

Senate orders Ebola screening at all entry points, seeks emergency funds

CAROLINE AMEH

ABUJA

The Nigerian Senate has directed the Federal Government to enforce mandatory Ebola screening for all international travellers entering the country through airports, seaports and designated land

borders, following concerns over a reported case in Abuja. The resolution followed a motion sponsored by Senator Francis Ade Fadahunsi, who warned that Nigeria faced a significant risk of importing the deadly virus. He disclosed that about 44 contacts linked to the reported case had been identified for quar-

antine and observation. Fadahunsi called for urgent measures to strengthen the country's public health response and prevent further transmission. Senate President Godswill Akpabio expressed concern over reports that the infected traveller entered Nigeria from Kenya without adequate screening,

warning that lapses in border surveillance could expose more people to the virus. Contributing to the debate, Senator Ali Ndume called for compulsory screening of all international travellers, irrespective of their countries of origin, to minimise the risk of imported infections.

Senator Adamu Aliero urged the immediate release of emergency funds from the Service Wide Vote to support containment efforts and strengthen the capacity of relevant health agencies. The lawmakers also called for the replacement of the Quarantine Act of 1926 with a modern

public health law capable of addressing emerging infectious diseases and contemporary public health threats. Senator Mohammed Tahir Monguno described the existing legislation as outdated, stressing the need for urgent legislative ac-

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#200

2027: Okpebholo mobilises Edo for Tinubu

RICHARD EWEKA

UROMI

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has urged residents of the state to support President Bola Tinubu's administration in the 2027 general elections, saying the Federal Government's economic reforms are beginning

to yield positive results in development and governance. Okpebholo made the appeal on Wednesday during a visit to the Ojuromi of Uromi, HRH Zaiki Anselm Aidenojie II, at the traditional ruler's palace in Esan North-East Local Government Area. He was accompanied by members of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The governor, who highlighted his administration's development initiatives, listed road construction, the upgrading of primary healthcare centres, regular payment of salaries and the construction of schools among the projects being undertaken across the state. He, however, acknowledged that some of the projects would

take time to deliver their full benefits, noting that infrastructure development required sustained investment and execution. "Most of the work I am undertaking cannot manifest in one day. It takes time because it involves construction," he said. Okpebholo said several roads had been completed, while construction had commenced on

others in different parts of the state, adding that the projects would ease transportation, enhance connectivity and stimulate economic activities. "Many roads have been completed, and we have started several others in different parts of the state. They will ease movement and improve economic activities in Edo," he said. On electricity, which he described as one of the state's long-standing challenges, the governor disclosed that a 100-megawatt power plant was expected to commence operations in Edo

South in the near future, while another project would contribute an additional 16 megawatts to the state's power supply. "These projects are part of our efforts to address the power problem in the state," he said. The governor attributed the progress recorded so far to the support and policies of the Federal Government, insisting that Edo should align with the administration to consolidate the gains of ongoing reforms. "The man driving that suc-

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Edo Gov. his Deputy, join Benin royal family, residents to celebrate Oba Ewuare 11 @10

BENIN CITY

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, on Tuesday joined the Benin Royal Family, palace chiefs and residents in celebrating the 10th coronation anniversary of the Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty, Omo N'Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, CFR, in a colourful display of royal reverence, cultural pride and communal solidarity. The governor accompanied the revered monarch from the palace to the historic Holy Aruosa Cathedral, where the Oba worships, as part of activities marking a decade of his reign over the Great Benin Kingdom. The anniversary celebration attracted a mammoth crowd of residents, traditional lead-

ers and prominent sons and daughters of Edo State, who lined the streets of Benin City to honour the monarch. The atmosphere was charged with excitement as the Oba's arrival at the cathedral was heralded by traditional praises, drumming, singing and dancing, while groups of men and women dressed in colourful red and white traditional attire joined the procession. Governor Okpebholo, who joined the monarch at the palace before accompanying him on the drive to the worship centre, was received with cheers from residents and traders who stood by the roadside to witness the historic occasion. Speaking at the Holy Aruosa Cathedral, the Edo State Com-

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VISIT: Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo addressing the Ojuromi of Uromi, HRH Zaiki Anselm Aidenojie 11 and Chiefs during a visit to the traditional ruler's Palace in Uromi, Esan North East Local Government Area on Wednesday.

Edo First Lady decries prolonged pretrial detention, backs prison decongestion

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Treat every patient with dignity, kindness, Wellspring University VC charges nursing graduates

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US citizen Stephen Hubbard freed by Russia as Trump envoy meets Putin

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Monrovia set for AWBL Zone 3 qualifying showdown

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NEWS

Edo First Lady decries prolonged pretrial detention, backs prison decongestion • *Pledges support for access to justice, inmate rehabilitation*

BENIN CITY

The Coordinator, Office of the First Lady of Edo State, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, has decried the prolonged detention of awaiting-trial inmates, describing it as a serious injustice that demands urgent attention.

Mrs. Anani expressed concern over the high number of inmates awaiting trial in correctional centres across the state, pledging support for initiatives to decongest custodial facilities

and promote access to justice.

She spoke when she received members of the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (Federal) at the Government House, Benin City, where she reaffirmed her commitment to correctional reforms and the welfare of inmates.

The First Lady identified prolonged detention without conviction as a major contributor to overcrowding in correctional centres, lamenting that some inmates spend several years in custody without their cases be-

ing determined.

Citing a case in which an inmate reportedly spent 10 years awaiting trial, Mrs. Anani described the situation as distressing and called for measures to ensure the timely dispensation of justice.

She stressed the need for greater consideration of non-custodial measures, particularly for minor offences where imprisonment may not be necessary, noting that correctional reforms were essential to addressing congestion and im-

proving the justice system.

Mrs. Anani also expressed concern that some inmates remain in custody because they lack the financial resources, influence or support to navigate the justice system, insisting that access to justice should not be determined by an individual's social or economic status.

She assured the committee of her willingness to support programmes that promote inmates' welfare, facilitate access to justice and encourage the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders

into society.

While emphasising personal responsibility and respect for the law, the First Lady called for increased public awareness of the Constitution and relevant laws, noting that ignorance of the law could contribute to criminal behaviour.

She disclosed that her office would collaborate with the committee to intensify sensitisation campaigns targeting children, mothers, youths, churches, other religious institutions and vulnerable communities to promote lawful conduct and pre-

vent crime.

Earlier, the Executive Secretary of the committee, Mrs. Evbu Igbinedion, expressed appreciation to the First Lady for her visit to the Benin Correctional Centre on October 1, 2026, where she celebrated Independence Day with inmates.

Mrs. Igbinedion said the delegation's visit was also aimed at strengthening collaboration with the Office of the First Lady and recognising Mrs. Anani's contributions to correctional reform and access to justice.

2027: Okpebholo mobilises...

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cess is Mr President. That is why I am here to tell you that I do not want Edo to be in opposition to this government because of the progress we are already making," he said.

Earlier, the Ojuromi of Uromi, HRH Zaiki Anselm Aidenojie II, who spoke on behalf of the Esan Enigies, commended the governor for his efforts to accelerate development in Edo State.

The traditional ruler prayed for God's blessings and wisdom for the governor in the discharge of his responsibilities, expressing confidence in his leadership.

Describing Okpebholo as his son, Aidenojie assured him of the support of the traditional institution and expressed optimism that the governor would complete the anticipated eight years of his administration.

Senate orders Ebola screening...

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tion to provide an effective legal framework for disease surveillance, quarantine and emergency response.

The Senate further directed relevant agencies to equip airports, seaports and designated land borders with trained health personnel, appropriate screening equipment and isolation facilities to identify and manage suspected cases.

Senator Ireti Kingibe emphasised the need to provide adequate resources for effective prevention and containment, while Senator Diket Plang urged public and private institutions to make hand sanitisers and other preventive materials available.

As part of precautionary measures within the legislature, Akpabio directed the introduction of temperature checks and hand-washing facilities at the National Assembly to reduce the risk of possible transmission.

The Senate urged relevant authorities to intensify disease surveillance, strengthen emergency preparedness and ensure effective coordination among health and border agencies to prevent the spread of Ebola in Nigeria.

The resolutions come amid heightened concerns over the reported Ebola case in the Federal Capital Territory, underscoring the need for strict screening, prompt identification of suspected infections and effective contact tracing.

Edo Gov. his Deputy, join Benin...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

missioner for Mining, Mr Kayode Iriabekhai, described the anniversary as a celebration of a traditional institution whose influence had continued to promote peace and stability in the state.

Iriabekhai commended Oba Ewuare II for his support for the Okpebholo administration since its inception, expressing the hope that the monarch's reign would continue to foster peace, unity and progress across Edo State.

In a separate congratulatory message, the Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, extolled the monarch's decade of royal leadership, describing the milestone as a testament to his commitment to the preservation of sacred traditions, cultural identity and communal harmony.

Idahosa, in the message

signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Friday Aghedo, said Oba Ewuare II's reign had reinforced the bonds of unity among the Benin people and sustained the values of wisdom, discipline, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.

The Deputy Governor, who identified with the historic significance of the anniversary as a proud son of the Benin Kingdom, joined the Benin Royal Family, palace chiefs and sons and daughters of the kingdom across the world in celebrating the monarch's 10 years on the throne.

He noted that the Oba's role as custodian of the kingdom's ancestral heritage underscored the enduring importance of traditional institutions in preserving cultural identity, strengthening social cohesion and inspiring younger generations to uphold the values of their forebears.



COURTESY VISIT:

The Coordinator, office of the First Lady of Edo State, Mrs Edesili Okpebholo Anani (Middle) with members of the administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (Federal) during a courtesy visit at Government House on Wednesday.

Oluku Market Fire: Traders commend Okpebholo's quick response as clearing begins

RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

Traders who were hit by the petrol tanker fire that destroyed parts of the Oluku Market, along the Benin-Lagos Expressway, have commended Governor Monday Okpebholo for responding quickly, as evacuation of debris and clearing work continues at the site.

