Edo Muslims hold special prayers for Okpebholo's second anniversary

...SSG, others commend Governor's leadership, urge continued support

By RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

The Muslim community in Edo State has held special prayers across the three senatorial districts to mark the second anniversary of Governor Monday Okpebholo's administration, seeking divine guidance, protection and continued success for the government.

The prayers, held at central mosques in Edo South, Edo Central and Edo North, attracted government officials, Muslim leaders, clerics and members of the Muslim community.

In Edo South, the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Umar Musa Ikhilor, Esq., led government officials, including the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Hon. Yakubu Musa, JP, to the Igun Central Mosque, Benin City, where the Chief Imam of Benin, Mallam Abdulfatah Enabulele, led the prayers.

Speaking after the prayers, Ikhilor highlighted the achievements of the Okpebholo administration, saying the government was making concerted efforts to address

CONTINUES ON PG 2

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That The People May Know

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NNPCL gets C- of-O for proposed Edo Refinery

... Okpebholo assures company of government support

By RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) has received a Certificate of Occupancy (C-of-O) for its proposed Oredo Refinery and Petrochemical Company Limited in Edo State, marking a significant step towards the actualisation of the investment.

The certificate was presented to the company's Executive Vice President, Downstream, Alhaji Mumuni Dagazau, by Governor Monday Okpebholo during a courtesy visit by an NNPCL delegation to the Edo Government House, Benin City, on Friday.

Speaking during the visit, Dagazau commended the Okpebholo administration for its commitment to providing the land and necessary documentation to facilitate the project.

He said the proposed refinery aligned with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Agenda, particularly its objectives of strengthening domestic energy security, reducing dependence on imported petroleum products and promoting local value addition.

According to him, the project would strengthen Nigeria's domestic refining capacity while creating opportunities across the downstream petroleum value chain.

Dagazau noted that the refinery would generate employment, facilitate technology transfer, encourage local participation and stimulate industrial development in Edo State.

He assured the state government that NNPCL would work closely with relevant stakeholders to provide the necessary support for the successful completion of the project.

CONTINUES ON PG 2

FG reports 16 Nigerian deaths linked to Addis Ababa transit, warns travelers

By CAROLINE AMEH

ABUJA

The Federal Government has raised concerns over the deaths of 16 Nigerians who reportedly suffered fatal health complications while transiting through Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2026.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs disclosed this in a travel advisory, urging Nigerians with underlying medical conditions to exercise caution when travelling through the Ethiopian capital.

The advisory, signed by the ministry's spokesperson, Oluwafemi Adeniyi, said Nigeria's Diplomatic Mission in Addis Ababa had documented 16 deaths involving Nigerians who transited through the city this year.

According to the ministry, the potential health risks are associated with Addis Ababa's high-altitude location, approximately 2,355 metres above sea level.

It explained that the reduced atmospheric pressure at such elevations results in lower oxygen availability, potentially exposing travellers with certain pre-existing medical conditions to serious health complications.

The ministry identified people with cardiovascular and respiratory ailments as particularly vulnerable, noting, however, that healthy individuals can generally adapt to the reduced oxygen levels.

Consequently, it advised Nigerians whose medical con-

CONTINUES ON PG 2»



OREDO REFINERY AND PETROCHEMICAL COMPANY LTD:
Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo (right), and the Executive Vice President, Downstream, NNPC Limited, Dr. Mumuni Dagazau, display the Certificate of Occupancy for the land allocated to the proposed Oredo Refinery and Petrochemical Company Ltd, during the handover at Government House, Benin City, on Friday, November 13, 2026.

Edo Govt urges property owners to collect over 500 signed C-of-Os —Pg 2

Edo SSG warns against fake news, says Okpebholo is working to address inherited challenges —Pg 5

Three men sentenced to death in Jordan over fatal church mass shooting —Pg 8

Bendel Insurance suffer 2-1 defeat to Shooting Stars, turn attention to Doma United —11

NEWS

Edo Govt urges property owners to collect over 500 signed C-of-O

RICHARD EWEKA

BENIN CITY

The Edo State Government has urged property owners to collect more than 500 Certificates of Occupancy (C-of-Os) already signed by Governor Monday Okpebholo but yet to be claimed by their beneficiaries.

The Managing Director of the Edo State Geographic Information Service (EDOGIS), Associate Professor Innocent Ehi Bello, made the appeal in a special announcement issued on Saturday, stating that the documents were ready for collection at the agency's office.

He directed beneficiaries to visit the EDOGIS office at Plot 102, Sapele Road, Benin City, between 11am and 4pm daily to collect their certificates.

A Certificate of Occupancy is an important legal document evidencing a person's recognised interest in land. It provides property owners with greater security of tenure and serves as an important instrument in property transactions, mortgage applications, building approvals and the resolution of land disputes.

The government therefore urged all affected property owners to take advantage of the opportunity to collect their certificates and secure the necessary documentation for their landed properties.



HEALTH SECTOR REFORMS:
Members of Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria (MHWUN), Edo State Chapter, on a solidarity visit to Governor Monday Okpebholo in Government House, Benin City, at the weekend.

NNPCL gets C- of-O for....

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

He described the presentation of the C-of-O as a demonstration of Governor Okpebholo's commitment to attracting productive investments and accelerating economic development in the state.

In his remarks, Governor Okpebholo expressed delight at the visit and reaffirmed his administration's determination to create an enabling environment for investors.

He explained that the provision of land for the proposed refinery was part of deliberate efforts to attract investments, expand the state's revenue base and create employment opportunities for the people.

The governor said the project would broaden Edo's commercial and industrial base, stimulate economic activities and deliver substantial benefits to residents.

He assured NNPCL of the state government's continued cooperation and support, expressing confidence that the refinery would make a significant contribution to Edo's development and Nigeria's energy security.

The event was witnessed by top government functionaries and members of the NNPCL delegation, including Ikedichi Dick-Nwoke, Chief Downstream Investment Officer; Mrs Adaobi Oniwinde, Senior Communications Adviser; and Valentine Marinho, Senior Business Analyst to the Executive Vice President, Downstream, among others.

Edo Muslims hold special prayers ...

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

developmental challenges inherited from previous administrations.

He cautioned residents against fake news and misleading information on social media, urging them to assess the government's performance based on verifiable developments across the state.

The SSG explained that the road challenges confronting the state were not created within one year, noting that several roads had deteriorated over many years before the present administration assumed office.

He assured that the government remained committed to addressing the challenges despite criticisms over the pace of project execution.

Ikhilor also attributed the massive turnout at the recent Presidential Campaign rally at the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium to growing confidence in the administration, describing Governor Okpebholo as a humble leader with a strong connection to the grassroots.

He commended the Governor for promoting religious tolerance and inclusiveness, noting that Christians, Muslims and people from different ethnic backgrounds had enjoyed recognition and representation in his administration.The SSG particularly praised the Governor's personal discipline and commitment to God, explaining that these qualities informed his decision to support the administration politically.

He expressed appreciation to the Muslim community for its prayers and support, especially in the government's efforts to tackle insecurity, cultism and kidnapping.

According to him, the relative improvement in security across the state could not have been achieved without the support and prayers of well-meaning residents.

He urged Muslims to sustain their prayers and cooperation with the government to enable it to complete ongoing projects and consolidate its achievements.

The Chief of Staff, Hon. Yakubu Musa, also addressed the congregation, endorsing the SSG's remarks on the administration's achievements and the need for continued prayers and support.

Similarly, the Deputy Director of the Presidential Campaign Council in Edo State and former Chief of Staff to the Governor, Hon. Gani Audu, commended the Muslim community for its support and called for sustained cooperation with the government.

Other government officials present included the Special Adviser to the Governor on Disability Matters, Comrade Yunusa Abdul-Salam Adepoju, and the Special Adviser on Public Affairs and Media, Hon. Haruna Braimah, among others.

In Edo Central, special prayers were held at the Irrua Central Mosque, while in Edo North, the sessions took place at the Arafat Mosque, Auchi, and Uzairue Central Mosque, Jattu.

At the Arafat Mosque, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Islamic Religious Matters, Hon. Ahmed Musa Momoh, led government appointees to the prayer session.

Similarly, at the Uzairue Central Mosque, Jattu, the Coordinator of the Edo State Musaabaqah, Barrister Hamza Umar, led government appointees in participating in the prayers.

The special prayer sessions across the three senatorial districts formed part of activities marking Governor Okpebholo's second anniversary in office, providing an opportunity for the Muslim community to seek divine blessings for the Governor, his administration and the continued peace and development of Edo State.

FG reports 16 Nigerian deaths...

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

ditions could be aggravated by high altitudes to seek medical advice before embarking on journeys involving transit through Addis Ababa.

The advisory stated: "In view of the foregoing, Nigerians with pre-existing health conditions that can be exacerbated by high-altitudes are strongly advised to exercise caution when planning journeys that involve transit through Addis Ababa."

The Federal Government, however, clarified that the advisory was not intended to discourage Nigerians from travelling to Ethiopia or using Addis Ababa as a transit destination.

Rather, it explained that the objective was to ensure that travellers, particularly those considered medically vulnerable, were adequately informed of the potential risks and could take appropriate precautions.

The ministry emphasised that the safety and wellbeing of Nigerians remained central to its foreign affairs responsibilities, urging citizens to prioritise their health when making international travel arrangements.

It also reaffirmed its commitment to providing timely travel advisories and relevant information to safeguard Nigerians travelling abroad.

MHWUN hails Okpebholo over health sector reforms , presents award

BENIN CITY

The Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria (MHWUN), Edo State Council, has commended Governor Monday Okpebholo for what it described as significant improvements in the state's health sector, presenting him with the Best Governor of the Decade Award in recognition of his administration's interventions.

The union's State Chairman, Mr Osaigie Ogbiede, gave the commendation on Friday when he led members of the union on a special appreciation visit to the governor at Government House, Benin City.

Ogbiede said the visit was to acknowledge the governor's commitment to improving healthcare delivery and addressing the welfare concerns of health workers across the state.

He noted that since Okpebholo assumed office, the union had witnessed positive changes in the sector, particularly in the attention given to healthcare facilities, staff welfare and the relationship between government and health workers.

