦31.39m, indicating that fewer but larger payments drove the expenditure during the period.

The Technical Aid Corps recorded the highest expenditure among the MDAs, with ₦11.70bn paid through 93 transactions. The amount represented 23.2 per cent of the total foreign-travel bill.

A substantial part of the agency's expenditure covered offshore allowances for Nigerian volunteers and other foreign-service activities. Its major releases included ₦1.45bn in July 2025, ₦1.27bn in April 2026, ₦1.23bn in May 2025 and ₦1.22bn in December 2025.

Another ₦1.01bn was released in October 2025, while payments of ₦884.28m and ₦812.24m

were recorded in May and April 2026, respectively.

The Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation ranked second, with ₦5.16bn recorded in two transactions.

Its largest transaction, and the single biggest payment in the dataset, was ₦5.15bn released in December 2024 for what the payment description identified as outstanding estacode allowances and flight tickets for the Vice-President and First Lady's official foreign trips that were not budgeted for in 2023 and 2024.

The records indicate that the payment was processed by the Accountant-General's office, although the expenditure related to State House foreign trips. State House Headquarters followed with ₦4.83bn across 28 transactions, while the Federal Ministry of Sports Development recorded ₦4.10bn in 25 payments.

State House Operations for the President spent another ₦2.12bn through 19 transactions. State House Operations for the Vice-President separately recorded ₦691.66m across nine payments.

Abiodun, Yayi receive 5,000 Ogun PDP defectors into APC

OGUN

No fewer than 5,000 stalwarts and members of the Peoples Democratic Party in Ogun State on Sunday defected to the ruling All Progressives Congress at an event held in Ilaro, the headquarters of Yewa South Local Government Area of the state.

The PDP members, who were mainly from the Ogun West Senatorial District, were officially received into the APC by Governor Dapo Abiodun, the governorship candidate of the ruling party, and the party chairman in the state, Yemi Sanusi.

Speaking at the event, the former state chairman of the PDP, Sikirullahi Ogundele, said he decided to lead other notable PDP leaders to the ruling party to escape "political slavery" in his former party, where he disclosed that he spent seven years.

He said the mass movement of governors and other prominent politicians away from the PDP was evidence of the deep crisis within the party, stressing that it would amount to political suicide for experienced par-

ty leaders like himself and others to remain in the party.

Ogundele explained that "The truth is that there is nothing like the PDP again in the state; what is left behind is an empty shell, the umbrella which is the symbol of the party has been shredded into pieces, and some of us have escaped so as not to allow the PDP dilapidated house to collapse on us.

"We have therefore moved away from the opposition party and embrace the APC, which we know is also the next victorious party in the state come 2027 elections. We are all ready to work diligently and deploy our wealth of experience to further mobilise for the APC landmark victory in 2027."

Commenting on the controversy surrounding the origin status of the APC governorship candidate, Ogundele described such allegations as a recurring feature peculiar to governorship contests in the state.

He, however, urged party supporters to disregard claims questioning Adeola's Ogun roots, recalling that similar allegations had been made against past governors of the state.

Lagos orders evacuation of residents in flood-prone communities

LAGOS

The Lagos State Government has directed residents living in low-lying and flood-prone communities to relocate to higher ground following a fresh seven-day flood alert issued by the Nigerian Hydrological Services Agency.

This, the government said, was necessary to prevent loss of lives and property.

The Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, disclosed this in a statement issued on Monday by the ministry's Director of Public Affairs, Kunle Adeshina.

The state government said the alert, issued over the weekend, affects Lagos and 14 other

states, with vulnerable areas in Lagos including Eti-Osa, Lagos Island, Oke-Ira Nla in Ajah, Kirikiri, Ilaje Waterfront Jetty and Jetty Terminal B.

Wahab said the government was treating the NiHSA flood advisory with the utmost seriousness and had intensified monitoring across the identified locations and in other riverine, low-lying, and flood-prone communities.

He urged residents not to wait until floodwaters rise before taking action, stressing that early preparation and temporary relocation could prevent loss of lives and property.

"We are urging Lagosians, particularly those living in flood-prone and low-lying areas, not to take this warning lightly.

When the signs point to danger, the safest decision is to move early. No property is worth risking a life," Wahab stated.

The commissioner advised residents in flood-prone communities to move to higher ground and remain there until the peak of the resurgent rainy season had passed.

He urged communities along the Ogun River and other major waterways to exercise heightened caution, noting that rainfall intensity and rising water levels in connected river sys-

tems could affect downstream communities in Lagos.

Wahab listed Isheri North, Kara, Itowolo, Ajegunle, Majidun, Ogolonto, parts of Agboyi, and other settlements downstream of Isheri Olofin among communities that should remain on high alert between September 19 and 25.

He also advised residents living near rivers, lagoons, wetlands, drainage channels, and other water bodies to monitor official flood forecasts and be prepared to relocate

temporarily when flooding becomes imminent.

According to the commissioner, the NiHSA report warned that rising river levels could cause flooding in vulnerable communities and affect critical facilities, including schools, healthcare centres, markets, farms, and places of worship.

Wahab called on affected local governments, emergency management agencies, community leaders, and residents to activate early-warning and response mechanisms.

He urged them to move people, livestock, and valuable possessions to safer locations where necessary.

The commissioner said the state government would continue to monitor river levels, rainfall patterns, and other hydrological developments in collaboration with relevant federal agencies.

He added that routine cleaning, maintenance, and monitoring of drainage infrastructure across the state would also be sustained.

NSCDC nabs 35-year-old man for vandalising water station cables in Jigawa

MAKURDI

Dutse: A 35-year-old man has been arrested by operatives of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Jigawa State Command, over alleged theft and vandalism of an armoured cable at the Birnin Kudu Township Water Station.

This was confirmed in a statement made available to journalists in Dutse, the Jigawa State capital, on Monday by the Public Relations Officer of the NSCDC, Jigawa State Command, ASC Badaruddeen Tijjani.

Confirming the arrest, the PRO said the incident was reported at about 4am on Sunday, September 20, 2026, after unknown persons allegedly vandalised the facility.

"The incident was reported after unknown persons allegedly vandalised the facility

and tampered with its electrical installations," Tijjani said.

He stated that upon receipt of the report, the Divisional Officer, Birnin Kudu Division, CSC A. S. Adam, immediately mobilised operatives and commenced an investigation.

"Acting on credible intelligence provided by the Birnin Kudu Peace and Security Group, operatives succeeded in arresting the suspect at about 1100hrs on the same day," he added.

The PRO identified the suspect as Rayyanu Ibrahim, 35, of Kurima, Birnin Kudu, who was arrested with the stolen cable.

"The suspect was arrested with an armoured cable suspected to have been removed from the affected facility, which has been recovered as an exhibit," Tijjani stated.

He said the Divisional Officer, alongside other operatives, visited the scene, where it was confirmed that the electrical system had been vandalised.

Suspected armed robber arrested in Akwa Ibom

UYO

The Akwa Ibom State Police Command has arrested a suspected armed robber and recovered two locally made pistols and two machetes in Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area of the state.

The police said the arrest followed a distress alert in the early hours of September 14, 2026.

The command's Public Relations Officer, Timfon John, disclosed this in a statement issued on Monday and made available to journalists in Uyo.

John said operatives on vehicular patrol received an emergency alert from the Command Control Room directing them to Ikot Ekweng Village in Ibiono Ibom, following a report of a vi-

olent attack at about 5am.

According to her, the patrol team met one Inspector Henry, who alleged that he was attacked by one Ini Mfon.

The police spokesperson said the suspect allegedly attacked the officer with a machete while attempting to dispossess him of his tricycle, leaving the officer with an injury to his right hand.

The statement read, "The Akwa Ibom State Police Command has recorded another major operational breakthrough in its sustained onslaught against violent crime and the proliferation of illegal firearms across the State, following the arrest of a suspected armed robber and the recovery of two locally made pistols and two machetes in Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area.



UPDATE:

Minister of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa (R) with the Minister of State for Education, Prof. Suwaiba Ahmad, addressing newsmen on the update of the King's College in Abuja.

Nigerian Navy warns public against fake recruitment notice

ABUJA

The Nigerian Navy has dismissed as fake a recruitment notice currently circulating on social media platforms, purportedly announcing a 2026 Batch 39 recruitment exercise.

The Director of Naval Information, Capt. Abiodun Folorunsho, in a statement on Monday, said the circulating information was not an author-

ised publication and should not be trusted as an official recruitment announcement.

He advised prospective applicants and the public to exercise caution and disregard recruitment information obtained from unofficial social media accounts, websites or other sources.

He said official information regarding Nigerian Navy recruitment, including eligibility requirements, application

procedures, timelines and categories, would only be communicated through authorised Nigerian Navy channels.

"The official website for Nigerian Navy recruitment or enlistment is <http://www.join-nigeriannavy.navy.mil.ng>, and the official website remains <https://navy.mil.ng>," he said.

He also advised the public against making payments to individuals, agents or unauthorised platforms in connec-

tion with Nigerian Navy recruitment, as the exercise was free of charge.

"The Nigerian Navy does not authorise third parties to recruit applicants or collect recruitment fees on its behalf.

"The Navy remains committed to maintaining a transparent and credible recruitment process and will continue to provide timely and accurate information through its official communication channels," he said.

Soldiers rescue 23 kidnapped victims, arrest four suspected Lakurawa members in Sokoto

SOKOTO

Troops of the Joint Task Force North-West, Operation Fansan Yamma, have rescued 23 kidnapped victims and arrested four suspected members of the Lakurawa terrorist group during separate operations across Sokoto State.

The operations, conducted on Sunday, also saw the troops foil attempted terrorist attacks in Wurno, Sabon Birni and Isa Local Government Areas of the state.

The Media Information Officer of JTF North-West, Operation Fansan Yamma, Lt-Col.

Aliyu Danja, disclosed this in a statement issued on Monday.

Danja said troops of Sector 2 responded to a terrorist attack on Sabon Gari in Wurno LGA, where terrorists invaded the community and opened sporadic fire, forcing residents to flee.

He said the troops engaged the attackers and forced them to withdraw, while six kidnapped victims were rescued during the operation.

"During the operation, troops rescued six kidnapped victims. One civilian who sustained a gunshot wound during the attack was evacuated to a medical facility for treat-

ment," he said.

According to him, troops also responded to intelligence about an attempted movement by terrorists along the Sabon Birni-Takatsaba Road around Chabe Biyu in Sabon Birni LGA.

He said the troops established an ambush along the terrorists' likely axis of advance and engaged them on sighting, forcing the attackers to flee.

"Troops engaged the terrorists with firepower on sighting, forcing them to flee in disarray. Troops dominate the general area in order to deny the terrorists freedom of action,"

Danja stated.

The military spokesman further disclosed that troops rescued 17 kidnapped civilians after responding to a distress call concerning terrorist activities along the Isa-Kwanar Isa-Shinkafi Road in Isa LGA.

He said the troops made contact with the terrorists and engaged them, forcing them to withdraw.

"Exploitation of the area led to the rescue of 17 kidnapped civilians. One of the rescued victims, who sustained a fracture, was immediately evacuated to the General Hospital, Isa, for medical attention," he said.

NEWS

NNPCL shops for partners to revive P/H, Warri Refineries as fuel hits ₦1,500

ABUJA

OSEMUDIAMHEN FAITH

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited says it is evaluating technical and financial partnership options for the completion and sustainable operation of the Port Harcourt and Warri refineries, as petroleum marketers mount fresh pressure for the plants to restart.

The marketers are demanding urgent resumption of domestic

refining to check surging pump prices, with petrol selling for between N1,400 and N1,500 per litre and diesel above N2,000 per litre in some locations.

National Public Relations Officer of the Petroleum Products Retail Outlets Owners Association of Nigeria, Mr. Joseph Obele, had urged the Federal Government and NNPC to commence production at both refineries, saying increased local output would reduce import dependence and cushion Nigerians from volatile international

crude prices.

Responding on Sunday, a senior NNPC Ltd official, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak on the matter, said the company recognises public concerns over fuel prices and remains committed to restoring the refineries to commercially viable operations.

"NNPC Ltd is evaluating technical and financial partnership options for the completion, operation and long-term optimisation of the facilities to ensure any partnership is commercially sustainable," the official said.

He disclosed that as part of the process, NNPC Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Sanjiang Chemical Company Limited on April 30, 2026, covering potential technical, operational and investment opportunities relating to the refineries and associated petrochemical development.

"The parties have since undertaken preliminary technical assessment of Warri Refinery and Petrochemical Plant and the Port Harcourt Refinery," he said.

The MoU, which also involves Xingangchen (Fuzhou) Industrial Park Operation and Management Company Limited, is aimed at exploring a technical equity partnership for the completion and operation of both refineries, including expansion, petrochemical development and gas-based industrial projects.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GLORY OF NEW COVENANT GOSPEL CHURCH

This is to inform the general public that the above named has applied to the corporate affairs commission for registration under part 'F' of the companies and allied matters act, 2020.

TRUSTEE NAME AND POSITION

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. OVIBIEBO ANDERSON | Chairman |
| 2. OSAWARU EUNICE | Secretary |
| 3. OVIBIEBO UYIOGHOSA | Member |

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To advance the kingdom of God through Evangelism, discipleship, teaching, prayer, worship and christian service. To promote christian education, mentorship and the development of individuals in accordance with biblical principles.

To empower youths and adults through skills acquisition, vocational training, entrepreneurship and educational support as well as to provide humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and community development support to individuals and families. To promote responsible and productive communities through education, empowerment, family support and lawful partnerships.

Any Objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General Corporate Affairs Commission Plot 420 Tigris Crescent off Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria within Twenty eight (28) days of this publication.

