Govs disown $100million claim, distance selves from suit

Kebonkwu Ruth / Aghedo Iyobor

ABUJA

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has distanced itself from a $100 million legal dispute involving the Paris Club refund, insisting that it neither participated in the transaction nor held any part of the disputed funds.

The Forum said the controversy arose from alleged dealings between the claimant, Dr Ted Iseghohi-Edwards, and the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON), stressing that it had no contractual relationship with the claimant.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, NGF spokesman, Yunusa Tanko Abdullahi, categorically denied the allegation that the Forum was in possession of the money.

"The Nigeria Governors' Forum has no hand in that transaction and did not engage any party thereto, nor held any such monies in its custody at any time," the statement said.

The clarification followed an interim order issued on November 19 by Justice O.C. Agbaza of the Federal Capital Territory High Court, directing the freezing of up to $100 million, equivalent to approximately N135.58 billion, allegedly held by the NGF.

The order is to remain in force pending the hearing of a motion for interlocutory injunction in the matter.

The claimant, Iseghohi-Edwards, is reportedly seeking the money under an indemnity allegedly issued by the NGF on December 20, 2018, in connection with legal services rendered on behalf of the 774 local government councils in the country.

However, the NGF has maintained that it was not involved in the alleged transaction and has denied having custody of the funds at any time.

The Forum disclosed that its legal team was reviewing the court processes and would take appropriate steps to respond to the matter.

The case has been adjourned until December 1, 2026, for further proceedings.

The Nigerian OBSERVER

That The People May Know

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Okpebholo denies link to alleged attack on NDC members

says APC has no reason to promote violence

Richard Eweka

BENIN CITY

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has categorically denied allegations linking him, his administration, the All Progressives Congress (APC) or its supporters to the alleged violent attack on members and supporters of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) in Benin City, insisting that his government has neither the interest nor the intention to disrupt the activities of opposition political parties in the state.

The governor maintained that his administration remained committed to peace, democratic participation and the protection of the rights of all political parties to operate freely in Edo State.

Okpebholo spoke on Thursday while addressing supporters during the APC presidential campaign rally at Ehor, headquarters of Uhunmwode Local Government Area, and Ekpoma in Esan West Local Government Area.

He was reacting to allegations linking him to Wednesday's reported violent incident involving supporters of Mr Peter Obi, a presidential candidate of the NDC, in Benin City.

Dismissing the allegations, the governor described them as unfounded, maintaining that the reported incident had nothing to do with him or the APC.

According to him, the opposition group's outing in Benin City was characterised by internal confusion and disagreements, rather than any orchestrated action by the ruling party.

"They thought they could come to Edo and shine, but when they got here, there were only three people in the hall. Their supporters became confused and started shouting, 'Okpe's baby'," he said.

The governor stressed that his overriding concern was the development of Edo State, insisting that he would not allow political distractions or allegations to derail the responsibilities of his office.

"Someone who is already winning will not start a fight to disrupt his progress. When I heard that someone was mentioning my name on television, I

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CAMPAIGN RALLY:
R - L: Minister of Regional Development, Engr. Abubakar Momoh; APC House of Assembly Aspirant, Hon. Kaycee Uhunoma Osamwuyi; APC House of Representatives Aspirant, Dr. Billy Osawaru; Governor of Edo State, Senator Monday Okpebholo; Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa; Director-General, Edo State APC Presidential Campaign Council, Senator Matthew Urhoghide; and Commissioner for Education, Hon. Washington Osifo, at the APC presidential campaign rally in Uhunmwonde Local Government Area on Thursday, November 26, 2026.

Senators decry poor gas supply, mull price cut

Aghedo Iyobor

ABUJA

The Senate Committee on Gas Resources has criticised the poor supply of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) to the domestic market.

The Chairman of the Committee, Senator Jarigbe Jarigbe, representing Cross River North, raised the concern on Wednesday during an interface with stakeholders in the gas sector on export remittances and domestic LPG supply.

He noted that the shortfall could undermine efforts to reduce the price of cooking gas for Nigerians.

He said: "We are already working for Nigerians here, for our people, and that's why we want to get to the root of it.

"And we'll make sure that the price of gas goes down, because when there is adequate supply in response to demand, the price will naturally go down."

Senator Jarigbe said the situation was contrary to the objectives of Presidential Executive Order 9, issued by President Bola Tinubu on February 13, 2026.

He noted that the order was intended to ensure adequate domestic supply, improve revenue remittances, and bring down gas prices.

He said sufficient LPG must be made available locally to ease the financial burden on Nigerians.

According to him, the committee would sustain engagement with key industry players, including Chevron, the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission

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North East: Shettima unleashes 10,330 EVs, ₦30bn for youth, women —Pg 3

Myanmar refuses to comply with parts of ICJ genocide ruling —Pg 14

Arsenal-Man City set for EPL match of the week on Sunday —Pg 22

NEWS

Senators decry poor gas supply...

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(NUPRC) and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), to ensure adequate supply and achieve the desired price reduction.

Mr Enorense Amadasu, representing the NUPRC, said the offshore facility was originally built to export gas for both the Nigerian side and Chevron under their joint venture.

He said poor infrastructure and logistics problems were making it difficult to move offshore LPG into the local market.

The committee is expected to continue its engagement with stakeholders next Tuesday as it seeks to close the supply gap, improve export remittances and ensure more LPG is made available to Nigerians.

"How many of you know my promise to President Bola Tinubu? Are we ready for it?" he asked, drawing a positive response from the supporters.

He expressed appreciation to party faithful and residents for the impressive turnout, while reiterating his commitment to credible elections and the principle of one person, one vote. He also urged the electorate to participate actively in the democratic process.

Earlier, Deputy Governor, Dennis Idahosa, commended the people of Uhunmwode for their impressive turnout and show of solidarity with the APC, urging them to vote for the party's candidates at all levels in the 2027 general elections.

Similarly, the Edo State APC Chairman, Mr Jarrett Tenebe, called on residents to sustain their support for Governor Okpebholo, President Tinubu and other candidates of the party to ensure victory at the polls.

Tenebe said the Okpebholo administration had recorded significant achievements in its two years in office, particularly in the area of security, noting that intensified efforts against kidnapping, cultism and other criminal activities had helped improve the security situation across the state.

Okpebholo denies link to...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

concluded that everything these people were saying was lies.

"I have no time for anybody. All I am concerned about is how to develop Edo. I will not channel the energy I should use to develop our dear state into destroying Edo," he declared.

To reinforce his position, Okpebholo recalled his conduct during previous political contests, including his senatorial and governorship campaigns, insisting that he had never relied on thuggery or political violence to pursue electoral victories.

"When I was contesting for the Senate, I refused to use thugs. For the governorship, I also refused to use thugs. My policeman was killed during the election by the same people who were crying yesterday. The NDC chairman was one of those who was fingered at that time," he alleged.

The governor, however, used the occasion to reaffirm his administration's determination to rid Edo State of cultism and other forms of criminality, warning that political considerations would not shield anyone involved in criminal activities.

"Elections will come to an end. We will make sure that we go after cultism, and cultism will never be heard for life. We will fight cultism to the end. What we believe in is one man, one vote; one woman, one vote," he declared.

Turning to the 2027 general elections, Okpebholo challenged the enthusiastic crowd to demonstrate their commitment to the political understanding he had reached with President Bola Tinubu.

Tinubu mourns Pete Edochie, says Nigeria lost great thespian

Aghedo Iyobor

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu has mourned the passing of Nollywood legend, Chief Peter Uwadiegwu Ogugua Edochie, better known as Pete Edochie.

President Tinubu said in a personally signed statement on Wednesday: "It was with deep sorrow that I received the news of the passing of Chief Peter Uwadiegwu Ogugua Edochie, better known as Pete Edochie."

He said: "Chief Edochie was an exceptional actor – one of the progenitors of our vibrant film industry, Nollywood. He was graceful and larger than life, both on the screen and in person."

He said: "He was one of Africa's most recognisable thespians. For decades, he plied his craft, bringing joy, laughter, and charm to many homes."

President Tinubu recalled his unforgettable portrayal of Okonkwo in the Nigerian Television Authority adaptation of Chinua Achebe's novel, Things Fall Apart, in the 1980s.

He said through productions such as Igodo, Rituals and Lionheart, he helped shape the evolution and international visibility of Nollywood.

He said: "Pete Edochie was not only an actor; he was also an administrator, broadcaster, and journalist – truly one of our finest."

He said: "As I mourn the passing of this legendary actor, I also reflect on his life. Pete Edochie lived well. He played his part and exited gracefully. In his works, he lives forever."

President Tinubu extended his condolences to the Edochie family, his friends, associates and the entire Nigerian film industry.

He said: "May God Almighty grant 'Ebube Dike' eternal rest."



FLAG OFF:
Gov Monday Okpebholo addressing traders at New Auto Spare Part Market Evbareke, flanked by his Deputy,RT Hon Dennis Idahosa (2nd left), Secretary to Edo State government Musa Umar Ikhilor Esq (1st left) and APC State chairman Jarrett Tenebe (1st Right) during the flag off of the market road.
PHOTO: GOVERNMENT HOUSE PRESS UNIT

Funeral for Edo Central Hospital surgeon holds December 3

Lucky Efese

BENIN CITY

The funeral rites for Dr. Igbinobaro Aimuamwosa, a surgeon with the Edo Central Hospital, Benin City, will take place on Thursday, December 3, 2026.

According to the burial programme released by the Egbe-Nuhe family of Ogbe Quarters, Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, a service of songs in honour of the deceased will hold at the Central Baptist Church, King Square/Ring Road, Benin City, at 2 p.m., followed immediately by his interment.

Dr. Aimuamwosa, who until his death was a member of the Department of Surgery at Edo Central Hospital, was said to have contributed to the delivery of quality healthcare services and efforts to reposition the state-owned medical facility in line with international best practices.

In a statement signed on behalf of the family by Efe Igbinobaro, the deceased, who was also the Medical Director of Igbinobaro Clinic, Benin City, reportedly battled a protracted illness before his death.

He is survived by his wife, three children, siblings and aged parents.

Describing his death as painful and devastating, Efe said the loss had created a huge vacuum that would be difficult to fill.

He noted that the family, friends and associates would greatly miss his wise counsel, generosity, calm disposition, peaceful nature and characteristic sense of humour.

INEC, NSA intensify security preparations ahead of 2027 elections

Amupitan warns against violence

Caroline Ameh

ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) have intensified efforts to strengthen election security ahead of the 2027 general elections, warning political actors against violence, intimidation and attacks on electoral officials.

INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, gave the warning on Thursday in Abuja during the INEC–ONSA Strategic Election Security Conference, attended by the National Security Adviser, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, Minister of Defence, Gen. Christopher Musa (retd.), heads of security agencies and other stakeholders.

Amupitan said the conference was convened to assess emerging security threats, improve inter-agency collaboration and develop a comprehensive operational framework for the peaceful conduct of the 2027 elections.

He noted that with the presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled for January 16, 2027, and governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections slated for February 6, security agencies must strengthen their preparations to ensure credible and peaceful polls.

According to him, conducting elections in a country with more than 100 million registered voters and 177,299 polling units requires effective coordination between INEC and security agencies.

He described electoral administration and national security as inseparable, explaining that while INEC is responsible for managing the electoral process, security agencies must provide an environment where citizens can freely exercise their democratic rights.

PBAT celebrate Atiku @80

ABUJA

President Tinubu said in a personally signed statement on Wednesday, November 25, 2026: "I extend my warmest congratulations to former Vice President and African Democratic Congress Presidential Candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, on his 80th birthday today, November 25, 2026."

He said: "I commend Atiku Abubakar's contributions to national progress and development over the years."

He recalled his support for Mr Abubakar's 2007 presidential bid under the defunct Action Congress platform, saying it reflected their shared commitment to democratic pluralism.

He said: "Of particular note are the many years of political engagement and undying commitment to democratic pluralism that I share with him, including my support for his 2007 presidential election."

Mr Bayo Onanuga, the President's spokesman, said President Tinubu also praised Mr Abubakar's investments in education and entrepreneurship, particularly the establishment of the American University of Nigeria, Yola.

President Tinubu said despite their different political affiliations, their shared commitment to Nigeria's unity and democratic stability remained important.

He said: "Therefore, as the former vice president joins the Octogenarian Club, I wish him good health, renewed strength and many more years of service to the nation and humanity. Happy 80th birthday, Your Excellency."

North East: Shettima unleashes 10,330 EVs, ₦30bn for youth, women

AGHEDO IYOBOR

MAIDUGURI

The Federal Government has unveiled a major package of reconstruction and economic recovery initiatives for the North-East, featuring the deployment of 10,330 electric vehicles and a 50-megawatt solar power project aimed at boosting transportation, electricity supply and economic activities across the region.

The initiatives were unveiled on Tuesday by Vice President Kashim Shettima in Maiduguri, Borno State, during the presidential launch and inauguration of multi-sectoral development projects executed by the North-East Development Commission (NEDC).

At the event, Shettima also announced the approval of a N30 billion Youth and Women Empowerment Fund in partnership with the Bank of Industry to provide financial support for micro, small and medium-scale enterprises across the six states of the region.

He said the initiatives reflected President Bola Tinubu's commitment to rebuilding communities affected by years of insecurity, restoring livelihoods and creating sustainable economic opportunities for residents.

According to the Vice President, despite the devastating effects of insurgency and prolonged hardship, the people of the North-East have remained resolute in their determination to overcome adversity and rebuild their communities.

"We have long maintained, as a region, that our right to tomorrow cannot be confiscated by the violence of today or yesterday.

"For years, the North-East has carried the cost of insecurity and hardship without losing sight of our redemption," he said.

Shettima noted that President Tinubu's pledge to rebuild the region was being translated into concrete interventions through the NEDC.

"President Bola Tinubu came to office with a pledge to rebuild this region, and the North-East Development Commission is giving that obligation practical expression," he stated.

He explained that the 10,330 electric vehicles, comprising metro buses, taxis and tricycles, would improve public transportation, reduce mobility costs, promote clean energy and stimulate economic growth.

The Vice President added that the planned 50MW solar-powered mini-grid projects across the region would strengthen electricity supply, support small businesses and improve healthcare delivery.

On road infrastructure, Shettima disclosed that the commission had constructed and rehabilitated 51 roads and 35 bridges, while several other projects were ongoing.

He also said more than 100,000 solar streetlights had been installed under the Light Up the North-East initiative to improve security, enhance public lighting and extend economic activities into the night.

"Our people must be able to move freely between communities, take their produce to market and seek opportunities beyond their villages," he said.

In the education sector, the Vice President listed the construction of 18 mega schools, 232 classrooms and 22 hostels, alongside interventions in 49 tertiary institutions.

He added that scholarships and bursaries had been provided to deserving students, including orphans and vulnerable children in secondary schools.

"Our ticket to the future is sound and accessible education," he emphasised.

On healthcare, Shettima disclosed that the NEDC had executed 92 projects across hospitals and specialist medical facilities.

He said the commission had also provided eight MRI and CT scanning units, alongside other medical equipment and medicines to tertiary healthcare institutions.

The Vice President further revealed that more than 3,500 houses had been constructed under the commission's mass housing programme to provide accommodation for displaced persons and vulnerable families.

Other interventions, he said, included over 100 water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and more than 1,100 solar-powered boreholes and community water supply schemes.

"For those driven from their homes, recovery must begin with a place to call their own," he stated.

On agriculture and economic empowerment, Shettima said farmers across the region had received more than 2,000 units of agricultural machinery and equipment, as well as over 38,000 bags of fertiliser to boost food production.

He stressed that the administration's support for women-owned businesses and small and medium-scale enterprises, coupled with vocational training, skills acquisition and youth empowerment programmes, was aimed at improving household incomes and expanding economic opportunities.

"Our support for women-owned businesses and small and medium enterprises, alongside skills development, vocational training and youth empowerment programmes, is driven by our conviction that every family deserves the opportunity to earn a living," he said.

Shettima commended the governors of the North-East, the management and staff of the NEDC, as well as development partners, for their contributions to the region's reconstruction and recovery efforts.

He urged all stakeholders to sustain the collaboration and ensure that the various interventions translate into lasting improvements in the living conditions of the people.



5TH IGIEHON MATHEMATICS TOURNAMENT:
Don Bosco Science Academy representatives celebrate victory after clinching the N1.5 million grand prize.

Don Bosco Science Academy wins ₦1.5m Igiehon Mathematics Tournament

BY EDWARD OSEGHE AND ESOHE AIFUWA

...Over 200 schools participate as foundation rewards academic excellence

BENIN CITY

Don Bosco Science Academy has emerged overall winner of the fifth edition of the Igiehon Mathematics Tournament, clinching the N1.5 million grand prize at a competition designed to promote academic excellence and inspire a new generation of mathematics enthusiasts in Edo State.

The annual tournament, held on Saturday, November 21, attracted participation from over 200 secondary schools across the state, with outstanding students rewarded for their intellectual abilities and commitment to learning.

Beacon of Success School came second, winning N1.05 million, while Deeper Life High School secured third position with a prize of NB650,000.

The competition also recognised the contributions of teachers, who received cash prizes and certificates of recognition for their outstanding tutelage of the award-winning students.

Speaking at the event, the Chairperson of the Igiehon Foundation, Mrs. Nosariere Igiehon, expressed gratitude to the participating students and commended their dedication and hard work.

She encouraged the contestants to remain calm and confident throughout the competition, noting that their selection to participate was already an achievement. She also assured every participant of a consolation prize, irrespective of their final position.

Mrs. Igiehon emphasised the need to give education greater recognition in society by rewarding academic excellence and encouraging students to strive for higher achievements.

She said the N1.5 million grand prize, high-performance laptops and other awards were part of the foundation's commitment to motivating students and promoting a culture of excellence.

The tournament also featured an intermission lecture titled "Application of Mathematics," delivered by Miss Light Orukpa, which demonstrated the practical relevance of mathematics in everyday life.

The lecture explained that mathematics extends beyond numbers, formulas and equations, serving as an essential tool for understanding patterns, relationships, measurements and uncertainty, as well as the operations of modern technology.

Using the Global Positioning System (GPS) as an example, the speaker demonstrated how mathematics powers everyday technologies, including mobile phones and navigation applications such as Google Maps and Bolt.

She explained how satellite signals and the mathematical principle of trilateration enable these applications to determine users' locations.

In an interview, the Chairperson, Mrs. Nosariere Igiehon, said the foundation was inspired by its upbringing, heritage and commitment to excellence.

She explained that having benefited from academic competitions during their school years, the founders were motivated to establish the initiative to provide similar opportunities for other students and nurture a love for learning.

She added that the mathematics tournament was part of the foundation's broader vision of making a positive impact through education.

Beyond the competition, she said the foundation provides scholarships and supports brilliant students from less privileged backgrounds by paying their university tuition fees.

According to her, the ultimate goal is to create educational opportunities capable of transforming the lives of beneficiaries and their families.

The fifth edition of the tournament further reinforced the foundation's commitment to recognising academic talent, encouraging healthy intellectual competition and investing in the educational development of young people across Edo State.

NDLEA busts N303.9bn meth Lab in Enugu, arrests drug baron, 5 Mexicans

BY AGHEDO IYOBOR

ABUJA

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has dismantled an industrial-scale methamphetamine laboratory in Enugu State.

Brig.-Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (retd.), the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the Agency, disclosed this at a press conference in Abuja on Wednesday.

He said operatives arrested a 63-year-old suspected drug baron, Mr Chuks Enoch Ezeike, popularly known as 'Over Size', and five Mexican meth specialists.

He said: "A total of 1,512 kilogrammes of methamphetamine, finished and in production, with an estimated value of US$226.8 million, equivalent to N303,913,000,000.00, was recovered from the clandestine factory."

He said the Agency also recovered 6.68 tonnes of 20 different types of precursor and essential chemicals and industrial equipment used in making the drug.

Brig.-Gen. Marwa said Mr Ezeike allegedly smuggled the Mexicans into Nigeria with forged passports to produce the Class 'A' drug on Nigerian soil.

He said the laboratory was built by Mr Ezeike behind San Savanna Oil Company Limited, along Abakaliki Expressway, Emene, Enugu, complete with living quarters for the Mexicans.

He described the operation as one of the most carefully planned, intelligence-led operations ever conducted by the Agency.

He said: "The operation began in faraway Mexico, ran through Colombia, France and the Republic of Benin, crossed into Lagos, and ended in an industrial complex in Enugu."

INSIDE DELTA STATE

APC fixes Dec 5 for Tinubu's presidential campaign rally in Delta

Ajuwa Victor

ASABA

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in Delta State has fixed Saturday, Decembery 5, 2026, for its presidential campaign rally in support of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The rally, scheduled to hold at the Stephen Keshi Stadium, Asaba, will commence at 10am and is expected to attract party leaders, candidates, stakeholders and supporters from across the state.

According to the revised schedule, campaign rallies will also hold on Wednesday, December 2, at Issele-Uku, Aniocha North Local Government Area, by 10am, and Ogwashi-Uku, Aniocha South Local Government Area, by noon.

The campaign train will subsequently move to Ika Federal Constituency on Monday, December 21, with rallies scheduled for Agbor, Ika South Local Government Area, at 10am, and Owa-Oyibu, Ika North East Local Government Area, at noon.

Ebie urged party leaders, candidates, stakeholders and members to take note of the revised arrangements and make necessary preparations.

He clarified that the adjustments affected only the dates and locations specifically indicated in the revised timetable, stressing that all other dates in the earlier campaign schedule remained unchanged.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on ICT and Cybersecurity, Shuaib Salisu, proposed a national cybersecurity resilience index to assess organisations' preparedness against cyber threats.

He also advocated stronger collaboration among government agencies and greater regional cooperation on digital security.

Customs, Delta special economic zone strengthen ties for trade, revenue growth

Ajuwa Victor

ASABA

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Edo/Delta Area Command, and the management of the Delta Special Economic Zone have pledged to strengthen collaboration towards enhancing trade facilitation, attracting investments and boosting revenue generation.

The commitment followed a familiarisation visit by the Acting Customs Area Controller of the Edo/Delta Area Command, Deputy Comptroller Dooyum Dominic Ortsen, to the management of the Delta Special Economic Zone.

Ortsen was received by the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Zone, Pastor Godwin Akpovie, PhD.

Also present were the Director, Zones, Emmanuel Ofunne, and the Chief Regulatory/Legal Officer of the Zone, Samuel Nwanne, Esq.

Speaking during the visit, Ortsen reaffirmed the Nigeria Customs Service's commitment to working closely with the Zone's management to facilitate legitimate trade, ensure faster clearance of goods, promote regulatory compliance and create a business-friendly environment for investors.

He observed that an efficiently managed Free Trade Zone could significantly contribute to the nation's economic growth through increased manufacturing activities, export promotion and improved revenue generation.

In his response, Akpovie welcomed the Customs delegation and expressed the Zone management's readiness to deepen cooperation with the Service to attract investments, generate employment opportunities and stimulate economic development in Delta State.