According to him, the administration's interventions have restored confidence among workers and demonstrated a renewed commitment to strengthening the health sector.

"We have actually come here to say thank you for the impact you have made in the health sector. We know that no one will take us for granted because you have been closer to us, even beyond politics. We want to thank you for empowering the health sector," he said.

The union leader also applauded the governor for addressing some longstanding concerns of health workers, including salary disparities, promotions and outstanding payments.

He particularly expressed appreciation for the payment of arrears and implementation of promotions, describing the developments as unprecedented in the state.

NEWS

Edo security: Cleric, APC chieftains hail Okpebholo

MATTHEW OKAGHA

…Say Edo has never been this peaceful in decades

BENIN CITY

Three prominent Edo personalities, Prophetess Patience Azeta Edoriawhe, JP, General Overseer of God's Gift Church of Jesus Christ; Elder Jolly Igbinovia, an APC chieftain in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area; and Hon. Elder Napoleon Agbama, a former Chairman of Uhunmwode Local Government Council, have applauded Governor Monday Okpebholo for what they described as his determined efforts to end the persistent bloodshed and insecurity associated with cult-related clashes in Edo State.

In separate interviews, the trio expressed satisfaction with the prevailing security atmosphere in the state, declaring that Edo had not experienced such a level of peace and calm in several decades.

They attributed the improvement to the governor's political will, commitment to security and determination to restore public confidence, noting that the relative peace has brought renewed hope to residents, business operators and communities that had endured years of violence, killings and fear.

For Prophetess Edoriawhe, the restoration of peace in Edo State goes beyond government policy and security operations; it is also an answer to prayers and a demonstration of the importance of divine intervention in the affairs of humanity.

The woman of God described peace as a priceless gift from God, stressing that no meaningful development can take place in an atmosphere of fear, bloodshed and uncertainty.

She noted that for years, families had been thrown into mourning, young people had lost their lives prematurely, and communities had lived under the frightening shadow of cult-related violence.

According to her, the present atmosphere of relative calm is a welcome development that deserves commendation, encouragement and sustained prayers.

The prophetess said Governor Okpebholo had demonstrated courage and a sense of responsibility by confronting the security challenges confronting the state, adding that leadership requires not only the formulation of policies but also the determination to protect human lives.

She urged the governor not to relent, emphasising that the task of sustaining peace requires constant vigilance, wisdom and God's guidance.

Prophetess Edoriawhe also called on religious leaders, parents and community stakeholders to intensify prayers and moral guidance, particularly for young people vulnerable to cultism and other social vices.

She maintained that the church has a significant role to play in promoting godliness, forgiveness, discipline and respect for human life, adding that lasting peace must begin with a transformation of the human heart.

For Elder Jolly Igbinovia, the prevailing security situation represents a significant departure from the painful experiences of the past, particularly in communities that had suffered the consequences of cult clashes.

The APC chieftain, who spoke from the perspective of community development, said the relative peace had restored confidence among residents, many of whom previously lived with anxiety over the possibility of violent confrontations.



CHURCH HARVEST:
FTC Minister, Mr. Nyesom Wike, speaking at the funeral service held at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Mgbuogba Parish, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on Saturday.

UNN Deputy Chief seeks funding, protection for Nigerian women peacebuilders

ABUJA

United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, has called for increased funding and protection for Nigerian women working to prevent conflicts and rebuild communities.

Mohammed made the call at the maiden Nigeria Women Peace, Democracy and Inclusive Governance Summit and Awards, organised by the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) in Abuja.

"Women are mediating local disputes, supporting families affected by insecurity, and rebuilding livelihoods,

"Yet this work too often receives little funding, protection, or influence over decisions, and we have to change that,"she said. She urged governments and development partners to support women-led organisations and ensure survivors of violence have access to justice and care.

"It means funding women's organisations and ensuring survivors of violence can access justice and care," Mohammed said.

She also warned that the growing demand for critical minerals presented opportunities and risks, urging that the benefits reach communities, particularly women and young people.

"Growing demand for critical minerals brings new opportunities, but also risks that we must address, so that this wealth benefits our communities, especially our women and youth," she said.

NCWS National President, Princess Edna Azura, said women continued to face exclusion from political processes, including party formations and primaries, limiting their access to leadership positions.

She called for greater inclusion of women in peacebuilding, mediation, community security and reconciliation, urging political leaders to involve them in decisions affecting their communities.

"We are not asking for positions as favour, we are asking for fairness, inclusion and equal opportunity," Azura said.

She also urged women to organise, support one another and strengthen their participation in governance rather than allow divisions to weaken their collective voice.

The Minister of Women Affairs, Imaan Sulaiman- Ibrahim, said the Federal Government recognised women as important partners in preventing conflicts and sustaining peace.

Represented by Princess Jummai Idonije, Chairman of the Governing Council of the Maryam Babangida National Centre for Women Development, she said women must be involved in peace and security processes.

She, however, said they must be "guided by the Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security".

Sulaiman-Ibrahim said women should not only be protected during conflicts but also participate in shaping and sustaining peace.

"True political voice and peace building require economic independence," she said.

She stressed the importance of empowering women economically, adding that women should have opportunities to participate in governance and influence decisions ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Bingham University graduates 1,895 students, 71 bags First Class degrees

ABUJA

Seventy-one students bagged First-Class degrees as 1,895 graduated from Bingham University, Karu, for the 2025/2026 academic session.

Prof. Ayuba Haruna, Vice-Chancellor, disclosed this at the seventh convocation ceremony of the institution on Saturday.

He highlighted the university's achievements in academics, infrastructural development and contributions to knowledge and national development.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the convocation was themed "Faith, Excellence and Impact: Building the Future Through Innovation and Service."

According to him, the graduating students comprised 1,315 undergraduates and 580 postgraduate students.

Ayuba said the undergraduate category included 71 First Class, 472 Second Class Upper Division and 337 Second Class Lower Division graduates.

He added that there were 66 Third Class and two Pass graduates in the undergraduate category.

"Three hundred and sixty-seven graduates, comprising students of Bachelor of Pharmacy (B.Pharm) and Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) programmes, fall under the unclassified category.

Wike eulogises late chief as friends, associates donates N100m for church harvest

ABUJA

Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Mr Nyesom Wike, his friends and associates, have donated N100 million as Church harvest to St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Mgbuogba Parish, Port Harcourt, in honour of late Sir Edward Chinda.

Chinda, until his death, was the Eze (chief) Nyemenum I of Rumuokwuta, a prominent community in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (LGA) of Rivers.

Speaking at the funeral service held at the parish on Saturday, Wike described the deceased octogenarian, who died at 85, as a humble, easy-going, and dependable family pillar.

The minister, who noted his close ties to the late traditional leader through marriage to his aunt, recalled that Chinda was deeply involved in the affairs of his extended family and maintained a vibrant disposition that belied his age.

"There are in-laws, and there are in-laws. When he was alive, there was nothing that affected my family that he would not play a role in.

"In fact, I was surprised when I read that he was 85 years old because you would not know he was up to that age. He was very humble and easy-going," he said.

Wike recounted his political association with the late Eze Nyemenum I during his run for the chairmanship of Obio/Akpor LGA.

He added that he had spoken with the deceased during his illness and remained hopeful of his recovery until news of his death broke.

Explaining the motivation behind the N100 million donation, the FCT minister said the late monarch had eagerly anticipated participating in the church's annual harvest thanksgiving to ensure his church group emerged first, a wish cut short by his death.

Gwagwalada Int'l Market on fire

ABUJA

The Gwagwalada International Market, in Gwagwalada Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is engulfed in fire.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that efforts are ongoing to contain the inferno.

A correspondent of NAN who was at the scene, reports that the cause of the fire is not yet known.

NAN also reports that personnel of the fire service were at the scene making frantic efforts to put out the fire.

They were also trying to prevent the fire from spreading to other shops in the market not yet caught in the inferno as well as other areas outside the market.

Security personnel had confined off the market to prevent shop owners and hoodlums from gaining access.

The Chairman, Gwagwalada Area Council, Mr Kasim Mohammed, was at the scene of the incident to ensure things were put under control.

An eyewitness, who spoke to NAN said it was most likely that the fire might have been caused by an electrical fault, although the claim had yet to be confirmed.

As at the time of filing this report, the extent of damage caused by the fire and the number of shops affected were not yet known.

INSIDE **DELTA STATE**

Oborevwori woos investors to Delta, highlights $100m derisk fund

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has wooed local and international investors to the state, highlighting its natural resources, industrial opportunities and $100 million Viability Gap Funding committed to derisk investments in the state.

Oborevwori made the call at the 6th African Sub-Sovereign Governments Network (AfSNET) Investment Conference 2026 in Calabar, Cross River State, where he was represented by the Chairman of the Delta State Investment Development Agency (DIDA), Olorogun Lucky Oghene-Omoru.

The conference, has as its theme, "The Role of Sovereigns in Catalysing Development through Trade and Investments."

Oborevwori said Delta had identified bankable projects across the industrial, maritime, energy and agricultural sectors, assuring investors of the government's commitment to creating an enabling business environment.

He disclosed that the state had two economic free zones in Kwale and Koko, offering opportunities for gas-based industries and manufacturing.

Among the projects being pursued are a ceramics raw materials plant requiring €50 million and a glass manufacturing facility estimated at between $50 million and $200 million, depending on its scale. Another industrial project is estimated to require €19 million.

He said preliminary studies had been completed, with the ceramics project progressing towards take-off and a leading German glass manufacturer expressing interest in the proposed glass factory.

On maritime development, he identified the proposed Burutu Seaport as a major investment opportunity, noting its strategic access to inland waterways linking Onitsha, Lokoja and other commercial centres.

He said the port secured a 40-year concession in 2023, with its second phase designed to accommodate a depth requirement of 41 metres.

The project, he added, had received Federal Executive Council and Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission approvals.

Other maritime assets include ports in Warri, Sapele and Koko, as well as several jetties with potential for shipbuilding and related businesses.

However, he identified the silting of waterways as a major challenge, urging Afreximbank and other development finance institutions to invest in dredging to improve navigation and maritime commerce.