Many of them lost shops, goods and their only source of income. They said the governor's promised intervention gave them some hope, and they want the promised rebuilding to start without delay.

One of the traders, Julie Ologbosere, told journalists that the governor listened when they cried out. "Our baba Okpebholo E do well, when we cry go meet am he really answer our cry. He say make we no worry. He no even let one week reach, the second day after the fire na he start work for here so," she said.

Another trader, Yunusa Usman, called the governor a father to the people of Edo State. He thanked him for acting promptly and prayed for God's blessings on him.

Isaac Orina also thanked the governor, but appealed for the market to be rebuilt as soon as possible. He said life had been

hard since the fire, which had shut down their businesses and cut off their means of survival.

Popular businessman and philanthropist, Mr Adun Osamede, widely known as Bob Izua, visited the site while clearing was ongoing and also praised the governor's han-

dling of the matter. He asked the affected market women to be patient and to stay off the expressway, for their own safety and so that work could go on without interruption.

Governor Okpebholo had earlier visited the market and promised that reconstruction

would begin within one week. The fire followed a petrol tanker explosion at Oluku Junction last Thursday, leaving many traders counting their losses.

For now, the traders say they are waiting and hoping that the pledge will be kept, so they can return to business and begin to recover.

State police bill, 29 amendment bills go to Justice Ministry for review

CAROLINE AMEH

ABUJA

The Presidential Working Group on the National Policing Bill has submitted the draft National Policing Bill, 2026, and 29 consequential amendment bills to the Federal Ministry of Justice for legislative drafting review and validation.

The submission was made on October 19 to the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, in line with the working group's implementation plan.

Chief of Staff to the President and Chairman of the Presidential Working Group, Femi Gbajabiamila, disclosed this in a statement issued on Tuesday, October 20, 2026.

He said the Ministry of Jus-

tice would review the proposed legislation to ensure compliance with legislative drafting standards and conventions, as well as consistency with existing laws.

The ministry is expected to return the validated bills to the working group on or before Friday, October 30, 2026.

According to Gbajabiamila, the working group would give the bills final consideration after receiving the ministry's feedback before presenting them to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, thereby concluding its assignment.

The proposed National Policing Bill seeks to establish a constitutional and legislative framework for a dual policing structure comprising a Federal Police Service and State Police Services.

The proposal forms part of ongoing efforts to create the legal framework for the proposed restructuring of policing in Nigeria.

Gbajabiamila said the working group remained committed to a rigorous and transparent process that would produce a comprehensive legislative proposal for the President's consideration and eventual transmission to the National Assembly.

He, however, noted that the drafting process was proceeding alongside the ongoing consideration of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (Sixth Alteration) Bill, 2026, by state Houses of Assembly.

He said the constitutional amendment process must be completed before the proposed National Policing Bill could be transmitted to the National Assembly.

NEWS**A SPECIAL EDITORIAL TRIBUTE****The throne lives: Oba Ewuare II, ten years after**

A Special Editorial Tribute on the Birthday and 10th Coronation Anniversary of His Royal Majesty, Omo N' Oba N' Edo, Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, CFR

Write the history of Nigeria without the Oba of Benin, and you have written a lie.

For over a thousand years before the white man named this country, there was a Kingdom here. A kingdom with an army, a court, a guild, a wall that was once the largest earthwork on earth, and a bronze that spoke before books were written. That Kingdom never died. It lives today in one man — the Oba of Benin.

On October 20, 2016, that man became His Royal Majesty, Oba Ewuare II.

He did not need an introduction. Born Eheneden Erediauwa on October 20, 1953, son of the legendary Oba Erediauwa of blessed memory, grandson of Oba Akenzua II, great-grandson of Oba Eweka II who restored the monarchy after 1897 — his blood is the history of Benin itself. Before the throne, he served Nigeria as Ambassador to Angola, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. He had seen the world. Then the world called him home to sit on a throne older than most countries.

In ten years, what has he done?

He has taught Nigeria what royalty means.

In an age of loud leaders, he is quiet strength. He does not grant interviews to abuse. He does not post his thoughts for likes. He speaks when the ancestors would want him to speak — and when he speaks, Benin listens and Nigeria respects.

When our children were trafficked through the desert, when cultism stained the name of our youth, he did not organize a workshop. He performed a sacred rite. He placed a royal curse on human traffickers and on those who spill blood for cults. That curse did what laws could not do. Our girls began to return. Our boys began to renounce. Because in Benin,

the Oba's word is not opinion. It is law before the law.

He has turned memory into movement. For decades, we begged for our bronzes politely. Oba Ewuare II demanded them royally. He said: You cannot keep my father's portrait in your living room and call yourself my friend. The world heard a King, not a complainant. And today, the bronzes are flying home — from Cambridge, from Glasgow, from Germany — because one King refused to let his heritage remain homeless. He has kept the Palace what it must be: Above. Above politics. Above partisanship. In Edo, governors have come and gone, parties have risen and fallen, but the Palace on Plymouth Road has remained what it has been since the 11th century — the House of Truth.

That is why today is not a celebration. It is a re-affirmation. From Use where you chose your sacred name, to Igun Street where the carvers still carve your face in bronze, to Oba Market where the women tie your picture on their wrappers, to the Edo son in Peckham, London who cannot speak Edo fluently but knows how to shout "Oba ghato kpere" — there is joy. Real joy. Not sponsored. Not

rented. Joy from the soul of a people who know who they are because their King reminds them.

73 years of age. 10 years on the throne. A lifetime of honour. What lies ahead?

Ahead lies the greater task — to make Benin not just culturally great, but economically great through culture. To build the Royal Museum that will house our returnees. To make the Benin City National Museum corridor the cultural capital of Africa. To make the Edo Language, which this Oba speaks with pride, become the language of opportunity for our children. The Oba has laid the

foundation. The next decade must build the empire of culture that Ewuare the Great dreamt of.

We at The Nigerian Observer have a special right to speak today. We were established on May 29, 1968 by General Samuel Ogbemudia to tell Edo's story. For 58 years we have done that. We told the story of Oba Akenzua II's transition. We told the story of Oba Erediauwa's 37-year reign. Today, we are honoured to tell the story of his son.

It is a story of continuity. Of dignity. Of a throne that never ends.

Your Royal Majesty,

You met a Kingdom.

You have kept a Kingdom.

You will leave a greater Kingdom.

May the Almighty Osanobua who crowns kings, and the great ancestors who sit on the stools before you, grant you long life, good health, and peace that passes all understanding.

May you reign till your coral beads become too heavy for your neck.

May you reign till the children of those who witnessed your coronation bring their own children to witness your 30th anniversary.

For you have reigned well.

Oba gha to kpere!

Respectfully, with our foreheads touching the ground in reverence.



Oba Ewuare II

.....

"For over a thousand years before the white man named this country, there was a Kingdom here. A kingdom with an army, a court, a guild, a wall that was once the largest earthwork on earth, and a bronze that spoke before books were written. That Kingdom never died. It lives today in one man — the Oba of Benin."

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Showers of tributes for Oba Ewuare11 @10

As Benin monarch marks the double celebration of his birthday and 10th year on the throne, the Nigerian Observer speaks to some residents of Benin and Edo people in the diaspora on the celebration.

Hon, (Dr.) Agharese Idubor, 2023 Edo State Governorship Candidate of the NPC and special Adviser to the State Governor (Protocol Matters) from 2008 to 2012.

I most respectfully felicitate with His Royal Majesty on the momentous occasion of his 10th coronation anniversary.

His Majesty, ten years ago, on the 20th of October, 2016, he ascended the sacred and revered ancient throne of forebears as the 40th Oba of the Great Benin Kingdom. It was not just a coronation; it was a divine restoration of hope, pride and cultural consciousness for every Edo son and daughter across the world.

In this decade of glorious reign, he has distinguished his self as:

A peerless custodian of our rich cultural heritage, who has projected the Benin monarchy to enviable global prominence.

A symbol of peace, unity and progress, whose fatherly counsel has continued to foster harmony and development in Edo State and beyond.

A courageous defender of justice, who has stood firm for the return of our looted artifacts and the dignity of the Black race.

A compassionate King with a heart for the youth, arts, sports and the less privileged, showing that royalty is service.

As he commemorate this historic milestone marked with thanksgiving, cultural exhibitions, sports and communal festivities from October 4 to November 21, we pray that the Almighty God and our great ancestors continue to grant him long life, sound health, profound wisdom and greater accomplishments on the throne.

May his reign continue to bring peace to our land and pride to our people.

Oba gha to kpere, Ise!

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Dr. Agharese Idubor

A SPECIAL EDITORIAL TRIBUTE

Showers of tributes ...

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Hassan Daisy, Scholar

As His Royal Majesty, Omo N'Oba N'Edo, Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, the Oba of Benin, marks the 10th anniversary of his coronation, it is with profound respect, admiration and a deep sense of cultural pride that we celebrate a monarch whose reign has continued to reflect the enduring strength, dignity and rich heritage of the ancient Benin Kingdom. This remarkable milestone is not merely a celebration of ten years on the throne, but an occasion to reflect on the significance of traditional institutions in preserving our collective identity, promoting peace and strengthening the bonds that unite our people. For the Benin Kingdom, the reign of Oba Ewuare II represents a continuation of a glorious royal heritage deeply rooted in history, tradition, discipline and the enduring values of the Benin people.

Since his coronation in October 2016, His Majesty has remained a symbol of cultural continuity and traditional authority, carrying the enormous responsibility of preserving one of Africa's most distinguished monarchies.

The Benin throne occupies a unique place in the historical development of Nigeria, having served for centuries as a centre of political authority, artistic excellence, diplomacy and cultural advancement.

Under the guidance of the Oba, the throne continues to command profound respect among his subjects and admirers of Benin civilisation across the world.

