

NCDC heightens vigilance over Kenya's imported Bundibugyo virus case

ABUJA

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) has heightened vigilance following Kenya's confirmation of an imported Bundibugyo Virus Disease (BVD) case linked to the

ongoing outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The Director-General of NCDC, Dr Jide Idris, said in a statement in Abuja, that the development underscored the risk of international disease importation through travel and population movement,

including the possibility of transmission into Nigeria.

According to him, Kenya's Ministry of Health confirmed that the case involved a Kenyan citizen living in the DRC, who travelled by road to Kampala, Uganda, before flying to Nairobi, where he was isolated and tested positive.

He said that the patient subsequently died, while Kenyan health authorities commenced contact tracing and other response measures to identify exposed persons and prevent further transmission of the virus within the country.

Idris said that as of Oct. 6, there was no confirmed

case of Ebola disease in Nigeria, while NCDC continued monitoring developments in Kenya, the DRC and other affected countries.

He said NCDC was reviewing Nigeria's risk assessment and existing preparedness measures following the Kenyan case,

with plans to strengthen interventions according to the evolving regional situation.

"Since the outbreak was reported in the DRC, NCDC, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Port

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That The People May Know

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2027: Defining year for Nigeria's growth, development — Gov. Okpebholo

RICHARD EWEKA

AUCHI

Edo State Governor Monday Okpebholo has said the 2027 general election would determine whether Nigeria consolidates its current growth and development path or returns to retrogression, urging citizens to take the poll seriously.

The governor stated this while addressing All Progressives Congress (APC) supporters during the party's mobilisation campaign for President Bola Tinubu's re-election in Akoko-Edo and Etsako West Local Government Areas of Edo State.

The governor, who visited Azane Model Primary

School in Ibillo and Igarra, the administrative headquarters of Akoko-Edo, also addressed party members at the Auchi Township Stadium and Azama Primary School, Ikpe-Uzuirue, in Etsako West.

"2027 is a defining year for Nigeria's growth and development. This is the year we are voting for our president, Senators, House of Representatives members and House of Assembly members to finish the good work our president commenced," Governor Okpebholo said.

He commended President Tinubu for removing fuel subsidy, describing it as a major step towards addressing economic challenges that had hindered Nigeria's

growth and development.

He said the reforms introduced by the Tinubu administration, particularly the fuel subsidy removal, would yield long-term benefits for the country, adding that Nigerians would begin to feel the impact of the reforms.

The governor also pledged that his administration would continue its infrastructure development programme to ensure that the three senatorial districts of Edo State benefited from

what he described as practical governance.

Responding to requests by residents of Akoko-Edo for the provision of a transformer and rehabilitation of the area's water board, Governor Okpebholo promised swift intervention.

"The step-down transformer you requested will be provided and it's a package we will deliver to make you know that I am a son of President Tinubu," he said.

He also directed that the appropriate ministry assess

the condition of the water board and recommend measures for its rehabilitation.

"I will inform the necessary ministry to visit this place and recommend to us what should be done to revive the water board here. We will do all to ensure that we resolve and find solutions to the water problem facing our people here," he said.

The governor further promised to rehabilitate a bridge linking Ibillo, which

he said had been badly damaged by flooding.

"When I was coming to Ibillo here, I saw the bridge leading to this place in a bad shape. The bridge is almost washed away by flood. I will get an expert to fix the bridge and make it motorable," Governor Okpebholo said.

Deputy Governor Dennis Idahosa commended the governor for what he de-

CONTINUES ON PG 2 >>

Edo Speaker assures of overwhelming APC victory in Akoko-Edo

AKOKO-EDO

The Speaker of the Edo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. (Prince) Yekini Idaiye, has assured the All Progressives Congress (APC) of an overwhelming victory in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area in the 2027 general election.

Idaiye gave the assurance at an APC rally in Ibillo, Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, where he declared that the council

would record the highest number of votes for the party in the state.

The Speaker, who represents Akoko-Edo I Constituency, said the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo had made significant interventions in the local government, particularly in the area of security, while also appointing several indigenes of Akoko-Edo to key positions in government.

CONTINUES ON PG 2 >>



MOBILISATION CAMPAIGN:

Former Governor of Edo State, Sen. Adams Oshiomhole (left) and the State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo (right) addressing All Progressives Congress faithful during the party's mobilisation campaign for President Bola Tinubu's re-election in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area on Tuesday.

'No hiding place' promise: Ibillo people say Gov. Okpebholo has delivered —Pg 2

16 days after wedding, NAF officer loses husband as father died 20 years ago —Pg 5

Trump to speak to Putin about plague lab worker's death in Russia —Pg 8

Stakeholder hails NSC over dissolution of Musa Oshodi-led Nigeria Judo —Pg 11

NEWS

'No hiding place' promise: Ibillo people say Gov. Okpebholo has delivered

AKOKO-EDO

The people of Ibillo in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State have commended the state governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, for

delivering on his campaign promise to rid Akoko-Edo of criminal elements.

They commendation came when the governor led members of his cabinet, chieftains, members and supporters of the All Pro-

gressives Congress (APC) to a rally in Akoko-Edo to canvass support for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's re-election.

Recalling his pledge during his governorship campaign that criminals would

have no hiding place in Akoko-Edo, the governor said his administration had flushed out those terrorising the communities.

To the governor's assertion, the crowd responded with a resounding "YES!"

The governor thanked them for being his witnesses.

At the APC rally, Governor Okpebholo also canvassed support for Senator Adams Oshiomhole and other APC candidates in Edo North.

Having declared that

those terrorising Akoko-Edo had been flushed out, the governor issued a stern warning to anyone contemplating a return to criminal activity.

"When we catch them, we will execute them at the roundabout," he said



CAMPAIGN RALLY:

A cross section of the All Progressives Congress (APC) loyalists during the party's mobilisation rally for President Tinubu's re-election in Auchi on Tuesday.



STAKEHOLDERS MEETING::

Dr. Kenneth Ihenseken, Esq, Commissioner for Special Duties & Inter Governmental Relations and Hon Martin Anayor Chukwu Oli, Commissioner for Inter Ethnic Relations during Inter MDAs and Intergovernmental Relation Stakeholders Meeting in Benin City on Wednesday.

Photo: Emmanuel Ijgbai

... overwhelming APC victory in Akoko-Edo

CONTINUED FROM PG 1 >>

According to him, the people of the area should reciprocate the Governor's efforts by voting massively for the APC and all its candidates in the forthcoming elections.

He urged the people to rally behind Governor Okpebholo and support the party's target of securing 2.5 million votes across Edo State.

Idaiye said the appointments of Akoko-Edo indigenes into prominent positions in the state gov-

ernment demonstrated the Governor's commitment to inclusiveness and recognition of the contributions of the people of the area.

He cited the appointment of Rt. Hon. Kabiru Adjoto as Chairman of the Local Government Service Commission, Architect Emmanuel Fashanu as Managing Director of the Edo State Public Buildings, and Barr. Bisi Idaomi as a Commissioner, among others.

The Speaker said: "I am standing here today as the Speaker of the Edo State

House of Assembly, to the glory of God and through the magnanimity of His Excellency.

"Rt. Hon. Kabiru Adjoto is seated here as the Executive Chairman, Local Government Service Commission; you have our brother here, Architect Emmanuel Fashanu, who is the MD of Edo State Public Buildings. We have two Commissioners, one seated here, Barr. Bisi Idaomi, and many others I cannot mention here. All this is due to the magnanimity of His Excellency."

He added: "The only way we can thank the Governor is to give the APC our votes. That is the only way we can appreciate him. I can assure His Excellency that the votes for APC from Akoko-Edo in January will be massive."

"All the leaders of Akoko-Edo are working to ensure massive victory for APC in the upcoming elections. I doubt if any local government will be able to challenge us. Your Excellency, we are going to prove it again."

... 2027: Defining year

scribed as efforts to restore security in Edo State.

Idahosa said the administration had tackled cult-related killings, kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities, adding that residents were beginning to experience improved security.