Giving an overview of the state's economy, Oborevwori said Delta had an estimated population of 6.7 million, a GDP of about $1.7 billion and a 2026 budget of approximately N1.72 trillion.

He recalled that his administration committed $100 million as initial Viability Gap Funding at the August 2026 Delta State Economic and Investment Summit to derisk investments of prospective investors.

He cited the acquisition of 100 hectares of land by multinational agribusiness company, Olam, for a proposed $70 million agro-processing facility as evidence of growing investor confidence.

He also highlighted the state's one-stop-shop investment arrangement and incentives aimed at simplifying business processes and reducing the cost of doing business.

On electricity, he said power plants in Sapele, Ughelli and Okpai had a combined installed generation capacity exceeding 3,500 megawatts, positioning Delta as a major contributor to national power generation.

He said the administration was addressing transmission and distribution challenges through legal and administrative reforms, while encouraging private-sector investment in electricity infrastructure.

He added that the government was also exploring gas-based industries, including liquefied natural gas and compressed natural gas projects.

"Delta State has the natural resources, strategic location, infrastructure and investment opportunities to support profitable businesses. We are inviting local and international investors to partner with us.

"Our message is simple: Delta State is ready for business," Oborevwori said.

Members of the Delta delegation included the Chief Economic Adviser to the Governor, Dr Barry Gbe; Director-General of DIDA, Hon Anthony Elekeokwuri; Special Adviser on Finance, Investment and International Development, Barr. George Orogun; and Executive Assistant to the Governor on Media, Dr Nelson Egware.



Delta State Governor... Oborevwori

Oborevwori celebrates Asagba of Asaba at 71

ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has congratulated the Asagba of Asaba, HRM, Prof. Epiphany Azinge, SAN, OON, on the occasion of his 71st birthday, describing him as a distinguished traditional ruler whose life reflects excellence, wisdom, service and commitment to humanity.

In a statement issued in Asaba by his Chief Press Secretary, Sir Festus Ahon, the Governor commended the monarch for his exemplary leadership, intellectual accomplishments and dedication to the growth and development of Asaba and Delta State.

Oborevwori noted that the Asagba had brought dignity, prestige and renewed energy to the traditional institution through his wealth of experience, depth of knowledge and commitment to the preservation of cultural heritage.

He described the monarch as a man of remarkable accomplishments whose contributions to academia, the legal profession and public service continue to inspire generations, adding that his emergence as the traditional ruler of Asaba further strengthened the community's rich cultural identity and traditional values.

The Governor particularly acknowledged the Asagba's role in promoting peace, unity, mutual understanding and harmonious relationships among the people, noting that his wisdom and inclusive approach to leadership remain invaluable to the stability and progress of the ancient kingdom.

Oborevwori expressed confidence that the Asagba's reign would continue to open new chapters of progress, unity and prosperity for Asaba, while strengthening the community's place in the cultural and developmental history of Delta State.

He prayed God to grant the revered monarch sound health, renewed strength and many more fruitful years on the throne, wishing the Asagba a long, peaceful and prosperous reign.

First multi-billion naira agricultural facility to commence operations before 2027 - Obodoagwu

Stories by Ajuwa Victor

ASABA

The first multi-billion naira integrated agricultural facility in Delta State, located in Okpanam, Oshimili North Local Government Area, is expected to commence operations before the end of 2026.

The Chief Executive Officer of the facility and agricultural entrepreneur, Chief Chukwudi Stanley Obodoagwu, disclosed this while conducting journalists round the various departments of the farm.

The modern agricultural facility comprises administrative offices, poultry houses for layers and broilers, a massive fish pond, staff quarters, a security post, staff canteen, accommodation for trainees, a training hall and a residence for the General Manager.

Chief Obodoagwu disclosed that several other important facilities were nearing completion.

These include an animal hospital, ultra-modern laboratory and pharmacy, goat and ram pens, cattle ranch, feed processing plant, milk processing factory, greenhouse, fish roasting and packaging centre, doctors' quarters and a shopping mall for the sale of fresh farm products.

He attributed his decision to establish the ambitious agricultural investment in Delta State to the favourable investment climate created by the administration of Governor Sheriff Oborevwori.

The entrepreneur explained that the pace of construction demonstrated the commitment of the company's management to delivering the ambitious project within the scheduled timeframe.

He added that the project had expanded beyond its original scope to accommodate additional agricultural components considered essential for its long-term sustainability, productivity and commercial viability.

The expanded agricultural components include ginger cultivation, fresh juice production, pineapple farming, as well as palm and plantain plantations, among other ventures.

On employment generation, Chief Obodoagwu disclosed that the facility was expected to provide permanent employment for more than 1,000 people when fully operational.

He revealed that over 20 personnel, including pioneer employees and members of the National Youth Service Corps, were already engaged in various activities at the facility.

Speaking on power supply, the agricultural entrepreneur said the farm would operate a hybrid energy system comprising solar power and a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant currently under construction.

He further disclosed that the management had ordered 500KVA generating machines from China, adding that the equipment and technical personnel required for their installation were expected to arrive soon.

Also speaking, the Human Resources Manager of the facility, Mr Richard Obi, said significant progress had been recorded in infrastructure development, operational activities and human capital development, with several components of the project already completed and operational.

CNB ASABA branch seeks strategic collaboration with NSCDC in Delta

ASABA

The Central Bank of Nigeria, Asaba branch has made a strategic move to collaborate with the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Delta State Command. Acknowledging the fact that CBN buildings are Critical National Assets and the need to boost the existing relationship with NSCDC DELTA ahead of the forthcoming 2027 general elections, the move became necessary.

The CBN Asaba Branch Controller, Mr. IMOKHAI who led some Senior officers of the branch on a visit to the office of the State Commandant NSCDC in Delta.

Chinedu Igbo stated during the visit that Agencies of the Federal Government are expected to understand their various roles and mandates, also know the place of strategic partnership with relevant government Security agencies such as the NSCDC to boost their ability to deliver on their mandate as a regulatory bank.

He appreciated commandant Chinedu for the prompt and warm reception and promised to work with NSCDC DELTA especially in the protection of the sensitive materials that will be deposited in the custody of the bank for use in the forthcoming 2027 general elections.

Commandant Chinedu in his response appreciated Mr. Imokhai for the very necessary visit to the command stating that the visit was indeed timely and of necessity. He acknowledged the fact that the CBN has always worked with the Corps in the past and both agencies have maintained good relationship till date.

He however called the attention of the CBN to the need for partnership with the Corps in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility as the NSCDC still requires a lot of support to deliver on the enormous mandate in Delta.

NEWS

Edo SSG warns against fake News, says Okpebholo is working to address inherited challenges

BENIN CITY

ABDUL-KADIR ABDULLAH

The Secretary to the Edo State Government (SSG), Umar Musa Ikhilor, Esq., has cautioned residents against the spread of fake news and misleading information, urging them to assess Governor Monday Okpebholo's administration based on its achievements on the ground, as the Governor continues efforts to address developmental challenges inherited from previous administrations.

Ikhilor stated this during special prayers organised by the Edo Muslim community across the three senatorial districts of the state to mark the second anniversary of Governor Okpebholo's administration.

Speaking after the prayers at the Benin Central Mosque, Ogun Street,cBenin City, the SSG warned that the spread of false information on social media could mislead members of the public, particularly those who might not have the opportunity to verify such claims.

"Sometimes, people who spread falsehood and fake news are always online, shouting updates and spreading false information. Ordinary people have no way of verifying, and some will believe it. But it is good that those who are on the ground know exactly what the government is doing and the efforts the Governor is making to correct all the damages that were done in the past eight years," he said.

He explained that many of the roads being criticised had remained in deplorable conditions for several years before the present administration assumed office, stressing that it was unrealistic to expect the government to resolve all inherited challenges within a short period.

The SSG also described the massive turnout at the recent presidential campaign rally at the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium as evidence of the people's appreciation and support for the Governor's administration, noting that the crowd had pleasantly surprised visitors from across the country.

He described Okpebholo as a grassroots-oriented leader who identifies with ordinary people rather than the elite, adding that his humility and accessibility had strengthened his connection with the people.

Ikhilor, who described the Governor as a disciplined and God-fearing leader, said his personal qualities were among the reasons he decided to actively participate in politics in support of his administration.

"As a Muslim, I have never done such active politics before. This is the first time that I decided to do active politics with someone because of the kind of man he is. From the first day I knew him, he had the qualities of a good Muslim. He is disciplined. He doesn't involve in alcoholism, smoking or womanising. He tells you what he can do and what he can't do, and he is somebody who is very passionate about God," he said.

He further commended the Governor for promoting religious tolerance and ethnic inclusiveness, noting that people from different ethnic backgrounds, including Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba communities, had been accommodated in government appointments.

The SSG also expressed appreciation to the Muslim community for its continued support and prayers, particularly for the administration's efforts to tackle insecurity, cultism and kidnapping.



WORLD NEWS CONFERENCE:
From left: Director of Media, Public relations and Protocols Unit, (NiDCOM), Mr AbdulRahman Balogun; National President of National Association of Proprietors of Arabic and Islamic Schools (NAPAIS), Mohammad Jamiu; Representative of The Inspector General of Police, ACP. Alhassan Yaqub; and the Special Adviser to the Minister of Education on Imajiri and Out-of-School Children's Education, Dr Balarabe Kakale, during a "World news conference and the inauguration nationwide census of Arabic, Qur'anic and Islamic Schools in Nigeria" at the Al-Habiyyah Islamic Society Centre in Abuja on Thursday.

Ebonyi Council boss begins construction of ultramodern school block

ABAKALIKI

MAXWELL OKECHUKWU

The Executive Chairman of Abakaliki Local Government Area, Hon. Chidebere Onyemaechi Alo, has commenced the construction of an ultramodern school block at Ekeru Inyimegu community, reaffirming his administration's commitment to educational development and improved learning facilities for the younger generation.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony, the Chairman assured members of the community that the project would be completed within the shortest possible time, expressing optimism that the facility would be delivered within a few weeks.

He noted that construction activities had already commenced, with work progressing at the project site, and assured the people of his determination to ensure timely delivery.