Signed: Secretary R/N 1175

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOST OF PROOF OF INHERITANCE IN FAVOUR OF MR. AUGUSTINE EMUJIEZE

The general public is hereby notified that I, **Mr. EHIKHUEMHEN EHIKCHIOYA JOEL** is the rightful owner of one piece/parcel of land measuring 100ft by 100ft lying and situate at Idumu-Ekhuere Village Uromi in Esan North East local government Area of Edo state. That the said **Mr. EHIKHUEMHEN EHIKCHIOYA JOEL** bought the said land from one **Hon. PETER OKOJIE** via deed of transfer and proof of inheritance in favour of **Mr. AUGUSTINE EMUJIEZE** for the sum of three Hundred and Ten Thousand (310,000.00) dated on the 5th day of may 2007. That sometime in the year 2025 **Mr. EHIKHUEMHEN EHIKCHIOYA JOEL** discovered that the proof of inheritance of **Mr. AUGUSTINE EMUJIEZE** got missing in transit. That all effort made to locate the said proof of inheritance of **Mr. AUGUSTINE EMUJIEZE** has proven abortive. Hence this publication for record purposes concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

Signed: Mr EHIKHUEMHEN. E. JOEL

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

The general public is hereby notified that I, **AKHIGBE AUGUSTINE EHRAHIEME** is the rightful owner of the property situated at 24, Irowa Obaze Street, Off Federal Government Girls College Benin Road, Ugbowo, Benin City, Egor Local Government, Edo State. That the original deed of conveyance dated 18th September 1975, registered as No.30 at page 30 in Volume 316 of the EDOGIS Land Registry, Benin City is missing and all efforts to locate it has proven abortive, hence this notification. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

Signed: Mr Charles Akhigbe
Authorized Representative of
Mr Augustine Erhahieme Akhigbe

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OBOH FAITH** now wish to be known and addressed as **IYARE FAITH**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **IGWE EMMANUEL PRECIOUS** and **SUNDAY EMMANUEL PRECIOUS** are one and the same person as may appear on some document. Henceforth i hereby wish to be known and addressed as **SUNDAY EMMANUEL PRECIOUS**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known and address as **OSAWA MARY** now wish to be addressed and known as **ENONAMWAN MARY** henceforth. All former documents remain valid. The general public and concerned authorities please note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as miss **UGWUANYI CALISTER NKECHI** now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs OJEI CALISTER NKECHI**. All for documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **ESEGBUE OLUCHUKWU WISDOM** and **ESEGBUE OLUCHI WISDOM** are one and same person hence now wish to be known and addressed as **ESEGBUE OLUCHUKWU WISDOM**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss ODIANOSEN OBOSAIGHE GIFT** now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs GIFT OBOSAIGHE EHIKHUEMHEN**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **IDRIS MOMODU RAFAT ALHAJA**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **MOMODU RAFAT**. All former documents remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss ODIANOSEN OBOSAIGHE GIFT** now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs GIFT OBOSAIGHE EHIKHUEMHEN**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **ODO HELEN** now wish to be known and addressed as **ESOGBAN HELEN ONAWON**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

Six critically injured as assailant attacks ESSC operatives, others in Edo

BENIN CITY

MIKE OSAROGIAGBON

Six persons, including two operatives of the Edo State Security Corps (ESSC), have been hospitalized following a machete attack at Ogun Community in Edo State.

The Edo State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, ASP Eno Ikoedem, disclosed this to our correspondent in Benin.

The incident occurred at about 1:30pm on September 9, 2026, when operatives of the Ebelle Division in Igueben local government area responded to a distress call from the community.

The victims, identified as

Christian Ogidi, Adoghe Boniface, Jackson Eboh and Ogbe-mudia Igubinoba, alongside two ESSC operatives, sustained various degrees of machete injuries from the machete-wielding assailant.

They were rushed to Zion Hospital, Ebelle, in Esan South-East Local Government Area of Edo State, where they are responding to treatment.

The suspect, who was believed to be under the influence of hard drugs, was arrested at the scene.

The machete and other exhibits were also recovered, while the prompt intervention of the operatives helped prevent further harm and restore calm to the community.

Meanwhile, a newborn baby girl abandoned inside a sack had been rescued at Obaretin Community in the Ikpo-ba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State.

It was gathered that residents of the community made the shocking discovery and alerted the Ologbo Police Station at about 7am on September 8, 2026.

The Edo State Police Command spokesperson, ASP Eno Ikoedem, confirmed the incident, saying the baby was immediately taken to a hospital, where she was certified healthy.

ASP Ikoedem said investigation was ongoing to identify the child's parents and unravel the circumstances surrounding her abandonment.

PUBLIC NOTICE

WARNING AGAINST UNAUTHORISED SALE OF FAMILY PROPERTY

The Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren of the late **Chief IMIOWAVAN OKIRI**, under the **OKIRI DYNASTY**, hereby issue this public notice concerning the family property located at No. 27 Plymouth Road, Benin City Edo State, Nigeria.

The **OKIRI DYNASTY** wishes to make it known to the general public, prospective buyers, estate agents, and other interested parties that the above-mentioned property in NOT FOR SALE.

We further wish to clarify that **Mr. FELIX UGIAGBE**, who is alleged to be acting as caretaker of the property, is not the owner of the property and has no authority from the Okiri Dynasty to sell, transfer, or otherwise dispose of the family land. Accordingly, members of the public are hereby advised to exercise extreme caution and to conduct proper verification of ownership and authority before entering into any transaction concerning this kproperty.

Any person who purchases, pays money for, or enters into an agreement concerning the property without obtaining proper authorization from the legitimate representatives of the **OKIRI DYNASTY** does so at their own risk.

The **OKIRI DYNASTY** has not authorised any individual, including the aforementioned caretaker, to offer the property for sale.

This notice is published to protect the interests of the family and to alert the general public against any unauthorised or purported sale of the property.



Signed: Mrs CAROLIN OKIRI OGBEBOR

The only surviving child

For on behalf of the **OKIRI DYNASTY**

Representing the Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren of the Late Chief IMIOWAVAN OKIRI Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

NEWSEXTRA

Commuters groan as rainfall delays first Niger bridge reopening by one week

ASABA

Constant rainfall has disrupted the planned reopening of the First Niger Bridge, which was closed two weeks ago for rehabilitation works, thereby extending heavy traffic congestion, longer travel times and increased transportation costs for commuters travelling between Onitsha, Anambra State, and Asaba, Delta State.

It was gathered that the reopening suffered a setback, following the constant heavy rainfall across the state, thereby extending the reopening by an extra week.

Recall that the Federal Government had, through the Ministry of Works, Anambra State Field Headquarters, announced the closure of the bridge in Onitsha for two weeks, from September 7 to 21, 2026, to allow for rehabili-

tation and maintenance works.

The Acting Federal Controller of Works, Federal Ministry of Works, Anambra State Field Headquarters, Timothy Emenike, announced the closure in a statement, saying that the bridge, which connects motorists from Anambra and Delta states, will be fully closed to traffic from Monday, September 7, 2026, and is expected to reopen on Monday, September 21, 2026.

Emenike advised motorists and other road users to use the Second Niger Bridge route through Obosi, Onitsha-Owerri Road towards Asaba, Delta State, and other destinations throughout the closure period.

The two-week closure of the bridge was aimed at carrying out emergency repairs to replace its vandalised railings, bolts and nuts, including portions of the expansion-joint steelwork and stanchion/steel

truss nuts, as well as the installation of CCTV cameras, and also general improvement of the bridge to restore the facility. However, when our corre-

spondent visited the bridge on Monday (today), amidst heavy rainfall, the bridge was still barricaded with heavy construction vehicles and equip-

ment, including caterpillars, while some on-site workers were seen performing some activities at the bridge.

It was also discovered that some sections of the bridge that had already been worked upon had been affected by the persistent rainfall.

When contacted on the telephone, Emenike said the reopening of the bridge may no longer be possible for now, adding that following the impact of the rainfall on the project, the contractor would require at least three consecutive dry days for work to resume.

**VISIT:**

Managing Director, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Ali M Ali (R), presenting a souvenir to Veteran Broadcast Journalist, Bimbo Oloyede, during her visit to NAN headquarters in Abuja on Friday

JAMB opens SIM, email update for candidates who lost access

ABUJA

The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board has reviewed its policy to allow candidates who have genuinely lost access to their registered phone numbers or email addresses to update the details through a controlled process.

JAMB announced the policy change on Monday through its official X account, saying the service commenced on Sept. 21, 2026.

The board said the service was available only at designated JAMB Computer-Based Test centres, including State Offices where applicable.

It said the measure was intended for candidates with genuine cases involving loss of access to their registered GSM numbers or email addresses.

According to the board, candidates seeking to use the service would be required to undergo strict identity and biometric verification.

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"Please note: The service can be accessed only once and is subject to strict identity and biometric verification," JAMB said.

The board urged candidates to use only designated JAMB centres and avoid unauthorised persons or channels when seeking to update their registered details.

"For your security, use only designated JAMB centres and avoid unauthorised persons or channels," it said.

JAMB said the announcement was part of its JCARE and JAMB Updates initiatives.

The board's latest policy means candidates who meet the requirements can now seek to update either their registered GSM number, email address or both through the designated centres.

It, however, stressed that the service would be available only once and would be subject to identity and biometric checks.

NCAA orders Air Peace to compensate passengers over delayed flight

YENAGOA

The Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority has directed Air Peace to come up with a compensation package for passengers affected by a delayed Lagos-Enugu flight on Monday, after its preliminary investigation found that the airline sent them the wrong notification.

A human rights activist and lawyer, Inibehe Effiong, had accused Air Peace of irresponsibility and impunity after his Lagos-Enugu flight was delayed till the evening.

Effiong said in a post on X on Monday that the delay would cause him to miss a scheduled court appearance in Enugu State. The NCAA, through its Direc-

tor, Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, Michael Achimugu, however, said it would look into the disruption, while rejecting his claim that the regulator is incapable of tackling the airline.

Effiong explained that he arrived at Terminal One of the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos, at about 5:50am to join the airline's 6:45am flight, having checked in the previous night.

"I am scheduled to appear in court in Enugu State this morn-

ing for a case that is slated for definite hearing," he said.

The lawyer said he became suspicious when the airline called only passengers who were meant to fly to Enugu and Owerri on Sunday, while those scheduled to depart on Monday were asked to wait.

"Apparently, they cancelled yesterday's flight to Enugu," he said.

He said the passengers were kept waiting for about an hour before airline staff announced

that the flight had been delayed till 4:50pm.

Effiong also claimed that Air Peace sent a second reminder to passengers at 2:01am on Monday, despite knowing that the flight was not going to depart as scheduled.

He said he met two other lawyers billed to travel on the same flight, one of whom also had a hearing in Enugu that morning. He added that the two other airlines that fly the route, United Nigeria and Enugu Air, had only afternoon flights.

JAMB sacks staff for extorting candidates

ENUGU

The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board has terminated the appointment of one of its staff members for extorting unsuspecting candidates.

The development was disclosed in the Board's release bulletin on Monday, as JAMB reiterated its commitment to sanitising the admission and examination processes.

The Board said the action against the unnamed staff member demonstrated that its efforts to rid the system of fraud were not limited to external fraudsters.

"The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) has terminated the appointment of one of its staff members for extorting unsuspecting candidates, in further demonstration of its renewed commitment to flushing out bad eggs from the system.

"Accordingly, the Board once again warned all members of staff to desist from all forms of unwholesome conduct, particularly acts capable of undermining the integrity of the Board or exploiting candidates and members of the public, as such actions would attract severe consequences in

accordance with established rules," JAMB stated.

The Board stressed that the same determination with which it had pursued fraudulent elements outside the organisation was being applied to internal misconduct.

"The Board stated that its resolve to sanitise the admission and examination processes is not targeted at external fraudsters alone, stressing that the same determination with which it has relentlessly pursued and dealt with fraudulent elements outside the Board is being brought to bear on internal misconduct."

2027: Obi, Kwankwaso Movement unveils 59-member campaign council

The Obi-Kwankwaso Movement has unveiled a 59-member presidential campaign council comprising zonal and state coordinators as well as directors for mobilisation, women's affairs, strategy, security, legal affairs and other key areas ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The council, as announced in a statement at the weekend, has the Director-General of the movement, John Ughulu, as Director-General of the campaign, while National Secretary, Saadatu Sani, is also listed among the campaign leadership.

The structure has representatives from the six geopolitical zones and the Federal Capital Territory, with state coordinators appointed for the 36 states.

The council also includes directors responsible for grassroots

mobilisation, women affairs, contact and engagement, special duties, procurement, information technology, legal affairs, strategy and planning, security and intelligence, and administration.

The development comes as the movement intensifies preparations to mobilise support for the joint presidential ticket of Nigeria Democratic Congress candidate, Peter Obi, and his running mate, Rabiu Kwankwaso, ahead of the 2027 election.

In a congratulatory message to the newly appointed council members, Sani explained that their selection was a call to duty and tasked them with taking the message of its principals to communities across the country.

She said, "Your selection is not merely an appointment; it is a call to duty, sacrifice, leadership and service to Nigeria. At

this critical moment in our nation's history, the responsibility before the presidential campaign council is enormous.

"You have been entrusted with the task of taking the vision, message and aspirations of our principals directly to the Nigerian people from the cities to the grassroots, from the states to the local governments, and from the wards to every community across the federation.

"Your appointment is an honour, but more importantly, it is a responsibility. The journey has begun. The assignment is clear. The mission is Nigeria."

Continuing, she highlighted that the Obi and Kwankwaso campaign would not be built around individuals seeking personal recognition, but around what it described as a broader national vision.

FEATURE

One year after: Governor Okpebholo's appointment of OMONZEJIE, square peg • *And the quiet rebirth of AAUE*

OTUNBA MIKE ADE ALADENIKA

There are moments in the life of an institution when the significance of a new leadership is not immediately captured by the sound of drums or the glow of ceremonies. Sometimes, it is in the gradual return of confidence; in the reopening of a laboratory; in a student who walks into a renovated hostel; in a lecturer who finds a little more room to teach and research; in a university that begins, almost imperceptibly, to believe in itself again.

At Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, the first year of Professor. Eunice Eboiserehimen Omonzejie has been something of that story—a year of repairing, rebuilding and repositioning an institution whose aspirations have often been larger than its circumstances.

On September 22, 2025, when Governor Monday Okpebholo approved her appointment as Vice-Chancellor, Omonzejie stepped into one of the most consequential offices in Edo State's university system. She was not coming in as an outsider. She was a scholar who had spent years inside the university, a professor of French and Francophone African literature, a researcher, editor and academic who understood both the promise and the pressures of AAUE.