Both parties also resolved to strengthen information sharing, compliance monitoring and security operations within the Zone to curb smuggling, prevent the diversion of duty-free goods and ensure strict adherence to applicable regulations.

The visit forms part of Ortsen's ongoing stakeholders' engagement initiative since assuming office as Acting Customs Area Controller of the Edo/Delta Area Command, with headquarters in Warri.

The engagement is expected to provide a stronger institutional framework for cooperation between the Customs Service and the Special Economic Zone, particularly in promoting legitimate commerce, investor confidence and sustainable economic growth.

He urged residents to remain informed, practice good hygiene and cooperate with health authorities, emphasizing that vigilance, timely reporting and collective responsibility were essential to protecting families and communities against the disease.



HON. SHERIFF OBOREVWORI, DELTA STATE GOVERNOR (RIGHT)

Oborevwori leads Delta APC campaign to Burutu, warns against political violence

Ajuwa Victor

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has declared that nobody involved in the killing of innocent citizens under the guise of political rivalry will escape justice, warning that his administration will not shield anyone, irrespective of political influence or status.

The Governor gave the warning during the All Progressives Congress (APC) campaign rally in Burutu, where he condemned political violence and urged politicians and their supporters to place the sanctity of human life above partisan interests.

Reaffirming his administration's commitment to peace and security, Oborevwori said the government would not tolerate the use of violence to settle political differences, insisting that those responsible for the loss of innocent lives must be brought to justice.

"Those that have killed, they can never go free. They will not go free. Nobody will be exempted. All will be brought to book. The law will take its course," he declared.

Making reference to Section 14(2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution, which identifies the security and welfare of citizens as the primary purpose of government, and Section 33, which guarantees the right to life, the Governor said his administration would continue to take all lawful measures to protect residents across the state.

He cautioned political leaders against inflammatory statements and conduct capable of heightening tensions, stressing that those entrusted with leadership positions must demonstrate responsibility and promote peaceful political engagement.

On infrastructure, Oborevwori disclosed that construction work on the Ayakoromo Bridge was progressing steadily, assuring the people that the project would be completed soon.

"The contractor handling the Ayakoromo Bridge is working day and night, and by the grace of God, that project will be completed in a very short time," he said.

He also disclosed that work was ongoing on the Ojobo Road and Bridge, as well as internal roads in Ogulagha, reaffirming his administration's determination to improve transportation and connectivity in riverine communities.

Acknowledging the difficult terrain and logistical challenges associated with executing projects in riverine areas, the Governor assured that no community would be excluded from the state's development agenda.

He said projects were ongoing across the 25 local government areas of Delta State, adding that his administration remained committed to spreading infrastructure and development opportunities across the state.

The Governor urged the people of Burutu to demonstrate their support for the APC through their votes in the forthcoming general elections, particularly for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Senator Joel-Onowakpo Thomas and other party candidates.

Aniocha North APC inaugurates three ward campaign councils, Intensifies 2027 mobilisation

Ajuwa Victor

ANIOCHA

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in Aniocha North Local Government Area of Delta State has intensified its grassroots mobilisation ahead of the 2027 general elections with the inauguration of Ward Campaign Councils in three wards.

The councils inaugurated are Ward 8 (Idumuje-Unor), Ward 9 (Ukwu-Nzu), and Ward 3, covering Obomkpa, Ugboba and Idumuogo communities.

The exercise, which forms part of the party's ward-toward mobilisation strategy, is designed to strengthen its grassroots structures, consolidate voter support and mobilise electoral backing for APC candidates at all levels in 2027.

Aniocha North political leader and Chairman of the Campaign Council, Chief Nkem Okwuofu, charged party members to remain united, committed and focused, stressing that cohesion and collective determination were essential to securing victory for the party.

Similarly, the Local Government Campaign Coordinator, Prince Uzoma Idaboh, urged members to demonstrate dedication, hard work and sustained commitment to grassroots mobilisation, noting that electoral success depended largely on effective engagement with voters.

Addressing members of the newly inaugurated Ward 8 Campaign Council, its Chairman and Commissioner for Special Duties (Government House), Dr. Ifeanyi Osuoza, called for intensive house-to-house mobilisation to take the APC message directly to the electorate.

Osuoza expressed confidence in the electoral prospects of Governor Sheriff Oborevwori and other APC candidates, urging Deltans to reciprocate the governor's commitment to the development of the state with massive votes for the party in 2027.

He also charged campaigners to maintain peace, discipline, organisation and steadfastness, noting that unity, faith and determination would help them overcome possible challenges in the course of the campaign.

The Aniocha North APC Chairman, Sir Matthew Chinye, urged members of the ward campaign structures to approach the assignment with seriousness and dedication, assuring them that their commitment and loyalty to the party would yield positive results.

He subsequently joined Idaboh in formally inaugurating the respective Ward Campaign Councils.

The inauguration ceremonies attracted the Commissioner for Science and Technology, Dr. Daniel Odinigwe Odigie; members of the campaign councils; party leaders and stakeholders; serving and former political appointees; as well as elected councillors from the affected wards.

The inauguration of the three councils marks another step in the Aniocha North APC's efforts to strengthen its organisational base, deepen grassroots engagement and position the party for a strong showing in the 2027 general elections.

With the exercise, the party leadership has reinforced its call for unity, sustained mobilisation and collective commitment towards achieving its electoral objectives.

He said the initiatives, alongside the proposed Blue Marine Special Economic Zone, could position Ogun State as a hub for industrial investment, international trade and maritime business.

NEWS

PTAD settles ₦91.5bn inherited pension liabilities, pays ₦60bn arrears

LAGOS

The Pension Transitional Arrangement Directorate (PTAD) says it has settled more than N91.5 billion in inherited pension liabilities and paid over N60 billion in arrears arising from the N32,000 pension increment.

Mrs Tolulope Odunaiya, Executive Secretary of PTAD, disclosed this at a stakeholders' engagement forum in Lagos on Thursday.

Odunaiya said the achievements were part of reforms aimed at strengthening the directorate's institutional capacity, improving service delivery, enhancing transparency and modernising pension administration under the Defined Benefit Scheme (DBS).

She said the settlements included N25.05 billion paid to 9,675 pensioners of the defunct Nigeria Telecommunications Ltd. (NITEL) and its mobile subsidiary, MTEL, bringing an end to longstanding outstanding pension obligations.

According to her, the directorate also paid more than N23.8 billion in arrears arising from pension increments of 10.66 per cent, 12.95 per cent, 13.8 per cent and 20.55 per cent, alongside corresponding increases in monthly pensions.

She noted that PTAD paid over N5 billion in pension harmonisation arrears to more than 64,000 eligible pensioners.

"We also recomputed the monthly pensions of more than 13,000 pensioners and paid N3.8 billion in outstanding arrears.

"Seven hundred and twenty six retirees of the Federal Mortgage Finance Ltd. and Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria have also been enrolled on the pension payroll.

"The beneficiaries comprised 508 retirees of the Federal Mortgage Finance Ltd. and 218 of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, with a combined monthly pension of over N41 million," she said.

On healthcare, she said PTAD had secured approximately N5 billion for a health insurance scheme for DBS pensioners.

She emphasised that the scheme would be free, assuring pensioners that participation would not attract deductions from their monthly pension entitlements.

"The scheme is free of charge. It has zero cost to pensioners, and there will be no reduction in their pensions, whether now or in the future," she said.

Odunaiya said the achievements represented more than financial figures, as they reflected the payment of legitimate entitlements and efforts to restore confidence in pension administration.

On the directorate's digital transformation, she said PTAD was advancing its Integrated Automation System (IAS) to improve access to services and make pension administration more efficient.

She explained that the platform would enable pensioners to update their personal information, upload required documents, submit complaints and track the status of their requests.

According to her, the system is expected to reduce processing timelines, improve data integrity and strengthen transparency and accountability.

Tears as victims of Bayelsa boat mishap get mass burial

Philip Jeremiah Eke

YENAGOA

It was tears and wailing at the Azikoro Cemetery in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, yesterday, as victims of Friday's boat mishap in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of the state, were laid to rest in a mass burial.

The burial, which commenced at about 11am, ended at 4pm, when the last batch of bodies, wrapped in black body bags, were brought to the cemetery in ambulance

The exercise was supervised by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Nimibofa Ayawei, and the Commissioner for Environment, Mr. Ebi Ololo, alongside other government officials.

The cemetery was enveloped by a foul stench from the bodies, some of which had begun to decompose, as grieving relatives, friends and sympathisers gathered to witness the burial.

Many mourners broke down in tears, while others stood in groups, speaking in hushed tones as the remains of their loved ones were lowered into shallow graves.

One of the bereaved relatives, Timipreye Diepreye, who said she lost seven family members in the tragedy, faulted the manner in which relatives were informed about the mass burial.

She said the family would have made arrangements for coffins for their deceased relatives, particularly those whose bodies were recovered on Friday, if they had been adequately informed ahead of the exercise.

Nigerian academic bags Prestigious Qatar Literary Award for Arabic-Fulfulde Translation

Caroline Ameh

QATAR

A Nigerian scholar, Abubakar Muhammad Kabri, has earned international recognition after emerging as a winner at the 12th edition of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in Qatar.

Kabri, an educationist and researcher from Taraba State, was honoured in the Achievement Category for his contributions to translating literary works involving Arabic and Fulfulde, a widely spoken West African language also known as Fulani.

The recognition places Nigeria among five countries whose scholars and institutions were celebrated at the 2026 edition of the prestigious international award.

According to the organisers, the competition attracted 256 nominations from 33 countries, with winners selected from Nigeria, Azerbaijan, China, Guinea and Italy.

Established in 2015, the Sheikh Hamad Award promotes literary translation as a tool for strengthening international understanding, cultural exchange and communication between Arabic-speaking communities and the rest of the world.

Over its 12 editions, the initiative has featured works involving approximately 40 languages from more than 50 countries.

The 2026 award ceremony was held at the Marsa Malaz Kempinski Hotel in Doha, with prominent Qatari officials, diplomats and international guests in attendance.

PUBLIC AUCTION

POLICE PRESS RELEASE

The Edo State Police Command wishes to inform members of the general public that there will be a public auction at State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Edo State Command.

STATE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT (SCID)

(1) One unregistered Benz GLA, (2) One unregistered Benz GLE 350 (3) One unregistered Benz C350 (4) One unregistered Benz C300 (5) one Toyota Hiace Bus.

Therefore, members of the public are hereby advised within twenty one (21) days expiration of this publication to go to the above mentioned Police Station to check, with a valid and authentic documents in respect of the items for claim. After the expiration of this publication, the items will be sold on Public Auction accordingly. For further enquiries, please call GSM No 09056530763.

SIGNED: **ASP ENO IKOEDEM,** ANIPR,
Police Public Relations Officer,
Edo State Police Command, Benin City.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MISSING LAND DOCUMENTS

The general public is hereby notified that I, **(PASTOR) MRS EXCEL IMARIAGBE (NEE OSAWE)** is the rightful owner of a land measuring 110ft by 120ft, Comprising of two bungalow buildings lying and situate at no 8a and 8b, OSAWE Lane off Iwehen street off Wire Road, Benin City Edo state. That the said property above was given to me by the family after the burial ceremony of my late father (**Late Mr. Apostle Donald Sunday Ighedosa OSAWE**) as my own share of property from my father in accordance with the Bini Native Law and Custom and I was given the sharing documents. That the same documents have been in my possession since then as was shared to me years ago, only for me to discover recently that the documents and some of my personal belongings were missing. Hence, my report to notify the general public and concerned authorities to please take note.

Signed: Pastor Mrs. **EXCEL IMARIAGBE**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss FAITH CHINEMEREM OCHIAGHA**.Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs, FAITH CHINEMEREM OBI**. All former documents Remain valid. Concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note

ADDITION OF NAME

I, formerly known as **OJIOTOFOH SATURDAY**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OJIOTOFOH SATURDAY OTAIGBE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public and all concerned authorities to take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I Formerly known as **BENJAMIN EHIKIOYA JOHNSON**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IGENE JOHNSON**, all former documents remain valid, concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

REARRANGEMENT OF NAME/ CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

The general public is here by notified that **NKEMJIKA JOY** and **NKEMJIKA JOY IFEOMA** is one and the same person, henceforth, now wish to be known and addressed as **NKEMJIKA JOY IFEOMA**, and also my correct date of birth is 18th day of August, 1979 and not 28th day of August, 1977, all former documents remain valid, concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME / CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

I Formerly known as **AZOBOR COMFORT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ESORAE COMFORT** and also my correct date of birth is 1st day of January,1955 and not 22nd day of JUNE, 1956 as was wrongly captured on my Bank Verification Number, all former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

REMOVAL OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **EGWUATU OGBETA IRIA**. As captured on my national Identification number (NIN) and not **OGBETA EDORE**. as captured on my corporate affairs commission (CAC) certificate. All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF SURNAME AND CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

I, formerly known as **APPEAL ELIZABETH UZEZI** now wish to be known and addressed as **APPEAL- IVRI ELIZABETH UZEZI**. And also my correct date of birth is 15 th day of June 1990, and not 15 th day of June 1985. All former documents remain valid. Concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I Formerly known as **MR. KENNETH OSARETIN IGBINOVIA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MR. OSARETIN MARK IDEHEN**, all former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME

I formerly known as **HAPPY EHICHIOYA** now wish to be known as **HAPPY EHICHIOYA OMOBHO** Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **RITA UCHECHI MADUGBA** now wish to be known as **RITA UCHECHI EZIHE**. Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should take note.

ADDITION OF NAME

I formerly known as **HAPPY EHICHIOYA** now wish to be known as **HAPPY EHICHIOYA OMOBHO** Former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **ARUKU SAMUEL MONDAY** and **ARUKU MONDAY** are one and the same person. Henceforth, I now wish to be known and addressed as **ARUKU SAMUEL MONDAY**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **IGBINOVIA NEISON**. and **IGBINOVIA NEISON OSARO** is one and the same person. Hence,Now wish to be known and addressed as **IGBINOVIA NEISON OSARO**. All former documents Remain valid. concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss OGBONNA HELEN OKACHI**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs. OSUKU HELEN OKACHI**. All former documents Remain valid. concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as miss **RACHEL ANETOR**, Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs RACHEL MOFFAT**. And also my correct date of birth is 1th OCTOBER 1983 and not 10th OCTOBER 1983, All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss, AGABI CECILIA AGBOMUOFUEGBE**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs. CECILIA AGBOMUOFUEGBE NOSAKHARE**. All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME/ CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

The general public is here by notified that my correct name is **ISOGO JOSEPH** and not **AIOGUO JOSEPH** as was wrongly captured in my Bank Verification Number, and also my correct date of birth is 10th April, 2003 as shown on my National Identification number and not 10th April, 2002, all former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NEXT OF KIN

I, formerly known as **EMUZOR OYEACHOLAMOKWU**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **MR. BAMIDELE AGBEBAKU**.All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Miss, OMOROGBE RUTH UWA**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs. IGIEHON RUTH UWA**. All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF MLDDLE NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **WILSON IDAHOR ODUAGBON** and **WILSON IDAHOR** are one and the same person. Henceforth, I wish to be known and addressed as WILSON IDAHOR ODUAGBON.All former documents Remain valid concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the general public that, I, **UHUNWANGHO DERICK ISAAC**, have resigned my appointment as a Legislative Assistant to Senator Neda Bernards Imasuen since March 2nd 2026.

That I served him diligently until the 2nd March 2026, when I voluntarily resigned vide a resignation letter to pursue my political career under the platform of the People Democratic Party, PDP.

That I am no longer on his appointment, as I also expect him to communicate same to the National Assembly Commission

The general public and concerned authorities should please take note.

Signed: **UHUNWANGHO DERICK ISAAC**

CORRECTION OF NAME/DATE OF BIRTH

I formerly known as **OBIORA CHINNAEDU** now wish to be known and addressed as **OBIORA SYLVESTER CHINEDU** and also my correct date of birth is 15/8/1974 and not 16/2/2004. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF MIDDLE NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **WILSON IDAHOR ODUAGBON** and **WILOSN IDAHOR** are one and the same person, Henceforth I now wish to be known and addressed as **WILSON IDAHOR ODUAGBON**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME/CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

I formerly known as **ANIFIOK VICTOR AKANIYENE** now wish to be known and addressed as **GEORGE AKANIYENE ANIEFIOK** as captured on my (NIN) and also my correct date of birth is 3/8/2000 and not 8/3/2000. as wrongly captured on my BVN. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME/ CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

The general public is hereby notified that **IDIARU BEATRICE** and **IDIARU BEATRICE UWA** are one and the same person, Henceforth I now wish to be known and addressed as **IDIARU BEATRICE UWA** and also my correct date of birth is 16/7/1963 and not 16/7/1964 as wrongly captured on my BVN. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OMOREKIE EKE** now wish to be known and addressed as **IKPONMWOSA AMUSA EKE**. All former documents remain valid concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

APOLOGY TO THE ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENT DOCTORS UBTH

I, CYNTHIA HANSON wish to sincerely tender my unreserved apology for the unfortunate incident that occurred last week Monday 16th day of November, 2026 in the Hospital premises. It is with deep regret that I acknowledge the distress and harm caused by my action, which were completely uncalled for and unacceptable, it was due to some circumstance beyond my control.

I take full responsibility for actions and the impact they have on your member and the Management at large. I am committed to learning from experience and ensuring that such an incident does not occur again in future.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt apology to the Association of Resident Doctors, UBTH, and to the members affected by my actions. I hope this rebuild trust and demonstrate my commitment to upholding the values peace.

SIGNED:
CYNTHIA HANSON

PUBLIC NOTICE

CULT RENUNCIATION

The general public is hereby notified that I, **OSADOLOR FESTUS** has renounced my membership with Eiye Confraternity. I joined the Confraternity in the year 2009 in Benin City, Edo State. I decided to renounce and withdraw my membership from Eiye Confraternity, due to the violent act of the group.

That I, **OSADOLOR FESTUS** is no longer a member of Eiye Confraternity. The general public, concerned authorities and security agencies, should please take note.

SIGNED:
OSADOLOR FESTUS

ESAN NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

P.M.B 013, UROMI, EDO STATE, NIGERIA.

Our Ref: C.24/T1/68 *Date:* 23rd November, 2026

ADDENDUM TO ADVERT PUBLICATION
RE-INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE UNDERLISTED PROJECTS:

Reconstruction/Asphalting of Ujie-Oro Street, Esan North East Local Government. Uromi.1158

Constructiom/Asphalting of chief Odijie Esogban Road ,Esan North East Local Government, Uromi C. 1159

With reference to our advertisement published in The Nigerian Observer on **Wednesday, 18th November, 2026.**

Esan North East Local Government Council hereby informs all interested bidders and the general public that the bid opening exercise earlier scheduled to hold on **24th November, 2026** has been postponed. And submission of bid now **ends on the 10th December, 2026 at 12 noon.**

The new proposed date for the bid opening exercise is now fixed for **Thursday, 10th December,** 2026 at **2:00pm,** at the Council Secretariat, Uromi, Edo State. All other terms and conditions of the tender remain unchanged.

All other items, conditions and information in the original advertisement remain unchanged and valid.

Signed
Barr. Akhimie Gladys Edogiawerie
HOLGA.
Esan North East Local Government Council.
For:
Executive Chairman,
Esan North East Local Government Council.

EDO STATE UNIVERSITY, IYAMHO

Km7, Auchi-Abuja Road, Iyamho-Uzairue,
Edo State, Nigeria

8TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY
PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

The Vice-Chancellor, **Professor Victor O. Adetimirin, FNPBA**, on behalf of the Governing Council, Senate, Management, Staff and Students of Edo State University, Iyamho, hereby announces the University's **8th Convocation Ceremony**, holding on **Saturday, 28th November 2026, at 11:00 a.m.**at the **Aliko Dangote Auditorium**. The ceremony features the award of postgraduate degrees, postgraduate diplomas, first degrees and prizes.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

Sunday, 22nd November, 2026

7:00 a.m. Thanksgiving Service; St Joseph Catholic Church, Iyamho.

Monday, 23rd November, 2026

10:00 a.m. Vice-Chancellor's Press Briefing, University Senate Chambers.

Tuesday, 24th November, 2026

10:00 a.m. Flag-off of Two-Day Free Medical Outreach (24th–25th November).

Wednesday, 25th November, 2026

3:00 p.m. Novelty Football Match: (i) University Staff versus Auchi Coaches; (ii) Female Academic Staff versus Female Non-Academic Staff.

Thursday, 26th November, 2026

2:00 p.m. Convocation Lecture: "That Nigeria's Higher Education System May Fulfil Its Purpose". **Lecturer:**Professor Labode Popoola, Ph.D., FFAN. **Distinguished Guest:**Professor Andrew Haruna, FNAL, FLAN. **Special Guest:**Dr Washington O. Osifo, Commissioner for Education, Edo State. **5:00 p.m.**Vice-Chancellor's Cocktail.

Friday, 27th November, 2026

1:00 p.m. Jumat Prayers; Iyamho Central Mosque.

Saturday, 28th November, 2026

11:00 a.m.8th Convocation Ceremony; Aliko Dangote Auditorium.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parents, guardians, guests and members of the public are advised to arrive early for processing and seating. Admittance into the official venue shall be subject to university security and seating arrangements. Guests are required to present invitation cards and means of identification. Vehicles are to be parked in designated areas, and all visitors are expected to comply with traffic, security and ceremonial instructions issued by authorised university personnel.

Guests and students are to be seated by 10:30 a.m.

NOTICE TO GRADUATING STUDENTS

Graduating students are required to comply with all academic, administrative and ceremonial regulations relating to the Convocation. Participation in the academic procession requires the use of approved academic gowns. Graduands are to obtain from their Faculties, Departments, the Registry and the Ceremonials Committee information on fees, robing, procession, invitation cards, official materials, clearance and collection of their certificates. **Graduands are to converge at 10:00 a.m. at the E-Library Building where they will receive important instructions.**

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

The Governing Council, Senate, Management, Staff and Students congratulate all graduands and thank their parents, guardians and sponsors. The University welcomes all guests to its 8th Convocation Ceremony and wishes everyone a memorable celebration.

Special Guest of Honour: His Excellency, Senator Monday Okpebholo, Executive Governor of Edo State and Visitor to Edo State University, Iyamho.