The initiative is expected to serve as an example for other local government chairmen across the 13 local government areas of Ebonyi State, demonstrating the importance of purposeful leadership, commitment to public service and the translation of campaign promises into tangible development projects.

Hon. Alo's administration, since assuming office, has demonstrated its resolve to align with the development agenda of the Ebonyi State Governor, Rt. Hon. Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru, particularly the principles of the People's Charter of Needs, which emphasises people-oriented governance and the delivery of meaningful development to the grassroots.

The Chairman further assured that his administration would not be limited to making promises but would prioritise practical actions and projects capable of improving the living conditions of residents.

He reiterated his commitment to providing quality leadership, executing people-centred projects and delivering measurable results that would positively impact the lives of the people of Abakaliki Local Government Area.

Fani-Kayode refuses interview invitation after livestream 'exclusion' — SABC

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, has said Nigeria's High Commissioner to the country, Femi Fani-Kayode, declined an interview invitation following his protest over the exclusion of his speech from a livestream of a diplomatic ceremony hosted by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The SABC, in a statement issued on Sunday, said it regretted the envoy's decision but remained open to engaging with him and the Nigerian High Commission.

The response followed Fani-Kayode's complaint that his introduction and speech were omitted from the broadcaster's livestream of the presentation of letters of credence ceremony held at the Sefako Makgatho Presidential Guest House in Pretoria on Friday.

"We regret that the High Commissioner declined an interview with SABC News, reportedly because of his dissatisfaction with the livestream of the ceremony. We respect his decision and remain open to engaging with him and the Nigerian High Commission," the statement said.

Notably, the SABC did not address the specific allegation that Fani-Kayode's presentation was excluded from the livestream of the ceremony.

The broadcaster, however, rejected the description of it as a state broadcaster, insisting that it was a public service media organisation committed to independent, impartial and credible journalism.

"Two points need clarifying. First, the SABC is a public service media, not a state broadcaster. Our mandate is to serve the public interest through independent, impartial and credible journalism. The Presidency's livestream arrangements and SABC News' editorial coverage are separate matters.

"Secondly, SABC News did cover the ceremony. It was carried on the SABC News LIVE channel on SABC+, and the High Commissioner's arrival was shown during a live crossing on the SABC News Channel (DStv Channel 404). We also published a clip on our official X account of the High Commissioner speaking to President Cyril Ramaphosa," it said.

"The SABC remains committed to upholding the principles of fairness, impartiality and editorial independence in its coverage, as well as value our longstanding relationship with Nigeria," the statement added.

PUNCH Online reports that Fani-Kayode had earlier accused the South African Presidency of deliberately excluding Nigeria's delegation from the livestream of the ceremony, which involved 15 ambassadors presenting their letters of credence to Ramaphosa.

The envoy said the introductions and speeches of 14 other ambassadors were broadcast, while Nigeria's segment was omitted, with the livestream resuming after he had concluded his address.

He also disclosed that he declined an interview offered by SABC News at the venue, saying he had been displeased with the treatment of the Nigerian delegation.

However, the South African Presidency later released the full video of the ceremony, including Fani-Kayode's speech, on its YouTube channel.

The controversy subsequently sparked a public exchange between the Nigerian High Commission and Vincent Magwenya, spokesperson for Ramaphosa.

Nigeria, S'Arabia to begin direct Abuja-Jeddah flights in December — Envoy

ABUJA

Nigeria and Saudi Arabia are set to strengthen their air connectivity, with Saudi Arabia's national carrier, Saudia Airlines, scheduled to begin direct flights between Abuja and Jeddah in December.

Nigerian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Dr Yakubu Gambo, disclosed this in an interview with newsmen on Sunday.

Gambo said the service would subsequently be extended to Lagos and Port Harcourt.

He said Kano would retain its existing direct flight arrangement, while additional routes were expected to become operational before the end of the first quarter of 2027.

"By December, we will start having Saudi air flights directly from Abuja. And it will scale up to Lagos, Port Harcourt and Kano," he said.

Gambo said the arrangement followed adjustments and engagements with Saudi aviation authorities, who expressed willingness to support direct air connectivity between both countries.

He said Saudi Arabia had also indicated its readiness to provide technical and financial support for Nigeria to operate flights through its national carrier.

According to him, the arrangement would enable Nigerian pilgrims travelling for Hajj and Umrah to fly directly between both countries without transiting through other territories.

"They wouldn't want pilgrims coming for Umrah or Hajj to fly through other territories that may not be safe," he said.

The ambassador said President Bola Tinubu had been briefed on the proposal and welcomed the initiative.

He confirmed that direct flights would also be available to Nigerian pilgrims during the 2027 Hajj exercise.

NEWS

10 feared killed, 2,000 displaced in Anambra communal clash — NEMA

AWKA

The National Emergency Management Agency said no fewer than 10 persons had either been killed or declared missing, while about 150 houses were destroyed during the communal clash between Umuoba Anam and Aguleri communities in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Similarly, the agency said no fewer than 2,000 persons were displaced during the crisis.

The Head of Operations, NEMA Enugu Zonal Office, Priscilla Madukwe, disclosed this when she led a team to the affected areas for an impact assessment on Saturday.

The assessment team, comprising NEMA and SEMA officials, was led to the devastated communities by the Chairman of Anambra East Local Government Area, Ifeanyi Chinweze, alongside some community leaders and security operatives.

Recall that the communal clash, which occurred in October, led to the destruction of houses, shops, factories, automobiles and other property belonging to residents of the communities, including non-indigenes.

The palace of a monarch was also razed, prompting the state governor, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, to convene a high-level stakeholders' peace meeting at the Light House, Awka, to address the protracted crisis.

Our correspondent gathered that, more than one month after the incident, the affected areas remained deserted, with some security personnel stationed there to maintain peace and order.

However, during the visit, the NEMA Head of Operations said the magnitude of the destruction prompted the Federal Government, through the agency, to visit the affected communities to evaluate the extent of the damage, with a view to assisting the victims.

Speaking during the exercise, Madukwe said, "No fewer than 150 houses were destroyed during the communal clash that occurred in Umuoba Anam and Aguleri communities in October.

"Similarly, about 2,000 persons were displaced while 10 persons were either killed or declared missing during the crisis in the affected areas.

"The destruction prompted the Federal Government through the NEMA, to visit the affected communities to evaluate the extent of damage, with a view to assisting the victims.

"The level of damage is unfortunate. Our findings will be submitted to the Federal Government for possible assistance to the victims to enable them to return to their homes."

Madukwe, however, called on community leaders and stakeholders in the affected areas to ensure that the crisis was resolved and guard against a recurrence.

Also speaking, the Chairman of Anambra East Local Government Area, Ifeanyi Chinweze, assured that efforts were being made to resolve the differences that led to the disturbance.

Chinweze, therefore, called on the people to embrace peace and dialogue, stressing that the curfew imposed in the area had contributed to restoring calm to the zone.

He thanked the Federal Government for sending the assessment team and expressed the hope that relief would come to the people to reduce the pain caused by the crisis.

In an interview, the Head of Administration, Anambra State Emergency Management Agency, Ndidi Omega, said the government had set up a committee to look into the crisis, recommend ways to prevent a recurrence and suggest assistance for the victims.



DEDICATION:
From left: Nigerian Navy Chaplain Services, Roman Catholic, VRF Richmond Diala; Archbishop of Abuja, Bishop Ignatius Kaigama and representative of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Rear Adm. Adedokun Siyanbade, during the dedication Curpus Christi Catholic Church Admiralty Estate Asokoro in Abuja.

Reviving Kano industries key to fixing North, says Obi

KANO

The presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, Peter Obi, has said reviving Kano's moribund industries is critical to addressing Northern Nigeria's economic challenges, describing the state as one of the country's most important commercial centres.

Obi made the remarks in Kano while speaking at the fifth convocation ceremony of Skyline University Nigeria, where he lamented the decline of the state's manufacturing sector and called for urgent efforts to restore its industrial capacity.

He said Kano had historically played a major role in Nigeria's commerce, business and manufacturing, but regretted that many factories that once drove its industrial growth were no longer operational.

"As I was coming to Kano this morning, I met several people, and I told them that Kano is one of the most important commercial centres in Nigeria.

"This city represents the country's strength in commerce, business and manufacturing. Kano was once a major industrial hub, with several factories operating here. Today, many of those factories are no longer functioning. We need to bring them back, revive manufacturing and create employment opportunities for our people," he said.

The former Anambra State governor said restoring the factories and strengthening manufacturing would create jobs, reduce poverty and improve the economy.

He cited Vietnam as an example of a country that had made significant progress through manufacturing, noting that Nigeria needed to strengthen its productive capacity rather than depend heavily on the export of raw materials.

"Countries such as Vietnam have made significant progress through manufacturing, earning substantially more from manufactured goods than Nigeria does," Obi said.

He also highlighted the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises, urging the government to create an enabling environment for businesses to grow, expand and employ more people.

"Small businesses are also critical to economic development. In countries such as Indonesia, small and medium-sized enterprises account for a significant proportion of employment. Nigeria must create an environment where businesses can grow, expand and employ more people," he said.

Obi further called for increased investment in young entrepreneurs, saying government support for promising business ideas could help tackle unemployment and poverty.

He recalled meeting a young entrepreneur who told him about a competition in which successful participants received between N5m and N10m to develop their businesses.

Obi questioned why the government could not provide more substantial support to young people with viable business ideas, arguing that resources saved from fuel subsidy removal could be channelled into productive investments.

CHANGE OF MIDDLE NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **AKPOGUMA HARRISON AWUSA** and **AKPOGUMA HARRISON OJARUARE** are one and the same person. Henceforth, I now wish to be known as **AKPOGUMA HARRISON OJARUARE**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

NGE condemns prosecution of FIJ journalist, demands release

LAGOS

The Nigerian Guild of Editors has condemned the arrest, detention and remand of Foundation for Investigative Journalism correspondent, Daniel Ojukwu, at the Kuje Correctional Centre, Abuja, demanding his immediate release on bail.

The Guild described Ojukwu's criminal prosecution as an attack on press freedom and the right of Nigerians to receive information.