Knowing a university from the inside is one thing; being responsible for its future is another. And that future was waiting. From the beginning, Prof. Mrs. Omonzejie's language was remarkably simple: the university must move forward, and everybody must move with it.

At her assumption of office, she called for a collective responsibility for the growth of the institution. It was an important signal. She was not presenting the university as a personal project, but as a shared enterprise involving the Governing Council, management, Senate, staff, students, government and other stakeholders.

That philosophy has increasingly become a defining feature of her administration.

The past year has therefore not been about one spectacular intervention. It has been about several moving parts beginning to fit together. And perhaps nowhere is that more visible than in the changing physical environment of the university.

Universities are often judged by their intellectual output, but students experience them first through physical reality. The classroom they enter. The hostel where they sleep. The laboratory where they practise. The library where they read. The roads they walk. The light they see. The water they drink.

The physical environment, in many ways, is the first language through which a university speaks to its students. That is why the ongoing infrastructure interventions at AAUE have assumed particular significance.

In March 2026, the university held the foundation-laying ceremony for Edo State Government-supported projects for the College of Medicine, including 500-capacity lecture theatres, 300-bed medical students' hostels and other major teaching facilities. The significance goes beyond bricks and concrete.

For a university that has long carried the ambition of being a major centre for medical education, better infrastructure means the possibility of giving that ambition a physical address. It is also why the administration's decision to adjust resumption arrangements to accommodate renovation works was more than an administrative announcement. It reflected an attempt to bring the physical condition of the university into closer alignment with the academic experience expected of a modern institution.

This is where the story of the Omonzejie administration intersects with the larger story of Edo State's renewed financial intervention in AAU. The monthly subvention to the university was increased from 41 million to 500 million, significantly improving the institution's financial position.

Money can stabilise a university but it cannot, by itself, transform one.

Transformation requires systems, discipline, and people who can turn resources into results. That has been one of the defining challenges before Prof. Omonzejie in her first year: converting a more favourable financial environment into institutional momentum.

Her administration has increasingly pushed the university toward stronger academic processes, improved facilities, research development, staff capacity building and digital transformation. It is an agenda that recognises a simple truth: a university cannot become globally relevant by merely surviving.

For decades, Nigerian universities have wrestled with the challenge of moving from being consumers of knowledge to producers of knowledge. AAUE is no exception. One of the more telling developments of Omonzejie's first year was the emergence of fresh research activity, including a 13.9 million Nigerian Communications Commission grant secured by AAUE researchers for innovative mobile network research. The university also reported research support through TETFund Institutional-Based Research intervention.

Such developments matter because the true currency of a university is not its number of buildings. It is knowledge; the laboratory experiment, the journal article, the new theory, the invention, the solution to a problem nobody else has solved, and the student whose thinking changes because a lecturer challenged an old assumption, that is the invisible infrastructure of a university.

And Prof. Omonzejie, a scholar whose own career has been rooted in research and the humanities, appears to understand that the rebuilding of AAU cannot end with infrastructure. The university must also rebuild its intellectual muscle.

The university's increasing emphasis on digital systems and artificial intelligence is perhaps one of the clearest signs that the administration is conscious of the changing character of higher education. AAUE has announced programmes around AI-driven innovation and pedagogical applications, reflecting the growing place of technology in teaching, learning and academic administration. This is not simply about fashionable technology.

The real question is whether a uni-



Prof. Eunice Omonzejie

versity can make technology work for its people. Can a student complete a process without spending hours moving from office to office? Can a lecturer access academic information more efficiently? Can examination and administrative systems become more transparent? Can the university use data to make better decisions?

Can AI become a teaching tool rather than merely a conference theme?

These are the questions that will ultimately determine whether digital transformation at AAUE becomes a slogan or a system. Providing answers to these forms part of the foundation that Omonzejie's administration is laying for the growth of the University.

The most interesting dimension of the Omonzejie story is not technological or infrastructural; it is human. Universities are communities before they are institutions. And every policy eventually finds its way to a human being: The student trying to graduate, The young lecturer seeking promotion, The professor supervising a doctoral candidate, The parent struggling to keep a child in school, The researcher searching for funding, The athlete representing the university, The administrator trying to keep the machinery moving.

Omonzejie's administration has, during the year, continued to place emphasis on capacity development, including programmes for professors, lecturers, postgraduate supervisors and coordinators.

The university has also celebrated its students and staff when they have distinguished themselves. When AAUE athletes returned from the National Universities Games, the Vice-Chancellor received them and pledged support, including scholarships for outstanding performers. Similarly, students of English and literary stud-

ies distinguished themselves at the recently concluded All-Nigeria Universities Debate Competition held in Port-Harcourt, Rivers State. Similarly, Mr Asibor Ernest, a lecturer at the university distinguished himself beat about 25,000 other applicants to win the coveted NDDC Niger/Delta Scholarship for further studies.

No honest assessment of the first year should suggest that the road has been without rough patches. There have been controversies, administrative pressures and difficult questions, including public debate over governance, student support and the implementation of the Nigerian Education Loan Fund programme.

AAUE Management has publicly rejected reports alleging a breakdown of governance and administrative crisis as well as address other concerns over students' access to NELFUND and other staff and students welfare programs. These developments are important not because they altered the progress recorded, but because they illustrate the reality of university administration.

It is a negotiation between expectation and capacity; between old systems and new demands, between what government wants and what the university can immediately deliver, between the urgency of students' needs and the complexity of bureaucracy. The measure of leadership is therefore not the absence of problems. It is the capacity to confront them without losing sight of the destination.

There is also another dimension to Prof. Eunice Omonzejie's first year that should not be lost in the statistics. She is a woman leading one of Nigeria's established universities at a time when the country's higher education system is undergoing profound change.

Before becoming Vice-Chancellor,

she had served as President of the AAU chapter of the National Association of Women Academics, where she was associated with mentoring, research and advocacy for female academics and students. Her elevation therefore carries significance beyond the office she occupies. For many young women within the university system, her presence at the apex of the institution is itself a statement.

Her rise demonstrates that a woman who spent years in the classroom can eventually become responsible for the direction of an entire university, and perhaps more importantly, that leadership does not always have to announce itself loudly to be consequential.

If the first year has been about stabilising, rebuilding and setting the machinery in motion, the years ahead will demand something harder: sustainability. The infrastructure projects must be completed, The research momentum must deepen. Digital reforms must become institutional habits.

Staff development must produce measurable academic gains.

Student welfare must remain central.

The university must continue to strengthen its relationship with government, industry, alumni, development partners and the wider society.

Above all, AAUE must become more than a university that tells Nigerians what it intends to become, rather, it must increasingly become a university that shows them. That is the real challenge before Professor Omonzejie which she has never hidden her determination to confront head-on.

On September 22, 2026, Professor Mrs. Eunice Eboiserehimen Omonzejie will mark one year in the saddle. A year may be too short to declare a university transformed, but it is long enough to establish direction, and direction matters.

At AAU today, the story is no longer simply about an institution confronting yesterday's problems. There is a discernible effort to construct tomorrow's university—through infrastructure, research, technology, human capacity and a renewed relationship with its stakeholders. The work is unfinished. Universities are never finished projects; they are living institutions, constantly rebuilding themselves as knowledge, societies and generations change.

For Omonzejie, the first year has therefore been less about arriving at a destination than about changing the direction of the journey. Foundations are being laid, walls are rising, and intellectual engine is being revved.

And somewhere between the sound of construction on campus, the rustle of research papers, the tapping of keyboards in digital classrooms and the footsteps of thousands of students moving towards their future, a larger story is quietly taking shape; the story of a university trying to find its rhythm again. Perhaps, one year after Professor Eunice Omonzejie walked through the gates of the Vice-Chancellor's office, that is the most important story of all.

• OTUNBA MIKE ADE ALADENIKA is the Principal Assistant Registrar / Head, Information, Protocol and Public Relations, Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma.



INSIDE EDO STATE

Morgan Junction Bypass: Uhunmwode Tackles 20ft Gully Erosion

The Executive Chairman of Uhunmwode Local Government Council, Hon. Austin Imafidon, popularly known as ISIWINA, has ordered immediate measures to tackle a deep gully erosion threatening the Morgan Junction bypass road in the council area.

Imafidon gave the directive on Friday, September 18, 2026, during an on-the-spot inspection of the affected portion of the road, where erosion had created a deep and widening channel across part of the roadway.

The gully, estimated at almost 20 feet deep, has weakened the road and poses a serious threat to the ongoing palliative rehabilitation of the route.

The Council Chairman directed the council's engineers and technical team to urgently control the erosion and ensure that the affected section is adequately protected against further washout.

He also ordered that the divided portion of the road be filled with hardcore and other appropriate construction materials to strengthen the roadway and improve its durability.

Imafidon said the intervention became necessary because of the importance of the Morgan Junction bypass to motorists, commuters and residents who depend on the route for movement within and beyond the area.

He expressed satisfaction with the progress of the ongoing palliative rehabilitation, saying the intervention had already improved vehicular movement and reduced the hardship previously experienced by road users.

The Council boss, however, expressed concern over the activities of some tipper truck operators around the construction site.

He frowned at the practice of drivers gathering around the project area and interfering with construction materials meant for the rehabilita-

tion work, warning that such actions could undermine the intervention.

He appealed to tipper operators and other road users to regard the project as a collective responsibility and protect the materials being deployed to rehabilitate the road.

According to him, the road is being reconstructed for the benefit of all stakeholders, including the tipper operators, and therefore everyone must contribute to ensuring that the investment is protected.

Imafidon commended the engineers, workers and other personnel handling the project for the progress recorded so far, expressing optimism that the continued intervention would bring lasting relief to motorists and commuters who had endured prolonged delays, vehicle damage and increased transportation costs because of the poor condition of the road.

He said the council would continue to identify critical infrastructure challenges across Uhunmwode and respond to them within available resources.

The Council Chairman also commended Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, for creating an enabling environment for local governments to respond directly to the needs of their people.

Imafidon said the Governor's approach had given councils greater freedom and opportunity to identify pressing challenges in their respective communities and deploy resources to address them.

He reiterated his administration's commitment to projects and interventions that would improve the welfare of residents, facilitate economic activities and ease movement across Uhunmwode.

He assured motorists and residents that the council would continue to monitor the Morgan Junction bypass project and other critical road interventions to ensure that they are properly executed and deliver sustainable relief to the people.



FEATURE

Alternative perspectives: Are women more sensitive to smell than men?

BAGUDU MOHAMMED

This weekend arrived with a strange, nostalgic ache, the kind that follows a story that refuses to leave your chest. I had just finished reading a tragedy that inflicted pain and fear in equal measure, and left me curiously obsessed with one small, often ignored organ: the nose.

According to a report by Daily Trust on Saturday, 19 September, 2026, written by Salim Ashir Mahuta in Sokoto, a gas explosion tore through the family home of Professor Hassan Muhammad Maishanu in Sokoto on Wednesday, September 9, 2026.

The Professor, born July 18, 1970, a botanist who earned his BSc from Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto in 1991, MSc Forestry from Ibadan in 1994 and PhD from UDUS in 2011, had just become a Professor in November 2025. He was a man who joined UDUS as a part-time lecturer in 1994 and climbed, steadily and quietly, until his last promotion. He left behind a wife and children.

His 24-year-old wife, Zaliha Aliyu Gidan Kanawa, described their marriage as one built on love, understanding and mutual respect. That afternoon they were in the sitting room with one of their daughters when their little son Su-

dais walked in, hungry. Zaliha called out to Husnah, their 21-year-old daughter, a 100-level Software Engineering student of UDUS who was in the kitchen. Why was the food taking so long? Husnah answered that the main gas was not producing enough flame and the smaller camp gas had also developed a problem. Zaliha called her husband to help check it. Professor Maishanu followed Husnah into the kitchen. Minutes later, a deafening explosion.

Zaliha's recollection is what chilled me. As captured in that same Daily Trust report, she said her husband had a bad cold and could not smell anything properly. She believed his inability to smell may have prevented him from perceiving the odour of the leaking gas while he was checking the cooker. The food itself was not burnt, the main cylinder did not even catch fire, but the invisible leak had filled the room.

Father and daughter were pulled out completely burnt. They were taken to the Intensive Care Unit of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital. Husnah died around midnight that same September 9. The family chose not to tell her father. When Zaliha saw him on September 15, he said he felt much better after three hours of sleep and asked about Husnah. She told him she

was still in the ICU. He died two days later, without ever knowing his daughter had gone before him.

It is that single detail, poor sense of smell in the face of sudden danger that inspired this reflection. It threw my mind immediately to my own home. My wife has what I can only call a diagnostic nose. Hers dwarfs mine to the point of fatigue. "Don't you perceive that smell?" she will ask, while I am still sniffing the air like a confused amateur. What to her is a loud alarm is to me a whisper, if anything at all. Watching her, you begin to wonder if a sensitive nose is not just a sense, but a kind of immunity, a private security system.

That is precisely how science frames it. In evolutionary psychology and sensory ecology, olfaction is described as our most ancient chemical surveillance system. The late Paul Rozin called smell the sentinel of ingestion, the gatekeeper that decides what enters the body.

Neuroscientist Rachel Herz, in her work on the emotional power of scent, shows that smell is wired directly into the amygdala and hippocampus, the brain's memory and danger centers, which is why a single whiff can transport you to childhood or jolt you into panic faster than sight or sound. It is, in a way, a digital detective tool, constantly scanning for the fragrance of what

is good and the stench of what might kill.

Which brings me to the nagging question that would not leave me after the Sokoto tragedy: Do women really have a better sense of smell than men, such that they can spot the deficit in men?

Research says yes, but with elegant nuance. The most authoritative voice here is Professor Richard Doty, creator of the University of Pennsylvania Smell Identification Test, whose work across four decades has established that, on average, women outperform men on odor identification, discrimination, and detection thresholds. This finding has been replicated in large cross-cultural studies from Sweden to Japan, as documented by Cain and others.

