Tinubu hails Sultan @ 20, describes him as moral authority

AKAHOMEN MIRACLE

ABUJA

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has congratulated the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, on the 20th anniversary of his ascension to the throne, describing him as a moral authority, a voice of moderation and a trusted counsellor to Nigerian leaders.

In a congratulatory letter personally signed on Monday, the President said the Sultan's two decades of leadership had not only preserved the historic institution of the Sokoto Caliphate but also strengthened its role as an instrument of peace, unity and national development.

"You have been more than a traditional ruler. You have been a moral authority, a bridge between faiths, a voice of moderation and a steady counsellor to leaders across the country," Tinubu stated.

The President commended the Sultan's contributions as President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and Co-Chairman of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), noting that his leadership had fostered understanding and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

He particularly praised the monarch's consistent advocacy for religious harmony and tolerance, saying Nigeria's religious diversity should remain a source of strength rather than division.

Tinubu also acknowledged the Sultan's contributions to peacebuilding in Northern Ni-

CONTINUES ON PG 2»



ALHAJI MUHAMMAD SA'AD ABUBAKAR III

The Nigerian OBSERVER

That The People May Know

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2027: Oshiomhole rallies Edo North for Tinubu

IGUNBOR GODWIN

AUCHI

Former Edo State Governor and Senator representing Edo North, Adams Oshiomhole, has urged residents of the senatorial district to support President Bola Tinubu's re-election bid in 2027, arguing that another presidential victory would create greater opportunities for the region to benefit from federal appointments and development initiatives.

Oshiomhole made the appeal on Sunday, November 1, 2026, during an APC stakeholders' gathering in Edo North, where he called for stronger grassroots mobilisation ahead of the general elections.

The former APC National Chairman maintained that political representation in the Senate alone would not be sufficient to secure all the interests of Edo North without corresponding support for the president at the federal level.

Recalling the 2023 general elections, Oshiomhole said he had encouraged residents to support Tinubu because the district stood to benefit from having a representative in the federal executive. He pointed to the emergence of Abubakar Momoh as Minister of Regional Development as an example of the opportunities available through federal political representation.

The senator expressed confidence that another Tinubu victory in 2027 would provide greater opportunities for Edo North, urging residents to sustain their support for the APC and its presidential candidate.

Oshiomhole also cautioned party members against electoral malpractice, insisting that the APC must embrace credible democratic processes and avoid returning to the era of election manipulation. He maintained that political victory should be achieved through genuine voter support.

He further urged party members to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the Electoral Act and ensure that their campaign activities complied with the law.

CONTINUES ON PG 2»

INEC upholds 66 petitions, rejects 64 in review of 2027 guber, NASS candidates lists

OLIVER IJIOGBE

ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has upheld 66 petitions and rejected 64 others following its review of 130 complaints arising from the final lists of candidates for the 2027 governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections.

The petitions, filed by political parties across several states, bordered on alleged wrongful inclusion of candidates, omission of political parties and multiple nominations.

In a statement issued on Thursday, October 29, 2026, and signed by the Chairman of INEC's Information and Voter Education Committee, Mohammed Kudu Haruna, the commission disclosed that it received 69 petitions relating to governorship elections from 12 political parties across 26 states.

Of the number, 41 petitions were upheld, while 28 were rejected.

For the State Houses of Assembly elections, INEC said it received 61 petitions from 11 political parties across 11 states, out of which 25 were upheld and 36 dismissed.

The commission explained that the review resulted in the inclusion of some candidates and political parties whose complaints were found to have merit.

It added that some candidates previously listed were removed after verification established that their names were not contained in the membership registers submit-

CONTINUES ON PG 2»



PRESIDENT TINUBU

SENATOR OSHIOMHOLE

Motorists commend EDSG as repair work commences on failed portions in Benin metropolis —Pg 2

TCN shuts down Irrua transformer for 2 days in Edo, 5 electricity feeders face disruption —Pg 6

Nine killed as small jet crashes on Florida street —Pg 14

NSC, International Volleyball Federation enter Landmark partnership to transform Volleyball In Nigeria —Pg 23

NEWS



ROAD MAINTENANCE:
Edo State Road Maintenance Agency mobilised personnel and equipment to carry out extensive repairs of failed portions of roads in Benin metropolis yesterday.

2027: Oshiomhole urges Edo...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

According to him, effective grassroots mobilisation and convincing voters remain the legitimate ways to secure electoral victory.

Also speaking at the gathering, Minister of Regional Development, Abubakar Momoh, appealed to residents of Edo North to work towards Tinubu's re-election. He argued that the district's political support for the president in 2023 contributed to its representation in the Federal Executive Council.

The meeting, which brought together APC leaders and stakeholders, was aimed at strengthening party unity, coordinating political activities and preparing members for the 2027 general elections. Oshiomhole urged party supporters to remain committed to the mobilisation process, expressing optimism about the APC's prospects in the forthcoming polls.

Tinubu hails Sultan @ 20...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

geria and across the Sahel, as well as his advocacy for girl-child education, support for farmers and interventions on behalf of the poor and vulnerable.

On a personal note, the President expressed appreciation for his friendship with the Sultan, describing his counsel as honest, patriotic and guided by Nigeria's best interests.

He also thanked the monarch for his support and prayers for the nation, while wishing him continued good health, long life and divine wisdom.

"May your reign continue to bring peace to Sokoto, unity to Nigeria, and honour to the Ummah," the President added.

Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III ascended the throne as the 20th Sultan of Sokoto on November 2, 2006, following the death of his predecessor, Sultan Muhammadu Maccido, in the ADC Airlines Flight 053 crash of October 29, 2006. The crash claimed 96 of the 105 people on board.

A graduate of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, the Sultan was commissioned into the Nigerian Army in 1974 and rose to the rank of Brigadier-General before retiring in December 2006. He served in various command positions and participated in United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Motorists commend EDSG as repair work commences on failed portions in Benin metropolis

BENIN CITY

Richard Eweka

Motorists have commended the Edo State Government (EDSG) for commencing repair work on failed portions of roads in Benin metropolis to ensure safer and more motorable roads for residents.

The state government is taking advantage of the dry season to rehabilitate failed portions of roads, as the Edo State Road Maintenance Agency (EDSRMA) has mobilised personnel and equipment to carry out extensive repairs across the state.

Residents who spoke on the ongoing rehabilitation and repair works commended the determination, commitment and zeal of the government to ensure that roads across the three senatorial districts are motorable and safe for road users.

Some of the roads inspected include Federal Avenue, off Boundary Road; Ihama Road; Adesuwa Road by Boundary Road Junction; Evbhukhu-Sapele Road; and the second junction by Faith Motors, among others.

Speaking to journalists on the state government's efforts to rehabilitate and repair failed portions of roads across the state, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of EDSRMA, Hon. Felix Ibhade, said the agency had commenced day-and-night rehabilitation work during the dry season to ensure that roads across the state remained motorable.

He said the repair work was not restricted to the GRA, adding that areas such as Siluko, Ibiwe, TV Road and Ikpoba Slope, among others, would also receive attention.

Ibhade noted that the agency received calls from residents providing information about bad roads and responded promptly to such reports.

"Any information we get on any bad road, and find it very important, we move to attend to such road to fix it.

"The agency is not restricted to Edo South Senatorial District alone but will touch all the three senatorial districts because the agency belongs to Edo people.

"The roads we have repaired since the rain subsided include the second exit gate of Government House, St. Mary Road, Federal Avenue, Boundary Road by AIG, and the second junction by Faith Motors. We are also giving attention to other roads," he said.

Mrs. Cecelia Maduka, Christiana Noah, Felix Odigure and Mongov Asema Moses commended Gov. Monday Okpebholo for his commitment to ensuring that residents of the state enjoy good roads.

They thanked the governor for matching his words with action, noting that some of the failed portions of roads had already been repaired.

INEC upholds 66 petitions...

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

ted by their respective political parties.

INEC also approved the removal of candidates whose nominations failed to meet the applicable legal requirements.

The commission noted that its decisions on the State Assembly candidates were based on specific complaints submitted to it and determined in accordance with the law and established criteria.

The latest review follows an earlier statement issued on October 13, 2026, concerning complaints arising from the publication of the final candidates' lists on October 10.

INEC said the affected candidates, political parties and states would be reflected in an updated candidates' list to be published on its official website.

The commission reaffirmed its commitment to transparency, credibility and the integrity of the electoral process, assuring political parties and Nigerians that all electoral complaints would be treated in accordance with the law.

Oborevwori cuts Delta's legacy debt by ₦400bn, targets full clearance in 2027

Aghedo Iyobor

ASABA

The Delta State Government says it has reduced the state's legacy debt from N463 billion to N63 billion, representing a remarkable N400 billion reduction, with plans to completely liquidate the outstanding debt by the first quarter of 2027.

The Commissioner for Economic Planning, Mr Sonny Ekedayen, disclosed this at the state's 2026 budget stakeholders' engagement held in Asaba on Friday.

Ekedayen attributed the achievement to Governor Sheriff Oborevwori's prudent financial management and responsible utilisation of public resources since assuming office in May 2023.

He said the administration was committed to clearing the outstanding N63 billion within the first quarter of 2027.

According to the commissioner, the government would prioritise road construction and other critical infrastructure projects in the proposed 2027 budget to stimulate economic activities and improve connectivity across communities in the state.

He explained that the state's expenditure framework currently allocates about 70 per cent to capital projects and 30 per cent to recurrent expenditure, adding that the administration would sustain the funding pattern in the 2027 fiscal year.

Ekedayen noted that the debt reduction initiative was aimed at strengthening the state's fiscal sustainability while ensuring continued investment in critical infrastructure and other development projects.

In a related development, the Delta State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has commended Governor Oborevwori for the significant reduction in the state's legacy debt, describing the development as a remarkable milestone in Delta's financial history.

Why I carried placard during Jonathan's presidency – Adeboye

Aghedo Iyobor

LAGOS

The General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Pastor Enoch Adeboye, has clarified that his decision to carry a placard during the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan was not an act of protest against the former president.

Adeboye made the clarification following the resurfacing of a viral photograph showing him holding a placard during Jonathan's presidency, which has generated discussions and varying interpretations on social media.

The respected cleric explained that his action was part of a faith-based advocacy against corruption and in support of good governance, rather than a partisan campaign or an attempt to discredit the administration of the former president.

"I carried a placard, but not to protest against Jonathan," he said.

He stressed the need for Nigerians to understand the circumstances surrounding public events before drawing conclusions, warning against the tendency to interpret issues without adequate knowledge of their background.

Adeboye also urged Christians to remain committed to praying for the nation and its leaders, regardless of political differences.

He emphasised the importance of promoting righteousness, accountability and good governance, noting that the Church has a responsibility to speak up on issues affecting the welfare and development of society.

The cleric's clarification comes amid renewed attention to the photograph, with his explanation seeking to correct what he considers a misrepresentation of the motive behind his action.

NEWS

TCN shuts down Irrua transformer for 2 days in Edo, 5 electricity feeders face disruption

JOY ODOR

ABUJA

The Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has announced a two-day planned maintenance operation at its Irrua 132/33kV Transmission Substation in Edo State, a development expected to disrupt bulk electricity supply to customers served by five major distribution feeders.

The exercise, scheduled for November 2 and 3, 2026, will involve work on the substation's 100MVA power transformer to enable contractors to commission an installed SERGI fire protection system.

According to TCN, the maintenance will take place between 10:00am and 5:00pm on each day, effectively preventing the Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) from taking bulk electricity for onward distribution to affected customers throughout the scheduled work periods.

The affected feeders are Ehor, Uzebba, Ubiaja, Ekpoma and Agbor 33kV feeders, placing electricity consumers served by the networks under a temporary supply disruption during the maintenance exercise.

The announcement underscores the operational challenges associated with maintaining critical transmission infrastructure while ensuring the safety and reliability of high-capacity electricity equipment.

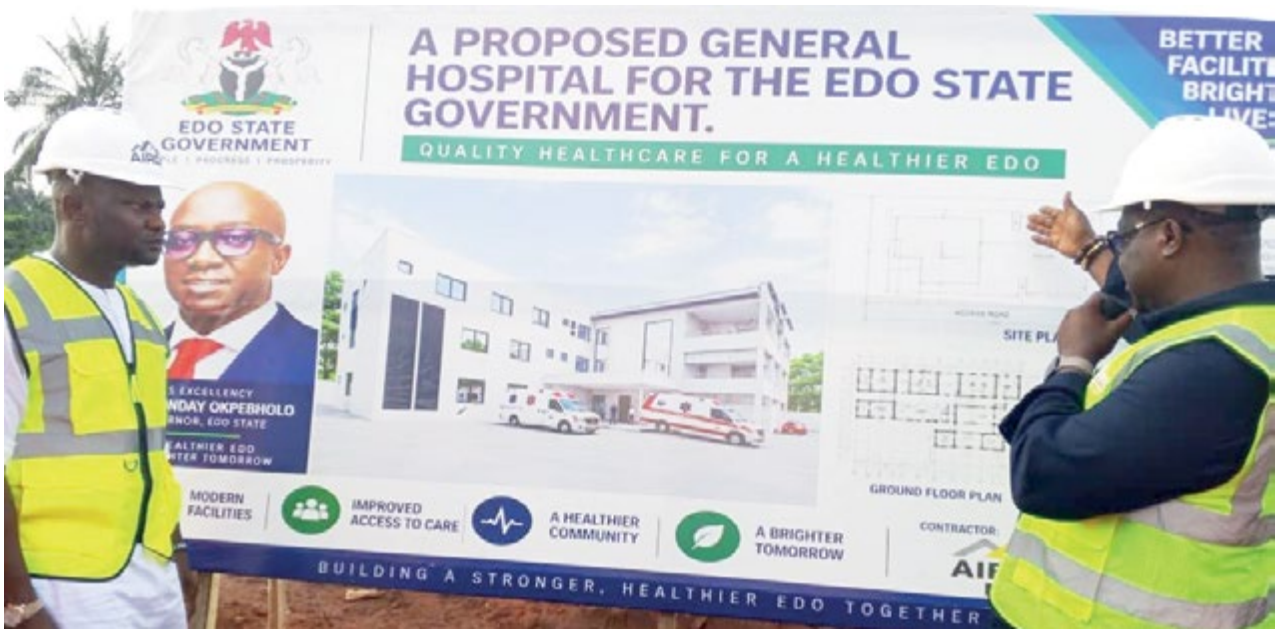
TCN disclosed that the planned intervention would affect electricity supply to customers connected to the five 33kV feeders supplied through the Irrua transmission substation.

BEDC will be unable to receive bulk electricity through the affected transmission arrangement during the maintenance hours, meaning customers relying on the feeders should expect interruptions in supply.

The two-day schedule means the affected distribution networks will experience disruptions between 10:00am and 5:00pm on November 2 and 3.

TCN did not indicate whether alternative supply arrangements would be available to cushion the impact on customers during the exercise.

At the heart of the maintenance operation is the commissioning of the SERGI fire protection system installed on the 100MVA transformer.



FOUNDATION LAYING CEREMONY:
Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa(Left) listening to Engr. Osayimwen Airunmwonde, as he explained the proposed plan of Iguobazuwa General Hospital shortly before the foundation laying ceremony of the proposed General Hospital by the Deputy Governor on behalf of the Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebolo recently. Photo: Moses oboh

2027: Kalu declares S/E 'locked down' for Tinubu, says Igbo have no other candidate

ABUJA

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Benjamin Kalu, has made a sweeping political claim that the South-East is united behind President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's re-election bid in 2027, declaring that the region has no alternative presidential candidate and must reciprocate what he described as the President's support for the Igbo.

Hon. Kalu's declaration comes amid growing political calculations ahead of the 2027 general election, with the Deputy Speaker insisting that the five South-East states have agreed to support Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima for another four-year mandate.

He also reignited the debate over the Igbo quest for Nigeria's presidency, arguing that the region should not be expected to settle for a four-year presidential arrangement after waiting for nearly six decades for an opportunity to occupy the nation's highest political office.

Speaking on Saturday in Enugu at the flag-off of the APC Women's Mobilisation Campaign and South-East Women Empowerment Programme organised by First Lady Oluremi Tinubu, Hon Kalu said the immediate political responsibility of the Igbo was to support a President he claimed had demonstrated commitment to the region.

The Deputy Speaker, who is also Director-General of the APC Presidential Campaign Council 11 (South), argued that Tinubu's relationship with the Igbo predates his emergence as President, pointing to his record as governor of Lagos State between 1999 and 2007.

According to Hon Kalu, Tinubu demonstrated confidence in the Igbo by appointing people from the region into his Lagos State administration at a time when, he claimed, such political inclusion was uncommon.

He cited the appointment of Ben Akabueze, an Igbo technocrat, into the Lagos State cabinet as evidence of the President's longstanding relationship with the South-East.

"This man has not hidden his love for Ndi Igbo. During his time as the governor of Lagos State, no Igbo property was taken. Nobody who was a businessman in Lagos was arrested. Mr. Ben Akabueze was an Igbo man that he brought into his cabinet as Governor. It has never happened before," Kalu said.

He urged the South-East to reciprocate what he described as Tinubu's goodwill by supporting his re-election, arguing that political support should be matched with recognition of previous commitments

But beyond the political endorsement, Hon Kalu placed the South-East Development Commission (SEDC) at the centre of his argument, describing its establishment as a major intervention in addressing longstanding demands for reconstruction and development in the region.

Delta health workers endorse Tinubu, Oborevwori for 2027

AJUWA VICTOR

ASABA

Health workers in Delta State have declared support for President Bola Tinubu and Governor Sheriff Oborevwori ahead of the 2027 general elections, citing what they described as the positive impact of their respective administrations on healthcare delivery and workers' welfare.

The workers made their position known at a stakeholders' meeting in Asaba, where issues relating to healthcare development, professional responsibilities and government policies were discussed.

Speaking at the meeting, the Delta State Commissioner for Health, Dr Joseph Onojaeme, said the support for Governor Oborevwori's second-term ambition was informed by the administration's interventions in the health sector.

He urged health personnel across the state to remain committed to their professional responsibilities and continue to support policies and programmes designed to strengthen healthcare delivery and improve the welfare of residents.

The Director of Protocol, Government House, Chief Sunday Onoriode, who also addressed the gathering, praised health workers for their dedication and sacrifices in caring for patients and sustaining healthcare services across the state.

He called on them to take the message of President Tinubu and Governor Oborevwori to their communities and mobilise support for both leaders ahead of the 2027 elections.

Onoriode described the workers' endorsement as a reciprocal gesture for what he said were the contributions of the two administrations to governance, development and the welfare of Nigerians and Deltans.

He expressed confidence that the Oborevwori administration would continue to deliver on its promises through the MORE Agenda, adding that its policies and programmes were aimed at improving the living conditions of residents.

Dirty money, terror cash in focus, as customs assemble six agencies

ABUJA

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has moved to tighten Nigeria's defences against money laundering, terrorism financing and cross-border financial crimes, opening a fresh inter-agency offensive involving six federal institutions responsible for financial intelligence, law enforcement, drug control and national security.

The initiative brings together the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and the National Counter-Terrorism Centre under the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).

The three-day engagement, held between October 27 and 29, 2026, was led by Muhammad Shuaibu, Assistant Comptroller-General of Customs in charge of Headquarters, with a central focus on strengthening intelligence sharing, operational coordination and institutional cooperation against illicit financial flows and other transnational crimes.

The development reflects growing efforts by Nigerian security and enforcement institutions to address criminal networks that exploit weaknesses in border controls, financial monitoring and information-sharing systems to move illicit funds and facilitate organised crime.

Shuaibu said the mission was designed to improve the capacity of participating agencies to detect and disrupt cross-border illicit financial transactions, while assessing how Customs operations at border stations could support the broader anti-financial crime campaign.

"The sole objective of this mission is to effectively detect and disrupt cross-border illicit financial flows. The measures include field visits to selected border stations to assess practical Customs control measures and engage with relevant agencies," he said.

Delta pilgrims board commences distribution of forms, commends Oborevwori

AJUWA VICTOR

ASABA

The Delta State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board has commenced the distribution of application forms for the 2026 Christian pilgrimage to Israel and Jordan, with intending pilgrims required to submit completed forms on or before November 9, 2026.

The Board commended Governor Sheriff Oborevwori for approving and releasing funds for the pilgrimage and directing local government council chairmen across the state to sponsor additional pilgrims in support of the state government's efforts. The combined sponsorship commitment for this year's exercise is expected to exceed N2 billion.

These disclosures were made when the Board's Executive Secretary, Rev. Fr. Christopher Ekabo, JP, paid a courtesy visit to the Director-General of the Delta State Bureau for Orientation and Communications, Dr. Wilfred Latimore Oghenesivbe, Esq., at the Bureau's office in Asaba.

During the visit, Rev. Fr. Ekabo presented application forms to Dr. Oghenesivbe and announced his appointment as Head of Media for the 2026 pilgrimage to Israel and Jordan.