One of the enduring hallmarks of the Benin monarchy is its commitment to the preservation of the kingdom's rich cultural heritage. From its celebrated bronze works and intricate artistic traditions to its royal ceremonies, indigenous knowledge and ancestral customs, Benin remains a source of immense pride to Edo State and Nigeria. The continued preservation and promotion of this heritage are essential not only to present generations but also to the generations yet unborn, who deserve to inherit a culture that is both respected and cherished.

Oba Ewuare II's reign has also underscored the importance of traditional rulers as partners in the pursuit of peace, social harmony and community development. In a rapidly changing society, traditional institutions remain relevant through their capacity to foster dialogue, encourage responsible conduct, promote unity and strengthen the relationship between communities and government.

The Oba's position as the revered custodian of Benin customs and traditions places him at the heart of these important responsibilities.

His Majesty's international exposure and diplomatic background have further brought a distinctive dimension to his role as a traditional ruler. His experience in international relations has provided an important platform for cultural engagement and the promotion of the Benin Kingdom's historical significance beyond Nigeria's borders.

At a time when the preservation and restitution of African cultural heritage remain subjects of global interest, the Benin royal institution continues to occupy an important place in conversations about history, identity, ownership and the protection of priceless cultural treasures.

Beyond the splendour of the royal palace and the grandeur associated with the ancient throne, the true value of traditional leadership lies in its enduring impact on the lives of the people. The welfare of the people, the promotion of peace, the preservation of communal values and the protection of the kingdom's cultural inheritance remain important measures of a successful reign.

As the Benin Kingdom celebrates this milestone, the occasion offers an opportunity to renew the collective commitment to these ideals.

For the people of Edo State, the Oba of Benin represents far more than a traditional institution. He embodies a living connection between the kingdom's glorious past and its aspirations for the future. His throne is a reminder that a people who preserve their history, honour their traditions and remain united in purpose can continue to make meaningful contributions to national development and global civilisation.

The 10th anniversary of his coronation therefore presents an opportunity for the sons and daughters of Benin, both at home and in the diaspora, to celebrate their heritage with renewed pride and to support efforts aimed at preserving the kingdom's cultural identity. It is also a moment to encourage younger generations to appreciate the historical achievements of their forebears and recognise their responsibility in sustaining the values that have distinguished Benin civilisation over the centuries.

As His Royal Majesty marks this significant anniversary, we extend our heart-

felt congratulations and profound best wishes to the revered Oba of Benin. We celebrate his place in the continuing story of a kingdom whose contributions to African history, art, culture and civilisation remain immeasurable.

May the years ahead bring greater peace, unity, progress and renewed cultural recognition to the Benin Kingdom. May the ancient traditions of the throne continue to inspire the people, strengthen their sense of belonging and provide a solid foundation for future generations.

Congratulations to the Oba of Benin on this historic milestone of royal service and cultural stewardship.

Congratulations, Your Majesty, on the celebration of your birthday and the 10th anniversary of your coronation.

**Dr. Idubor****Ayenomoh Winner Alukhei, an intern**

The Benin Kingdom has been agog this October since the Palace of the Oba of Benin unveiled a 23-day programme to mark the 10th coronation anniversary of His Royal Majesty, Omo N'Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, CFR. The 40th Oba of Benin ascended the throne on October 20, 2016, succeeding his father, Oba Erediauwa. The Palace Christened the anniversary celebrates: "A decade of restoration, culture, and calm."

According to the official programme, celebrations would run from October 3 to 25, 2026. Activities opened on October 3 with a Cultural Festival featuring Edo masquerades, dances and heritage displays, followed by a Grand Royal Durbar on October 4 and an Arise TV documentary on the monarch's reign.

From October 7 to 11, the city played host an International Chess, Lawn Tennis Tournament and an International Golf Tournament.

On October 9, the Oba Akenzua Cultural Centre hosted a Food Festival, Art Exhibition and Trade Fair to showcase Edo cuisine and creativity, while the Oba Erediauwa Memorial Lecture was held on October 10 at the University of Benin.

Other highlights included a Novelty Football Match on October 11, the Benin Economic Summit on October 13, Children's Day on October 14, Security Summit on October 15, Wrestling Competition on October 16, and a football match on October 18.

On October 19, there was an exhibition of repatriated Benin Bronzes by the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM).

The climax came on Tuesday, October 20, with a Grand Reception at the Royal Palace for dignitaries and international guests. The celebration ends on October 25 with a Thanksgiving Service at Holy Aruosa Cathedral.

In ten years, Oba Ewuare II's reign has been defined by peace, cultural revival and diplomatic push for the return of Benin artefacts looted in 1897, including 119 returned from the Netherlands in June 2025.

Ayenomoh's toast to His Royal Majesty

On this historic occasion of your 10th Coronation Anniversary and Birthday, we join all sons and daughters of the Great Benin Kingdom at home and in the diaspora to celebrate an icon, a custodian of culture, and a symbol of peace.

Your Majesty, in ten years on the ancient throne of your ancestors since your ascension on October 20, 2016, you have reigned with wisdom, grace, and uncommon vision. Your reign has ushered in a renaissance of Benin culture, the global return of our stolen heritage, the preservation of our language and traditions, and a reign of peace that has united Edo people worldwide.

You are not just the 40th Oba of the Benin Kingdom; you are the father of all, the defender of the oppressed, and the true embodiment of _Omo N'Oba N'Edo_.

As you mark this double celebration, we pray that the Almighty God and the great ancestors of the Benin Kingdom continue to grant you long life, sound health, divine wisdom, and greater strength to lead our great Kingdom to even greater glory.

Oba Ghatto Kpere, Ise!
Long Live His Royal Majesty!
Long Live the Benin Kingdom!

Muyideen Funmilayo, Benin resident

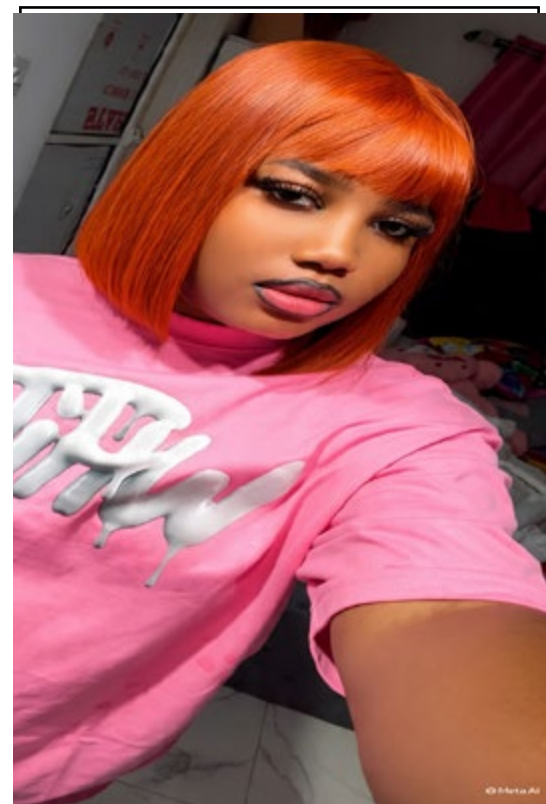
The people of Benin Kingdom are celebrating with joy and excitement as the Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty, Oba Ewuare II, marks his 10th coronation anniversary.

Oba Ewuare II was crowned the Oba of Benin on October 20, 2016, following the passing of his father, Oba Erediauwa. His reign has continued to draw attention to the rich cultural heritage, traditions and historical importance of the Benin Kingdom.

The anniversary is an opportunity for the people of Edo State and Benin Kingdom to reflect on the monarch's leadership and his contributions to preserving Benin culture. Traditional ceremonies, cultural displays, prayers and other activities form part of the celebrations, bringing together palace chiefs, community leaders, indigenes and well-wishers.

Oba Ewuare II is also known for promoting the cultural identity of the Benin people and advocating for the return of looted Benin artefacts taken abroad during the 1897 British invasion. These artefacts remain an important part of the kingdom's history and identity.

As the monarch celebrates a decade on the throne, many people see the occasion as a moment to honour the institution of the Oba and encourage unity, peace and development across Edo State.

**Hassan Daisy**

NEWS

Treat every patient with dignity, kindness, Wellspring University VC charges nursing graduates

BENIN CITY

The Vice Chancellor of Wellspring University, Benin City Prof Isaac Rotimi Ajayi has charged newly inducted graduates of nursing from the institution to treat every patient with dignity, kindness, and respect in the course of practicing their profession.

Professor Ajayi said that the protection of patients' confidentiality, upholding of professional boundaries, continuous learning, and non compromise of standards for convenience or personal gains were at the core of a successful nursing career.

The Vice Chancellor who spoke at the 2nd induction and oath taking ceremony for the university's

graduates of Nursing on Tuesday in Benin City advised them to allow their conducts to reflect both their personal character and the quality of the institution that trained them.

According to Prof Ajayi, "nursing is a noble profession that places human life, dignity, and wellbeing in your hands. It demands competence, compassion,

integrity, patience, discipline, and unwavering commitment to professional ethics.

"As you enter the profession, remain faithful to the values of hard work, diligence, respect, integrity, and excellence in service instilled in you at Wellspring University".

Admitting the 56 nursing graduates into the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria, the Registrar of the Council Alhaji Ndagi Alhassan urged the to pursue excellence in learning, humil-

ity, hard work, integrity in defense patients' care and safety.

The Registrar of Council who was represented by Goodwill Stella, said that the young nurses would go far in their chosen profession if they imbibed its code of ethics by putting the interest of others first.

While congratulating the inductees for a successful academic achievement, the Registrar commended Wellspring University for its sterling academic milestones within the short period of its existence and called for its sustenance.

Earlier in her remarks, the Dean, Faculty of Nursing, Wellspring University Professor Ngozi Osunde, advised the graduates against perceiving their certification as qualified nurses as an

end in itself, but should see it as the beginning of an equally challenging part in their professional journeys.

Professor Osunde urged them to deploy the knowledge and skills acquired to promote the nursing profession through excellence in practice.

She commended the Vice Chancellor and the institution's for the attention the Faculty of Nursing Sciences had received through the provision of requisite funding and equipment which had transformed it to its present enviable state.