ENQUIRIES

Toksi Omage-Umeh, FCPM, MANUPA(Registrar): 0703 888 7811
Professor Harriet Efanodor-Obeten, Ph.D.(Chairperson, Ceremonials Committee): 0803 943 0181

Signed
Toksi Omage-Umeh, FCPM, MANUPA
Registrar and Secretary to Council

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

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

1.	**MR. JOSIAH OSAHON IMAFIDON**, late of Useni, Ikpoba Okha L.G.A., who died on the 30th day of January, 2021 in Benin City.	**PED/438/2021** Mr. Emmanuel Eghosa Imafidon and Mrs. Edith Amenaghawon Ekhovbiye of No 74, Sakponba Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
2.	**MR. AIBANGBEE JAMES EGHAREVBA**, late of Orogho, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 16th day of June, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/817/2026** Mrs. Hannah Osauwmen Ikharia and Miss. Gift Aisosa Egharevba of No 32, Ikponwosa Street, Off St Saviour Road, Off Upper Sakponba Road, Benin City, daughters of the deceased.
3.	**MADAM. CORDELIA RHODASADO-OMOZEGBAI**, late of Jattu-Uzairue, Etsako West L.G.A., who died on the 7th day of January, 2024 in Benin City.	**PED/827/2026** Mr. Temidayo Modestus Ebiniyi and Mr. Cosmas Oshomah Sado of No 8, NTA Road, Jattu, Edo State, son and brother respectively of the deceased.
4.	**MR. EDOKPOLOR SUNDAY EMMANUEL ERABOR (A.K.A) ERABOR EDOKPOLOR EMMANUEL SUNDAY**, late of Obahenhen, Ovia North East L.G.A., who died on the 25th day of March, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/803/2026** Mr. Abraham Eloghosa Edokpolor and Mrs. Kehinde Erabor Edokpolor of Asakpa Street, Idunmwunowina, Off Benin-Auchi Road, Benin City, son and widow respectively of the deceased.
5.	**MR. WELLINGTON IMADUERHIE**, late of Izikhiri, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 24th day of October, 2026 in Italy.	**PED/810/2026** Mr. Edobor Victor and Mrs. Esther Esohe Imaduerhie of No 4, Uhumarogie Close, Ikpoba Hill, Benin City, brother and mother respectively of the deceased.
6.	**MRS. EUNICE EGHE OKAO**, late of Uselu, Egor L.G.A., who died on the 27th day of March, 2013 in United Kindgdom.	**PED/806/2026** MR. Aifesehi Uhunamure and Mr. Omorogieva Tommy Okao of No 3, Obaze Street, Off Abuja Quarters, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
7.	**MR. WALE SANI**, late of Kebi, Baudu North L.G.A, Kebbi State, who died on the 26th day of July, 2025 in Kebbi.	**PED/807/2026** Mrs. Rabi Sani and Mr. Yahuza Attahiru of No 40, Sakponba Road, Benin City, widow and cousin respectively of the deceased.
8.	**MR. WELLINGTON OKHOMINA**, late of Udo, Egor L.G.A., who died on the 17th day of September, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/816/2026** Mr. Favour Oduwa Okhomina and Miss. Oghogho Happy Okhomina of No 2, Okhomina Street, Off Akara Depot, Along Siluko Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
9.	**MRS. ROSE OLOTU**, late of Utekon, Ovia North East L.G.A., who died on the 14th day of August, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/845/2026** Mrs. Imade Olotu Osawe and Mr. Osayamen Anthony Ojo of No 15 Egbon Street, Ugbowo, Benin City, daughter and nephew respectively of the deceased.
10.	PASTOR. AUSTIN IKECHUKWU OBED, late of Namkpu, Awka South L.G.A., Anambra State, who died on the 20th day of March, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/835/2026** Mrs. Favour Chikwado Austin Obed and Mr. Temple Okechukwu Austin of No 3, Izekor Street, Off Upper Mission Road, Benin City, widow and son respectively of the deceased.
11.	**MR. OGBE FRIDAY EGHAREVBA**, late of Iguadolor, Ovia North East L.G.A., who died on the 9th day of October, 2025 in Iguadolor.	**PED/818/2026** Mrs. Beauty Egharevba and Mr. Osarumen Ebenezer Egharevba of No 5, Aliu igbinogie Street, Iguadolor, widow and son respectively of the deceased.
12.	**MR. VICTOR OSAROGIE OSAGHAE**, late of Ugoneki, Ikpoba Okha L.G.A., who died on the 13th day of September, 2023 in Benin City.	**PED/742/2026** Mrs. Philomena Emike Osaghae and Mrs. Isoken Sandra Aiwerioghene of No 2, Hillary Street, Off ADP, Airport Road, Benin City, widow and family friends respectively of the deceased.
13.	**MR. CHRISTOPHER EDUVIE URHIE**, late of Okpare, Ughelli South L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 10th day of September, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/800/2026** Mr. Urhie Emmanuel Ogaga and Mrs. Roseline Ovoyetanurun Unugbro of No 10, Obanosa Street, Off 2nd East Circular Raod, Benin City,
14.	**MR. PETER OKOGUN**, late of Ubiaja, Esan South East L.G.A., who died on the 5th day of June, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/844/2026** Mrs. Evelyn Osemudiamhen Eromosele and Miss. Ehinomhen Blessing Okogun of No 30, Obanor Street, BIU, GRA, Benin City, daughters of the deceased.
15.	**MR. RAFIU OLAMILEKAN SULEMAN**, late of Oke-Baale, Osogbo L.G.A., Osun State, who died on the 6th day of May, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/522/2026** Mr. Sodiq Olalekan Sulaimon and Miss. Odunayo Zainab Suleman of Femi Close, Off Oluku Primary School, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
16.	**MR. PHILIP AFENSUMU**, late of Okpuje, Owan West L.G.A., who died on the 21st day of October, 2022 in Auchi.	**PED/841/2026** Madam. Grace Olubunmi Osayameh and Mr. Augustine Affensumu of Opposite 247 Hotel, Kubwa, Abuja, widow and son respectively of the deceased
17.	**MR. FRANCIS OGHENEJABOR IMONIEFE**, late of Ozoro, Isoko North L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 16th day of June, 2023 in Benin City.	**PED/674/2026** Orevaoghene Imoniefe and Miss. Onome Imoniefe of No 38, Orobosa Street, Off Omokaro Street, Off Siluko Road, Benin City, daughters of the deceased.
18.	**MR. OSIGWE HILLARY (A.K.A) HILLARY IRONUZO OSIGWE**, late of Umuokobo Lowa Okatta, Ihitte/Uboma L.G.A., Imo State, who died on the 10th day of April, 2021 in Benin City.	**PED/695/2026** Ms. Ese Akpolo and Mr. Mike Matthew Odianose of No 3, Baptist Road, Ologbo, Edo State, widow and brother Prespectively of the deceased.
19.	**MR. IKPONMWOSA WALTER IYEN**, late of Urho, Oredo L.G.A., who died on the 30th day of January, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/525/2025** Mrs. Imuwahen Sarah Iyen and Racheal Ehibor of No 14, Ogbebor Street, off M.M.Way Road, Benin City, widow and family friend respectively of the deceased.
20.	**MR. HAPPY ERHUNMWUSE**, late of Sokponba, Oredo L.G.A., who died on the 24th day of July, 2024 in Benin City.	**PED/255/2026** Mrs. Anthonia Ekenobaye Erhunmwuse and Mr. Sunday Eghosa Osunde of No 14, Ehiorobo Street, Off Dumez Road, Benin City, widow and cousin respectively of the deceased.
21.	**MRS. RHODA ARROW**, late of Orogun, Ughelli North L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 26th day of July, 2026 in Iguobazuwa.	**PED/826/2026** Mrs. Manasseh Joy and Mr. Reuben Egoro of No 6, Oko Central Road, GRA, Benin City, daughter and son respectively of the deceased.
22.	**MRS. ROSE MOJI** late of Udo, Ovia North East L.G.A, who died on the 22nd day of July, 2022 in Benin City.	**PED/854/2026** Mr. Bright Oforpele and Mr. Lucky Moni Moji of No 28, Along Benin Agbor Road, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
23.	**INSP. FRANCIS SATURDAY ETUMUDOR**, late of Idumesah, Ika North East L.G.A, Delta State, who died on the 23rd day of October, 2020 in Nnewi.	**PED/855/2026** Mrs. Blessing Issabella Francis and Miss. Goodness Ukamaka Francis of No 40, Imade Street, Off Upper Sakponba Road, Benin City, widow and daughter respectively of the deceased.
24.	**MR. OBASIGIE EMMANUEL AIBANGBEE (A.K.A) EMMANUEL OBAS AIBANGBEE (A.K.A) EMMANUEL AIGBANGBEE**, late of Ogbe, Oredo L.G.A., who died on the 20th day of August, 2026 in Jos.	**PED/777/2026** Mr. Uyilawa Joseph Aibangbee and Mr. Efe John Aibangbee of No 6, Old Oguanogbe Street, Opposite Oba Palace, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
25.	**MR. CHINEZE ANSELEM ELOANYI**, late of Ozom, Ezeagu L.G.A., Enugu State, who died on the 12th day of January, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/618/2026** Ngozi Faustina Eloanyi and Otitodilichukwu Martin Eloanyi Street J, off Covenant Road, Upper Mission Ext, Uteh, Benin City, widow and son respectively of the deceased.
26.	**PROF. CHRISTOPHER AJUEYISHI DIME**, late of Iboro, Ovia North East L.G.A., who died on the 28th day of February, 2024 in Yenagoa.	**PED/745/2026** Mr. Nnamdi Edauemi Dime and Mr. Temetua Dime of No 6, Bright Street, Off St Leo Catholic Church Road, Amagba, Benin City, sons the deceased.
27.	**MR. FELIX BENETU OYEBHE**, late of Iraokor, Etsako West L.G.A., who died on the 25th day of February, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/759/2026** Mr. Jesse Anosi Benetu and Mr. Gabriel Benetu of Youth Road, Okpagha Quarters, Off Benin Auchi Road, Eyaen, Benin City, sons of the
28.	**MR. UCHECHUKWUKA NDUDI NWOKOH**, late of Ossissa, Ndokwa East L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 13th day of June, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/421/2026** Mr. Nnamdi Waiter Nwokoh and Mr. Ugochukwu Nwokoh of Ogun Village, Orhionmwon L.G.A, Edo State, sons of the deceased.
29.	**MR. ANTHONY AZUBUIKE GBOGWU**, late of Agua, Esan Central L.G.A., who died on the 22nd day of July, 2024 in Asaba.	**PED/838/2026** Mr. John Chukwuweike Gbogwu and Miss. Esther Chinonso Gbogwu of No 24, Aviation Street, Off Joromi Street, Off Ekenwan Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
30.	**MRS. GRACE MAUDELINE ERIBO**, late of Ogbe, Oredo L.G.A., who died on the 12th day of July, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/466/2026** Mr. Nosa Jacob Eribo and Miss. Itohan Eribo of No 2, 4th Uwa lane, Off Uwa Street, 2nd East Circular Road, Benin City, Step son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
31.	**MRS. JOY IKHAILOSE ARMSTRONG EWAH**, late of Otuo, Owan East L.G.A, who died on the 29th day of October, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/831/2026** Mr. Armstrong Ekpen Ewah and Mr. Freedom Armstrong Ewah of Goshen City, Km 10, Upper Ekenwan Road, Benin City, widower and son respectively of the deceased.
32.	**MR. CEPHAS AUGUSTINE NWABEZE (A.K.A) CEPHASE IFEANYICHUKU AUGUSTINE NWABEZE**, late of Obiaruku, Ukwuani L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 11th day of November, 2024 in Benin City.	**PED/804/2026** Miss. Becknee Nkechi Nwabeze and Mrs. Margaret Etemini Nwabeze of No 9, 2nd Uwadia Street, Off Adolor College Road, Benin City, daughter and widow respectively of the deceased.
33.	MR. MARK OLUWADAMILOLA EJALONIBU, late of Abeokuta, Abeokuta South L.G.A., Ogun State, who died on the 13th day of October, 2026 in Abuja.	**PED/871/2026** Mr. Taofeek Alao Ejalonibu and Miss. Lucy Oluwatobi Ewea Ejalonibu of No 7, Hillary Street, Off Airport Road, Oko, Benin City, son and sister respectively of the deceased.
34.	**DEACON. PETER OSADOLOR OGBEBOR (A.K.A) PETER OGBEBOR**, late of Agbonmoba, Ikpoba-Okha L.G.A., who died on the 22nd day of April, 2026 in Abuja.	**PED/808/2026** Osayamen Mokogwu Esq and Mrs. Eki Ogbebor of Plot 109, Ogbe-Ibuya Layout, Aerodrome Close, Benin City, daughter and widow respectively872 of the deceased.
35.	**MRS. AGNES OKOELIBO**, late of Uwalor, Esan North East L.G.A., who died on the 24th day of January, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/872/2026** Mr. Precious Precious Oyameda and Mr. Ehizogie Oyameda of No 5, Ekosodin Road, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
36.	**MRS. EUNICE EHIKWE**, late of Igbanke, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 17th day of July, 2018 in Benin City.	**PED/783/2026** Mrs. Blessing Ngozi Aifuwa and Miss. Favour Osagioduwa of No 7, Emeubore Street, Off Uselu Lagos Road, Benin City, daughter and granddaughter respectively of the deceased.
37.	**MR. JAMES MICHAEL BASSEY**, late of Ndot-Ikpe, Ini L.G.A., Akwa-Ibom State, who died on the 1st day of January, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/683/2026** Miss. Deborah Israel Bassey, Miss. Stella Bassey Israel and Mrs. Idongesit Israel Bassey of No 10, Ugiagbe Street, Off Ojo Street, Off Uwasota Road, Benin City, widow and daughters respectively of the deceased.
38.	**MR. DAVID AKWAYEVU OKENU**, late of Eniagbedhi, Isoko North L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 17th day of August, 2026 in Eniagbedhi.	**PED/850/2026** Mr. Godswill Oghenerumemu Okenu and Miss. Rosemary Oghenehomefon Okenu of No 8A, Osasere Osayogie Street, Aso Rock, Iduowina, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
39.	**DR. (PHARM). MARCELLINUS OLATUNDE ALAKIJA**, late of Idioro, Ikeja L.G.A., Lagos State, who died on the 12th day of November, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/802/2026** Mrs. Temitope Taiwo Alakija and Mr. Oluwatosin Eleazar Alakija of UBTH Senior Staff Quarters, Ora Town, Akure Road, Benin City, widow and son respectively of the deceased.
40.	**MRS. PATIENCE JOY OMOBUDE**, late of Urhonigbe, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 8th day of January, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/717/2026** Mr. Osaretin Omobude and Mr. Osahenoma caleb Omobude of No 5, Grane Street, Off Ogbesan Quarters, Benin City, widower and son respectively of the deceased.
41.	**MR. NOSAKHARE EDOMWONYI**, late of Ogan, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 6th day of March, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/858/2026** Miss. Glory Edomwonyi and Mrs. Juliet Ese Yusuf of No 17, Uyigue Street, Off Upper Uwa Street, Off 3rd East Circular Road, Benin City, daughters of the deceased.
42.	**MR. CLEMENT EGHE OVIAWE**, late of Iguogbe, Uhunmwonde L.G.A, who died on the 5th day of November, 2007, in Benin City.	**PED/839/2026** Mrs. Stella Owomwan Oviawe and Mrs. Jane Iriagbonse Alohan of No 16, Dandy Avenue, Off Okhoro Road, Benin City, daughter and widow respectively of the deceased.
43.	**MRS. URSULA AMULIEGBE IKUOBASE**, late of Jattu, Etsako West L.G.A., who died on the 20th day of March, 2026, in Benin City.	**PED/696/2026** Ikuobase Roland Osarumwense and Raymond Osahitohan Idubor Esq of No 34, Aerodrome Close, Ekenwan Road, Benin City, widower and family friend respectively of the deceased.
44.	**MR. DANIEL IGBINEHI EBOHON**, late of Orgho, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 3rd day of April, 2026, in Benin City.	**PED/662/2026** Mr. Olu Ebohon and Mr. Uyi Ebohon of No 4, Maternity Road, Urhuehue village, Orhionmwon L.G.A., Edo State, sons of the deceased.
45.	**MR. DANIEL EMWINGHARE OSAYANDE**, late of Urhonigbe, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 1st day of April, 2016, in Benin City.	**PED/653/2020** Mr. Solomon Osaro Osayande and Mr. osaivbie Osayande of No 58, Akengbuda Street, Ogbeson Quarters, Benin City, sons of the deceased.
46.	**MISS. ZULIAT MUHAMMED** late of Imiegba, Etsako East L.G.A., who died on the 21st day of September, 2025, in Benin City.	**PED/859/2026** Amanat Onagiemhize Salifu and Zainab Otuemobe Salif of No 10, Eboigbe Street, Off NIPOST Road, By Egor Market, sister and mother respectively of the deceased.
47.	**MR. TIMOTHY EHIJIEMEN ENABOIFO**, late of Ekpoma, Esan West L.G.A., who died on the 24th day of January, 2026, in Irrua.	**PED/739/2026** Mrs. Mercy Irekpitan Enaboifo and Mrs. Angela Okojie of No 18, Osajie Street, Off Lucky Way, Benin City, widow and sister respectively of the deceased.
48.	**MR. PETER EZEUNWA OHAJI**, late of Okponkwume, Ekwerazuahazumbais L.G.A., Imo State, who died on the 1st day of September, 2021, in Idogbo.	**PED/864/2026** Mr. Chukwudi Charles Peters and Miss. Chinyere Favour Ohaji of No 1, Divine Close, Adima Street, Off Sapele Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
49.	**MR. JONAH AISAGBONBUOMWAN**, late of Iguediayi, Egor L.G.A., who died on the 9th day of August, 2026, in Benin City.	**PED/900/2026** Mr. Osaretin Aiyevbomwan and Miss. Evelyn Aiyevbomwan of No 22, Imuetinyanosa Street, Off New Road, Ugbiyokho Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
50.	**MR. AISAGBONRIOBA OSAZUWA**, late of Uhi, Uhunmwonde L.G.A., who died on the 9th day of January, 2026, in Benin City.	**PED/890/2026** Miss. Loretha Juliet Isibor and Mr. Osemwengie Handel Osazuwa of No 4, Osayande State, Off Jamilar Road, Ikpoba Hill, Benin City, daughter and widow respectively of the deceased.
51.	**MR. FRIDAY OGBE**, late of Igbanke, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 1st day of April, 2025, in Benin City.	**PED/834/2026** Mr. Wisdom Ikechukwu Ogbe and Miss. Gift Chukwuyem Ogbe of No 15, Imatitikua Street, Off Erediauwa Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
52.	**MRS. ELIZABETH UWAMOKUN IGBINEVBO**, late of Oza, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 14th day of February, 2021, in Benin City.	**PED/912/2026** Mr. Uyioghosa Ikponmwosa Igbinevbo and Mrs. Eseosa Eghe Darlingekanem of No 3, Evbuomwan Close, Off Edo Street., Off BTC Road, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
53.	**MRS. HELEN OSARUGUE OSAWE**, late of Udo, Ovia South West L.G.A., who died on the 26th day of May, 2025, in Benin City.	**PED/878/2026** Mr. Sylvester Osabuohien Osawe and Miss. Hilda Oghorose Osawe of No 8, Iyengumwena Street, Off Egor Secretariat Road, Uselu, Benin City, son and daughter respectively of the deceased.
54.	**MR. PATRICK EDEKIN ENAHORO**, late of Eme-Ora, Owan West L.G.A., who died on the 3rd day of March, 2026, in Sabongidda-Ora.	**PED/773/2026** Madam. Loveth Mercy Oriri and Mr. Julius Osa Uwumagbe of No 16, Idahosa Street, Off Uwelu Road, Benin City, widow and family friend respectively of the deceased.

DATED THIS 26th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

NEWS

High energy costs, inefficient ports hurting Nigeria exports — NEXIM Bank

ABUJA

The Nigerian Export-Import Bank has identified high energy costs, inefficient ports, inadequate infrastructure and limited access to finance as major constraints undermining the competitiveness of Nigerian exports in international markets.

The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NEXIM Bank, Abubakar Bello, disclosed this on Thursday in Abuja at the bank's stakeholder forum themed 'Leveraging the AfCFTA for Enhanced Nigerian Export Competitiveness and Economic Diversification'.

Bello warned that Nigeria risked losing out on the opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area unless it addressed structural challenges affecting domestic production and the movement of goods.

"High energy costs, inadequate infrastructure, inefficient ports, limited access to finance, and regulatory bottlenecks still hold us back. And we must confront them decisively," he said.

The NEXIM boss explained that while the AfCFTA provided Nigerian businesses access to a continental market of about 1.4 billion people, it also exposed domestic producers to increased competition from other African countries.

"Trade agreements open markets, but competitiveness determines who succeeds in them," Bello added.

He noted that disruptions to shipping routes arising from conflicts in the Middle East had increased energy and freight costs, while changing tariff policies among major economies had strengthened the case for regional trade.

Citing data from the African Export-Import Bank, Bello said intra-African trade grew by 5.5 per cent to $213.8bn in 2025, while Nigeria's total trade with Africa increased by 21 per cent to $9.02bn.



NEWS CONFERENCE:
From left: Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment, Sen. John Enoh; representative of the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Yuguda Abubakar and the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Export-Import Bank, Abba Bello; during the 2026 NEXIM Bank stakeholders engagement forum and 35 years Anniversary of the Bank in Abuja on Thursday

2027: FG pledges to protect voters, INEC officials

The Federal Government has pledged to safeguard voters, politicians, electoral officials and political parties before, during and after the 2027 general elections.

The promise came amid concerns over rising political violence and threats to the electoral process.

The National Security Adviser, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, gave the assurance on Thursday at the Strategic Election Security Conference, jointly organised in Abuja by the Independent National Electoral Commission and the Office of the National Security Adviser.

Ribadu said the government and security agencies would ensure the safety of Nigerians participating in the electoral process, including candidates and election workers.

"The duty of government and the security agencies is to protect voters, electoral officials and the wider population before, during and after the election. We will protect you. We will protect the voters. We will protect politicians. And even after the election, we will make sure there is no violence," he declared.

He said the administration of President Bola Tinubu was "committed to providing the security necessary for peaceful, transparent and credible elections".

The NSA also assured that security agencies would remain neutral in the discharge of their duties, stressing that their constitutional independence "must be protected and respected, especially now that we have a professor of law heading INEC".

"Security agencies will discharge their responsibilities impartially and in accordance with the law," he added.

Ribadu identified social media as a major challenge to election security, warning that the spread of false information could trigger unrest and heighten tensions among communities.

"Social media is a big problem. It creates false narratives and misinformation, causing problems among people. One individual, sitting somewhere in a village, could say something that triggers trouble," he said.

He also cautioned against politicians who, in their pursuit of power, could resort to violence and other unlawful means.

"Sometimes they become desperate. There is almost nothing they may not do," he said.

On his part, INEC Chairman, Joash Amupitan, criticised political parties that sign peace agreements in the Federal Capital Territory but allegedly tolerate or finance violence in their states.

"Signing peace accords in Abuja while tolerating or financing thuggery in the states is a contradiction our democracy can no longer afford," he said.

Amupitan said the commission had observed a rise in political violence since the commencement of open campaigns in August 2026, with attacks reported in several parts of the country.

He said Nigeria had witnessed "a disturbing escalation in political intolerance, incendiary rhetoric, and coordinated physical attacks" on campaign convoys, town hall meetings, party offices and supporters in Lagos, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Ebonyi, Delta, Cross River, Oyo and Benue states.

