IGP Disu shakes up police, posts 13 AIGs, two CPs to new commands

Akahomen Miracle Gift/ Aghedo Iyobor

ABUJA

The Inspector-General of Police, Olatunji Disu, has ordered a major redeployment of senior police officers, posting 13 Assistant Inspectors-General of Police (AIGs) and two Commissioners of Police (CPs) to new commands, departments and specialised formations across the country.

The postings, which take immediate effect, were contained in a police wireless message dated November 15, 2026, issued by the Force Secretariat, Abuja, and addressed to all zonal, state and specialised commands.

The directive, marked "Most Immediate," affects strategic positions at the Force Headquarters, zonal commands and specialised police formations.

Under the new arrangement, AIG Enyinnaya I. Adiogu has been posted to Zone 4, Makurdi; AIG Ibrahim Maikaba Balarabe to Zone 7, Abuja; AIG Ohagwu Felix Ndukwe to Zone 17, Akure; while AIG Regina Cosmas Udoette moves to Zone 16, Yenagoa.

At the Force Headquarters in Abuja, AIG Clement Robert has been posted to the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), while AIG Olusegun Eyitayo Omosayin takes charge of the Department of Training and Development.

Similarly, AIG Afolabi Wilfred Olutokunbo has been posted to the Department of Operations (DOPS); AIG Martin O. Nwogoh to the Police Air Wing; and AIG Ibrahim Gotan to the Force Intelligence Department (FID).

The reshuffle also affects specialised police formations, with AIG Betty Enekpen Otimeyin posted to the Maritime Command, Lagos; AIG Ugobueze Ogbodo to the FCID Annex, Enugu; AIG Taylor Olarenwaju to the Coordination Office, Lagos; and AIG Shetima Jauro Mohammed to the Border Patrol Force (BPF), Abuja.

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The Nigerian OBSERVER

That The People May Know

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PUBLISHED SINCE MAY 29, 1968 | VOL. 47, NO. 1,398 | WEDNESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER, 2026. | ₦200

Okpebholo receives Silverbird man of the year award

RICHARD EWEKA

LAGOS

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has received the Silverbird Man of the Year Award in recognition of his administration's achievements in tackling insecurity, cultism and kidnapping, as well as its interventions in infrastructure and other critical sectors.

The award was received on the Governor's behalf by his deputy, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, at a ceremony held in Lagos on Monday.

Speaking after receiving the award, Idahosa described the honour as a motivation for the Okpebholo administration to intensify its efforts towards delivering more dividends of democracy to the people of Edo State.

He particularly highlighted the administration's achievements in the security sector, recalling that Edo State previously recorded an average of 300 cult-related killings annually before the present government assumed office.

According to him, the state has witnessed a remarkable improvement in its security situation since Okpebholo became governor.

"We are delighted for this remarkable award. His Excellency has done extremely well in all sectors, especially in the area of security. When he came on board, there were records of a minimum of 300 cult-related killings annually in Edo State. But since he came on board, he has recovered the security architecture of Edo State. As we speak, this year, we have not recorded any cult-related killing in Edo State," he said.

The Deputy Governor thanked the Silverbird Group for recognising the Governor's efforts and expressed confidence that the honour would spur him to achieve more for the state.

He also commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his leadership and economic reforms, reaffirming Edo State's commitment to supporting his re-election bid in 2027.

Also speaking, the Secretary to the State Government, Umar Musa Ikhilor, Esq., described the award as well deserved, citing the administration's achievements in road construction, infrastructure development and security.

Ikhilor said the Governor had taken decisive measures to address cultism, cult-related killings and kidnapping, which had constituted major security challenges in the state.

He recalled that cult-related violence was particularly rampant towards the end of the year, especially during the Ember months, but noted that the administration's interventions had significantly altered the situation.

He attributed the improvement to measures including the demolition of structures allegedly used for criminal activities, extraordinary actions against perpetrators of cult-related crimes and the introduction of an anti-cultism law to strengthen the capacity of security agencies and ensure that offenders were brought to

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SILVERBIRD MAN OF THE YEAR:
Director-General Edo State Tourism Agency Lady Vivian Elabor, (2nd left), Edo State Commissioner for women affairs Hon. Eugenia Abdallah (3rd left), Commissioner for Information and strategy Prince Kassim Afegbua (4th left), the Secretary to Edo State Government Musa Ikhilor Esq (5th left) the governor of Edo State represented by his Deputy Dannis Idahosa (6th left) Chief Press Secretary (CPS) to Edo State governor Dr. Patrick Ebojele during a ceremony in Lagos State to honour Governor Monday Okpeholo as Silverbird man of the year award

UniAbuja shuts down over alleged land grab

Akahomen Miracle Gift

ABUJA

Activities at the University of Abuja were disrupted on Monday as staff, students and alumni barricaded the institution's main entrance in protest against the alleged allocation of university land to private developers by the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike.

The protesters, operating under the Joint Action Committee (JAC), comprising the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU), Students' Union Government (SUG) and alumni, demanded the immediate reversal of the alleged land allocation.

They also called on President Bola Tinubu to intervene in the dispute and protect the university's landed property.