He said the appointment was unanimously approved by the Board in recognition of Oghenesivbe's competence, professional experience and commitment to strategic media management of local and international engagements. Oghenesivbe will be assisted by Eunice Emezia, a senior reporter with Voice of Delta Radio, Asaba.

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SPECIAL EDITION

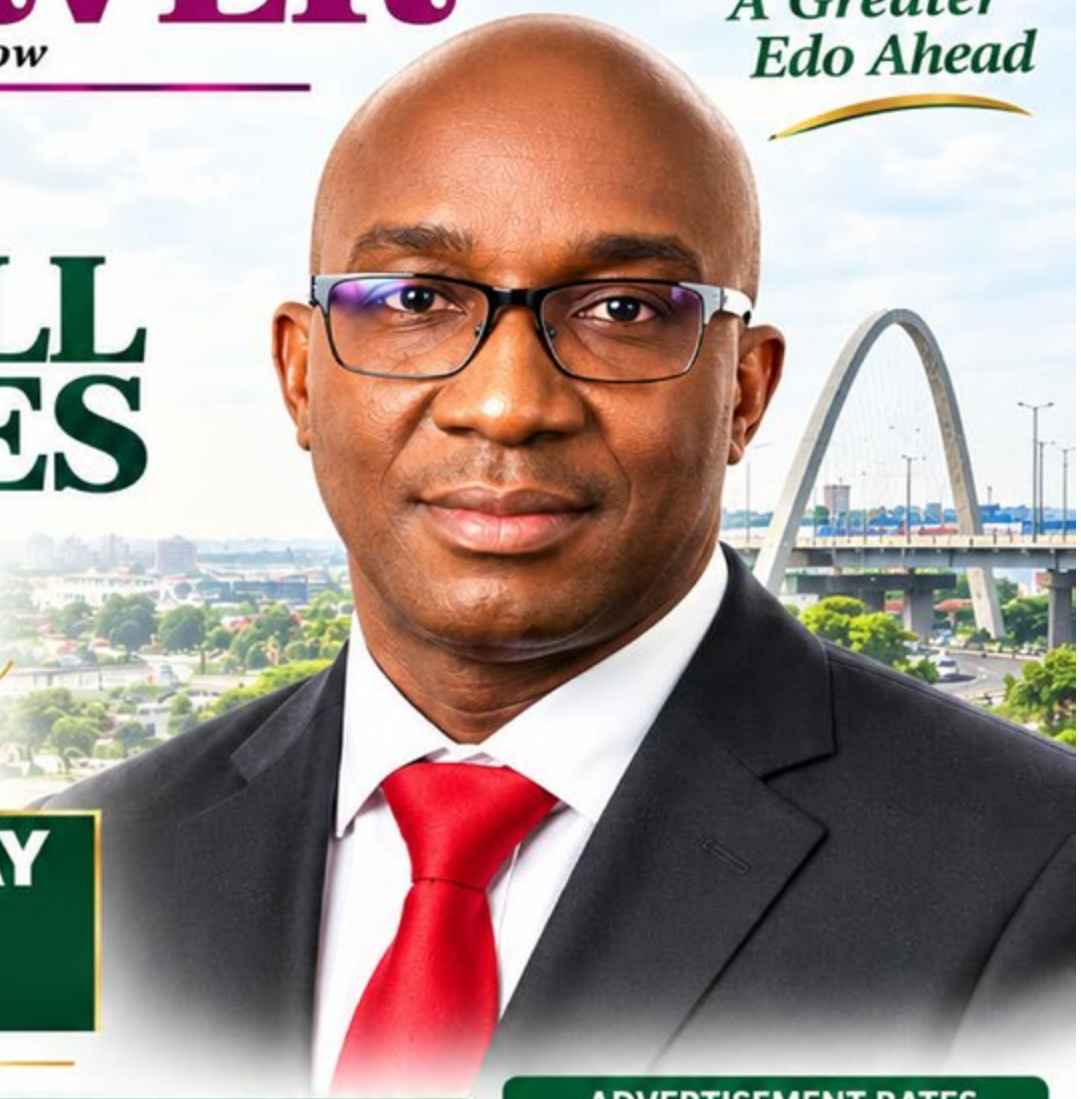
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IN COMMEMORATION OF THE

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EDO STATE



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NEWS

NLC can negotiate alone, Ajaero replies TUC president

LAGOS

The President of the Nigeria Labour Congress, Joe Ajaero, has insisted that the union has the authority to negotiate alone on labour matters, countering the position of his Trade Union Congress counterpart, Festus Osifo, that both labour centres must participate in such negotiations.

Ajaero said the TUC could negotiate alongside the NLC but could not independently negotiate with labour authorities, citing what he described as the principle of most workers' representatives under the International Labour Organisation.

He spoke on Monday while appearing as a guest on Channels Television's The Morning Brief, amid the disagreement between the two labour bodies over the N70,000 transport allowance approved by the Federal Government for workers across all levels for six months.

"TUC can negotiate along with NLC but NLC can negotiate alone based on the principle of most workers representatives of the ILO," the NLC president said.

Ajaero argued that the TUC was required to present its proposals to the NLC for onward submission when engaging with the ILO.

"TUC sent their negotiation alone ahead of the ILO conference but they returned it back and I had to minuted on it.

"They have to send their list here for me to forward it; that is the position of the ILO. NLC determines how TUC participates," he said.

He added that the Ministry of Labour and other labour authorities would not engage with the TUC independently on workers' welfare negotiations.

"TUC can't negotiate alone; if they are saying and it is implied, it does not happen. I don't think the Ministry of Labour or the Labour Authority will allow that to happen."

Responding to Osifo's claim that the TUC had a significant number of workers in the federal civil service, Ajaero cited the Trade Union Amendment Act 2005 and the 1999 Constitution, arguing that workers had the right to choose their unions.

"The 2005 Trade Union Amendment Act made membership of trade unions voluntary.

"It is the worker that determines the union he belongs to; the Act makes

"Section 40 of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as amended was clear that every Nigerian worker has the right to belong to any trade union, political or religious institution of his choice, which gives every worker the latitude to belong to any union of their choice," he said.

Ajaero also argued that Osifo's claim about the number of workers represented by the TUC did not reflect the composition of the Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council.

According to him, only one of the eight union bodies in the joint council belongs to the TUC, while the remaining seven are affiliated with the NLC.

He further argued that the TUC-affiliated union in the joint body had subjected its powers to the council.

Explaining how the N70,000 transport allowance agreement was reached, Ajaero said the NLC had issued an ultimatum to the Federal Government before the intervention was agreed upon.

"We gave government an ultimatum; we were supposed to start an action. The government asked for four days and to meet with us, and we met, and they resumed sitting after four days.

"After the meeting, the 70k allowance came up," he said.

The NLC president maintained that minimum wage demands could not be presented without the government first establishing a negotiation committee, adding that any wage increase required consultations involving labour leaders, government officials and employers.

Ebonyi Assembly pegs Presidential governorship billboards at N150m, to crackdown on illegal operators

Maxwell Okechukwu

ABAKALIKI

The Ebonyi State House of Assembly has passed a resolution directing the immediate termination of all existing contracts for political billboards and posters within the Abakaliki Capital City.

The House also resolved that the Commissioner for Capital City Development shall take over full enforcement and collection of all levies relating to political billboards and posters with immediate effect.

The resolution followed a Motion of Urgent Public Importance moved by the Chairman, House Committee on Capital City Development and Deputy Chief Whip, Hon. Arinze Lucas Chukwu.

Moving the motion, Hon. Arinze Lucas Chukwu representing Ishielu South Constituency expressed dismay over the indiscriminate pasting of political posters and erection of billboards on public buildings, electric poles, streetlights, bridges and fences across the capital city, describing the act as environmental pollution that defaces the aesthetic beauty of Abakaliki and deprives the State of Internally Generated Revenue.

He noted that the multiplicity of agencies laying claim to the collection of billboard levies has created confusion, revenue leakages and double taxation, stressing that extant laws empower the Commissioner for Capital City Development to regulate outdoor advertising within the capital territory.

According to the resolution, any political party, aspirant, group, organization or individual intending to mount billboards or paste posters within the capital city must pay the approved levies into a designated Government Revenue Account and obtain an official receipt before pasting:

It prescribed N150,000,000 for Presidential and Governorship billboards, while those of National Assembly is put at N20,000,000. State House of Assembly attracts N5,000,000.



TAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE:
From left: Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Dr Muttaqha Darma; Speaker, House of Representatives, Rep. Tajudeen Abass and the Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Housing and Habitat, Rep. Abdulmumin Jibrin, during a stakeholders conference on the proposed National Real Estate Regulatory Authority (NRERA) organized by the committee, in Abuja on Monday

FG introduces USSD code for loans covering food, solar, others

ABUJA

The Federal Government has introduced a USSD-based credit service designed to help Nigerians access consumer loans using basic mobile phones without requiring internet connectivity or smartphones.

The service, known as SPARK, was unveiled by the Nigerian Consumer Credit Corporation, also known as CREDICORP, to expand access to credit, particularly for first-time borrowers with limited or no formal credit history.

Interested Nigerians have been advised to watch for the service's wider rollout. *347*333# was unveiled as the USSD code for accessing SPARK, but the service is not yet confirmed to be fully operational nationwide.

CREDICORP said the product was expected to become more widely available before the end of 2026.

The initiative is designed to help borrowers establish repayment records that could improve their credit profiles and create opportunities to access further financial services.

What Nigerians can use CREDICORP credit for

CREDICORP's broader consumer credit programmes cover five thematic areas aimed at improving access to essential goods, household equipment and productive assets.

They include, Mobility: Compressed natural gas (CNG) and electric vehicles, Digital devices: Laptops, smartphones and tablets, Energy solutions: Generators and solar panels, Home improvement: Furniture, household appliances and building materials, and Life essentials: Healthcare, apparel, food and beverages.

These categories outline CREDICORP's broader consumer credit priorities. However, the available announcement does not confirm that all the listed goods and services can currently be financed through SPARK specifically.

The product was unveiled at CREDICORP's CREDICORP for All showcase in Aba, Abia State, where the corporation highlighted consumer credit opportunities for more than 1,000 residents.

The event brought together beneficiaries, participating financial institutions, local vendors and government representatives to demonstrate how consumer credit could support livelihoods and economic activities.

Activities included credit-access demonstrations for market women and traders, presentations on the YouthCred initiative for young Nigerians, and the showcasing of credit-backed tricycles for transport operators.

The event also featured locally assembled tricycles made available through CREDICORP's Securing Consumer Access for Local Enterprises initiative, known as S.C.A.L.E.

CREDICORP Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Uzoma Nwagba, said the initiative was intended to extend consumer credit beyond traditional financial institutions.

NUJ demands prosecution of journalists' attackers

ABUJA

The Nigeria Union of Journalists has called on the Federal Government, security agencies and other relevant institutions to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of attacks, harassment and unlawful detention of journalists in the country.

The union also urged the authorities to strengthen legal protections for media professionals and ensure that security agencies respect press freedom as a constitutional right.

The NUJ made the demands in a statement issued by its National President, Alhassan Yahya, on Monday to mark the 2026 International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists.

The union expressed concern over persistent intimidation, unlawful arrests, physical assaults, cyberbullying and other forms of violence against journalists in Nigeria and across the world.

It warned that the failure to hold perpetrators accountable created an atmosphere of fear among media professionals and undermined democratic accountability.

"Journalism remains the bedrock of any thriving democracy. It holds the powerful accountable, gives voice to the marginalised, and ensures the public's fundamental right to accurate information," the statement said.

The union added that impunity for crimes against journalists had serious consequences for democracy and the rule of law.

"The impunity that surrounds crimes committed against journalists creates a chilling effect on democratic discourse and weakens the rule of law," it said.

It warned that when perpetrators of violence against journalists faced no legal consequences, public trust in institutions was eroded, while self-censorship was encouraged.

The NUJ called for "thoroughly, independently, and transparently" investigating all reported cases of harassment, physical attacks and unlawful detention of journalists, insisting that those responsible must be brought to justice.

It also urged the government to enforce existing laws and legal protections against arbitrary arrests, censorship and the misuse of security regulations to intimidate media workers.

The statement further called on security agencies to recognise journalists as essential workers and partners in democratic governance rather than adversaries.

The union urged media organisations, civil society groups and international partners to collaborate in establishing safety protocols and emergency support networks, particularly for reporters working in high-risk environments.

It also appealed to human rights organisations and members of the public to support efforts to create an environment where journalists could perform their professional duties without fear or intimidation.

The NUJ said, "A threat to any journalist anywhere is a threat to democratic governance everywhere."

NEWS

NCDC confirms negative Ebola tests in 2 suspected Adamawa cases

ABUJA

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) says two suspected Ebola Virus Disease cases identified in Yola, Adamawa state, have tested negative following two rounds of laboratory testing.

Dr Jide Idris, NCDC Director-General, disclosed this in a statement, saying the agency was working with the Adamawa Government to investigate the reported cases.

Idris said the report was received by the Adamawa Public Health Emergency Operations Centre in the early hours of Oct. 30, following the identification of two individuals with symptoms suggestive of Ebola.

He explained that the individuals were immediately isolated, while samples were collected and appropriate public health measures initiated to determine the cause of their illnesses.

The NCDC director-general said laboratory results from two rounds of testing were negative for Ebola, confirming that there was currently no laboratory-confirmed case in Adamawa.

He commended the Adamawa Commissioner for Health and his team for their proactive response, assuring that the NCDC would continue to provide technical support to strengthen the state's response operations.

Idris also clarified that the previously confirmed case in the Federal Capital Territory, remained Nigeria's only laboratory-confirmed Ebola case.

He urged Nigerians to remain calm and avoid spreading unverified information or speculation, advising the public to rely on official government and public health communication channels.

The NCDC boss described Ebola as a serious infectious disease requiring prompt detection, appropriate clinical management and effective infection prevention and control measures.

He advised anyone experiencing symptoms such as fever, severe weakness, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea or unexplained bleeding to seek immediate medical attention.

Idris stressed that people experiencing such symptoms, particularly after possible exposure, should inform healthcare workers about relevant travel or contact history.

He also cautioned against self-medication, urging individuals to follow professional medical advice and guidance from public health authorities.

According to him, the NCDC, Adamawa Government and other relevant stakeholders will continue to monitore the situation and provide updates as verified information becomes available.

He reaffirmed the commitment of public health authorities to protecting Nigerians through early detection, evidence-based interventions, transparent communication and coordinated national response efforts.

Edo organizes free medical outreach, urges early disease detection

BENIN CITY

The Edo Government has organised a one-day free medical outreach, offering screening for high blood pressure, HIV/AIDS, syphilis, hepatitis B, tuberculosis (TB), blood sugar and malaria, as well as eye examinations, to promote preventive healthcare and early disease detection.

The exercise, held at the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Benin was aimed at encouraging residents to check their health status and seek prompt medical attention where necessary.

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Eugenia Abdallah, urged residents to take advantage of the outreach, stressing the importance of regular health checks and early detection of diseases.

Abdallah said the initiative aligned with the state government's SHINE Agenda, which seeks to ensure that women, men and children were not left behind in accessing essential services, including healthcare.

"Health is wealth. We want our people to be healthy, and we encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity," she said.

She urged residents not to ignore persistent symptoms or dismiss them without seeking medical advice, particularly when they could indicate an underlying health condition such as tuberculosis.

The commissioner also encouraged participants to share health information with their families and neighbours to increase awareness of preventive healthcare.

She thanked the volunteer medical personnel and partner organisations for supporting the exercise and called for more collaboration to sustain similar outreach programmes for the benefit of the community.

Speaking on behalf of the Braimoh Empowerment Foundation, Mr Braimoh Ahmed said the initiative was driven by the belief that good health remained essential to empowerment and community development.

"You cannot empower anybody that is not healthy. So the beginning of empowerment is health. It is those that are alive that you can empower," he said.

Ahmed said his siblings and him operate the foundation as a family initiative, adding that the outreach provided an opportunity to help residents identify health conditions and access appropriate care.

He said tuberculosis treatment is available free of charge, and that people diagnosed with the disease would be linked to treatment and followed up to support their recovery.

According to him, the foundation collaborates with other healthcare facilities, including public and private hospitals, to ensure that people who require further tests or treatment are referred for appropriate care.

The Executive Director of the Health Care and Support Initiative (HCSI), Sister Augustina Okoroafor, said people who tested positive for HIV would receive counselling, be linked to appropriate health facilities for treatment and receive follow-up support.

Okoroafor stressed that HIV test results are confidential, urging residents not to allow fear of stigma to prevent them from knowing their status or seeking medical care.

She explained that people diagnosed with HIV were supported through counselling and follow-up to encourage adherence to medication and help them maintain their health.

Two beneficiaries, Mrs Maria Uzorka and Mrs Oshanor Joy, commended the organisers for bringing the services closer to residents.

Uzorka said she underwent blood pressure, blood sugar, malaria and eye checks, adding that she appreciated the opportunity to assess her health without paying for the services.

Oshanor said her checks showed that she had no malaria and that her blood pressure and blood sugar readings were satisfactory. However, she was advised to seek further assessment for her eyes.

She urged the government to sustain such initiatives to enable more residents to access basic health checks.

NAN reports that the outreach, themed: "Your Health Is Our Priority", was organised by the Edo Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in collaboration with the Braimoh Empowerment Foundation and the Health Care and Support Initiative.



ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Lagos State Head of Service, Mr Bode Agoro; Chairman, Ikeja Local Government, Mr Akeem Dauda; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, Dr Omobolaji Gaji; Permanent Secretary, office of the Drainage Service, Ministry of Environment, Mr Mahmood Adegbite and others during the monthly environmental sanitation in Lagos on Saturday.

Expert seeks collaboration to tackle fake medicines

LAGOS

A Professor of Business Law and Ethics at James Hope University, Ehi Esoimeme, has called for stronger collaboration to tackle counterfeit medicines in Nigeria.

Esoimeme made the call at the investiture of Mrs Osita Chito, the 11th President of the Rotary Club of Abijo, Ibeju-Lekki, and the Board of Directors on Saturday in Lagos.

He described substandard and falsified medicines as a major public health challenge affecting developed and developing countries.

He said the menace placed enormous pressure on national medicines regulatory authorities.

According to him, unscrupulous manufacturers, importers and distributors deliberately target medicines with high consumption rates, particularly those used to treat diseases of public health importance.

"The targeted medicines include antimalarials, antibiotics, antihypertensive drugs, anti-diabetic agents and lifestyle medicines," he said.

The professor noted that the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control was intensifying efforts, alongside other countries, to curb the menace.

He stressed the need for appropriate training and awareness programmes to equip employees and other stakeholders with skills to identify and report unethical practices.

Esoimeme also identified whistleblowing as an important accountability mechanism, urging organisations to establish confidential channels for reporting suspicious activities.

He said effective whistleblowing systems should include dedicated telephone hotlines, email addresses and electronic platforms that allow anonymous reporting.

The professor further advocated collaboration among businesses, suppliers, professional bodies, non-governmental organisations, trade unions and regulatory institutions.

The newly installed president of the club, Rotarian Chito Osita, pledged to prioritise membership growth, strengthen support for The Rotary Foundation and re-engage former members during her 2026/2027 tenure.

Osita said her administration would focus on maternal and child healthcare, education, cancer screening, environmental protection, vocational skills development and community empowerment.

She listed proposed projects to include distributing maternal and nursing kits, prostate and cervical cancer screening, scholarships and support for external examinations.

Other initiatives include free medical check-ups in communities across Ibeju-Lekki, provision of boreholes, environmental sanitation and tree planting.

She also listed the renovation of a police station, youth leadership development and vocational training for women and young people.

Osita announced plans to visit the Badagry Correctional Centre, provide welfare materials to inmates and facilitate the release of eligible inmates.

She said the club had earmarked N48 million for the proposed projects.

Osita called on members, corporate organisations and other stakeholders to support the initiatives, stressing that their successful implementation required collective commitment.

Earlier, the Chairman of the Investiture Committee, Rotarian Walter Idundun, commended the outgoing president and board for their contributions to the club's growth and community service.

He urged members and partners to sustain their support for the club's humanitarian activities.

Idundun said the club's achievements should be measured not only by projects executed but also by lives transformed and positive changes created in communities.



NEWS

N8.2bn inadequate for 30 million PWDs — Experts

LAGOS

DISABILITY advocates, a journalist and a public finance analyst have described the N8.2bn allocated to issues affecting persons with disabilities in the 2026 Appropriation Act as grossly inadequate.

They warned that poor budget releases, vague allocations and corruption are undermining efforts to improve their welfare.

They made the observations on Sunday during an X Space titled "Nigeria Disability Budget Discussion," organised by PWDSpotlight in collaboration with BOFIM and BO News.

The moderator, Habeeb Adisa, who is also the Project Manager at PWDSpotlight, said the organisation's review of the 2026 Appropriation Act showed that N8.2bn was allocated to issues affecting persons with disabilities, estimated at more than 30 million nationwide.

Giving a breakdown of the allocation, Adisa said N2.0044bn was earmarked for awareness campaigns, programmes and policy development, representing the largest share, while skills acquisition received N1.413bn and construction N1.86bn.