In a statement issued on Sunday and signed by its President, Eze Anaba, and General Secretary, Onuoha Ukeh, the NGE said the journalist was being prosecuted for raising questions about the expenditure of public funds.

"The Guild is deeply alarmed that a journalist whose professional duty is to investigate and report matters of public interest is being subjected to criminal prosecution and incarceration over reports that raised serious questions about the expenditure of public funds by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals.

"Ojukwu's investigation reportedly exposed the alleged payment of more than M N147 million (approximately $109,000) to an Abuja-based restaurant for the construction of classrooms and a skills acquisition centre at a primary school in Lagos. His findings raised questions about the existence of the projects and the capacity and track record of the company involved in the contract.

"These are legitimate issues of public accountability that deserve transparent answers, not the criminalisation of the journalist who brought them to public attention," the statement read.

Ojukwu and FIJ founder, Fisayo Soyombo, face allegations of cyberstalking and criminal defamation in connection with investigative reports on President Bola Tinubu's Senior Special Assistant on Sustainable Development Goals, Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire.

Justice Joyce Abdulmalik of the Federal High Court in Abuja ordered Ojukwu's remand at the Kuje Correctional Centre on November 10, pending the hearing of his bail application on December 1.

The journalist pleaded not guilty to the 12-count charge, which also named Soyombo as a defendant.

The prosecution alleged that the reports placed Orelope-Adefulire in fear of death, violence or bodily harm.

Inspector-General of Police, Olatunji Disu, also requested a bench warrant against Soyombo, but the court rejected the ruling that such an order could not be issued against a defendant who had not previously been brought before it.

Soyombo subsequently said he would appear in court on December 1, despite alleging that he had not been served with the charge and proof of evidence.

The NGE said the resort to arrest, detention and criminal prosecution over journalistic work raised questions about the authorities' commitment to press freedom and freedom of expression.

It said, "Investigative journalism is not a crime. Asking questions about public expenditure is not cyberstalking. Demanding accountability from public officials is not defamation."

The Guild added that public office holders should understand that their management of public resources was subject to scrutiny.

Akwa Ibom gov gifts car, N5m to abandoned-at-birth bride

UYO

Akwa Ibom State Governor, Umo Eno, has gifted a brand-new car and N5m to a woman who was abandoned at birth and raised at the state's Special Children's Home on her wedding day.

The governor disclosed this on Saturday in a social media post on the traditional marriage and reception of Abigail Edet and her husband, Kevin Etiemana, held at Ibom Hall, Uyo.

Eno said he served as the Father of the Day at the ceremony, describing Abigail's journey from being abandoned at birth to starting a family of her own as a reminder that everyone has a purpose and destiny.

He said, "Abigail, who was abandoned at birth and raised at our Special Children's Home, has today been blessed with a family of her own.

"Her story reminds us that no matter the circumstances of our birth, God has a purpose and destiny for each of us."

The governor said the gifts were presented to support the couple as they began their married life.

"As a demonstration of our love and support, I presented the couple with a brand-new car and N5 million to help them begin their marital journey," he said.

Eno also disclosed that he offered the newlyweds advice on their responsibilities to each other as they begin their marriage.

"I encouraged Kevin to love, protect and cherish his wife, and urged Abigail to honour and support her husband as they build their home together," he said.

The governor prayed for the couple, wishing them a peaceful and fulfilling marriage.

NDLEA arrests US basketball player with 33.95kg cannabis in Lagos

LAGOS

Nigeria's anti-narcotics agency on Sunday said it had arrested an American professional basketball player with 33.95Kg of cannabis in his luggage on arrival at the main airport.

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency named the player as 28-year-old Greene Da'monte Khiree, from the US state of Georgia.

He was arrested on Wednesday at the main international airport carpark in Lagos after he "was observed abandoning his two checked-in bags before attempting to exit the airport with only his carry-on luggage", NDLEA said in a statement.

The bags bearing his name tags were filled with 16 packs of a "potent strain of cannabis", the agency said.

He had arrived in Lagos from Thailand, where he said he had lived and played professional basketball since October 2025, the agency said.

The agency said he claimed he was visiting Nigeria to "build networks for his basketball career" but examination of his mobile phone showed information suggesting his "knowledge of and involvement in the drug trafficking activity".

FIBA lists a player by the name DaMonte Greene, a point guard, one of whose recent appearances was at the Phuket Elite Cup in September.

Nigeria has been considered a trafficking and production hub for drugs bound for other countries, but researchers say the contraband spills into local markets.

Recent busts of industrial-scale meth production labs have left authorities worrying that Mexican cartels are establishing links in Nigeria to produce and ship meth out of the country.



2027: Oyebanji urges Ekiti to vote massively for Tinubu

ADO EKITI

Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, has assured different communities across the state of sustained government attention to initiatives aimed at improving living conditions and promoting community growth.

The governor, who reaffirmed his administration's commitment to grassroots development, also called on the Ekiti people to mobilise massive support for the re-election of President Bola Tinubu in the January 2027 presidential election, saying the President's continued leadership was critical to sustaining the development strides being recorded in the state.

Oyebanji spoke on Saturday at his hometown, Ikogosi-Ekiti, during the 2026 Ikogosi Day celebration and the fundraising for the construction of a N1 billion Oba Palace in the community.

He highlighted the importance of community participation, political support and collective responsibility in advancing development at the grassroots.

The governor, who said that the state government did not contribute a dime to the funds raised for the palace project, expressed profound appreciation to the event's Chairman and Chief Launcher, Dr Tunji Olowolafe, who is the Chancellor of Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, for mobilising his friends and associates across the country to support the initiative, with contributions amounting to N906 million.

Oyebanji urged the community leadership to ensure judicious utilisation of the funds for the purpose for which they were raised, expressing optimism that the palace project would be completed and inaugurated by the next Ikogosi Day celebration in 2027.

The governor urged all sons and daughters of Ikogosi to remain united and sustain their collective commitment to the development of the community, while supporting initiatives that would promote its growth and prosperity.

He said, "On behalf of the Ikogosi community, we are extremely grateful to the Chairman and Chief Launcher, Dr Tunji Olowolafe, and his friends for what they have done for us. I am particularly grateful that he informed us that he reached out to his friends, who willingly made their donations directly to the community's account. The funds raised today, therefore, have nothing to do with the Ekiti State Government.

"Let me also remind us that January 16 is the presidential election, and we must come out en masse to vote for Asiwaju Bola Tinubu. He is a president who has assisted our state tremendously, and we must double the votes we secured during the governorship election for him," the governor said.

NCAA upgrades Anambra airport firefighting facility to category seven

UMUERI (ANAMBRA)

Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has upgraded the firefighting facility at Chinua Achebe International Airport, Umueri, Anambra State, from Category Six (CAT-6) to Category Seven (CAT-7).

Managing Director of CAICA, Mr Martins Nwafor, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria at Umueri, near Onitsha, on Sunday.

Nwafor said the upgrade followed improvements in firefighting equipment and personnel training, which enabled the airport to meet the NCAA's minimum safety requirements for Category Seven Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting Services.

He explained that the upgrade would enable the airport to handle aircraft requiring a higher level of firefighting and emergency response capability.

According to him, the development was part of efforts to position the airport as a major aviation hub and a preferred destination and departure point for air travellers.

"The NCAA has audited and upgraded our Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting Service from CAT-6 to CAT-7. What this means is that we can accommodate bigger aeroplanes.

"We are looking forward to having bigger aeroplanes operating here.

"We just conducted a two-week recency training for most staff on wildlife management, which is a very serious safety issue in the industry.

"We trained them on airside management, airside driving, as well as administrative and human resources management," he said.

Nwafor also confirmed the introduction of Embraer 190 and CRJ 900 aircraft by United Nigeria Airlines on its Abuja-Anambra route, effective November 5.

He described the deployment of the aircraft to replace the previous ones as a significant development for air travel to and from the state.

The airport managing director said the aircraft would provide passengers with greater comfort and convenience while strengthening air connectivity between Anambra and major Nigerian cities, including Abuja and Lagos.

He, however, said the airport remained underserved despite the growing demand for air travel, noting that it was operating below its installed capacity because of the limited number of flights and operators.

Nwafor commended Air Peace and United Nigeria Airlines for servicing the airport.

He added that the Airport Collaborative Decision-Making (A-CDM) system, which promotes coordination and information-sharing between airport management and airlines, was functional and effective.

"We have passengers; what we need is more operators to bring their flights here and also service other routes outside Lagos and Abuja, even though it is not going to be on a daily basis.

"We are still at the stage of route development because the airport is new. We are working with operators to develop other routes. We want them to service routes such as Kano, Bauchi or Gombe, maybe on particular days of the week," he said.

Nwafor described air transport as one of the safest and fastest means of transportation, despite its relatively high cost.

Know your genotype before marriage, Kwara tells youths

KWARA

The Kwara State Government has urged young people to ascertain their genotype status before entering into marriage, as part of efforts to curb the prevalence of sickle cell disease in the state.

The government advised that early genotype screening and increased public awareness were critical to preventing avoidable cases of the disease and helping young people make informed decisions about their health and marital choices.

According to a statement issued on Sunday by the Press Secretary of the Kwara State Ministry of Health, Saad Hamdalat, the First Lady of the state, Olufolake Abdulrazaq, made the appeal during the flag-off of a statewide genotype screening and awareness programme tagged 'Know Your Genotype.'

The programme, organised in collaboration with the state Ministry of Health and Concerned Medics Foundation, is aimed at promoting early genotype screening and raising awareness about SCD, particularly among adolescents and young people.

Abdulrazaq, who was represented by the Commissioner for Health, Amina El-Imam, said Nigeria carried the highest burden of sickle cell disease globally, with about six million people living with the condition and approximately 150,000 affected babies born annually.

She noted that the figures underscored the need for sustained public enlightenment and early screening to reduce the number of children born with the disease.

The governor's wife stressed that young people needed to understand their genotype status early enough to make informed decisions about their reproductive health and future marriages.

She also urged traditional and religious leaders to take the campaign to their communities, using their influence to encourage residents to undergo genotype screening.

"I urge religious leaders, churches, mosques and all faith communities to use their sermons to encourage people to screen themselves and make informed decisions," she said. Abdulrazaq also called on parents to take responsibility for knowing the genotype status of their children and ensuring that the information was properly documented.