"Before you became the governor of Edo State, there was a lot of insecurity in the State. You came and began to tackle it and evidence shows you are winning the war against insecurity. Edo people are very happy for ensuring that peace returned to Edo State," he said.

Former Edo governor and Senator representing Edo North, Adams Oshiomhole also praised President Tinubu for what he described as courage, determination and commitment to implementing fundamental reforms in the country.

He said Nigeria needed continuity and urged APC members to mobilise support for Tinubu's re-election to enable him to complete his development agenda.

CONTINUED FROM PG 1 >>

The Edo APC Chairman, Mr Jarrett Tenebe, urged residents of Akoko-Edo and Etsako West to vote massively for Tinubu in the 2027 presidential election.

Tenebe said the state needed the votes to strengthen its demand for the creation of additional local government areas.

He said collaboration among the governor, senators, members of the House of Representatives and the Edo State House of Assembly would help make the demand for new local government areas a reality.

Tenebe also urged party members to work towards achieving the 2.5 million votes promised Tinubu by the Edo APC.

The APC mobilisation train has so far visited 11 of Edo State's 18 local government areas, including Oredo, Egor, Ikpoba-Okha, Orhionmwon, Ughunmwode, Ovia North-East, Ovia South-West, Owan East, Owan West, Akoko-Edo and Etsako West.

...NCDC heightens vigilance over virus

CONTINUED FROM PG 1 >>

Health Services, State Governments and partners have strengthened national Ebola preparedness measures.

"These measures include early detection, isolation and referral, laboratory diagnosis, infection prevention and control, contact tracing, risk communication and protection of healthcare workers across the country."

"NCDC also conducted a National Ebola Preparedness Tabletop Simulation exercise to test existing response arrangements, assess readiness and identify gaps requiring further attention by relevant authorities and partners," he said.

Idris urged Nigerians to remain calm but vigilant, practise regular hand hygiene, and avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids of anyone suspected of having Ebola disease.

He also advised the public to avoid contact with bodies of people who died from unknown illnesses, as well as sick or dead wild animals and raw or improperly prepared bushmeat.

The director-general

urged anyone who becomes unwell, particularly after travelling to an affected area or contacting a suspected case, to promptly seek care at a recognised health facility.

He also advised Nigerians to provide healthcare workers with accurate travel and exposure histories and rely on information from NCDC, the Federal Ministry of Health and other official sources.

Nigerian business news "Healthcare workers are advised to maintain a high index of suspicion among patients with compatible symptoms and relevant travel or exposure histories within the preceding 21 days."

He reminded healthcare workers that early Ebola symptoms may resemble common febrile illnesses and urged them not to wait for bleeding before considering the disease.

He reminded healthcare workers that early Ebola symptoms may resemble common febrile illnesses and urged them not to wait for bleeding before considering the disease.

NEWS

OSAHENIRO MIRACLE
OFUWENGBE

BENIN CITY

The Aiguobasin-mwin Movement Worldwide on Tuesday, warned former Niger Delta militant leader, Asari Dokubo, to steer clear of Edo State.

The warning was issued by the movement's President, Iyamu Osaro Culture, at a press conference in Benin City, Edo State, over what it described as provocative and derogatory comments about the Edo people, their heritage and the Benin traditional institution.

Iyamu said the movement decided to speak publicly because of what it described as

Edo group draws the line: 'Dokubo, steer clear of our land'

repeated remarks by Dokubo concerning the Edo Nation and the Benin monarchy.

According to him, the Edo people had remained peaceful and restrained despite the alleged provocations because of their commitment to decorum, but such restraint should not be mistaken for weakness or cowardice.

"We have imbibed the culture of decorum in the face of the incessant provocation of Asari Dokubo, who parades

himself as a traditional ruler, but whose ways, manners and public outbursts are far demeaning of that exalted position," Iyamu said.

The movement's president questioned Dokubo's continued interest in Edo affairs and rejected claims attributed to him concerning land ownership in the state.

He also condemned what he described as derogatory remarks allegedly directed at the Oba of Benin, saying the

monarch remains a revered institution central to the history, culture and identity of the Edo people.

Iyamu said the movement would not allow the names and legacies of respected Edo sons, families and institutions to be disparaged without a response.

He maintained that the group remained committed to peaceful coexistence, respect for constituted authorities and the rule of law, while insisting that Edo's cultural heritage and traditional institution must be respected.

On the controversy sur-

rounding Pipeline Infrastructure Nigeria Limited (PINL), Iyamu clarified that the movement was not acting as a spokesperson for the company.

He, however, said the company's corporate social responsibility activities could be independently verified, citing reported outreach programmes and interventions in indigent communities.

Iyamu also defended Osahon Okunbo, whom he identified as the son of the late Captain Hosa Okunbo, against what he described as attempts to tarnish the family's reputation and legacy.

He further questioned claims attributed to Dokubo regarding PINL's alleged annual earnings, insisting that such claims should be subjected to proper scrutiny and supported by verifiable facts.

The warning comes amid wider controversy over Doku-

bo's recent comments on pipeline surveillance contracts and payments in the Niger Delta.

AT national publication, not the Nigerian Observer, reported that Dokubo alleged that Osahon Idahosa and the Olu of Warri, Ogiame Atuwatse III, receive about N2.7 trillion annually from the Federal Government for pipeline protection, but noted that no supporting documentation was publicly presented with the allegation.

Iyamu urged Dokubo to respect the Edo people, their heritage and the Benin traditional institution and refrain from further comments capable of creating tension.

Reaffirming the movement's position at the October 6 press conference, he said, "That we have been calm does not make us cowards," before declaring:

Cult clash claims 5 in Bayelsa, police boss reads riot act

PHILIP JEREMIAH EKE.

YENAGOA

Five persons are feared killed following renewed clashes between rival cult groups in Yenagoa as Police Commissioner orders a crack-down.

The inter-cult clash, which re-started on Friday, allegedly involved members of the Bobos and Greenlanders cult groups.

The clashes were recorded in Agudama, Obele and Back of St. Peters areas of Yenagoa.

The renewed clash is a breach of a peace accord brokered among cult groups by former leadership of the Police Command in Bayelsa.

Residents said the development could also undermine an existing understanding between members of the Bobos and Greenlanders groups.

One source said the first reported killing occurred in Agudama, where a youth was allegedly attacked and beheaded.

Another cult member was reportedly shot in the buttocks but was rescued by a neighbour, leaving him in critical

condition.

However, residents said the Bobos and Greenlanders had remained rivals despite previous efforts to broker peace among cult groups.

Checks around Imgbi Road, Ovom and Obele, identified as cult activity hotspots, showed a noticeable absence of youths suspected to be involved in cult activities.

Our Correspondent who monitored the situation observed that some of the youths had reportedly gone into hiding amid fears of police arrest or attacks by rival groups.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police, Ajao Adewale, had ordered intensified operations against cultism and cult-related violence across Bayelsa.

A statement on Tuesday by the Police said the CP directed Divisional Police Officers and tactical commanders to increase patrols in vulnerable areas.

He also ordered them to identify emerging threats and act promptly on credible intelligence about planned clashes, initiation ceremonies and recruitment.

Tinubu assures manufacturers of NIP implementation

LAGOS

President Bola Tinubu has assured manufacturers of the Federal Government's commitment to the Nigeria Industrial Policy (NIP).

Tinubu said the policy had a delivery mechanism to drive measurable improvements in the country's industrial sector.

He gave the assurance at the sixth Adeola Odutola Lecture and 54th Annual General Meeting of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) on Tuesday in Lagos.

He was represented by the Minister of State for Industry, Sen. John Enoh, at the event with the theme: "Leveraging National Industrial Policy to Position Nigeria as Africa's Industrial Hub."

The President said NIP implementation would be measured by factories reopening, increased capacity utilisation, jobs created, exports shipped and new factories established.

He also directed the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, through the Industrial Revolution Working Group (IRWG), to hold quarterly delivery dialogues with MAN.



MOU:

L-R: Managing Director, , News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Malam Ali M Ali (R), with the Chief Executive Officer, Green Luner Nigeria Ltd (GLNL), Mr Olaniyi Odiria, during the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between NAN and GLNL on Digitalisation as Platform to Revolution to Promote Classified Adverts, in Abuja on Wednesday.