He said the discussion was timely as the country approached the 2027 election cycle, when the performance of governments would come under increased scrutiny.

Speaking on the allocation, Blessing Oladunjoye of BOFIM and BO News said although N8.2bn might appear substantial, it was insufficient to address the needs of persons with disabilities, including inclusive education, healthcare, assistive devices and accessible transportation.

She said the amount would translate to about N273 per person, adding that persons with disabilities often incur additional expenses, such as paying for guides or hiring taxis, which should be considered in budget planning.

"When you think N8.2 billion, much. But in real terms, looking at what exactly they should address, you know that it's grossly inadequate," she said.

Oladunjoye argued that disability funding should not be the responsibility of a single agency, noting that infrastructure and public services, including roads, schools, elections and transportation, should be designed to accommodate persons with disabilities.

"We should understand that disability is a cross-cutting issue," she said.

She also urged journalists to monitor budget implementation by comparing approved allocations with actual releases and expenditure reports, while verifying government claims on the ground.



LESSER HAJJ:
Nigeria President, Bola Tinubu (R) with the Group Chief Executive Officer, Oando PLC, Mr Wale Tinubu (L) and Chairman of BUA Group, Alhaji Abdul Samad Rabiu (M), during the Lesser Hajj in Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Otti woos US investors to Abia

UMUAHIA

Governor Alex Otti of Abia State has concluded plans to bring investors, business leaders, policymakers, development partners, diplomatic representatives and entrepreneurs to the state to explore investment opportunities and strengthen commercial relations between Africa and the United States.

In a statement he signed and issued to newsmen on Sunday, the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Pastor Caleb Ajagba, disclosed that the Abia State Government had unveiled plans to attract American and other international investors to the state through the 2026 edition of the African Diaspora Conference and Expo, AFRICANDO, scheduled for this month.

Ajagba said, "AFRICANDO is a platform for translating international economic engagement into concrete investments and commercial partnerships. The state government is working with the organisers to ensure that the conference goes beyond speeches and networking to facilitate transactions, business agreements and sustainable investment."

According to him, the 2026 edition, with the theme, "Deepening U.S.–Africa Commercial Ties in the Era of AfCFTA," would connect investment opportunities in Abia and other African markets with American capital, technology, expertise and international distribution networks.

He added, "The African Continental Free Trade Area, AfCFTA, presents opportunities for African businesses to expand beyond their domestic markets, while international partnerships could help them improve production capacity and competitiveness.

"Abia is strategically positioned to benefit from the initiative because of its manufacturing and entrepreneurial base, particularly in Aba, which is known for indigenous manufacturing, commerce and craftsmanship."

Ajagba added that Otti's administration "is investing in infrastructure, strengthening public institutions and improving the business environment to position the state as a destination for private investment."

He explained that international delegates and prospective investors would be encouraged not only to attend conference sessions but also to visit strategic economic locations, manufacturing clusters, enterprises and government-backed projects to assess investment opportunities firsthand.

He said the approach was intended to give participants a practical understanding of the state's economic potential and create opportunities for direct engagement with local businesses and relevant government agencies.

"AFRICANDO 2026 is not exclusively an Abia event. It is an international economic platform being hosted in Abia State," he continued.

Scholars urge Lagos mosques to improve documentation, sanitation

LAGOS

Islamic scholars and experts have warned that poor documentation, weak governance and inadequate sanitation threaten the sustainability of some mosques in Lagos.

They gave the warning at the annual programme of the Mosque Guidance and Development Lagos Initiative (MGDLI), held in Lagos on Sunday.

The programme had the theme, "Building Better Mosques: Documentation, Good Governance and Hygiene Environment".

Prof. Saheed Timehin of the Department of Foreign Languages, Lagos State University (LASU), said "proper documentation, good governance and hygiene were essential for sustainable mosque development."

Delivering the keynote address, Timehin said "mosques must reflect Islamic values through transparency, accountability, cleanliness and responsible administration."

He said "many mosques lacked reliable records of their properties, finances, activities and membership, exposing them to disputes and possible loss of assets."

He urged "mosque leaders to preserve land titles, survey plans, waqf deeds and registration certificates to protect properties dedicated to Allah."

He also advocated written constitutions, meeting minutes, succession plans and maintenance records to promote institutional continuity.

On hygiene, Timehin urged "mosque managers to ensure regular cleaning of toilets, ablution areas, prayer halls and water tanks."

He called for "sanitation committees, cleaning schedules, dedicated budgets and proper waste management."

In his welcome address, Alhaji Musoddiq Adele-Sanni, Chairman of MGDLI, said "inadequate documentation exposed many Lagos mosques to demolition and unlawful sale."

Adele-Sanni said the initiative began during his tenure as Chairman of the Muslim Lawyers Association of Nigeria, following complaints about mosque demolitions across Lagos.

He said "investigations revealed that some mosque properties had been sold or demolished because donors failed to transfer legal ownership to the mosques."

Ondo kingdom plans medical outreach, others for monarch's 20th anniversary

AKURE

The Ondo Kingdom in Ondo State is set to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the coronation of its paramount ruler, Oba Victor Adesimbo Kiladejo, with a series of medical, cultural, educational and community development activities.

The celebrations, organised by the Ondo Development Committee, will feature a medical intervention tagged the 'Festival of Surgeries', cultural performances, an inter-school debate competition, a public lecture, an art exhibition, a golf tournament and the commissioning of legacy development projects.

The activities are expected to run until December 24, 2026, ahead of the annual Ekimogun Day Festival on December 26. The anniversary is themed, '20 Years of Unprecedented Peace and Development in Ondo Kingdom'.

According to a statement made available to PUNCH Online on Monday, a major highlight of the celebrations will be the conferment of traditional chieftaincy titles on two prominent Americans, media personality Sway Calloway and renowned American music industry executive and cultural advocate, Leila Steinberg, alongside other distinguished personalities.

"The ancient Ondo Kingdom in Ondo State is set to celebrate 20 years of the reign of its paramount ruler, the Osemawe of Ondo, Oba Victor Adesimbo Kiladejo, with an elaborate programme of cultural, medical, educational and community development activities.

"The celebrations, organised by the Ondo Development Committee (ODC), will feature a major medical intervention tagged the 'Festival of Surgeries', cultural performances, an inter-school debate competition, a public lecture, an art exhibition, a golf tournament and the commissioning of legacy development projects.

"The activities, which are expected to run until December 24, 2026, will culminate in the annual Ekimogun Day Festival on December 26, providing an opportunity for indigenes, residents and friends of the kingdom to celebrate its rich cultural heritage and reflect on its development trajectory.

"The anniversary is themed, '20 Years of Unprecedented Peace and Development in Ondo Kingdom'", the statement partly read.

It added that the former Vice-Chancellor of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Professor Femi Mimiko, who is the High Chief Lisa-elect of Ondo Kingdom, is chairman of the committee organising the anniversary.

"A major highlight of the celebrations will be the conferment of traditional chieftaincy titles on two prominent Americans, media personality, Sway Calloway, and renowned American music industry executive and cultural advocate, Leila Steinberg, alongside other distinguished personalities.

"The two Americans will receive the traditional honours in recognition of their accomplishments and contributions, while deserving sons and daughters of Ondo Kingdom will also be recognised for achievements that have brought honour to the ancient kingdom.

CHANGE OF NAME/ ADDITION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **MISS. ALONGE LINDA** and **MRS. IREDIA LINDA OSATOHANMWEN**. are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. IREDIA LINDA OSATOHANMWEN**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OGUWUIKE PEPERTUA CHISARA**. Now wish to be known and Addressed as **BELLO - ODINANKARU PEPERTUA CHISARA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **LUCKY CHARITY**, **OSAGIE CHARITY**, and **UWAIFO CHARITY** are one and the person henceforth now wish to be known and Addressed as **LUCKY CHARITY**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

REMOVEAL OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **ERIAMIATOE OTANIYEN**. and **ERIAMIATOE MATTHEW OTANIYEN**. are one the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addressed as **ERIAMIATOE OTANIYEN**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **ONYENEKUNUM SUNDAY**. and **ONYENEKUNUM CHINEDU SUNDAY**. are one and the same person. Henceforth now wish to be known and Addressed as **ONYENEKUNUM SUNDAY**. All former document remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

RECONCILIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **IYAYIKE NOGIE**. and **DANIEL NOSA**. are one and the same person. Henceforth now wish to be known and Addressed as **DANIEL NOSA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

REARRANGEMENT OF NAME

I formerly known as **IDOYE MITCHELLE AMAKA**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **IDOYE MITCHELLE**. All former documents remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OGHENETEGA FAITH**. now wish to be known and addressed as **EDO FAITH**. all former documen remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION REARRANGEMENT OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **EHIKIOYA ITOHAN RITA**. And **OJEMEN RITE**. are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and Addressed as **EHIKIOYA ITOHAN RITA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **IDOYE MITCHELLE AMAKA**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **IDOYE MITCHELLE**. All former documents remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME/ CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH

I formerly known as **AYEWAH PROGRESS OSETOHAMEN**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **AYEWAH PRECIOUS OTIBHOR**. And also my correct date of birth is 4th day of January 2003. and not 1st day of January 1998. as was wrongly captured on my (N.I.N). All former documents remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

BOX FOR SALE

MISSING LAND DOCUMENT

The general public is hereby notified that I, **EKEMENA ERUAGA OKPAKOWWOKO** am the Transferor under a Deed of Transfer executed on 28/09/26 between myself and **IRENUMA CHARLES IDEMUDIA**, the Transferee regarding a property, lying, situate and properly described as No. 25 Oghewe Street, off Siluko Road, Benin City, Edo State, consisting of a four flats building on a parcel of land, measuring 50ft by 100ft.The property devolved on me through inheritance from my late father, Mr. **ISREAL UDUOPHORI OKPAKOWWOKO**

Pursuant to a family resolution and sharing formula on 15/01/26, the property was allocated to me and I subsequently transferred my interest in the said property to **IRENUMA CHARLES IDEMUDIA**, through the Deed of Transfer.

The Original Land Documents(Deed of Transfer and Land Approval) got missing on 27/11/14, in Benin City, Edo State as a result of relocation and all efforts to recover it has proved abortive, hence this publication for record purposes.

The general public and concerned authorities should please take note.

Signed:
EKEMENA ERUAGA OKPAKOWWOKO

LEGAL NOTICE

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and at the place stated in the column; AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. **PRPF. EMMANUEL OSAMWONYI OSAZUWA**, late of Ugo-Niyekeorhionmwon, Orhionmwon L.G.A., who died on the 25th day of July, 2025 in Benin City.	**PED/687/2026** Mrs. Esther Osayomore Osazuwa and Mr. Imade Wilfred Uwagboe of No 19, Omomagiowawi Street, Evbareke Quarters, Benin City, widow and Cousin respectively of the deceased.

DATED THIS 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

LEGAL NOTICE

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died testate on the date and at the place stated in the column; AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. **PRINCE. GODSWILL SHAKA MOMODU**, late of Irrua, Esan Central L.G.A., who died on the 2nd day of April, 1982 in Irrua.	PED/910/2018 Mackor Macaulay Shaka-Momodu, Mr. Eseimuede Shaka Momodu, Mr. Victor Shaka Momodu, Mr Kingsley Shaka-Momodu and Mr. Kennedy Shaka Momodu of No 1, Shaka Momodu Road, Eguare, Irrua, Edo State, sons of the deceased.

DATED THIS 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

LEGAL NOTICE

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and at the place stated in the column; AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. **MR. JOHN OCHUKO OKORO**, late of Ogbe-Udu, Udu L.G.A., Delta State, who died on the 1st day of April, 2026 in Benin City.	**PED/704/2026** Mrs. Tina Oshovwiyo Okoro, Mrs. Joyce Onajomo Okafor and Mrs. Oghenerukevwe Nora Chukwuka of No 50, Sophia Street, Ovbiogie Community, Benin City, widow and daughters respectively of the deceased.

DATED THIS 30th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

LEGAL NOTICE

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and at the place stated in the column; AND WHEREAS the persons whose names, addresses and claimed relationship to the deceased are set in the second column hereunder have applied to the Probate Registrar, High Court of Justice, Edo State of Nigeria for a grant of Letters of Administration of the real and personal property of the deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless a NOTICE to prohibit the grant is filed in this Registry within Twenty-One (21) days from the date of the publication of this notice.

1. **MR. SAMUEL GBENGA MORENIKEJI**, late of Kajola, Ewekoro L.G.A., Ogun State, who died on the 13th day of April, 2026 in Ugbowo.	**PED/527/2026** Madam. Blessing Osasuwen Imahenakhue and Mr. Hope Monday Omoruyi of No 1, Ajana Street, Off Ohonre Road, Adolor, Benin City, widow and family friend respectively of the deceased.

DATED THIS 30th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

B. O. OSAWARU ESQ.
Probate Registrar

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **MR. ASEMIEN RALPH MOORE OMHAN**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **MR. OSEMIEN AMAYO RALPH MOORE OMHAN**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF FIRST NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **ABEL UWA**. and **ABEL OKO - OBOH UWA**. are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addressed as **ABEL OKO - OBOH UWA**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that my correct name is **ATOTOBOH HAPPY POWETEI**. and not **HAPPY GOOD**. as was wrongly captured on my (B.V.N). All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **ADU JUSTINA**. now wish to be known and addressed as **JUSTINA UKPEIGBE**. all former documents remain valid concern authorities and the general public should please take note.

REMOVAL OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **EHIGIEGBA EMWANTA**. and **EHIGIEGBA OMIS EMWANTA**. are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addressed as **EHIGIEGBA EMWANTA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

REARRANGEMENT AND RECONCELIATION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **OSAGIE AIMUFUA**. and **SAMUEL OSAGIE AIMUFUA** are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addressed as **SAMUEL OSAGIE AIMUFUA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME

I formerly known as **OSA - IRUGHE EFE BRIANNA** now wish to be known and addressed as **OSA - IRUGHE EFE BRIANNA LAYLA**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **CHRISTOPHER. ONOME IGHOSOTU** and **CHRISTOPHER ONOME IGHOSOTU - ODEH**. are one and the same person henceforth now wish to be known and addtessed as **CHRISTOPHER ONOME IGHOSOTU**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **MISS. IGHEDOSA JULIET OFURE**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. DICKSON JULIET OFURE**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **MELE - DIARE OYOWOLI CHARITY**. now wish to be known and addressed as **OSEMWEGIE OYOWOLI CHARITY**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF MIDDLE NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **OGBEIFUN OSAGIE ENDURANCE**. and **OGBEIFUN OSAGIE EDDY**. are one the same person henceforth now wish to be known and Addressed as **OGBEIFUN OSAGIE EDDY**. all former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **OSAMUYI AISOSA GOODNEWS**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **OSAMUYI AISOSA GOODNESS**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **DR. SOLOMON SEFFIA WHIWHU**. Now wish to be known and Addressed as **DR. SOLOMON SEFFIA WILLIAMS**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **MISS. IYAMU JOY AGHONGHON**. Now wish to be known and Addressed as **MRS. ASORO JOY AGHONGHON**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **MISS. EGUAKHIDE EBANEHITA JOY**. Now wish to be known and Addressed as **MRS. EMMANUEL JOY EBANEHITA**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known as **EKENE. KINGSLEY CALLISTUS**. Now wish to be known and Addressed as **EKENE KINGSLEY OKEZUONU**. All former documents remain valid concern Authorities and the general public should please take note.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI) CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNDER THE NIGERIA CLIMATE ADAPTATION – EROSION AND WATERSHED PROJECT (NEWMAP-EIB) EDO STATE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

Reference No.: NEWMAP-EIB/ED/PMU/2026/001
Client/Procuring Entity: Edo State NEWMAP-EIB
Project: Consultancy Services
Location: Edo State

1. INTRODUCTION
The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), through the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv.) has received a credit from the European Investment Bank (EIB) towards the cost of Nigeria Climate Adaptation Erosion and Watershed Project – EIB (NEWMAP-EIB). Edo State is a beneficiary of the Credit and now intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Consultancy Services for Engineering Designs for Civil Works.
Accordingly, the Edo State SPIU invites qualified, experienced and reputable consulting firms, consulting organizations, consortia and/or joint ventures to express their Interest in providing the consultancy services described under the Lots below;

SCOPE OF SERVICES

SN	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES
1.	Consultancy Services for Engineering Designs for Civil Works.

A firm can only apply to be shortlisted once either as a single entity or as a member of JV or consortium.

2. SHORTLISTING/MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CRITERIA
Interested consulting firms must demonstrate relevant institutional experience, technical capacity and availability of qualified multidisciplinary personnel. The following criteria shall apply, as relevant to this assignment for which the firm expresses interest:

- Proven experience in the preparation of engineering designs for civil works of similar nature, complexity and scale, in accordance with applicable legislation, recognized engineering standards, the approved Terms of Reference and the Employer's Requirements.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting or coordinating relevant engineering investigations and assessments, including topographical surveys, geotechnical investigations, hydrological and hydraulic assessments, and erosion or flood-risk assessments, as applicable to the assignment.
- Demonstrated capacity to develop technically sound and constructible engineering solutions, including detailed engineering drawings, design calculations, technical specifications, bills of quantities, cost estimates and other design deliverables required under the Terms of Reference.
- Demonstrated capacity to integrate environmental, social, health and safety, climate-resilience and sustainability considerations into engineering design, as applicable to the assignment.
- Demonstrated experience in multidisciplinary design coordination, technical quality assurance, identification and mitigation of design risks, and compliance with applicable engineering standards and project requirements.
- Demonstrated capacity to review and incorporate the Employer's comments and recommendations, revise design deliverables where necessary, and submit complete and coordinated final designs suitable for the intended procurement and construction stages.

3. SHORTLISTING AND MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CRITERIA
Interested consultants/firms are to submit an Expression of Interest containing below Mandatory requirement:

- Evidence of Company's registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) or equivalent in the country of incorporation.
- Evidence of the company's Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years (2023, 2024 and 2025).
- Company's audited account for the last three years (2023, 2024 and 2025) duly stamped.
- Evidence of Registration with State Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) 2026 or equivalent at national level or in the country of incorporation.
- Well detailed company profile with managerial and technical structure, office address and functional contact details including staff list with functions and years of experience and years with firm.
- For joint ventures, a draft memorandum of understanding must be attached.
- Evidence of experience as required for the qualification criteria for the lot under consideration inclusive of Client contact details.

3. The attention of interested consultants(s) is drawn to section I sub-section 1.5 of Guide to procurement for projects financed by EIB September 2024, setting forth the bank's policy on conflict of interest.
4. Following the shortlisting of qualified consultants based on the information submitted in response to this REOI, the shortlisted consultants will be invited to submit a technical and financial proposal in the next stage and subsequently evaluated and the successful consultant selected in accordance with the Consultant Qualification Selection (CQS) method or other methods as appropriately set out in the applicable procurement regulations.
5. Requests for proposals will be issued to only shortlisted applicant.
6. Interested eligible consulting firms may obtain further information from the State Project Coordinator (SPC) Edo State NEWMAP-EIB, State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) during office working days/hours from 0900 to 1600 at the address stated below.

Office Address: 5th Floor, Block D, Secretariat Complex, Sapele Road, Benin City
NOTE:

- The EOI should focus on demonstrating the consultant's qualifications and experience.
- A consulting firm may express interest in this assignment subject to the applicable procurement strategy. The firm shall demonstrate adequate technical, managerial, staffing and logistical capacity to undertake the assignment.
- Contact the Project office through email (procurementedonewmapeib@gmail.com) for EOI Submission Form.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SHORTLISTING OF CONSULTANTS – REOI

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1	General relevant Experiences of the Firm/Consultant	15
2	Specific experience in similar assignment	35
3	Donor Funded/WB/EIB/International development Projects Experience	10
4	Technical and Institutional capacity	15
5	Geographical/Contextual Experience	10
6	Availability and Suitability of resources	5
7	Experience in Managing Multidisciplinary/Integrated Assignments	10
		TOTAL100

4. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Expressions of Interest (One Original and Two Copies) should be clearly marked with the title and Ref number and submitted to:
The State Project Coordinator,
Edo State NEWMAP-EIB
5th Floor, Block D, Secretariat Complex, Sapele Road, Benin City
Email: procurementedonewmapeib@gmail.com

Closing Date: 4th December 2026
Closing Time: 12:00 Noon

Only shortlisted consultants/firms will be invited.

Signed
Project Procurement Officer

OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

KING'S SQUARE, P.M.B. 1052, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.