The INEC chairman said electoral officials and commission workers had also come under attack, noting that the incidents involved supporters and agents of political parties both within Nigeria and abroad.

"We will neither be intimidated nor blackmailed into compromising our neutrality, and every attack on INEC personnel, facilities, or materials will be met with the full weight of the law," he said.

He warned that responsibility for political violence extended beyond those directly involved in attacks, saying accountability "does not end with the foot soldiers who throw stones or wield weapons".

He stressed that "party leadership bears moral and political responsibility for the conduct of its candidates, campaign councils, and youth wings".

Tinubu ready for more local media interviews, says Bwala

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu is willing to grant more interviews to Nigerian journalists, his Special Adviser on Media and Policy Communications, Daniel Bwala, has said, acknowledging that the President should engage more with local media.

Bwala made the remarks during an interview on the Niger Unfiltered podcast published on Thursday, following questions about why the President had granted only one official interview with Nigerian media organisations in about three years and seven months in office.

Asked whether he considered the limited number of interviews acceptable, Bwala said he expected the President to do more.

"I expect us to do more. And the second time, you'll see more of that," he said.

He acknowledged that there had been occasions when the President agreed to grant interviews but later postponed them.

"There are a number of times in which the President called for media. At the 11th hour, he may have been advised, and then he would apologise and say some other time," Bwala said.

He added that Tinubu was willing to engage journalists and did not need to read prepared answers or receive briefings before granting interviews.

"There is a willingness to grant interviews on the part of the President. And the President, when granting interviews, didn't need to read anything, didn't need to be briefed," he said.

The presidential aide, however, defended the administration's approach to media engagement, arguing that the changing media landscape had provided different channels through which the President could communicate with Nigerians.

He said members of the press corps, representing mainstream, print, broadcast and social media platforms, covered the President's daily activities at the State House.

"In the State House press corps, we have representatives of the mainstream, the new media, the social media, and the print media. So every day, the activity of the President is covered by them," he said.

Bwala also argued that the Presidency should be allowed to choose the journalists and platforms it engages, rather than being pressured to grant interviews to particular media organisations.

"We control our narrative. We decide who we grant interviews to. Nobody can come and tell us, grant to this one and not the other one," he said.

He criticised some media practitioners for what he described as a lack of professionalism and alleged political bias, arguing that the President should engage journalists capable of conducting balanced interviews.

The discussion followed controversy over Tinubu's recent interview with American political strategist and media personality, Diana London, at the Presidential Villa in Abuja.

London met with the President on November 17, with photographs of the encounter showing her alongside Tinubu and his Chief of Staff, Femi Gbajabiamila. The interview was subsequently announced by Imran Muhammad, Senior Special Assistant on New Media to the All Progressives Congress National Chairman, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda, who said it would be released soon.

FG laments Nigeria's dependence on raw material exports

ABUJA

The Federal Government has raised concerns over Nigeria's continued dependence on raw material exports, disclosing that the country exported nearly six times as much in raw materials as manufactured goods in the second quarter of 2026, despite efforts to diversify the economy and promote industrialisation.

The Minister of State for Industry, John Enoh, FG laments Nigeria's dependence on raw material exportsdisclosed this on Thursday in Abuja at a stakeholder forum organised by the Nigerian Export-Import Bank, themed 'Leveraging the AfCFTA for Enhanced Nigerian Export Competitiveness and Economic Diversification'.

Citing data from the National Bureau of Statistics, Enoh noted that manufactured goods accounted for less than 1.5 per cent of Nigeria's total exports during the period, highlighting the country's limited capacity to convert its natural resources into higher-value products.

"Five products accounted for about 91 per cent of everything we sold to Africa. Manufactured goods, as the bureau classifies them, at N390bn, less than 1.5 per cent of our exports. We exported nearly six times as much in raw materials," the minister said.

Enoh noted that Nigeria recorded total exports of about N27tn in the second quarter, with crude oil accounting for less than half of the figure.

He added that Nigeria exported N6.65tn worth of goods to African countries while importing N1.10tn, resulting in a trade surplus of N5.55tn.

However, the minister expressed concern over the concentration of exports in a few products and the underutilisation of domestic industrial capacity amid electricity and financing constraints.

According to him, African countries purchased N213bn worth of Nigeria's manufactured exports, representing about 54.6 per cent of the N390bn recorded globally.

"The market is therefore telling us where our factories are wanted," he said.

Osun exempts statutory commissions, others from board dissolution

OSHOGBO

The Osun State Government has clarified that statutory commissions across the state are exempted from the dissolution of boards and political appointments announced after the valedictory State Executive Council meeting held on Wednesday.

The government said the exempted commissions include the Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSIEC), Civil Service Commission, Judicial Service Commission, State Assembly Service Commission and Local Government Service Commission.

According to a statement issued on Thursday by Mallam Olawale Rasheed, Spokesperson to Governor Ademola Adeleke, recently reconstituted boards, including those of Osun State University (UNIOSUN) and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), are also not affected by the dissolution.

The statement specifically clarified that the statutory commissions were not covered by the government's decision, while the recently reconstituted boards would also retain their status.

"Recently reconstituted boards like those of the UNIOSUN and SUBEB are not affected by the dissolution," the statement said.

The government further disclosed that Adeleke had extended his goodwill to members of the dissolved boards and former political appointees.

"Governor Ademola Adeleke wishes members of the dissolved boards and former political appointees the best in their new endeavours," the statement added.

The clarification is expected to provide further understanding of the scope of the dissolution and the categories of commissions and boards exempted from the exercise.



NEWS CONFERENCE:
Executive Chairman, Enugu State Internal Revenue Service (ESIRS), Mr Emmanuel Ekene-Nnamani (L), addressing newsmen on the activities of fake and fraudulent tax collectors by Non-State Actors including generator tax in Enugu on Thursday.

EFCC arraigns businessman, firm over N11m Canadian visa fraud

LAGOS

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has arraigned a businessman, Akinmusire Anthony, and his company, Socrates Travels and Tours Nigeria Limited, over an alleged N11m fraud involving a promise to secure a Canadian work visa.

According to a statement shared by the agency on Thursday, the defendants were arraigned on Wednesday, November 25, 2026, before Justice O.A. Okunuga of the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja Judicial Division, on a two-count charge of stealing and obtaining money by false pretence.

According to the EFCC, the defendants allegedly collected N11m from Egoma Felix Ehianua between September 8 and October 11, 2023, under the pretence that they could secure a Canadian working visa for him.

One of the counts stated, "That you, Akinmusire Olorunsola Anthony and Socrates Travels and Tours Nigeria Limited, between 8th September and 11th October, 2023, in Lagos within the jurisdiction of this Honourable court, fraudulently converted to your own use the sum of N11,000,000.00 (Eleven Million Naira), property of Egoma Felix Ehianua, thereby committing an offence to wit; Stealing contrary to Section 280 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015 and punishable under Section 287 of the same Law."

The second count accused them of obtaining the money under false pretences, stating that they claimed they were capable of securing a Canadian working visa for the complainant.

Police deny vendetta in detention of two activists in Ogun

ABEOKUTA

The Ogun State Police Command has denied allegations that a senior police officer, CSP Abimbola Oyeyemi, orchestrated the prolonged detention of two leaders of a civic organisation over a personal grudge.

The command said an internal review found no evidence of personal vendetta, abuse of office or deliberate obstruction of bail by Oyeyemi, insisting that the matter arose from a criminal investigation now before the Federal High Court in Abeokuta.

The police spokesperson, DSP Oluseyi Babaseyi, disclosed this in a statement on Thursday, following allegations by the Rights and Freedom Advocates that its president, Lukmon Soliu, and secretary, Oyebade Ahmed, had been in detention since May 4, 2026, over an alleged personal dispute with the officer.

The command said the case was formally instituted before the Federal High Court, Abeokuta Judicial Division, with proceedings commencing on May 4.

According to the statement, the defendants are facing three counts under the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act, 2015, as amended.

The charges border on conspiracy to commit cyberbullying and defamation, sending electronic messages allegedly intended to bully, threaten and harass, and publishing information alleged to be false and injurious to another person's reputation.

Explaining its position on the allegations, the command said, "Following an internal review, the command found no evidence of personal vendetta, abuse of office or deliberate obstruction of bail by the officer."

It maintained that the police had the statutory responsibility to investigate offences and initiate prosecutions but lacked the authority to determine bail applications or remand suspects.

"Once a matter is before a court, decisions concerning bail and remand fall within the jurisdiction of the presiding judge and should not be attributed to the investigating

Rivers senator demands sanctions over aides' assault at N'Assembly

ABUJA

The senator representing Rivers East, Allwell Onyesoh, on Thursday demanded sanctions against security operatives allegedly involved in the assault on two of his aides during a meeting of the Senate Committee on Appropriation on Wednesday.

Onyesoh, who condemned the incident, also called on the National Assembly management to conduct a transparent investigation, identify the operatives involved and ensure that those found culpable were punished.

The incident occurred at the entrance to the committee room during a meeting chaired by the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriation, Senator Solomon Adeola, popularly known as Yayi, who represents Ogun West.

The affected aides were identified as Kingsley Wali, a legislative aide, and Dr Kingsley Chioma Nwanyanwu, Special Adviser to Onyesoh on General Services.

Wali reportedly sustained a head injury and was left bleeding following a confrontation with security operatives allegedly attached to Adeola.

In a statement issued on Thursday by his Special Adviser on Publicity and Communications, Peter Oriri, Onyesoh disputed the account given by Adeola's media adviser, Chief Kayode Odunaro, that the incident resulted from a misunderstanding over access to a closed-door meeting.

The senator's camp maintained that the aides were performing their official duties and were already leaving the committee room after accompanying their principal when the confrontation occurred.

It said, "For the avoidance of doubt, there was no closed-door session in progress when the incident occurred. Any suggestion that they were attempting to forcefully gain access to a restricted meeting is therefore unfounded."

According to the statement, the security operatives first restrained, pushed and slapped Nwanyanwu, despite his having no intention of entering the meeting.

It alleged that when Wali intervened, the operatives turned on him, dragging him towards a staircase, pushing him down and hitting him on the head with the butt of a firearm.

The statement said Wali sustained a serious head injury and bled profusely, requiring urgent medical attention.

It further alleged that the same operatives attempted to arrest Nwanyanwu while he was seeking medical assistance for his injured colleague. Onyesoh's camp said the senator immediately left the committee meeting after being informed of the incident and brought the two aides before the committee, where the senators present condemned the assault.

Hardship, insecurity promoting Nigerians' political awareness – ACF spokesman

LAGOS

The Publicity Secretary of the Arewa Consultative Forum, Tukur Mohammed-Baba, has attributed growing public discontent the Tinubu's administration to worsening living conditions, poverty and insecurity.

Mohammed-Baba said the discontent is not confined to the North or driven by religious and regional divisions.

He stated this during an interview with Arise TV on Thursday.

He said the hardship confronting Nigerians had become a major source of dissatisfaction with the government, warning that political appointees would find it difficult to convince citizens about the administration's performance while many struggled to meet their basic needs.

He said, "I would rather see it not as anger from the North. I will talk about citizens are angry."

He cautioned against framing the country's political discontent around a North-South or religious divide, arguing that such narratives could obscure the underlying economic problems.

"When we keep promoting the binary of North-South divide or religion, we tend to mask the real problems. Let me say bluntly, the citizens are angry, and I don't think it's confined to the North alone," he said.

According to him, the dissatisfaction was evident in the reactions of Nigerians during political campaigns across the country, where opposition to the government was being expressed through public protests, confrontations and other displays of displeasure.

"When you look at the campaign trains that have been going all over the country, you will see that the opposition or the anger, displeasure, is palpably displayed. You can see it, the shouts, the violence and so on," he said.

Mohammed-Baba, however, acknowledged that the North appeared to be expressing significant political anger, which he linked directly to the economic and security conditions affecting residents.

He said living standards had deteriorated, poverty had increased and insecurity had made it difficult for many people to sustain their livelihoods, particularly those dependent on agriculture.

"There is no doubt that standards of living have become very challenged. Conditions of living have become very challenging. There is more poverty, there is greater difficulty," he said.

He added that insecurity had disrupted farming and other primary production activities, while the absence of processing industries had further weakened economic opportunities in the region.

Improve funding for Nigerian exporters, Cardoso urges banks

ABUJA

The Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Olayemi Cardoso, has called on commercial banks and development finance institutions to deepen collaboration to address financing constraints limiting the ability of Nigerian businesses to compete in international markets.

Cardoso said inadequate working capital remained a barrier to export growth, preventing businesses with confirmed orders from purchasing raw materials, obtaining certification, expanding production, and financing shipments.

He spoke on Thursday in Abuja at a stakeholder forum organised by the Nigerian Export-Import Bank, themed 'Leveraging the AfCFTA for Enhanced Nigerian Export Competitiveness and Economic Diversification.'

The CBN governor was represented by the Deputy Governor in charge of Financial System Stability, Isa Yuguda.

"A Nigerian firm may have a confirmed order but lack the working capital to purchase inputs, obtain certification, expand production, or finance shipment," Cardoso said.

He added, "The objective should not be for development finance institutions to replace commercial banks, but to crowd them in."

Cardoso urged NEXIM Bank to deploy its financing, guarantees, insurance and risk-sharing instruments to make viable export transactions bankable and attract more private capital.

He warned that Nigeria's dependence on a narrow range of export commodities exposed the economy to external shocks, stressing that diversification must translate into increased production, employment and sustainable foreign exchange earnings.

"Our ambition must extend beyond increasing export volumes. Nigeria must increase the value, sophistication, and competitiveness of what it exports," he said.

The governor advocated greater investment in manufacturing, agricultural processing, solid minerals, technology, services and the creative economy to strengthen Nigeria's participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area.

On foreign exchange reforms, Cardoso said the apex bank was committed to improving market transparency, liquidity, price discovery and efficiency to enable businesses to plan cross-border transactions.

He, however, warned exporters against violating foreign exchange regulations.

"Exporters are expected to comply with applicable documentation requirements and repatriate export proceeds within prescribed regulatory timelines," he said.

Cardoso added that monitoring export proceeds, verifying prices and maintaining appropriate documentation were necessary to curb import over-invoicing, export under-invoicing and illicit capital flows.

He said the digitisation of trade documentation and integration with the National Single Window would reduce processing times and transaction costs.

The governor also pledged continued collaboration with financial institutions to facilitate cross-border transactions through regional payment arrangements, including the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System.

He stressed that the CBN would focus on monetary and financial stability, while commercial banks provided scalable private financing and development finance institutions deployed specialised risk-sharing instruments.



NEWS CONFERENCE:
From left: Secretary, Nigeria Drug Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Shadrack Haruna; Chairman and Chief Executive, retired Brig.-Gen. Mohammed Marwa; Special Adviser to the Chairman, retired Col. Yakubu Bako and Director, Media and Advocacy, Mr Femi Babafemi, during a news conference on high profile operation carried by the agency, in Abuja on Wednesday

Offa robbery: Saraki vows to sue Abdulrazaq over AK-47 allegation

ABUJA

Former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, has threatened to sue Kwara State Governor, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq, for defamation after he leaves office, accusing him of making false and malicious allegations linking him to the 2018 Offa bank robbery.

Saraki, in a statement issued on Thursday by his media office and signed by Yusuph Olaniyonu, said he had instructed his lawyers to serve a pre-action notice on the governor, giving him an opportunity to withdraw his comments.

He warned that Abdulrazaq would face legal action after his tenure ends on May 29, 2027, adding that the suit would be instituted on June 1, 2027.

"Dr. Saraki has mandated his lawyers to serve a pre-action notice on Mr. Abdulrazaq and give him the opportunity to withdraw his defamatory statements. By June 1, 2027, he will face the full legal consequences of his defamatory statements in a court of law," the statement read.

The reaction followed comments reportedly made by Abdulrazaq on Wednesday, November 25, during a meeting with traditional rulers from Kwara South at an All Progressives Congress campaign flag-off.

In a video of the meeting circulated online, the governor accused Saraki of supplying AK-47 rifles to young men and blamed members of the Peoples Democratic Party for the killings during the Offa robbery.

Saraki described the governor's remarks as "reckless, false, and defamatory," accusing him of using the immunity granted to him by the Constitution to make allegations against the former Senate president.

The statement said, "Mr Abdulrazaq is hiding behind the immunity from prosecution accorded to him under Section 308 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). This is a crass abuse of power and misuse of the platform entrusted to him by the people."

It added that Saraki would respect the governor's present constitutional immunity but insisted that it would no longer protect him after leaving office.

The media office also faulted Abdulrazaq for making what it described as "false magisterial pronouncements" on a matter that had been investigated by the police, with reports submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federation.

The statement further said, "In a matter that had been investigated by the police, reports were submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) of the federation, and a criminal case was filed against the indicted person, Mr. Abdulrazaq turned himself in to the investigator, prosecutor, and the judge and was making false magisterial pronouncements."

The latest exchange comes amid the long-running dispute over the 2018 Offa bank robbery, in which 33 people were reported killed during attacks on banks and a police station in the Kwara town. In April 2026, the Kwara State Government filed a 20-count charge against Saraki, former governor Abdulfatah Ahmed, and two others over the robbery.

However, the state government subsequently applied to amend the charge, reducing it to four counts after dropping 18 of the original charges, including those bordering on armed robbery, the deaths of police officers and illegal possession of firearms.

The amended charges retain allegations of conspiracy to belong to a gang of thieves and belonging to a gang of thieves, while introducing two counts relating to the alleged concealment of a vehicle. The defendants have yet to enter their pleas, and the trial has not commenced.

Tinubu gifts families of NAF crash victims houses, N100m

LAGOS

President Bola Tinubu has approved three-bedroom flats in Abuja for the families of military personnel and civilians who died in the October 5, 2026 Nigerian Air Force aircraft crash.

The President also approved N100m as part of the Federal Government's support for the bereaved families.

Tinubu announced the gestures on Thursday during a memorial service and wreath-laying ceremony in honour of the 25 victims of the NAF ATR 42 aircraft accident.

He said the housing allocation was a demonstration of the nation's gratitude to the fallen personnel and other victims who lost their lives in the crash.

"As a tangible expression of the nation's gratitude, I approve the allocation of three-bedroom flats in the Renewed Hope Housing Project in Abuja to the family of each of the military personnel who lost their lives in this accident.

"No home can ever replace the one you have lost, but they gave their lives for Nigeria, and Nigeria will give their family a home," the President said.

Tinubu added that the gesture would also be extended to the immediate families of the civilians aboard the aircraft.

PAP dismisses protest threat, says 13,800 scholarships fully funded

DELTA

The Presidential Amnesty Programme has dismissed allegations of unpaid entitlements and welfare neglect by a group claiming to represent former militant leaders in the Niger Delta.

PAP described its planned protest in Abuja as an attempt to blackmail the agency's leadership.

The group, which identifies itself as the Coalition of Ex-militant Leaders, has reportedly scheduled a protest for November 30, over alleged unpaid benefits and demands for an increase in monthly stipends.

However, the PAP said the allegations were aimed at pressuring its leadership to divert public funds.

It insisted that its resources were being channelled into projects with long-term benefits for the Niger Delta.

The Special Assistant on Media to the Administrator, Mr Igoniko Oduma, disclosed this in a statement issued on Thursday in Abuja.

Oduma stated that the Office of the Administrator, Dr Dennis Otuaro, said the group's grievances, including demands to raise monthly stipends from N65,000 to N300,000 and complaints over Bank Verification Number restrictions, failed to recognise the developmental initiatives being implemented by the programme.

The agency said the increased annual allocation approved by President Bola Tinubu had enabled it to expand educational and human capital development programmes across the region.

"Rather than sitting idle or being shared among vocal interest groups, the increased budget has been strategically deployed to expand educational access for youths in the Niger Delta, resulting in 13,300 in-country and over 500 overseas scholarships alongside the provision of critical learning aids, including the ongoing multi-phase distribution of laptops to students on PAP scholarships," the statement said.

On complaints over stipends affected by BVN discrepancies, the PAP said the verification exercise was not primarily its policy, but a directive of the Federal Government and the Central Bank of Nigeria to enforce banking regulations and promote accountability.

It said the process was also intended to eliminate ghost beneficiaries from public payrolls.

"Beneficiaries with legitimate banking irregularities have clear, established institutional channels to regularise their records," the programme said.

The agency further alleged that some former agitators who had raised concerns over their entitlements failed to appear for verification after being invited by the Office of the Administrator.

NEWS

Ex-minister commends Nwifuru, Tinubu, expresses confidence in APC 2027 elections victory

Maxwell Okechukwu

ABAKALIKI

Former Minister of Power and Secretary of the Ebonyi State All Progressives Congress (APC) Campaign Council for the 2027 general elections, Chief Gody Ogbaga, has commended Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for his administration's performance, describing his leadership approach as practical and impactful.

Ogbaga made the commendation while speaking with journalists at an event in Ebonyi State, where he applauded the governor for what he described as visible developmental projects and initiatives across the state.

He acknowledged that no leader was perfect but maintained that Governor Nwifuru deserved recognition for his efforts towards improving the living conditions of residents.

He also urged the people of Ebonyi State to support government programmes and continue to pray for leaders at all levels, so they could make decisions that would advance the interests of the state and its people.

Speaking on the gathering, Ogbaga congratulated the people of Ebonyi State for turning out in large numbers to express appreciation to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Governor Nwifuru.

He said the Federal Government had demonstrated its commitment to the development of Ebonyi State through political appointments, infrastructure projects and empowerment programmes.

According to him, the appointment of former Ebonyi State Governor, Senator David Umahi, as Minister of Works, alongside other federal appointments given to indigenes of the state, reflected the recognition accorded the state by the Tinubu administration.

Ogbaga equally commended President Tinubu for the economic reforms introduced by his administration, expressing optimism that the policies would strengthen the nation's economy and promote sustainable development.

On the 2027 general elections, the former minister expressed confidence in the APC's prospects in Ebonyi State, predicting a strong performance for the party.

He attributed his optimism to what he described as the party's growing grassroots support and the developmental initiatives of the APC-led administrations at both the federal and state levels.

Ogbaga further expressed confidence in President Tinubu's re-election bid and the party's candidates in the forthcoming elections.

He urged the people of the State to sustain their engagement with the party and its programmes, noting that continued public support was important for the implementation of government policies and initiatives.



GOVERNORSHIP CANDIDATE MEETS SUPPORTERS IN ENUGU: People's Democratic Party (PDP) Ebonyi State Governorship Candidate, Chief Ifeanyi Chukwuma-Odii (R) addressing some of his supporters on his Candidacy in Enugu on Thursday.

SAN urges judiciary to prioritise speedy justice delivery in Ebonyi

Maxwell Okechukwu

ABAKALIKI

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Prof. Amari Omaka, has urged judicial officers in Ebonyi State to prioritise speedy justice delivery, embrace technological innovations and strengthen public confidence in the judiciary.

Omaka made the call during the official commencement of the 2026/2027 Legal Year at the Ebonyi State Judiciary premises in Abakaliki, where he emphasised the need for effective case management, reduction in unnecessary adjournments and timely delivery of judgments.