PHOTO: NAN

IHRC faults high drug prices in public hospitals, demands probe

OSEMUDIAMHEN O. FAITH

ABUJA

The International Human Rights Commission - Relief Fund Trust (IHRC-RFT), Nigeria Chapter, has decried the high cost of medicines and medical consumables in some government-owned hospitals across the country.

The Commission said poor Nigerians are unable to afford essential drugs, with some allegedly losing their lives for inability to pay.

Country Director, IHRC-RFT Nigeria Chapter, Amb. Abdullahi Bakoji Adamu, in a statement yesterday, said government hospitals should provide free healthcare where policy provides for it and affordable services for vulnerable citizens.

According to him, a preliminary investigation at Imam Wali General Hospital, Kano, showed that a cannula was sold for about N300 as against N100 outside the hospital, a blood bag for about N2,000 compared to N1,700 in pri-

...Commission alleges poor Nigerians pay more than pharmacy rates

vate pharmacies, and N4,000 charged for blood screening.

He said the figures are subject to official verification.

Adamu cited Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees the right to medical care, and Section 17(3)(d) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)

which mandates the State to provide adequate medical and health facilities for all persons.

He called on the Federal Government, the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, state governors and commissioners for health to investigate pricing of drugs and consumables in public

hospitals.

The Commission said it will extend its investigation to other federal and state hospitals nationwide and submit its findings to relevant authorities.

"Free or affordable healthcare for the poor is not a luxury, it is a public responsibility," Adamu said.

2027: Idele emerges APC Women Presidential Campaign Council D-G

MIKE OSAROGIAGBON

ABUJA

Dr Mary Idele, the National Women Leader of the All Progressives Congress (APC), has been appointed Director-General of the APC Women Presidential Campaign Council for the 2027 general elections.

The First Lady of Nigeria, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu, announced this during the pre-inauguration of the Women Mobilisation Directorate in Abuja.

Idele, who disclosed this

while speaking with newsmen in Abuja, said the appointment had placed her at the forefront of the party's women mobilisation efforts as the APC prepares for the 2027 presidential election and seeks to secure the re-election of President Bola Tinubu.

"As director-general, I am expected to coordinate and provide strategic direction for the APC's women-focused campaign structures across the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

"I will also lead efforts to mobilise women voters and party members at the grassroots, strengthen women's participation in the campaign. "I will communicate the administration's policies, programmes and achievements to women across the country."

Idele said the Women Presidential Campaign Council under her leadership would engage women's groups, market associations, professional bodies, community organisations and other grassroots networks in support of Tinubu's re-election bid.

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NEWS FEATURE

16 days after wedding, NAF officer loses husband as father Died 20 years ago

...How Igbokoda crash widowed daughter of 2006 Benue air crash victim

OSEMUDIAMHEN O. FAITH

Some losses do not fade with time; they return.

In 2006, a young girl lost her father when a Nigerian Air Force plane went down in Benue State. Twenty years later, that same girl — now a woman and a military officer — has lost her husband in another Air Force crash.

She is Flight Lieutenant Damilola E. Adekunle.

Her father, Wing Commander E. O. Adekunle, was the co-pilot of the NAF Dornier 228 aircraft that crashed on September 17, 2006, at Oko, Vandeikya, while conveying senior Army officers to Obudu for a presidential retreat. Thirteen officers died.

Her husband, Squadron Leader Ahamfule Aham Man-Ugwueje, was the co-pilot of NAF 931, the ATR-42 aircraft that crashed on October 5, 2026, in a swampy area near Igbokoda, Ondo State, while on a routine flight from Benin to Lagos. The NAF confirmed all 25 persons on board died.

They had been married for just 16 days.

They had been married for just 16 days.

Damilola and Ahamfule had wedded on September 19, 2026, at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, The Master's Place, Utako, Abuja. Their reception was

at the Nigerian Army Conference Centre, Asokoro.

He was the son of a retired Group Captain. She is the daughter of a late Wing Commander. Their union was a union of two Air Force families.

Today, that union tells a story of sacrifice that spans two generations.

Squadron Leader Man-Ugwueje, an Abia-born officer from Umuahia, was winged as a pilot in April 2018 and rose to become a seasoned co-pilot in the 81 Air Maritime Group, Benin.

His wedding photos, which surfaced online after the crash, show a smiling officer in full military regalia beside his bride — also in uniform.

Two weeks later, he was gone. The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Kelvin Aneke, described the crash as a deeply painful moment for the Force.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has ordered a full investigation and declared three days of national mourning.

For the Nigerian Air Force, it is a loss of 25 personnel.

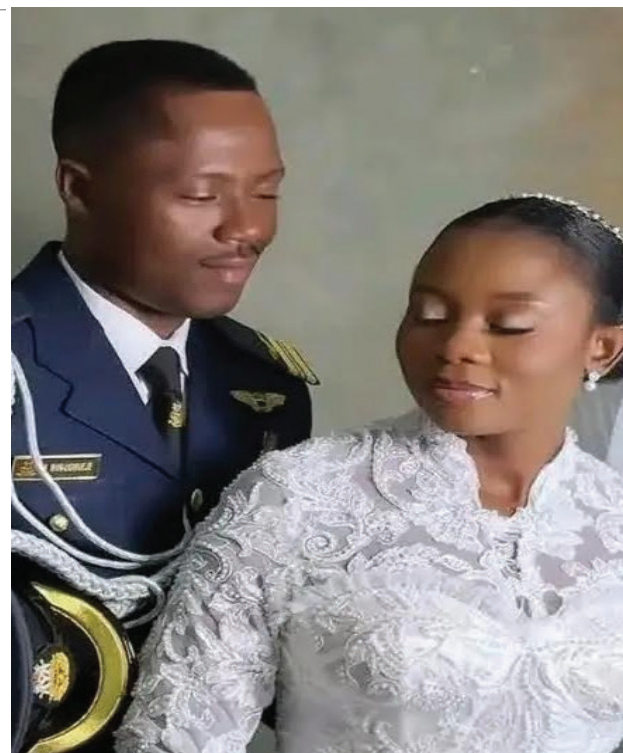
For Flight Lieutenant Damilola Adekunle, it is a history that has repeated itself — in the same uniform, in the same circumstance, 20 years apart.



Flight Lieutenant Demolola Adekunle And Her Late Husband Squadron Leader Ahamfule Aham Man Ugueje During Their Wedding Reception



NAF DORNIER 228 AIRCRAFT THAT CRASHED ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2006, VANDEIKYA, BENUE STATE



Tinubu mourns NADECO chieftain Ralph Obioha

OSOGBO

President Bola Tinubu has mourned the death of a former lawmaker, businessman, statesman and prominent figure in Nigeria's pro-democracy struggle, Chief Ralph Obioha.

Tinubu, in a condolence message issued on Wednesday by his Special Adviser on In-

formation and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, described Obioha as a patriot who made significant sacrifices for the restoration of democracy in Nigeria.

The President extended his condolences to Obioha's family, community, the people of Abia State, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, members of the National Democratic Coalition and Nigerians mourning the deceased.

Tinubu said Obioha belonged to a generation of Nigerians who responded to the call of duty during some of the most difficult periods in the country's history.

"As a founding member and prominent leader of NADECO, Chief Obioha stood firmly on the side of democratic governance during the struggle for the restoration of democracy

following the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election," the President said.

He noted that Obioha's commitment to the pro-democracy struggle came at considerable personal cost, but that he remained committed to his convictions despite the pressures of the period.

"Despite the challenges and pressures of those difficult

years, he remained steadfast in his belief that Nigeria's destiny was inseparable from democracy, justice, constitutionalism and the right of the Nigerian people to choose their leaders," Tinubu said.

The President said the contributions of Nigerians who stood firm during difficult periods in the country's history must continue to be remembered.

"Chief Ralph Obioha was a courageous Nigerian who made sacrifices for democracy and remained committed to the ideals of a better Nigeria.

"His generation faced extraordinary challenges, and he played his part in defending the principles he believed would strengthen our democracy and our nation," he added.