"Parents, please start taking responsibility for knowing the genotype of all your children, ensuring they have these documents with them as they go into adulthood," she added.

She noted that people living with SCD often faced emotional, economic and physical challenges, adding that early genotype awareness and informed decisions could help reduce the burden on affected individuals and their families. She further disclosed that the state government had provided free health insurance coverage for people living with SCD in Kwara as part of efforts to ease the financial pressure associated with managing the condition.

Israel kills Hamas commander in strike on Gaza camp, officials say

A senior Hamas figure who helped plan and oversee the 7 October 2023 attack on Israel has been killed in an Israeli airstrike, officials in Israel and Gaza have said.

Samir Abu Younis, the newly appointed commander of the Rafah Brigade, was killed on Saturday in Al-Mawasi in the southern Gaza Strip, according to Hamas's Al-Qassam Brigades military wing.

A local Hamas official confirmed Younis's death. The Israeli military said it had targeted him and that prior to the strike "steps were taken to mitigate harm to civilians".

Eyewitnesses in Gaza said four missiles struck a tent in the Al-Waha camp, which shelters hundreds of displaced people in Al-Mawasi, causing a fire to break out. A medical source at Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Younis said three injured people had arrived there, as well as a dead body.

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and Israel's security agency, the ISA, confirmed in a statement on Telegram that it had "eliminated" Younis.

Describing him as a "central figure among Hamas's senior figures", it said he had "acted with the aim of trying to restore the strength of the brigade and the Hamas terrorist organisation".

It added: "Younis directed the brigade's terrorists to advance and carry out terror attacks against Israeli civilians and IDF troops."

Al-Qassam Brigades wrote on Telegram that Younis had "participated in numerous high-profile operations and resisted enemy incursions", and was "one of the most important commanders involved in planning and overseeing the 7 October attack". It described his killing as a "cowardly assassination".

Younis, 53, had been in his position since 15 September, following the death of the brigade's previous commander, Nael Abu Obeid.

He joined Hamas' armed wing in 1991 and held several senior operational roles before becoming commander. His funeral will be held on Sunday afternoon in Khan Younis, Hamas said.

The Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023, when about 1,200 people were killed an 251 others taken hostage, triggered the most recent war in Gaza.

Fifth Canadian soldier dies from injuries caused by large fire at military base

A fifth Canadian soldier has died from injuries he suffered when a grass fire swept through a military training area last month.

Four people were killed initially and dozens were injured when the fire, which ignited during a live fire training exercise, spread rapidly through Canadian Forces Base Wainwright carried by strong winds on 17 October.

Pte William Douglas Dal Bianco, who had been receiving medical care in Ontario, died on Friday, the Canadian Armed Forces said in a statement.

Prime Minister Mark Carney wrote on X: "Canadians are holding Private Dal Bianco's loved ones, and all those still grieving in the wake of this terrible tragedy, in our hearts."

The Canadian Armed Forces said that 24 military personnel were still in hospital receiving treatment, while 14 had been released as of Saturday. Thirty-eight military personnel had been injured in total.

Getty Images An image of a fire engine in a field which has been burned. The trees are bare and black and a firefighter can be seen standing near the truck.Getty Images

Canadian Forces Base Wainwright in Alberta is one of the country's busiest military training bases

Members of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group had been conducting live-fire training at the base, in the province of Alberta, when the fire broke out.

Military officials said at the time that the fire spread across a kilometre in a matter of seconds, taking many of those on the base by surprise.

Firefighters battled the blaze through the night, while nearby hospitals became inundated by injured personnel and staff.

Carney described it as "one of the worst tragedies for the forces on Canadian soil in peacetime".

An investigation found that the fire was likely sparked by a grenade launcher being fired on the base's grenade range, officials said.

Firefighters on the base had known about the fire but could not tackle it because it was in a danger area that could contain unspent explosives.

Canadian Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Jennie Carignan said the nation's armed forces were "heartbroken" by the loss of Dal Bianco, while Defence Minister David McGuinty offered his "deepest condolences" to his family, friends and colleagues.

"No words can ease the pain of losing a loved one, and my thoughts remain with all those affected by this tragedy," he said.

"We remain committed to supporting the families and the Canadian Armed Forces community during this profoundly difficult time, and to honouring Private Dal Bianco's service, dedication and sacrifice to Canada."



Nine people were killed in the shooting at the Greek Orthodox church, in Jordan last month

Three men sentenced to death in Jordan over fatal church mass shooting

A Jordanian court has sentenced three men to death by hanging for carrying out a fatal mass shooting on a church last month.

The attack on 23 October killed nine people and injured 34 others who had been attending a Christian funeral at a Greek Orthodox church in Karak governorate.

Jordan's Armed Forces said in a statement on Sunday that the men had been convicted of committing "terrorist acts", as well as possessing weapons, "promoting the ideas of a terrorist organisation" and "conspiracy to commit terrorist acts".

The three men - two Jordanian brothers and their brother-in-law - fled the scene of the attack and were arrested three days later. They have not been publicly identified.

Karak is home to a sizeable Christian community in the Muslim-majority kingdom.

CCTV footage from the day of the attack showed three men holding guns approaching and firing on St George's church in the village of Hmoud. A second video showed dead and wounded people lying on the ground amid chaotic scenes at the church.

It is still unclear why the attackers chose to target that specific church.

Shortly after the attack, Jordan's King Abdullah II wrote on X: "The terrorist attack against Karak will be met with the harshest retaliation.

"Those who delude themselves into thinking that they can divide Jordanians with their bullets have no chance in the face of our unity."

The three men fled the scene of the shooting and were later located inside an abandoned house in Karak governorate, south of the capital, Amman. They refused to surrender and opened fire on security forces, who returned fire and wounded all three of them, the Public Security Directorate said at the time. No security personnel were hurt in the shootout.

King Abdullah praised security forces for chasing the suspects "to the very end".

The week after the Karak shooting, Jordan struck what its military said were "terrorist organisations" in Syria in retaliation to the church attack.

Syrian health officials told state media that five people, including women, children and an elderly man, were killed in the strike on a village in the southern Daraa province. Jordan said its fighter jets had killed and wounded "several terrorists" without giving further details.

Jordan said it had co-ordinated with the Syrian government, but Syria said it had not been notified in advance.

Executions in Jordan are carried out by hanging. The kingdom previously observed an unofficial ban on executions from 2006 to 2014, and another pause from 2017 until June this year.

Copper wire upgrade behind US flight suspension, transport secretary says

A nationwide US ground stop that caused thousands of flight cancellations and prompted travel chaos was caused by a technical issue following a copper wire upgrade, the transport secretary has said.

Sean Duffy told a news conference that the government was trying to find out whether the problem that led to air traffic controllers suspending take-offs for four hours on Friday had been caused by "incompetence" on the part of the company doing the upgrades or faulty equipment.

Though the ground stop was lifted on Friday evening, it had a knock-on effect on air travel on Saturday as airlines attempted to clear a backlog of flights.

Officials including Duffy had previously attributed the issue to outdated equipment.

Maintenance on US air traffic control systems was being carried out to switch from copper wire to fibre-optic cable by a contractor called L3Harris, a technology provider, Duffy said.

The US had "an incredibly old telecommunications system", he said, adding: "It was such an old wire that it was being discontinued."

The transport secretary explained that a router that was being worked on had started flooding other air traffic control systems and created communication issues with planes, prompting the shutdown on safety grounds.

The government was now trying to understand whether the root cause was the wire replacement or a fault with the router.

The four-hour suspension from 15:54 EST (19:54 GMT) on Friday was the longest such incident since the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US.

More than 15,000 flights in the US were delayed or cancelled that day, according to data from flight tracking sites, affecting an estimated 1.5 million passengers, with more than 5,900 cancelled and 7,000 delayed on Saturday.

In some cases, passengers were left stuck inside planes on the tarmac, unable to take off or to return to the gates. The ground stop also had a knock-on effect on schedules around the world, with some flights out of the UK and Europe cancelled.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said the US flight schedule should return to normal by the end of Sunday.

US officials have said they did not believe the issue was as a result of a cyber-attack or a rogue AI agent, though Duffy said an investigation into the exact cause was under way.

Bryan Bedford, who heads the FAA, told the same news conference: "We see zero evidence of anything nefarious and zero evidence of anything AI related."

L3Harris said on Saturday that it had completed more than 70% of the work it had been tasked to undertake to modernise US air traffic communications infrastructure before the shutdown.

The company said it was supporting the FAA in its investigation, adding: "L3Harris takes the nationwide ground stop and its impact on travellers, airlines and air traffic operations seriously."

Duffy warned that a similar issue could arise again unless the US Congress approved upgrades to air traffic control infrastructure.

US President Donald Trump has requested $30.1bn (£22.8bn) for the upgrades. Both chambers of Congress are currently controlled by the Republican Party.

Duffy previously said the system needed a $50bn overhaul.

NEWS

South Sudan postpones first general election from December to February

People in South Sudan began registering to vote on Saturday as the country postponed its first general elections since independence from Sudan in 2011.

The National Elections Commission said the polls, due to take place in December, have been moved to 11 February.

Initially scheduled for 2015, the authorities have postponed the elections several times before and repeatedly extended the transitional period.

"The commission would like to take the opportunity to make it clear that the adjustment of the electoral timeline should not be misconstrued as a discussion to abandon or to call off the elections," said Commission spokesperson, Josephine Achiro.

She said the extension would allow for the implementation of additional processes including distribution of registration materials and civic education.

Saturday's announcement came amid growing violence, political battles between the country's president and deposed vice president, and slow voter registration.

There have been concerns from regional and international partners over the country's readiness to hold credible elections in December.

Former vice-president Riek Machar, President Salva Kiir's main opponent, has been under house arrest since March 2025, accused of "crimes against humanity".

A bloody civil war between the forces of the two men between 2013 and 2018 led to more than 400,000 deaths.

A 2018 peace accord brought in a government of national unity with Kiir as president and Machar his deputy, their joint administration tasked with paving the way to elections in 2022.