Our Ref: ABC 1501/47 *Date:* 26th October, 2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER

1.0 INTRODUCTION
Oredo Local Government Council intends to apply part of its approved budgetary provision for the fiscal year 2026 to cover eligible payments for contracts to be procured under this budget. Bidding is open to all eligible bidders in line with Part IV, Section 35 of the Edo State Public Procurement Law 2020 and EDPPA's *Procurement Guidelines (current edition)* **Bidders are advised to note the following minimum criteria to qualify for the award of the contract.**

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK
Oredo Local Government Council now invites bid(s) for civil works as described in the table below:

Bidding No.	Project Description	Scope of Work
ABI922/98	Construction of Ultra Modern Health Center in Ward 3 Oredo Local Government Area.	Site clearing, Removal of Trees, Shrubs, Demolition of existing ,dilapidated structure of temporary fencing, construction building with blocks, reinforced concrete, roofing, installation of doors, windows, rendering, electrical fitting and finishing plumbering installation
ABC1501/46	Construction of Modern Shopping Complex at Ogiso Market (Block A)	Site clearing ,Removal of Shades, Temporary structure, clearing of debris temporary fencing of site, construction of main building with blocks reinforced concrete floor reinforced concrete slab, Roofing, installation of doors , rendering, electrical fittings, finishing-floor tiles and staircase.
ABC1500/48	Construction of Modern Shopping Complex at Ogiso Market (Block B)	Site clearing ,Removal of Shades, Temporary structure, clearing of debris temporary fencing of site, construction of main building with blocks reinforced concrete floor reinforced concrete slab, Roofing, installation of doors , rendering, electrical fittings, finishing-floor tiles and staircase.
ABC1499/47	Construction of Modern Shopping Complex at Ogiso Market (Block C)	Site clearing ,Removal of Shades, Temporary structure, clearing of debris temporary fencing of site, construction of main building with blocks reinforced concrete floor reinforced concrete slab, Roofing, installation of doors , rendering, electrical fittings, finishing-floor tiles and staircase.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
You are required to submit a detailed profile which should contain the following:

a. Certificate of incorporation/registration with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)
b. Evidence of registration with Edo State Public Procurement Agency.
c. Evidence of payment of tax by the company for the immediate past 3 years (i.e. 2023, 2024, 2025)
d. Company's audited financial account (indicating turnover) and funding information over the past 3 years endorsed by a firm of chartered accountants.
e. Company Profile including names of Partners, Director(s), or if it is Private Limited Company (names of Shareholders and Beneficial Owners to that company); organization structure, key professional staff with their names and registration with appropriate regulatory bodies (COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON, etc.) with their current practicing license
f. Evidence of previous/similar work done in the past three (3) years showing the following:
   I. Letter of Award of the previous work done.
   II. Completion certificate obtained from previous work done.
g. A sworn affidavit indicating that:
   i. None of the Directors of the Company has been convicted in any court for any criminal offence including fraud and financial impropriety.
   ii. The Company is not in receivership, insolvent or bankrupt.
   iii. No officer of Oredo Local Government is a former or present Director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the company.
   iv. No Staff of Oredo Local Government should be involved in illegal activity.
h. Bid security of 1% of the Contract sum for each of the projects.

i. All documents for submission must be transmitted with a covering letter on the company's letter head paper bearing all necessary details:

i. Equipment and technology capacity if applicable, with evidence of ownership or lease.
ii. Letter of consent to allow verification of documents submitted.
iii. Evidence of payment of a non-refundable tender fee of **N100,000.00 only**

4.0 COLLECTION/SUBMISSION OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS
Bidding documents may be collected from the **Department of Public Procurement, Oredo Local Government Council Benin City** from 27th **October to 13th November, 2026** between the hours of 8.00am and 3.00pm on Mondays to Fridays, except on public holidays for a non-refundable tender fee of **₦100,000.00** payable only to Oredo Local Government Allocation Account **Account Number: 1023650452 U.B.A Bank**. Bidding documents shall be submitted duly signed by bidders in two separate sealed envelopes marked **"Technical Bid" and "Financial Bid"** Against the bided project title at the right top corner of the envelopes.
The two envelopes are to be placed in one large envelope and address to:

The Chairman
Oredo Local Government Council,
Kings Square,
Benin City, Edo State.

5.0 OPENING OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS
Bids must be submitted to the **Oredo Local Government's Tenders Board** as detailed in the bidding documents on or before **11:59am on 13th November, 2026** and the bids will be opened on the same day at **12:00pm** at the Oredo Local Government Council Secretariat, Conference Hall Benin City, in the presence of the bidders' representatives and Civil Society Organizations (with mandate of ensuring transparency and accountability) who wishes to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of the receipt and opening as specified, the bids will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time and location.

6.0 NOTE:
i. Late submission will be rejected
ii. This invitation shall not be construed to be commitment on the part of Procuring Entity for contract award nor shall it entitle the bidder to make any claims whatever and seek indemnity from the Agency by virtue of having responded to this advertisement.

7.0 Other details can be seen in the bidding document.

Engr, Emmanuel Ibhadode
HOLGA,
Oredo Local Government Council.
For,
Executive Chairman,
Oredo Local Government Council,
Benin City.

NEWS

Civil servants defend ₦70,000 allowance deal, say TUC opposition won't stop implementation

AGHEDO IYOBOR

ABUJA

Civil servants under the Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council (JNPSNC) have defended the N70,000 monthly transportation allowance agreement reached between the Federal Government and organised labour, insisting that the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria's (TUC) rejection of the deal will not affect its implementation

The council also disclosed key provisions of the agreement, including the six-month payment of the allowance, implementation of the 40 per cent peculiar allowance, settlement of 19 months' arrears of health workers' allowances and proposed salary adjustments in the health sector.

The position was contained in a circular signed by the council's National Secretary, Comrade Gbenga Olowoyo, and addressed to national presidents and general secretaries of affiliated unions, as well as state chairmen and secretaries of the councils nationwide.

According to the circular, the agreement was signed on October 27, 2026, after more than six hours of negotiations involving the Federal Government, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), JNPSNC and the Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU).

Under the agreement, public servants will receive N70,000 monthly as transportation allowance for six months, beginning from November 2026, to cushion the effects of rising transportation costs.

The council explained that the allowance was designed to ease the financial burden of transportation on workers.

It also confirmed that the agreement provided for the implementation of the 40 per cent peculiar allowance, which ought to have taken effect in July 2024 alongside the 2024 National Minimum Wage.



INAUGURATION:
Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa Flanked by comrade Okubo Robert, Special Adviser on Riverian Communities(Left), Comrade Emmanuel Ogbomo(2nd Left) chairman APC Ovia South West and Rt. Hon. Sunday Aghedo (Right) Member Edo State House of Assembly as he addresses the Newly Inaugurated members of Ovia South East Presidential Election Campaign Council at Iguobazuwa. Photo: Moses Oboh

Tinubu urges Nigerians to turn adversity into national prosperity

FAITH OSEMUDIAMHEN

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu has urged Nigerians to transform the country's diversity into an instrument of national prosperity, unity, peace and sustainable development.

Tinubu made the appeal on Sunday in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, while hosting members of his delegation to a dinner.

He prayed to Almighty Allah to bless Nigeria, guide its leaders and protect citizens at home and abroad.

"May Almighty Allah bless Nigeria, convert our diversity into prosperity as a country," the President said.

He also called for stronger bonds of brotherhood, patriotism and compassion, expressing confidence in Nigerians' collective ability to overcome the country's challenges.

Tinubu noted that Nigeria's abundant human and natural resources, coupled with its diverse talents and entrepreneurial spirit, provided a solid foundation for inclusive growth and development.

Speaking at the dinner, Kwara State Governor and Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, commended the President's commitment to national development.

He pledged the continued prayers and support of state governors for the President and his administration, while seeking divine guidance and strength for him.

"Only Allah can reward you; we will continue to pray for you daily and pray for Nigeria that you lead.

"May Allah continue to strengthen you in making the right decisions, strengthen your wisdom, your boldness, your audacity and your courage.

"May Allah lead you to the right path," AbdulRazaq said.

Similarly, Chairman of BUA Group, Alhaji Abdulsamad Rabiu, described the gathering as an opportunity to pray for Nigeria's peace, unity and prosperity.

He pledged continued support for the administration, describing Tinubu as passionate about the country's progress.

"We will continue to support His Excellency in whatever capacity we can.

"As you all know, Mr President is very passionate about the country. He is working very hard, and we will continue to support him," Rabiu said.

The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi (SAN), also offered prayers for divine strength and guidance for the President, expressing hope that he would continue to deliver justice and good governance to Nigerians.

Other dignitaries at the dinner included Yobe State Governor, Mai Mala Buni; Kaduna State Governor, Uba Sani; Jigawa State Governor, Mohammed Namadi; Sokoto State Governor, Ahmed Aliyu; and Borno State Governor, Babagana Zulum.

Also present were National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu; Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Ali Pate; Oando Chief Executive Officer, Wale Tinubu; Presidential Political Adviser, Ibrahim Masari; and Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila.

INEC sets up AI unit, deploys ChatGPT to tackle election disinformation ahead of 2027

CAROLINE AMEH

ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, has established a dedicated Artificial Intelligence unit and begun deploying ChatGPT as part of efforts to combat AI-driven disinformation and protect the integrity of the 2027 general elections.

INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, SAN, disclosed this at the National Summit on Electoral Information Integrity in Abuja, warning that artificial intelligence had created new threats capable of undermining elections long before voters arrive at polling units.

The summit, themed Beyond the Ballot: AI, FIMI and the Integrity of the Nigerian 2027 Elections, brought together election officials, media executives, security agencies, civil society organisations and technology stakeholders.

Amupitan said the Commission was strengthening its technological and institutional capacity to prevent malicious actors from using AI to impersonate election officials, circulate fake results, fabricate election directives and manipulate public opinion.

"Today, elections can be undermined long before the first ballot is cast," he said.

Labour crisis deepens as TUC disowns ₦70,000 allowance deal

AKAHOMEN MIRACLE

ABUJA

The President of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), Festus Osifo, has criticised the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) for negotiating salaries and allowances on behalf of Nigerian workers without the involvement or consultation of the TUC.

Osifo described the agreement on the N70,000 transport allowance recently approved by President Bola Tinubu as an aberration, insisting that the NLC has no authority to negotiate on behalf of the TUC or its affiliates.

He spoke on Monday during an appearance on Channels Television's The Morning Brief, amid growing disagreements between the two labour centres over negotiations with the Federal Government.

Expressing disappointment with the position of NLC President, Joe Ajaero, Osifo lamented what he described as a decline in the quality of leadership within the labour movement.

"Listening to Ajaero again today, I really pity the labour movement and the quality of leaders that have been inflicted in the NLC," he said.

He added: "As I listened to Ajaero today, I was wondering if it is the same NLC that produced the likes of Adams Oshiomhole, Hassan Sunmonu, Ayuba Wabba and others."

Osifo challenged Ajaero to produce any International Labour Organisation (ILO) regulation authorising one labour centre to negotiate on behalf of another without its involvement.

"There is nowhere in ILO regulations that says a trade centre can negotiate for another. It is not there! It is just that if you are going to the ILO, it is tripartite — labour, government and employers," he said.

He maintained that both labour centres must participate in negotiations affecting their respective members, noting that although the NLC has more affiliated unions, the TUC also represents a substantial number of workers.

"We are not contesting the fact that the NLC has more affiliates. But what we are saying is that you have about 60 affiliates while we have about 40. You cannot negotiate for a body that has trade unions of its own. It is not anywhere in the regulations," he said.

Tinubu orders EFCC to monitor FAAC funds to states, LGs

IGUNBOR GODWIN

ABUJA

President Bola Tinubu has directed the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to monitor Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) funds distributed to Nigeria's 36 states and 774 local government areas to strengthen financial accountability and prevent the misuse of public resources. The directive, announced on Wednesday, October 28, 2026, is aimed at ensuring that monthly allocations are properly utilised for development projects and essential services across the country.

The move comes amid growing concerns over the management of increased federal allocations following the removal of petrol subsidies and the government's foreign exchange reforms. The administration wants Nigerians to see tangible improvements in infrastructure, healthcare, education and other public services.

Under the proposed arrangement, the EFCC is expected to scrutinise how state and local governments receive and spend their allocations, with particular attention to suspicious transactions, questionable contracts, diversion of public funds and other financial irregularities.

The anti-graft agency is also expected to collaborate with relevant government institutions responsible for public finance and accountability to strengthen oversight and ensure that allocated resources are properly accounted for.

INSIDE **EDO STATE**

Over 1,000 women march for Tinubu, Okpebholo as United Amazon Prime inaugurates Uhunmwode ward coordinators

Ogiehor Ehis Tornado



MEMBERS OF UNITED AMAZON PRIME

More than 1,000 women from across Uhunmwode Local Government Area of Edo State have demonstrated their support for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's re-election bid and the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo in a massive solidarity march that underscored the growing role of women in grassroots political mobilisation.

The colourful march, which took place on October 30, 2026, formed part of activities marking the inauguration of ward coordinators and executives of the United Amazon Prime Initiative, Uhunmwode Chapter.

The event attracted political leaders, government functionaries, women leaders, party faithful and other stakeholders, who converged on the local government area to witness what organisers described as a significant step towards strengthening women's participation in politics and governance.

The procession, which assumed the character of a carnival, commenced at the popular Idokpa Bypass along the Benin-Auchi Road. Led by the President and Founder of the United Amazon Prime Initiative, Mrs Anita Iyare, the enthusiastic women marched through Eyean Primary School and adjoining communities before returning to the Oasis Hotel field, venue of the inauguration ceremony.

Displaying solidarity through songs, banners, chants and coordinated participation, the women reaffirmed their commitment to supporting President Tinubu and Governor Okpebholo while pledging to strengthen the political influence of women at the grassroots.

The mobilisation also provided an opportunity for the participants to demonstrate their readiness to play more active roles in community development, political sensitisation and the promotion of inclusive governance.

A major highlight of the occasion was the presentation of the prestigious "He for She Award" to the Executive Chairman of Uhunmwode Local Government Council, Hon. Austin Imafidon, popularly known as ISIWINA, who was recognised as the Most Gender Responsive Chairman of the Year.

The award was in recognition of his support for women, commitment to gender inclusion and encouragement of initiatives aimed at advancing women's empowerment and participation in public affairs.

Receiving the recognition, the chairman reaffirmed the importance of creating opportunities for women to contribute meaningfully to governance and community development. He also acknowledged the strategic importance of women in grassroots mobilisation and the political development of the local government area.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Uhunmwode Local Government Area, Rt. Hon. Osawe Osayemwere, commended the organisers for their initiative, describing the impressive turnout as evidence of the willingness of women to become more actively involved in the political process.

He expressed confidence in the capacity of the United Amazon Prime Initiative to mobilise support for President Tinubu and strengthen the APC's grassroots presence across the local government area.

Osayemwere further expressed optimism that Uhunmwode would contribute meaningfully to the political support base being built for the President, particularly in relation to the 2.5 million votes target announced by Governor Okpebholo.

He urged the newly inaugurated coordinators and executives to see their appointments as a call to service and remain committed to the objectives of the initiative.

The inauguration ceremony featured an oath-taking exercise coordinated by Hon. Billy Osawaru Adesuwa, Member representing the constituency in the House of Representatives.

Following the oath-taking, Mrs Anita Iyare formally inaugurated the ward coordinators and other executives of the Uhunmwode Chapter, charging them to demonstrate dedication, discipline, unity and commitment in the discharge of their responsibilities.



CHAIRMAN OF UHUNMWODE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, HON. AUSTIN IMAFIDON BEING PRESENTED WITH AN AWARD

She urged the newly inaugurated officers to take the message of the initiative to every ward, community and household, stressing that the success of the organisation would depend largely on their ability to sustain effective grassroots engagement.

Iyare also emphasised the need for women to move beyond political participation during election periods and become active stakeholders in decision-making, leadership development and community advancement.

According to her, the United Amazon Prime Initiative is committed to providing a platform through which women can organise, contribute to political development and support programmes that improve their economic and social well-being.

Another significant feature of the gathering was the financial support announced by political leaders and other stakeholders to strengthen the initiative and advance its empowerment objectives.

Hon. Austin Imafidon made the highest individual pledge of N1 million as an empowerment grant for the women.

Hon. Billy Osawaru Adesuwa and Hon. Kaycee Osamwonyi, a member of the Edo State House of Assembly, each donated N500,000.

Similarly, Rt. Hon. Osawe Osayemwere and Ms. Ivie Idahosa contributed N250,000 each, while the Speaker of the Legislative Arm, Rt. Hon. Moses Igbinoba, donated N200,000.

Other contributors included Hon. Osarenren Lawson and Dr. Filomina Erio, who each donated N100,000.

The contributions amounted to N2.9 million, representing a demonstration of financial and moral support from political stakeholders for the initiative and its proposed programmes.

The financial commitments were particularly significant against the backdrop of growing calls for greater economic empowerment of women and the need to provide them with the resources and opportunities to participate effectively in political and community activities.

The event ended on a jubilant note, with participants expressing satisfaction with the successful inauguration and renewed determination to sustain the initiative's activities across the 10 wards of Uhunmwode Local Government Area.

Beyond the colourful procession and political declarations, the gathering highlighted the increasing importance of organised women's groups in grassroots politics, particularly in voter engagement, community mobilisation and the promotion of inclusive leadership.

For the United Amazon Prime Initiative, the inauguration represents a fresh opportunity to consolidate its presence in Uhunmwode, build a functional grassroots structure and mobilise women towards its political and empowerment objectives.

With the inauguration of the ward coordinators and executives, attention is now expected to shift to the implementation of the initiative's programmes and the establishment of stronger networks capable of sustaining its activities across the local government area.

OGIEHOR EHIS TORNADO
is the Chief Press Secretary, Uhunmwode Local Government Council

20th anniversary: Rep hails Sultan's peace efforts

ABUJA

A member of the House of Representatives, Jafar Chiroma, has commended the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, for his contributions to national unity, religious harmony and peaceful coexistence as the monarch marks 20 years on the throne.

Chiroma, who represents Bali/Gassol Federal Constituency of Taraba State, described the Sultan's two decades of leadership as remarkable, noting his commitment to promoting peace, strengthening interfaith relations and preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage.

The lawmaker made the remarks in a congratulatory message made available to our correspondent in Sokoto on Monday, through his aide, Usman Sarsa, to mark the Sultan's 20th anniversary on the throne.

The Sultan ascended the throne on November 2, 2006, following the death of his predecessor, Sultan Muhammadu Maccido, who died alongside his son, Senator Badamasi Maccido, in the ADC Airlines Flight 53 crash on October 29, 2006.

His emergence as the 20th Sultan of Sokoto marked the beginning of a reign that has spanned two decades, during which he has remained a prominent voice in religious affairs, traditional leadership and national development.

Before becoming Sultan, Abubakar had a distinguished military career in the Nigerian Army, where he rose to the rank of Brigadier-General. He also served in international peacekeeping operations in Chad and Sierra Leone and was Nigeria's Defence Attaché to Pakistan.

Since ascending the throne, the monarch has played a significant role in promoting religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence, particularly through his leadership of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and Jama'atu Nasril Islam.



PUBLIC HEARING,:
Chairman, House of Representative Committee on Capital Market and Institutions, Rep. Solomon Bob; representative of the Speaker, House of Representatives, Rep. Sarki Dahiru and a member of the committee, Rep. John Dafaan, during the committee's public hearing on a Bill to Repeal the Trustee Investment at the National Assembly Complex in Abuja on Monday

Police arrest 24-year-old for stealing cleric's mobile phone in Anambra

AWKA

The Anambra State Police Command has arrested a 24-year-old suspect, Chidubem Anyigo, for allegedly stealing an iPhone 16 Pro Max mobile phone belonging to a Reverend Father in Okpoko, Ogbaru Local Government Area of the state.

The arrest comes amid the command's continued emphasis on intelligence-led policing and collaboration with community-based security groups to tackle burglary, theft and other crimes in the state.

The command has increasingly relied on local intelligence and joint operations with groups such as the Anambra Vigilante Group to identify suspects, recover stolen property and strengthen security at the community level.

In a statement released on Monday, the spokesman for the Anambra State Police Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, said police operatives attached to the Okpoko Police Division, in collaboration with operatives of the Anambra Vigilante Group, arrested the suspect at Relief Market on October 30.

Ikenga added that the arrest followed credible intelligence gathering and was part of the command's ongoing efforts to combat crime through intelligence-led policing and community security collaboration.

According to him, items recovered from the suspect included an iPhone 16 Plus and cash amounting to N150,070, adding that preliminary investigations indicated that the suspect allegedly burgled a parish house and stole the recovered items.

The statement read, "The Anambra State Police Command has arrested a 24-year-old suspect, Chidubem Anyigo, in connection with the burglary and theft of valuables belonging to a Reverend Father at St. Hilary Parish House, Owelle-Aja, Awada, Obosi, Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

"Items recovered from the suspect include an iPhone 16 Pro Max and a cash sum of N150,070. Preliminary investigations indicate that the suspect allegedly burgled the parish house and stole the recovered items.

"During interrogation, he reportedly made useful statements to assist the ongoing investigation. The victim has also been contacted and has positively identified the recovered items."

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police, Anambra State Command, CP Nnanna Ama, commended the operatives of the police and AVG for their prompt response to credible intelligence and effective collaboration, which led to the arrest and recovery of the items.