Tinubu described Obioha's

death as a loss to his family, community and the country, saying he would be remembered for his courage, convictions and service to Nigeria.

"His passing is a loss to his family, his community and the nation. We shall remember him for his courage, his convictions, his service and his belief in Nigeria," the President stated.

He prayed for comfort for the deceased's family and eternal rest for his soul.

"On behalf of the Federal Government and the people of Nigeria, I extend my deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. I pray that Almighty God grants them comfort and gives eternal rest to the soul of Chief Ralph Obioha," Tinubu said.



CELEBRATION:

From left: Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor of Lagos state, Mr Sam Egube; Special Adviser to the Governor on Urban Development and GIS, Dr Olajide Babatunde; Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State; Permanent Secretary, Lands Bureau, Mr Kamar Olowosago and Special Adviser on Works, Dr Adekunle Olayinka, during the GIS Day celebration in Lagos on Tuesday

Adeleke summons security chiefs over Osun cult killings

OSOGBO

Osun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, has summoned heads of security agencies in the state to a meeting following a spike in security breaches, particularly recent killings involving rival cult groups in the state.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Security Matters, Samuel Ojo, disclosed this during an exclusive interview with our correspondent.

Ojo said the meeting would deliberate on and address the killings by suspected cultists in the state.

He added that the meeting would also discuss measures to make forests in the state safer, in view of the recent

killings of an ISWAP leader in Owo, Ondo State.

"We are holding a security meeting on Wednesday, by the special grace of God, to reassure our people and put our security agencies on their toes.

"What happened in Ondo is a lesson to those criminals hibernating in the forests.

We will not take it lightly

with anyone using the forest as a hideout," he said.

He further said, "Aside from that, we are also using the meeting to address the incessant killings by rival cult groups in the past weeks.

"We need to meet and discuss how to stop these killings by cult groups or any other violent crimes hiding under that canopy."

PH Refinery workers threaten shutdown over seven months' unpaid salaries

PORT HARCOURT

Support Staff Union members of the PHRC on Monday displayed placards with various inscriptions and mounted tents in front of the refinery gate, temporarily disrupting activities at the complex.

The protesting workers, had barricaded the entrance of the PHRC on Monday and displayed placards with various inscriptions and mounted tents in front of the refinery gate, temporarily disrupting activities at the complex.

They alleged that after the NNPC GCEO gave the approval, the Refinery Coordinator had refused to implement it.

The aggrieved union members said the peaceful protest was against what they described as injustice and marginalisation at the refinery, and listed four key demands.

The demands include the implementation of the approved salary structure and

remuneration package in accordance with the applicable approval and effective date; approval of the requested N1m housing/rent relief to alleviate accommodation challenges facing eligible support staff; urgent payment of their seven months' outstanding salaries and other legitimate entitlements owed to affected workers; and improved consultation and effective engagement among the Refinery Coordinator, managing directors, relevant management authorities and recognised labour representatives on matters affecting workers' welfare.

Some of the inscriptions on their placards read: "No

more empty promises, January 2027 is too far to implement new salary structure," "Refinery Coordinator must go," and "Approved by GCEO on 1st October, rejected by RC (Refinery Coordinator), Support Staff demands that RC must go."

Other placards read: "Workers deserve dignity: Fair pay is our right" and "Stop the delay, no more postponement."

Speaking to newsmen during the protest, the Chairman of the PHRC Support Staff Union, Bennett Isy, said the new salary structure was supposed to take effect on October 1, 2026, but that nothing had been done.

Collect your PVC before 2027 elections, Makinde urges Nigerians

IBADAN

Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde, has urged Nigerians to collect their Permanent Voter Cards ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Makinde made the call in a video shared on his social media accounts on Tuesday, where he displayed his PVC while urging citizens to collect theirs ahead of the polls.

In a statement accompanying the video, the governor said the Independent National Electoral Commission had confirmed that PVC collection would commence on October 9, 2026.

"INEC has confirmed that Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) collection commences on 9 October 2026. Please get your PVC so that you can participate in the 2027 election," he said.

In the video, Makinde said the PVC represented the power of citizens to participate in

choosing their leaders.

"Fellow Nigerians, INEC has set December 12th as the date for people to start collecting their Permanent Voter Card.

"This is your power. Irrespective of who you want to vote for, let's go out, collect your PVC, and you will use it wisely," he said.

Makinde urged Nigerians to participate in the electoral process regardless of the candidates they intended to support.

The governor is contesting the 2027 presidential election on the platform of the Allied Peoples Movement.

He emerged as the party's presidential candidate in May 2026 and has since commenced activities towards his presidential campaign.

On Tuesday, his campaign organisation inaugurated its National Campaign Management Committee in Abuja, with the campaign targeting between 41 million and 68 million votes in the 2027 election.

Murder suspect dies after collapsing in Bayelsa court

YENAGOA

A 50-year-old murder suspect, Bethlehem Nwanlia, has died after reportedly collapsing shortly after his appearance before the Bayelsa State High Court in Yenagoa on Tuesday.

Nwanlia was standing trial alongside two other defendants over allegations bordering on conspiracy, kidnapping and the murder of three persons in Kalaba community, Yenagoa Local Government Area of the state.

The incident occurred at Court 11 shortly after Justice Amadise Michael Ekadi adjourned judgment in the matter to October 27, 2026.

Nwanlia was said to have

suddenly complained of chest pain before collapsing in the court's holding area.

Correctional officers, police personnel and lawyers reportedly rushed to his aid and attempted to revive him before medical personnel were called to the scene.

He was subsequently taken to a hospital, where he was confirmed dead, while his remains were later deposited at the mortuary of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa.

Confirming the incident, the Public Relations Officer of the Bayelsa State Judiciary, Mr Enoch Okunobo, said the deceased had been a regular attendee at the court in connection with the criminal case.

President of the Senate, SenWorld Bank selects Ebonyi to kick off Q2 malnutrition control projects, in Nigeria

Maxwell Okechukwu

ABAKALIKI

The World Bank has selected Ebonyi State as one of the states in the South East Region to kick off its project plans to reduce challenge of malnutrition affecting pregnant women and children in Nigeria.

Speaking with Newsmen

shortly after a meeting with officials from the World Bank and other stakeholders in the health and agriculture sectors at the Old Government House in Abakaliki, the Commissioner for health Dr. Moses Ekuma said, discourse centred on practical approaches at reducing malnutrition among pregnant women and children in Nigeria.

Besides the World Bank team, delegates were also drawn from the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, the Federal Ministries of Health, Budget and that of Agriculture.

Dr. Ekuma explain that even before the kick-off the project, the state Governor. Rt. Hon Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru has already shown

commitments in the areas of procuring additional malnutrition supplements worth over N100m, in addition to gotten support from the Unicef and other donor agencies which also had supported the state with a hundred carton of malnutrition supplements.

In the area of agriculture, he said "the governor has also

invested so much in reviving the Ebonyi state Hatchery Farm that had remained moribond and abandoned by past administrations.

He said that eggs consumption was another major source of protein for the healthy of people especially pregnant women in the state, adding that the live stock farm at Ezzamgbo in

Ohaukwu local government Council had received similar attention.

The Commissioner also commended the governor for providing the Ministry of Health with the required funds that had enabled it built needed capacity to attract donor agencies, NGOs support to growing the State health-wise.



VISIT:

From left; Director-General, National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Mr Sola Obadimu; Executive Secretary, Nigeria South Africa Chamber of Commerce (NSACC), lyke Ejimofor; Chairman, Nigeria South Africa Chamber of Commerce; Dr Ije Jidenma; President of NACCIMA; Dr Janice Ibrahim; Deputy National President, Asiwaju, Dr Olawale Cole, and others, during a visit to the Association Office in Lagos on Wednesday

2027: Bayelsa PDP begins grassroots campaign November 23

YENAGOA

The Peoples Democratic Party in Bayelsa State has unveiled plans to take its 2027 election campaign to the grassroots, with mobilisation activities expected to cover all 105 wards across the state.

The party, in its campaign timetable released on Wednesday and made available to Journalists, said its LGA-to-LGA campaign tour would commence on November 23, fol-

lowing the inauguration of its State Campaign Council and senatorial district campaign flag-offs.