Speaking during the protest, ASUU Chairman, Prof. Sylvanus Ugoh, said the land in question was allocated to the university in 1988, adding that

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Okpe's baby: The Governor who is familiar with the street —Pg 8

Tinubu's reforms painful but necessary-Abbas —Pg 9

NEWS

Tinubu, Oshiomhole to grace Auchi Poly's 30th-32nd combined convocation

AGHEDO IYOBOR

AUCHI

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Senator Adams Aliu Oshiomhole are expected to grace the 30th-32nd Combined Convocation Ceremony of Auchi Polytechnic, scheduled for Saturday, November 28, 2026.

The ceremony, which will hold at the institution's Main Auditorium by 11:00 a.m., will bring together graduands from three academic sets for the conferment of National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND) certificates and Fellowship Awards.

President Tinubu, who is the Visitor to the Polytechnic, is listed as a special guest at the landmark event, while Senator Oshiomhole, representing Edo North Senatorial District, will attend as Special Guest of Honour.

The Rector of Auchi Polytechnic, Dr. Salisu Shehu Umar, who announced the ceremony, extended an invitation to members of the public on behalf of the Governing Council, Academic Board, management, staff and students of the institution.

A major highlight of the convocation will be the delivery of the Convocation Lecture by Professor Salisu Ogbo Usman.

The lecture, entitled "Bridging the Gap Between Technical and Vocational Education for Industrial Needs in Nigeria," is expected to examine the importance of technical and vocational education in addressing Nigeria's industrial manpower requirements and strengthening the country's economic development.

The choice of the topic underscores the critical role of polytechnic education in producing skilled, competent and industry-ready graduates capable of meeting the demands of a rapidly evolving economy.

The combined convocation will also provide an opportunity for the institution to celebrate the academic achievements of its graduands, recognise outstanding contributions through Fellowship Awards and showcase its enduring commitment to technical and vocational education.

The 30th-32nd Combined Convocation represents another significant milestone in the history of Auchi Polytechnic, one of Nigeria's foremost institutions of higher learning, with a longstanding reputation for technical and vocational training.

Graduands, parents, alumni, members of the academic community and other well-wishers are expected to converge on Auchi for the ceremony.

Nigeria leads global efforts in terrorism prosecution, convictions –Tinubu

AUCHI

President Bola Tinubu says Nigeria has emerged as a leading country globally in the prosecution and conviction of terrorism suspects, demonstrating its commitment to confronting terrorism through both military operations and judicial action.

Tinubu, represented by the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, stated this in Abuja, at the opening of the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI) Annual Conference 2026.

Nigeria has so far secured 2,512 convictions in 11 phases terrorism trials, with 791 convictions recorded in the latest phase, according to the record provided by the National Terrorism Centre (NCTC), in the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).

Tinubu said the milestone reflected the country's resolve to dismantle terrorist networks, bring perpetrators to justice and strengthen the rule of law in the fight against terrorism.

He said Nigeria's counter-terrorism efforts had recorded significant gains through sustained military operations and effective collaboration among security and intelligence agencies.

The president said the government remained committed to ensuring that terrorists and other criminal elements were not only neutralised on the battlefield but also subjected to appropriate legal processes.

According to him, the combination of operational pressure and effective prosecution is critical to dismantling terrorist networks and preventing their resurgence.

Tinubu said his administration had intensified efforts to strengthen national security through improved intelligence gathering, inter-agency cooperation and international partnerships. He noted that the security environment had become increasingly complex, with terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, cyber threats and transnational organised crime posing significant challenges.

The president said recent military successes had demonstrated Nigeria's growing capacity to dismantle terrorist leadership, disrupt expansion networks and restrict the operational freedom of violent groups.

"Under this administration, four of eight identified senior terrorist leaders have been killed or arrested," he said.

He listed the successes to include action against Ahmed Ohida's ISWAP southern expansion network, the elimination of senior Islamic State leader, Abu Bilal Mainuki, in May 2026, and the arrests of Abu Barra of Ansaru and Mamuda of Mahmudawa in 2025.

He commended the Armed Forces and other security agencies for their sacrifices, stressing that the ultimate objective was to translate operational successes into lasting peace and security.



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Senator Adams Aliu Oshiomhole

...IGP Disu shakes up police, posts 13 AIGs, two CPs to new commands

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

In a related development, two Commissioners of Police have been assigned higher-duty responsibilities in positions designated for AIGs.

They are CP Gabriel Onyilo Elaigwu, posted as AIG in charge of Armament, Department of Operations, Force Headquarters, Abuja, and CP Abbas Sule, who will serve as AIG in charge of Interpol, Abuja.

However, the Force Secretariat clarified that the two commissioners are not authorised to wear the AIG rank while performing their higher-duty assignments.

The wireless message stated: "Officers on higher duty post should not wear the rank."

The Force Secretariat also directed the Computer, Establishment and Records units to ensure the immediate implementation of the postings and update relevant records to reflect the new assignments.

The redeployment represents a significant reshuffling of the senior leadership structure of the Nigeria Police Force, affecting key operational, investigative, intelligence, training and administrative departments as well as commands across the country.

The immediate implementation of the directive underscores the urgency attached to the exercise as the police leadership moves to reposition its personnel across strategic formations

... Okpebholo receives award

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

justice.

"We are very delighted. The way he has tackled cultism, cult killings as well as kidnapping is on record. No one has achieved that feat in this very short period of time," the SSG said.

The Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Prince Kassim Afegbua, described the award as a validation of the Governor's performance and evidence that his administration's efforts were receiving recognition beyond Edo State.

Afegbua said the Governor had demonstrated commitment to the SHINE agenda, which focuses on Security, Health, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Agriculture, and Education.

He noted that the five priority sectors had received considerable attention through deliberate interventions aimed at addressing inherited challenges and improving the living conditions of residents.

Describing the administration's security interventions as outstanding, the Commissioner said the Silverbird award was among several recognitions Governor Okpebholo had received for his performance.

He listed previous honours from New Telegraph, The Sun, Daily Independent and Leadership newspapers, describing the latest recognition as further encouragement for the Governor to sustain his achievements.

On education, Afegbua disclosed that about 93 secondary schools had benefited from the provision of chairs, boards and other learning materials, while school enrolment had reportedly increased by approximately 85 per cent.

He further stated that the administration had constructed about 193 primary healthcare centres and intervened in federal and state road projects to improve connectivity and ease transportation across the state.

The Commissioner attributed the administration's growing public acceptance to the Governor's connection with ordinary people, saying the affectionate nickname, "Okpe's Baby," reflected the relationship between the Governor and the people.

He stressed that the government was committed to ensuring value for public resources through visible projects and measurable results rather than propaganda.

Afegbua thanked the Silverbird Group for the recognition and appreciated the people of Edo State and Nigerians for their continued support and cooperation with the Okpebholo-led administration.

The Deputy Governor was accompanied to the ceremony by top government functionaries, including the Commissioners for Security and Public Safety, Rt. Hon. Festus Ebea, and Chris Okaeben; Commissioner for Arts and Culture, Eugenia Abdallah; members of the Edo State House of Assembly led by the Majority Leader, Hon. Sunny Ojiezele; Director-General of the Edo State Tourism Agency, Lady Vivian Elabor, and other dignitaries.

...UniAbuja shuts down over alleged land grab

«CONTINUED FROM PG 1

successive FCT ministers had respected the allocation.

Ugoh accused Wike of disregarding the rule of law and allegedly violating an existing court order in the handling of the disputed property.

He insisted that the university's land must be protected from encroachment and called for an immediate review of the decision.

However, Wike dismissed the protesters' objections, maintaining that land administration falls within the jurisdiction of the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA).

The minister reportedly advised the protesters to seek legal redress in court if they were dissatisfied with the administration's position.

The protest paralysed activities at the university's main campus, with the barricading of the entrance disrupting normal movement and academic operations.

The development has heightened tensions between the university community and the FCTA over the ownership and

NEWS

INEC disowns man in viral video, rejects bias claims in Edo ad-hoc recruitment

AKAHOMEN MIRACLE GIFT

BENIN CITY

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Edo State has disowned an individual featured in a viral video alleging partisan involvement in the recruitment of ad-hoc personnel for the 2027 general elections.

The commission described the allegations as misleading, insisting that the recruitment process was conducted through its official online platform.

INEC's position was contained in a statement issued in Benin City by its Head of Voter Education and Publicity, Mr Samuel Sunday, on behalf of the Resident Electoral Commissioner.

The commission identified the individual as Osayi Israel Omoroduwa and clarified that he was not a member of its staff in Edo State.

According to the statement, no individual has the authority or special access to recruit ad-hoc personnel for the commission or direct applicants to work for a particular political interest.

INEC explained that recruitment was conducted exclusively through the INEC Portal for the Recruitment of Election Staff (INECPRES), administered by its national headquarters.

It added that qualified applicants could independently access the platform to submit their applications or assist other eligible individuals in completing the process.

The commission further stressed that its state office personnel had no authority to influence the recruitment or selection of election workers.

It noted that successful applicants would undergo the necessary screening and training on electoral procedures, conduct and ethics before deployment.

INEC described the viral video as an irresponsible attempt to undermine public confidence in its recruitment process and urged residents to disregard the allegations.

The commission reaffirmed its commitment to transparency, professionalism and the conduct of credible elections.



UI HOLDS AWARD:
From left: Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC), Research and Innovation, University of Ibadan, Prof. Simisila Akintola; DVC Administration, Prof. Adedeji Omole; Vice Chancellor, Prof. Peter Olapegba; a graduate of higher degree, Mr Abayomi Ajayi; Registrar, Mr Ganiyu Saliu, during the award of higher degree by the University Ibadan on Monday

Ahanotu dumps Labour Party presidential bid, backs Tinubu's re-election

IGIEBOR CONFIDENCE

ABUJA

A factional presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Kennedy Ahanotu, has withdrawn from the 2027 presidential race and declared support for President Bola Tinubu's re-election, citing the prolonged leadership crisis within the opposition party.

Ahanotu announced his decision at a press briefing in Abuja on Monday, where he disclosed that he had agreed to work with the City Boy Movement to mobilise support for Tinubu ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The politician, who previously served as the National Youth Leader of the Labour Party, emerged as the consensus presidential candidate of the Julius Abure-led faction during its presidential, governorship and House of Representatives primaries held in Abuja in May 2026.

His emergence came amid the protracted leadership dispute that has divided the party into rival camps, with competing claims over its leadership and internal structures.