Speaking on the topic "From Studentship to Professional Practice: Navigating the Challenges of Modern Nursing," the Guest Lecturer, Dr. Olasolunpo Olorunfemi.

**MEETING:**

From left: Members, House of Representatives committee on Polytechnic and Higher technical education, Rep. Ifeoluwa Ehindaro; Rep. Danladi Aguyi and the chairman of the Committee, Rep. Fuad Laguda, during the committee's meeting with the minister of education, at National Assembly complex in Abuja on Tuesday

Edo advocates political inclusion of persons with disabilities at Kaduna convention...commends Okpebholo for establishing state disability commission

ABDUL-KADIR ABDULLAH

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government has advocated greater political inclusion of persons with disabilities at the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) National Convention in Kaduna State, commending Governor Monday Okpebholo for establishing a state disability commission to advance the interests of the community.

The Special Adviser to the

Governor on Disability Matters, Comrade Yunusa Abdul-Salam Adepoju, made the call in a goodwill message at the convention on Monday, October 19, 2026, urging persons with disabilities across the country to participate actively in politics and contribute to decision-making processes.

Adepoju, who led the Edo State delegation alongside the state Chairman of JONAPWD, Anne Ojugo, said political participation remained an important pathway for persons with

disabilities to access leadership positions and contribute to governance.

He encouraged members of the disability community to take advantage of opportunities within the political system, drawing from his experience as a political participant who was subsequently appointed Special Adviser by Governor Okpebholo.

"I'm delighted to be here this morning. I consider this as an opportunity to interact with everyone in this community. I want to mention something I feel is very important to the people with disabilities. I want us to

be fully participating in politics," he said.

The Special Adviser also called for the development of a comprehensive database of persons with disabilities across Nigeria, with information organised state by state, to support effective planning, policy formulation and the implementation of programmes that address their needs.

He described the initiative as a priority of his office, stressing that reliable data would help stakeholders understand the population and circumstances of persons with disabilities and im-

Edo Govt to fix failed portions on Oluku, other roads, says Permanent Secretary

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government has announced plans to intervene in failed portions of the Oluku-Lagos Road in and other roads in the state to address the deteriorating condition of the roads in order to ease difficulties faced by motorists and avert likely dangers motorists could be exposed to.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Works, Mr. John Obanor, disclosed this while briefing newsmen in Benin City, where he said the government had mandated relevant officials to follow up on road failures at Oluku and other areas within the metropolis and come up with appropriate intervention measures.

Obanor who expressed the commitment of the Okpebholo's administration to road infrastructure upgrade and maintenance, lamented the failure rate of some interstate roads which has made swift commuting on affected corridors a challenging experience to motorists.

He attributed rate of delapidation of roads to the tonne weight of articulated vehicle which often time are overloaded beyond what the roads could withstand, due largely to the absence of effective train haulage services in the country, stressing that efforts were being made by the relevant levels of government to restore them.

It would be recalled that a truck laden with petroleum products, had fallen over and spilled its contents while attempting to manoeuvre its way through a failed portion on the Oluku Road.

The spillage subsequently triggered a fire outbreak, which razed several shops and left several people with varying degrees of burns.

According to him, Edo State's strategic position as a major transit corridor connecting different parts of the country exposes its roads to considerable pressure from heavy-duty

vehicles, making regular maintenance and timely intervention inevitable.

The Permanent Secretary assured residents that the government was working to identify failures on critical roads and implement appropriate measures to fixing them.

He added that the government remained committed to ensuring that contractors fulfilled their contractual obligations in roads construction and maintenance, stressing that any defects identified on road projects before their formal handover must be fixed by the contractors at no cost to the government.

Obanor further explained that mechanisms, including retention payments and maintenance periods, were in place to hold contractors accountable for the quality and durability of road projects.

He noted that contractors were also being directed to submit updated work programmes to enable the government to monitor progress effectively and ensure timely project delivery.

The Permanent Secretary reiterated the government's determination to addressing the challenges posed by road infrastructure maintenance across Edo State, just as he called for the cooperation and support of residents, contractors and the media in supporting ongoing efforts to improve the state's road network.

He highlighted that several projects, including Prince Jim Road, Prince Harrison Road, Iyoha Road, and Varsity Road and many others had been completed, while others are at various stages of completion.

The Permanent Secretary along side Ministry Engineers led journalists on a guided tour of some road projects in Benin City. Places visited included the Benin-Sapele Road, Old Sapele Road, Ramat Park flyover bridge and flood control on Obaseli Street among others.

Police probe Rivers boat mishap, casualty figure uncertain

BENIN CITY

The Rivers State Police Command has confirmed the loss of lives following a boat mishap reportedly linked to a confrontation between youths and men in military uniform over an oil spill in Kula, Akuku-Toru Local Government Area of the state.

The incident reportedly occurred on Tuesday evening as community members attempted to stop further operations by a contractor pending the remediation of the affected environment and compensation for the spill.

It was gathered that the dispute involved a businessman whose vessel was being used to execute a contract in the area.

The situation reportedly escalated when men in uniform arrived in gunboats and attempted to move the businessman's vessel.

Youths from the community allegedly challenged the move, questioning why the vessel was being relocated before their concerns about the pollution and compensation had been addressed.

During the confrontation, one of the gunboats reportedly struck a boat carrying the

youths, causing it to capsize.

A community leader and pioneer spokeswoman of the Pan Niger Delta Forum, Chief Anabs Sara-Igbe, confirmed the incident to our reporter in a telephone conversation on Tuesday night.

Sara-Igbe alleged that the arrival of the uniformed personnel worsened the situation and undermined earlier efforts to resolve the dispute peacefully.

The Niger Delta activist and elder statesman called on the police and other relevant security authorities to investigate the incident and establish the circumstances surrounding the

tragedy.

He stated, "The confrontation occurred amid attempts by residents to resist the alleged forceful re-entry to the site, during which a community boat capsized while trying to resist them. Ten people are feared dead.

"Now, from what I gathered, immediately after this happened (tragedy), the uniformed people ran away."

Providing an update on Wednesday morning, Sara-Igbe condemned the incident and said the community intended to take the victims' bodies to government and security offices.

NEWS

Ebola resurfaces in Nigeria as woman tests positive

KELECHI C. UGWUADU

ABUJA

Nigeria has reportedly recorded a new case of Ebola virus disease after a woman who recently returned from Uganda tested positive at Nizamiye Hospital in Abuja.

Sources familiar with the development disclosed that the infection was confirmed at the Turkish-run hospital

located outside Abuja's city centre.

The Federal Ministry of Health has reportedly mobilised financial and other resources to support efforts to contain the disease, including contact tracing and the identification of persons who may have had contact with the infected woman.

Ebola virus disease is a severe and potentially fatal illness that spreads through

direct contact with the blood or other bodily fluids of an infected person who is showing symptoms. Transmission may also occur through contact with contaminated materials.

Symptoms include fever, fatigue, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. In some cases, patients may develop vomiting, diarrhoea, rashes and internal or external bleeding.

Because the disease can initially resemble other illnesses,

prompt medical assessment and laboratory testing are essential when Ebola infection is suspected.

Nigeria previously experienced an Ebola outbreak in 2014 after an infected traveller arrived in Lagos from Liberia.

The outbreak triggered an emergency public health response involving the Federal Ministry of Health, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), the

Lagos State Government and international health partners.

According to a report by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Nigeria recorded 19 laboratory-confirmed Ebola cases and one probable case during the 2014 outbreak.

The report stated that 894 contacts were identified and monitored as health authorities intensified efforts to prevent further transmission. Eight deaths were recorded among the confirmed and probable cases.

The response involved the isolation of suspected cases, laboratory testing, contact tracing, monitoring of exposed individuals and coordination through an emergency operations centre.

The outbreak was eventually contained through early detection, effective contact trac-

ing and collaboration among health authorities and medical facilities.

Following the reported new case, members of the public have been urged to remain calm but vigilant, observe proper hand hygiene and avoid contact with the blood or other bodily fluids of suspected or confirmed cases.

The public is also advised to watch out for symptoms such as fever, severe weakness, headache, vomiting and diarrhoea, and seek prompt medical attention if such symptoms develop after possible exposure.

Health authorities are expected to provide further guidance as investigations and contact-tracing efforts continue. It also urged the ministries responsible for finance, budget and economic planning to provide adequate funding



CUSTOMER WEEK:

From left: Minister of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa (M); Minister of State for Education, Prof. Suwaiba Ahmad (L); Registrar of Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Prof. Segun Aina (R); and the overall best candidate for 2026 JAMB, Owuoye Daniella and Kingsley Ikenna, during the award of the recognition by the Minister of Education to celebrates JAMB 2026 Customer Week in Abuja on Wednesday.

Gombe confirms cholera outbreak, treats 74 patients

GOMBE

The Gombe State Government has declared a cholera outbreak in Kedo village, Todi Ward, Billiri Local Government Area, following reports of diarrhoea and vomiting that claimed two lives on October 4.

The Commissioner for Health, Prof. Adamu-Danladi Bojude, disclosed this during a media briefing in Gombe on Wednesday, adding that 74 patients had been treated and discharged, with no active admission recorded as of the time of the briefing.

Bojude said the state gov-

ernment immediately deployed a Rapid Response Team to support the local government health team in investigating the outbreak and providing free treatment to affected residents at the Primary Health Centre, Sheila.

"Since then, 74 persons were treated and discharged, and there is nobody currently on admission," the commissioner said.

He added that the state had recorded seven consecutive days without a new case as of October 21, expressing optimism that the outbreak would be declared over if no additional case was reported by October 24.

"Today, being October 21, is

day seven of zero cases reported. If by day 10, October 24, no case is reported, then this particular outbreak will be declared over," he said.

The commissioner explained that the state had strengthened its cholera prevention measures since 2023 through an annual prevention plan implemented by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) and other development partners.

According to him, the initiative covers more than 150 identified cholera hotspots across the state's 11 local government areas and has significantly reduced the occurrence of outbreaks.