The timetable signed by the State Publicity Secretary, Ikaebimo Mark, showed that the party would begin its pre-campaign activities with meetings of the State Working Committee, Expanded State Caucus and State Executive Committee from October 26 to 28.

The party will also hold a three-day fasting, prayer and Solemn Assembly from No-

vember 5 to 7, followed by a dedication and thanksgiving service on November 8.

"The State Campaign Council will be inaugurated on November 9, while senatorial district campaign flag-offs are scheduled for November 17, 19 and 21.

"The PDP campaign programme was structured to enable candidates to reach voters at the grassroots, engage communities and explain their policies and programmes.

"The campaign would be

based on issues affecting the people, including development priorities and the welfare of citizens, rather than personal attacks or inflammatory rhetoric.

"The party, led in the state by High Chief (Hon.) Alabh George Turnah, MON, Esq., also pledged that its campaign activities would be conducted peacefully and in accordance with the law.

"We urged candidates, supporters and campaign officials to show discipline and tolerance while respecting other political parties and participants in the electoral process.

Group seeks support to empower blind persons through skills

LAGOS

The Federal Nigeria Society for the Blind has called for support for visually impaired persons as it prepares to host an Independence Ball and fundraising event.

The event is scheduled for Friday, October 9, at the Shell Zenith Hall, MUSON Centre, Onikan, Lagos.

The body, in a statement obtained on Wednesday, said funds raised at the programme would support the rehabilita-

tion and training of visually impaired adolescents and adults, including free tuition, accommodation, feeding, and training materials.

It also noted that the funds would support vocational courses such as computer literacy, Braille reading, mobility training, crafts and music, designed to equip visually impaired persons with skills to secure employment or establish businesses.

The Chairman of the Executive Council of the FNSB, Arit Tunde-Imoyo, who signed the

statement, explained that the organisation had remained committed to empowering visually impaired persons through rehabilitation, education and skills acquisition for over seven decades.

Tunde-Imoyo said the organisation, established in 1955, had provided rehabilitation and training for hundreds of men and women with visual disabilities, enabling them to live with dignity and greater independence.

"Over the last seven decades, FNSB has remained committed to the mission of empowering visually impaired adolescents and adults through rehabilita-

tion, education and skills acquisition.

"From its inception in 1955 to the present day, the centre has been a beacon of hope for hundreds of men and women who, despite visual disabilities, now live with dignity and independence," she disclosed.

She added that the centre had, in recent years, expanded its vocational programmes and strengthened its social reintegration initiatives to respond to the changing needs of visually impaired persons.

According to her, the organisation is also continuing to promote inclusivity in education and employment.

Delta warns taxpayers against fake tax notices, fraudulent revenue collectors

ASABA

The Delta State Internal Revenue Service has warned taxpayers against paying money to individuals issuing fake tax demand notices and collecting revenue illegally in the name of the state government.

The Chairman of the service, Solomon Ighrakpata, raised the alarm in a statement, saying the activities of the fraudsters could cause revenue leakages and financial losses to taxpayers.

Ighrakpata said the DSIRS had not authorised any individual or agent to issue tax demand notices or collect taxes outside its approved channels.

"The DSIRS wishes to categorically state that it has not authorised any individual or unauthorised agent to issue tax demand notices or collect taxes on its behalf outside established and approved channels," he said.

He urged taxpayers and

businesses to verify the authenticity of any demand notice, tax assessment or payment request before making payments.

The chairman advised members of the public to use only officially approved government payment channels and report suspicious tax demands or persons claiming to be DSIRS officials.

Ighrakpata said the service was working with law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute those involved in fake tax notices, impersonation and fraudulent revenue collection.

He warned that such activities could undermine confidence in the state's tax system and divert funds meant for government projects and public services.

He assured taxpayers that the DSIRS would continue to protect the integrity of the state's revenue collection system and promote transparent and accountable tax administration.

NSCDC operatives arrest vandal, recover electricity cables in Kano

KANO

Operatives of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Danbatta Division, Kano State, have arrested a suspected vandal and recovered four bags filled with aluminium electricity conductor cables in Danbatta town.

This is contained in a statement issued by the Public Relations Officer of the Kano State Command of the NSCDC, Ibrahim Abdullahi on Wednesday.

According to the statement, the suspect, Jamilu Inusa, of Kauyen Mudu village, Danbatta Local Government Area, was apprehended on Friday, October 2, 2026, while the operatives were on patrol.

"The operatives of the NSCDC Danbatta Division, while on patrol duty around 0415hrs on Friday, 02/10/2026, and acting on credible intelligence, apprehended a suspected vandal, identified as Jamilu Inusa, 20 years old, of Kauyen

Mudu, Danbatta Local Government Area of Kano State.

"The suspect was intercepted in possession of a white Volkswagen Golf Wagon with registration number KMC 656 ZJ.

"Following further investigation and a search operation, our operatives recovered four bags filled with aluminium electricity conductor cables, which had been concealed in a compound within Danbatta. The vehicle was used to convey the vandalised items by the suspect in our custody," the statement said.

It said the recovered conductors were bare-stranded aluminium wires, ACSR/AAC type, commonly used for overhead 33KV, 11KV and low-voltage electricity distribution lines.

The NSCDC described the vandalism and theft of critical national assets, particularly electricity infrastructure, as a serious threat to public safety and socio-economic development.

NEWS

FOREIGN



PROTEST:

Hundreds of thousands of protesters took to the streets across France on Tuesday, including in the capital Paris

US death row inmate Christa Pike awake and speaking after failed execution, lawyers say

US death row inmate Christa Pike is "conscious and speaking" after surviving a failed execution attempt in Tennessee last week, her lawyers say.

Pike, 50, continues to receive critical medical care while "handcuffed and shackled to the bed" in hospital, her lawyers said in a statement on Tuesday.

Pike, who was sentenced to death after murdering Colleen Slemmer with her then-boyfriend in 1995, survived two failed lethal injections last Wednesday in Tennessee.

She was taken to hospital, where she remained unconscious for days as medical staff cleared her body of the injected chemical. Experts and her legal team say her apparent recovery is unprecedented.

Pike is believed to be the only person to survive a lethal injection.

Her lawyers said her prognosis remained unclear, but that "at

a minimum, we expect a long recovery".

Deborah Denno, a criminologist and professor at Fordham Law School, said she was "absolutely astonished" that Pike was conscious and speaking.

There had been seven other cases where prisoners survived executions but in those cases, executioners were not able to inject anything into the inmates' veins, Denno told the BBC.

Pike "is the only person for whom some kind of toxin has been injected", she said.

"They did everything they were supposed to do as part of the execution process, and it simply didn't work," Denno said. "This has never happened before."

Speaking to Radio 4's Today programme, a local journalist who witnessed the attempted execution said that he, too, did not know of "an exact precedent".

Steven Hale, a journalist for the Nashville Banner, said the

case raised many questions, including "what must this be like for the victim's family, who for 30 years has been told we are gonna give you justice and justice is us executing Christa Pike".

Authorities have not yet said whether they will try again to execute Pike. They have also not offered an explanation for what went wrong after twice injecting her with the chemical pentobarbital.

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee has suspended all executions for the rest of the year - and the head of prisons in the state said over the weekend that he planned to resign.

Pike was 18 when she and her then-boyfriend, Tadaryl Shipp, beat, tortured and killed 19-year-old Slemmer, whom they had met at a job training camp for troubled teens.

Shipp was 17 years old at the time, meaning that he was spared the death penalty for his part in the attack because he was not yet legally an adult at the time. He remains in prison.

Pike's lawyers are scheduled to appear in court in Nashville on Wednesday. They also plan to hold a news conference outside the court.

In their latest update, they repeated their call for Lee to use his powers to commute Pike's sentence to the lower punishment of life in prison without parole.

Dr Joel Zivot, an anaesthesiologist advising Pike's defence team, said on Tuesday that the likelihood of recovering from lethal injection was low.

"Most people who get lethal injection die from it," he told the BBC. "In fact, pretty well everyone, except Christa. So, the fact that she survived it... was unusual."