He observed that prolonged court proceedings, abuse of judicial processes and unprofessional conduct could erode public confidence in the justice system.

The legal luminary urged judicial officers to remain mindful of the enormous responsibilities attached to their offices, noting that behind every case is a citizen whose future and fundamental rights may depend on the outcome of judicial proceedings.

He further advocated improved management of pending cases, court registries and institutional operations, stressing that efficiency in the judiciary must be pursued without compromising due process and the principles of fair hearing.

Addressing members of the Bar, Omaka charged lawyers to maintain professional discipline, respect court procedures and demonstrate genuine commitment to the administration of justice.

He maintained that the Bar and the Bench shared a collective responsibility to uphold the rule of law, protect democratic values and ensure that justice remains accessible and affordable to all citizens.

The SAN commended the Chief Judge of Ebonyi State and other judicial officers for their contributions towards strengthening the state's judiciary.

He also appreciated Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for sustaining a cordial working relationship among the three arms of government and providing support for the judiciary through infrastructure development, accommodation and other interventions.

Omaka described the relationship between the executive and the judiciary under the present administration as encouraging, expressing optimism that sustained cooperation among the arms of government would promote peace, institutional stability and effective justice delivery in the state.

He called for sustained investment in judicial infrastructure, human capacity development and the welfare of judicial officers, insisting that access to justice should not be determined by an individual's financial capacity or social status.

The legal practitioner congratulated the Chief Judge, judicial officers, members of the Bar and staff of the Ebonyi State Judiciary on the commencement of the new legal year, urging them to remain steadfast in protecting citizens' rights, upholding the rule of law and strengthening democracy.

2027: Borno women declare support for Tinubu, Shettima

MAIDUGURI

Women from different political and social backgrounds in Borno State have declared support for President Bola Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima beyond 2027, saying the administration's interventions for women and widows have influenced their position.

The women made the declaration at a stakeholders' meeting organised by the Directorate of Women Mobilisation of the APC Presidential Campaign Council at the Government House, Maiduguri, according to a statement made available to our correspondent on Thursday.

"I am not a member of the APC, but what President Tinubu has done for women and widows in Borno State and across Nigeria through the First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu, has made a difference," she said.

Biu added, "I and my group, alongside women across the 27 local government areas of Borno State, are expressing our support for the Tinubu-Shettima ticket beyond 2027."

The meeting was attended by the wife of the Vice President, Nana Shettima, and the wives of the governors of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe and Taraba states, among other political and community stakeholders.

Earlier, the First Lady's economic empowerment team, led by the Directorate of Women Mobilisation, visited Monday Market in Maiduguri, where hundreds of women, including petty traders and small-scale entrepreneurs, received 100,000 each.

Be loyal to constitutional authority, Army commander tells officers

ASABA

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 6 Division, Nigerian Army, and Land Component Commander, Joint Task Force (South-South), Operation DELTA SAFE, Major General Everest Okoro, has charged newly promoted senior officers to demonstrate unwavering loyalty to constitutional authority, dedication to duty and commitment to professional excellence.

The GOC gave the charge on Wednesday, during the investiture ceremony for seven officers promoted from the rank of Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel at the 6 Division Python Officers' Mess, following the approval of their promotions by the Army Council.

According to a post obtained from the Nigerian Army's X handle on Thursday, Okoro described the elevation to the rank of Colonel as a significant milestone that comes with greater responsibilities, higher expectations and renewed obligations to the Nigerian Army.

He noted that officers within the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel occupy strategic positions in the military hierarchy, where their contributions to policy formulation, decision-making and institutional development are critical to the overall effectiveness of the Service.

According to him, "Attaining the rank of Colonel places officers in a position of greater institutional responsibility, you are regarded as potential future Generals upon whom the Nigerian Army would continue to rely for effective leadership and strategic direction."

He urged the newly promoted officers to justify the confidence reposed in them by demonstrating exceptional dedication, discipline and loyalty to constitutional authority.

The GOC further charged them to deploy their wealth of experience, professional competence and leadership skills towards addressing the security challenges confronting the country, while remaining committed to the core values and operational objectives of the Nigerian Army.

Earlier, at the General Olufemi Oluyede Auditorium of the Division, the GOC decorated and congratulated 19 newly promoted Army Warrant Officers, Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and soldiers.

He described their promotions as a well-deserved recognition of their dedication, sacrifices and years of meritorious service.

According to him, "The Nigerian Armed Forces provide opportunities for career advancement based on merit, hard work and demonstrated competence."

He urged the newly promoted personnel to regard their elevation as a renewed call to greater service, encouraging them to bring their wealth of experience to bear on ongoing efforts to tackle security challenges across the country.

The promoted personnel comprised three Army Warrant Officers, three Master Warrant Officers, two Warrant Officers, three Staff Sergeants, four Sergeants, three Corporals and one Lance Corporal.

Major General Okoro also acknowledged the invaluable contributions of the spouses of the promoted personnel, commending them for their sacrifices, encouragement and unwavering support in managing the home front.

He noted that their commitment to providing a stable family environment remained essential to the success and career progression of military personnel.

In his vote of thanks on behalf of the newly promoted senior officers, Colonel Bashir Ibrahim expressed appreciation to God and the Chief of Army Staff for finding them worthy of promotion.

He described the elevation as more than an advancement in rank, noting that it represented increased responsibility and a renewed obligation to meet the expectations of the Nigerian Army.

FEATURE

Women, agriculture and economic development in Nigeria

Grace Ijeoma Umeh

If you walk through any market in Nigeria in the early morning, you will see her. She is the woman who arrived at 4am with baskets of yam, pepper, tomatoes and garri balanced on her head. She is the woman who borrowed money to buy seeds, who tilled the soil with her own hands, who harvested under the sun, who carried her produce for miles to sell. She is the woman who feeds the nation, yet she is the last to be recognised, the last to be funded, the last to be invited to the table where agricultural policy is made. Nigeria cannot develop without her. Africa cannot develop without her. The world cannot develop without her. And until we invest in her, our economy will remain stunted.

In Nigeria, women make up between sixty and seventy percent of the agricultural labour force. They plant, they weed, they harvest, they process, they store, they transport, they sell. In the south, women dominate cassava, palm oil, vegetables and fish processing. In the north, women dominate groundnut, millet, rice processing and small livestock. In every region, it is women who ensure that food reaches the table. Yet when you look at who owns the land, who gets the loan, who gets the tractor, who gets the fertiliser subsidy, it is rarely the woman. In many parts of Nigeria, a woman cannot own land in her own name. She farms on her husband's land, or her father's land, or communal land that can be taken away at any time. Without land, she cannot get a loan, because banks demand collateral. Without a loan, she cannot buy improved seeds, cannot buy fertiliser, cannot buy machines. She is trapped in subsistence farming, working harder and harder for less and less.

This is not just a Nigerian problem. Across sub Saharan Africa, women produce most of the food but own less than twenty percent of the land. Across Asia, women in India, Bangladesh and Vietnam work in rice fields and tea plantations for wages far lower than men. Across Latin America, women in Colombia, Brazil and Peru work in coffee and flower farms, often without contracts, without health insurance, without maternity protection. Globally, the Food and Agriculture Organisation has estimated that if women had the same access to land, credit, training and technology as men, farm yields would increase by twenty to thirty percent, and the number of hungry people in the world would fall by up to seventeen percent. That is not a small figure. That is millions of children who would eat, millions of families who would escape poverty, simply by treating women fairly.

The Nigerian economy is a story of missed opportunity. We are a country blessed with fertile land, with a large population, with hardworking people, yet we import rice, wheat, fish and even tomatoes. We spend billions of naira every year importing food we could grow ourselves. Why? Partly because we have neglected the very people who grow our food. The woman farmer in Benue who could produce ten bags of rice produces only three, because she has no access to good seeds. The woman in Kaduna who could process groundnut oil cannot expand, because she has no machine. The woman in Edo who could export garri cannot meet international standards, because no one has trained her on packaging and quality. We hold conferences on agriculture in Abuja, in air conditioned halls, with men in suits speaking about food security, while the women who actually grow the food are outside, selling pure water, uninvited.

Development is not about big buildings in Abuja or Lagos. Development is about the woman in the village who can now send her children to school because her harvest improved. Development is about the market woman who can now save, who can now join a cooperative, who can now buy a freezer to preserve her fish. Development is about the young woman who studied agriculture in university and returns to her community to start a modern farm, using irrigation, using mobile phone apps to check prices, using social media to sell directly to customers. That is the new face of agriculture, and women are leading it, quietly, without applause.

Technology is changing the story, but only for those who can access it. In Kenya, women farmers use mobile money to receive payments, to save, to borrow. In Nigeria, fintech platforms are beginning to reach rural women, allowing them to receive loans on their phones without collateral. In Ghana, women use WhatsApp groups to share market prices, to warn each other about pests, to organise transport. But millions of Nigerian women still have no smartphone, no internet, no bank account. They are excluded from the digital economy that could transform their lives. If we are serious about development, we must close the digital gap for rural women. We must provide training in local languages. We must ensure that extension workers actually visit women farmers, not just men. We must ensure that government programmes for fertiliser, seedlings and loans reach women directly, not through middlemen who divert them.

Cooperatives are also a powerful tool. When women come together in cooperatives, they can buy in bulk, they can negotiate better prices, they can access loans, they can share machines. In many parts of Nigeria, women have formed thrift societies, ajo, esusu, adashe, where they save together and lend to each other. These informal systems have kept families alive for generations. Imagine what would happen if government and banks partnered with these cooperatives, if they provided matching funds, if they provided training in bookkeeping and marketing. The impact would be enormous. A woman who has access to fifty thousand naira can buy seeds. A woman who has access to five hundred thousand naira can buy a grinding machine and employ three other women. A woman who has access to five million naira can build a processing factory and employ a whole village.

We must also talk about unpaid care work, the invisible economy that women carry. Every day, Nigerian women cook, clean, fetch water, care for children, care for the sick and elderly, without pay. The United Nations estimates that women globally do three times more unpaid care work than men. If this work were paid, it would be worth trillions of dollars. It is the foundation of the economy, yet it is not counted in GDP, it is not recognised in policy, it is not shared fairly. A woman who spends six hours a day on housework has six hours less to farm, to trade, to study, to rest. When we talk about economic development, we must talk about reducing this burden, through water supply, through electricity, through childcare, through men sharing housework. A husband who fetches water is not helping his wife. He is contributing to the economy.

The future of Nigeria's economy is female. It is the young woman in Kano who wants to start a fashion business. It is the young woman in Port Harcourt who wants to start a fish farm. It is the young woman in Enugu who wants to start a tech company. It is the mother in Ibadan who sells akara and dreams of owning a restaurant. If we give them land, credit, training, technology and security, they will transform this country. If we continue to ignore them, we will continue to import what we should produce, to beg for what we should own, to remain poor in the midst of plenty.

Development is not a gift from government. Development is the release of the potential that is already in our people, especially our women. The woman who feeds the nation deserves more than praise. She deserves land. She deserves a loan. She deserves a tractor. She deserves respect. When we invest in her, we invest in Nigeria. When we lift her, we lift the nation.



WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

A global issue

A planet in fever: *Climate change, and why women and the poor will pay the highest price*

Clareth Solomon

The world is getting hotter, and it is not a distant threat. It is here. In Nigeria, the rains come late, or they come too much. In Lagos, floods sweep away houses, shops and cars. In Borno, the desert is advancing, swallowing farmlands and villages. In Bayelsa, the sea is rising, swallowing communities. In the north, farmers and herders are fighting over shrinking land and water. In the south, fishermen are catching less because the sea is warmer. This is climate change. It is not a foreign word. It is the flood that destroyed your shop. It is the drought that killed your crops. It is the heat that makes your children sick. And around the world, from Pakistan to California, from Australia to Europe, the story is the same. The planet is in fever, and the poorest, especially women, are paying the highest price.

Climate change is caused by human activity, by the burning of fossil fuels, by deforestation, by industrial pollution, by the way we produce and consume. The countries that caused most of the pollution are the rich countries of Europe, America and Asia, who industrialised for two hundred years, burning coal and oil, cutting forests, emitting gases that now trap heat in the atmosphere. The countries that suffer most are the poor countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, who contributed least to the problem. This is the greatest injustice of our time. Nigeria, which contributes less than one percent of global emissions, suffers floods, droughts, desertification and rising sea levels. Bangladesh, which contributes almost nothing, sees its coastal villages disappear into the sea. Small island nations in the Pacific, like Tuvalu and Kiribati, face the possibility of disappearing entirely. Their people may become climate refugees, losing their homes, their culture, their identity, for a crisis they did not create.

And within every country, it is women who suffer most. Why? Because women are responsible for fetching water, for cooking, for farming, for caring for children and the sick. When water becomes scarce, it is the woman who walks further to find it. When firewood becomes scarce, it is the woman who walks further to find it, risking rape and attack. When crops fail, it is the woman who must find another way to feed her family.

When floods come, it is the woman who must carry children, elderly parents and belongings to safety. When there is a disaster, women are more likely to die, because they are less likely to know how to swim, because they are wearing clothes that restrict movement, because they stay behind to save others. After a disaster, women face increased violence, increased child marriage, increased trafficking, because families in desperation marry off their daughters to reduce the number of mouths to feed, or to get a bride price to survive.

In Nigeria, the impact is already visible. Lake Chad, once one of the largest lakes in Africa, has shrunk by over ninety percent. Communities that once fished and farmed around it have lost their livelihoods. Young men have migrated, some have joined armed groups, some have become bandits, because they have no work. Women left behind must farm on dry land, must fetch water from distant boreholes, must care for children in conditions of extreme poverty. In the Middle Belt, the shrinking of grazing land has intensified conflict between farmers and herders, a conflict that has killed thousands, displaced millions, and made women and children the primary victims. In the Niger Delta, oil pollution has destroyed fishing and farming, leaving women who once processed fish with nothing to process. In Lagos, the poor who live in Makoko, in Ajegunle, in Iwaya, live in houses on water, and when the sea rises, they lose everything.

Globally, the picture is equally alarming. In 2022, floods in Pakistan submerged one third of the country, displaced thirty three million people, and destroyed crops and homes. In 2023, wildfires in Canada burned an area larger than many countries, choking cities in smoke. In 2024, heatwaves in Europe killed thousands of elderly people. In Australia, bushfires have become more frequent and more intense. In the Horn of Africa, drought has left millions facing hunger. In the Philippines, typhoons are becoming stronger. In California, wildfires have destroyed entire towns. No country is immune. No continent is safe. Climate change does not respect borders, does not respect wealth, does not respect power.

ThroughTheLens

Memorial Service in Honour of the Victims of NAF 931 Aircraft Accident



From left: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Aneke, during the Wreath Laying at the Memorial Service Ceremony in Honour of the Victims of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 931 Aircraft Accident, in Abuja on Thursday



From left: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Aneke; President Bola Tinubu; Senate President Godswill Akpabio and Gov. Lucky Orimisan-Aiyedatiwa of Ondo, during the Memorial Service and Wreath-Laying Ceremony in Honour of the Victims of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 931 Aircraft Accident, in Abuja on Thursday



President Bola Tinubu (M), during the Wreath-Laying at the Memorial Service Ceremony in Honour of the Victims of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 931 Aircraft Accident, in Abuja on Thursday.



A cross-section of the Families of the Victims of Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 931 Aircraft Accident, during Memorial Service and Wreath-Laying Ceremony in their Honour, in Abuja on Thursday



From left: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Aneke; Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Idi Abbas; Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Waidi Shaibu and Inspector-General of Police, IGP Olatunji Disu, during the Memorial Service and Wreath-Laying Ceremony in Honour of the Victims of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 931 Aircraft Accident, in Abuja on Thursday.

NEXIM Bank holds 2026 stakeholder engagement forum



From left: Representative of the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Yuguda Abubakar; Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Export-Import Bank, Abba Bello and the Chairman of Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), Baba-Gana Mustapha, during the 2026 NEXIM Bank stakeholders' engagement forum and 35 years Anniversary of the Bank in Abuja on Thursday

NEWS

FOREIGN



MYANMAR'S PRESIDENT MIN AUNG HLAING

Myanmar refuses to comply with parts of ICJ genocide ruling

Myanmar will not comply with "inappropriate" parts of the genocide ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), its leader Min Aung Hlaing has said in his first public comments since the court decision.

The ICJ's landmark ruling last week found Myanmar guilty of committing genocide against its Rohingya minority in a 2017 military crackdown that killed thousands and forced more than 700,000 to flee.

Myanmar denied committing genocide, saying its forces had responded to attacks by armed groups. It is the first state to have been found in violation of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

Min Aung Hlaing said "the term 'genocide' had seriously affected the country's reputation", state media report.

"Myanmar would take actions appropriate for a responsible country but would not comply with requirements it considered inappropriate," the country's coup leader-turned-president said at a meeting on Wednesday, according to state media.

The statement did not specify which parts of the ruling the country objects to.

The genocide case, brought by The Gambia in 2019, centred around so-called "clearance operations" initiated in 2017 in Rakhine State, where many of the Rohingya Muslim minority resided.

The ICJ determined that about 10,000 Rohingya were violently killed during the operation, while more than 700,000 are thought to have fled to Bangladesh by foot or by sea. The court found that approximately 815,000 had been targeted in some way.

The verdict was reached by a majority of nine votes to six among a panel of judges from around the world.

The ICJ also found in favour by majority that Myanmar had violated several other parts of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

The ruling is final and cannot be appealed.

The ICJ ordered Myanmar to pay proportionate reparations, but said an exact figure should be determined at a later date.

The court also ordered Myanmar to stop ongoing violations and immediately investigate those suspected of breaking the Convention.

But the ICJ does not have the power to enforce these demands. Instead it has to rely on the UN Security Council and political pressure to make its rulings stick.

While the ruling was largely symbolic, it was welcomed by Rohingya communities and human rights groups who have long called attention to the suffering faced by the Rohingya.

More than a dozen countries have acknowledged the ICJ ruling, and the UK has announced sanctions on several senior Myanmar military leaders.

Myanmar has been devastated by civil war since Min Aung Hlaing led a military coup to oust civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi in 2021. The move turned Myanmar into an international pariah, and its military regime has faced sweeping international sanctions.

Since then, Min Aung Hlaing has been trying to reintegrate Myanmar into the international community, but it remains largely shut out of key diplomatic arenas.

German boat dealer suspected of supplying channel smuggling gangs

A German boat dealer is suspected by European authorities of being a key supplier to migrant smugglers operating in the English Channel, the BBC can reveal.

Nearly a third of small-boat crossings in the first four months of this year allegedly involved boats or engines from MaReBoote, a small firm in western Germany, according to files we have seen.

The managing director, Marvin Reuter, is contesting extradition to France, where he could face smuggling, criminal conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter charges.

His equipment is suspected of being linked to two fatal accidents, in which four men died.

We confronted the 35-year-old at his business near Dortmund, but he would not answer our questions. He said he was reporting us to the police.

Reuter cannot be formally charged until extradited to France but could face jail time, if tried and convicted. He is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

The BBC - alongside German broadcasters WDR and NDR, newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ) - and France's Le Monde newspaper - has obtained and reviewed hundreds of police, court and tax documents about the case. We have blurred images of Reuter because of German privacy rules.

Investigators, we have learned, believe they have uncovered clear, persistent links between Reuter and smuggling networks.

Evidence has been gathered through the confessions of alleged accomplices and covert jail-cell recordings of an alleged gang chief - as well as the two deadly crossing attempts.

At least 82 boats from Reuter's firm reached the English coast in just over two years to May, according to French investigations.

There are also press photos dating back five years showing the MaReBoote logo on dinghies crowded with migrants.

In 2021, Reuter told the Sun and Guardian he felt "frustrated" and "anxious" that his vessels had ended up in the hands of smugglers.

There was no suggestion, at that time, that authorities suspected him of wrongdoing as a German detective reportedly told the Sun: "This would be like if somebody buys a Mercedes and does something in another country which is wrong. The Mercedes seller can't help that."

It is not exactly clear when police suspicions were aroused.

French prosecutor Samuel Finielz would not comment on the details of the investigation but confirmed the head of a German company is currently the subject of a European Arrest Warrant.

The warrant was issued in May this year and relates to alleged offences dating back to December 2024.

While selling boats is "perfectly legal" it becomes illegal, said Finielz, "when one is fully aware that they will be used by networks involved in illegal immigration or human trafficking".

Case files we have seen say that German police had learned from UK authorities that 29% of detected crossings this year, up to the end of April, involved boats and/or engines linked to MaReBoote.

In France, five other men have already been charged as part of the investigation - an Iranian, three Iraqis and a Syrian.

In one of the two fatal incidents where Reuter's equipment is suspected to be involved, one of those who died was also Syrian.

Suliman al Husein would have just turned 20 when he died, according to a birth date listed in the files.

News reports at the time say he suffered a cardiac arrest after likely being crushed on a packed dinghy during a failed launch, west of Calais, in January 2025.

He was the first migrant to die in the English Channel that year. His body was found on the floor of the boat which, investigators allege, bore the MaReBoote logo.

Desperate appeals from women on death row

In recent weeks, the 21-year-old has been unable to walk properly after her legs were beaten, and an ear-infection caused by an untreated head injury has affected her balance, her cousin says.

She is "keeping her spirits up" but "there are days she breaks down in tears," Masoud Nourmohammadi tells BBC News Persian.

He says Taraneh and her twin sister Romina were arrested after joining the anti-government protests that swept the country in January.

When the twins' mother first saw them in prison, their faces were so swollen and bruised, and their hair pulled out, that she could only recognise them by their voices, Nourmohammadi says, speaking from the US.

He says Taraneh signed a confession after interrogators threatened that her sister would be raped in front of her.

Taraneh is one of six women who have been sentenced to death this year in connection with the January protests, according to the UN's human rights rapporteur for Iran, Mai Sato.

The figure for men is much higher. However, women protesters and dissidents are being sentenced to death in numbers not seen for decades, as part of a "horrific rise" in politically motivated executions, Amnesty International's Iran researcher Raha Bahreini says.

January's protests began over economic grievances and spread to become Iran's largest since the 1979 Islamic Revolution

The Iranian embassy in London told the BBC that claims of an increase in the use of the death penalty in protest-related cases were "misleading".

It categorically rejected allegations of the use of torture and any allegations that the death penalty has been imposed solely for peaceful protest, which it said is a "legitimate, and protected right".

It said death sentences in relation to the "riot in January 2026" were issued in cases involving "intentional murder" or "Moharebeh (the taking up of weapons with the intent to threaten or wreck the people's lives or property)".

The twins were seized in late January, Nourmohammadi says.

It was two weeks after the end of the protests, which began in late December over economic grievances and grew to become Iran's largest against the clerical establishment since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (Hrana) says it has identified more than 7,000 people killed in the crackdown that followed, most of them protesters, but believes the true figure is much higher.

The Iranian government accuses the US and Israel of fomenting the unrest, blaming "terrorists" and "rioters" for the deaths, which it says totalled 3,117 including some members of the security forces.