Explaining his decision to withdraw from the presidential contest, Ahanotu said it followed consultations with youth leaders across the country, who encouraged him to align with the President's support group and work towards Tinubu's re-election.

He said the youth leaders, who represented structures established across the country during the 2023 general elections, believed the persistent crisis within the Labour Party had made it necessary to consider an alternative political direction.

According to him, the representatives urged him to collaborate with the City Boy Movement as part of efforts to mobilise young Nigerians and build support for the President ahead of the next election.

Ahanotu also disclosed that he had maintained a cordial relationship with Seyi Tinubu since 2022, describing him as a close associate with whom he shared a longstanding friendship. He confirmed that the partnership with the movement would focus on supporting President Tinubu's second-term ambition in 2027.

Defending his decision, the former party youth leader dismissed suggestions that his political realignment amounted to a betrayal of the Labour Party, insisting that he had invested 10 years in the organisation.

He explained that he joined the party in 2016 after studying the manifestos of several political parties and subsequently committed himself to its activities and development.

Ahanotu also recalled his role during the 2023 presidential election, when he campaigned for the party's presidential candidate, Peter Obi, and mobilised young Nigerians to support the Labour Party.

However, he accused politicians who joined the party shortly before the 2023 elections of sidelining longstanding members after gaining political prominence.

NLC threatens industrial action, gives Oborevwori 14 days to resolve MOUN dispute

IGIEBOR CONFIDENCE

ASABA

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has given Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori, a 14-day ultimatum to address allegations of harassment, intimidation and detention of members of the Motorcycle Operators Union of Nigeria (MOUN), warning that failure to meet its demands could trigger industrial action across the state.

The labour organisation is demanding an end to the alleged restrictions on MOUN and the treatment of its members, insisting that workers have a constitutional right to organise and operate under legally recognised trade unions.

In a letter dated October 28, 2026, signed by NLC President, Joe Ajaero, and made available to journalists in Warri, the Congress accused some government officials of interfering in the affairs of the union while allegedly promoting another association.

The letter, addressed to Governor Oborevwori, was also copied to the Inspector-General of Police, the Director-General of the State Security Service and the Federal Ministry of Labour.

The Congress specifically accused the Secretary to the State Government (SSG) of involvement in the alleged restrictions against MOUN, including the reported harassment and detention of its members.

According to the NLC, the alleged actions were linked to the SSG's support for the Commercial Motorcycle and Tricycle Operators Association (COMTOA), which it maintained did not have the legal status of a registered trade union.

The labour body argued that the alleged interference by government officials amounted to a violation of workers' constitutional rights to organise and pursue their interests through recognised labour organisations.

NAF fixes November 26 for memorial honouring of Ondo crash victims

AKAHOMEN MIRACLE GIFT

ABUJA

The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has scheduled November 26, 2026, for a memorial service and wreath-laying ceremony in honour of victims of its NAF 931 aircraft crash in Igbokoda, Ondo State.

The ceremony will take place at the National Military Cemetery in Abuja, bringing together bereaved families, colleagues, friends and members of the military community to pay their last respects to the victims.

The Director of Public Relations and Information of the Nigerian Air Force, Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, disclosed this in a statement, describing the ceremony as an opportunity to honour the memories and sacrifices of those who lost their lives.

The aircraft crashed on October 5, 2026, at Igbokoda, Ondo State, claiming 25 lives.

Meanwhile, the Air Force has confirmed the recovery of the aircraft's Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), alongside other aircraft fragments and relevant evidence from the crash site.

Ejodame said the recovered materials would contribute to the ongoing investigation into the circumstances surrounding the accident.

The memorial service is expected to provide an opportunity for the military community and families of the victims to reflect on the loss and pay tribute to those who died in the tragedy.

The Air Force reiterated its commitment to preserving the memories of the deceased and recognising their service and sacrifice.

Nigeria's inflation rate projected to drop to 13.59% in October report as food prices ease

IGIEBOR CONFIDENCE

ABUJA

Nigeria's headline inflation rate is projected to decline for the fifth consecutive month in October 2026 report, with expectations that easing food prices and relative stability in the foreign exchange market will help moderate the country's rising price pressures.

A pre-inflation assessment by Coronation Group Limited's research subsidiary projected that headline inflation would fall to 13.59 per cent year-on-year in October, compared with 14.63 per cent recorded in September.

The projection represents a 1.04 percentage-point decline in the annual inflation rate, extending the disinflation trend that began in June 2026.

The research firm also expects the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures changes in the prices of goods and services, to record a month-on-month increase of 0.02 per cent, down from 0.06 per cent in September.

According to the firm, the expected moderation would largely be supported by easing food prices, relative stability in the exchange rate and favourable base effects.

It noted that food prices would remain the major factor driving the anticipated decline, while core inflation was also expected to moderate at a slower pace due to persistent pressures from transportation, energy and other operating costs.

However, the projected decline in headline inflation does not necessarily translate into an immediate reduction in the cost of living, as households may continue to face high prices for essential goods and services.

Food inflation remains elevated, while rising transportation and energy expenses continue to expose consumers and businesses to additional financial pressure.

CORRECTION OF NAME

The general public is hereby notified that **JANE ERONMWON OKECHUKWU** and **JANE ERONMWON IDAEHO** is one and the same person Henceforth, Now wish to be known and addressed as **JANE ERONMWON IDAEHO**. All former documents Remain valid. Concerned Authorities and the general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

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

NEWS

NNPC raises $1.5bn for AKK pipeline, eyes Abuja gas by Dec.