"This has been largely very successful and has reduced the occurrence of cholera outbreaks in the state to the barest minimum. We still have some settlements that are not classified as hotspots where we may have cases," he said.

Bojude described preparedness as critical to containing disease outbreaks, noting that the state's response mechanism was designed to ensure prompt intervention and prevent further transmission.

"The good thing about being prepared is that we are always ready to respond on time and control such cases within the shortest possible time," he said.

Ebola: Reps demand immediate release of health emergency funds

ABUJA

The House of Representatives on Wednesday urged the Federal Government to strengthen preventive and emergency medical measures against the spread of Ebola Virus Disease in Nigeria, following the confirmation of a case in Abuja.

The House also called for the immediate release of outstanding appropriated funds to relevant health agencies to boost the country's preparedness and response capacity.

The resolutions followed the adoption of a motion of

urgent public importance sponsored by the member representing Isuikwato/Umunneochi Federal Constituency of Abia State, Amobi Ogah, during plenary on Wednesday.

Presenting the motion, Ogah described Ebola Virus Disease as a severe and potentially fatal infectious disease that requires prompt detection, effective infection prevention and control measures, and coordinated public health intervention to prevent transmission and save lives.

"It is extremely disturbing that yesterday, October 20,

2026 an Ebola Virus case was confirmed in a woman arriving from Uganda in Abuja who tested positive. Health authorities traced 44 contacts for isolation and further tests," he said.

The lawmaker warned that delays in detecting suspected cases, conducting laboratory investigations, isolating infected persons, tracing contacts and providing timely medical care could increase the risk of transmission and put additional pressure on the country's healthcare system.

He said the House was also concerned that inadequate

public awareness, shortages of infection prevention and control supplies, gaps in healthcare workers' preparedness and limited emergency response capacity could undermine efforts to contain the disease.

"The House is further concerned that inadequate public awareness, insufficient infection prevention and control supplies, gaps in healthcare workers' preparedness, and limited emergency response capacity could undermine efforts to prevent and contain the Ebola outbreak.

How I steal ATM users' PINs, defraud them – Suspect

CALABAR

A suspected fraudster has explained how he allegedly stole bank customers' PINs by pretending to help them operate automated teller machines in Calabar, Cross River State.

The suspect, whose identity was not disclosed in a statement by the Cross River State Police Command, said he targeted customers who needed assistance at ATM points, withheld their cards and observed them entering their PINs before leaving the premises.

The Cross River State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, ASP Sunday Eitokpah, disclosed this in a video uploaded to the command's Facebook page on Tuesday.

Eitokpah said the suspect was arrested on October 6, 2026, over alleged fraud involving unsuspecting ATM users.

Explaining the alleged method, the suspect said he approached customers who appeared to need help and exploited their willingness to trust him.

"I do go to the ATM machine to lie in wait for gullible customers who believe whatever I may tell them, and people that seek for help too," he said.

He added, "So, if you call for help or assistance from me, what I do is I put the ATM on the cardless transaction mode and withhold your card. You'll be thinking your card is inside, but your card is not inside."

According to the suspect, he watched as customers selected the transactions they

wanted to carry out and entered their PINs.

He said, "And you'll choose a transaction which you want to perform. It's either withdrawal or transfer or inquiry. By the time you click on any of them, ask you to put your password, to put your password, and confirm your password, I will leave the premises."

Eitokpah said the suspect allegedly memorised customers' PINs as they entered them, then left the ATM point with the information needed to carry out fraudulent transactions elsewhere. The customers would subsequently discover that their cards were missing and their accounts had been debited.

The police spokesman added that the suspect allegedly worked with a getaway driver who was still being sought by the command.

He said the divisional police officer responsible for the area had been tracking the suspect and had previously held meetings with bank managers to address reported fraudulent activities around ATM points.

The police urged members of the public to remain cautious when using ATMs and avoid handing their cards or PINs to strangers offering assistance. Oshiomhole said the Senate needed to establish what had been provided for aircraft maintenance.

Seconding the additional prayer, Senator Titus Zam, representing Benue North-West, said, "The inquiry should determine the amount allocated to the Air Force for maintenance and whether the funding was sufficient to prevent the incident."

NEWS**APC 2027: Yari gives campaign chiefs 72 hours to submit action plans**

By JOY ODOR, ABUJA

BENIN CITY

The Director-General of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council (PCC), Senator Abdul'aziz Yari, has given heads of campaign committees 72 hours to submit detailed action plans, warning that the council must move swiftly from planning to execution ahead of the 2027 presidential election.

Yari issued the directive on Tuesday in Abuja at the inaugural meeting of the PCC Executive Committee, stressing that the responsibility entrusted to members by President Bola Tinubu must be matched by concrete action, coordinated mobilisation and measurable results. He directed committee heads and secretaries to consult their teams, identify operational priorities and submit

proposals detailing how they intend to execute their assignments.

The submissions, he said, would be reviewed by the council's leadership to determine the support required for implementation.

"The engine room is here," Yari told members, underscoring the importance of

the committees in translating the party's political objectives into an organised campaign operation.

He urged officials to regard their appointments as a call to service rather than political recognition, insisting that each member must demonstrate commitment to the president's re-election project.

"This responsibility given to us by Mr President is on trust, and we have to do our best to ensure that this trust is demonstrated," he said.

Yari directed committee heads to return to their teams, convene meetings and begin preparing their work plans immediately, adding that the PCC secretariat would receive

and examine the submissions before forwarding them to the appropriate leadership.

He expressed confidence in the APC's electoral prospects, urging members to work collectively towards Tinubu's re-election, while acknowledging that the anticipated victory would depend on their commitment and performance.

Edo police arrest five suspected ucltists, recover gun in fresh crackdown

By MIKE OSAROIGBON

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Police Command has arrested five suspected cultists and recovered a firearm in two separate operations targeting criminal hideouts across the state.

The arrests came amid a renewed push against cult-related violence, following Governor Monday Okpebholo's October 12 warning that unrepentant cultists would face the full force of the law.

Briefing journalists in his office on Wednesday, October 21, the Commissioner of Police, CP Patrick Daor, said the arrests were made on October 2 and 17 following intelligence reports.

The operations took place before and after the governor's warning at a mass cultism renunciation ceremony organised by the state government

in Benin City.

P Daor said in the October 17 operation, operatives of the Command's Violent Crime Response Unit (VCRU) arrested four suspected cultists along Upper Siluko Road, Benin City.

he suspects were identified as Kevwe Kokori, 30, Omoregbe Iguma, 38, Gabriel Kokori, 32, and Emmanuel Friday, 39.

The police Chief in Edo added that the operation followed intelligence that some suspected cultists were planning to initiate new members into their group.

He stated further that one of the suspects, Kevwe Kokori, who claimed to be a member of a vigilante group, was initially intercepted and released.

However, he was alleged to have returned shortly afterwards with about 20 young men on motorcycles, armed with dangerous weapons, in an attempt to attack the operatives.

**SOLIDARITY VISIT:**

Edo State Deputy Governor Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa listening to Amayo Richard (centre) Team lead and Co-ordinator Staffs of Defunct College of Education Ekiadolor with is Ewaka Humble (Right) Deputy Co-ordinator, Staffs of Defunct College of Education Ekiadolor during a Solidarity and Thank you visit to Government House Benin

Oborevwoori pays condolence visit to Uduaghan's family

By AJUWA VICTOR

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwoori, has visited the family of former Governor Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, CON to offer his condolences, following the death of the former governor on Monday at the age of 71.

Oborevwoori, who was accompanied by his wife, Deaconess Tobore Oborevwoori, and top government functionaries, described the late Uduaghan as a great leader whose contributions to the development of Delta State would remain indelible.

The governor had earlier joined family members and other dignitaries, including Uduaghan's daughter, Orode, and former President of the Nigeria Football Federation, Amaju Pinnick, to receive the former governor's remains at Osubi Airport.

Speaking during the condolence visit to Uduaghan's widow, Mrs Roli Uduaghan and family members, Oborevwoori said the outpouring of grief and the large number of people who gathered to mourn the former governor reflected the impact he had made on many lives.

He recalled his relationship with the deceased, describing him as his former boss and a

man who played a significant role in his political journey.

"He was my boss. He gave me the highest political appointment, Special Adviser, in 2007. That is something that really touches my heart. You are all aware that he supported me throughout this journey," the governor said.

Oborevwoori described Uduaghan as a calm, articulate and thoughtful leader who made significant contributions to the development of the state.

According to him, the number of people who turned out to receive the late governor's remains and those who visited

his family was evidence of the lives he had touched through public service and political appointments.

The governor particularly commended Uduaghan for building the Asaba International Airport, noting that the Airport has become one of the deceased former Governor's legacies and an enduring asset to the state.

He said Uduaghan's decision to build development projects beyond narrow ethnic considerations demonstrated his commitment to the overall progress of Delta State.

Oborevwoori said his administration would continue to rec-

ognise and preserve worthy projects inherited from previous administrations.

He cited the ongoing modification of the Effurun Roundabout Flyover as examples of the need to sustain existing infrastructure while making improvements where necessary.

"He has gone, but he can never be forgotten by Deltans," Oborevwoori said.

Earlier, the governor had signed the condolence register, expressing sadness over former Governor Uduaghan's death and commiserated with the bereaved family and people of Delta State.

Uduaghan's death is a personal loss - Atshelege**OLOGBO**

As Nigerians mourn the passing of the former Governor of Delta State, Dr. Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, the Iyatsere of Warri Kingdom, High Chief Johnson Atshelege, JP, has expressed profound sorrow over his death, describing his passing as a personal and a painful loss to their family, Abiugbodo community, Warri Kingdom, Delta State and Nigeria at large.

Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, a prominent son of Abiugbodo community in Warri North Local Government Area of Delta State, hailed from the Iyatsere family, which is headed by High Chief Johnson Atshelege.