The difference emerges around puberty and is sharpest for biologically relevant odors, including body odors and compounds like androstenone. Women also tend to rate odors as more intense and more unpleasant, a finding that fits with what psychologists call Signal Detection Theory: women often adopt a lower threshold for reporting a smell, meaning they detect faint signals earlier but may also experience more false alarms.

Why? There is no single cause, but rather a choir of explanations. Biologi-

cally, hormonal fluctuation matters. Research by Doty and colleagues and later by Hummel's group in Dresden shows olfactory sensitivity shifting across the menstrual cycle, peaking around ovulation when estrogen is high, and estrogen receptors have been found in the olfactory epithelium itself. Anatomically, a 2014 study by Oliveira-Pinto and colleagues at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro found that women on average have up to 43% more cells in the olfactory bulb, even though the bulb is similar in size. In terms of brain processing, functional MRI studies by Savic and others reveal women recruit broader cortical networks when smelling.

Yet biology is not destiny. The non-biological story is just as compelling. Anthropologist Constance Classen reminds us that smell is cultural. Women, on average, have more sustained exposure to cooking, childcare, fragrance, and household management where odor naming is practiced, and olfactory expertise is trainable, as shown in the work of perfumers and sommeliers. Psychologist Trygg Engen argued decades ago that we smell what we can name, and women on average have an advantage in verbal labeling of odors, which boosts test scores. And there is reporting bias, women are more likely to admit noticing smells.

What Okpebholo's E-Governor Award means for Digital Governance

DR. PATRICK AKHERE EBOJELE

Edo State was celebrated recently following the recognition of Governor Monday Okpebholo, as E-Government Governor of the Year – Digital Transformation Award 2026. It is an award that places his administration's digital governance reforms at the center of its broader effort to rebuild the state's public service.

For Governor Okpebholo, the award is not simply an honor for adopting new technology. It is a recognition of an approach that puts digital infrastructure at the heart of how the Edo State government delivers services, manages information, and responds to citizens.

Close to two years into the administration, this is one recognition that has provided external validation for one of the key components of the governor's SHINE Agenda — building a government that can operate with greater efficiency, transparency and accountability.

The administration's approach has been simple: to move beyond introducing isolated digital services and instead establish an integrated government system that is owned and controlled by the state. That thinking informed the development of Edo-Gov 2.0, also known as Edo Cloud. The inherited digital governance initiatives from the previous government had limitations, particularly around ownership and access to the technology behind the systems.

In the words of the Edo State Head of Service, Dr Anthony Okungbowa, external vendors controlled intellectual property and backend access under the arrangements, limiting the state's ability to independently manage and expand its digital infrastructure. This informed the Okpebholo administration's option for a new approach: build a platform that the Edo State Government owns and manages.

Edo Cloud was this designed as a scalable and secure platform for government operations, giving the state greater control over its data, systems, and future expansion. It is a distinction that is important. The reason is



EDO STATE GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO

that digital transformation is not simply about putting government services online. It is about ensuring that the government itself has the capacity and institutional ownership required to sustain those services.

And so much has happened. The progress recorded reflects that ambition. More than 36,000 civil and public servants have been integrated into the EdoGov Enterprise Resource Planning platform, while more than 125,000 transactions have been processed since its inception.

All 18 local government areas have also been connected through fibre-optic infrastructure, while ministries, departments, and agencies are being moved from paper-based processes towards a paperless system. Dr Okungbowa describes the transition as unique among Nigerian states.

Governor Okpebholo reforms can not be separated from the delivery

of his SHINE Agenda — Security, Healthcare, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Agriculture, and Education. This is because the scale of government programs requires information to move quickly between officials, institutions, and communities.

In healthcare, for example, the administration has reopened several general hospitals and primary healthcare centres, absorbed hundreds of health workers into permanent positions, recruited more than a thousand clinical and non-clinical workers and equipped myriads of secondary health facilities with modern medical equipment. These investments require systems capable of managing personnel, records, procurement, and service delivery efficiently.

The same principle applies to education, security, and other sectors. For the governor, digital government is, therefore, less about computers

and more about making the machinery of government work. It is about reducing the movement of paper files between offices, providing quicker access to records, and allowing officials to monitor transactions and processes more effectively. It has also recognised that technology alone can not deliver those results.

That is why it is investing in people. That is why one of the notable features of the digital transformation program has been its emphasis on training government workers. The state has conducted intensive workshops for more than 70 e-governance champions drawn from ministries, departments, and agencies to familiarise them with Edo Cloud and its deployment strategy.

The Edo State Information Communication Technology Agency has also trained close to a thousand of not more civil and public servants in digital skills required to operate the

system. All these reflect the administration's position that successful digital transformation depends as much on people as it does on technology. Sophisticated software without workers who understand how to use and maintain the systems can make the technology another abandoned public-sector project.

The e-Government award gives the Okpebholo administration recognition, but the bigger test lies outside government offices. For Edo residents, the value of digital transformation is being viewed from how fast, simple, and more transparent interactions with government become.

Citizens can now obtain a government document without repeated visits to an office. Their public payments can be tracked more easily, records can be accessed when needed, and government agencies can respond more quickly because information is available when they need it.

Evolving is a paperless government that's accessible to people who are not digitally proficient. For Governor Okpebholo, the significance of the award lies in what it says about the direction of his administration. The government has sought to establish digital infrastructure, train personnel, and create systems that can support the wider delivery of its development agenda. The recognition provides a measure of progress, but it does not remove the responsibility to deliver results.

As the administration enters the difficult phase: ensuring that Edo Cloud remains functional, secure, and accessible, translating improvements inside government offices into measurable changes for citizens is key. The award recognises the infrastructure being built under Okpebholo. It is to make the government more responsive in the daily lives of Edo residents.

For the governor, the work is therefore not finished with the award. It has only established a foundation on which the wider SHINE Agenda is expected to operate.

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

NEWS

Lebarty American Leadership Academy Lauded for Building students with strong moral values

The wife of the Speaker of the Oyo State House of Assembly,

Olamidun Majekodunmi-Ogundoyin has stressed on the importance of building students with strong moral values.

The wife of the Speaker made the appeal during her visit to the American Leadership Academy in Benin city at the weekend.

According to her, the vision should go beyond the physical structure and she commended the management of Lebarty American Leadership Academy for building students with strong moral values.

There was excitement at the school as the students and

teachers welcomed Olamidun Majekodunmi-Ogundoyin, wife of the Speaker of the Oyo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Adebo Ogundoyin.

The visit brought together the school management, teachers and students, as the Speaker wife, toured the academy to see the world class structure built by the Proprietor of the school, Okenfe Aigbe Lebarty and took part in some of the activities by the students to welcome their visitor.

She interacted with students and staff while observing activities across the academy.

In an interview, she expressed excitement at the

growth of the academy, saying her vision goes beyond physical expansion and stressing the importance of building students with strong values and morals.

The Executive Director of Lebarty Enterprise, Pst. Mrs. Ovis Enahoro, Head of School, Bini-chukwu Ozuem, and students appreciated the visit and expressed optimism for continued support for the academy and its students.

The visit ended with the Speaker wife spending time with students and staff in a lively atmosphere.

Lebarty American Leadership Academy is located at No. 16 Ogiesoba Street, Idumwovina Quarters, Benin City, Edo State.



VISIT:

The wife of the Speaker of Oyo State House of Assembly, Olamidun Majekodunmi-Ogundoyin (Middle) with management, staff and students during her visit to the Lebarty American Leadership Academy in Benin City at the weekend.

NEWS**FOREIGN**

German Chancellor Merz calls state election a 'disaster' for his party but vows to stay on

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz has called a local election defeat for his party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a "disaster" but vowed to remain in post.

In the north-eastern state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the CDU fell short of a 5% threshold to enter parliament, underperforming against what had already been projected to be the party's worst ever result in the area.

Far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) was on track to win the most votes in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, but it is unlikely to govern as other parties refuse to work with it.

Meanwhile in Berlin, the ruling CDU was on course to be beaten by Die Linke (The Left).

Merz is under mounting pressure after months of poor approval ratings, and there have been rumours he could be replaced mid-term in a so-called chancellor swap.

Following the results, AfD

co-leader Alice Weidel was asked by the BBC how long Merz has left in office, to which she replied, in English, "Pretty soon, he's going to leave".

The two local elections took place on Sunday, a fortnight after the CDU saw its vote halved in the state of Saxony-Anhalt, where the AfD won a major victory.

Echoing comments he made after that defeat, Merz told reporters at the party's Berlin headquarters on Sunday that he would forge ahead with his coalition government's plans to push through a package of economic, tax and welfare reforms.

"The reforms have to come," he insisted. "I am taking on this responsibility, because I want to move our country forward".

"What needs to be done now requires backbone, steadfastness and patience," Merz said. "I will demonstrate this as CDU party chairman and, above all, as chancellor of our country."

"I would even go so far as to say that these reforms are the antidote to the authoritarian poison that, with the fascination of authoritarianism, is penetrating ever deeper into our society," Merz added.

But Weidel argues: "We are the strongest force and have reached the mainstream of the population."

Some branches of the populist AfD are classed as right-wing extremist by domestic intelligence, a designation it strongly rejects.

But its anti-immigration, Germany first, and Russian-friendly agenda has found fertile ground in the country's former communist east.

The CDU leader quickly went on the offensive, declaring that he is going nowhere.

Merz has long coveted the top job in German politics, and likely won't give it up easily.

Polls for both states closed at 18:00 local time (17:00 BST), with a final result expected

later on Sunday night, or even Monday morning.

Public broadcasters ZDF and ARD put the AfD slightly ahead in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where the CDU has likely posted its worst result in any state since World War Two.

The AfD was projected to take 38% of the vote share in the state, followed in second place by the centre-left SPD, on 35%.

For Berlin, the broadcasters put the CDU on 19% of the vote share, behind Die Linke - which has never topped polls in the capital before - on nearly 26%.

The AfD also looks set to increase its vote in Berlin, with a projected 16% of the vote.

Prior to Sunday's elections, there had been intense speculation in Germany that Merz could be replaced unless his party's political fortunes improved.

Earlier this week, the leaders of eight German states backed Merz, who has only been chancellor for 16 months.



Merz staying on as German chancellor after election 'disaster'

US strikes on alleged drug boats could be crimes against humanity, says UN

A UN report has concluded that recent US airstrikes on vessels allegedly trafficking drugs breached international law and could constitute crimes against humanity.

The report by Special Rapporteur Ben Saul said since September last year there had been at least 68 US strikes in the Caribbean and Pacific, outside US territorial waters, which killed more than 220 people.

Saul said that even if targets could be identified as members of designated terrorist groups, they had not staged an armed attack on the US

which would trigger a right to self-defence under international law.

The report comes two days after the US military said it killed four people in a strike on a vessel in the Caribbean.

"Confirmed intelligence revealed the vessel's active involvement in narco-trafficking. The operation killed four narco-terrorists," Southcom, which commands US forces in the region, said in a statement about the latest attack, which was accompanied by a grainy video.

But in a briefing note released by the UN Human Rights Council on Monday,

Saul said that "such attacks amount to serial extrajudicial killings in violation of the right to life, being unjustified in national or personal self-defence or under international humanitarian law, the international law of the sea, narcotics suppression conventions, or international counter-terrorism law".

"There are reasonable grounds to believe that the reported 68 attacks that killed 223 people constituted crimes against humanity of murder under customary international law," Saul concluded.

BBC News has contacted the White House and State Department for a response to the report.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth has previously said the overall operation is aimed at removing "narco-terrorists from our hemisphere" and securing the US from "the drugs that are killing our people".

The US military launched the operation, known as "Southern Spear", in early September.

However, officials have not offered definitive evidence that the vessels targeted are involved in trafficking.

Since the beginning, experts have questioned the legality of the strikes, which initially drew strong criticism from Latin American leaders whose citizens have been targeted.

Russia's elections had few surprises - but how the Kremlin uses the results will be crucial

No surprises as results emerge in Russian parliamentary election

Many things about Russia are hard to predict.

The result of this election wasn't one of them.

In a political system tightly controlled by the Kremlin, the party of power - United Russia - had been widely expected to remain the largest in parliament by a large margin.

There were no upsets. No surprises. No other party came close.

Preliminary results suggest that United Russia, which is supported by President Putin, is on course to retain its constitutional majority in the State Duma - with even bigger numbers than last time round.

And that's after more than four-and-a-half years of war on Ukraine, which have resulted in massive battlefield losses for the Russian army, economic difficulties and, most recently, widespread petrol shortages due to Ukrainian drone strikes on Russian oil facilities.

Those parties trailing far behind, but which have cleared the 5% threshold and made it into the new Duma, featured in the previous parliament, too: a Duma that was fully behind the Kremlin and the so-called special military operation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently ruled out another wave of mobilisation for the Ukraine war.

One party that didn't make it into parliament was Yabloko.

Yabloko had been the only anti-war political party permitted to take part in the election - permission that was short-lived.

Just twelve days after being registered for the vote it was removed from the ballot (the party list) by the Supreme Court, an indication of Kremlin concern that Yabloko's pro-peace message was gaining too much traction with the public.

The party isn't surprised that the new Duma looks like being as pro-Kremlin as the previous one.

"What other result can there be if there were ten parties on the ballot and they all support the policies of Putin?" Yabloko party chairman Nikolai Rybakov tells me.

"I don't think the Duma will change. They'll vote 100% for the policies of Putin just like they did."

Although Yabloko had been struck off the party list, around a hundred of its candidates remained in individual constituency races. According to preliminary results, none have won seats. The party claims it has come under sustained pressure.

US and China discuss AI safety plan ahead of Trump-Xi summit

Top US and Chinese officials have discussed creating a new "notification mechanism" for AI incidents that could affect national security, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told reporters on Sunday.

Bessent made the comments after what he called "successful" talks with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in New York.

The meeting came as US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping are due to hold a summit in Washington later this week.

AI has come under intense scrutiny in recent days after researchers warned of the potential risks posed by the technology and some of the industry's most high profile figures called for developers to take a more cautious approach.

"We think that, just like with any cross-border activity, that moving from opaque to more transparency between the number one and the number two AI powers in the world is very important," Bessent told reporters after the talks.