AGHEDO IYOBOR / KEBONKWU RUTH

ABUJA

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, NNPC, has raised $1.5bn to finance the Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano, AKK, Gas Pipeline Project, leveraging projected throughput from the facility.

The Group Chief Executive Officer of the NNPC, Bashir Ojulari, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria, NAN, in Abuja at the weekend.

He said the financing was secured solely on the basis of anticipated gas transportation volumes through the pipeline.

Ojulari said the mainline section of the project had been completed, with overall execution reaching 95 per cent, while the outstanding 5 per cent involved completing some stations and connecting the pipeline to end-users.

He said the company was targeting delivery of gas to Abuja before the end of 2026, with Kaduna and Kano expected to receive supplies in 2027.

"The AKK gas pipeline, all the way from Ajaokuta, Kaduna to Kano, the main pipeline has been completed. The remaining 5 per cent has to do with some of the stations where we need to then link offtakes from the main pipeline to users.

"We are hoping that before the end of the year, we will get the gas to Abuja, which is the first step, and by 2027 we will get the gas to Kaduna and Kano," Ojulari said.

The $1.5bn financing is significant as it shows that the country's gas transportation infrastructure can attract funding based on projected commercial flows, rather than relying exclusively on conventional government-backed financing.

Ojulari said the pipeline would support power generation, factories, data centres and industrial hubs, while also improving the availability of Compressed Natural Gas, CNG, across the northern region.

He explained that the completion of the mainline would make it easier to extend gas supply to additional locations, reducing the difficulty and cost of transporting gas from southern Nigeria to the North.

"We already solved the first line because we now have the Abuja power plant. As we move north and we build those connections, the CNG availability will increase phenomenally.

"But keep in mind that we still then have to go towards Maiduguri and Sokoto, right? So there'll be more work to be done, but it's now much easier than just taking gas from all the way from Port Harcourt to those locations," he added.

The NNPC chief explained that although the main pipeline had been completed, additional infrastructure would be required to extend distribution to other northern locations, particularly Maiduguri and Sokoto.

The AKK project is a 40-inch, 614-kilometre pipeline system running from Ajaokuta in Kogi State to Kano, with associated intermediate and terminal gas facilities designed to transport natural gas to industrial and other off-takers.

Its completion is expected to expand access to domestic gas, support electricity generation and provide feedstock for industries, while opening up opportunities for greater CNG penetration in northern Nigeria.



CNG POWERED BUSES:

World Bank additional $500m into NG-CARES programme – *Bagudu*

ABUJA

The Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Sen. Abubakar Bagudu, says additional 500 million dollars World Bank financing will strengthen community resilience and reduce poverty.

Bagudu said this at the Nigeria Community Action for Resilience and Economic Stimulus (NG-CARES)

Programme Additional Financing Technical

Meeting in Abuja on Monday.

He commended the World Bank for its sustained partnership, saying its support had contributed significantly to Nigeria's economic reform achievements.

The minister said that the NG-CARES, initially introduced to address COVID-19 challenges, had evolved into an important intervention for supporting vulnerable households and communities.

According to him, the additional financing will help cushion the disproportionate effects of economic reforms on vulnerable Nigerians.

Bagudu urged participating states to ensure effective implementation, describing the programme as an opportunity to strengthen community resilience.

He said the 500 million dollars should be utilised effectively to attract further investments from private investors and development partners.

The minister said the programme could contribute significantly to Nigeria's ambition of building a one-trillion-dollar economy.

He cited cassava farming communities in Enugu as examples of areas where targeted agricultural support could improve productivity and livelihoods.

Bagudu urged participating states to maximise the technical meeting by seeking clarification on implementation procedures and addressing potential challenges.

Earlier, the World Bank Country Director for Nigeria, Mr Matthew Verghis, said the additional financing would support long-term resilience and strengthen institutions.

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Earlier, the World Bank Country Director for Nigeria, Mr Matthew Verghis, said the additional financing would support long-term resilience and strengthen institutions.

Also speaking, the Minister of State for Budget and Economic Planning, Dr Doris Uzoka-Anite, commended the World Bank for approving the additional financing.

FG targets 91% increase in CNG enabled vehicles by 2027

ABUJA

The Federal Government says it is targeting an increase in CNG-enabled vehicles from 143,000 to 273,000 by February 2027, representing a 91 per cent growth.

Mrs Tari Mayor-Bright, Head of Gas Supply Integration, Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles (Pi-CNG & EV), disclosed this on Monday in Abuja at its Regional Town Hall and Stakeholders' Dialogue.

Mayor-Bright said the target was part of efforts by the Pi-CNG & EV to accelerate the adoption of CNG as an alternative fuel for motorists.

She commended said the initiative had recorded significant progress, with the number of converted vehicles increasing from 11,500 in 2023 to 143,000 by September 2026.

She said the number of conversion centres had also increased from about seven in 2023 to 415 by September, while CNG refuelling stations grew from seven to 116 within the period.

According to her, private sector investment in the programme has risen from 500 million dollars in 2023 to more than 2.6 billion dollars in 2026.