In a message, the revered traditional chief, High Chief Johnson Atshelege described the death of their son and former Governor, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan as a significant loss to the family and the wider community, noting that his demise had brought deep sad-

ness to the family ties, community heritage and public service.

"On behalf of the Iyatsere family, I express our heartfelt sorrow over the passing of our beloved son, His Excellency, Dr. Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan. His death is a painful loss to our family, Abiugbodo community, Warri Kingdom and Delta State. We receive this sad news with heavy hearts," the Iyatsere said.

High Chief Johnson Atshelege noted that although Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan's death had particularly left the family and Delta State in mourning, they could draw some consolation from the enduring legacy he built during his years in public service.

He particularly highlighted Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan's contributions to Delta State during his tenure as Commissioner for Health, Secretary to the State Government and, most notably, Governor of the state. According to High Chief Johnson Atshelege, these positions provided him with opportunities to contribute to the development of the state and serve its people.

Ekiadolor retirees pledge support for Okpebholo beyond 2027

By BERNADETTE IDALU

BENIN CITY

Retirees and former staff of the defunct College of Education, Ekiadolor, have pledged their support and solidarity for Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, while seeking inclusion in his 2027 campaign schedule.

The Edo State Deputy Governor, Hon. Dennis Idahosa, gave the assurance during a solidarity visit by members of the association to the Edo State Government House on

Wednesday.

Idahosa, who received the delegation on behalf of the state government, said Governor Okpebholo was willing to consider integrating the group into the 2027 campaign schedule.

He also assured the retirees of the government's readiness to pay the outstanding final tranche of emoluments owed to displaced former staff of the institution.

The deputy governor commended the group for its solidarity visit and said Okpebholo had responded promptly to

the plight of the affected workers by paying their entitlements in three tranches after their concerns were brought to his attention.

He assured the delegation that he would relay its proposal to the governor and provide feedback on the best way to incorporate its members into the campaign activities.

Earlier, the leader of the Defunct Staff and Pensioners of College of Education, Ekiadolor, Mr. Richard Amayo, expressed appreciation to Okpebholo for clearing, in three tranches, the backlog of outstanding payments owed to dismissed staff by the previous administration.

NEWS**FOREIGN****FREED US PRISONER STEPHEN HUBBARD**

US citizen Stephen Hubbard freed by Russia as Trump envoy meets Putin

Russia has released a 74-year-old American citizen who was jailed for allegedly fighting on behalf of Ukraine, as President Vladimir Putin met US envoy Steve Witkoff in St Petersburg for talks.

Stephen Hubbard has been taken to the city's Pulkovo Airport, Putin said during the meeting early on Wednesday.

President Donald Trump later said the former teacher was "on his way back home" and "there was no 'swap' necessary".

Hubbard was sentenced to almost seven years in a penal colony in 2024. He was accused of serving in a defence unit in Izyum, eastern Ukraine, when he was

captured by Russian forces shortly after Moscow's full-scale invasion in 2022.

Writing on social media after Russian state media reported the release, Trump said it had followed a request he "made directly" to Putin last week.

Some other releases of detained Americans from Russia have been obtained through prisoner swaps.

Trump also appeared to defend his recent decision to suspend sanctions on Russia two days before they were due to come into force, writing that "if sanctions would have been placed", negotiations for Hubbard's release "would have come to a complete and total halt".

The US state department

had previously classified Hubbard, from Michigan, as "wrongfully detained" and the US president had suggested on Tuesday that his release may be imminent.

"Watch what happens," Trump told reporters, "we have been focused on Hubbard".

CBS News, the BBC's US media partner, reported that Hubbard had been in poor health and was expected to be flown to Texas for treatment.

Witkoff praised Putin for releasing Hubbard: "You talk so much about my president, President Trump, being a humanitarian - you are a humanitarian also sir, and I salute that. I commend you."

Hubbard was later seen

thanking Witkoff as they met separately. Putin's financial adviser Kirill Dmitriev was also present.

Witkoff, who had attended talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Oslo the previous day, also asked Putin to consider a number of proposals agreed in the Norwegian capital, including renewing trilateral peace talks with Ukraine to try to end the war.

Putin has not publicly commented on whether any of the proposals would be acceptable for Moscow.

The Russian leader has so far rejected all proposals from Ukraine and its European allies to freeze the vast front line as it is and start peace talks.

Macron accuses foreign leaders of exploiting French riots

Macron accuses foreign leaders of exploiting French riots

French President Emmanuel Macron has accused foreign leaders of exploiting the riots which erupted across the country on Saturday for electoral purposes.

Without naming them, he said they were campaigning for forthcoming elections "at France's expense" with their comments on the violence, which erupted on the fringe of cost-of-living protests.

Speaking on a visit to the Middle East, he referred to them as "leaders who are in campaign mode, whether here in the region or on the other side of the Atlantic".

It was an apparent swipe at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces parliamentary elections next week, and US President Donald Trump, for whom mid-term polls fall next month.

Macron said the unnamed leaders had been influenced by fake videos generated by AI about the riots.

Nearly 150 people have been jailed and more than 800 brought before the courts since the riots which gripped Paris and other cities including Lyon, Marseille and Nice.

Video of running battles between masked rioters and police, as well as property being destroyed and stores being looted, spread across social media.

The government admitted the police had "lost control" during the violence, which came after weeks of protests by students over conditions in high schools.

Macron vowed afterwards that the authorities would be "uncompromising" towards "agitators from ultra-left fringe groups", which he blamed for much of the trouble.

Speaking in the Qatari capital Doha, the French president said: "For me, there is no visible foreign interference in the events that took place. On the other hand, there was foreign manipulation of information afterwards, yes, and that gave rise to unacceptable and stupid comments from many people, including foreign leaders..."

"We had people claiming that

we had been invaded by hordes of migrants and Islamists, which is completely false."

On Tuesday, Netanyahu said in an interview for Israel's i24 channel that France, which has Western Europe's largest Muslim minority, had been hit by an "invasion of extremist Islam".

He said he had told Macron after the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October 2023: "If we do not eliminate them here, you will have them in Paris." "That is exactly what is happening," he added.

Also on Tuesday, Trump blamed the riots on mass immigration to France.

"When I look at France, when you look at Italy, when you look at all the turmoil and the hatred, that's not about school," he said. "That's about people coming into the countries that hate the country."

Pakistan arrests man wanted by US over \$126m postage fraud case

Pakistan's cybercrime agency has arrested a man accused of running a counterfeit operation that caused \$126 million (£94m) in losses to the US Postal service.

Faheem Akram is accused of having sold fake stamps via a fraudulent website in the US since 2023.

He was indicted by a federal grand jury in Florida last month for selling more than five million counterfeit shipping labels to thousands of US customers over the years. Authorities have now shut down the website.

Earlier this month, the US Postal Inspection Service offered a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to his arrest.

According to the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida, the 33-year-old from Khanewal, Pakistan, operated Labels-Bank.com.

US prosecutors alleged that he sold counterfeit US postage

at a fixed rate regardless of a package's weight, size or destination.

The counterfeit labels, usually sold at \$2 each, allegedly allowed customers to ship packages at rates far below legitimate prices, resulting in substantial lost revenue and shipping costs to the Postal Service.

An investigation found that more than 5,200 individuals purchased more than 5.1 million counterfeit shipping labels, the office said in a press release.

Akram is charged with one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States and to make and sell counterfeit postage stamps, five counts of making and selling counterfeit postage stamp labels, and four counts of wire fraud.

If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison on the conspiracy and counterfeit postage counts, and 20 years in prison on each wire fraud count, the office said.

Family of prison officer killed by IRA receives state apology

The family of a senior Irish prison officer murdered by the IRA has received a state apology on Wednesday for failings in investigations into his killing.

Brian Stack, a father of three, was crossing a street in Dublin, after leaving a boxing match in 1983, when he was shot in the back of the neck.

Stack, who was the chief prison officer at the high-security Portlaoise Prison, was left paralysed and died 18 months later, aged 49.

There were three separate garda (Irish police) investigations into Stack's death, but no-one was brought to justice for his killing.

Taoiseach (Irish prime minister) Micheál Martin offered an apology on behalf of the state during a sitting of the Dáil (Irish parliament).

Stack's wife Sheila and her sons Austin, Kieran and Oliver were in the Dáil chamber for the apology.

Martin said the Provisional IRA is "still in the possession of all the facts" on this case.

Apology means 'an awful lot'

Speaking to BBC Radio Ulster's Good Morning Ulster programme Brian Stack's son, Austin Stack, said the apology "means an awful lot to us".

"It's a great sense of comfort, to particularly my mother and to myself and my two brothers, because the state is officially owning up to the

errors and the missions that happened," he said.

He went on to say that the serious crime review team looked into the first investigation and "they found 194 errors and omissions".

"So I have, and my family have, met with several ministers for justice down through the years and we have a requested sight of that report.

"And every time we've requested it, we've been told that it's an internally valid document and that we cannot see it."

Austin Stack said that Wednesday would be a very emotional day for his family.

"My dad was doing a very difficult job at a very difficult time in our history," he said.

"He was awarded the Irish Prison Service's highest bravery award for that work that he was doing. And this is further vindication of him and his good name."

Prior to the Dáil proceedings, the Stack family held a private meeting at government buildings with the taoiseach and Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan.

'Utterly unacceptable'

Taoiseach Micheál Martin formally apologised to the Stack family

In 2007 the Garda Commissioner directed a review of the case by the Garda Serious Crime Review Team. Over 200 recommendations were made relating to the cases.

FOREIGN

NEWS

Gambia to pay victims of Yahya Jammeh's rule from proceeds of his seized US mansion

The Gambia will use funds received from the forfeiture of long-time ruler Yahya Jammeh's property in the US to pay victims of his rule, authorities have said.

The Gambia's Reparations Commission said it received \$2.5m (£1.86m) from the sale of a mansion in Maryland owned by former leader of the West African nation.

The US had in 2022 secured the right to sell the property on grounds that it was acquired through "criminal proceeds and misappropriated Gambian public funds".