The CP reiterated the command's commitment to strengthening partnerships with community-based security structures and other stakeholders in the collective effort to combat crime, protect lives and property, and sustain public safety across the state.A 12-month transition plan is due to begin to in January, giving Somalia and the AU time to seek alternative sources of funding.

KC Luxury seeks judge's recusal over court record dispute

LAGOS

Businessman and social media influencer, Afolabi Kazeem, popularly known as KC Luxury, standing trial over alleged 184.5kg cocaine trafficking and money laundering, has asked Justice Musa Kakaki of the Federal High Court in Lagos to recuse himself from the case, citing alleged irregularities in court records and concerns over his health.

The application followed the court's refusal last Wednesday to grant Kazeem bail on medical grounds, with the judge holding that the defendant had failed to establish special circumstances or provided sufficient evidence to justify his release.

At the resumed proceedings on Monday, Kazeem, who was absent from court, sought the judge's recusal through his counsel, Emefo Etudo, who appeared with Mrs Charity Etudo.

Etudo told the court that the record of proceedings did not reflect the October 28, 2026 ruling delivered on his client's bail application, adding that repeated efforts to obtain a copy from the court registry had proved unsuccessful.

He said the defence was informed that the judge had yet to sign the ruling, raising concerns that the delay could affect his client's right to appeal within the prescribed period.

Etudo also alleged that a reply affidavit filed by the defence had gone missing, questioning the safety of documents submitted to the court.

He said, "The record of proceedings did not reflect that any ruling was made on October 28, 2026, by this honourable court. And we don't feel so safe that our evidence, like the reply affidavit that got missing, is safe in the court."

Etudo further criticised the Federal High Court's lack of adequate recording facilities, arguing that verbatim recording equipment would ensure that statements and decisions made during proceedings were accurately captured.

He maintained that the discrepancies in the court records had further eroded his client's confidence in the court.

SSANU shuts Sokoto varsity over unpaid allowances, threatens indefinite strike

SOKOTO

The Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities, Sokoto State University chapter, has shut down services at the institution following the commencement of a five-working-day warning strike over unresolved staff entitlements.

The union warned that it would embark on an indefinite strike if the Sokoto State Government failed to address its demands before the expiration of the warning action.

The strike, which commenced on Monday, November 2, followed the expiration of a 14-working-day ultimatum issued to the state government on October 14.

In a statement made available to journalists on Monday and jointly signed by the chapter Chairman, Ismail Bala Muhammed, and Secretary, Mansur Ahmad, SSANU said the decision followed unsuccessful attempts to resolve the dispute through dialogue and engagements with relevant government officials.

The union said, "Despite repeated engagements, appeals and consultations with relevant government authorities, no concrete action has been taken to address the legitimate demands of our members."

SSANU is demanding the payment of arrears arising from the 25 per cent salary increment, approval and implementation of the 35 per cent Consolidated Non-Teaching Tools Allowance, annual salary increments for eligible members and the release of outstanding check-off dues.

The union said it had previously engaged the Commissioner for Higher Education, the ministry's permanent secretary and the deputy governor in a bid to resolve the issues amicably.

It added that the government subsequently constituted a committee to engage university-based unions from Sokoto State University and Shehu Shagari University of Education.

According to the statement, at a meeting held on October 9, the government maintained that arrears arising from the 25 per cent salary increment would not be paid, while implementation of the Consolidated Non-Teaching Tools Allowance would commence in January 2027, subject to budgetary provision.

However, the union rejected the position, insisting that it failed to address the concerns of its members.

"Despite resubmitting our demands as requested by the Permanent Secretary, the government failed to take any concrete action before the expiration of the ultimatum," the statement said.

The association maintained that the 35 per cent allowance was a legitimate entitlement, noting that similar allowances had been approved for academic staff under the Academic Staff Union of Universities and other categories of workers in state-owned tertiary institutions.

It appealed to Governor Ahmed Aliyu to personally intervene by approving the outstanding demands to prevent the dispute from escalating.

The union also called on traditional institutions, parents, students and other stakeholders to intervene and facilitate an amicable resolution.

SSANU warned that if the government failed to meet its demands by the end of the five-working-day warning strike, it would have no option but to embark on a total and indefinite shutdown of services at the university.

Nickolay Mladenov - a senior diplomat tasked with implementing Donald Trump's peace plan - defended the plan on Sunday and said discussions were ongoing in the hope of a "positive outcome".

FEATURE

The Darkness Business: Why Nigeria cannot grow without light

GRACE IJEOMA UMEH



At 7pm in Benin City, the sound changes. In Ugbowo, generators roar. In GRA, inverters hum. In Ikpoba Hill, darkness. A tailor named Osas has been waiting for Benin Electricity Distribution Company since morning. She has three uniforms to sew for school children who will resume on Monday. She cannot sew without light. She buys fuel for N1,200 per litre, puts it in her small generator, the generator smokes and spoils the cloth. She loses the customer. She loses N15,000. She goes to bed angry, in darkness.

This is Nigeria's most expensive failure. We are a country that generates darkness and sells it as normal.

Nigeria has over 230 million people, is Africa's largest economy by population, has gas reserves of over 200 trillion cubic feet, has sun for 300 days a year, has rivers, has wind in the north, yet cannot generate 6,000 megawatts consistently. South Africa with 60 million people generates over 50,000 megawatts. Egypt with 110 million generates over 59,000 megawatts. Nigeria generates between 4,000 and 5,000 megawatts for 230 million. That is less than what city of Johannesburg uses alone.

Why? Because we turned electricity into business for few, not service for all.

The power sector problem has four layers: generation without gas, transmission without capacity, distribution without investment, and billing without electricity.

First, generation. Nigeria privatized generation in 2013. Government sold power plants to private companies called GenCos. The idea was private sector will bring efficiency. What happened? The GenCos bought old plants that were already broken, they did not invest in new turbines, and they depend on gas that they do not pay for. Most power plants in Nigeria are gas plants, but gas companies do not want to sell gas to GenCos because GenCos owe them over 2 trillion naira. So gas companies flare gas or sell to export. GenCo says no gas, so no power. Meanwhile, Nigeria flares enough gas to generate over 10,000 megawatts. We burn wealth and complain of darkness.

Hydro plants like Kainji, Jebba, and Shiroro that should give cheap power suffer from low water due to climate change and lack of maintenance. Solar and wind that should complement gas are almost zero. In 2024, Nigeria's solar contribution to grid was less than 1 percent, despite having sun that can power entire West Africa. So we depend on one source, gas, that we cannot manage.

Second, transmission. Even when GenCos manage to generate 6,000 megawatts, Transmission Company of Nigeria cannot carry it. Transmission lines are old, built in 1970s, with no upgrade. The grid collapses over 10 times a year. Sometimes twice in a week. When grid collapses, entire country goes dark. TCN needs over 5 billion dollars to upgrade, but budget allocation is N100 billion yearly, not enough. So generation is stranded. GenCo says I can generate, TCN says I cannot carry.

" There is also need for honesty. Nigeria cannot have 24-hour power everywhere tomorrow. But we can have 12-hour reliable power in 3 years if we are serious. We can have industrial clusters with 24-hour power, markets with 12-hour power, homes with 8-hour power, properly scheduled and announced "

Third, distribution. This is where ordinary Nigerian feels pain. Eleven distribution companies, called DisCos, were sold to private investors in 2013. Many of them had no experience in power business. They were politicians, traders. They bought DisCos with bank loans, hoping to make quick money. They did not invest in meters, in transformers, in cables. Today, over 7 million customers have no meter. They are on estimated billing. DisCo staff will bring bill of N45,000 to a one-bedroom flat that used N10,000 worth of power. If you complain, they cut your light. If you pay, you are paying for darkness.

Transformers are another racket. A community transformer blows. DisCo says no money to replace. Community contributes N2 million to buy transformer. DisCo then claims ownership of transformer and still bills community. This happens in almost every street in Benin, Lagos, Kano.

Fourth, theft and corruption. Over 40 percent of power generated is stolen through illegal connections, or lost through technical losses. In some areas, people bypass meters. In some areas, DisCo staff collect N2,000 monthly to not disconnect illegal connection. The honest customer who pays subsidizes thief.

The result is that Nigeria is generator economy. We import over 10 million generators yearly. We spend over 15 billion dollars yearly on diesel and petrol for generators. That is more than federal budget for health and education combined. Small businesses spend over 40 percent of cost on power. That is why made-in-Nigeria goods are expensive. That is why factories close. Dunlop closed, Michelin closed, textile factories in Kaduna closed, all because of power.

What can be done? We must stop pretending that current structure works. It does not.

First, we must fix gas-to-power. Government must enforce that gas companies that produce gas in Niger Delta must allocate certain percentage to domestic power at commercial price, not export price. And GenCos must pay. Federal Government's debt of over 2 trillion naira to GenCos and gas companies must be securitized and paid through bonds, so gas flows again. Without paying old debts, no new investment will come.

Second, we must decentralize power. The Electricity Act 2023 signed by President Tinubu allows states to generate, transmit, and distribute power. This is best reform in 20 years. States like Lagos, Edo, and Enugu are already passing their own electricity laws. Edo State has Ossiomo power plant that gives 24-hour light to government houses and some industrial areas. This model should be expanded. Each state should have its own grid, focusing on its own resources. Edo has gas and water for power. Sokoto has sun and wind. Plateau has hydro. States should partner with private investors to build 100 megawatt to 500 megawatt plants for their states, not wait for Abuja.

Third, we must enforce metering and punish estimated billing. Federal Government's National Mass Metering Programme gave out less than 1 million meters in 3 years. We need 7 million meters. We can achieve this by allowing DisCos to charge cost-reflective tariff only if they meter all customers in a feeder within 6 months. If they do not meter, they cannot increase tariff. Also, Meter Asset Provider scheme should be opened to more companies, including Chinese meter factories to assemble meters in Nigeria, creating jobs.

Fourth, we must allow customers to pay for service, not darkness. Band A, Band B, Band C idea is good if it works. Band A customers who get 20 hours light pay more, Band E who get 4 hours pay less. But DisCos cheat. They put communities in Band A without giving 20 hours, just to collect high tariff. Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission must enforce with technology. Feeders should have automated monitoring that measures hours of light, published online daily, so customers can verify.

Fifth, we must invest in renewable for rural areas. Over 80 million Nigerians have no access to grid at all, mostly in rural areas of north and Niger Delta. Extending grid to them is expensive. Solar mini-grids are cheaper. Private companies like Husk Power and GVE have built mini-grids in Nasarawa and Rivers that give 24-hour light at N100 per kilowatt. Government's Rural Electrification Agency should scale this with World Bank funding, with target of 10,000 mini-grids in 5 years.

Finally, we must make theft expensive. Electricity theft should be criminal offence with jail term, not just fine. And DisCos that aid theft through their staff should be sanctioned. When people know that bypassing meter can lead to jail, they will stop.

There is also need for honesty. Nigeria cannot have 24-hour power everywhere tomorrow. But we can have 12-hour reliable power in 3 years if we are serious. We can have industrial clusters with 24-hour power, markets with 12-hour power, homes with 8-hour power, properly scheduled and announced, so tailor like Osas can plan.

In 1960, Nigeria had less population but had more stable power because industries were fewer and management was better. In 2026, we have more resources but worse management. Light is not rocket science. Ghana did it. Ivory Coast did it. Rwanda did it. Nigeria can do it.

But we must decide that darkness is not normal. Darkness is not spiritual. Darkness is failure of planning and corruption. When we fix light, we fix jobs, we fix health because hospitals will have light, we fix education because children can read at night, we fix everything.

Osas in Ugbowo is waiting for light. Her sewing machine is waiting. Her customers are waiting. The entire country is waiting.

We must turn on light.

FOREIGN NEWS

Nine killed as small jet crashes on Florida street

A business jet crashed in a neighbourhood in Florida on Sunday, killing all nine people on board, the US transport secretary has said.

The crash happened near Cresthaven, some nine miles (14 km) from Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump's resort in the wealthy enclave of Palm Beach County, around 12:50 EST (17:50 GMT).

Images show a large crater in the middle of a multi-lane road, with fire and debris from the Learjet 60 aircraft scattered across it, but nobody on the ground was hurt.

The aircraft had departed from Austin, Texas, and was headed to the Bahamas, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said in a statement.

Flight analysis indicates that the jet was plummeting hundreds of feet per second before crashing.

In air traffic control audio recorded moments before the crash, someone in the cockpit can be heard reporting "moderate turbulence" and that the crew was "managing the ice".

The person can then be heard saying the plane was "picking up precipitation" and "we need to climb". Moments later, the same voice said the plane was descending at a rate of 10,000ft (3,048m) per minute.

The crew member declared an emergency, yelling "we are in an overspeed condition descending 20,000ft per minute", before saying, "we are going to crash into the ground".

About 35 seconds after the initial mayday announcement, the last remark from the cockpit was "we're out of time".

Unverified footage posted on social media shows what appears to be a dash-camera recording of the moment of the crash. It shows vehicles driving on a residential suburban street, when suddenly an aircraft nosedives into the ground almost vertically, and explodes into a large fireball.

"When you see that video, it's a jarring thing," Florida Governor Ron DeSantis told reporters at a news conference after the crash. "It's like a missile coming down, and a massive explosion, debris going everywhere."

It is not yet clear who was aboard the jet when it crashed. DeSantis said "as of now, we don't have any reports of anyone who was on the ground... who was killed or injured".

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy described the crash as a "horrific tragedy", and said the FAA was sending a team to the scene to help an investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board.

"Please join me in praying for the families and loved ones of those we lost," Duffy added.

Palm Beach County Fire Rescue has declared a "mass casualty incident".

The jet crashed on a six-lane road

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office said the crash happened on Military Trail, a six-lane road that features businesses and restaurants.

At a news conference, DeSantis and local officials said that 600 local residents were being evacuated from a nearby trailer-park community.

The impact of the crash caused considerable damage to local infrastructure, including its water lines, they said, and it would be at least 30 days before the road re-opened.



A flaming crater at the scene of the crash in Florida

Israeli strikes in Gaza kill eight including child, hospitals say

Israeli strikes in Gaza have killed at least eight people, including a child, according to hospitals, despite a year-old ceasefire.

In Gaza City to the north, hospital officials said a missile attack hit a group of civilians next to Cairo School in the Al-Rimal neighbourhood, killing three people, including a four-year-old boy.

In the southern city of Khan Younis, the Hamas-run ministry of interior said a drone attack targeted a group of police officers in the Al-Mawasi area, killing five, as they were carrying out their routine duties.

The Israeli military said it had carried out two attacks on what it described as military operatives but has not yet provided evidence or further information.

Outside Gaza City's Shifa Hospital, video showed a crowd of men gathered to pray next to two body bags and the tiny body of the child, which was wrapped in a white towel.

"My son and his child were martyred. They were sitting in their tent, bothering no one, and nothing else was happening in the area when suddenly, a missile struck them, and they were martyred," Ali Oweis told AFP news agency. "There is no ceasefire; the war is ongoing, don't you see?"

At Nasser hospital in Khan Younis, women despaired as body bags lay on the floor, video showed. The interior ministry named the five police officers killed, who were between the ages of 23 and 53, and called the attack a "horrific massacre".

A ceasefire came into force in Gaza in October last year, but Israeli air strikes have continued almost every day.

Since then, 1,580 people have been killed, according to Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the UN. Israel says it is targeting Hamas, but often civilians are also killed.

Meanwhile, a peace plan for Gaza, brokered by the Trump administration, has stalled.

The ceasefire saw thousands of Palestinians held by Israel released in return for all of the 48 remaining hostages held in Gaza, and an agreement to end the war.

The conflict was triggered by the Hamas-led attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, when about 1,200 people were killed and 251 taken hostage.

Since the war began, 74,594 people have been killed in Gaza, according to the territory's health ministry.

input from every sector and region of Oyo State. The governorship, senatorial, House of Representatives and House of Assembly candidates all emerged through consensus," he said.political distractions but to allow him to focus on governance, stating that his administration had brought greater accountability and transparency to the management of the state.

"This is evidenced by certifications and recognitions from reputable international audit firms. He has also restored Benue to creditworthy status and created a safer and more credible environment for investment," the statement read.The chairman of the occasion and Plateau State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang, commended Mustapha for choosing to mark his 70th birthday by investing in education rather than personal luxury.

Mutfwang said the gesture demonstrated the importance of using positions of influence and personal milestones to create lasting opportunities for society.

Also speaking, the Adamawa State Governor, Ahmadu Fintiri, described the library as a lasting monument to knowledge, saying it would provide a valuable resource for students and researchers in the university and beyond.

Trump makes fevered campaign push in final weekend before election

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"Please join me in praying for the families and loved ones of those we lost," Duffy added.

France launches attempted murder investigation after petrol bomb thrown at police

Prosecutors in France have launched an attempted murder investigation after petrol bombs were thrown at police during unrest, French media reported.

An image of a police officer with his leg on fire during a clash with protesters in Paris on Saturday has prompted outrage and follows weeks of street protests in France that have also seen demonstrators injured.

The officer, who suffered burns to his ankle and minor injures to his hand, told French newspaper Le Figaro it was a "particularly sophisticated" incendiary device.

Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez said throwing a molotov cocktail at a police line was "what I call a murder attempt", adding officers were working to find the perpetrators.

Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated across France in largely peaceful protests on Saturday, the latest in a series of youth-led protests that began in late September demanding action on the high cost of living and poor public services, especially schools.

Following previous clashes and looting, thousands of police officers were deployed across the country over the weekend, and officers fired tear gas at demonstrators in some cities.

There were more than 770 arrests on Saturday, roughly half as many as the previous week's protests, the French interior ministry said.

But police said no one had been arrested for the attack caught on camera that set a police officer on fire, AFP reported.

The officer - part of the National Gendarmerie, a national law enforcement force that is technically part of the military but under the control of the interior ministry - said his unit "suddenly found ourselves facing several hundred hostile, well equipped adversaries".

Speaking to French newspaper Le Figaro, he said police were yet to identify the liquid used but that the incendiary device "had a far greater burning capacity than a standard Molotov cocktail".

"We faced hostile individuals who are not protesters," he said. "These adversaries are there with the intent to harm those who represent the state."

NEWS

FOREIGN



Uganda troops deplored to Somalia in 2007

Uganda begins withdrawing troops from Somalia after 20 years

Uganda has begun withdrawing its troops from Somalia after nearly two decades of military involvement in the country.

The first contingent of 109 Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) troops reportedly left the capital, Mogadishu, on Friday, following an announcement by Uganda's army chief, Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba.

Uganda's acting army spokesperson, Chris Magezi, did not respond to the BBC's request for comment.

Uganda was the first African country to deploy troops to Somalia under the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom), which was established in 2007 to help protect the country's transitional government from attacks by Islamist militants.

Last week, Gen Muhoozi said Uganda had begun pulling out its troops and would hand over security responsibilities to Somali forces.

"As we promised, we have started withdrawing UPDF from Somalia. After 20 years of a lot of blood and sacrifice, we are handing over security to our Somali brothers," he wrote on X.

The withdrawal is being carried out in phases and is expected to be completed in August 2027.

However, Uganda is not ending its entire military involvement in Somalia. Its troops deployed under a separate bilateral security arrangement will remain in the country.

An estimated 4,500 troops are in Somalia under the Africa Union mission, alongside about 2,000 deployed through bilateral arrangements.

Somalia has been battling a prolonged and deadly insurgency led al-Shabab, an al-Qaeda-linked militant group, for more than two decades.

Uganda forces first deployed to the country in 2007 and played a key role in driving al-Shabab out of Mogadishu and other major towns.

They fought alongside the Somali National Army to recapture strategic territory and secure key government installations.

Ugandan troops continued its military involvement under successive Africa Union, including the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (Atmis), which began with the aim of gradually transferring security responsibilities to Somalia.

It was replaced in 2025 by the African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (Aussom), which is focused on strengthening Somalia's security institutions and preparing its forces to take full responsibility for the country's security.

Aussom now faces uncertainty over its future funding, amid plans to wind down US and UN support.

A 12-month transition plan is due to begin to in January, giving Somalia and the AU time to seek alternative sources of funding.

Iran proposes two-day plan to reopen Strait of Hormuz

IRAN has agreed to a "two-day plan" to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, shortening its earlier seven-day proposal, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday, as an Iranian delegation continues talks with mediators in Qatar. Iran proposes two-day plan to reopen Strait of Hormuz

Araghchi stated that the proposal currently on the table is basically the same as the "seven-day plan" previously proposed by Iran.

The "seven-day plan" set out the conditions for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, stipulating that if Iran's conditions are met, the strait will be reopened on the sixth day, and U.S.-Iran negotiations will resume on the seventh day.

Mediators such as Qatar and Pakistan have also held multiple consultations and discussions on this matter, putting forward suggestions that are more feasible and actionable than Iran's "seven-day plan".

One of Qatar's suggestions was to shorten the seven-day timeline to five or even fewer days, Araghchi said, and the Iranian delegation discussed the idea with the Qatari side during their visit.

Currently, Iran agrees to a "two-day plan" under which the United States will take a series of compliance measures on the first day, the Strait of Hormuz will open on the second day, and traffic will return to what it was before the conflict.