But there remains a lot of uncertainty and many unknowns, he said, including how much of the pentobarbital got into her system, what her blood levels were after the injection and what her recovery will look like.

"I would not, in any way, say at this point that all the big risks are behind her," he noted.

Trump to speak to Putin about plague lab worker's death in Russia

US President Donald Trump has said he will speak with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin soon about the death of a lab worker at a plague research centre in Siberia.

"So far we are in very deep discussions," Trump said, adding that he would be able to report on his talks with Putin "probably" on Thursday.

Russian officials say they are investigating the cause of the 28-year-old's death. They say that those who came into contact with the victim all tested negative and have not confirmed that the suspected disease is pneumonic plague - a serious lung infection, often described as the most virulent form of plague.

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has called for transparency from Russia.

"Timely, complete and transparent information sharing under the International Health Regulations is essential to clarify conflicting reports and enable an accurate assessment of potential public health risks," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

According to the WHO, pneumonic plague has a very short incubation period - sometimes just 24 hours - and can be fatal, if not diagnosed and treated early.

People can be infected through:

infected flea bites
contact with bodily fluids or contaminated materials
the inhalation of respiratory particles

Symptoms include shortness of breath and coughing, often with blood-tainted phlegm.

Reports first emerged on Friday of almost 200 people being placed under observation in Siberia's Irkutsk region following the death.

The lab worker, named in Russian media as Darya Shipilova, had reportedly fallen ill a couple of days earlier.

Unconfirmed reports suggested that she had become ill after breaking a test tube containing the pathogen at the Anti-Plague Institute of Siberia and the Far East where she worked - or following a field trip to a region where plague occurs naturally among wild rodents.

But Russian officials have played down those reports. The country's health watchdog Rosпотребнадзор said the woman had died of "pneumonia of an undetermined etiology".

Ongoing speculation into the lab worker's death has sparked a back and forth between Russia and the US, with questions about a possible spread outside of Russia.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the US had "measures" available to help Russia if the situation turned out to be more serious than claimed.

Residents of kibbutz destroyed in 7 October Hamas-led attacks grapple with how to rebuild

Roosting birds now coo among the ceiling tiles in the deserted dining room of Kibbutz Nir Oz, once the bustling heart of a close-knit, 400-strong Israeli community which was devastated by the Hamas-led attacks on 7 October 2023.

"We used to come and see each other, eat together. There were lots of activities here, also holidays to celebrate," remembers Dalit Ram Aharon, who is showing me around with her husband, Achi.

By the glass entrance doors, dotted with bullet holes, there is a shocking reminder of what happened to the missing residents.

The postboxes for each household bear stickers put there after the attacks three years ago: red indicates those killed, and black those taken hostage. "That's one out of four of us: murdered or kidnapped," Dalit says. "Including children and babies."

As Israel marks the third anniversary of its deadliest-ever day, this is another painful time of reflection for residents of the kibbutz, which sits just a mile (1.6km) from the Gaza border and was one of the worst-hit places.

Time stands still at the near-burnt-out house of the Siman

Tov family, where a wind chime dangles by the door. A picture shows Tamar and Yonatan with their three children, twin girls Shahar and Arbel, five, and their two-year-old son, Omer.

The parents were shot through the door of their bomb shelter - designed to protect from rockets launched from Gaza, not gunfire.

Dalit, who survived with Achi and their three children by hiding in their own shelter for nearly 12 hours that day, recalls the last social media messages sent by Tamar to her neighbours.

"On that day in the morning, she wrote in the woman's group, at the beginning, 'Is everyone fine?' Then, at another point, she wrote, 'They are shooting us.' And after that she wrote with a lot of mistakes, 'We are very injured,'" Dalit tells me.

"From what we understand, they torched the house and the children died from suffocation, so all the family was killed."

An estimated 500 Palestinians, led by Hamas's elite Nukhba force fighters, but including civilian looters, some of them children, joined the assault on the unsuspecting Nir Oz.

Forty-one Nir Oz residents and foreign workers were killed, along with six people who had fled to the kibbutz from a party nearby.

France halts use of stun grenades after boy's hand blown off in student protests

France has suspended the use of stun grenades for policing student protests that have swept the country, after a 15-year-old's hand was blown off earlier this week.

Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez said he had requested the pause until the facts of Monday's incident in Lens had been "clarified", with conflicting accounts offered by protesters and officials.

Several groups have complained of police using disproportionate force towards teenagers.

The disruption continued on Wednesday with more than 500 schools fully or partially shut, and Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu is due to speak about the school protests in an evening address.

Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets on

Tuesday to call for better school conditions and in some cities tear gas and water cannon were deployed. The interior ministry said 488 people were arrested and 43 members of the security forces were hurt.

Nuñez told French radio RTL that police watchdog IGP said it had opened 18 investigations to determine whether officers had been "proportionate" during the demonstrations, which have spread from high school pupils to their parents, university students and unions.

"There is a police action that raises questions for all of us within the Ministry of the Interior; it's what happened in Lens," he said, and confirmed the use of stun grenades was being suspended "until the facts surrounding this case have been clarified".

The 15-year-old boy's hand

was torn off after a so-called anti-encirclement grenade was fired in unclear circumstances near the Auguste Béal high school in the northern city near Lille.

Authorities have said he picked up the grenade which then exploded, but students have alleged he was hit directly after an officer fired.

According to the local prefect, the incident took place when police were confronted by a group of 200-250 students throwing stones and fireworks.

The stun grenade is considered a non-lethal weapon, but sends out small rubber pellets when it detonates.

"When there is suspicion of disproportionate force, there are always judicial investigations," Nuñez said, affirming that the government was "here to protect high school students".

FOREIGN

NEWS

Kenyan health workers demand protection after first Ebola death

The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union has called on the government to protect health workers after the country reported its first case of Ebola.

"Our health workers must not be the weakest link in our response. They must be of first line of protection," the union's secretary-general, Dr. Divji Atallah, said in statement on Tuesday.

On Tuesday, Health Minister Aden Duale announced the death of a Kenyan national who had contracted the virus while living in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The patient, a 40-year-old

businessman, fell ill around a month ago and had been treated in the DRC, Duale told reporters. He travelled overland to the Ugandan capital, Kampala, and then flew to Nairobi on October 3, where he received treatment.

He eventually died on Monday evening.

Dr. Divji Atallah, demanded that the Kenyan government act with "urgency, transparency and responsibility."

He said healthcare professionals who had come in contact with the infected patient must "receive immediate monitoring, psychological support and appropriate follow-up."

The union also called for "rigorous" contact tracing and adequate preparedness of facilities.

Kenyan authorities have identified 28 contacts of the deceased, including family members and healthcare workers, but none have tested

positive for the virus so far.

Authorities are pursuing a further 23 passengers and four crew members who were on the same flight and said that potential quarantine for those at risk had been prepared.

Kenya had never previously reported an Ebola case. Neighbouring Uganda recorded 20 — almost all people who had travelled from the DRC — and two deaths, before being declared Ebola-free in August. As of October 2, the

World Health Organization had recorded 4,082 deaths out of 8,463 cases since the emergence in the DRC of the Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, for which there is still neither a vaccine nor a specific treatment.



Laboratory technician Irene Ooko attends to a patient seeking a COVID-19 test in Nairobi, Kenya

Senegal postpones start of school year following destructive flooding

Senegal has postponed the start of the school year across the country after the recent heavy rain and destructive flooding.

Torrential downpours from Friday through to Monday impacted several regions and paralysed parts of the capital, Dakar.

At least five people have been reported dead in the flooding which comes weeks before the country is due to host the 2026 Summer Youth Olympics.

Operations are underway to clear flooded roads and restore traffic as the authorities work to protect water and power supplies, and provide immediate aid.

The education ministry said the decision to postpone the academic year was "driven

primarily by the need to ensure the safety and protection" of children.

It added that this would also allow for, among other things, the "cleaning, sanitation, disinfection, and restoration" of educational facilities.

In what is an unprecedented postponement in recent years, primary and secondary schools will start on 12 October rather than today as scheduled.