Jammeh ruled The Gambia for more than 20 years after taking over in a coup in 1994 - a time marked by allegations of human rights abuses forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings.

On Tuesday, the Gambia Reparations Commission said it was "pleased to inform victims, survivors and the public that it has received a total of \$2,573,414.10" from the sale of Jammeh's property.

It said it was committed to ensuring the funds were managed responsibly and transparently, "with due regard to the rights and needs of victims and survivors".

Jammeh lost to Adama Barrow in the election of 2016, first accepting defeat and then rejecting the results.

He eventually stepped down in 2017 amid intense regional and international pressure.

Troops from several West African nations, including Senegal, had been deployed to The Gambia, threatening to drive Jammeh out of office.

In the end he agreed to step down and went into exile Equatorial Guinea.

A national commission then discovered that the former president had 281 properties in The Gambia, as well as the one in the US and one in Morocco, and controlled more than 100 bank accounts.

There was no way that he could have afforded this on his salary and it concluded that he had misappropriated more than \$300m.

Jammeh is accused of presiding over the murder of political opponents, disappearances, rape and torture.

A commission of inquiry found that widespread abuses had resulted in the death of "240-250 Gambians and non-Gambians at the hands of the state or its agents".

Sudan army drones hit mourners and fuel market killing more than 300 people, sources say

A meth Bek Hospital in Abyei town has been treating people wounded in Monday's attack on the market. Sudan's army has been accused of launching several drone strikes that have reportedly killed more than 300 people, including dozens travelling to a funeral.

The death toll from strikes in two areas of West Kordofan state on Sunday evening was 150, sources told the Sudan War Observatory, which tracks the conflict that erupted in 2023 between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

In Abyei, a disputed border area between Sudan and South Sudan, 153 people were killed when drones hit a market on Monday, the region's information minister said.

A military source told the BBC the army had carried out the Abyei attack, saying the market was a fuel supply site for the RSF.

The attack has raised tensions between South Sudan and Sudan, which jointly administer Abyei, as they both claim ownership to the oil-rich region in a dispute that has remained unresolved since South Sudan ceded in 2011.

South Sudan has summoned Sudan's ambassador to lodge a formal protest. There are fears the conflict could spill across the border.

Drones hammer Sudan's gold and oil zone - the pivotal new front line

Despite a partial arms embargo on Sudan, foreign countries

have been supplying both the army and the RSF with drones and they are increasingly becoming the weapon of choice in the conflict.

The war has created one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, killed hundreds of thousands of people and forced more than 14 million from their homes.

"We are alarmed by the continued deadly drone strikes across the country that are killing civilians, including children, and that are disrupting essential services," UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said on Monday.

The rising use of armed drones came as 20 million people faced acute hunger, with a rising risk of famine in parts of the western region of Darfur and Greater Kordofan, he said.

Greater Kordofan comprises three states and is a vital axis linking Darfur, controlled by the RSF, to the capital, Khartoum, now in army hands.

The wave of drone attacks started on Sunday evening and, according to the Sudan War Observatory, it is likely they were launched from the army-held city of Kadugli in South Kordofan state.

A truck carrying around 200 mourners which had travelled from an area north of Abyei was hit as it arrived in the town of Al-Dabab in West Kordofan, the monitoring group said.

Sources told the group that 145 people were killed and a



People wave national flags during a rally to celebrate the 63rd anniversary of the October 14 revolution against British colonial rule, Aden, Yemen, Oct. 14, 2026.

Australian MP hit by car in alleged attack

Australian independent MP Helen Haines has had to have both her legs amputated after she was struck by a car outside her electorate office, in what Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said appeared to be "a deliberate act".

The incident in Wangaratta, north-east of Melbourne, happened on Monday afternoon local time.

Her alleged attacker, 43-year-old Brendan Nugent, was arrested shortly after the incident.

He has since appeared in court on three charges over the alleged attack.

What happened?

tent where mourners at the funeral had gathered was also hit, killing five others. A further 150 people were injured in the attacks, it said.

Army drones also bombed a market in the town of Al-Mujlad in West Kordofan on the same evening, according to the Sudan War Observatory, which said the exact number of deaths and injuries were not yet known.

Sudan's army has not responded to the allegation it carried out these strikes, but said it did not attack civilians even if they believed there were RSF fighters amongst them.

The attack in Abyei, which borders West Kordofan, took place on Monday around 11:30 local time (09:30 GMT) targeting Amiet Market around 10km (six miles) from Abyei town, the region's Information Minister Yohana Akol Ngor told Radio Tamazuj, which broadcasts from the Netherlands to audiences on the Sudan-South Sudan border.

Haines was struck by a White Toyota LandCruiser outside her electorate office on Monday.

A local barber Ricky Jefferies said he heard a loud commotion and ran towards the car, and multiple people "got involved immediately" to stop the alleged attacker.

Haines was airlifted to a Melbourne hospital where she underwent surgery.

Her husband told reporters on Wednesday that she had lost her left leg on Monday and despite hope that they could save her right leg, surgeons had to make the decision to amputate it on Wednesday.

Phil Haines added that her road to recovery would be "long and difficult".

But "her heart and her mind are in good shape", he said, adding that Haines would "do her best" to recover.

Who is the suspect?

Victoria Police arrested the driver of the car, Brendan Nugent, 43, shortly after the incident.

He was detained at the scene by a passer-by before being taken into custody by officers.

On Wednesday, Nugent

appeared at Wangaratta Magistrates Court to face three charges: dangerous driving causing serious injury, intentionally causing serious injury and causing harm to a Commonwealth public official.

Police said more charges may be laid, including attempted murder.

Court documents show he was also charged with cultivating and possessing cannabis.

Nugent, who lives in the nearby town of Tarravongee, did not apply for bail and is due back in court in February.

Nugent reportedly campaigned widely on environmental issues, including advocating against logging.

His family released a statement on Tuesday, saying that they were long-time friends of Haines and that the apparent attack was "devastating and unfathomable".

Police said investigations are still ongoing. "His motivation for this - what we allege is a deliberate attack - is very much a centrepiece of the investigation," said Victoria Police Commissioner Mike Bush.

Who is Helen Haines?

Haines is a 65-year-old inde-

pendent MP for the Indi division in Victoria, south-eastern Australia.

As a lawmaker, she has championed climate action and better working conditions for healthcare professionals. She was first elected to the Australian House of Representatives in 2019 and was re-elected in 2022 and 2025.

She grew up in the south-west of Victoria on a dairy farm with four brothers before training as a nurse and a midwife.

She became the matron of the Chiltern Bush Nursing Hospital in Victoria when she was 26, before later completing a master's degree in public health and a PhD in medical science while raising her three children and working, according to her website.

She lives with her family on a small cattle farm outside Wangaratta.

She also recently became a grandmother and would share photos of her baby grandchildren, according to fellow independent MP Zali Steggall, who sits next to Haines in federal parliament. Steggall described Haines as "deeply loved and respected".

Yemen: 75 new recruits killed in Houthi missile strike laid to rest

Yemen's military held a mass funeral on Wednesday for 75 new recruits killed in a Houthi missile strike.

The ceremony was held in a soccer field in south-central Shabwa province where Monday's attack took place.

The new recruits were lining up in formation for a training

session at the al-Alam camp when the strike occurred. Two hundred others were wounded.

Senior government and military officials attended the funeral as troops and security forces carried the coffins of the dead soldiers.

In a statement after the funeral, Shabwa's governor

pledged to increase efforts to defend the province. He also vowed to pursue those behind the strike and hold them accountable.

The recruits were all aged between 18 and 20. They were being trained to provide security in Shabwa and not for combat operations, the governor said.

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10 X 4	340,000	365,500	273,500	294,013	177,400	190,705	370,000	397,750	295,600	317,770
HALF PAGE	295,600	317,770	236,500	254,238	147,800	158,885	340,000	365,500	273,450	293,959
10 X 3	221,700	238,328	147,800	158,885	118,300	127,173	266,000	285,950	251,300	270,148
13 X2	206,900	222,418	133,000	142,925	103,500	111,263	221,800	238,435	147,810	158,896
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FP 5X2	81,100	87,183	97,300	104,598	5 X 2	51,950	55,846	42,120	45,279	
FP 4X2	73,000	78,475	80,700	86,753	4 X 2	45,260	48,655	34,400	36,980	
FP 3X2	64,870	69,735	73,000	78,475	3 X 2	30,900	33,218	26,600	28,595	
FP 2X2	59,000	63,425	64,900	69,768	2 X 2	18,680	20,081	15,600	16,770	
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Sports

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

Monrovia set for AWBL Zone 3 qualifying showdown

The race for two places in the final rounds of the African Women's Basketball League (AWBL) will take centre stage in Monrovia, Liberia as six clubs prepare to compete in the FIBA Africa Zone 3 qualifiers from November 2 to 9, 2026.

With the competition set for the Samuel Kanyon Doe (SKD) Indoor Gymnasium in Paynesville, the participating teams face a demanding week in which every result could prove decisive in their quest to reach the continental finals in Cairo, Egypt, scheduled for December 11-19.

Liberia will have two representatives in the contest, with

Flames Basketball Club, the domestic league runners-up, joined by reigning national champions D'Rockers Basketball Club. Both sides will be eager to make home advantage count against a competitive field.

Côte d'Ivoire's Friends of Basketball Association (FBA), the defending FIBA Africa Zone 3 champions, will arrive with a title to defend, while Benin Republic's Energie Basketball Club of Cotonou brings its experience from previous appearances in the competition.

Nigeria's Mountain of Fire Ministries (MFM) Basketball Club and First Bank Basketball Club complete the six-

team lineup, setting up another chapter in one of the country's notable domestic rivalries.

MFM heads to Liberia with bragging rights after edging First Bank 66-64 in the Zenith Bank Women's Basketball League final at the Indoor Sports Hall of the National Stadium.

The closely fought encounter, played before a packed arena, underlined how little separates the two Nigerian sides.