He said the meeting also covered other topics, including plans to "operationalise"

a process to identify potential tariff cuts on goods called the Board of Trade.

A truce in the tariffs war between the world's two biggest economies is due to expire on 10 November.

The BBC has contacted the Chinese embassy in the US for comment.

Chinese state news agency Xinhua said the two sides had "candid, in-depth and constructive exchanges on key economic and trade issues", noting that they had discussed AI.

Bessent said in a post on X on Sunday that the talks "help lay the groundwork for President Trump to advance America's economic interests and deliver results for the American people."

The US and China are locked in a race to dominate the AI and technology industries.

In recent days Washington has faced calls to slow down the development of AI over fears about its potential negative impact on humanity.

Trump has largely dismissed those concerns, arguing that there are sufficient policies around AI and that the US cannot lose its edge to China.

FOREIGN

NEWS



Jabulile Ntimba's body was found by a road last Thursday

Jailed teacher convicted of sexual abuse secretly released early in Indonesia

An Indonesian teacher convicted of sexually assaulting a student at an Islamic boarding school has been secretly released from prison early, a BBC Eye investigation has found.

Moch Subchi Azal Tsani or Bechi, as he is known, is the son of an influential Islamic religious leader. His trial sent shockwaves through Indonesia, a Muslim-majority country where millions of parents send their children to Islamic boarding schools.

He was arrested in 2022 at his father's school in East Java where he had taught, after a 15-hour siege involving nearly 1,000 riot police - his family's supporters had gathered in large numbers to prevent his arrest. He was sentenced to seven years in prison later that year.

The government withdrew the school's operating licence,

but then President Joko Widodo intervened to keep the school open, arguing that the case involved an individual rather than the institution.

But our investigation has uncovered further allegations against Bechi, 46, and evidence suggesting that the school and the family attempted to suppress them.

Bechi's release comes as the National Commission on Violence against Women warns of an "emergency" of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools. It says the power of religious leaders is shielding these schools from oversight and repercussions, while discouraging students from reporting abuse.

Of the several female students who alleged abuse and rape against Bechi, only one pursued a legal case that led to him being convicted. Her identity has never been made

public.

Prosecutors sought the maximum sentence - 16 years - for rape, but the court found Bechi not guilty of rape, and convicted him for the lesser charge of sexual assault.

Undercover footage recorded by the BBC now reveals that he has been released after serving less than half his sentence.

Viewers in the UK can also watch *Catching My Teacher on Global Eye* on BBC Two at 19:00 BST. Outside the UK, watch on YouTube.

Bechi would have been eligible for parole around March 2027, or would have been released at the end of his sentence in 2029.

Indonesia's Ministry of Immigration and Corrections told the BBC that Bechi was released in August 2025 because of "sentence remissions granted to him in accordance with applicable regulations". The

ministry said it could not say why his sentence was reduced.

Ira Puspitasari was another student who testified at the trial, but her allegations didn't lead to separate charges. She waived her legal right to anonymity to speak publicly about this for the first time.

"I was treated as his slave. I was held captive, raped, beaten," she says. "I can never forget what he said to me: 'Don't you realise you're just my slave?'"

Major investigation reveals scale of US deportations to Africa

The United States has deported more than 25,000 people under secretive agreements with 35 countries to take migrants with no ties to those nations, according to an investigation published Monday.

Since US President Donald Trump took office in January 2025, Washington has been signing deals with developing countries to take migrants who cannot legally be sent home.

The investigation by *Forbidden Stories*, helped by French TV channel France 24 and Radio France International (RFI), found the administration has earmarked \$410 million to be paid directly to the receiving countries, or to UN agencies to facilitate the returns.

At least 25,447 people had already been deported to third countries by August 31, 2026, according to data compiled by *Forbidden Stories* with a consortium of international journalists.

The vast majority - around 20,000 - were sent to Mexico, but the rest were dispersed

Seven Ethiopian rebel groups form new alliance

Several of the rebel groups which have been fighting the Ethiopian authorities in different parts of the country have announced they have formed an alliance to remove the government in Addis Ababa.

The alliance brings together the Fano militia in Amhara, the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and four other smaller groupings in a coalition named Alliance for Survival.

The seven groups accuse Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government of presiding over "war, genocide, mass destruction, and utter poverty", claiming Ethiopia is at risk of disintegration.

Ethiopia has faced years of armed conflict in Oromia and Amhara, the most populous states in the country.

There have also been renewed tensions in the northern Tigray region, where a two-year civil war left hundreds of thousands dead and displaced millions.

An African-Union peace deal ended that war in 2022, but there have been fears of a return to a full-scale conflict, with both sides accusing each other of violating that agreement.

Besides Oromia, Amhara and Tigray, the new alliance also includes groups based in three other regions - Somali, Afar and Benishangul-Gumuz - making up a half of Ethiopia's 12 regional states.

The states are structured largely based on their dominant ethnic groups - a system of ethnic federalism that gives some autonomy to the states, but which can present social and political challenges for the country which has more than 80 ethnic groups.

Some of the rebel groups in the new alliance have previously fought against each other but they say they will now work together against their common enemy.

Abdikadir Addaani Hir-mooge, the spokesman for the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), which is part of the alliance, told the BBC that the government had not respected a peace deal signed in 2018 to end the conflict in the Somali region.

Addaani accused Abiy's Prosperity Party of being an "obstacle to the people" and "unleashing" wars and many deaths.

"Ethnic conflict, insecurity, and mutual oppression and pushing each other aside have not been eradicated, resulting in a need that has affected every ethnic group," he said.

Addaani said the groups in the new coalition were working to bring together communities that have been divided against one another.

"Our objective is for the communities to have democracy and to exercise their right to self-determination, to genuinely govern themselves," he said.

Three arrested in South Africa over the murder of a woman

Three suspects have been detained in South Africa in connection with the murder of a woman in an area east of Johannesburg - the last of nine recent cases in that region that has shone a spotlight on the level of violence against women in the country.

Under pressure to solve the spate of murders which has involved victims' bodies being dumped on a roadside, police have described the arrests of the three - a man and two women - as a "breakthrough".

Referring to all nine cases, acting police chief Lt Gen Puleng Dimpane said her officers were "working tirelessly to bring those responsible to justice".

The three suspects are due in court on Monday morning.

Their case relates to the death of Jabulile Ntimba, whose half-naked body was found wrapped in a sheet in Dawn Park last Thursday.

Several of the recent victims were discovered partially clothed and with injuries, but police have stressed that they have not established whether all the deaths are connected or whether a serial killer is responsible.

Addressing journalists on Monday, deputy police chief Lt Gen Tebello Mosikili said that "a team of analysts are working hard to see if there are links to all these cases"

but the killing of Ntimba "appears to be an indication of a murder that stemmed from a relationship... this includes... a possible love triangle".

South Africa has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence in the world. It also has a very high murder rate and though officials statistics do not identify the gender of the victims, a recent estimate from the country's Human Rights Commission indicated that, on average, six women were murdered every day between April and June this year.

The recent grim discoveries have sparked a national outcry about the scale of the problem and increased the feeling of insecurity for many women.

to 27 other countries across Latin America, Africa, and the Pacific, and agreements have been finalised with seven more. The deals vary, including over which nationalities can be deported and whether people with criminal records can be accepted.

A "legal black hole"

An AFP investigation earlier this year found Washington is using visa bans and restrictions on African countries to strongarm them into accepting deportees.

Lawyers told AFP that deportees were being thrown into a "legal black hole", held without charge in countries where they have no ties and few if any rights. *Forbidden Stories* said 49 of Africa's 54 countries had been approached about accepting third-country deportees.

A little-known State Department division called the Office of Remigration, created in May 2025, has handled most of the negotiations and payments, according to *Forbidden Stories*.

The office is headed by Christian Jove Ehrhardt, a

41-year-old diplomat who previously worked as a security officer. The report details his visits to Cameroon, which signed a memorandum of understanding with the US in December on accepting deportees. A week later, it also signed a five-year health assistance programme worth nearly \$400 million.

The following month, the State Department said it would provide a further \$30 million to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Cameroon to "facilitate the voluntary return of refugees and combat illegal immigration."

The first plane carrying deportees arrived in Cameroon on January 14.

Payments

Other agreements have involved direct payments to governments.

Palau, a small Pacific island nation with a population of under 18,000, signed an agreement in December 2025 to accept up to 75 third-country nationals in return for \$7.5 million.

CENTRE FOR MORAL VALUE AND JUSTICE & THE EDO STATE MINISTRY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

VOCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT FIRST BATCH LIST FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

IGUEBEN

S/NO	APPLICANTS NAME	VOCATION OF INTEREST	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	PHONE NUMBER
1	IGHALO SUCCESS,	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	2002	F	09064326917
2	EHIDAMHEN THANKGOD,	SCREEDIGN & POP INSTALLATION	NIL	M	08023367819
3	AMADAMHEN EBENEZER,	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	07032999965
4	ISIMHENKE CLEMENTINA,	PAINTING AND DECORATION	NIL	M	0703 867 0966
5	PALLE HAPPINESS,	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	NIL	F	07050306667
6	SATURDAY PEACE,	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	09158752912
7	MARCUS SANDRA DESTINY	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	1999	F	09019146421
8	OKOH EDAKI EMMANUEL,	SCREEDIGN & POP INSTALLATION	NIL	M	07011525277
9	NWANTUKE FRANK,	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1985	M	09124651975 / 07028240125
10	OSAGIE JAMES	ALUMINIUM FABRICATION & GLAZING,	1999	M	09136424989
11	ALUGE ANTHONIA	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	NIL	F	08147561225
12	USMAN JEMILAH	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	08130700895
13	EIN WISDOM	PLUMBING & PIPING	NIL	M	NIL
14	AKIHLE OSAGIE	SHOE MAKING AND LEATHER MAKING,	NIL	M	NIL
15	OJOH SATURDAY	ALUMINIUM FABRICATION & GLAZING,	NIL	M	NIL
16	BENEDICT IBOI	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	NIL
17	EGONMHAN OSARO	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	NIL
18	AREWE BLESSING	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	NIL	F	09074225504
19	ANTHONY RITA	HAIRDRESSING & STYLIST	NIL	F	09125574494
20	OSAGIE JONATHAN	SHOE MAKING AND LEATHER MAKING,	NIL	M	07073774936
21	ISIMAIL LATEEF	SHOE MAKING AND LEATHER MAKING,	NIL	M	08066943521
22	AMIENRELU STPEPHEN	PLUMBING & PIPING	NIL	M	09050112077
23	AGOZIE GODWIN	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08101990583
24	OJIEKHILE LOUIS	SCREEDIGN & POP INSTALLATION	NIL	M	08069708091
25	IHENSEKHIE BLESSING	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	1977	F	09155567237
26	OSAGIE ESTHER	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	NIL	F	09032974344
27	AGBOAWO IKE	SCREEDIGN & POP INSTALLATION	NIL	M	09163834128
28	ISIOMA AMOS	PLUMBING & PIPING	1988	M	08038464520
29	IDEHENRE JOHNSON	AGRIC MACHINERY/MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	08167685294
30	ENDURANCE GOWON	BARBING	NIL	M	09074647093
31	IRIOGBE JONAH ENONMHANMHIDOB,	SHOE MAKING AND LEATHER MAKING,	2002	M	09064326917 / 08130857674
33	TERRY ODION USIFOH,	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08038412931
34	USIFOH PAUL AKHERE,	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08030521459
35	AILENOTOR EHIMEN BENEDICT,	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING,	NIL	M	07065476117
36	SHADRACK JONATHAN	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING,	NIL	M	08143629807
37	ROSEMARY CHUKWU,	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING,	NIL	F	07072983804
38	ASINE MOSES,	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING	NIL	M	09013564437
39	BLESSING OHENMEN,	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION,	NIL	F	09154204101
40	OMOIFO HARRISON OSEDEBAME,	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08133894876
41	ONOIGBORIA ODION,	ALUMINIUM FABRICATION & GLAZING,	NIL		08141835129
42	EHIREMEN AKHERE EHINOMEN,	TAILORING & GERMENT MACKING,	NIL		07078863213
43	IGUE GLORY			F	07037161363

N/B: ALL EXECUTIVE CHAIRMEN IN THE VARIOUS LOCAL GOVERNEMENT COUNCIL ARE BY THIS PUBLICATION URGED TO NOTIFY SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT THROUGH THEIR VARIOUS L.G/WARD CHAIRMEN TO GO THROUGH THE LIST FOR POSSIBLE RATIFICATION OF THEIR DATE OF BIRTH, PHONE NUMBERS AND AREA OF VOCATIONAL INTEREST AND FORWARD VIA WHATSAPP NUMBER: 08064056731. 08058680872.