The twins' family did not find out where they were being held for more than three months, their cousin says. They were tried over protests in Isfahan, in an area of the city where a member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) security force was killed.

Court documents have not been published, but the BBC has seen part of a sentencing document which says Taraneh was convicted of moharebeh, which is a capital offence under Iran's Islamic Penal Code. The offence included "drawing a bladed weapon with the intent to endanger people's lives", according to the document.

Romina was sentenced to 25 years in jail for the lesser charge of aiding and abetting moharebeh, according to Sato, the UN rapporteur.

Nourmohammadi, who has been in contact with relatives and others in Iran familiar with the case, says both women deny all the charges against them and that there is no evidence Taraneh had a "bladed weapon".

Sato says the sisters were part of a case in which 10 people were sentenced to death, but that there was "no clarification of the acts attributed to each individual".

According to sources familiar with the case, the twins' lawyers have submitted a complaint alleging they were tortured and sexually abused during interrogation, but the investigation into it is being overseen by an official they accuse of torture.

Mahboubeh Shabani - widely reported to be 33 and a civil engineer - was sentenced to death in September under Iran's espionage law after transporting injured protesters, according to rights groups.

She called for help for herself and other prisoners from jail in the city of Mashhad in north-eastern Iran: "Everyone is in a terrible place mentally, especially those whose sentences have been finalised," she said.

Also jailed in Mashhad is Najmeh Amini, reported to be 23, who was initially arrested in the wake of the January protests, and later sentenced to death after being convicted of committing blasphemy in a social media post, according to rights groups.

"As long as I am alive, I have one hope, and that is to see a free and prosperous Iran before my life ends by the noose," a voice message attributed to her says.

In addition, Mojdeh Hashemi Bazargani - reported to be aged 27 - is also facing execution, according to rights groups. They say she was convicted of charges including "espionage", after being arrested in April, during the current war between Iran and Israel and the US.

The US-based Iranian rights group Tavaana has shared audio it says is of a phone call she made from prison, describing being beaten in the head, neck and body and made to sign a confession.

NEWS

Seven injured, four critically, after Bangkok oil refinery explosion

Seven people have been injured - four of them critically - after an explosion at an oil refinery in Bangkok, local government officials have said.

A fire broke out after the blast at the Phra Khanong facility run by energy giant Bangchak Corporation in the east of Thailand's capital at around 14:45 (07:45 GMT).

The company said the fire was brought under control and put out within 30 minutes, adding that the cause of the incident was being investigated.

Black smoke could be seen across Bangkok's skyline after the blast, as local officials told residents to leave the area.

A alert sent to mobile phones by Bangkok authorities confirmed that the fire was under control, but urged people to avoid the area.

Eyewitnesses shared video clips on social media of flames and smoke rising above the refinery.

The city-run Erawan Emergency Medical Centre said it was treating four "red" cases and three "yellow" - less severe cases.

On a visit to the scene, Thailand's energy minister Akanat Promphan said it appeared the impact of the explosion was limited because the fire started in a distillation tower about 100m (330ft) from where oil was being stored.

He said the incident was concerning as the refinery was in a residential area and the government was suspending production until it could be confident that operations would resume without any issues.

Bangchak Corporation said air quality monitoring in the immediate area around the refinery was within normal ranges.

It confirmed that production at the site, which can process up to 120,000 barrels of oil a day had been shut down. The company has a second refinery in Chonburi province, about 50 miles (80km) from Bangkok, handling a daily capacity of about 180,000 barrels.

Pregnant US inmate escapes in prison vehicle after medical appointment

A pregnant inmate has escaped from custody in the US state of New Mexico, after taking control of a police vehicle while returning to prison from a prenatal appointment, the state's corrections department has said.

Rebecca Taylor, 26, took control of the Dodge Journey and drove away when the team transporting her and another inmate stopped to pick up food in Albuquerque, local media reported.

The New Mexico Corrections Department said that the vehicle and her prison jumpsuit were later recovered, but Taylor remains on the run.

She had been imprisoned for multiple theft and burglary charges, the department said in a Facebook statement.

Local media reported that another inmate, also travelling back from a prenatal appointment, was able to get out of the car as Taylor took control on Wednesday morning.

The corrections department has said that a multi-agency search for Taylor is under way. The BBC has approached it for an update.

The Albuquerque Journal reported that Taylor is currently in her second trimester of pregnancy. For this reason, she was not restrained during transportation, department spokesperson Brittany Roembach said.

"It is the understanding right now that one officer was with the vehicle but not inside of the vehicle when this occurred," she was quoted as saying.

All prisons in New Mexico went into lockdown following Taylor's escape, but it was lifted at 06:00 on Thursday.

Thirteen dead as mine disaster highlights illegal hunt for gold

It's been three days since Rani last saw her father as he left for work on Monday. Early on Tuesday, she received news that he was trapped underground.

Rais, 50, had been working as an illegal gold miner in Bogor, Indonesia's West Java province. On Monday night, he and at least 25 other miners were digging in an open-pit mine about 100m (328ft) deep, when torrential rain caused a nearby river to overflow and flood the two shafts.

Authorities on Thursday confirmed that 13 people had died and their bodies were recovered from the site. At least 13 more are thought to still be missing.

Search-and-rescue operations are ongoing, with personnel using ropes to access the depths of the dark, narrow and slippery mine shafts, which are continually being flooded from below.

Above ground, ambulances and medical personnel are ready and waiting to transport victims.

"We are coordinating with all search and rescue personnel involved in the operation to monitor water conditions and assess access to the mine shaft," Desiana Kartika Bahari, head of the Jakarta Search and Rescue Office, said in a statement on Wednesday.

"The depth of the shaft, narrow access and limited lighting are key considerations in determining the search strategy so that personnel can operate safely."

FOREIGN



The Med Emre vessel capsized near Ibiza and Spain's Clara Campoamor, a pollution control vessel, was sent to assess the environmental impact

Diesel tanker carrying up to 7,000 tonnes sinks near Ibiza, killing one

An oil tanker carrying up to 7,000 tonnes of diesel has sunk off the coast of Ibiza, leaving one crew member dead, authorities have said.

The Med Emre, a Malta-flagged vessel, was carrying 17 crew members who were all rescued. However seven were taken to hospital and one was later pronounced dead, Balearic Islands emergency services confirmed.

The six crew receiving treatment reportedly suffered minor injuries, such as hypothermia, Spanish media reports.

The possible environmental damage is being assessed by a plane and Spain's pollution control vessel, Clara Campoamor, which is owned by the country's national maritime rescue service.

"There is still little information available about a possible fuel spill," Balearic Islands' President Marga Prohens wrote on X.

Regional emergencies director Pablo Gárriz said the tanker had not completely sunk, and was still partially submerged.

That made conditions more favourable for carrying out recovery operations, he said, "as we have gone from the possibility of the vessel being at a depth of 1,000m to a situation that allows operations to be carried out on the surface."

The Med Emre sank 25 nautical miles (46 km; 29 miles) from Ibiza's coastline and 57 nautical miles from Valencia. It is unclear what caused the sinking.

The chemical tanker was en route from Algeciras, in southern Spain, to Barcelona in the north-east.

Rescuers in Valencia received a distress call around 22:30 local time (21:30 GMT) on Wednesday, according to Spanish media. Minutes later, the vessel reported a leak and the crew said it was leaning at a 90-degree angle.

The injured crew members have been taken to hospitals in Valencia and Can Misses Hospital in Ibiza, President Prohens said.

Ibiza's marine environment was added to the Unesco World Heritage List in 1999. In particular, it is home to dense prairies of Posidonia oceanic seagrass, which is found only in the Mediterranean basin and plays a vital role in supporting local marine biodiversity.

In 2002, Spain experienced one of its worst environmental disasters when the Prestige oil tanker ran into trouble off Galicia's coastline. It spilled more than 60,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil into the sea.

Hope for millions as cheaper HIV prevention jab reaches Africa

Uganda is set to receive its first supplies of a cheaper version of a ground-breaking injection to prevent HIV, raising hopes of expanding access to the drug across Africa, where the burden of the disease remains highest.

The first global shipment of the generic drug, known as lenacapavir, arrived in Zambia on Wednesday, with deliveries to Uganda expected in the coming days, the Global Fund has said.

The drug, administered as an injection twice a year, is nearly 100% effective at preventing HIV infection and is expected to cost just $40 (£30) per person annually.

Zimbabwe is due to receive supplies early next year, with several other countries expected to follow.

The arrival of the generic drug comes just a year after the original version, developed by US pharmaceutical giant Gilead Sciences, became available in sub-Saharan Africa.

The original version cost about about $28,000 annually in the US, putting it beyond the reach of many of those in developing countries.

Lenacapavir works by targeting the protective protein shell of HIV, disrupting the virus's ability to multiply and establish an infection in the body.

In a landmark clinical trial involving more than 5,000 adolescent girls and young women in Uganda and South Africa in 2024, none of those who received the injection contracted HIV.

Health experts say the injection offers a major advantage over existing HIV prevention pills, known as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), which must be taken every day and can carry social stigma.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended the drug for HIV prevention in July 2025.

The Global Fund described the arrival of the drug in Africa as a "major breakthrough" in the fight against HIV, saying cheaper supplies would help reach millions more people at risk of infection.

"These deliveries mark an unprecedented acceleration and expansion in access to a highly effective, quality-assured generic HIV prevention medicine in low- and middle-income settings," the group said in a statement on Wednesday.

More than 189,000 people across 10 countries have already received their first injection of lenacapavir, according to the Global Fund.

The organisation expects 24 countries to have received supplies by the end of this year and, working with the US government, plans to reach at least three million people by the end of 2028.

It is eventually expected to be available in 120 low- and middle-income countries.

Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for nearly two-thirds of people living with HIV globally, with adolescent girls and young women disproportionately affected.

South Africa has the world's largest HIV-positive population, with nearly eight million people living with the virus. It is among the countries expected to receive the cheaper injection.

Some 41 million people worldwide were living with HIV last year, while 570,000 died from HIV-related illnesses, according to the WHO.

The rollout comes amid concerns that sweeping cuts to US foreign aid under President Donald Trump's administration could undermine decades of progress in tackling HIV in Africa, where many countries rely heavily on international funding for prevention and treatment.

The UN aims to end Aids as a public health threat by 2030.

Opinion

Significance of Okpebholo's campaign engagement with Catholic Women



EUBALDUS ENAHORO

In Nigerian politics, election campaigns are often characterised by elaborate rallies, expensive billboards, motorcades and speeches delivered from elevated platforms, sometimes far removed from the everyday experiences of the people politicians seek to engage.

However, Governor Monday Okpebholo's approach to grassroots mobilisation in Edo State has placed considerable emphasis on direct engagement with communities, households, religious organisations and socio-economic groups.

His campaign for the re-election of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in 2027 has adopted a door-to-door strategy, taking the political message to homes, markets, churches, community associations and other organised groups across the state.

The Governor has also brought a religious dimension to his political engagements, acknowledging the place of faith and prayer in public life.

He has repeatedly called on religious organisations, Christian and Muslim communities, and other faith-based groups to pray for him and his administration.

One of such engagements was his interaction with Catholic women at St. Paul Catholic Church, where he requested their prayers and support.

The occasion also featured an empowerment initiative involving 2,000 women, with a reported sum of N200 million distributed among the beneficiaries, amounting to N100,000 each. A brand-new Toyota Hiace bus was also presented to the group.

The significance of this engagement extends beyond the financial assistance and the presentation of the vehicle.

It raises important questions about the relationship between political leadership, religious institutions, women's economic empowerment and grassroots participation in the democratic process.

On November 20, 2026, in Benin City, Governor Okpebholo inaugurated the Edo State chapter of the PBAT Door-to-Door Campaign Movement, declaring a target of 2.5 million votes for President Tinubu in the 2027 presidential election.

The movement is designed to take the campaign directly to residents through household visits and community-level mobilisation and the strategy represents a departure from the conventional dependence on large political rallies as the principal means of reaching voters.

Rather than relying exclusively on public speeches and campaign advertisements, door-to-door mobilisation creates opportunities for personal interaction, questions, explanations and direct communication between political campaigners and residents.

It is a method that places greater emphasis on the individual voter and the immediate community. It also requires campaigners to understand local concerns, listen to citizens and communicate political positions in ways that relate to their daily experiences.

When political leaders encourage their supporters to visit households, they are acknowledging that electoral participation is ultimately a decision made by individual citizens.

The decision to engage Catholic women in this process is equally significant. Women occupy important positions in family life, community development, religious organisations and economic activities.

Catholic women, in particular, have established structures through which they participate in church administration, charitable activities, family welfare and community outreach.

Their influence extends beyond the walls of the church. Many are traders, entrepreneurs, civil servants, professionals, farmers and caregivers who contribute substantially to the economic and social wellbeing of their families and communities.

Consequently, an empowerment programme involving 2,000 women has both an economic and a social dimension. The reported N100,000 allocation to each beneficiary could provide additional working capital for petty traders, assist small-scale businesses, support household needs and offer opportunities for recipients to strengthen their economic activities.

For a market woman, such assistance could mean additional stock for her shop. For a small business owner, it could provide resources to expand operations. For another beneficiary, it might help address pressing family responsibilities.

The presentation of a Toyota Hiace bus also has practical implications. Beyond its symbolic value, the vehicle could facilitate transportation, coordination and the activities of the Catholic women's organisation, particularly where members need to participate in programmes across different communities.

Beyond the material benefits, the Governor's request for prayers introduces another dimension to the engagement. In a deeply religious society such as Nigeria, faith-based institutions remain influential in community relations, social mobilisation and the promotion of moral values.

For many Catholic women, prayer, the Rosary and participation in church activities are integral aspects of their daily lives. Their religious commitments also find expression in charitable work, support for vulnerable members of society and the promotion of family values.

By seeking their prayers, Okpebholo is recognising the place of religious communities in public affairs.

The relationship between governance and faith should therefore be understood within the broader context of mutual respect, accountability and the freedom of citizens to participate in democratic life.

The Governor's engagement with Catholic women also forms part of a wider outreach to religious and socio-cultural organisations, including the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Muslim communities, the Arewa and Igbo communities, artisans, professionals and other organised groups.

This wider approach suggests an attempt to build a broad grassroots network for the presidential campaign. It also reflects the importance political organisations attach to established community structures in reaching residents across Edo State's 18 local government areas.

The campaign provides an organisational framework for this strategy, while the 2.5 million-vote target announced by the Governor represents a political commitment

The Governor's supporters have linked his administration's development agenda to the support it receives from the Federal Government under President Tinubu. They point to infrastructure projects, road construction and rehabilitation, interventions in education and healthcare, CNG transportation initiatives and other empowerment programmes as areas of government activity.

Governor Okpebholo has also attributed his administration's achievements to the support received from the Federal Government, arguing that continuity in the relationship would be important to his development plans.

This position forms a central part of the argument his campaign intends to take to Edo residents.

Ultimately, the significance of the Governor's engagement with Catholic women lies in the intersection of several important issues: grassroots political mobilisation, women's economic empowerment, religious participation and the relationship between state and federal political leadership.

It provides an opportunity to examine how political campaigns can engage organised groups beyond conventional rallies and how empowerment initiatives can be assessed by their actual impact on beneficiaries.

For the Catholic women, the immediate consideration will be the practical value of the assistance received and the opportunities it creates for their organisation and individual members.

• Eubaldus Enahoro is a former Editor of The NIGERIAN OBSERVER Newspaper.

Hitler: Between strong men and strong institutions

SOYOMBO OPEYEMI

Hitler, Putin, Museveni and Trump

Adolf Hitler was a contradiction of some sort. But for some experiences in life, one should have thought it impossible for a man or woman to lead successfully a double life. Here was Hitler, a father figure to his staff, solicitous for their welfare and treating his comrades (the old brigade) with kindness, sometimes making excuses for their failings. Yet at the same time, "a man whose honourable facade hid a criminal lust for power… a mass murderer… genocidal murderer!" Hitler was a weird racist, megalomaniac supremacist and psychopath.

The book, Hitler's Last Secretary, is about the dual personality of Adolf Hitler, author's own (official) relationship with the Fuhrer, the hermit life of Hitler with his staff during the war years and the fall of Germany.

From the Wolf 's Lair (Fuhrer's headquarters) in East Prussia, to Berghof in Munich and finally the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, the author, Traudl Junge, narrates the life and times of the most brutal dictator of the 20th century.

Hitler thought of himself as a genius and would not have children because "I think the offspring of men of genius usually have a very hard time of it. People expect them to be just like their famous progenitor, and won't forgive them for being only average. And in fact most of them are feeble-minded."

At one time in the 261-page book, one of Hitler's staff members, Marlene von Exner, was discovered to have "Jewish blood in her maternal line." There had been uncertainty about the origins of her grandmother – she had been a foundling. But "In view of the good Nazi attitude of the whole family, Hitler thought nothing much of this" until the sudden discovery. He there and then told Frau von Exner, "I'm really extremely sorry for you, but you will understand that I have no alternative to dismissing you from my service. I can't possibly make an exception for myself personally and break my own laws just because it would be to my advantage. But when you are back in Vienna I will have your whole family Aryanized, and pay you your salary for the next six months. I would also like to invite you to be my guest at the Berghof again before you leave me."

At another time, Eva Braun, Hitler's mistress, had seen a statue she liked in the Foreign Office and would want the Fuhrer to buy it for her so it could be "by the pool in my garden."

"Hitler took her hand. 'But I don't know whose it is. It's probably state property, in which case I can't buy it and put it in a private garden.'"

As the Allied forces closed in on the Fuhrer's bunker in Berlin, Frau Goebbels, wife of the Minister of Propaganda made up her mind: "I would rather have my (six) children die than live in disgrace, jeered at. Our children have no place in Germany as it will be after the war."

And so, one after the other in the bunker at Reich Chancellery in Berlin, it was a tale of suicide through poison. Hitler had decreed he would not fall into the hands of the enemy. He would take his own life and his body must be cremated so that no one could find it.

At the dining table, he said to the few staff members left with him in the bunker: "The best way (to die) is to shoot yourself in the mouth. Your skull is shattered and you don't notice anything. Death is instantaneous." Frau Braun, however, preferred to be "a beautiful corpse" and would take poison – "a little brass capsule containing a phial of cyanide." Himler had given Hitler ten of those capsules. Frau Christian and Frau Junge asked Hitler for the capsules too. "…and when we left him after the meal he personally gave each of us one, saying, 'I am very sorry that I can't give you a better farewell present.'"

Hitler marries Eva Braun… Traudl Junge types Hitler's last political testament and private will. And that of Goebbels… the end of the Third Reich in a matter of days. Frau Junge decides to live.

Notwithstanding his self-description as a "genius", Adolf Hitler might have been afflicted with the spirit of destruction. His notion of Germany being the "master race" that must subjugate other "inferior" races could be a product of a warped mind. Destroy million of others in a doomed expansionist campaign and then get destroyed. But for his affliction with the spirit of destruction, stone age mentality and mind disorders, how on earth would Hitler, who had long planned to commit suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Allied forces, announce a new government to succeed him only hours to suicide, when all the major cities of Germany were in ruins with the tanks of the Red Army at the very entrance of the Reich Chancellery where he was holed up in a bunker, awaiting the moment of suicide? Was the new government to function in the air when the Soviet Military Administration in Germany was only a few weeks away from being formed by the occupying forces?

Hitler's Last Secretary is most illuminating, affecting and instructive as well. Only God knows what course a man's life will take. On page 131 is the picture of little Traudl Humps (now Junge) at age seven in 1927. Hitler, the Fuhrer, would not come to power until six years later. Traudl never dreamt she would one day work in the Reich Chancellery. She had trained to be a ballet dancer or ballerina and passed her exams. Working for Hitler was completely by accident or a question of fate.

In this part of the world, our parents determine our course up to the secondary school or varsity level at best. Thereafter you are on your own, to chart a course that suits you or have one determined for you by fate – in which you, most often, get what you never planned for or dreamt of.

The Denazification Commission exonerates Traudl Junge as a "youthful fellow traveller" and fate again places her in a position to write this invaluable book.

Traudl Junge breathed her last in 2002 at age 82 shortly after the publication of the German version of her book.

It is better to have strong institutions than strong men…

FEATURE

The power of thanksgiving

BY APOSTLE SULE FARADAY AZEKHUMEN

Jesus gave thanks. And when you are faced with problems and you still give thanks, during challenges, the challenges you are facing will bow to the God that you serve.

The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, _in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you._ In Acts 16, in Psalm 100:4, we are told to enter His gates with thanksgiving.

Jesus Christ was faced with a situation. He did not send the people away hungry. Rather, He prayed to His Father and gave thanks, and He fed five thousand people, and still had twelve baskets full of bread and fish remaining.

At the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus thanked God again. In John 11:41-42, Jesus said, _Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I know that You always hear Me, but because of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that You sent Me._

The God of resurrection is always present with His people. Doors of resurrection are always open unto God's people when thanksgiving is involved.

When Jesus was to feed the five thousand, He prayed and thanked God. Thanksgiving multiplied the food that Jesus used to feed the multitude.

We were also told how Paul and Silas prayed and thanked God, and the power of the Holy Ghost came down. The prison doors were shaken and opened. Thanksgiving opens doors of stagnation. Thanksgiving opens every door locked against your life and your opportunities. Thanksgiving can break every yoke of barrenness in your life.

When you give some people an appointment, they will tell you that what you gave them is too small. But whatever you are given, give thanks to God and He will multiply it for you.

Jesus gave thanks and attracted God's presence to do more. When you give thanks, you attract God's presence and His blessings, and more opportunities you will receive from God.

If at the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus Christ could thank the Father instead of complaining, then we should learn to be grateful to God. When you thank God for the little given to you, God will prepare a bigger one for you.

It is God that helps. Help cannot be given unless it has been given from heaven above. If God is involved in your matter, that is when help comes from anyone.

THE TEN LEPERS

There is power in thanksgiving. In Luke 17:11, Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one came back to give thanks to God.

Those other nine were children of Israel, descendants of Israel. The one who came back to thank God was a Samaritan. Only the stranger came back to give thanks to God.

The Bible is correct, because Jesus cleansed ten lepers, and He expected the ten to come back with thanksgiving unto God. And the only one that came back, look at what Jesus said to him: _Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not found who returned to give thanks to God, except this stranger?_

Jesus said to the Samaritan, _Go your way, your faith has made you whole._ Luke 17:17-19.

Made whole from every infirmity, sin, poverty, affliction, and setback. Those that did not come back did not receive the blessing.

Learn to thank God for the blessing. He said, in everything, give thanks. In every situation, give thanks to God. Thanksgiving is an act of appreciation to God.

THE BENEFITS OF THANKSGIVING

First, thanksgiving brings multiplication. Thanksgiving opens the door of multiplication.

Second, thanksgiving brings victory. In 2 Chronicles 20:21, when you come together to sing praises to God, doors of victory are opened unto you. In Acts 16:25-26, it opens doors of divine health, protection, financial breakthroughs, and healing from all diseases.