"The question is no longer whether CNG mobility can work, but how we take it to scale. We are currently having a market-led CNG economy and ecosystem," she said.

Mayor-Bright, however, identified some challenges to achieving the February 2027 target, including the cost of vehicle conversion, increased electoral activities and challenges in tracking private sector conversion figures.

Nigeria pushes World Bank funding to $1.25bn to tackle blackouts

IGIEBOR CONFIDENCE / AGHEDO IYOBOR

ABUJA

The Federal Government is seeking an additional $500m loan from the World Bank to expand its renewable energy programme, a move that would increase the bank's total financing for the project to $1.25bn amid persistent electricity shortages across the country.

The proposed financing will supplement the $750m previously approved by the World Bank for the Nigeria Distributed Access through Renewable Energy Scale-up (DARES) project, which is being implemented by the Rural Electrification Agency.

According to a World Bank Project Information Document obtained by The PUNCH on Sunday, the additional financing is scheduled for consideration by the bank's Board of Executive Directors on December 18, 2026.

The document stated that the original DARES project was approved on December 14, 2023, and became effective on November 15, 2024, with the objective of expanding electricity access for households, public institutions and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through private sector-led renewable energy generation.

Prepared on November 13, 2026, the document indicated that the proposed funding would support the expansion of electricity access to households, businesses, schools, healthcare facilities and underserved communities through solar-powered systems and mini-grids.

The World Bank explained that the additional financing would accelerate the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure, particularly in communities that remain disconnected from the national electricity grid.

It stated that the proposed funding would enable the expansion of electricity services through mini-grids and standalone solar systems while sustaining private sector-led efforts to improve access.

The proposed borrowing comes amid persistent electricity supply challenges in Nigeria, where households and businesses continue to experience frequent outages and rely heavily on petrol and diesel generators.

The World Bank estimated that 87.2 million Nigerians lacked access to electricity in 2024, despite improvements in the country's electrification rate over the preceding decade.

According to the document,

Diesel discharge sparks fire at NNPC station, school classrooms burnt

AKAHOMEN MIRACLE

LAGOS

Fire broke out on Monday at an NNPC-affiliated filling station on Ekoro-Ajasa Road, Alimosho, Lagos.

The fire started while a tanker was discharging diesel, and spread to fuel pumps and an adjacent building.

NNPC's Chief Corporate Communications Officer, Andy Odeh, confirmed no deaths or injuries were recorded.

Preliminary findings by LASEMA show the fire began during discharge.

Seven classrooms at St Lawrence Greater Height School as were reportedly damaged as three fuel pumps and two vehicles — a DAF truck and a Toyota Camry — were burnt in a blaze that was eventually contained by LASEMA and Lagos Fire Service.

NNPC says its HSE team is investigating to reinforce safety protocols during fuel offloading.

NEWS

2027: Court of Appeal warns elections tribunal staff against bribery

ABUJA

The President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, has warned secretaries and registry staff of election petition tribunals against accepting bribes or compromising judicial processes ahead of the 2027 general elections.

She warned that any staff found engaging in corrupt practices would be sanctioned, stressing that the assignment was a call to national service and not an opportunity for personal enrichment.

Dongban-Mensem gave the warning on Monday at the opening of a two-day capacity-building workshop on the theme, "Modern Registry Practices for Effective Election Petition Tribunal Administration", in Abuja.

The Court of Appeal President said the exercise was designed to prepare tribunal staff for the administrative demands of handling electoral disputes.

She described the registry as the engine room of every tribunal, noting that its efficiency, integrity and transparency were critical to the timely administration of electoral justice.

The PUNCH reports that the presidential and National Assembly elections would hold on January 16, 2027, while the governorship and state Houses of Assembly elections were scheduled for February 6, 2027.

The Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, inaugurated 375 judicial officers from different jurisdictions across the country last week to serve on election petition tribunals ahead of the 2027 general elections.

According to the PCA, the responsibilities of registry staff include receiving and filing petitions, serving processes on parties, issuing hearing notices, preparing records of proceedings and orders, preserving tribunal documents and compiling records, adding that the registry's performance directly affects the efficiency of tribunals and public confidence in the judicial process.

Citing Sections 285(1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution, Dongban-Mensem said the President of the Court of Appeal was empowered to constitute election petition tribunals in every state of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory, among others.

Dongban-Mensem charged the tribunal secretaries to familiarise themselves with the Electoral Act 2026 and the Election Petition Tribunal Proceedings Practice Direction 2026, warning that ignorance of the relevant provisions could expose them to manipulation and costly administrative errors.

"As tribunal secretaries, as prescribed by the Electoral Act 2026 and the Election Petition Tribunal Proceedings Practice Direction 2026, you must know the Practice Directions and have them on your fingertips. If you do not know them, you will be intimidated, you will be misled, and you will permit serious errors, and that will fetch serious consequences.

"There is no room for that now. You are given a good chance to equip yourself now, and we are giving you materials, so there will be no excuses. And we shall be constantly monitoring every aspect of your conduct," she added.

Addressing the integrity of tribunal staff, the PCA warned against allowing financial inducements to influence their conduct, saying their activities would be subjected to intense public scrutiny.

"Let me be clear: you must discharge your duties with utmost good faith, and not be swayed by pecuniary inducements. Your conduct, and indeed, that of the tribunal, will be under intense public scrutiny.