Forecasts point to a high risk of more rain over the coming days. Senegal's rainy season usually starts in June before trailing off in October.

The country's vulnerability to flooding was evident in 2024, when the Senegal River burst its banks in 2024 affecting more than 56,000 people in the east of the country.

Four killed in helicopter crash near Montreal

Four people have died after a helicopter crashed in a small town 50km (31 miles) from Montreal, Quebec's provincial police have told the BBC.

Emergency services were called to Sainte-Brigide-d'Iberville shortly after 14:30 local time (18:30 GMT) on Saturday afternoon, where they found the aircraft on fire and declared its occupants dead at the scene.

The victims have not yet been identified but the aircraft appeared to be a private helicopter, Sgt Audrey-Anne Bilodeau said.

An investigation into the crash is being led by the Major Crime Unit of the Sûreté du Québec, work-

ing alongside crime scene technicians as well as investigators from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

The crash site is located near the Rang des Écossais road off Highway 10, according to Bilodeau.

Police were notified of a helicopter in distress that may have crashed and caught fire in an emergency call.

An hour after the call, the fire at the site had been brought under control, though officials were still working at the crash site just before 22:00 local time.

The victims have not yet been identified and Bilodeau said this process may "take a few days."

Sri Lanka's ex-first lady arrested over alleged misuse of children's hospital donations

Sri Lanka's former first lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa has been arrested over allegations that a charity she is linked to misused donations raised for a children's hospital.

Anti-corruption authorities arrested the 73-year-old wife of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa at their Colombo home on Wednesday.

They are questioning her over the 10 million rupees (\$30,300; £22,800) of donations collected by the Siriliya Saviya charity, meant to be spent on a specialised scanner for Colombo's Lady Ridgeway

Children's Hospital.

But officials say such a scanner had already been donated by the Chinese government.

Shiranthi Rajapaksa has denied any wrongdoing and says the money has not been appropriated.

She returned to Sri Lanka on Monday from Singapore, where she was receiving medical treatment. She had filed a court petition to try to prevent her arrest, but the hearing was set for 12 October.

Ex-President Mahinda Rajapaksa's spokesperson, Manoj Gamage, has said the money is

safe in Siriliya's accounts and that no fraud has occurred.

Mahinda Rajapaksa served as president of Sri Lanka from 2005 to 2015 and for years, his family held a tight grip over the country's politics. He was hailed by many as a hero for bringing an end to nearly three decades of civil war when Tamil Tiger rebels were crushed in 2009, during his first term as president.

But in 2022, protests broke out across the country as inflation surged and Sri Lanka ran out of fuel, food and medicine.

Mahinda's brother Gotabaya

Rajapaksa, who was serving as leader at that time, was eventually toppled.

Sri Lanka's current government, under President Anura Kumara Disanayake, has since revived long-stalled corruption investigations involving various members of the Rajapaksa family.

Mahinda and Shiranthi's eldest son, Namal Rajapaksa, was arrested earlier this year over allegations linked to an aircraft procurement deal made during his father's presidency. He is currently held in remand.

Zelensky condemns 'vile' large-scale Russian attacks that killed 15

At least 15 people have died in overnight strikes across central and eastern Ukraine, in what Volodymyr Zelensky has described as one of Russia's "most vile" attacks.

Ukraine's president said a residential building in Pryluky in the Chernihiv region was destroyed as a "birthday 'gift' to Putin", who turns 74 on Wednesday. Strikes also hit Kyiv, Dnipro, Kremenchuk, Zaporizhzhia and Oleksandriya.

Zelensky said Ukraine had struck targets in attacks on Russia's Perm, Samara and Astrakhan regions in the past 24

hours, adding there was "also a response in the Black Sea", without providing further details.

Moscow is yet to comment on the latest strikes.

"The Russians wanted to strike painfully and demonstratively," Zelensky said, adding that 70 missiles were fired in total.

In the social media post on Wednesday morning, Zelensky said five people had been killed and 26, including five children, injured in a strike on a five-storey apartment building in Pryluky.

He added that people could still be trapped in the rubble.

Chernihiv Oblast police later reported that the death toll had risen to nine after the bodies of three children were recovered, with emergency workers continuing a search operation.

Two people were also killed and eight injured after Russian missile strikes damaged five apartment buildings in Dnipro and four high-rise buildings in Kremenchuk, said Zelensky.

Two people were also killed in the capital, Kyiv, and two others in Oleksandriya, he added.

Ukraine's national police posted pictures online showing what it says is an unexploded Russian Iskander missile in the middle of a Kyiv district. BBC Verify has confirmed the

images are genuine and the apparent missile fragments came down in an area of open land surrounded by high-rise apartment buildings.

A video posted by the police shows people digging through collapsed remains of a residential building in Pryluky. Another verified video shows damage to cars and what appears to be rubble and a fallen tree in an area surrounded by apartment blocks in Kremenchuk.

Zelensky renewed a call for allies to provide air defence support packages to Ukraine, saying its military only managed to shoot down "some" of the missiles launched by Russia overnight.

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			PUBLIC NOTICE		PRODUCT		COLOUR		BLACK & WHITE	
	RATE	TOTAL (7.5% VAT Incl)	RATE	TOTAL (7.5% VAT Incl)	RATE	TOTAL (7.5% VAT Incl)	RATE	TOTAL (7.5% VAT Incl)	RATE	TOTAL (7.5% VAT Incl)
FULL PAGE	417,344	448,645	369,500	397,213	325,150	349,536	565,156	607,542	443,440	476,698
13 X 4	369,500	397,213	295,600	317,770	206,938	222,458	443,500	476,763	369,550	397,266
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	158,898
QUARTER PAGE	192,150	206,561	118,250	127,119	88,690	95,342	236,500	254,238	133,000	142,975
FRONT PAGE POSITIONS					OTHER SIZES					
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FP 6X2	89,800	96,535	105,450	113,359	6 X 2	60,640	65,188	49,140	52,826	
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	
SPECIAL POSITIONS					2 X 1	12,400	13,330	15,600	16,770	
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STRIP	118,250	127,119	147,800	158,885	LOOSE INSERTS					
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Sports

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Stakeholder hails NSC over dissolution of Musa Oshodi-led Nigeria Judo Federation Board

...Urges overhaul of system to attract international support for growth

Kehinde Osagiede

A well-known judo stakeholder and CEO/founder of Ekus Judo Club, Eke Osahon, has commended the National Sports Commission (NSC) for dissolving the Musa Oshodi-led board of the Nigeria Judo Federation.

Osahon, who spoke with Nigerian Observer Sports, said the decision was in the best interest of Nigerian Judo and would help reposition the federation.

He, however, urged the National Sports Commission to go a step further by supervising a comprehensive overhaul

of the Nigeria Judo Federation.

According to him, such an exercise should address what he described as bottlenecks created by a constitution allegedly produced and used by some officials of the federation without broad approval from the judo community.

"We want the Auegan table cleared before another election. As a stakeholder, I'm happy with the dissolution of the board and will be happier when the NSC thoroughly looks into the issues that have bedevilled the federation.

"The previous board had a self-made or inherited constitution that is fraudulent. It

must not be allowed to be used anymore. Any constitution that the Nigeria Judo community did not endorse must be thrown out.

"We need to purge the federation before elections are held in order to give room for people with integrity to come on board."

Osahon also called for greater consideration of the interests of stakeholders and development partners, particularly Nigerians in the diaspora who sponsor and support Judo development.

"Whatever we are doing, we should consider the interest of all the stakeholders, particularly the big development

partners, the diaspora sponsors and supporters. We don't want anything that will make our development partners and sponsors withdraw their support," he said.

He further expressed concern over what he described as the federation's poor performances at major international competitions in recent years, attributing the situation to leadership challenges within the federation.

Meanwhile, the Secretary General of the Nigeria Judo Federation, Mrs Ngozi Amayo, announced the dissolution of the Musa Oshodi-led board in a statement dated October 5, 2026.