Araghchi stated that the U.S. must meet the relevant conditions, all of which were mentioned in the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The conditions Iran has set for the U.S. reportedly include determining new navigation routes for the Strait of Hormuz, releasing all frozen Iranian funds, ending regional wars including in Lebanon, lifting the naval blockade, restoring sanctions waivers for Iranian oil exports, and lifting new sanctions imposed by the U.S. after the Islamabad MoU.

Araghchi emphasized that the Iranian side mentioned other conditions in the submitted letter, which have nothing unreasonable about them, provided that the U.S. side shows sincerity, has a genuine desire to reach an agreement, and truly seeks a peaceful solution.

He pointed out that all these issues are now on the table. As long as the U.S. side abides by the "two-day plan", this will pave the way for peace and returning the Strait of Hormuz to normal.

Only after the U.S. fulfills its relevant commitments and the strait is opened will the path to resuming negotiations between the two countries be opened.

The navy of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) on Sunday announced that two "violating" oil tankers, including a supertanker, suffered explosions and were stopped after hitting naval mines in the Strait of Hormuz within the preceding hours.

In a statement published on the IRGC's official news outlet Sepah News, the navy said the tankers were transiting the "unauthorized" route in the strait.

It added the supertanker "suffered a massive explosion and is burning", stressing that both vessels had turned off their navigation and identification systems.

Iran tightened its grip on the strait on Feb. 28, barring safe passage of vessels belonging to or affiliated with Israel and the United States following their joint strikes on Iranian territory.

Last year, the then British Defence Secretary John Healey met Wanjiru's family during a visit to Kenya and pledged his government's support for efforts to secure justice.

Popular Australian children's author jailed over child exploitation offences

Australian children's author Craig Silvey has been sentenced to seven months in jail for possessing and distributing child exploitation material.

In handing down her sentence, Judge Hayley Cormann called Silvey's actions "repulsive" and "degrading".

In January, Silvey was arrested after police raided his home in Western Australia and seized several electronic devices. In May, the 44-year-old pleaded guilty to possessing and distributing child exploitation material and in October he was jailed pending his sentencing.

The father-of-three is best known for his award-winning young adult novel Jasper Jones and children's book Runt, both of which were later made into movies.

"You have devastated and betrayed the trust of thousands of people, and you've let entire communities down," Cormann said on Monday, according to WA Today.

Police said Silvey had online chats, in which he discussed child exploitation, open at the moment they turned up to raid his house.

In them, the court heard, Silvey had described himself as "extremely open minded" and "obsessed with taboos".

He'd discussed his sexual interest in children as young as five with another user of a pornography site, and detectives found images and videos of other adults abusing children on his devices.

He was initially charged with four offences, but prosecutors later dropped two.

Prosecutors said Silvey contributed to the "cycle of abuse" victimising the children in the images, and argued a harsh sentence was required.

However, the author's defence lawyer said he did not have a "sexual interest in children" and was seeking out "the most depraved material" as a form of "emotional" self harm.

"His behaviour provided temporary relief from psychological agitation," Eloise Barker said.

She said Silvey had displayed genuine remorse for his offending, and that his high profile and the resulting media scrutiny - which lead to his former partner and children relocating interstate - was already a form of punishment.

Israel's first ambassador presents credentials in Somaliland

Israel's first ambassador to Somaliland has presented his credentials to President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, known as Cirro, in Hargeisa. The ceremony also marked the laying of the cornerstone for an Israeli embassy.

Israel recognised Somaliland in December 2025, becoming the first United Nations member state to do so. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991, but Mogadishu continues to claim the territory, which has not been recognised by any other UN member state.

Cirro called the occasion historic, while Ambassador Michael Lotem said the recognition acknowledged what Somaliland had built over 35 years. Israel's foreign minister said the exchange of ambassadors fulfilled commitments made when diplomatic relations were established.

The relationship has drawn criticism from Somalia, the Arab League, the African Union and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud accused Israel of seeking access to the Red Sea and alleged it wanted a naval base in Somaliland. Somaliland officials have indicated openness to hosting an Israeli military base, though Cirro recently said no talks had taken place.

The GECF is made up of 20 of the world's leading gas producing nations. Together, they control more than 70 percent of the world's proven gas reserves and more than a third of global gas production.

Spain's El Hierro grapples with rising migrant arrivals

Nearly 3,000 migrants have reached the island of El Hierro, in Spain's Canary Islands, since the beginning of October. The small Atlantic island, home to around 11,000 people, is facing a sharp increase in arrivals along the Atlantic migration route.

At the port of La Restinga, boats carrying migrants continue to arrive. On October 22, more than 400 people reached the island aboard four boats that had departed from the African coast, according to maritime rescue services.

The increase has raised concerns among some residents, who fear growing pressure on local infrastructure and resources. "It's not just 20 or 30 people arriving; there are a lot of them. There have been days when 500 have arrived. That's why either we have to put a stop to all this, or I don't know how we're going to cope," says Luis Andres Gonzalez, owner of a bar at La Restinga port.

A French resident who has lived on the island for four years also describes frustration among some locals, particularly over the cost of water and the perception that migrants receive free assistance.

FEATURE

The Broken Shield: Why insecurity is killing Nigeria's future

Clareth Solomon

At 2am in a village near Auchi, Edo North, a farmer named Momoh hears dogs barking. He knows what it means. Bandits are coming. He wakes his wife and three children, carries the youngest on his back, and runs into bush. He stays in bush till 6am, with mosquitoes biting his children. When he returns, his goats are gone, his stored yam is gone. He reports to police station 10 kilometers away. Police say no fuel for patrol vehicle. That is all.

This is Nigeria's insecurity story. Not big grammar of terrorism, but daily fear of ordinary people who cannot farm, cannot travel, cannot sleep.

Nigeria is facing insecurity that has evolved from isolated to industrial. Ten years ago, insecurity was Boko Haram in Borno. Today, insecurity is everywhere, in every state, in every local government, with different names but same result: people live in fear.

In North East, Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province still kill and kidnap, despite claims of technical defeat. In North West, bandits have taken over forests in Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, and Niger, running over 100 camps, collecting taxes from farmers, kidnapping for ransom as business. In North Central, herder-farmer clashes have killed over 20,000 people in 10 years, turning Benue and Plateau into killing fields. In South East, unknown gunmen attack police stations and kill. In South South, sea pirates and cultists kill youths. In South West, ritual killings and kidnapping on Lagos-Ibadan expressway increase. No zone is safe.

Why did insecurity become so widespread? Because we allowed small fires to become wildfire.

First, failure of justice. In Nigeria, crime pays because punishment is rare. A man kidnaps 20 people, collects N20 million, is arrested, and is released after 3 months because case file is missing. A cultist kills in Benin, police arrests, politician calls DPO and says release him, he is our boy. So impunity grows. Criminals know nothing will happen. According to National Bureau of Statistics, conviction rate for violent crimes is less than 5 percent. When criminals are not punished, they recruit more.

Second, ungoverned spaces. Nigeria has over 1,000 forests, many of them unmanned. Sambisa forest in Borno is 60,000 square kilometers, larger than some countries. Kuyanbana forest in Zamfara, Kuduru forest in Kaduna, Okomu forest in Edo, all are ungoverned. No police, no army, no ranger.



Bandits live there, train there, keep kidnapped victims there. Government knows but does nothing. Nigeria has less than 400,000 police for 230 million people. That is 1 policeman to 575 citizens. United Nations recommends 1 to 400. So forests remain free for criminals.

Third, poverty and unemployment. Insecurity is also economy. Many bandits and cultists are young men who have no job, no skill, no hope. In Zamfara, bandit leader collects more in one kidnapping than civil servant earns in 10 years. So young men join. In Edo, cultism thrives in areas where youths have no jobs. A boy who finished secondary school in 2019, has no job till 2026, is angry. When cult offers him gun, money, and belonging, he joins. Poverty does not justify crime, but it fuels it.

Fourth, proliferation of small arms. Nigeria has over 6 million illegal small arms in circulation, according to Small Arms Survey. These arms come from Libya, from Sahel, from porous borders, from corrupt security officers who sell guns. An AK-47 that sold for N500,000 in 2015 now sells for N1.5 million, but it is available. Anybody with money can buy. So farmer with cutlass meets herder with AK-47. How can he defend?

Fifth, breakdown of traditional security. Before, traditional rulers, vigilantes, and community elders provided intelligence. Today, many traditional rulers have been politicized or sidelined. Vigilantes have no support. In many communities, when vigilante arrests criminal and hands to police, police releases criminal next day, and criminal comes back to kill vigilante. So communities stop helping.

The cost of insecurity is beyond death. It is economic collapse.

Farmers cannot farm, so food prices rise. Traders cannot move goods, so inflation rises. Investors cannot invest, so jobs do not come. Schools close. In Kaduna, over 50 schools closed in 2 years due to kidnapping. Children stay home and become street hawkers. Health workers cannot go to rural clinics, so maternal mortality rises. The entire development agenda collapses.

What must we do? We must stop treating insecurity as military problem alone. It is governance problem.

First, we must reform security architecture. Nigeria needs state police, with clear roles. Federal police cannot police every village from Abuja. Amotekun in South West and Ebube Agu in South East showed that local security with local knowledge works, but they need better funding, training, and legal backing. Each state should have police with powers to arrest and prosecilute minor crimes, while federal police handles major crimes. Local government should have community policing where youths are recruited from community, known to community, and paid.

Second, we must occupy ungoverned spaces. Nigeria needs forest rangers, like South Africa and Kenya have. A force of over 50,000 rangers, armed, trained, with drones and motorcycles, to occupy forests and deny bandits sanctuary. We must also use technology. Drones can monitor forests, CCTV can monitor highways, phone tracking can locate kidnappers. But technology needs investment, not just talk.

Third, we must fix justice. We need special courts for kidnapping and terrorism, with trials within 6 months, not 10 years. We need witness protection, so people can testify without fear. We need to stop political interference in police work. A criminal should be criminal, whether he is son of politician or not.

Fourth, we must address root causes. We must create jobs for youths. Not sharing N50,000, but creating skills and industries. In areas prone to banditry, government should build agro-industrial clusters that employ thousands. In areas prone to cultism, government should build technical colleges and sports centres that engage youths. A boy who is busy learning welding or playing football has less time for cult.

We must also resolve herder-farmer crisis with honesty. Open grazing is no longer sustainable. Ranching is solution. Government should create ranching cooperatives where herders get land, water, and veterinary services, and farmers get security. This is not taking land from anybody, it is modernizing livestock business. Brazil did it, Kenya is doing it.

Fifth, we must secure borders and control arms. Nigeria has over 4,000 kilometers of land borders, many unmanned. We need border technology, not just men with guns. We need to work with Niger, Chad, Cameroon to stop arms flow. And we must punish security officers who sell arms.

Finally, we must rebuild trust between people and security agencies. Many Nigerians do not trust police because police extort, beat, and kill. Police reform is urgent. Police should be trained to be friendly, not fearful. Their salaries should be increased, their barracks fixed, so they do not need to extort to survive.

Momoh in Auchi is still sleeping in bush some nights. His children are still not in school because he cannot afford to move to town. His story is story of millions.

Nigeria cannot develop in fear. No country ever developed where citizens sleep with one eye open. Security is not privilege, it is foundation. Without it, everything else is building on sand.

We must fix broken shield, so Nigerians can farm, travel, school, and sleep in peace.

" First, failure of justice. In Nigeria, crime pays because punishment is rare. A man kidnaps 20 people, collects N20 million, is arrested, and is released after 3 months because case file is missing. A cultist kills in Benin, police arrests, politician calls DPO and says release him, he is our boy. So impunity grows. Criminals know nothing will happen."

FEATURE



The generation that scrolls: Social media, mental health, and Nigerian youths

Monalisa Osawe

At 1am in Ekpoma, a 19-year-old girl named Blessing is still awake. She is not reading. She is scrolling. Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X. She sees her mate in Canada posting snow, her mate in Lagos posting new wig, her mate in Benin posting boyfriend's car. She looks at her own life: no wig, no car, small room, school fees unpaid. She feels poor, ugly, left behind. She drops phone, cries, sleeps by 3am, wakes by 6am to go to school, tired, angry, with headache.

Multiply Blessing by 40 million, and you have Nigerian youth mental health crisis that nobody talks about.

Nigeria is youngest country in Africa, with over 70 percent under 30. This should be blessing. But we have turned blessing to burden because we have not understood what this generation faces. This generation does not face hunger alone, they face comparison, pressure, and loneliness amplified by phone in their hand.

Social media came to Nigeria as blessing. It gave voice, business, connection. Today, Nigeria has over 109 million internet users, mostly youths. Youths sell clothes on Instagram, learn tailoring on YouTube, find scholarship on Twitter. But same social media has become source of anxiety, depression, fraud, and immorality that is destroying many.

First, the pressure of fake life. On social media, everybody is rich, fine, happy. Nobody posts failure. So young people think their mates are all succeeding except them. A boy in Uromi sees his secondary school mate posting Benz in Lagos. He does not know Benz is rented for content. He thinks mate is rich. He feels like failure. So he wants to make quick money. He enters Yahoo Yahoo, or goes into hookup, or steals. The fake life pressure is pushing youths into crime.

Girls face worse. On TikTok, beauty standard is white skin, big hips, big breast, foreign hair. Filters make ordinary girl look ugly to herself. So she bleaches, buys fake hips, goes into debt to buy hair of N200,000, just to look like Instagram girl. When she cannot afford, she feels worthless. Many young girls now have low self-esteem, not because they are ugly, but because phone tells them they are ugly.

Second, addiction and sleep loss. Many Nigerian youths spend over 8 hours daily on phone, mostly scrolling, not learning. A study by NOI Polls found 60 percent of youths check phone first thing in morning and last thing at night. This addiction affects brain, sleep, and studies. A student who scrolls till 2am cannot concentrate in class by 8am. So performance drops, he carries over courses, he becomes frustrated, he drops out.

Third, fraud and exploitation. Social media is now hunting ground. Yahoo boys use Instagram to scam, hookup girls use TikTok to find clients, traffickers use Facebook to lure girls to Libya, drug dealers use Snapchat to sell drugs. Many youths have been scammed of school fees through fake giveaway, many girls have been raped after meeting stranger from Facebook, many boys have been initiated into cult through WhatsApp group. Parents have no idea what children do online because parents themselves are not digitally literate.

Fourth, mental health crisis. Nigeria has less than 300 psychiatrists for 230 million people. Mental health is taboo, people say na spiritual. But depression, anxiety, and suicide are rising among youths. According to Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, cases of depression among youths increased by over 40 percent between 2020 and 2024, linked to social media and economic pressure. Every month, we hear of student who commits suicide because of failed exam, or because boyfriend broke up on WhatsApp, or because he lost money in betting. Betting, which is promoted heavily on social media, is another trap. Many youths have lost school fees to Bet-9ja and SportyBet advertised by their favorite musician.

Fifth, loss of values and skills. This generation can scroll, but cannot converse. They can make TikTok video, but cannot write application letter. They know how to do Instagram live, but cannot do face-to-face interview. Social media has reduced attention span to 15 seconds. A youth cannot read book for 1 hour, but can watch 100 videos of 15 seconds each. This affects employability. Employers complain that graduates cannot write, cannot speak, cannot think critically, because they grew up scrolling, not reading.

What must we do? We must not ban social media. Ban does not work. We must teach youths to use it, not be used by it.

First, we need digital literacy in schools. From JSS 1, children should be taught what is real and fake online, how algorithm manipulates, how to protect privacy, how to use internet for learning not just slaying. Teachers should be trained to use YouTube and Telegram for teaching, not just blackboard. Parents should be taught to monitor children without invading privacy.

Second, we need mental health support that is youth-friendly. Universities, polytechnics, and colleges should have counseling units with trained counselors, not just old men who preach. NYSC orientation should have mental health sessions. Government and private sector should fund toll-free helplines like Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative where youths can call and talk without stigma. Religious leaders should stop calling depression spiritual attack and encourage professional help.

Third, we need to regulate content and protect youths. National Broadcasting Commission and National Information Technology Development Agency should enforce that platforms remove harmful content, like videos promoting ritual, drug, or fraud, and that betting companies do not target underage. Influencers who promote fake life and fraud should be called out. Real success stories of youths who work hard, farm, build, should be promoted, not just slay queens and Yahoo boys.

Fourth, we need to provide alternative to scrolling. Youths scroll because they are idle. If youth has job, skill, or sport, he scrolls less. Government should build more sports facilities, skill centres, and youth hubs with free internet for learning, not just for TikTok. In Benin City, after renovation of Ogbe Stadium, many youths now go there to train in evening, reducing time for crime. That model should be replicated in all local governments.

Fifth, we need family and community. Before, child was raised by community, elders told stories, taught values. Today, child is raised by phone. Parents are busy hustling, no time to talk. We must bring back family conversation. Parents should eat with children without phone, talk, listen. Community should have youth mentorship where successful adults mentor 5 youths each, teaching them life skills.

Finally, youths themselves must take responsibility. Phone is tool. You can use cutlass to farm or to kill. Same with phone. Youth must ask: is my phone making me better or bitter? Does scrolling increase my skill or my sorrow? Blessing in Ekpoma can use same phone to learn makeup professionally on YouTube and make money, or to compare herself and cry. Choice is hers, but she needs guidance.

Nigeria's youth population can be greatest asset if we invest in their minds, not just their data. A generation that scrolls can also be generation that codes, that creates, that solves.

At 1am, Blessing should be sleeping, dreaming of future she will build, not crying because of picture she saw online. We must help her, and 40 million like her, to put phone down, look up, and build.

The future is not in phone. Future is in what they do with phone.

FEATURE

Nigeria's tertiary education policy dilemma

Bagudu Mohammed



President Bola Tinubu's assent on 16 October 2026 to bills upgrading the Federal Polytechnic, Kaduna, and Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, into universities of technology and vocational studies has renewed debate about the direction of Nigeria's tertiary education.

The conversions follow similar developments involving the Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa, now the Federal University of Mining, Engineering and Technology, as well as approvals affecting other polytechnics. Meanwhile, the Federal Government is converting colleges of education into universities of education, with 28 federal colleges reportedly operating dual mandates, awarding both the Nigeria Certificate in Education and Bachelor of Education.

These developments raise a fundamental question: what coherent philosophy guides the expansion and restructuring of tertiary institutions?

On 15 October, the Senate amended the Federal Polytechnic Act to empower polytechnics to award Bachelor of Technology degrees in science, engineering and technology, subject to accreditation by the National Universities Commission and relevant professional bodies. The proposal also revises rectors' tenure. It still requires concurrence by the House of Representatives and presidential assent.

The initiative seeks to address the longstanding discrimination against Higher National Diploma holders, who have faced restrictions on entry-level placement and career progression in the public service. Unlike the earlier proposal under former Education Minister Adamu Adamu to scrap the HND and make polytechnics subordinate to universities, the new approach would preserve polytechnic identity while expanding degree-awarding powers.

Yet a policy contradiction emerges. Why convert selected polytechnics into universities while empowering the remaining institutions to award degrees? If both pathways serve technological education, what criteria determine which institution should be upgraded and which should retain its existing status?

The same Senate has equally passed bills to establish the Federal University of Agriculture in Orogun, Delta State, and the Federal University of Education in Obudu, Cross River State.Senator Muntari Dandutse said the Obudu proposal would convert the existing Federal College of Education into a university, using its facilities, infrastructure and workforce.

Both bills passed their third reading through voice votes on October 22, 2026, after senators considered and adopted their clauses.

The wider proliferation of specialised universities deepens this dilemma. In 2017, the Federal Government directed specialised universities to restrict programmes to their mandates, including instructing universities of agriculture to discontinue unrelated courses. However, universities are adaptive institutions. Clark Kerr's concept of the multiversity and Burton Clark's work on entrepreneurial universities help explain why institutions expand into new disciplines to attract students, funding and partnerships.

Nigeria's experience illustrates this pressure. Institutions established for transportation, aviation, agriculture, health or environmental studies may eventually introduce management and social science programmes to remain attractive and financially sustainable. Specialisation can consequently become a label rather than a defining academic practice.

These developments raise a fundamental question: what coherent philosophy guides the expansion and restructuring of tertiary institutions?

This trend is difficult to reconcile with the Federal Government's August 2025 announcement of a seven-year moratorium on establishing new federal tertiary institutions. The Education Ministry cited underutilisation, reporting that 199 universities received fewer than 100 applications through JAMB, 34 recorded no applications, and several polytechnics and colleges of education attracted similarly low demand.

Despite these concerns, new specialised institutions have continued to emerge. The challenge, therefore, is not simply establishing universities but ensuring that existing institutions are adequately funded, staffed, relevant and accessible to students.

Specialised universities have legitimate value where national development requires focused expertise, advanced research and strong industry partnerships. However, their establishment should follow credible assessments of workforce demand, regional access, institutional capacity and long-term sustainability. A specialised university must demonstrate why its mandate requires a separate institution rather than a faculty or research centre within an existing university.