BUDGET:
From left: Executive Assistant on Budget and Planning to Governor of Oyo State, Alhaji Gafaru Bello; Permanent Secretary, Oyo State Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, Tunde Ayanleke; Director Budget, Mrs Folake Hassan-Akintayo, during the breakdown and highlights of Oyo State 2027 budget proposal by the ministry of budget and planning in Ibadan on Monday.

Correctional service decorates 6,207 promoted officers, pledges to end backlogs

ABUJA

The Civil Defence, Correctional, Fire and Immigration Services Board has assured personnel of the Nigerian Correctional Service that promotion backlogs will not recur, following the promotion of 6,207 officers in the 2026 exercise.

The Secretary of the board, retired Major General Abdulmalik Jibrin, gave the assurance at the decoration ceremony for the promoted officers in Abuja on Monday.

Jibrin said accumulated promotion backlogs had previously affected personnel morale and contributed to the exit of some officers from the correctional service.

He said President Bola Tinubu, following the intervention of the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, had approved the clearance of outstanding promotion backlogs.

"I want to assure you that I will not allow that to happen again. Officers who give their best, and are tested and fulfil the requirements will certainly be given their due promotion," he said.

The Controller-General of Corrections, Sylvester Nwakuche, said the exercise involved 6,207 personnel, comprising 4,924 senior and 1,283 junior officers.

He said the promotions included three medical professionals elevated from Controller of Corrections to Assistant Controller-General, alongside other senior officers across nine rank categories.

Nwakuche added that 743 Chief Correctional Assistants were converted to Inspectors of Corrections after completing the required conversion course, while 129 personnel were upgraded to the Inspector cadre upon acquiring relevant qualifications.

He described promotion as recognition of service, competence and experience, urging the officers to justify their elevation through discipline, integrity and professionalism.

"Promotion is not merely an administrative exercise or a change in designation. It is an important recognition of service, competence, experience and demonstrated capacity," he said.

Representing the Minister of Interior, the Permanent Secretary, Magdalene Ajani, said the promotion of more than 6,000 personnel in one exercise reflected the Federal Government's commitment to personnel welfare and career progression.

Tunji-Ojo described the exercise as a demonstration of ongoing reforms in the ministry, saying the reforms were repositioning the NCoS as a centre for transformation, reformation and rehabilitation rather than a mere facility for imprisoning offenders.

He urged the newly promoted officers, particularly those assuming management positions, to demonstrate leadership, take initiatives and address challenges promptly.

"You must play the managerial role of the positions you now occupy. You are not going to be waiting for directives while things are going bad because you will now be held responsible," he said.

The minister also urged the officers to share the service's vision with their subordinates and ensure younger personnel were carried along in implementing reforms.

Nwakuche further directed the officers to embrace the Performance Management System, saying future career progression would depend partly on performance records, competencies and measurable contributions to the service.

He said the service mandate extended beyond secure custody to reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration and the administration of non-custodial measures.

UniAbuja land cut approved by Wike's Predecessor – FCTA

ABUJA

The Federal Capital Territory Administration has defended its decision to reduce the land allocated to the University of Abuja, saying the action was based on recommendations made by a joint committee established in 2016 by the administration of former FCT Minister Mohammed Bello.

The FCTA said the committee, comprising representatives of the administration and the university, had recommended that the institution's landholding of over 11,000 hectares be reduced to 100 hectares in line with the National Universities Commission's recommended size for universities.

The administration's position followed a protest by the university's academic and non-academic staff, students and alumni on Monday over the reduction of its original 11,824.04 hectares of land to 4,685 hectares by the administration of the incumbent FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike.

In a statement issued on Monday by the minister's Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and Social Media, Lere Olayinka, the FCTA described the protest as misplaced, insisting that Wike merely implemented a decision taken by his predecessor.

According to the statement, the joint committee was inaugurated on November 10, 2016, to examine the university's land size, encroachment by indigenous settlers, illegal developments around its Gwagwalada mini-campus and the issuance of title documents for the institution's two campuses.

Olayinka disclosed that five of the committee's 12 members were representatives of the university, namely Prof Otaki Alanana, Prof A. Mallam, Mohamed Kassim, A.E. Ripite and Sadiq O. Shuaibu.

He said the committee subsequently recommended that the university's landholding of over 11,000 hectares was far beyond the size recommended by the NUC, adding that the 100-hectare recommendation was approved by Bello.

"It is on record that on November 10, 2016, the then FCT Minister inaugurated a Joint Committee of FCTA and UNIABUJA on Land and Sundry Issues. The committee was to look into the UNIABUJA land size vis encroachment by indigenous settlers, encroachment on the Gwagwalada Mini Campus land by illegal developers and issuance of titles for the two campuses of the university with their actual land size.

"The committee recommended, amongst others, that the land area of over 11,000 hectares of the main campus was far beyond the recommended size by the National University Commission (NUC), and that the recommended size of 100 hectares by the NUC be given to the university.

"Report of the committee was approved by the immediate past FCT Minister, Mohammed Musa Bello, and going by the committee's recommendation, only 100 hectares of land ought to be given to UNIABUJA," the statement partly read.