Their meeting in Monrovia could therefore carry added significance, as both clubs seek to translate their domestic form into continental success and secure passage to Cairo.

...As MFM, First Bank and four other clubs fight for two tickets



AFRICAN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Umerah supports Women's Hammer throw development with ₦500,000 Athletic heat boost

Nigerian international hammer thrower Kosi Umerah is taking her support for athletics beyond the competition arena, pledging ₦500,000 in prize money and offering technical guidance to female throwers ahead of the Athletic Heat 10th Anniversary Meet.

The Texas State University master's student-athlete is backing the women's hammer throw competition at the November 7 meet, scheduled for the Yaba College of Technology Sports Complex in Lagos.

The prize pool will be shared among the top four athletes, with the winner taking home ₦200,000. The runner-up will receive ₦150,000, while third and fourth place will earn ₦100,000 and ₦50,000, respectively.

The financial reward is only part of Umerah's plan.

The Nigerian thrower, whose personal best of 65.71 metres places her fourth on the country's all-time women's hammer throw list, is also offering individual video analysis to every female athlete entered in the event.

Through Instagram direct messages, she intends to provide feedback on throwing mechanics, recommend training drills and share coaching cues to help athletes improve their technique. Monthly sessions

are planned, with additional attention for those requiring more technical assistance.

The intervention for Umerah addresses a persistent challenge in her discipline, the struggle for visibility and investment.

"I'm supporting this meet because I truly believe, in my heart and soul, that women's hammer throw does not get the love it deserves, especially considering how much time and dedication we put into mastering this craft," she said.



ANDERSEN

2026/2027 BetPawa locker room bonus: NNL to train teams on onboarding process

The Nigeria National League (NNL) will train participating clubs on the onboarding process for the BetPawa Locker Room Bonus ahead of the 2026/2027 season.

The NNL said its partnership with gaming company, BetPawa, has been renewed and expressed delight to announce this to its 34 participating clubs.

The training, which will be held via zoom, is designed to guide clubs on the procedures, requirements and documentation needed to benefit from the BetPawa Locker Room Bonus.

Each of the 34 clubs is to forward the details of its Media

Manager/Officer or staff that will be responsible for the onboarding process to the NNL Secretariat or the Chairman, NNL Clubs Media Officers Association.

Chief Operating Officer of the NNL, Danlami Alanana, said that the essence of the



training is to ensure that all clubs understand the modalities for accessing the bonus and comply with the set guidelines.

According to him, the initiative is part of efforts to guarantee transparency and seamless implementation of the BetPawa sponsorship package for the new season.

Alanana urged all participating teams to take the workshop seriously, noting that proper onboarding is mandatory for clubs to qualify for the Locker Room Bonus.

Details of the date and venue for the training will be communicated to the clubs in due course.

Raheem advances to final as five Nigerian boxers reach championship finals

Nigeria's Ridwan Raheem has qualified for the final of the men's 65kg category at the ongoing African Elite Men's and Women's Boxing Championships in Nairobi, Kenya.

Raheem secured his place in the final after defeating Rwanda's Niyonzima Pacifique on points in their semi-final encounter.

The victory further boosted Nigeria's medal hopes at the continental championship, with Raheem becoming the

fifth Nigerian boxer to book a place in the final.

Nigeria's impressive performance in Nairobi reflects the country's determination to compete for honours across different weight categories in both the men's and women's divisions.

With five Nigerian boxers now through to the finals, attention will turn to their respective bouts as they aim to secure gold medals for the country.



RIDWAN RAHEEM

FIFA U17 Women's World Cup: Flamingos keep hopes alive with 2-0 win over Puerto Rico



FLAMINGOS

Nigeria's U-17 Women National Team, the Flamingos, kept their campaign at the ongoing FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Morocco on track with a hard-fought 2-0 victory over Puerto Rico in their Group B encounter on Tuesday night in Rabat.

The 2022 World Cup bronze-medallists started the game with real intent, pressing high and creating early problems for the Puerto Rican defence. It was a live-

ly opening from both sides, but the Flamingos soon took control with their quick movement and direct play going forward.

The breakthrough came in the 25th minute when in-form striker Oluwakemi Adegbuyi finished brilliantly from Queen Joseph's assist to put Nigeria 1-0 up. That goal settled the Nigerian girls and gave them the confidence to dominate possession for most of the first half.

In the second period, the Fla-

mingos continued to push for another goal. Queen Joseph, Tosin Rafiu and Favour Nkwocha all came close, while Puerto Rico also tried to find a way back into the game with a couple of changes. Coach Hakeem Busari responded by introducing Awawu Bashiru and Oluebube Umejiaku in the 67th minute to add more energy and bite in attack.

The pressure finally paid off in the 90th minute when Nigeria got the second goal as substitute

Precious Oscar nodded home a cross from Kemi Adegbuyi to seal the contest at 2-0. The team showed great maturity to see out six minutes of added time and secure all three points. The victory is a big boost for the Flamingos as North Korea defeated Poland 6-1 in the other match of Group B. The high-score deficit against the Poles is an advantage to the Flamingos ahead of Friday's Group B encounter against the Koreans.

SPORTS



CAFCL: MC Alger fans sell out 40,000 tickets ahead of Rangers clash

Tickets for the CAF Champions League second-leg encounter between MC Alger of Algeria and Nigeria's Rangers International have been sold out in less than one hour ahead of the highly anticipated fixture.

The match, scheduled to take place at the Ali La Pointe Stadium in Algiers, is expected to attract a capacity crowd of 40,000 passionate supporters, who will be cheering on the Algerian champions against their Nigerian coun-

terparts.

The overwhelming response from MC Alger supporters highlights the importance of the encounter, with the home fans expected to create an intimidating atmosphere as their team battles to overturn a two-goal deficit.

Rangers International secured a 2-0 victory in the first leg played in Nigeria, putting the Nigerian champions in a strong position ahead of the return fixture.

However, MC Alger will be

hoping to take advantage of their home support to overturn the deficit and secure qualification for the group stage of the prestigious continental competition.

With a place in the group stage at stake, Rangers must withstand the anticipated pressure from the Algerian supporters to protect their advantage and complete the job.

The winner over the two legs will advance to the group stage of the CAF Champions League.



RANGERS

CAF to review Rangers-MC Alger match incidents on Thursday

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) Disciplinary Committee will meet via video conference on Thursday to review incidents that occurred during the first-leg encounter between Rangers International and MC Alger in the second preliminary round of the CAF Champions League.

CAF has received video footage of the incidents, which will be examined by the committee during the meeting as part of its investigation into the match.

Both Rangers International of Nigeria and Algerian side MC Alger will be given the opportunity to respond to questions and present their

positions during the disciplinary proceedings.

The meeting is expected to help CAF assess the incidents and determine any necessary disciplinary measures in line with its regulations.

However, CAF has yet to announce any sanctions, as the matter remains under review.

Nigeria's Boxing resurgence shakes Nairobi as five fighters storm African championships finals with Gold medals in sight



NIGERIA'S BOXERS

Team Nigeria has staged a remarkable comeback at the African Elite Men's and Women's Boxing Championships 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya, with five Nigerian boxers securing places in the finals despite a difficult start to the continental competition.

After suffering five defeats earlier in the tournament, Nigeria's remaining fighters have demonstrated determination and resilience, keeping the

country's hopes of winning multiple gold medals alive.

Leading the resurgence is Ridwan Raheem, whose victory over Algeria's Ismail Bekhis in the men's welterweight (60-65kg) category provided a major confidence boost for the Nigerian contingent.

Before his encounter, Raheem had expressed his determination to deliver a convincing performance that would leave no room for controversial

judging decisions.

In the women's 54kg division, Ajishola Khadijat produced an impressive performance, defeating Kenya's Amina Martha by a commanding 5-0 unanimous decision to secure her place in the final.

Precious Anine also advanced following her semifinal encounter against Egypt's Ayyad Yomna in the women's 60-65kg category, strengthening Nigeria's medal prospects.

Similarly, Blessing Orakwe booked her place in the final after overcoming Uganda's Aiwine Diana in the women's 75-80kg division.

Completing Nigeria's five finalists is Patricia Mbata, who had already secured qualification for the championship's final stage.

The achievement represents an encouraging turnaround for Nigeria's 10-member contingent, which endured several disappointing results during the early stages of the championship.

Nigeria Boxing Federation board member and Head of Delegation, Capt. Rasulun Kashim, had earlier expressed confidence in the athletes, insisting that Nigerian boxers possessed the talent and determination to compete successfully against their continental counterparts.

With five finalists now confirmed by the Nigerian camp, attention shifts to the championship's gold medal contests.

For Team Nigeria, the mission is no longer simply about recovering from early setbacks but converting five final appearances into continental glory.

The stage is set in Nairobi, and Nigeria's boxing warriors have everything to fight for.

World Cup dream starts here: Nigeria's Yellow Greens open T20 campaign

Nigeria's Senior Men's Cricket National Team, the Yellow Greens, officially launched their campaign for the ICC T20 World Cup Sub-Regional Africa Qualifier today at the Nigeria Cricket Federation (NCF) Oval in Abuja. Head coach Steve Mangongo and team captain Sylvester Okpe lead the squad into battle as hosts, aiming to secure a path toward the global showpiece.

Alongside key player Daniel Ajekun, the Nigerian squad enters the tournament on home soil with high expectations. The team faces tough competition against regional rivals, including Gambia, Mozambique, and Zambia, in a bid to dom-

inate the sub-regional round.

Coach Steve Mangongo expressed confidence in the team's preparation, emphasising that playing in front of a home crowd provides a vital psychological advantage. With local talents like Okpe guiding the bowling attack and Ajekun anchoring the batting lineup, the Yellow Greens possess a strong mix of experience and momentum.

The tournament format requires Nigeria to finish among the top two teams to advance to the final Africa Regional Qualifier stage. Success on home turf in Abuja represents the crucial first step on the long pathway toward securing an unprecedented ICC T20 World Cup spot for the nation



NIGERIA'S YELLOW GREENS