You do not need a miracle before you tell God thank you. With only five loaves and two fishes, it was discouraging, but Jesus was courageous because He knows what the Father can do. Jesus gave thanks and the doors of multiplication were opened unto Him.



Apostle Sule Faraday Azekhumen, special to the Edo Governor on religious matters, and Chaplain government house, Benin City.

Even if you are yet to receive, thank the Lord. Say, Father, for putting food on our table, thank You. Thank Him for deliverance. Thank Him for all He has done and what He is yet to do. Thank Him for keeping you alive. Thank Him for waking you up every morning, because many go to bed at night and never wake up the following morning. Thank Him for His continuous mercies upon you and your family. Thank Him for His blessings. Thank Him for His goodness and mercies upon your life which are following you every day. Thank God for making you to see yet another bright new day today, in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

Why young Nigerians are choosing self-development before marriage

Osarugue Sophia Osadolor

For generations, marriage has been regarded as one of the most important milestones of adulthood in Nigerian society. Growing up, many young people were taught to follow a familiar path: attend school, secure a job, get married, have children and build a home. Marriage was often presented not only as a personal decision but also as a sign that an individual had become responsible and successful.

However, that traditional expectation is gradually changing. For many young Nigerians, marriage is no longer viewed as the ultimate destination or the major evidence of having "made it" in life. Instead, they are increasingly choosing to invest time in education, careers, businesses, financial stability, personal development and emotional maturity before taking the step towards marriage.

This does not necessarily mean that young people no longer believe in marriage. Many still hope to marry and raise families of their own. What is changing is the order in which they want to achieve these milestones. Rather than getting married first and hoping to build a stable life afterwards, some youths want to establish themselves before saying "I do."

For a 24-year-old university graduate who is still searching for stable employment, marriage may feel like an additional responsibility rather than the next logical step. Instead of rushing into marriage because friends of the same age are getting married, the person may choose to acquire professional skills, secure a reliable source of income or start a small business. The priority is not necessarily to become wealthy before marriage, but to have enough stability to contribute meaningfully to a household.

The same applies to a young woman who may decide to spend her twenties building her career, pursuing a postgraduate degree or establishing a business. While previous generations might have questioned why she was "waiting," she may see the period as an opportunity to become financially independent and establish an identity outside marriage.

The rising cost of living has also changed the way many young Nigerians think about starting families. Getting married is one expense, but maintaining a household is another. Rent, food, transportation, healthcare, electricity, school fees and other daily expenses can quickly place pressure on a young couple.

For this reason, some youths are asking themselves a question that previous generations may not have considered as frequently: "Can I actually afford to raise a family?"

For many, the answer is not yet.

The concern becomes even greater when children are involved. Some young Nigerians say they do not want to have children simply because they are married. They want to be reasonably certain that they can provide the resources and environment necessary for their children to grow.

A young couple, for example, may both have jobs but still struggle to pay rent and meet their monthly expenses. They may decide to postpone having children until they have built some savings, secured better accommodation or reached a level of income that can comfortably accommodate the additional responsibility.

> "Investors provide capital. Development partners bring technical knowledge and resources. Civil society organisations help hold institutions accountable and represent communities. Researchers generate evidence and innovation.

For other youths, the concern is education. They have witnessed parents struggle to pay school fees or watched families remove children from good schools because they could no longer afford the cost. Consequently, they want to avoid repeating the same experience with their own children.

A young man who earns enough to support himself may therefore decide that marriage can wait until his income improves. His concern may not be the wedding ceremony itself, but what happens afterwards: paying rent, feeding a family, handling medical emergencies, supporting a pregnant partner and eventually paying school fees.

Similarly, a young woman who is financially independent may want to ensure that she can continue supporting herself and contributing to her family even if circumstances change. For her, having her own career or business is not a rejection of traditional family values; it is preparation for the uncertainties of life.

The changing attitude is also evident in the way some youths approach weddings. Nigerian weddings are often associated with elaborate ceremonies, expensive outfits, large guest lists and significant financial commitments. While many still dream of grand celebrations, others are beginning to question the wisdom of spending large amounts of money on a wedding while having little left to establish the home afterwards.

For such individuals, a modest wedding followed by financial planning may be preferable to an extravagant ceremony that leaves the couple in debt.

Beyond money, personal development has become another major consideration. Some young Nigerians want to understand themselves better before committing to a lifelong relationship. They want to learn how to communicate, manage conflict, understand finances and develop emotional maturity.

This is partly influenced by the growing visibility of failed relationships and marriages. Through social media, conversations that were once kept within families are now public. Stories of marital conflicts, infidelity, separation, domestic violence and divorce are frequently discussed online. While social media does not always provide the complete picture, these stories have encouraged some young people to take marriage more seriously.

Rather than viewing marriage as something that automatically works because two people love each other, some youths now recognise that marriage requires communication, financial planning, patience, compromise and emotional responsibility.

There is also a growing desire among young people to avoid entering marriage because of pressure. In many Nigerian families, unmarried adults are frequently asked when they intend to settle down. Questions such as "When are you bringing someone home?" or "Your mates are already married, what are you waiting for?" can become a source of pressure.

But some young Nigerians are increasingly unwilling to allow these expectations to determine the timing of their lives.

A 23-year-old who is still in university may not consider marriage an immediate priority when she is focused on completing her degree. A 26-year-old entrepreneur who is trying to keep a business afloat may prefer to invest his limited income into his business rather than immediately take on the financial demands of a household. A young professional working her first job may want to build an emergency fund, gain experience and advance in her career before starting a family.

FEATURE

Exposed! before we renew the stories we tell

...We must renew the way we see

Babawale Obayanju

Good morning, and welcome to you all!

It is with joy in my heart and gratitude to the Almighty God for His grace of light to gain insight, His gift of people with whom we build this work, His mercy to practise hope — that doing emotion that reminlds us our desired future is a possibility — and His breath that births life as we tread daily the paths Mother Earth sets before us.

It has been nine years since we began this journey of building together a movement of intentional, purposeful and productive visual storytellers who are telling the African story and stories from a place of strength. We are grateful to God for guiding us and helping us accomplish these strides over the years.

For those who are just meeting TellThatStory, let me tell you a little about us.

TellThatStory is a creative not-for-profit media group based in Benin City, Nigeria.

Our vision is to raise a movement of focused and productive visual artists telling genuine stories of the peoples of Africa — our strengths, our culture, our beauty, our issues and our alternatives.

Our mission is to inspire purposeful change by empowering artists to produce high-quality, meaningful works that hold value and amplify local voices addressing pressing environmental and social challenges.

Over the years, we have developed programmes such as INCLUSIVE: The Creative Female Convergence, DOCUmentary SCREENing, Street + Photography Workshop, TTS x FUJIFILM Visual Storytelling Grant, portfolio reviews, TheCONVERSATION and a budding library, among others.

You can find us at www.tellthatstory.com.ng

WHY RENEWAL?

Every year, we approach our work guided by an inspired theme that helps us narrow our focus, one year at a time. This year, that guide has led us to RENEWAL, expressed through the concepts of Light, Hope and Life.

As documenters of our stories, renewal helps us speak about the real, lived cycles of existence, evoked by the daily mental, social, environmental and economic changes we encounter. Changes that require us to recover, remain resilient and be bold enough to rebuild.

Renewal asks us to acknowledge the process, the ruptures and the transformations, not just the beauty our minds have been wired to seek.

It asks us to look beyond the finished picture and pay attention to what it takes to get there.

It invites us to locate quiet hope rather than eye-catching visual performance; earned insight rather than the cosmetic radiance amplified by our microwave era.

Perhaps we need to ask ourselves: Are we making images that merely attract attention, or are we making images that deserve attention?

Are we documenting what is trending, or are we paying attention to what must not be forgotten?

Renewal invites us to ponder that light and hope emerge from life as e be — life as it is. Not an idealised version of life, not the perfectly arranged frame, not some manufactured picture of perfection, but the imperfect, sometimes uncomfortable and often complicated realities of our existence.

To tell stories of renewal, we must first renew our capacity to see.

The Bible says in Romans 8:24:

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

Renewal calls us to see again, dream again and reimagine again. This is where light and hope reside.

The story of the 2026 edition of EXPOSED! is itself a testament to the potency of this idea.

We asked ourselves: How do we build on the work already done? How will new life emerge from what we have started?

In that musing, light shone. We encountered an expression from ART X Lagos from a couple of years ago, an idea that helped us see a possibility where perhaps we had not seen one before. Hope came alive, and today, here we are, witnessing life emerge from that possibility.

LEARNING TO NOTICE

I want to share something personal with you.

As privileged archivists of our peoples' stories and history, a responsibility is laid upon us. It requires attentiveness amidst the noise of trending, likes and virality at all costs — sometimes at the expense of truth, substance and meaning.

Our responsibility is to ensure that we own our truths, because generations past, present and those yet to come rely on us to hold forth this task.

And to do this, we must become voracious readers.

Not only reading when we are preparing for an examination or seeking to perform, but reading as a way of sharpening the tool of the mind. Reading to expand our imagination, challenge our assumptions and renew our capacity to see.

We must learn to notice.

For me, my metaphysical connection is with Jesus Christ, and I engage prayer as a means of staying guided.

Prayer turns me into a noticer. It helps me see what God wants me to notice. The more I pray, the more I notice; the less I pray, the less I notice. It is as simple as that.

And when I say prayer, I do not mean only clasping my hands and kneeling down piously, although that is part of it. I also speak of the time I spend thinking through a book, a film, a website of stories, and the time I spend experimentally doing what I have seen, read or imagined.

I guess you are wondering how all of this connects.

Let me help you.

Scientifically, there is a network of structures in the brainstem known as the Reticular Activating System (RAS), which plays an important role in arousal, wakefulness and attention.

Every day, as we awake, we are bombarded by countless stimuli competing for our attention. Our brains cannot consciously process everything around us, so our attention becomes selective. We begin to notice what has become relevant to us.

Let me give you an example.

When I got my Fujifilm X-T20, I would have sworn that Edgar was the only person shooting Fujifilm in Benin City, perhaps with Bernard Kalu in Lagos. But after buying the camera, it suddenly seemed as though many people had the same camera brand!

It wasn't that lots of people went out to buy Fujifilm cameras when I did. It was simply that the camera had become relevant to me. I had begun to notice it.

Before then, it was there, but I hardly paid attention to it.

This is an illustration of how our attention works. What becomes important to us begins to occupy more of our awareness.

And this is where I find an interesting connection with prayer.

When I pray about someone or something, it creates a category of attention in my mind. I begin to notice things connected to the prayers I have made. I become more attentive to possibilities, people, conversations and opportunities that might otherwise have passed me by.

Have you ever noticed that when you pray, coincidences seem to happen? And when you don't, they don't?

For me, it is more than coincidence; it is providence.

Prayer does not mean that every opportunity will simply fall into our laps. It helps prepare us to recognise possibilities, discern opportunities and respond when they appear.

We often think of prayer as nothing more than words spoken to God, but perhaps it is more than that. Prayer is not a monologue; it is a dialogue. We speak to God with everything from words to groans to thoughts. And we believe God speaks to us through dreams, desires, promptings, impressions and ideas.

Colossians 4:2 says:

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."

Notice that word: WATCHFUL.

Prayer and watchfulness belong together.

And so, as we have gathered here, I am pretty sure providence is manifesting. Open the eyes of your mind. Be attentive. Some of your prayers may find answers through the people you meet, the knowledge you encounter and the experiences you will have here.

But you must notice.

And when you notice, you must be willing to engage.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SEEING

This brings me back to our responsibility as visual storytellers.

For us at TellThatStory, EXPOSED! is a vehicle for asking the WHY question and finding answers thereof, not just the HOW.

The HOW matters, certainly, but the WHY gives the HOW its meaning.

We are interested in the intention behind the image, the consciousness behind the frame and the humanity behind the story.

We want to understand why a story deserves to be told, why a particular perspective matters, why certain histories must be recovered and why certain voices must be heard.

We must be careful not to become so concerned with producing images that people will like that we stop producing images that people need to remember.

What happens when the pursuit of visibility becomes more important than the pursuit of truth?

What happens when virality becomes the measure of value?

What happens when we become so occupied with producing content that we lose the consciousness required to create work that carries meaning?

These are questions we must confront.

Our work goes beyond the likes, the follows, the comments and the fleeting excitement of social media. We are custodians of memory, identity, culture and history.

And that responsibility demands that we read, research, observe, question, listen and think.

We must not only learn how to make better images; we must also become better thinkers, better observers and more conscious storytellers.

THE COMMON THREAD

EXPOSED! The Visual Storytelling Conference is a common thread. It fans the embers of the lights and flames we must individually and responsibly carry and protect.

We are different people. We have different faces, different histories and different ways of meeting our gaze.

EXPOSED! does not bring us here to become alike. It is set out to bring forth that thin bronze thread of light — that insight that connects us together, as we bear our distinct individual lights, from the established to the yet-to-be-established.

There is something in Thomas Blackshear II's 2018 painting, The Common Thread, that speaks to this idea. The connection may be shared, but our identities are not surrendered.

We are not gathered here to manufacture a common identity. We are gathered to discover a common connection.

We do not need to see alike, think alike or tell stories alike to learn from one another. Our distinctiveness is not a barrier to community; it is what makes the community richer.

So, as you move through these three days, I encourage you to listen to hear your own knowledge and insight.

Do not get carried away by the rave, the vibes or even the names in the room. Be open to learning from everyone, whether established or emerging. But do not lose sight of your own light in the process.

Your light is unique. Fan it.

The responsibility is yours, but it is also a responsibility to things beyond yourself.

You do not have to become less distinct in order to shine or belong to a community.

Your voice counts. Your perspective matters. Your stories deserve to be told.

You do not have to leave home to be seen. Rise from it.



A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT EVENT , EXPOSED! TELL THAT STORY 2026.

FEATURE

When an iroko falls:

Pete Edochie, the voice that gave African culture a face

Matthew Okagha

There are men whose departure leaves an empty chair, and there are men whose passing leaves a vacuum in the soul of a nation. Chief Pete Edochie belongs unmistakably to the latter category.

With his death at 79, Nigeria has lost one of its most distinguished actors, but Africa has lost something even more profound: a custodian of its cultural memory, a master interpreter of its stories and a remarkable ambassador of its identity.

Indeed, an iroko has fallen!

But even in death, the iroko does not surrender its greatness. Its roots remain embedded in the soil, its branches continue to provide shelter in memory, and its towering presence becomes a permanent reference point for generations yet unborn.

> Whenever he appeared on screen, attention followed. He did not need to shout to command respect, nor did he need elaborate gestures to communicate authority.

Such is the enduring place Pete Edochie occupies in the history of Nigerian entertainment and African storytelling.

For millions of Nigerians and admirers of African cinema across the world, Pete Edochie was not simply an actor. He was an experience. His deep, commanding voice, dignified carriage, measured delivery and extraordinary mastery of dialogue gave his performances a distinctive authority that few could replicate.

Whenever he appeared on screen, attention followed. He did not need to shout to command respect, nor did he need elaborate gestures to communicate authority. His presence alone could transform an ordinary scene into a memorable theatrical experience.

His legendary interpretation of Okonkwo in the television adaptation of Chinua Achebe's literary masterpiece, Things Fall Apart, remains one of the defining moments in African television history.

In bringing Okonkwo to life, Edochie did something extraordinary. He transported a literary character from the pages of a celebrated novel into the consciousness of millions of viewers. He gave flesh, voice and emotional depth to Achebe's fictional creation, making the struggles, pride, contradictions and tragic fate of Okonkwo resonate far beyond the boundaries of Nigeria.

It was a performance that transcended entertainment. It became a cultural statement.

Through that role, Edochie demonstrated that African stories, when told with authenticity and artistic excellence, possess the power to command global attention and admiration.

Yet, to remember Pete Edochie only through Okonkwo would be to underestimate the breadth of his contribution.

His professional journey began in broadcasting in 1967 with the Eastern Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, where he distinguished himself and rose through the ranks. His experience as a broadcaster undoubtedly enriched his acting, particularly his remarkable command of language, diction and dramatic expression.

He subsequently became one of Nollywood's most recognisable faces, featuring in productions that helped shape the evolution of Nigeria's indigenous film industry. From Igodo to Rituals and Lionheart, his performances demonstrated versatility, depth and an enduring commitment to his craft.

He was particularly convincing in roles that required him to embody traditional rulers, family patriarchs, community elders and men of influence. He understood the cultural weight of these characters and interpreted them with a dignity that made audiences believe in the worlds he represented.

His proverbs were not merely decorative expressions. They carried the wisdom of generations. His pauses communicated as much as his words, while his distinctive voice gave African traditional expressions a special musicality.

In an era when cultural identities are increasingly influenced by global entertainment, Pete Edochie remained a powerful reminder that our traditions, languages, values and stories are worthy of preservation and celebration.

He showed that an African actor did not have to abandon his cultural roots to achieve international recognition. Rather, authenticity could become his greatest strength.

That is perhaps one of the greatest lessons of his life.



The tributes pouring in from government officials, political leaders, colleagues and admirers testify to the extraordinary reach of his influence. The Minister of Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy, Hannatu Musa Musawa, aptly described him as a national treasure, a cultural ambassador, a teacher and a father figure to generations of artists.

Her description captures the magnitude of the loss.

But beyond official tributes and glowing newspaper headlines lies a more personal grief: the loss felt by families who grew up watching him, young actors who studied his performances, filmmakers who admired his discipline and ordinary Nigerians who found in his screen appearances a familiar representation of African values.

For the Nigerian film industry, his departure marks the end of a remarkable chapter. For younger practitioners, it leaves behind a demanding standard of excellence, professionalism and cultural consciousness.

Great artists do not merely entertain their generation. They influence the artistic direction of generations that follow. They establish standards by which others are measured.

Pete Edochie did precisely that.

His legacy must therefore be preserved beyond ceremonial speeches and momentary expressions of grief. Nigeria must find meaningful ways to document his career, preserve his works, celebrate his contribution to broadcasting and cinema, and make his artistic journey accessible to young people who wish to understand the foundations of African filmmaking.

The nation should also recognise that cultural icons are national assets. Their contributions deserve deliberate documentation and institutional preservation.

As we mourn this extraordinary son of Africa, our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Barrister Josephine Edochie, his children, the extended family, the people of Nteje in Anambra State, the Actors Guild of Nigeria and the entire creative community.

May God grant them the strength to bear this irreparable loss.

There is, however, a consolation in the midst of grief: death may silence the voice, but it cannot erase the words already spoken. It may draw the curtain on a life, but it cannot bring an enduring performance to an end.

Pete Edochie may have taken his final bow, but the stage of African storytelling will forever bear his imprint.

When future generations revisit Things Fall Apart, they will encounter Okonkwo. When they watch the great productions that shaped Nollywood, they will encounter his artistry. When they speak of actors who carried African culture with uncommon dignity, his name will inevitably be mentioned.

That is the privilege of a life well spent and a talent faithfully deployed.

An iroko has fallen, but its roots remain. Its shadow will endure in our collective memory, and its story will continue to inspire.

Rest well, Chief Pete Edochie, MON, Ononenyi.

You did not merely act out stories; you gave Africa a voice, a face and a lasting sense of cultural pride. Your final curtain has fallen, but your ovation will never end.

COLUMN

Nigeria and South Korea: A tale of two leadership cultures



Sometimes, I find myself wondering whether Nigeria, my treasured homeland truly belongs to the same global community as other nations.

Stories from elsewhere often leave me bewildered and prompt sober reflection on the yawning gulf between Nigeria and societies more committed to responsible leadership, institutional integrity and national development.

A recent report concerned South Korea's Education Minister, Choi Kyo-jin, who resigned following controversy over the government's handling of measures introduced to prevent artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted cheating in the country's university entrance examination.

In a recent examination in South korea, a candidate who emerged as a top scorer admitted to having deployed a miniature camera, a mobile phone and AI tools to facilitate examination malpractice. This disturbing revelation prompted examination officials to take urgent measures to detect and uncover concealed electronic devices used by candidates to perpetrate such misconduct.

President Lee Jae Myung accepted his resignation. What fascinated me was not merely the resignation itself, but the political culture in which a minister could acknowledge responsibility and consider relinquishing his position an appropriate response.

South Korea's annual College Scholastic Ability Test, popularly known as Suneung, is comparable in significance to Nigeria's Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), although the examination systems differ. More than 550,000 candidates registered for the 2026 examination. Authorities reported 111 suspected cases of examination misconduct involving the use of electronic devices with AI Application (App).

The controversy arose partly from the late introduction and repeated adjustment of anti-cheating measures. Following concerns about concealed devices and AI-assisted cheating, the authorities introduced stringent restrictions and additional security checks. However, the last-minute changes generated confusion and anxiety among candidates, teachers and examination officials. Choi acknowledged that his ministry had failed to prepare adequately in advance, accepted responsibility for the inconvenience and offered to resign. The president accepted his resignation.

Then I began to wonder: can such a thing happen in Nigeria? Can a Nigerian minister voluntarily relinquish office because of a serious administrative failure in his ministry? Can a public office holder sacrifice the privileges, influence and material benefits associated with political appointment because he believes that accountability must take precedence? More fundamentally, do we have a political culture in which responsibility is regarded as an obligation rather than an inconvenience?

Again, my concern extends beyond conventional examination malpractice to the increasingly sophisticated use of technology to manipulate academic performance. In an era where AI tools are readily accessible, one cannot help but wonder how many candidates who record exceptionally high scores in the UTME genuinely earn their grades through intellectual effort and academic competence.

How can we be certain that some of these remarkable performances are not facilitated by the surreptitious deployment of AI tools and other technological devices? While exceptionally high scores deserve commendation, they should also inspire confidence in the integrity of the examination process. The credibility of our educational assessment system must never be sacrificed on the altar of impressive statistics.

These questions and other issues become particularly compelling against the background of a statement attributed to Alwan Hassan, an APC spokesperson, in October. Hassan reportedly alleged that some ministers paid as much as N1billion or more to secure ministerial appointments. The allegation is grave, but it must be treated as an allegation, not an established fact. No individual should be pronounced guilty on the strength of an unsubstantiated claim. Nevertheless, such a statement raises an uncomfortable question about the integrity of our political appointment process.

Imagine an individual allegedly spending a humongous sum to secure a ministerial position. Would such a person readily surrender the appointment when confronted with a scandal or administrative failure? Would the office be regarded primarily as an opportunity to serve the public or as an investment from which the individual must recoup his expenditure, accumulate wealth and consolidate political influence? These are questions that deserve serious national attention.

If appointments are secured through financial inducement rather than competence, character and capacity, the consequences can be devastating. An office intended for public service may become an avenue for private enrichment. This is not to suggest that every minister paid for an appointment or that every office holder is corrupt. Rather, it is to emphasise that allegations of transactional politics must be investigated and that public appointments must command credibility and confidence.

This is one of Nigeria's fundamental problems. Public office is sometimes perceived as a prize, a reward for political loyalty or an avenue for personal enrichment rather than a platform for national service. Consequently, private interests take precedence over the collective good. When appointments become transactions, the public ultimately pays the price through poor leadership, waste and institutional decay.