Mr Eke Osahon, CEO, Ekus Judo Club

NSC DG, Hon. Bukola Olopade charges Golden Eaglets to fly at WAFU U-17 championship, end World Cup qualification drought



Nigeria's Super Eagles v Russia

The Director General of the National Sports Commission, NSC, Hon. Bukola Olopade, has charged Nigeria's U-17 national team, the Golden Eaglets, to fly high at the WAFU B U-17 Championship to qualify for the U-17 AFCON and ultimately, the FIFA U-17 World Cup.

Hon. Olopade gave the charge during a morale-boosting visit to the team's training camp at the FIFA Goal Project pitch in Abuja on Monday, ahead of their departure on Tuesday for the WAFU B U-17 Tournament in Burkina Faso.

The DG urged the players to embrace the responsibility of representing Nigeria and

begin their journey to the reaching the FIFA U-17 World Cup by winning the WAFU B tournament.

He reminded the players that Nigeria has not featured at the FIFA U-17 World Cup for years, urging them to write a new chapter in the history of one of the country's most successful national teams.

"We have not qualified for the World Cup for a long time now, and the country is looking up to you to end that drought. You are Nigerians, and Nigerians are fighters. We no dey carry last. Go to Burkina Faso, win the WAFU B tournament, qualify for the AFCON and then secure our place at the World Cup."

"We are dreaming of winning the World Cup, and that dream starts with you. You have the talent, you have the opportunity and you have the support of the entire country. Nigeria is a grateful and generous nation, and when you achieve this, we will show you just how much your country appreciates you."

Hon. Olopade encouraged the players to remain disciplined, focused and united throughout the tournament, stressing that their performance would carry the hopes and aspirations of millions of Nigerians.

Nigeria's rich history at the U-17 level provides a powerful legacy for the current

generation of Golden Eaglets. The country is the record five-time winner of the FIFA U-17 World Cup, having lifted the trophy in 1985, 1993, 2007, 2013 and 2015. Nigeria also won back-to-back world titles in 2013 and 2015, becoming the first nation to reach five championships at the tournament.

The Golden Eaglets' historic record has also produced some of Nigeria's most celebrated footballers, including Nwankwo Kanu, Kelechi Iheanacho, Victor Osimhen, amongst a long list of other stars, who all emerged from the country's U-17 ranks and went on to make significant marks on the international stage.

Mustapha unveils blueprint to rebuild Nigerian Basketball ahead of NBBF polls

Dr Abdullahi Mustapha, a candidate for the presidency of the Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF), has unveiled an ambitious "New Dawn" agenda aimed at transforming Nigerian basketball through professional administration, grassroots development, improved competitions and sustainable commercial investment.

Mustapha made the pledge on Wednesday in Abuja while addressing the media ahead of the NBBF elective congress scheduled for October 15, 2026.

He said his decision to contest the presidency was driven by the need to build a stronger institution capable of converting Nigeria's abundant basketball talent into sustained success at domestic and international levels.

According to him, the election should be viewed as more than a contest for leadership, but as an opportunity to determine the future direction of Nigerian basketball.

"I believe Nigerian basketball has enormous potential, but that potential must now be matched with a stronger institution, sustainable investment, professional administration and a clear development pathway," Mustapha said.

The presidential hopeful said his proposed administration would prioritise grassroots

development, arguing that the next generation of D'Tigers and D'Tigress players were already playing in schools, communities, academies and local court across the country.

He proposed the establishment of a coordinated national schools basketball programme stronger competitions from local government to national level, regional talent centres and a national talent-identification and player-tracking system.

Mustapha also promised to create a structured pathway linking schools, academies, clubs, leagues and national teams, insisting that talented youngsters should not be denied opportunities because of their location, financial circumstances or lack of connections.

He said restoring confidence in domestic competition would be another major priority of his administration.

According to him, Nigerian leagues require predictable calendars, stronger club structures, proper licensing improved player contracts and welfare, better venues, digital statistics and stronger broadcasting and commercial platform forms.

"Nigerian players should not have to remain inactive for long periods simply because our domestic system is unable to provide regular competition," he said.



Basket ball player

SPORTS



CAF names Rwandan officials for Super Falcons' Olympic Qualifier against Comoros

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has appointed a team of Rwandan match officials for the first-leg 2028 Olympic Games qualifying fixture between Nigeria's Super Falcons and Comoros.

Rwandan referee Henriette Byukusenge has been appointed as the centre referee for the encounter.

She will be assisted by compatriots Sandrine Murangwa, who will serve as first assistant referee, and Regine Mukayiranga, who has been named second assistant referee.

Another Rwandan, Aline Umutoni, will serve as the fourth official.

Namibia's Fransiska Katjaimo has been appointed as the

referee assessor, while Burkina Faso's Oumou Sy will serve as the match commissioner.

The first-leg encounter is scheduled for Friday at the Remo Stars Sports Complex in Ikenne, Ogun State.

The Super Falcons and Comoros will meet again in the return leg at the same venue next Tuesday, with both teams battling for progression in the Olympic qualifying campaign.

Olympic Qualifier: Comoros Arrive, Begin Training In Ikenne Ahead of Super Falcons Clash

The Comoros women's national team have arrived in Ikenne ahead of their 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games qualifying first-leg encounter against Nigeria's Super Falcons.

The island nation's representatives have settled into their base and begun preparations for Friday's crucial

fixture at the Remo Stars Stadium.

With the first leg fast approaching, the Comoros technical crew will use the remaining training sessions to fine-tune their tactics and

prepare their players for the daunting challenge posed by Nigeria's Super Falcons, ten-time African champions.

The visitors will be aiming to secure a positive result in Ikenne before the return leg,

scheduled for next Tuesday.

The two-legged tie will determine which side advances in the Olympic qualifying race, with the Super Falcons seeking to take a commanding advantage on home soil

Oyo Sports Writers Back Olumide Oyedeji's NBBF Presidential Ambition

...Pledge Maximum Support for Former D'Tigers Captain.

Sports Writers in Oyo State have thrown their weight behind the ambition of former Nigeria senior basketball team captain, Olumide Oyedeji, to become the next President of the Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF).

The sports journalists expressed their support when Oyedeji paid a courtesy visit to the Governor's Office Correspondents at the Oyo State Secretariat, Ibadan, on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, as part of his consultations ahead of the NBBF presidential election.

During the meeting, the journalists welcomed Oyedeji and congratulated him on his decision to offer himself for the leadership of the federation, describing his wealth of experience in basketball at both national and international levels as an advantage for the development of the sport in Nigeria.

The Oyo sports writers pledged their maximum support for Oyedeji's aspiration, assuring him that they would continue to provide the necessary media support and promote initiatives capable of

repositioning Nigerian basketball.

Welcoming the lanky ex basketballer, Olalekan Sulaiman popularly known as SP noted that Oyedeji's background as a former captain of D'Tigers, former NBA player and an experienced basketball administrator has placed him in a strong position to provide purposeful leadership for the NBBF.

Speaking during the visit, Oyedeji thanked the journalists for their warm reception and support, saying that despite manipulative attempts by some elements to present another candidate, the state is still solidly behind him. He stressed that his ambition was driven by a desire to contribute to the growth and transformation of basketball in Nigeria.

He explained that his vision was to build a stronger basketball structure that would provide opportunities for players, coaches, referees and other stakeholders, while ensuring that Nigerian basketball regains its pride of place on the international stage.



Russia 3-3 Nigeria: Seven takeaways as depleted Super Eagles stand firm in Nizhny Novgorod

The Super Eagles showed character and attacking quality to fight back from two goals down and secure a 3-3 draw against Russia in an entertaining international friendly at the Nizhny Novgorod Stadium on Tuesday. Nigeria, despite fielding

a depleted and experimental squad, twice found themselves in trouble after taking an early lead through Kelechi Iheanacho.

Lechi Sadulaev equalised for Russia in the 30th minute before Matvey Kislyak put the hosts ahead in first-half stop-

page time. Aleksey Miranchuk then appeared to put Russia in control with a 54th-minute strike.

But Nigeria refused to collapse. Debutant Peter Edokpolor pulled one back in the 78th minute before Akor Adams completed the comeback

with a 90+3rd-minute equaliser.

The result gave Eric Chelle valuable information as he continues to reshape the Super Eagles, with nine players making their senior international debuts.