SIGNED:

COMR. INEGBENEHI IZIEGBE SYLVESTER
CONVENER OF SECURITY SENSITIZATION TOWN HALL MEETINGS

HON. PRINCE CHRISTIAN OKOJIE
CO-CONVENER

CENTRE FOR MORAL VALUE AND JUSTICE & THE EDO STATE MINISTRY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

VOCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT FIRST BATCH LIST FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

ESAN CENTRAL

S/NO	APPLICANTS NAME	VOCATION OF INTEREST	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	PHONE NUMBER
1	OTUOKPAIW S. EHIJIE	SOLAR INSTALLATION	1990	M	08134501596
2	EHIGNEPA AKHARE	VEHICLE SPRAY	1996	M	08057577257
3	DORCAS OMOZUABHOR	TAILORING & GARMENT	1972	M	08161769441
4	UNUANE BENJAMIN	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1970	M	07066656328
5	ABHULIMEN COLLINS	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1988	F	07030892503
6	PIUS EHINOMEN ESTHER	SHOES & LEATHER MAKING	1996	F	08157619146
7	MABLE IKUKE	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1981	M	09034194174
8	ADOYE OMOZOKPIA	COMPUTER HARDWARE	1978	M	07043185036
9	UGHAZUMEN EHICHIOYA	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1982	M	08054215749
10	UNUANE ESTHER O.	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1972	F	080371879894
11	PETER BLESSED	BABERING	2005	F	09136040067
12	MOMODU PATRICIA	TAILORING & GARMENT	2001	F	09132981052
13	PETER EKETA	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1984	M	07042535308
14	IYAYI ANNA	BAKING & CAKE/DECORATION	1985	F	08030521459
15	ODION ERNEST	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1983	M	08030521459
16	OSEGHAE E. SAMUEL	SOLAR INSTALLATION	1995	M	07051254337
17	OAEBULU FRIDAY	PAINTING & DECORATION	1990	M	08145380598
18	OMENAI LAWSON	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1969	M	08134708196
19	LAWAL AISHA	SHOES & LEATHER MAKING	1987	F	09063246690
20	IRABOR DAVID	SHOES & LEATHER MAKING	2004	M	08039290879
21	EHIAKHAMEN FRANCIS	SHOES & LEATHER MAKING	1981	M	08073791240
22	AIGBEDION LOUIS EHIZOBA	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	1988	M	NIL
23	EBOSETALE SAMUEL OSEGHAE	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	1995	M	07051254337
24	PETER EKATA	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1984	M	07072983804
25	TERRY ODION USIFOH	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	07072983804
26	USIFOH PAUL AKHERE	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08030521459
27	AILENOTOR E. BENEDICT	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING,	NIL	M	07065476117
28	SHADRACK JONATHAN	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING,	NIL	M	08143629807
29	UAIFO FORTRESS AKHERE.	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	F	08130014572
30	OMOROJIE FIDELIS AKIOYA	BABERING	NIL	M	070311777361
31	EHIREMEN ODION OSEMELOMEN,	TAILORING & GERMENT MAKING	NIL	M	07058234038
32	MADOJEMU OZEMEBHOYA MADOJEMU,	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING	NIL	M	09069715578
33	UGBO JOSHUA IRIA,	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	NIL	M	07056061869
34	AHIGBE JOYCE ONOBIBIJORIA,	TAILORING & GERMENT MAKING	NIL	F	09036201441
35	UAIFO FORTRESS AKHERE,	TILORING & GERMENT MAKING	NIL	M	08130014572
36	EROMOSELE KINDNESS,	PAINTING & DECORATION	NIL	M	09117464560
37	IDIAKHOA OSHIO IVA,	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	NIL	M	08153438361
38	FRANK ANOINTING,	AUTO ELETRICAL	NIL	M	08076797224
39	UGHALUMEN FRANCIS EHICHIOYA,	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	NIL	M	08130988248
40	AIGBOSIORIA LUCKY	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	1988	M	08079545504
41	UWADE MIRACLE FAITH	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	2006	F	07058806507
42	UWADE FESTUS	BARBING	2008	M	09138051077
43	ANEGBE OSEZELE	BARBING	2005	M	08084779227
44	OSEIWE MARTHAR ODION	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	2002	F	09167049418
45	OSEIWE PRECIOUS ODION	BAKERING	2011	F	07056024618
46	OSEIWE JENNIFER	HAIRDRESSING & STYLIST	2007	F	09167490722
47	OBOH GRACE	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	1980	F	08058770931

48	OBOH AUSTIN	PHONE REPAIRER	1976	M	09057384181
49	ANEGBE MICHAEL	WELDING AND FABRICATION	1975	M	09160310083
50	ANEGBE EMMANUEL	PHONE REPAIRING	1983	M	08053502683
51	SUNDAY CHRISTOPHER	WELDING AND FABRICATION	2006	M	
52	IBHAHE MARIA	CATERER & FOOD SERVICES	1981	F	07067290968
53	OKOEGUALE ELIZABETH	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1990	F	07044065536
54	AREGHEAN ESTHER	FHAIR DRESSER & STYLIST	2005	F	08076748453
55	AREGHAN JOSEPH OSE	BARBER	2001	M	08076744789
56	AIGBOSIORIA LUCKY.	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	1988	M	08079545504
57	AZEKHUMEN EVANS	WELDING & FABRICATION	2003	M	08058770931
58	AKHIMIEN VINCENT	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	1987	M	07062918968
59	EBOH EDEGHONGHON ELIZABETH	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	2000	F	09054778419
60	MRS JULIE OSIME	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1983	F	07048923046
61	QUEEN MACAULAY	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	1976	F	08167679518
62	ODION LOUIS JAMES	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1992	M	07058786136
63	OGAH RUTH	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	2003	F	08085598317
64	OKOSUN GODSWILL	HAIR BARBING	2009	M	08031968269
65	AIDENOJIE SANDRA UWARIOMIEN	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1995	F	08088958647
66	DABOR OSEZELE RAMSEY	PHONE REPAIR	2004	M	08101772115
67	OKEKE OMONN	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1982	F	08147765612
68	EROMOSELE OMOAGA MATTHEW,	ALUMINUM,	1986,	M	07060988840
69	JOHN GRACE,	PHONE REPAIR	1998,	F	09079535095
70	EDITH KENNETH,	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1988,		09162985082
71	BROWN JOY OGHENE BREJO,	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	2001,		07039611246
72	ANAO FLORENCE	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1994	F	0915301144
73	EHIBHAMIEGHOLO CONFIDENCE,	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	F	08154408122
74	EDENOJIE LUCKY,	BARBING	NIL	M	07079928515
75	FADA AIGBOKHAN,	FHAIR DRESSER & STYLIST	NIL	M	0901063413
76	NAPOLEON ONUWABHAGBE EBHALEMEN,	BARBER	NIL	M	0814 753 3218
77	UDABOR DESTINY,	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	NIL	M	08030521459
78	DESTINY JOHN,	WELDING & FABRICATION	NIL	M	0810 294 1026
79	JOY EHANLEN,	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	NIL	F	0905 732 4312
80	OKOSUN MARY,	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	NIL	F	0703 932 2886
81	OYERIBHO BLESSING OSE,	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	F	0704 843 6531
82	ODION MIRACLE,	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	NIL	M	07025804719
83	FADA AIGBOKHAN,	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	NIL	M	0901063413
84	UDABOR DESTINY,	WELDING AND FABRICATION	NIL	M	09132896211
85	CONFIDENCE ULIFOH,	PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING	NIL	M	08033754605
86	UGOCHUKWU NGOZI BLESSING,	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	1999	F	08053438798,
87	KOLAWOLE SEYI,	WELDING AND FABRICATION	1998	M	07030487557,
88	UWAGBALE ANGELA ODEGUA,	HAIRDRESSING & HAIR STYLING	NIL	F	09052117038
89	OTUMU SUZIANA,	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	F	08165880873,
90	HENRIETTA CHINONYE AUSTIN-DABERECHI AKANAZU,	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	M	07038455518,
91	EGBELE LUCKY,	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	M	07038455518,

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CO-CONVENER

CENTRE FOR MORAL VALUE AND JUSTICE & THE EDO STATE MINISTRY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

VOCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT FIRST BATCH LIST FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

ESAN NORTH EAST

S/NO	APPLICANTS NAME	VOCATION OF INTEREST	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	PHONE NUMBER
1	UGHOMOMAGHO JESSICA	HAIR DRESSING & STYLIST	NIL	F	091137427649
2	EGHEBEDION DESTINY	ALUMINUM WORKS	NIL	M	07085539783
3	EWALEFOH PRINCILLA	TAILORING & GARMENT	NIL	F	08168145388
4	EHIZILIEN LUCKY	PLUMBING WORKS	NIL	M	07076747638
5	IYOKA SARAH	TAILORING & GARMENT	NIL	F	081277123989
6	AYEMERE RITA	HAIR DRESSING	NIL	F	08113860446
7	OBASEKI ISRAEL	PHONE REPAIRS	NIL	M	09077039681
8	OZIGHO PEACE	TAILORING & GARMENT	NIL	F	07043600793
9	DIVINE EBHODAGHE	HAIR DRESSING /STYLIST	NIL	F	08114378578
10	ENDURANCE SUCCESS	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	F	08070235905
11	OSEREMEN EROMOSELE	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	M	07064617891
12	JOY EIGBEREMON	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	F	08052070871
13	GIFT IMOISILI	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	F	09032706497
14	MICHAEL IMOISILE	WELDING & FABRICATION	NIL	M	07059980586
15	EMMANUEL EBHOHIMHEN	WELDING & FABRICATION	NIL	M	09052847237
16	PALMER OZIEVA J.	FISH FARMING & AQUACULTURE,	1996	M	09059289134
17	EJENEGBE LUCKY	HAIR DRESSING	2013	M	07050472740
18	OKODUWA ODION	CATERING & CAKE DECORATION	1992	M	08160808215
19	IFADA SUCCESS	TAILORING & GARMENT	2010	F	09059270846
20	OZIGBE FRIDAY	VEHICLE SPRAY PAINTING	1988	M	09137874757
21	OGHAMEMAN BLESSING	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	1996	F	07064461756
22	IMOJISE BLESSING	TAILORING & GARMENT	1998	F	07034254429
23	OKOEROR JOY	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	1991	F	07056236573
24	OKOEROR BLESSING PAUL	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	1990	F	09044236094
25	EKOYAGA JACOB	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1983	M	08072361887
26	AGODO EHINOR	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	1973	M	08142555825
27	EGBEDION MONICA	HAIR DRESSING/STYLIST	1977	F	09037755069
28	EROMOSELS ENDURANCE	PAINTING & DECORATION	1986	F	08162152328
29	INEGBENUDA GODSTIME	TILING & FLOOR FINISHING	NIL	M	08130952518
30	ELIJAH ELIJAH	PAINTING & DECORATION	NIL	M	08131385455
31	THOMAS OGEDEGED	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	NIL	M	08161173649
32	NWABUZE IFEANYI	SCREEDING AND POP INSTALLATION	NIL	M	08147018765
33	MONDAY PRECIOUS OMO	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	2000	F	NIL
34	EBHODAGHE PRECIOUS	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	2006	F	09153319899
35	AYEMERE RITA	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1985	F	08113860446
36	OZIGHO PEACE	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	2010	F	07043600793
37	EBHODAGHE DIVINE	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	2009	F	08114378578
38	EHIZOJIE MESHACH	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	2011	M	09031419357
39	ENDURANCE SUCCESS	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	2009	F	08070835905
40	OGEDOGBE EMMANUEL	SOLAR INSTALLATION MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	08146246030
41	OMODIAGBE USIFOH EMMA	SOLAR INSTALLATION MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	08164582171
42	ELIJAH JUNIOR	SOLAR INSTALLATION MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	08131325455
43	AIGBEDION LOUIS	SOLAR INSTALLATION MAINTENANCE	1988	M	NIL
44	AMUDA HAPPINESS	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	F	07078716752
45	IMHONBHOI LOUIS	PHONE REPAIRS	NIL	M	08119021041
46	SUZIAN ENEARU	AIR CONDITION REPAIR	NIL	M	08062349570
47	SUCCESS COURAGE	AIR CONDITION REPAIR	NIL	M	08126221537
48	UGBODU MERCY	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	NIL	F	09156122524
49	HAPPY EKPUDU	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	2008		09156485618
50	DAVID UBUANE	AUTO PANEL BITTER	2009	M	09035740308
51	IKENNA OGECHI	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	2010	F	09145068795
52	OBOH BLESSING	PHONE REPAIRS	2005	F	08153764094
53	UWAGBALE GOD'STIME	ALUMINIUM & FABRICATION	2010	M	07077735773

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ESAN SOUTH EAST

S/NO	APPLICANTS NAME	VOCATION OF INTEREST	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	PHONE NUMBER
1	ODINE ORUKPE MARY	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1998	F	09061266483
2	OMOKIERE GODSTIME	AGRIC MACHINARIES/MAINTENANCE	1993	M	08102916256
3	OKODUGHA JUDE	SOLAR INSTALLATION/MAINTENANCE	1990	M	08166888813
4	WISDOM AGBAI	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1980	M	08059096678
5	IBOI IDEMUDIA	FISH FARMING AND AQUICULTURE	1989	M	08166753857
6	OAIKHENA SUNDAY	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1980	M	07068388284
7	IKPUGBU PATRICK	VEHICEL SPRAYING/PAINTING	1984	M	08032500715
8	AKPAKA ISAAC OGIALESE	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1985	M	07045673867
9	BRIGHT ALENSELA	FISH FARMING AND AQUICULTURE	1993	M	08060297582
10	ITOYA MATTHEW	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1979	M	08074088302
11	IYOHASOLOMON	AUTOBODY REPAIR	1970	M	08114367703
12	IYERE TINA	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1960	F	08696156087
13	ONOBHARIOKHUEBE EDOBOR	TILING AND FLOOR FINISHING	1971	M	07043197481
14	OKOEGUALE FRIDAY	SOLAR INSTALLATION/MAINTENANCE	2005	M	08077515701
15	GLORIA UKPOKOLO	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1979	F	07056118231
16	OMACHONU CHERIST MERIT	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	1988	F	08107398032
17	OBOH CONFIDENCE	TAILORING/GARMENT MAKING	2005	F	08078312291
18	UWANUSI OSADEBE	POP SCREEDING AND CEILING INSTALLATION	1971	M	08057520150
19	OSAGIE ORUKPE	PAINTING AND DECORATION	1975	M	07067888568
20	OGBEIFUN SUNNY UWAKHONYE	PAINTING AND DECORATION	1983	M	08024988416
21	AKHABUE FESTUS LUCKY	PHONE REPAIRS	1982	M	08147202950
22	ANTHONY ATEBESUNU	ALUMINUM FABRICATIONS	1963	M	08029422501
23	SUNDAY GIFT EKATA	WELDING AND FABRICATIONS	1997	M	08122950776
24	OMOZUKPIA VICTOR	CARPENTRY AND JOINTERY	1955	M	08105469388
25	OMEIZA THERESA	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1980	F	08151674199
26	VICTORIA OMACHONU	BAKING AND CAKE DECORATION	1954	F	07058747886
27	ASUEIMHEN GODSIN IBHATE	POP SCREEDING AND CEILING INSTALLATION	1982	M	08143668441
28	OMOTSE SATURDAY	TILING AND FLOOR FINISHING	1969	M	08026747468
29	EHIMEN EMMANUEL,	FISH FARMING AND AQUACULTURE	NIL	M	0707 253 0129
30	ODIJIE PRECIOUS	FISH FARMING AND AQUACULTURE	NIL	M	08068387857
31	IKHAREBHA BEAUTY ESE,	BAKING,	NIL	F	09162711230
32	MORUFU VICTORY	SOLAR INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE	NIL	M	0905 499 4287
33	NAPOLEON ONUWABHAGBE EBHALEMEN	FISH FARMING AND AQUICULTURE	NIL	M	08030521459
34	OASON VICTORY OYAKHILOME,	AUTOMOBILE MECHANICS,	NIL	M	0805 734 4920
35	OMONKHODION ESE,	TAILORING & GERMENT MAKING	NIL	F	09162049765