The difference between Nigeria and South Korea, therefore, is not simply about a minister's willingness to resign. It is about the values, institutions and public expectations that shape governance. In a society where accountability is taken seriously, public officials understand that their continued appointment is conditional upon performance, integrity and public confidence. They recognise that political authority is not personal property and that ministerial office does not confer immunity from scrutiny.

Resignation should not be romanticised or treated as proof that a country is free of corruption. South Korea has its own political scandals and governance challenges, and not every administrative mistake warrants a minister's resignation. Nevertheless, leadership must entail accountability. A resignation can demonstrate a sense of responsibility when a minister acknowledges that the ministry has failed under his watch. It can also help restore public confidence in government.

In Nigeria, by contrast, resignation following administrative failure is hardly an established convention. Public officials often appear more concerned with retaining their positions than addressing the circumstances that have made their continued tenure questionable.

When controversies arise, the familiar response is often defensive. Blame is transferred, explanations are manufactured, investigations are promised and the public is urged to move on. At times, legitimate criticism is portrayed as political persecution rather than recognised as an essential component of democratic accountability.

Democracy is much more than periodic elections, political parties, campaign promises and the right to vote. It requires institutions that restrain the exercise of power, protect citizens' rights and ensure that public officials answer for their decisions. A country cannot claim to practise democracy meaningfully when political authority is exercised without effective checks and consequences. Elections may confer legitimacy, but they do not give elected leaders or appointed officials a licence to govern without accountability.

> We need citizens who judge public officials by their performance rather than political affiliation, and institutions that protect the public interest rather than powerful individuals

The rule of law must be sacrosanct. It must not be selectively applied according to an individual's political standing, wealth or proximity to those in power. A society cannot progress when influential people appear to enjoy privileges unavailable to ordinary citizens. When the law is rigorous against the poor but accommodating towards the powerful, justice becomes an illusion and public confidence in government deteriorates. No one should be above the law, and no public office should become a shield against investigation.

Corruption is destructive because its consequences extend far beyond the money diverted from public coffers. It undermines institutions, distorts public policy, discourages investment, weakens public services and entrenches inequality.

Resources meant for schools, hospitals, roads, electricity, research and technological advancement are lost through theft, inflated contracts, patronage and waste. Consequently, a resource-rich country continues to struggle with the provision of basic amenities. Corruption does not merely deprive a nation of money; it deprives its citizens of opportunities.

More troubling is the culture of impunity that sustains corruption. When individuals accused of misappropriating public funds enjoy political protection, the message is that wrongdoing may carry no serious consequences. When political loyalty is rewarded above competence, mediocrity becomes entrenched. When individuals are celebrated despite credible questions about their stewardship, integrity loses its value in public life. Institutions consequently become vulnerable to capture by those who should ordinarily be subject to their oversight.

Corruption also thrives on selective outrage. Some condemn it when political opponents are implicated but defend it when their allies are accused. Such double standards undermine accountability. Corruption has no political party, ethnicity or religion; its consequences are borne by everyone.

National development cannot depend solely on the personality or goodwill of a president. It requires strong institutions, transparent appointment processes, competent public servants, independent oversight bodies and citizens prepared to insist on high standards. Where institutions depend excessively on the goodwill of political leaders, they remain vulnerable to arbitrariness and abuse. They must be sufficiently independent to investigate wrongdoing, even when politically powerful individuals are implicated.

Nigeria must therefore make political appointments genuinely merit-based. Ministerial positions should not be treated as rewards for patronage, financial contributions or personal loyalty. They should be entrusted to individuals with the requisite expertise, integrity and capacity to deliver measurable results.

Allegations of financial inducement in appointments must be investigated transparently. Public officials should also be assessed against clearly defined performance benchmarks, with ministries publishing measurable targets and periodic reports on their achievements and failures.

Parliamentary oversight must be strengthened, while anti-corruption agencies must be allowed to operate without political interference. The media must also discharge its watchdog responsibility without fear or favour.

It should not become a propaganda instrument for public office holders or a platform for sanitising questionable conduct. Investigative journalism and sustained public-interest reporting remain indispensable to exposing wrongdoing and compelling those in authority to account for their stewardship.

Ultimately, the South Korean episode should remind us that leadership is inseparable from responsibility. A ministerial appointment is not a personal trophy, an entitlement or an investment portfolio. It is a public trust. The privileges of office must never outweigh the obligations that accompany it. Equally, resignation is not a substitute for investigation where wrongdoing is suspected. Accountability must incorporate due process and where evidence warrants, appropriate legal consequences.

Until Nigeria builds a political culture in which public officials accept responsibility, institutions enforce the law impartially and corruption attracts predictable consequences, our development aspirations will remain largely rhetorical. We cannot continue to demand the dividends of democracy while tolerating the very practices that undermine it.

The painful truth is that Nigeria is not short of human talent, intellectual capacity or natural resources. What we desperately need is leadership that understands the difference between occupying an office and deserving to hold it. We need citizens who judge public officials by their performance rather than political affiliation, and institutions that protect the public interest rather than powerful individuals.

The question is not whether Nigeria can become another South Korea. It is whether we are prepared to abandon the political habits that keep us where we are. Until we do, we may continue to watch other countries strengthen their institutions and make meaningful progress while we remain trapped in an endless cycle of corruption, impunity and unfulfilled promises.

That is the tragedy of a nation blessed with enormous potential but still struggling to make accountability the foundation of public life.

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ALGERIA FIFA U-17 WORLD CUP TEAM

2026 FIFA U-17 World Cup – Algeria comeback to record first win; heartbreaks for Tanzania and Cameroon

Yacine Abed scored twice as Algeria came back from a goal down to beat Montenegro 2-1 and record their first FIFA U-17 World Cup Qatar 2026 victory on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Tanzania fought hard but couldn't avoid a slim defeat to four-time champions Brazil, while there was a heartbreak for Cameroon who lost their second game of the campaign to Mexico.

Four-time champions Brazil punched their ticket to the Round of 32 with a tightly contested victory over Tanzania. Richard Wendel scored the lone goal after the ball fell kindly into his path after Eduardo Conceicao's effort was blocked. Tanzania goalkeeper Haji Abdalah made a number of brilliant saves to keep his side in the game.

Algeria goals: Abed (67 pen, 81)

Montenegro goal: Tifrani own goal (41)

Player of the Match: Yacine Abed (Algeria)

Algeria came from behind to beat Montenegro in a breathless clash. The opening goal came when the African side failed to deal with a teasing Petar Ivanovic corner and the ball deflected in off goalkeeper Yazid Tifrani. Algeria spurned a golden chance to level when Yacine Abed struck the bar with a penalty. They were then awarded another spot-kick, and this time Abed made no mistake. Abed then lashed home a fabulous winner to spark joyous scenes of celebration.

"It's an amazing feeling. We were losing, but we managed to come back and win. We made our fans happy, and we hope to make them happy again in the next match", said Yacine Abed, Algeria goalscorer.

Mexico became the latest side to punch their ticket to the next phase after a dominant second-half display against Cameroon. Miguel Rivera broke the deadlock with a sumptuous volley from a corner before Adan Sanchez added a second from the spot. Gerson Gutierrez wrapped things up with two close-range finishes after some fine touches from Sanchez.

Garo rewards Sai Masu Gida with double match bonus after victory over Ikorodu City

The Chairman of Kano Pillars FC, Alhaji Ahmad Musbahu Garo, has rewarded the players, technical crew and backroom staff with a double match bonus in recognition of their impressive performance and first road victory of the ongoing EUROMATCH-NPFL 2026/2027 season.



GARO TEAM

The Sai Masu Gida secured a hard fought 1-0 victory over Ikorodu City on Saturday at the Mobolaji Johnson Arena, Lagos, courtesy of Garba Shuaibu's 18th minute solitary strike.

The victory marks the first time the four-time NPFL champions have recorded an away win this season following several close attempts on the road.

The Pyramid City side have now climbed to second position on the league table with 25 points from 14 matches, just three points adrift of league leaders, Rangers Int'l FC.

The Sai Masu Gida will now turn their attention to Matchday 15, where they welcome Abia Warriors to the Sani Abacha Stadium, ofar Mata, this weekend.

Nigeria targets podium finish, contingent departs for World Para Powerlifting Championships in Bahrain

Team Nigeria is heading into the 2026 World Para Powerlifting Championships in Bahrain with ambitions of sustaining the country's impressive standing on the global stage, following the confirmation of a 17-athlete squad for the 12th edition of the competition scheduled for November 27 to December 2.

The Nigerian contingent will be led by Paralympic champion and world record holder Folashade Oluwafemiayo, las Nigeria seeks to build on its outstanding performance at the last edition of the championships in Cairo, Egypt, where the country finished second in the overall world rankings.

With the championships bringing together the world's leading para powerlifters, Nigeria will be looking to demonstrate the depth of its talent, competitive resilience and continued presence among the leading nations in the sport.

President of the Nigeria Para Powerlifting Federation, Mr Kingsley Awodi, expressed confidence in the team's readiness and determination, while acknowledging the support received from the National Sports Commission ahead of the global competition.

"I want to specifically appreciate the Director General of the National Sports Commission, Hon. Bukola Olopade, for the fatherly role he has played in supporting the federation and the athletes. He has provided the necessary support and given us what we need to prepare for this competition.

"The athletes are fully aware of the confidence and investment in them, and they are determined to reciprocate this support by giving their best and making Nigerians proud in Bahrain. We are going into this championship with a strong sense of responsibility and the determination to compete for honours," Awodi said.

The NSC's support for the team forms part of its broader commitment to strengthening Nigeria's participation in international competitions and providing athletes with the necessary backing to compete at the highest level.

CAF unveils five finalists for 2026 Men's Player of The Year Award

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has unveiled the final shortlist for the 2026 Men's Player of the Year award, with Morocco dominating the list with three nominees.

Morocco's Achraf Hakimi, Brahim Diaz and Ismael Saibari made the final five following their impressive performances during the year.

Senegal, meanwhile, have two representatives on the shortlist, with Pape Gueye and Sadio Mane completing the list of finalists.

The nominations highlight the strong presence of Morocco and Senegal in African football, with both countries accounting for all five contenders for the prestigious individual award.

The winner will be announced at the 2026 CAF Awards ceremony.



CAF moves to sack legal affairs director following CAS ruling

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) is reportedly preparing to accelerate the departure of its Director of Legal Affairs and Compliance, Cedrick Aghey, following the recent ruling by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Aghey's position has reportedly come under scrutiny over concerns surrounding his appointment by former CAF Secretary General Véron Mosengo-Omba, which was allegedly made without the approval of the organisation's Executive Committee.

The legal affairs director was also reportedly implicated in controversies surrounding the handling of CAF's Appeals Jury, which ruled in favour of Morocco in the disputed case.

The controversy also followed the dismissal of Yacine Osman Robleh, former head of CAF's Judicial Bodies Department, who was responsible, among other duties, for appointing members of the Appeals Jury.

Aghey is also said to have been involved in an internal disagreement with current CAF Secretary General Samson Adamu, amid reports of tensions over the leadership of the organisation's administrative structure.

His reported absence from CAF's offices in Egypt, with claims that he spends most of his time in Europe, has also generated dissatisfaction within the organisation.

The latest development comes amid wider concerns about CAF's legal administration, including previous cases that reportedly ended unfavourably for the continental football governing body.

However, CAF has yet to issue an official statement confirming Aghey's departure or explaining the circumstances surrounding the reported decision.



THE CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

SPORTS FEATURE

THE VERDICT THAT SAVED AFRICAN FOOTBALL:

How CAS restored justice, vindicated Senegal's on-field victory and reminded Africa of the true meaning of leadership

Douglas Baye-Osagie
Email: dbayeosagie@yahoo.com



Senegal's National Team with Sadio Mane Celebrate 2025 AFCON victory

If the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) had not intervened, November 24, 2026, would have gone down as one of the darkest days in the history of African football.

We would have been left to explain to future generations that an Africa Cup of Nations final was not ultimately decided by goals, saves, tactics or courage, but by lawyers, committees and a boardroom in Cairo.

CAS has spared African football that embarrassment.

By overturning the Confederation of African Football's (CAF) decision to award Morocco a 3-0 victory by forfeit and restoring Senegal's 1-0 triumph on the pitch, CAS has reaffirmed one of the most fundamental principles of sport: football matches should be decided on the field of play, not in the boardroom.

That principle is the soul of the beautiful game. Once it is compromised, the very foundation of football is threatened. A child in Dakar, Lagos, Accra or Casablanca must grow up believing that when his team scores more goals than its opponent, it wins. When that belief is destroyed, the credibility of the game itself is at stake.

This verdict deserves to be celebrated. It was more than a legal ruling; it was a moral correction and a victory for sporting justice.

A TRIBUTE TO SADIO MANÉ: THE CAPTAIN WHO HELD HIS TEAM TOGETHER

Amid the celebration, however, we must not forget the man whose leadership helped save Senegal's night in January, long before the lawyers delivered their verdict in November.

At a moment when emotions had reached boiling point, following a disallowed goal and a contentious late penalty awarded against Senegal, the situation threatened to descend into complete chaos. Senegal's players, overwhelmed by frustration, began walking off the pitch.

But Sadio Mané did not walk away.

He stayed.

Mané, the experienced leader, the elder statesman and the conscience of that team, called his teammates back. He appealed to them, urged restraint and reminded them of their responsibility to the country and the game.

In that moment, he was more than a footballer. He was a statesman of the sport, a leader who understood that history would not look kindly on a team that abandoned the field, however justified its grievances might have seemed.

If Senegal are champions today, Mané's intervention was a significant part of that journey. By persuading his teammates to return, he gave them the opportunity to settle the contest on the pitch — with Édouard Mendy saving the penalty and Pape Gueye eventually scoring the decisive goal in extra time.

He gave Senegal the opportunity to win fairly and gave the eventual legal proceedings a completed match result to consider.

Every young African captain should study that moment. Leadership is not about shouting the loudest when emotions are running high. It is about holding a team together when everything seems to be falling apart.

Sadio Mané deserves our admiration and respect.

PRAISE FOR THE MEDIA THAT KEPT THE TRUTH ALIVE

We must also acknowledge the journalists, broadcasters, football analysts, former players and supporters across Africa and beyond who refused to allow this controversy to disappear.

Between January and November, it would have been easy for everyone to move on, accept CAF's decision and declare Morocco champions. The football world could simply have shifted its attention to preparations for the FIFA World Cup.

But many in the media continued to ask an important question: How could a team lose a final it had won 1-0 on the pitch?

They kept the controversy alive, examined the available footage, questioned the circumstances surrounding the abandonment and subsequent resumption of the match, and continued to demand accountability.

Their persistence ensured that the issue remained in the public consciousness. They reminded football authorities that the integrity of the game could not be sacrificed for administrative convenience.

Without the determination of those who continued to question the original decision, the debate might have faded into history.

Truth needs witnesses, and the media played an important role in keeping those questions alive.

LESSONS FOR THE NEXT AFCON

Now that the controversy has reached its conclusion, African football must look ahead. The next Africa Cup of Nations must be better, not only in the quality of football but also in professionalism, discipline, officiating and administration.

However, one issue must be addressed honestly, without fear or favour and without diminishing Senegal's victory.

The decision by Senegal's players to walk off the pitch was unacceptable. It was a regrettable episode that should never be repeated.

Yes, the players felt aggrieved. Yes, the decisions that preceded the walk-off were contentious. And yes, they eventually returned to complete the match and won deservedly.

But walking off the pitch is never the appropriate response to perceived injustice. It disrespects the game, the opposing team, the paying supporters and the millions watching across the continent.

African football must not normalise such behaviour. If every team that disagrees with a referee's decision abandons the pitch, the game will descend into disorder.

There are important lessons for everyone.

1. For Players: Never Abandon the Pitch

Players must learn to manage their emotions, however difficult the circumstances. Protests should be channelled through the captain, the referee and the appropriate official procedures. Players must remain on the pitch and allow the game to reach its proper conclusion.

Your frustration may be understandable, but abandoning the field is not the answer.

2. For Captains: Be Like Mané

A captain's responsibility extends beyond wearing the armband. He must be the calming influence when tensions rise and the voice of reason when emotions threaten to overwhelm judgment.

Mané demonstrated the importance of leadership in a moment when his teammates needed direction. Future African captains should learn from his example.

3. For Referees and VAR: Restore Confidence in Officiating

The next AFCON must place a premium on transparent, consistent and competent officiating.

The controversy in Rabat exposed the consequences of losing players' and supporters' confidence in match officials. CAF must continue investing in elite referees, improve VAR implementation and ensure that important decisions are properly communicated and understood.

Technology should enhance fairness, not create further confusion.

4. For CAF: Protect the Integrity of Results

CAF must ensure that its regulations are clear, consistent and properly enforced before competitions begin.

Disciplinary decisions must be grounded in established rules and due process. Where disputes arise, they must be handled transparently and in accordance with the applicable regulations.

The credibility of African football depends on the confidence of its players, clubs, national associations and supporters in the integrity of its governing institutions.

5. For Teams: Discipline Must Match Talent

Morocco must accept the outcome, while Senegal must recognise how close a moment of indiscipline came to undermining its achievement.

The lessons are important for every participating nation. Talent may win matches, but discipline, professionalism and sound judgment help win championships.

The next AFCON champions must be a team that combines footballing excellence with the highest standards of professionalism.

SENEGAL WON ON THE PITCH; AFRICAN FOOTBALL MUST WIN BEYOND IT

Senegal are deserved champions. They won on the pitch, and CAS has restored that result. Sadio Mané has further strengthened his legacy, not merely through his footballing brilliance but through his leadership when his team needed him most.

Yet, beyond the celebration, this episode must serve as a warning to everyone responsible for the future of African football.

We must never again allow our biggest football competition to come so close to institutional embarrassment.

The Africa Cup of Nations belongs to the players, the supporters and the millions of Africans who see the competition as a source of pride, identity and continental unity. Its credibility must never be compromised by poor administration, questionable decisions or a failure of leadership.

Let the next AFCON be won with goals, not walk-offs; with discipline, not drama; with football, not boardroom battles.

African football deserves nothing less.

SPORTS

The Nigerian OBSERVER
That The People May Know

Edo Sports Commission Chairman, FA boss task newly elected LG FA officials on Grassroots Football Development

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

The Executive Chairman of the Edo State Sports Commission, Hon. Amadin Desmond Enabulele, has charged newly elected Local Government Football Association (LGFA) chairmen and other officials to intensify grassroots football development through talent discovery and nurturing across the 18 local government areas of the state.

Enabulele gave the charge on Thursday at the inauguration of the newly elected LGFA chairmen and vice chairmen held at the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium, Benin City.

He urged the officials to emulate Lagos State in their quest to reposition grassroots football in Edo, citing the state's achievement of having three clubs competing in the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL).

According to him, the success recorded by Lagos State was not achieved by the state Football Association alone but through the consistent contributionas of local government football associations, which organise grassroots competitions and regular scouting programmes to identify promising talents.

Congratulating the newly inaugurated officials, Enabulele reminded them that their positions were calls to service and required commitment, dedication and tangible results.

"Let me congratulate everyone of you on what you have achieved. For those coming back, we expect much more from you. We want you all to know that the positions you are holding now are not for funfair.

They are for service and for you to come and work.

"Let's take Lagos as a case study. A state that boasts of three NPFL clubs right now. It is not a joke. Let me admonish you and push you further to go to the grassroots to discover budding talents.

"You have no business organising tournaments for Under-23 players and above. We want to see Under-12 to Under-17 tournaments and proper development programmes. Grassroots football development is the way to go. Let work begin immediately. We in the Sports Commission are fully ready to give the Edo FA the support it needs," he said.

The Sports Commission chairman further stressed the need for the newly inaugurated officials to prioritise youth competitions and structured development programmes capable of producing future football stars for the state and the country.



EDO FA INAUGURATES 18 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CHAIRMEN

Arsenal-Man City set for EPL match of the week on Sunday

The Premier League title race could take another turn this weekend as Arsenal host Man City at the Emirates on Sunday, with both sides looking to recover from recent draws.

Liverpool head into the Merseyside derby against Everton in strong form, while Chelsea seek a response to their heavy defeat to Leeds.

Arsenal's five-game league winning streak ended in a 2-2 draw at Newcastle, followed by a 1-1 Champions League draw against Dortmund. Man City have also dropped points, winless in their last five league games and 2-2 draw with Napoli.

Both sides will be eager to return to winning ways as the title race intensifies. The match kicks off at 5:30 pm and is this week's Premier League Match of the Week for DStv and GOtv Starter subscribers, airing on SS KICKOFF (DStv Ch. 207).

This weekend's action begins on Friday with Nottingham Forest hosting Chelsea at 9 pm. Chelsea will be looking to recover from a heavy 4-1 defeat to Leeds, while Forest sit 17th and have won just once in their last seven games. This match, along with all Premier League matches, airs live on SS Premier League (DStv Ch. 203, GOtv Ch. 65) on the Sports package.

On Saturday, Man United host Brentford at 4 pm, looking to respond to their 4-0 defeat to Liverpool and a 2-2 Champions League draw with Sporting CP. United sit 19th, while Brentford arrive after a convincing 4-0 win over Everton.



Flamingoes forward makes CAF young talent of the Year Award list



Flamingos forward Kemi Adegbuyi has made the final three-player shortlist for the CAF Young Talent of the Year.

She will battle Maeva Nyadjou (Cameroon) and Kautar Azraf (Morocco) for the top prize on December 2 in Lagos.

Adegbuyi was MVP of the 2026 Women's Champions League WAFU B qualifiers, WAFU B U17 Girls Tournament and 2025/2026 NWFL season.

She played a big role in Nigeria's historic U-17 Women's World Cup triumph recently.

International Friendlies: Eguavoen picks Nnadozie, Oshoala, 22 others for Algeria

Head Coach Augustine Eguavoen has selected a total of 24 players of Nigeria's senior women team, Super Falcons, for two international friendly matches against the senior women national team of Algeria, taking place in Algiers next week.

The Lady Fennecs host the 10-time African champions to the first game on Monday, 30th November, before both teams again tango in a second encounter on Friday, 4th December, also in the Algerian capital.

In the roster are three goalkeepers, seven defenders, seven midfielders and seven forwards.

Captain Rasheedat Ajibade, recuperating from a surgery following an injury sustained during the Los Angeles Olympics qualifying fixture against Comoros in Ikenne-Remo some weeks ago, is understandably left out.

Five-time Africa Player of the Year Asisat Oshoala makes the list, alongside goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie, defenders Michelle Alozie, Oluwatosin Demehin and Shukurat Oladipo, midfielders Christy Ucheibe, Jennifer Echegini and Toni Payne, and forwards Folashade Ijamilusi and Joy Omewa.

The two matches are squarely in the frame of the Super Falcons' preparations for the third round series of the Los Angeles Olympics African qualifying race, which will pitch the Falcons against the Atlas Lionesses of Morocco in March 2027.



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