Those elections, however, have been repeatedly postponed and the administration has implemented virtually none of the provisions in the peace agreement.

Machar was suspended and charged with treason and murder in 2025.

The UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan recently warned a December election could set off widespread conflict if used to dismantle the 2018 accord.

Gabriel Bol Deng Majok, chairperson of the National Elections Commission appealed to politicians to refrain from using violence telling them to speak "to the mind, heart, and soul" of the people.

"If you want to be the leader that our citizens want, it will happen. But not through violence, not through bullets, only through ballot papers," he said.

The United Nations has repeatedly warned about conditions in the country, including the displacement of tens of thousands of people and the disruption of international humanitarian operations.



South Sudan's President Salva Kiir arrives at Juba's Presidential Palace, South Sudan, 3 February 2023.

Pope Leo speaks of community 'suffering' on visit to remote Andes town

Pope Leo XIV has spoken about the "suffering of those who are forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future", which he said had left communities under threat, during a visit to an isolated Andean village in his former diocese.

About 6,000 people live in Santa Cruz de Succhabamba, located in a remote part of the Andes mountains of northern Peru, but the Pope's visit still drew a crowd of about 20,000, according to the Vatican.

At an outdoor Mass, the Pope spoke of "declining birth rates that are emptying villages" and the unequal distribution of the land's resources.

More than 40% of the population in the Cajamarca region, where the town is located, live in poverty - the highest figure in Peru, according to official data.

Cajamarca has lost the highest number of people to internal migration, with 729,000 people born there now living elsewhere in Peru.

In his sermon, the Pope thanked those who had made the journey to see him and emphasised the importance of never losing heart, despite life's difficulties.

The pontiff's Latin America tour comes roughly a month after he underwent surgery to remove part of his right lung after a cancerous lump was found during routine checks.

At the start of his trip, he said the care he had received made him think of those who "lack the means to obtain a timely diagnosis" or receive treatment for health conditions.

Santa Cruz is within the Diocese of Chiclayo, where the Pope served as bishop from 2015 to 2023. During his tenure, he visited Santa Cruz several times a year to minister to the town's rural population.

He returned on Saturday by helicopter and was greeted by singing and cheering. He later did a tour in a popemobile, from which he waved to people who had travelled to see him.

Speaking at a local parish on Saturday, the 71-year-old said he felt "joy" at being able to visit the small town once again.

"It is like a very big dream that the Lord has allowed this servant to come here," he said.

Rev Kevin Noriega, who was ordained in 2018 by the then-bishop, told Reuters the visit had brought "enormous hope and emotion" to Santa Cruz.

Haitians welcome deployment of Salvadoran troops as gang violence rages on

Haitians have welcomed the deployment of Salvadoran troops to the country to help in the fight against gang violence.

They are guarding the main stadium in the capital, Port-au-Prince after Haitian security forces regained control of it on Thursday following two years under gang control.

El Salvador president, Nayib Bukele, said it will serve as an operational base for the around 2,000 soldiers sent to Haiti.

"The gangs drove me out of my home. Since then, I've been wandering from one place to another. With Bukele's arrival, I feel a certain pride at the thought of regaining my freedom," said a displaced man.

Bukele said his soldiers will launch an offensive from the stadium and urged gang members to abandon the area.

"Those who choose to stay and fight our forces will have to face the consequences," he added in a post on X written in Haitian Creole.

He gained attention for bringing Salvadoran gangs to heel but the authoritarian leader has been accused of human rights violations.

The Salvadoran president first ordered the deployment of troops to Haiti to rescue four of the country's soldiers who went missing after an ambush in Port-au-Prince.

Gangs expanded their control over large swathes of the city following the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

Experts say many Haitians welcome the idea of a Bukele-style hardline crackdown as conditions are so awful that people are desperate to be delivered from the gangs.

Port-au-Prince resident, Venet Demogene, said Haiti is their home and people have no other country to go to.

"We must be able to live here. We are Haitians, we're in our own home. We are not at war with another country," he said.

"If Bukele wishes, Jesus will speak to his heart and he will give us back our country," he added.

The Salvadoran troops are operating outside the official framework of the UN-backed Gang Suppression Force.

In 2024, the 10,000-capacity stadium fell into the hands of gangs that control much of the country, the poorest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Iran targets US military base in Bahrain with drone attack

Iran launched a drone attack against a US military base in Bahrain on Sunday, its second attempt to target the country in three days.

The country's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said it targeted the US air defence radar facility at al-Riffa air base in Bahrain using six drones.

Bahrain's military said its air defence systems intercepted and destroyed the Iranian air attacks "before they could achieve their objectives".

It comes after Iran fired drones at Bahrain on Friday, its first attack against Gulf countries since September.

The US and Iran are locked in a stand-off over the Strait of Hormuz. About a fifth of the world's gas and oil supply usually flows through it but shipping has been restricted since the outbreak of war in February.

Iran insists that it should control the strait and has been attacking what it calls "unauthorised" traffic, while the US military is providing protection for tankers shuttling oil through the strait to keep exports flowing from Gulf Arab states.

As sirens sounded across Bahrain on Sunday the interior ministry called on citizens to head to their nearest safe location.

Bahrain's foreign ministry said: "The Kingdom of Bahrain condemns in the strongest terms the continued brutal Iranian attacks on its territory and holds Iran fully responsible for their consequences."

In a statement on the strikes shared by Iran's state broadcaster on Telegram, the IRGC said: "The Strait of Hormuz is closed, and any aggression by the American enemy will be met with an even harsher and more forceful response."

Earlier this week, the IRGC claimed that it struck a US early warning radar system in Bahrain on Friday.

The US military has denied the claim, stating that the IRGC launched two one-way attack drones towards Bahrain and both were shot down by US forces. It added that there were no injuries or damage.

Earlier in the week the US carried out strikes on Iran's Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz, US officials told CBS, the BBC's US partner.

The officials described the strikes as limited and defensive, and said they were in response to the IRGC firing on a US aircraft.

Iranian state news agency Irna reported explosions on Qeshm on Monday. The IRGC did not comment but said its forces had shot down two US MQM-170 drones south of the island and a US MQ-9 drone east of the Strait.

The US and Iran reached a preliminary agreement to end the war and reopen the strait in June, but it collapsed within weeks after Iranian attacks on shipping resumed and the US reinstated a naval blockade of Iranian ports.

Iranian negotiators had been discussing with mediators a proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within two days if the US meets seven conditions, reportedly including the lifting of the naval blockade and releasing frozen Iranian assets.

However this week Donald Trump said that the US was no longer interested in a deal to end the war with Iran and ordered Vice-President JD Vance, who had been involved in efforts to restart negotiations, to focus on domestic US politics.

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10 X 4	340,000	365,500	273,500	294,013	177,400	190,705	370,000	397,750	295,600	317,770
HALF PAGE	295,600	317,770	236,500	254,238	147,800	158,885	340,000	365,500	273,450	293,959
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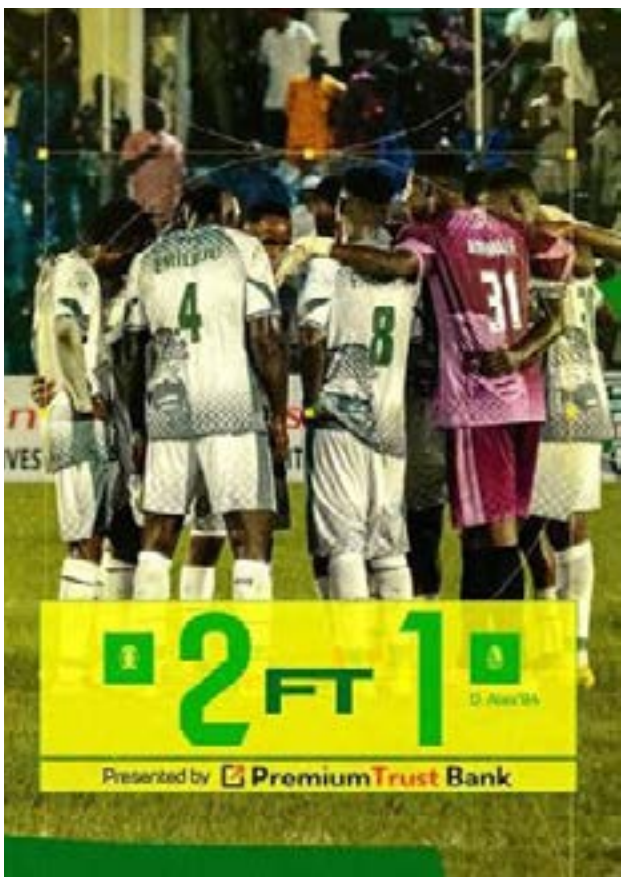
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Bendel Insurance suffer 2-1 defeat to Shooting Stars, turn attention to Doma Utd



ENDEL INSURANCE VS SHOOTING STARS

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Bendel Insurance FC suffered a disappointing 2-1 defeat to Shooting Stars Sports Club on Friday at the Lekan Salami Stadium in Ibadan, after conceding two late goals in their Matchday 13 encounter in the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL).

The Benin Arsenals, however, put up an impressive performance against their hosts, showing resilience and determination throughout the encounter and making life difficult for the Oluyole Warriors.

Bendel Insurance held their own in the first half, keeping Shooting Stars at bay as both sides went into the break with the scoreline at 0-0.

The visitors continued to frustrate their hosts after the restart and appeared to be heading for a hard-earned point in their attempt to avoid last season experience at the same stadium until Olakunle Akala broke the deadlock in the 84th minute with a stunning effort from over 25 yards, sending the home supporters into wild celebrations.

Shooting Stars doubled their advantage in the 92nd minute through Qamar Adegoke, who capitalised on a moment of defensive distraction following an injury to Bendel Insurance defender Gabriel Lekan, who was lying on the pitch.

Despite the setback, the Benin Arsenals refused to give up and continued to push forward in search of a response. Their determination paid off in the dying seconds of the six minutes of added six minutes time when Alex Oweilayefa calmly found the back of the net to reduce the deficit.

However, the late strike from Alex Oweilayefa proved insufficient to prevent Bendel Insurance from suffering a narrow 2-1 defeat.