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ESAN WEST

S/NO	APPLICANTS NAME	VOCATION OF INTEREST	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	PHONE NUMBER
1	EBOSELE ELIZABETH	CATERING AND FOOD MAKING	1974	F	08061930117
2	ELIMIHELE MARIA	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1983	F	07045347344
3	EROMOSELE SARAH	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1978	F	09064212112
4	OJIE JOY	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1973	F	07051235549
5	AKHIMIEN BEATRICE	FISH FARMING & AGRIC MECHINARY	1973	F	08063792558
6	AKHIMIEN LUCKY JOSHUA	AGRIC MACHINERY OPERATION	1982	M	08120187407
7	ESTHER ATOLE	AGRIC MACHINERY OPERATION	1981	F	07065653327
8	DAVID ISOA	SOLAR INSTALLATION MAINTENANCE	1980	M	08032646350
9	IGHIKHUMNEGBE TITUS	GRAPHIC DESIGN & DIGITAL PRINTING	1990	M	07068023485
10	IJEH GLORY OSEZELE	HAIR DRESSING & HAIR STYLIST	1999	F	07068023485
11	EDEGHONGHON ISESELE	AGRIC MACHINERY OPERATION	1977	F	08052995808
12	ATIVIE OMOYE	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1998	F	08071162737
13	ESEIGBE JOY	HAIRDRESSING/STYLIST	1998	F	08156959739
14	ESEIGBE HANNAH	CATERING & FOOD SERVICES	1982	F	07035834063
15	ADAKHILAN MERCY	CATERING & FOOD SERVICE	1990	F	08169866749
16	ASELIMEN GODSENT	BABERING	2013	M	08068550516
17	AKHIGBE SEBASTINE	AGRIC MACHINERY OPERATION	1988	M	08133370505
19	ADUDU KATE	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1991	F	0810951984
20	OBOITE OSAGIE	PLUMBING & PIPE FITTING	1984	M	08075980307
21	MIOMO SATURDAY	BARBERING	1983	M	08065672099
22	ERAZUA MERCY	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	1982	F	08153700550
23	OBOITE MONDAY	PLUMBING & PIPE FITTING	1991	M	09138456368
24	OKOSUN MESHAK	TILING & FLOOR FINISHING	1980	M	08104557438
25	AKHERE EHISUDRIA	VEHICLE SPRAY PAINTING	1983	M	08065116247
26	MERCY ISOA	CATERING & FOOD SERVICE	1980	F	07058492923
27	AKHIMIEN QUEEN	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	NIL	F	08144823164
28	AKHIMIEN AGBATOR	CARPENTRY & JOINERY	1991	M	07056681629
29	MASADE OSEREMEN	AGRIC MEC OPERATION & MACHINERY	1972	M	NIL
30	IDEMUDIA JOSPHINE	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1980	F	07052699322
31	ONOH I NEGBEDION	TAILORING & GARMENT MAKING	1992	M	09128396030
32	ANAKALI SYLVESTER	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1985	M	09137574350
33	ENEARU MARY	BAKING & CAKE DECORATION	1996	F	07065582086
34	UGBO JOSHUA IRIA	PLUMBING & PIPE FITTING	1987	M	08065235135
35	EHIJILE MERCY	TAILORING & GARMENT	1958	F	0815654415208
36	ERHUNMWO O. EVELYN	HAIR DRESSING & HAIR	1989	F	07038811435
37	EHICHOIYO SUNDAY	TAILORING & GARMENT	1992	M	08100839055
38	EGBEZIEN LIVINUS	BARBING	1993	M	07068300777
39	PATRICIA MATTHEW	BAKING CAKE & DECORATION	1976	M	08136051030
40	FIDELIS VICTOR	AGRIC MECH OPERATION	1980	M	08138080511
41	UDABOR ELIZABETH	DECORATION AND PAINTING	1982	F	08111677739
42	AKHEIMIEN ODION F.	WELDING & FABRICATION	1988	F	07067143634
43	OAHIMIRE INNOCENT	COMPUTER GRAPHICS	1989	M	08131398780
44	CHIMEZIE AUGUSTINA	HAIR DRESSING & STYLIST	1993		09037550159
45	OKOIBHOLE JONATHAN	TILING AND FLOOR FINISHING	1990		08102463963
46	OYEBEDA JOSEPH	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1993		08050906576
47	STANLEY RICHARD	ELECTRICCAL INST. & MAINTENANCE	1986		07059491709

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THE NIGERIAN OBSERVER

 THAT THE PEOPLE MAY KNOW

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& Birthday Anniversary**

of

HIS ROYAL MAJESTY

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OBA EWUARE II, CFR
Oba of Benin

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October 18, 2026



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Marcus Atoe: **08081986842**

Mrs. Doris Igbini: **08051177163**

❖ **LONG MAY HE REIGN** ❖

Matters-In-Focus



L-R Senior Adviser, Communication, Malene Kamp Jensen, UNICEF Nigeria's Country Representative, Wafaa Saeed Abdelatef, UNICEF's Executive Director of Mission to Nigeria Catherine Russell, First Lady of Nigeria Senator Oluremi Tinubu, Chief of Staff and Director of the Office of the UNICEF Executive Director, Mr. Ted Maly, Project Planning Officer, Maline Serrano and Executive Specialist, Office of the Executive Director UNICEF, Nabila Jamshed during the courtesy visit of the UNICEF delegation to the First Lady at the State House Abuja, recently.

Why balanced diet, personal hygiene, environmental cleanliness matters

OSAHENIRO OFUWENGBE

Health is one of the greatest assets every human being possesses. Regardless of age, occupation or economic status, everyone needs nutritious food, personal hygiene and a clean environment to live a healthy and productive life.

A balanced diet provides the body with the nutrients and energy needed for growth, repair and normal functioning. The World Health Organization (WHO) notes that healthy diets help protect against malnutrition and several noncommunicable diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

A balanced diet does not necessarily mean expensive food. Locally available foods such as vegetables, fruits, beans and other legumes, whole grains, eggs and fish can contribute to healthy nutrition. What matters is variety, balance and moderation.

When good nutrition is neglected, the consequences can include malnutrition, nutrient deficiencies, poor growth and weakened immunity. Regularly consuming excessive amounts of foods high in unhealthy fats, free sugars and salt can also increase the risk of health problems over time.

But good health is not only about what we eat.

Personal hygiene is equally important. Regular bathing, washing hands with soap and clean water, brushing the teeth,

keeping fingernails clean, wearing clean clothes and maintaining proper toilet hygiene are simple practices that help reduce exposure to harmful germs.

Handwashing is particularly important. WHO and UNICEF recognize hand hygiene as an important measure for reducing the spread of infections. Washing hands at appropriate times, especially before eating or preparing food and after using the toilet, can help prevent the transmission of harmful

microorganisms.

Poor hygiene, on the other hand, can increase the risk of infections and dental problems and may contribute to unpleasant body odour and other health concerns.

Environmental cleanliness completes the picture.

A person may maintain good personal hygiene, but an unhealthy environment can still expose that individual and the wider community to health risks. Indiscriminate dumping

of refuse, blocked drainage, unsafe water and poorly maintained toilets can create conditions that encourage the spread of disease and attract pests.

Environmental cleanliness is therefore everyone's responsibility. Government and relevant authorities have a duty to provide effective sanitation, waste-management, water and drainage systems. Citizens must also use these facilities responsibly and avoid practices that endanger others.

The growing number of beggars on major roads: What is driving them?

PRECIOUS AGBEJESI

At busy intersections, motorists barely have enough time to respond to the traffic light before a hand appears beside their vehicle.

Sometimes it is an elderly man. Sometimes a woman carries a baby. At other times, children move from one vehicle to another, knocking on windows and asking for money.

When the traffic begins to move, they disappear to another lane, waiting for the next opportunity.

Street begging has become a familiar sight on major roads in many Nigerian cities. But behind every outstretched hand is a story, and those stories are often more complicated than they appear.

For some people, begging is a

desperate response to poverty. For others, it may be connected to disability, unemployment, displacement or lack of family support. There are also concerns about children being used for begging and organized forms of street begging.

Nigeria's wider economic difficulties have created an environment in which vulnerable people can find it increasingly difficult to survive.

A Reuters report published in July 2026 said the International Monetary Fund had estimated that 63 per cent of Nigeria's population remained in poverty, with millions also facing food insecurity.

When families cannot consistently provide food, shelter or healthcare, some people turn to whatever means of sur-

vival is available.

Unemployment and limited opportunities can also push people onto the streets.

For an adult without a stable income, begging may become an alternative to going hungry. For people living with disabilities or serious social disadvantages, the situation can be even more difficult when there are inadequate support systems.

In some communities, displacement caused by insecurity has also contributed to vulnerability.

People who leave their homes because of violence may arrive in unfamiliar cities without employment, savings or relatives who can support them. For some, the street becomes both a place of work and survival.

Mental health awareness among Nigerian youths: Breaking the silence

PRECIOUS AGBEJESI

By all appearances, many Nigerian youths are doing fine. They attend lectures, post smiling photos online, joke with friends, and keep up with the fast pace of daily life. But beneath that surface, a growing number are quietly dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion.

For some, the pressure begins in school. For others, it starts at home, where expectations are high and conversations about feelings are rare. Add unemployment, financial strain, social media comparison, family pressure, and uncertainty about the future, and it becomes clear why mental health is no longer a side issue among young people in Nigeria.

Yet one of the biggest problems remains silence. In many homes and communities, mental health is still misunderstood. Some people see emotional distress as weakness, stubbornness, lack of faith, or even a spiritual problem. That attitude makes young people hide what they are going through instead of asking for help.

Research has shown that stigma is one of the strongest barriers to mental health help-seeking among adolescents in Nigeria. In Lagos, one study found that stigma was the most commonly reported obstacle for students dealing with depression, while family disapproval, ignorance, and preference for spiritual treatment also played a role.

Another study among secondary school students in Rivers State found that many adolescents could recognize some mental health symptoms, but far fewer could correctly identify depression and anxiety. It

also showed that many young people would rather speak to parents or guardians than mental health professionals, which suggests that awareness is still limited and formal help remains out of reach for many.

That gap matters because adolescence is often the stage when mental health problems first begin. If warning signs are missed early, the effects can spill into school performance, relationships, self-esteem, and long-term wellbeing. What may begin as stress or sadness can become a deeper problem if it is ignored for too long.

Access to care is another major concern. Nigeria has a serious shortage of mental health professionals, and specialist services are concentrated in urban areas. A 2025 review noted that the country has fewer than 300 psychiatrists for a population of more than 200 million, making access difficult for many people, especially youths outside major cities.

This shortage means that even young people who are ready to seek help may not know where to go or may not be able to afford care. In some cases, they are forced to rely on informal support, such as friends, parents, teachers, or religious leaders. While that support can be helpful, it is not always enough when professional intervention is needed.

Schools have a major role to play. Guidance counsellors, trained teachers, peer-support groups, and mental health education can help students understand what they are feeling and where to seek help. When schools treat mental wellbeing as seriously as academic performance, more students will feel safe enough to speak up.



Nigeria can break technology dependence with indigenous talent – Ex-DICON Chief

Maj.-Gen. Nnaemeka Maduegbunam, former Director-General of DICON, has urged Nigeria to harness indigenous talents to achieve self-reliance in science and technology.

Maduegbunam made the call in his book, "We Can Do It: Towards Nigeria's Self-Reliance in Science and Technology," scheduled for public presentation on Thursday in Abuja.

In a statement on Tuesday,

he said the book documented his military career and experiences in developing home-grown engineering solutions to national challenges, particularly in defence production.

Maduegbunam, a mechanical engineer, said Nigerians possessed the ingenuity and creativity required to make significant contributions to the country's science and technology ecosystem.

He said the book was also

an attempt to document lessons on leadership, discipline, self-reliance and nation building from his 34 years of military service.

According to him, a major focus of the book is his tenure as DICON Director-General, where he demonstrated the potential of indigenous expertise in reviving Nigeria's defence manufacturing capacity.

Maduegbunam said he assumed leadership of DICON

in February 2006 and encountered largely dormant machinery and production facilities.

According to the book, he subsequently revived the machines within five months and commenced production of weapons for the Nigerian military.

He attributed the breakthrough to committed leadership and support from the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Maduegbunam recalled that

during Obasanjo's first visit to DICON on Sept. 30, 2006, the former president expressed disappointment over the state of the facilities.

He said he nevertheless assured the president that the machines could be restored, declaring, "We can do it. We can restore the machines, sir."

The encounter, according to him, became a turning point that triggered renewed energy, innovation and achievements

at DICON.

The retired general said the experience demonstrated that Nigeria could overcome technological constraints when indigenous expertise was matched with purposeful leadership and political commitment.

He, therefore, called for greater confidence in Nigerian engineers, scientists, innovators and other professionals capable of developing solutions to the country's technological needs.

Sports

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



WAFU-B CHAMPIONS EDO QUEENS FC

U-20 Women's World Cup: NFF hails Falconets performance despite quarter-final elimination

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has hailed the performance of the nation's U-20 women's football team performance despite being eliminated by alone goal by Colombia in the quarter-final clash on Sunday.

Nigeria departed the 2026 FIFA U20 Women's World Cup in Poland on Sunday with heads held high despite a stoppage-time goal by Valerin Lobo that handed victory to Colombia, and made short work of the credible efforts of the Falconets throughout the quarter-final encounter in Łódź.