The government must also clarify the relationship between polytechnics and universities. Degree-awarding powers should not erase the distinctive practical and vocational training that makes polytechnics valuable. Equally, HND holders deserve fair career progression without unnecessary discrimination based solely on qualification nomenclature

Ultimately, Nigeria needs a consistent national framework defining when institutions should be upgraded, when specialised universities may diversify, and when investment should instead strengthen existing faculties and facilities.

Without such coordination, the country risks expanding institutional numbers without proportionately improving educational quality, employability or skills. More universities and certificates do not automatically translate into better education.

The objective must be a tertiary education system in which institutional status, academic programmes and public investment reflect national priorities, student demand and measurable development needs, not merely changing political or administrative preferences.

FEATURE

Ebola: Real or mirage? why Nigeria must not lower its guard

Uwakwe Alice

At the border post in Seme, Lagos, a health officer named Chidi holds an infrared thermometer. A bus arrives from Cotonou with 20 passengers. He checks temperature, one after another. One passenger has 38.2 degrees. He asks, where are you coming from? The passenger says Accra. He asks, have you had contact with sick person? Passenger says no. Chidi writes his name and lets him go. No isolation room, no rapid test kit, no ambulance on standby. That is Nigeria's Ebola preparedness in many borders.

In September 2025, the world woke up again to a word many thought was gone. Uganda announced outbreak of Ebola Sudan strain. Rwanda reported suspected cases. Democratic Republic of Congo reported over 15 deaths. The World Health Organization said risk is high for cross-border spread. Nigeria, which had its own Ebola experience in 2014, started to ask: are we safe? Is Ebola real threat or just mirage pushed by international agencies to scare us?

The question is valid because Nigerians have seen many scares. COVID-19 came and went, leaving debt and distrust. Lassa fever comes every year, kills, but nobody declares emergency. Cholera kills hundreds yearly. So when people hear Ebola again, some say it is real, some say it is mirage, some say it is business for big pharmaceutical companies.

But history teaches that dismissing Ebola as mirage is most dangerous thing to do.

Nigeria's experience with Ebola in 2014 is story that should never be forgotten. On July 20, 2014, Patrick Sawyer, a Liberian-American man, collapsed at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos. He was infected with Ebola Zaire strain, the deadliest. He had come from Liberia where outbreak was raging. He was supposed to be in quarantine in Liberia, but he flew to Nigeria. He was taken to First Consultants Hospital, Obalende. There, he infected nurses, doctors, and hospital staff. One nurse, Justina Ejelonu, was pregnant, she died. Doctor Ameyo Adadevoh, who stopped Sawyer from leaving hospital to go to church and infect hundreds, died. She paid with her life. In total, Nigeria had 20 cases, 8 deaths. It could have been thousands, but for quick action by Lagos State Government, Federal Government, and heroes like Dr Adadevoh.

That outbreak taught Nigeria three lessons. First, Ebola is real and kills fast. Fatality rate is between 25 percent and 90 percent, depending on strain. There is no cure, only supportive care. Second, Nigeria's health system is fragile, with one doctor to over 5,000 people, with many hospitals having no isolation wards, no personal protective equipment, no water. Third, containment is possible with political will, contact tracing, and community engagement. Nigeria contained Ebola in 93 days, a feat WHO called miracle.

So why is question of real or mirage coming again? Because Nigeria has relaxed.



Muhammed Ali Pate, Minister of Health

After 2014, Nigeria built Ebola treatment centres in Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. It trained rapid response teams. It created Nigeria Centre for Disease Control. But in 2025, many of those centres are empty, with no staff, no equipment. Rapid response teams have not been trained in 3 years. NCDC is underfunded, with budget less than N20 billion, not enough to monitor 230 million people. At airports, temperature screening that was strict during COVID has been relaxed. At land borders like Seme, Idi Iroko, and Jibiya, screening is paper exercise. So if Ebola enters again, will we be ready? Many health experts say no.

There is also problem of misinformation. On WhatsApp, people share messages that salt water cures Ebola, that bitter kola cures Ebola, that Ebola is not in Africa but invented by white people to reduce population. In 2014, many Nigerians drank salt water and died. In 2025, same messages are circulating again. If people believe Ebola is mirage, they will not report cases, they will hide sick relatives, they will go to church for deliverance instead of hospital, and they will infect others.

The argument that Ebola is mirage comes from three sources. Some say it is political, that government wants to declare emergency to collect donor money. Some say it is religious, that God will protect. Some say it is confusion with other fevers. After all, malaria, typhoid, and Lassa fever present with fever, vomiting, and bleeding, similar to early Ebola. So how do we know it is Ebola? Without lab test, we cannot know. And Nigeria has only 5 labs that can test Ebola with biosafety level 4. So diagnosis is delayed.

But Ebola is not mirage. It is real virus with real reservoir. Scientists have shown that fruit bats are natural hosts of Ebola. Bats live in forests across Nigeria, from Cross River to Omo forest in Ogun. When humans encroach into forest, cut trees, hunt bats, eat bats, they come into contact with virus. That is how spillover happens. In Uganda, outbreak started after man hunted bats in forest. In Nigeria, many communities hunt bats, monkeys, and antelopes as bushmeat. So risk is real. Climate change, deforestation, and urbanization increase contact between humans and bats, increasing risk of outbreak.

There is also risk of importation. Nigeria is travel hub. Over 100 flights enter Nigeria daily from across Africa, including from East and Central Africa where Ebola outbreaks occur. One infected passenger who evades screening can start outbreak, as Patrick Sawyer did. Land borders are even more porous, with thousands crossing daily without screening.

So what must Nigeria do to answer question of real or mirage with action?

First, we must accept that Ebola is real threat and invest in preparedness, not panic. Federal Government should fund NCDC adequately, with at least N50 billion yearly, to maintain treatment centres, train health workers, and stock personal protective equipment. Each state should have at least one isolation centre with 20 beds, functional, not just signboard. Health workers should be trained yearly on infection prevention, not once in 10 years.

Second, we must strengthen surveillance at points of entry. Airports, seaports, and land borders should have functional thermal scanners, rapid test kits, and holding rooms. Health officers should be motivated, not left without allowance for months. Community surveillance should be revived, where traditional birth attendants, patent medicine dealers, and community leaders are trained to report unusual deaths or bleeding.

Third, we must fight misinformation with information. NCDC and National Orientation Agency should use radio, television, WhatsApp, and town criers to tell people what Ebola is, how it spreads, and what to do. Messages should be in Pidgin, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, and local languages. Religious and traditional leaders should be engaged, because people listen to them more than government. In 2014, it was when pastors and imams told people to report cases that containment worked.

Fourth, we must invest in lab capacity. Nigeria needs at least 10 labs across geopolitical zones that can test Ebola within 6 hours, not 6 days. Samples should not have to go to Lagos alone. We must also invest in research. Nigerian scientists at Redeemer's University, Ede, discovered that some local herbs have antiviral properties. That research should be funded, so Nigeria can develop its own rapid test and maybe treatment.

Fifth, we must address bushmeat and deforestation. We cannot stop people from eating bushmeat, but we can teach safe handling, cooking well, and avoiding bats and sick animals. Forestry laws should be enforced to stop indiscriminate cutting of forests where bats live.

Finally, we must remember heroes. Dr Ameyo Adadevoh, Justina Ejelonu, and others died so Nigeria could live. Their sacrifice should not be in vain. The hospital where Adadevoh died should have a centre of excellence named after her, not just plaque. Her family should be supported. When we remember, we prepare.

In Seme border, Chidi still holds thermometer. He checks, he writes, he lets go. He hopes it is not Ebola. Hope is not strategy.

Ebola is not mirage. It is real virus waiting for weak system to exploit. Nigeria contained it in 2014 because system, though weak, acted fast and honestly. In 2026, with population bigger, movement more, and system weaker, can we contain again? That is question we must answer not with debate, but with budget, training, and vigilance.

Because next time, thermometer may not be enough.So, poverty mentality is not about refusing a phone or a washing machine. It is about believing that comfort alone will save your child. It won't. What will save them is the combination: exposure plus discipline, technology plus basic skills, ambition plus the memory of what it felt like to do without. That is how you raise children who are not just consumers of the future, but builders of it.

FEATURE

Will Nigeria bounce back? Tinubu's strides to rejig the economiy

James Ifidon



PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

At Computer Village, Ikeja, a phone seller named Emeka stares at his shelf. In January 2023, he bought iPhone 13 for N450,000 and sold for N500,000. Today, same phone costs N1.2 million. Customers come, ask price, and walk away. His sales have dropped by 70 percent. He has two staff he may sack. He asks, will Nigeria bounce back? Will this hardship end?

That question is asked in every market, every bus stop, every office in Nigeria today. Since President Bola Ahmed Tinubu took over on May 29, 2023, Nigeria's economy has gone through most radical reforms in 30 years. Some call it painful but necessary, some call it harsh and IMF-imposed. But one thing is clear, old economy that was living on subsidy and borrowing could no longer continue.

When Tinubu took over, he inherited economy that was almost dead. Fuel subsidy was costing Nigeria over N7 trillion yearly, more than budget for health, education, and infrastructure combined. Yet fuel was still scarce, with queues everywhere. Crude oil theft was at peak, with Nigeria producing less than 1 million barrels per day against OPEC quota of 1.8 million. Foreign reserves were depleted, used to defend naira artificially at N450 to dollar while black market was N750. Debt servicing was consuming over 90 percent of revenue, meaning government borrowed to pay salaries. Inflation was already 22 percent, unemployment over 33 percent, and 133 million Nigerians were in multidimensional poverty according to National Bureau of Statistics.

The former President Buhari's government had printed over N22 trillion through Ways and Means from Central Bank, causing inflation, without corresponding production. It was economy on oxygen.

Tinubu, in his inaugural speech, said two things that shocked market: fuel subsidy is gone, and exchange rate unification is needed. Those two statements set tone for reforms that are still unfolding.

First reform was fuel subsidy removal. On May 29, 2023, President announced subsidy gone. Overnight, fuel price moved from N195 to N540, later to N1,200 in some areas. The argument of government was that subsidy benefited only smugglers and rich who own many cars, not poor. Data showed that Nigeria spent over N13 trillion on subsidy in 10 years, money that could have built 10 refineries. Tinubu said savings from subsidy would be used for infrastructure, education, health, and palliatives.

What has happened? Federation Account Allocation Committee sharing to federal, state, and local governments has doubled. States that used to get N4 billion monthly now get N8 billion to N10 billion. In theory, they should use it for development. In practice, many states still owe salaries and have not shown what they did with extra money. Federal Government rolled out palliatives of N5 billion per state, but many Nigerians say they did not see it. Cost of transport tripled, cost of food doubled, cost of living crisis deepened. So subsidy removal, though economically correct, has not translated to relief for ordinary Nigerian like Emeka in Computer Village.

Second reform was exchange rate unification. Central Bank under new Governor, Yemi Cardoso, collapsed multiple exchange rates and allowed naira to float. Official rate moved from N450 to N1,600 at a point, now hovering around N1,500. The aim was to stop arbitrage, where connected people got dollar at N450 from CBN and sold at N750 in black market, making billions without work. That arbitrage destroyed manufacturing because manufacturers could not get dollar at official rate, so they bought at black market at high cost.

Unification has restored some confidence. Foreign investors who left because they could not repatriate dollars are returning slowly. Foreign portfolio investment increased by over 40 percent in 2024. But naira depreciation has caused inflation, because Nigeria imports almost everything, from fuel to toothpick. So price of goods imported, like phones Emeka sells, tripled.

Third reform is revenue and tax. Tinubu's government set up Tax Reform Committee headed by Taiwo Oyedele, which proposed over 50 tax reforms to simplify taxes and increase revenue without burdening poor. The committee said Nigeria has over 60 official taxes, many duplicated, that kill small businesses. It proposed single-digit tax for small businesses, and increase in VAT on luxury goods, not basic food. In 2025, National Assembly passed some of these reforms. Also, government increased efforts to block oil theft. Through partnership with private security contractors and navy, oil production has risen from 1 million barrels to over 1.6 million barrels per day in late 2024, increasing revenue.

Fourth reform is infrastructure and refinery. The biggest hope for bouncing back is Dangote Refinery, 650,000 barrels per day, which started production in 2024. For first time in 20 years, Nigeria is refining fuel at home, not importing. Port Harcourt refinery and Warri refinery have also been rehabilitated with over 1 billion dollars, though their full capacity is still in doubt. If refineries work at 80 percent, Nigeria can save over 10 billion dollars yearly on importation and naira will strengthen.

Government also removed import ban on 43 items previously banned from accessing forex, to reduce smuggling and increase transparency. It also launched student loan scheme, consumer credit scheme, and CNG initiative to convert cars from petrol to gas at cheaper cost.

> Ultimately, the changing attitude of young Nigerians towards marriage reflects a wider transformation in how they understand adulthood, success and responsibility. They are increasingly interested in building identities, careers and financial foundations before taking on the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood.

So will Nigeria bounce back? The answer depends on three things.

One, will savings from subsidy and exchange rate be used for production or for politics? If states use extra allocation to build roads, power, and support agriculture, economy will bounce back. If they use it to buy SUVs for lawmakers and build flyovers in villages where people need water, it will not.

Two, will government be consistent? In past, reforms were reversed after pressure. If Tinubu reverses subsidy or returns to fixing naira artificially because of protest, investors will lose confidence again. Consistency is key.

Three, will ordinary people feel relief soon? Economic theory says reforms cause short-term pain and long-term gain. But Nigerians have been in pain for 8 years. They need quick wins. Government needs to provide mass transit buses powered by CNG at N200 per trip, not N800, to reduce transport cost. It needs to provide single-digit loans to small businesses like Emeka's, not just big companies. It needs to enforce that palliatives reach poor, not politicians.

Data shows some green shoots. Inflation, which hit 34 percent in mid-2024, has started to slow to 28 percent in early 2026. GDP growth, which was 2.9 percent in 2023, is projected at 3.8 percent in 2026 by World Bank. Foreign reserves have increased from 32 billion dollars to over 38 billion dollars. But unemployment and poverty remain high.

Tinubu's strides are bold, no doubt. He took decisions that previous presidents avoided because they were politically risky. He removed subsidy that was like big elephant in room, he unified exchange rate that was ATM for cabal, he is pushing tax reform that will make Nigeria less dependent on oil. These are steps that if sustained, can rejig economy.

But reform without human face will fail. Economy is not GDP, it is Emeka's ability to sell phone, to feed family, to pay rent. If Emeka cannot sell, economy has not bounced back, no matter what IMF says.

Nigeria will bounce back if reforms lead to factories working, farms producing, lights staying on, and jobs created. Nigeria has population, market, gas, sun, and hardworking youths. What it needs is power, good roads, cheap credit, and security for farmers and traders.

Emeka in Computer Village still waits. He has not sacked his staff yet. He hopes that by December, dollar will come down, price of phones will stabilize, customers will return.

That hope is what keeps Nigeria going. Government must turn hope to reality, and quickly, before hope itself Japa.

Ultimately, the changing attitude of young Nigerians towards marriage reflects a wider transformation in how they understand adulthood, success and responsibility. They are increasingly interested in building identities, careers and financial foundations before taking on the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood.

For many of them, the goal is not to reject the altar but to approach it better prepared.

After all, the wedding may last a day, but the responsibilities that follow can last a lifetime.

For a generation increasingly conscious of the realities of raising a family in Nigeria, the question is no longer simply about getting married. It is about being ready to build, sustain and nurture the family that comes after the celebration.

FEATURE

Praying the Lord's Prayer

BY APOSTLE SULE FARADAY AZEKHUMEN

The Lord's Prayer gives us the blessing which pattern are you teaching the people. Are you teaching people the Lord's Prayer or are you reciting the Lord's Prayer? Matthew 6:9-14; Luke 11:1-4:

When you are praying the Lord's Prayer, you feel it in your spirit, through prayer we communicate with our heavenly father.

Jesus' kind of prayer yielded good result. Jesus' kind of prayer is a prayer of warfare.

Our relationship with God matters a lot. Matthew 6:9. When we pray our father in heaven you draw God's presence to yourself. Roman 8:15 you are telling God it is your son/daughter again.

Worship God before any request Job 42:10. Seek God's kingdom when establishing God's fact. When you seek God's kingdom and his will, you will receive God's blessings. You need to have a personal relationship with God. Matthew 10.

It is a must to pray the Lord's Prayer and if you are not teaching your congregation the Lord's Prayer, you are not doing the right thing. God is a righteous God. You may convince the judge in a law court but you can't convince God who is the Maker of Heaven and Earth.

God's plan for your life cannot be changed by the devil. Depend on God daily. Stop disturbing yourself of what you will eat tomorrow, God is the owner of tomorrow, he will make provision for your needs.

Daily bread represents our emotional, physical and spiritual needs. There is no prayer you pray that God cannot answer.

Everyone needs to ask God for forgiveness, for not living up to God's expectation in the area we know that we have failed God our father. You must pray for you to be able to overcome every temptation in this life.

We need strength from God to overcome trials and temptations that are brought by the enemy of our life and progress.

The Christian life involves spiritual warfare. The world is a terrible place. Some people want to always pull other people down but God is the lifter of everyone. Depend on God's power to overcome. Give God all the glory, Matthew 6:13; and teach your children the Lord's Prayer. Every prayer should end with prayer of faith.

As a believer, when God show syou what the enemy is planning, you should know that God has disappointed them already, Luke 19:27. He is just waiting for you to pray to cancel the enemy's plans. If you pray, you have the upper hand over the enemy ,the devil; Judges 6:23. Acts 16:25; Esther 4:16. You may be going through storms of life but the Lord has not forgotten you. Psalm 46:1; 118:17; John 3:27; Believe the word of God Acts 28:4,6,8,9; 27:25. Christianity without results is an insult; Psalm 138:8; Daniel 12:3. There shall be no loss of life, because our life is hid in Christ Jesus.

Compiled by Helen Bazuaye



APOSTLE SULE FARADAY AZEKHUMEN

ArtsWorld

with Francis Odupute
08023680030

Netanyahu and the new world: Israel's longest serving leader in an age of uncertainty

BEN SOLOMON

On October 7, 2023, Benjamin Netanyahu woke up as Prime Minister of Israel facing political crisis. By evening, he woke up as wartime Prime Minister facing existential crisis. Hamas had attacked Israel, killed over 1,200 people, kidnapped over 250, in worst attack on Jews since Holocaust. Netanyahu, who had built his career on image of Mr Security, was caught unprepared. Many thought his career was over. Two years later, in 2026, he is still Prime Minister, still standing, still dominating Israeli politics, despite protests, court cases, and international arrest warrant.

Who is Benjamin Netanyahu and what does his survival tell us about current political realities?

Benjamin Netanyahu, born in 1949 in Tel Aviv, son of historian Benzion Netanyahu, is Israel's longest serving Prime Minister, having served over 16 years in total, from 1996 to 1999, and from 2009 to 2021, and again from 2022 till date. He is leader of Likud Party, right-wing party that believes in strong security, free market, and Jewish identity of Israel. He is called Bibi by supporters and opponents. He is loved by many Israelis as strong leader who protects Israel, and hated by many as divisive, corrupt, and power-hungry.

His political philosophy is simple: Israel lives in tough neighborhood, surrounded by enemies who want to destroy it, so Israel must be strong militarily, must not trust international promises, and must control security itself. He opposed Oslo Peace Accords in 1990s, which gave Palestinians self-rule in parts of West Bank and Gaza, arguing it would bring terrorism, not peace. He supported settlements in West Bank, arguing Jews have historic right to Judea and Samaria.