The result leaves Bendel Insurance FC on 21 points after 13 matches, as the coach Kennedy Boboye led team shifts its attention to the next fixture against Doma United, scheduled to take place in Benin City.

The Benin Arsenals will now be hoping to bounce back in front of their home supporters and return to winning ways in their Matchday 14 encounter with Doma Utd on Sunday, November 22.

U23 AFCON Qualifier: Zadok Yohanna withdraws from Olympic Eagles squad

Brighton & Hove Albion winger Zadok Yohanna has withdrawn from the Olympic Eagles squad ahead of Tuesday's second-leg encounter against DR Congo in the U23 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers.

Yohanna sustained an injury during Nigeria's 2-0 defeat to DR Congo in the first leg and will now miss the decisive return fixture scheduled to take place at the Remo Stars Stadium in Ikenne.

The former player is expected to depart Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for England on Saturday night to undergo further medical assessment under the supervision of his club, Brighton & Hove Albion.

His withdrawal brings his involvement with the Olympic Eagles in the current qualifying campaign to an end.

Nigeria will now have to overturn the two-goal deficit without the services of the talented winger as they seek to keep their qualification hopes alive.



ZADOK YOHANNA

Ohonre Grammar School Halt Iyoba's Dominance, win 2026 Edo Girls Cricket Championship

SHARON EKHIWERE

Ohonre Grammar School Cricket team, Benin City, has emerged champions of the 2026 Edo State Secondary Schools Girls Cricket Competition after defeating defending champions, Iyoba Girls College, by 28 runs in an exciting final played on Friday at the Centre of Excellence, Iyoba Girls College, Benin City.

The victory ended Iyoba Girls' long-standing dominance of the competition and marked a historic achievement for Ohonre Grammar School, who had made several unsuccessful attempts to dethrone the former champions in previous editions.

Having consistently dominated the tournament, including last year's edition, Iyoba Girls College were unable to sustain their winning streak as Ohonre produced an impressive performance to claim the championship title.

In the final encounter, Ohonre Grammar School scored 52 runs for seven wickets in their allotted 20 overs before bowling out Iyoba Girls College for 24 runs in 12.3 overs, securing a convincing 28-run victory.

In the third-place match, Benin Technical College defeated Ujoelen Secondary School, Ekpoma, by 34 runs to claim the bronze medal.

Benin Technical College posted 80 runs for four wickets in 15 overs, while Ujoelen Secondary School were bowled out for 46 runs in 14.2 overs.



2026 EDO GIRLS CRICKET

NPFL: Abia government moves to rescue Enyimba, Abia Warriors

The Abia State Government has intervened in the poor performances of Enyimba International FC of Aba and Abia Warriors FC of Umuahia following their disappointing start to the 2026/2027 Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) season.

The two Abia-based clubs have struggled to find consistency, with Enyimba occupying 18th position and Abia Warriors sitting 19th on the league table.

Enyimba have accumulated 11 points from 12 matches, recording two wins, five draws and seven defeats, while Abia Warriors have also garnered 11 points, having registered three wins, five draws and five defeats.

In a move to address the situation, the Abia State Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Nwaobilor Ananaba, held strategic meetings with the management and technical crew of both clubs to identify the challenges affecting their performances.

Ananaba, accompanied by Governor Alex Otti's Special Adviser on Sports, Raymond Ukwa, first met with the board and technical crew of Enyimba before holding a separate meeting with the management of Abia Warriors.

During the engagements, the commissioner urged the club officials and technical teams to openly identify their challenges and propose practical solutions that would improve the fortunes of the two teams.



ABIA WARRIORS

Nigerian boxing fans can win $5,000 in Mayweather vs. Floyd promo bout



FLOYD MAYWEATHER

KEHINDE OSAGIEDE

Nigerian boxing fans have a chance to win $5,000 in a cash prize draw tied to the upcoming bout between American boxing great Floyd "Money" Mayweather and Australian light heavyweight Matt "The Jedi" Floyd.

The fight is scheduled for December 19, 2026, in Bangkok, Thailand.

According to Keane Anis in a statement, to qualify for the draw,- Boxing fans must buy Pay-Per-View (PPV) access to the event through the promoter's website, theorderpromotions.com/ng, subject to the promotion's terms and eligibility requirements. The promotional link closes on Monday, November 16, 2026.

The Chief Executive Officer of Front Row Fight Series, Keane Anis, is in Nigeria with representatives of TMT Africa and Floyd Mayweather Promotions to promote the event.

The visit reflects growing efforts to bring major international boxing events to Nigerian audiences and to engage fans ahead of the December contest.

The entry window closes tomorrow(Monday, November 16,2026).

SPORTS

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Nilayo Sports management hails PremiumTrust Bank for driving Sports Development through Abuja City half Marathon

The third edition of the PremiumTrust Bank Abuja City International Half Marathon ended on a high note on Saturday, and Nilayo Sports Management has reserved special praise for the event's lead sponsor, PremiumTrust Bank, for its remarkable role in advancing sports and empowering youths.

More than 120 international athletes competed in the race, placing Abuja firmly on the global athletics map. It was a vibrant spectacle, with athletes, guests and spectators enjoying rich entertainment before, during and after the competition.

The excitement continued into the after-party, where performances by notable artists kept fans and participants in high spirits.

Aside from the health benefits derived from the race, several international athletes and Nigerian youths were also empowered with cash rewards that will be enough for them to set up something meaningful outside sports.

Speaking to journalists, the Chief Operating Officer of Nilayo Sports Management, Mrs. Yetunde Olopade, who conceived the event, expressed deep appreciation to the bank:

"Words are too few to express our profound gratitude to our lead sponsor for the successful hosting of the third edition of the PremiumTrust Bank Abuja City International Half Marathon.

"They have shown credibility and displayed social responsibility. They have tried to take so many youths away from the streets with this platform. We are extremely grateful, and we look forward to a better subsequent edition.

"It's really an amazing time. You could see that the CEO of PremiumTrust Bank, Emmanuel Efe Emefienim, CON, FCIB, was in attendance at the World Press Conference on Friday, and he has been here as early as possible. That shows the commitment and passion he has for sports and youth development.

PremiumTrust Bank Praised for Youth Empowerment as Abuja City International Half Marathon ends in Style

The third edition of the PremiumTrust Bank Abuja City International Half Marathon concluded on a high note on Saturday, drawing praise from event organizers, Nilayo Sports Management, for the bank's pivotal role in driving sports development and youth empowerment.

The vibrant championship brought together more than 120 international athletes, firmly placing Abuja on the global athletics map. Beyond the competitive racing, participants and spectators enjoyed an electric atmosphere featuring high-energy entertainment and a lively after-party.

The event delivered significant economic and social impact, rewarding international athletes and Nigerian youths with substantial cash prizes designed to support meaningful ventures outside of sports.

Reflecting on the successful outing, Mrs. Yetunde Olopade, Chief Operating Officer of Nilayo Sports Management and architect of the event, expressed profound gratitude to the title sponsor:

"Words are too few to express our profound gratitude to our lead sponsor for the successful hosting of the third edition… They have shown credibility and displayed social responsibility. They have tried to take so many youths away from the streets with this platform."

Mrs. Olopade specifically commended the personal dedication of PremiumTrust Bank's CEO, Emmanuel Efe Emefienim, CON, FCIB, who actively participated in the pre-event World Press Conference and arrived early on race day. She also highlighted the bank's broader contributions to Nigerian sports, noting their recent celebratory dinner hosted for the Flamingos.

She further called on other private sector organizations to invest in sports as a powerful catalyst for economic growth and youth engagement, noting its immense multiplier effect.

U23 AFCON Qualifier: DR Congo risk disqualification as players refused to travel to Nigeria



NIGERIA U23 TEAM VS DR CONGO

The Democratic Republic of Congo U23 national team could face disqualification from the 2027 Africa U23 Cup of Nations qualifiers following reports that players have refused to travel to Nigeria for the return leg against the Olympic Eagles.

According to initial reports, the Congolese players allegedly declined to travel for the encounter over unpaid bonuses owed to them by the government.

The development has thrown DR Congo's participation in the remaining stages of the qualifying campaign into uncertainty, with the team potentially facing disciplinary consequences if they fail to honour the fixture.

The Leopards had taken a significant advantage in the first leg after securing a 2-0 victory over Nigeria, leaving the Olympic Eagles with a difficult task ahead of the return encounter.

However, the reported dispute over outstanding financial entitlements could hand Nigeria an unexpected opportunity to revive their qualification hopes.

Tottenham defender Adarabioyo's proposed switch to Nigeria rejected by FIFA

FIFA has reportedly rejected Tottenham Hotspur defender Tosin Adarabioyo's application to change his international allegiance from England to Nigeria, potentially ending the Super Eagles' hopes of securing his services.

The reported decision represents a setback for Nigeria's efforts to strengthen its defensive options ahead of upcoming international competitions, with the 28-year-old centre-back now facing uncertainty over his international future.

Adarabioyo, who was born in London to Nigerian parents, had been linked with a possible switch to the Super Eagles, raising expectations that he could add experience and quality to Nigeria's central defensive department.

However, FIFA's reported rejection of his application means the defender cannot currently make the anticipated switch, leaving Nigeria unable to consider him for international selection.

The Tottenham defender has previously represented England at youth international level making his eligibility a subject of interest amid ongoing discussions about players of Nigerian heritage who could potentially represent the Super Eagles.



TOSIN ADARABIOYO

Super Eagles off to Zanzibar City for Tanzania rematch

Super Eagles on Sunday flew out to Zanzibar City for the return leg of a 2027 AFCON double-header against Tanzania.

The Super Eagles will fly out on a chartered flight from Uyo.

The team revived their qualification hopes for the 2027 AFCON after they beat Tanzania 3-1 in Uyo Friday night.

Both teams will clash again Tuesday in continuation of the qualifying series.

Nigeria are now second in Group L with six points from three matches, a point behind leaders Guinea Bissau.

Madagascar are third on two points, while Tanzania are bottom of the standings with a point.

Only the overall winners of this group will advance to the tournament proper as AFCON co-hosts Tanzania feature in this section of the qualifying tournament.



SUPER EAGLES

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