In an action-packed first half, both sides struggled to find the breakthrough despite creating half-chances. The Falconets, who dominated set-pieces with several corners from Tumininu Adeshina and Kafayat Mafisere, came close through efforts from Janet Akekoromowei, Favour Nkwocha, Tosin Rafiu and Onyedikachi Ekezie, but the Colombian defence held firm.

Portugal-based forward Akekoromowei rocked the crossbar with a precise shot from the edge of the box in the 19th minute, and defender Tumininu Adeshina saw her terrific shot tipped over the bar by goalkeeper Luisa Agudelo in the 38th minute.

Nigeria showed more attacking intent throughout but lacked the clinical edge in the final third. The second half was marked by physical battles and disciplinary actions, with bookings for Sintia Cabezas and Juana Ortegón of Colombia, as well as Rebecca Adegbeile for Nigeria. The two-time runners-up continued to push for the opener, forcing corners and testing the Colombian goalkeeper through Rafiu and

Akekoromowei, while Colombia threatened on the counter through Valerin Lobo and Mariana Silva.

Coach Moses Aduku introduced Winner Onajite David for Queen Joseph and Precious Oscar for Favour Nkwocha to inject fresh energy into the attack. The game turned dramatically in the 77th minute when Nigeria were reduced to 10 players after Kafayat Mafisere was shown a straight red card for a foul on Samantha Rodriguez. Colombia's disciplined defending and game management frustrated numerous ef-

forts by the Falconets to find a breakthrough.

Lobo latched onto a through ball in the second minute of added time, and despite goalkeeper and captain Christiana Uzoma blocking her first effort, she pushed ahead and tucked in the ball on the rebound to send the South Americans through to the last four.

NFF's Acting General Secretary, Dr Emmanuel Ikpeeme praised the girls for their energy and vibrancy, saying they were not disgraced. "You gave your best out there, and the NFF and every Nigerian

watching saw that you held nothing back. You did not take the Colombians for granted and you certainly did not play with any form of complex.

"It is a game you could have won easily if you had been able to convert some of the numerous chances that you created, but that is sport. Please don't be disoriented by the result."

On her part, Nigeria's Ambassador to Poland, Her Excellency Chioma Ohakim Esq provided soothing words to the downcast players and officials in the dressing room of the Stadion LKS Miejski.

NPFL: Promoted Doma United stay top despite loss

Despite losing 4v-1 at Kano Pillars, promoted Doma United remain top of the NPFL standings, while Enyimba, Sporting Lagos and Kun Khalifat all fell at home today.

Doma remain top of the table on nine points from four matches.

The home win by home team Kano Pillars shot them

to third place with seven points and a game in hand.

The second Kano team, Barau FC, are second on the table after a heroic goalless draw at Ikorodu City.

They have eight points from four games.

It was far from a great weekend for three home teams – Enyimba, Sporting Lagos and Kun Khalifat, though.

Visiting Inter Lagos recorded their first victory of the new season when they upset hosts Enyimba by the odd goal. Record 10-time champions Enyimba are rock bottom after they lost their third straight game of the campaign.

Abia Warriors also won on the road when they stopped Sporting Lagos 2-0 in Lagos and hosts Kun Khalifat lost 4-2 to defending champions Enugu Rangers.

Abia Warriors are 10th on the table with five points from four matches, while Rangers are fifth on seven points from three games.

Super Lig goals race: Gift Orban overtakes Osimhen

Gift Orban tonight became the joint leading scorer in the Turkish Super Lig after he scored a goal and made an assist for his promoted club Amedspor to climb to top of the table.

Gift Orban now has seven goals and two assists, same as Mohamed Salah of Trabzonspor and ahead of Victor Osimhen, who has netted six goals and delivered two assists.

Gift Orban opened scoring for Amedspor after 13 minutes against visiting Besiktas and he then made the assist for his team to double their lead at 2-0 in the 22nd minute.

He thus followed up on his hat-trick of the previous week.



GIFT ORBAN

Mourinho attacks ref after chaotic Madrid Derby

Real Madrid lost the Madrid Derby to Atletico 2-1, they are now fourth on the table and six points behind leaders Barcelona with coach Jose Mourinho blaming the referee for this.

Mourinho was irritated at the post-match press conference.

"We can skip the press conference because this is the story of this match," he said, showing a printed photo showing both situations. "There are two clear sending-offs."

The situations were when Atletico defender Cristian Romero tackled Jude Bellingham and when Lee Kang-In tackled Real Madrid player Federico Valverde.

The Real Madrid coach said the derby was too big for referee Ortiz Arias to handle.

"The referee had no experience of refereeing a derby. He is 41 years old. He is a bad referee who has only done minor matches," he maintained.

Real Madrid later issued a press statement in the same mode.

"Real Madrid lost at Metropolitano in a derby marked by a poor refereeing performance by Ortiz Arias," the club said.

"Both decisions affected the outcome of the match, which was decided in the second half in favour of Atlético Madrid."



JOSE MOURINHO

AFCON 2027 Qualifiers: Ogunfuwa mobilises FFCN for Super Eagles' Uyo, Bissau battles

Wherever the Eagles Fly, FFCN Will Be There — Mama Nigeria.

The Football Fans Club of Nigeria (FFCN) has raised the drive of its mobilisation ahead of the Super Eagles' opening matches of the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers, with National President, Ambassador Oluwakemi Ogunfuwa, leading the charge to ensure massive supporters' presence in Uyo and later in Bissau.

The Super Eagles are scheduled to begin their qualifying campaign against Madagascar on Friday, September 25, at the Godswill Akpabio Stadium, Uyo, before travelling to Bissau for the Matchday Two encounter against Guinea-Bissau on September 29.

For FFCN, the mission is clear: stand behind the national team at home and carry the Nigerian spirit across the border.

"Mama Nigeria," as Ogunfuwa fondly called, said the supporters' body is leaving nothing to chance in its preparations, stressing that the Super Eagles must feel the presence

and passion of Nigerian supporters throughout the qualifying campaign.

"We are ready for the Super Eagles. From Uyo to Bissau, FFCN will be there. Our players must know that they are not alone; behind them is a nation of passionate supporters. We will sing, cheer and encourage them from the first whistle until the final whistle. Wherever the Eagles fly, the voice of Nigeria will be heard," Ogunfuwa declared.

A former CAF Award winner, Ogunfuwa has continued to champion an organised and patriotic supporters' culture around Nigerian football. Her leadership of FFCN has placed emphasis on mobilising supporters not only for home fixtures but also for crucial away assignments involving the national team.

The objective, according to the supporters' body, is to transform the Godswill Akpabio Stadium into a sea of Nigerian colours and provide the team with the vocal encouragement required throughout the encounter.

NPFL 26/27 LEAGUE TABLE

Rank	Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
1	Doma United FC	4	2	0	0	6
2	Barau FC	4	4	0	0	12
3	Kano Pillars FC	3	4	0	0	12
4	Rivers United	3	4	0	0	12
5	Rangers Int'l FC	3	3	0	0	9
6	Plateau United FC	4	1	2	0	5
7	Ranchers Bees FC	4	1	1	2	4
8	Benkel Insurance FC	4	1	1	2	4
9	Ikorodu City FC	3	2	0	1	6
10	Abia Warriors FC	4	2	0	2	6
11	Awara United FC	4	1	1	2	4
12	Niger Tornadoes FC	4	1	1	2	4
13	Nasarawa United FC	4	1	1	2	4
14	Caduna United FC	3	2	0	1	6
15	Shooting Stars FC	2	1	1	0	4
16	Sporting Lagos	3	1	1	1	4
17	Awari Wolves FC	3	2	0	1	6
18	Inter Lagos	4	4	0	0	12
19	Kun Khalifat FC	4	2	0	2	6
20	Enyimba Int'l FC	3	4	0	0	12

NPFL27 TABLE

SPORTS



NPFL 2026/27 MD4: 10-man Bendel Insurance succumb to Ranchers Bees 2-1 in Kano

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Bendel Insurance Football Club, weekend, suffered a 2-1 defeat to

newly promoted Ranchers Bees FC on Saturday in Matchday 4 of the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL). The result came against

expectations for the Benin Arsenal, who had made an impressive start to the new season. Insurance went into the encounter with confidence following their 4-2 home victory over Kunkalifat FC on Sunday.

From the opening whistle at the Sani Abacha Stadium in Kano, the Benin Arsenal put up a strong challenge and resisted the hosts effectively, with both sides going into the break goalless.

Ranchers Bees eventually broke the deadlock five minutes after the restart, with Jude Okorie putting the hosts ahead in the 50th minute.

Bendel Insurance remained composed despite falling behind and were rewarded for their persistence when hard-working right-back Lekan Gabriel drew them level in the 65th minute.

However, Ranchers Bees continued to push for a second goal and regained the lead in the 76th minute through Zilki-filu Mohammed, whose strike ultimately secured all three points for the newly promoted side.

Insurance's afternoon took another turn for the worse in the 80th minute when goalscorer Lekan Gabriel was sent off following a harsh infringement, leaving the Benin Arsenal to finish the game with 10 men.

The defeat leaves Bendel Insurance on six points from their opening four matches of the season.

The Benin Arsenal will now turn their attention to Matchday 5, when they host Ikorodu City in Benin on Wednesday. The fixture will be their first midweek match of the new season.



BENDEL INSURANCE VS RANCHERS BEES



VICTOR OSIMHEN

Super Eagles confirm Osimhen's absence from AFCON Qualifying

Super Eagles have confirmed unavailability of striker Victor Osimhen for Nigeria's double header AFCON 2027 Qualifying.

Coach Eric Chelle had listed the Galatasaray striker for the continental qualifying games at home to Madagascar on 25 September and away to Guinea Bissau on 29 September 2026.

However, the Super Eagles' media have reported that Osimhen is unavailable for the games after missing out on club duties on Saturday 19 September 2026.

Eagles' media officer Promise Efoghe explained that Osimhen's absence was down to slow recovery from an injury sustained two weeks ago while playing for Gala.

"Victor Osimhen's recovery from a muscle strain has been slower than expected. He was included in Nigeria's squad for

the AFCON qualifiers because Galatasaray and Super Eagles technical crew were hopeful he would be fit for the Super Lig game versus Trabzonspor and ready for the international window," Promise wrote.

"But his absence from tonight's match confirms Galatasaray's correspondence to Super Eagles manager Eric Chelle that the striker is still recovering and will not be ready for Nigeria's matches."

In the absence of Osimhen in Nigeria's attack for the AFCON Qualifying, coach Eric Chelle will make do with Akor Adams (Venezia FC, Italy); Samuel Chukwueze (AC Milan, Italy); Ademola Lookman (Atletico Madrid, Spain); Tolu Arokodare (Ajax FC, The Netherlands); George Ilhenikina (Al Ittihad, Saudi Arabia); and Moses Usor (LASK FC, Austria).

Okowa hails Nairobi 2029 World Athletics hosting rights as win-win for Africa

Senior Vice President of the Confederation of African Athletics (CAA) and the Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN) has congratulated Athletics Kenya on the award of the hosting rights for the 2029 World Athletics Championships in Nairobi, describing the decision as a landmark moment for Kenya and a major victory for African athletics.

AFN President and Senior Vice President of the Confederation of African Athletics (CAA), Chief Tonobok Okowa, expressed delight over Nairobi's successful bid, saying the hosting rights represent a "win-win" outcome for the continent.

"Congratulations, Athletics Kenya. This is a great moment for Kenya and, indeed, for the whole of Africa," Okowa said.

"Bringing the World Athletics Championships to Nairobi in 2029 is not just about Kenya hosting a global competition. It is a victory for African athletics and an opportunity to showcase the enormous talent, passion and organisational capacity that exist on our continent."

Okowa also commended World Athletics for selecting Nairobi, saying the decision would open a new chapter for the sport in Africa.

"We must commend World Athletics for entrusting Nairobi and Kenya with this historic responsibility. It is a bold and important decision that will

have a lasting impact on athletics across Africa," he added.

The AFN President noted that Nigeria was proud to have supported Athletics Kenya's successful bid and said the development should be embraced by every member of the African athletics family.

"AFN is proud to have supported the Kenyan bid, and we are delighted to celebrate this achievement with Athletics Kenya and the entire African athletics family," Okowa said.



CHIEF TONOBOK OKOWA

Volleyball: Nigeria to face Morocco in Q/finals At 2026 African Nations Championship

Nigeria will take on Morocco in the quarterfinals of the 2026 African Men's Nations Volleyball Championship on Monday, September 21.

Morocco sealed a place in the last eight after beating the Democratic Republic of Congo 3-0 (25-20, 25-21, 29-27) in the Round of 16 on Saturday, September 19.

Speaking ahead of the tie, head coach of Nigeria men's team, Ryan Masajedi identified the weakness of his opponents.

Masajedi said Nigeria stands a chance of creating an upset and progressing to the semi-finals.

He said: "I watched the match between Morocco and DR Congo in the Round of 16 with the players and saw their weaknesses and their strengths."

"They understand volleyball, they play with a system and they are consistent," Masajedi said.

"The North Africans side were many points behind, but they came back and eventually won 3-0."

"I think the serve is very important for us. They have a problem with their reception" he added.



NIGERIA VOLLEYBALL TEAM

NFF Reform: FIFA, CAF begin waiting game after Abuja stakeholders' talks

The conclusion of the FIFA and Confederation of African Football (CAF) assessment mission in Nigeria has heightened expectations over the next phase of the country's football reforms, with stakeholders now awaiting a formal position from the two governing bodies.

The four-man delegation, comprising FIFA officials Ahmed Harraz, Rolf Tanner and El Hadj Wack Diop, alongside CAF Legal Manager Nnaemeka Olu, spent two days in Abuja consulting widely on the legal, administrative, governance and electoral issues surrounding the crisis in the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF).

The mission followed the Au-

gust 27 resignation of NFF President Ibrahim Gusau, General Secretary Mohammed Sanusi and members of the Executive Committee, which triggered the suspension of the federation's electoral process and prompted calls for a comprehensive restructuring of Nigerian football.

FIFA had earlier made clear that the visit was a fact-finding and consultation exercise. The governing body said the assessment would help it and CAF understand the circumstances surrounding the leadership changes, hear the views of stakeholders and determine whether recommendations should subsequently be submitted to their competent decision-making bodies.