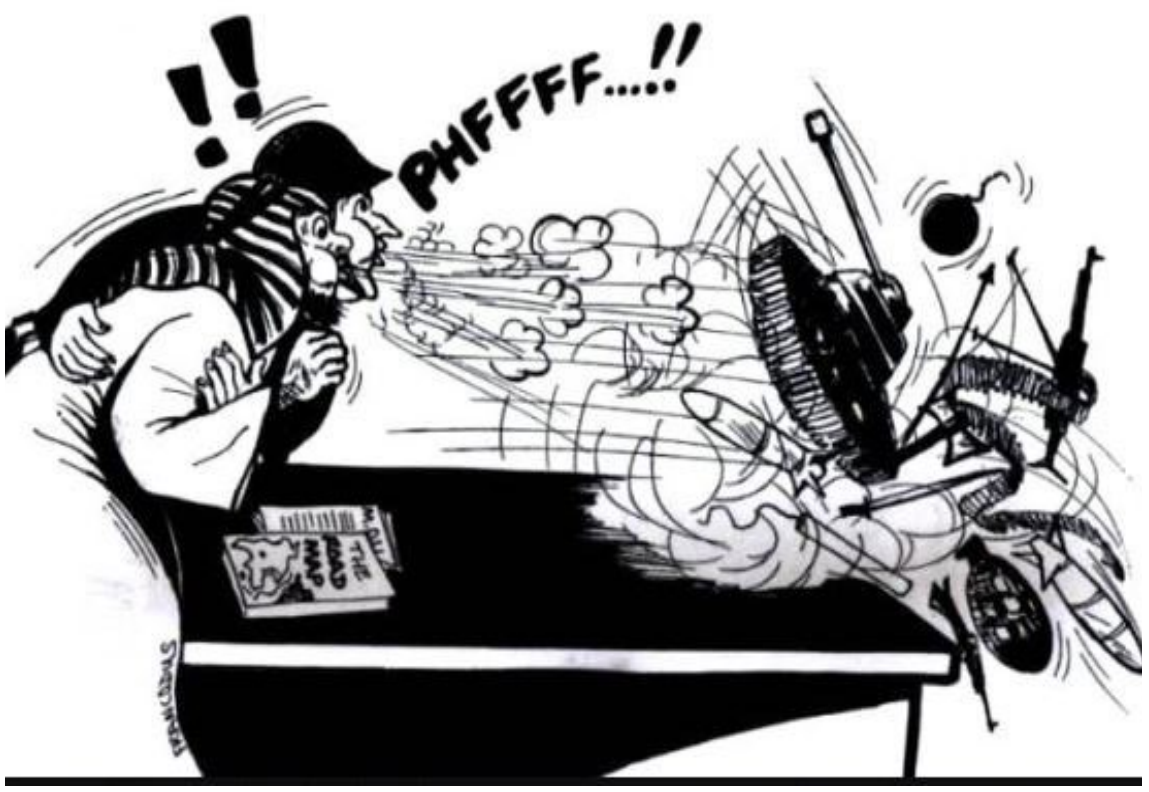
For many years, his strategy was to manage conflict, not solve it. He believed peace with Palestinians was not possible now, so Israel should manage security, grow economy, and make peace with Arab countries without giving much to Palestinians. That strategy led to Abraham Accords in 2020, where Israel made peace with United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan, under President Trump's mediation. It was historic, because for first time, Arab countries made peace with Israel without requiring Palestinian state first. Netanyahu took credit.

But October 7 changed everything. Hamas attack showed that managing conflict without solving it has limits. The attack exposed intelligence failure, military failure, and political failure. Netanyahu's government, which had focused on judicial reform that divided country in 2023, was accused of ignoring warnings about Hamas.

After attack, Netanyahu declared war on Hamas, vowing to destroy Hamas completely. Israel launched massive bombardment of Gaza, followed by ground invasion. Over 40,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to Gaza Health Ministry, over 100,000 injured, and Gaza largely destroyed. International Court of Justice is hearing genocide case against Israel, and International Criminal Court issued arrest warrant for Netanyahu and Hamas leaders for war crimes. Netanyahu dismissed ICC as anti-Semitic.

War in Gaza has expanded to wider regional war. Hezbollah in Lebanon attacked Israel from north, leading to war in Lebanon in 2024. Iran, which supports Hamas and Hezbollah, launched over 300 missiles and drones at Israel in April 2024 and October 2026.

CARTOON By Francis Odupute



Sports

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



TCC League: 'Beyond limits should be scared' – Akinyelu sends strong message ahead of their clash

Gbagada FC coach Akinyelu Olajide has sent a strong warning to defending champions Beyond Limits, declaring that the Remo-based side should be scared ahead of their TCC League Matchday Eight encounter on Monday, November 2.

READ ALSO: TCC League: Gbagada FC Celebrates 13th Anniversary as Akinyelu Reaffirms Commitment to Grassroots Football .

The highly anticipated fixture is scheduled for 4:00 pm at Ikenne, Ogun State, with Gbagada targeting maximum points against the reigning champions following their impressive 1-1 draw against league leaders Imperial FC last weekend.

Speaking ahead of the encounter, Sport247 reports that Akinyelu expressed confidence in his team's attacking strength, insisting that his players understand Beyond Limits' possession-based approach and preference for short passes.

"Beyond Limits are a side we know so well. They like to control the game with short passes and hold on to possession, but we already know how we want to play them," Akinyelu said.

Highlighting his team's attacking threat, the Gbagada tactician added: "With Femi on the left flank, with Chinedu on the right, I think Beyond Limits should be scared."

Dakar 2026: Nigerian swimmers begin campaign with heat finishes

Two Nigerian swimmers, Tobiloba Akinsanmi and Aidan Dumuje-Abili, began their campaigns at the ongoing Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games with appearances in their respective 100m Butterfly events on Day 1 of the competition.

Akinsanmi competed in the women's 100m Butterfly, finishing sixth in Heat 2 with a time of 34.70 seconds.

In the men's category, Grange International School student Dumuje-Abili finished fifth in his heat after clocking 27.45 seconds.

The Nigerian duo will be hoping to build on their performances as they continue their participation in the swimming events at the Games.

The Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games bring together young athletes from across the world to compete in various sporting disciplines

Rivers United stay top after home draw with closest challengers Enugu Rangers

Rivers United remain top of the NPFL after they were pegged back by closest rivals Enugu Rangers, while Shooting Stars, Bendel Insurance and Kano Pillars were back to winning ways.

Chijioke Mbaoma put hosts Rivers United after 17 minutes only for another experienced goal poacher Godwin Obaje to draw Rangers level on 53 minutes.

Rivers United maintained top spot on 18 points after 11 matches, while Rangers are second with same points but having played two matches less.

Bendel Insurance also on 18 points are third in the standings after a 2-1 win at Kwara United, while Kano Pillars stopped Nasarawa United 2-0 at home to move to fourth position.

At the other end of the table, Inter Lagos, Ranchers Bees, Abia Warriors and Warri Wolves.

Nigeria's Kuti one win Away from Table Tennis knockout stage

Nigeria's deputy captain, Matthew Kuti, is one win away from securing a place in the knockout stage of the men's singles table tennis event at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games taking place at the Dakar Expo Centre in Senegal.

Kuti and his compatriot, Favour Ojo, were eliminated in the mixed doubles round of 16 after suffering defeat to their Thai counterparts on the opening day of competition on Saturday, 31 October 2026.

In the men's singles event, Kuti was drawn in Group C alongside Youssef Aidli of Tunisia, Li Ki Ho of Hong Kong, and Francesco Travesan of Italy, with the top two players advancing to the knockout stage.

Kuti endured a difficult start to his campaign, falling 3-0 (11-4, 11-4, 11-3) to Hong Kong's Li, whose pace and attacking play proved too much for the Nigerian.

However, the African Youth Cup champion bounced back in style with a 3-1 (11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 11-7) victory over Tunisia's Aidli, setting up a decisive clash against Italy's Travesan on Monday, 2 November.

Meanwhile, Ojo was unable to recover from her opening-group defeat, losing 3-1 to Egypt's Yara Elbadawy. The result marked her second group-stage loss, ending her hopes of progressing to the knockout rounds.

Despite the challenges, Kuti remains upbeat about his chances of reaching the next stage.

"It has not been easy for us here in Dakar

Road to Abuja half marathon: organisers step up preparations ahead of November race

The Federal Capital Territory is set to welcome thousands of athletes and running enthusiasts in 14 days as preparations intensify for the PremiumTrust Bank Abuja City International Half Marathon.

The highly anticipated event is expected to bring together elite international athletes, professional running clubs, corporate teams, fitness enthusiasts and recreational runners for a 21.1-kilometre race through the major districts of Nigeria's capital.

Beyond the competitive action, the half marathon is designed to showcase Abuja's beauty, infrastructure and tourism potential while promoting sports development, healthy living and community participation.

Organised by Nilayo Sports Limited, the event is expected to attract significant attention from the athletics community, with participants having the opportunity to compete in an international-standard road race.

Nilayo Sports Limited said its involvement goes beyond organising a sporting competition, stressing its commitment to promoting wellness, empowering young people and positioning Nigeria as a destination for world-class sporting events.

"We believe in building excellence, and there is no better symbol of excellence than the marathon, where consistency, preparation and resilience meet," the organisers stated.

With just 14 days remaining, preparations are gathering momentum, with organisers focusing on route safety, medical services, logistics, electronic timing systems and volunteer mobilisation to guarantee a smooth and successful event.

The competition will offer prize money and global ranking points for elite athletes, providing an opportunity for professional runners to improve their international standing.

For recreational runners and fitness enthusiasts, however, the event presents an opportunity to participate in a major international sporting occasion while celebrating fitness, endurance and the spirit of community.



Sports

NSC, International Volleyball Federation enter landmark partnership to transform Volleyball in Nigeria

The National Sports Commission has recorded a major breakthrough for the development of volleyball in Nigeria following a milestone meeting in Dakar, Senegal with the International Volleyball Federation, the world governing body for the sport.

The meeting, which was held in a spirit of mutual respect and shared ambition, culminated in a firm commitment from the FIVB to provide comprehensive technical support, funding, and coaching expertise to fast-track the growth of both Beach Volleyball and Indoor Volleyball in Nigeria.

The partnership is strategically designed to strengthen the entire volleyball ecosystem in the country, from grassroots participation and talent identification to elite performance, coaching education, refereeing standards, and competition structure.

This development comes at a historic moment for Nigerian volleyball. Recall that the Nigeria Beach Volleyball Team qualified for the Olympic Games for the first time in the country's history, a landmark achievement that not only captured national attention but also demonstrated Nigeria's enormous potential on the world stage. The FIVB's intervention is therefore timely, as it will build on that momentum and provide the structured support needed to sustain and surpass that success.

Speaking after the meeting, the Director General of the National Sports Commission, in his usual approach of purposeful engagement and results-driven leadership, expressed profound appreciation to the FIVB for recognizing Nigeria as one of the greatest in the game.

"The meeting is quite productive, what a fruitful deliberation with the International Volleyball Federation. It gladdens my heart to know that international volleyball has seen Nigeria as one of the greatest in the game. They have offered technical support, funding, coaching and other resources that can aid the development of volleyball in Nigeria," he said.

"Recall that Nigeria has qualified for the Olympics in Los Angeles and with this, we will keep discovering talent, we will not relent in our efforts."

The Director General assured the Federation of a robust, transparent, and long-term relationship anchored on accountability, excellence, and shared development goals. He noted that the Commission is committed to providing the enabling environment, institutional support, and political will required to ensure that the partnership delivers tangible results for athletes, coaches, and the entire volleyball family.

He further emphasized that the NSC views volleyball as one of the strategic sports with the capacity to create jobs, inspire the youth, promote national unity, and project Nigeria positively to the world. The collaboration with the FIVB, he said, aligns perfectly with the Commission's vision of repositioning Nigerian sports for sustainable development.



Mobi Oparaku kicks off 2026/2027 NNL season as Heartland and Crown FC share four-goal thriller

Owerri football legend Mobi Patrick Oparaku performed the ceremonial kick-off of the 2026/2027 Nigeria National League (NNL) season as Heartland FC and Crown FC played out an entertaining 2-2 draw at the Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri, on Sunday, November 1, 2026.

Sports247 reports that the Conference A opening fixture, which commenced at 4pm, provided an exciting start to the new campaign, with both sides sharing four goals in front of the home supporters.

Oparaku's selection for the ceremonial kick-off carried significant historical importance, given his deep connection with Owerri and Heartland FC. Born in Umunkwocha, Umuonyeche, Owerri Municipal Council, Imo State, the former Nigerian international began his professional football journey with Iwuanyanwu Nationale, now known as Heartland FC.

Having started his career just behind the Dan Anyiam Stadium, Oparaku went on to feature for clubs in Belgium, the United States and Jamaica before returning to Nigeria, where he won the league title and Federation Cup with Enyimba.

His international career remains distinguished, having been part of Nigeria's Golden Eaglets squad that won the 1993 FIFA U-17 World Cup in Japan, the Dream Team that clinched the historic Olympic gold medal at Atlanta 1996, and the Super Eagles squad at the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France.

Meanwhile, the opening match lived up to expectations as Heartland, managed by former Super Eagles international Emmanuel Amuneke, took an early lead through Ekene Osuigwe in the 11th minute.

Jonathan Osondu doubled the Naze Millionaires' advantage deep into first-half stoppage time, scoring in the 45+3rd minute to give the hosts a 2-0 lead at the break.

However, Crown FC demonstrated resilience after the restart, with Osas Kelvin and Lekan Mustapha finding the net to complete an impressive comeback and secure a 2-2 draw for the visitors.

The result means both teams begin their 2026/2027 NNL campaigns with a point, although Heartland will reflect on an opportunity to secure maximum points after surrendering their two-goal advantage.

Oparaku's ceremonial involvement added a special touch to the occasion, connecting the league's new campaign with one of Nigeria's celebrated football generations.

Dakar 2026: Nigeria showcases sporting pride at historic African Youth Olympics

Team Nigeria was among the standout contingents at the colourful opening ceremony of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games on Saturday, as the historic sporting event officially commenced in Senegal with a celebration of African culture, unity and sporting excellence.

Led by athletics sensation Rosemary Chigozie Nwankwo, who served as the nation's flagbearer, the Nigerian contingent marched into the packed Abdoulaye Wade Stadium in Diamniadio, proudly displaying the country's green and white colours before thousands of spectators and a global television audience.

The ceremony marked a landmark moment for the African continent, with Senegal becoming the first African nation to host an Olympic sporting event. Young athletes from across the world have gathered in the country for the fourth edition of the Summer Youth Olympic Games.

Nwankwo, regarded as one of Nigeria's promising medal prospects, carried the national flag with pride, representing the hopes and aspirations of the country's 19-member contingent. The Nigerian team comprises 12 female and seven male athletes competing across six sporting disciplines.

The young sprinter is expected to play a key role in Nigeria's athletics campaign, particularly in the women's 100 metres, where she will be seeking to convert her potential into a podium finish.

The opening ceremony was a colourful showcase of Senegalese culture and hospitality, featuring traditional music, dance, elaborate choreography and captivating performances that reflected the country's rich cultural heritage.

The celebrations also provided an opportunity to highlight the significance of the Games, which will bring together emerging sporting talents from different parts of the world for 13 days of competition across Dakar, Diamniadio and Saly.

A major highlight of the evening was the arrival of the Youth Olympic flame at the stadium following an extensive journey through Senegal's 14 administrative regions over a period of more than 45 days.

VFA scouting tournament begins in Benin with Brazilian, French scouts in attendance

Kehinde Osagiede

BENIN CITY

The Victoria Football Academy (VFA) Scouting Tournament 2026 kicks off tomorrow at the S&T Barracks, Ugbowo, Benin City, with international scouts from France and Brazil already in the city to watch emerging talents.

Themed "Discover • Develop • Excel," the three-day competition, organised by the Benin-based Victoria Football Academy, runs from November 3 to 5. Matches begin at 9:00 a.m. each day.

Six teams are participating. They include Victoria Football Academy, Westgate FC, Alhaji FA, Dynamo Academica, Rolly FC and Ine Stars FC. They will play a series of fixtures designed to showcase players' technical ability, tactical understanding and discipline.

Among the visiting scouts are Philippe Kontostavlos, a FIFA-licensed agent from France, and Mesquita da Silva from Brazil. Also expected is Brazilian scout Dutra da Vergas Claudinei, who has previously worked with clubs including Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain(PSG).

Organisers say the tournament is aimed at identifying and developing young football talents while connecting grassroots football in Nigeria with international scouting networks.

The presence of the scouts offers participating players a chance to attract wider attention and possible career opportunities abroad. #

Nigeria U-23: Chelle prepares major squad shake-up

Olympic Eagles head coach Eric Chelle is expected to trim Nigeria's U-23 squad as preparations intensify for the upcoming Africa U-23 Cup of Nations qualifying fixtures against the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo).

Chelle initially invited 31 players from Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) clubs for the first phase of the team's training camp as he assesses the domestic-based talents ahead of the crucial qualifiers.

The invited players had their first opportunity to impress the technical crew during a friendly encounter against Nigeria National League (NNL) side Remo Stars on Saturday, with the match ending in a goalless draw.

Following the exercise, the Franco-Malian tactician is understood to have made decisions regarding the composition of the squad, with some of the players expected to be released, leaving the rest of the domestic-based players in contention.

SPORTS

The Nigerian OBSERVER
That The People May Know

Ex-FIFA GS joins historic celebration as Africa welcomes first youth Olympic games

Former FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samba Diouf Samoura joined the final procession of Olympic Flame bearers in Dakar ahead of the official opening ceremony of the 2026 Youth Olympic Games, marking a significant moment in Senegal's preparations to host the first Olympic event on African soil.

Samoura participated in the final leg of the relay alongside international personalities, including Senegalese social media star Khaby Lame, actor Omar Sy, wrestling champion Modou Lô and other prominent figures from sports, entertainment and public life.

The final procession, held in a celebratory atmosphere in Dakar, brought together athletes, artists and residents to celebrate the Olympic spirit and the role of African youth in shaping the continent's future.

The Olympic Flame, which originated in Athens, travelled across Senegal for 47 days, covering more than 3,650 kilometres from Dakar to Ziguinchor and back to the capital.

The nationwide relay passed through Thiès, Saint-Louis, Matam, Kaolack, Tambacounda, Kédougou and Kolda, among other locations, covering all 14 regions of the country.

Approximately 450 torchbearers participated in more than 30 stages of the relay, which also featured sporting, cultural and educational activities designed to engage young people and local communities.

The Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games represent a historic breakthrough for Africa, as Senegal becomes the first African country to host an Olympic event.

The Games mark a new chapter in the history of the Olympic movement, providing a global platform to showcase Africa's sporting potential, cultural diversity and youthful population.

Organisers expect approximately 2,700 athletes to compete across around 20 sporting disciplines, with the event being celebrated under the motto, "Africa welcomes, Dakar celebrates."

The hosting of the Games is also expected to strengthen Africa's position in international sport while creating opportunities for young athletes to demonstrate their talents on a global stage.

Samoura's participation in the final torch relay reflects her longstanding contribution to international sports administration and development.

A Senegalese national, she spent more than two decades working with the United Nations, holding senior positions in humanitarian affairs and development across several continents.

In 2016, she made history when she was appointed FIFA Secretary General, becoming the first woman and the first African to occupy the position. She served in the role until 2023, overseeing the federation's administration and contributing to the organisation of several FIFA World Cups.

During her tenure, she also supported initiatives aimed at expanding football development, particularly women's football, while promoting improved governance and modernisation within the global football governing body.

Following her departure from FIFA, Samoura has continued her involvement in international sports and development initiatives. She is currently a member of the FIA Senate and serves on the boards of organisations including Seed Project and African Collaborations Group (ACG).

Her participation in the final Olympic Flame relay symbolised the connection between her experience in global sports administration and Africa's growing ambitions on the international sporting stage.

"To carry the flame is to carry a dream, and to pass it on is to pass on its energy," Samoura said.

The final Olympic Flame relay preceded the opening ceremony of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games, which took place on October 31 at the Abdoulaye Wade Stadium in Diamniadio.

The ceremony was attended by Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Kirsty Coventry, Dakar 2026 Organising Committee President Mamadou Diagna Ndiaye and sports ministers representing African countries.

The ceremony officially launched the first Youth Olympic Games to be staged on the African continent, placing Senegal at the centre of a historic moment for African sport.

For Samoura and other prominent personalities who participated in the Flame relay, the occasion represented more than a ceremonial celebration. It underscored the power of sport to unite communities, inspire young people and strengthen Africa's presence on the global sporting stage.



Flamingos leading scorer Oluebube Umejiaku shoots for goal

Only the free-scoring Samba Girls of Brazil stand between the Flamingos and a place in a first-ever U17 Women's World Cup final.

Wednesday night in Rabat, Nigeria will have a chance to slug it out with the South Americans, while the other semifinal will be an all-Asian contest between Japan and defending champions North Korea.

Both Nigeria and Brazil left it late before they progressed to the last-four.

Skipper Azezat Oduntan put away a penalty a minute to fulltime before the Flamingos could see off a spirited Venezuela, while Brazil were stretched by China before they eventually triumphed 2-1.

Coach Akeem Busari has praised the character and resilience of the Nigerian girls after they lost their first game under his watch to Poland in their opening game at this World Cup.

They have since racked up four straight wins including an eye-popping 3-0 win over defending world champions North Korea.

Nigeria have featured in all eight U17 World Cups with their best-ever performance being a third-place finish in 2022.

They have what it takes to improve on this outing going by the quality of the talent they have paraded in Morocco.

Sixteen-year-old striker Kemi Adegbuyi is certainly destined for greatness after what she has already achieved at the WAFU B CAF Champions League qualifiers as well as the NWFL.

She makes up for her lack of size with her mastery of the ball and quickness.

The stocky Oluebube Umiajiaku is the team's leading scorer with three goals and like Adegbuyi she has already proved her mettle internationally at WAFU Champions League qualifying tournament. The girls have further been boosted with the return of five players, who featured at the recent U20 World Cup in Poland – goalkeeper Jane Ijirigho, Tosin Rafiu, Precious Oscar, Queen Joseph and Favour Nkwocha.

These players are the future of the Super falcons and their emergence could not have come at a more apt time than now when the 10-time Africans desperately need young players and new energy.

Will it be a rematch between the Flamingos and defending champions North Korea in the World Cup final Saturday?

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