Edo Muslim stakeholders unite, seek stronger community, govt engagement

Abdul-Kadir Abdullah

AUCHI

Muslim stakeholders across Edo State have called for greater unity, cooperation and collective commitment to the development of the Muslim community, stressing the need to put aside individual differences and work together for the common good of the Ummah.

The call was made at a Muslim stakeholders' meeting held in Auchi, Etsako West Local Government Area, where Muslim traditional rulers, Islamic scholars, women and youth representatives, leaders of various Islamic organisations and Muslim political appointees gathered to deliberate on issues affecting the community and its future.

Speaking at the meeting, the Secretary to the Edo State Government (SSG), Umar Musa Ikhilor, Esq, urged Muslim leaders and stakeholders to strengthen their unity and embrace the institutional channels established by the state government to address issues concerning the community.

Ikhilor expressed appreciation to Islamic scholars across the various communities for their contributions to the affairs of the Ummah, noting that the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Islamic Religious Matters by Governor Monday Okpebholo was intended to provide a coordinated platform for addressing Muslim concerns.

He disclosed that the Special Adviser, Hon. Ahmed Musa Momoh, had also been empowered to appoint three Senior Special Assistants on Islamic Matters to represent Edo North, Edo South and Edo Central, thereby strengthening engagement and communication across the three senatorial districts.

The SSG advised Muslim stakeholders to channel their concerns through the appropriate office rather than allowing issues to remain unattended, stressing that the responsibility of advancing the community required collective participation.

He also called for understanding among Muslims, particularly those who might feel left out of government appointments and other opportunities, noting that not everybody could be appointed but the presence of Muslim representatives in government should be seen as a collective benefit.

NEWS

INEC debunks claims of remote BVAS logout, missing offline results

ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission has dismissed claims that officials can remotely log out of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System before the end of voting, insisting that only the presiding officer operating the device has the authority to log in or out.

The commission also clarified that election results uploaded offline are securely stored on the device and automatically transmitted to its Result Viewing Portal once internet connectivity is restored.

INEC was reacting to a viral Instagram video in which a man claiming to have worked as a presiding officer alleged that officials could log voters out of BVAS before the close of polls and that results uploaded offline could be lost.

In the video, the man warned prospective poll workers ahead of the 2027 elections against uploading results offline, advising them to take screenshots of the results and wait for network connectivity before uploading them.

However, INEC, in a statement on Monday shared on its official X account, described the claims as "false, fabricated and misleading", urging Nigerians to disregard the video.

The commission explained that each polling unit was assigned unique login credentials, which were issued to the presiding officer on the eve of an election.

It said the credentials enabled the presiding officer to log into BVAS for voter accreditation on election day and subsequently upload the polling unit result sheet after the close of polls.

"The claim that the BVAS can be remotely logged out before the conclusion of accreditation and voting is false. Only the Poll Official operating the device has the authority to log in or log out of the BVAS, whether during voter accreditation or the result upload process," the commission stated.

It added that there was no provision for any external individual or authority to remotely log out the device.

On the allegation that results uploaded offline could disappear, INEC said the offline upload feature was introduced following challenges experienced during the 2023 general election.

According to the commission, some presiding officers were held hostage at polling units because they could not upload results due to poor or non-existent network connectivity.

It said the IReV application was subsequently upgraded to allow presiding officers in areas with poor or no network coverage to upload polling unit result sheets offline in the presence of stakeholders.

"The uploaded result sheet remains securely stored on the BVAS pending successful transmission," INEC stated.

The commission explained that as presiding officers moved from their polling units to ward collation centres and their devices reconnected to the internet, the results were automatically transmitted to the IReV portal without further manual intervention.

INEC assured Nigerians that the BVAS and IReV systems operated in line with established procedures designed to protect the integrity, transparency and credibility of the electoral process.



CONFERENCE:
R-L..Nigeria Ambassador to Qatar Professor Mahmood Yakubu in a handshake with Vice Minister of Industry and Information Technology and Leader of the Chinese delegations to the International Telecommunications union (ITU) Conference Mr. Jijun Xiong in Doha yesterday. Photo by Omoye Aminu

2027: Opposition no threat to APC – Jigawa Renewed Hope coordinator

DUTSE

The Coordinator of the Renewed Hope Ambassadors in Jigawa State, Musa Shu'aibu, has said that no opposition party can threaten the ruling All Progressives Congress in the state and the country at large.

Shu'aibu stated this while fielding questions from journalists during the Jigawa Northeast APC Zonal campaign held on Monday in the Hadejia Local Government Area of the state.

The statement comes amid intensifying campaign activities across political parties, political groups and various candidates vying for elective positions ahead of the forthcoming 2027 general elections in the state.

According to him, the APC has performed credibly and has enough achievements to campaign with and win the confidence of Nigerians again.

He said the APC-led administration has offered a lot to Nigerians in different sectors of the economy.

"APC has achieved a lot in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, social investment and economic reforms that directly touch the lives of the common man," Shu'aibu said.

He explained that in Jigawa, the impact of the APC government is visible in road construction, school renovation, healthcare delivery and empowerment programmes.

Shu'aibu added that the Renewed Hope Ambassadors of President Bola Tinubu have further strengthened the party's connection with the grassroots.

"These are not promises; they are realities that people are seeing and benefiting from," he said.

When asked by our correspondent about the increasing pressure and activities of opposition parties in the state, the coordinator debunked fears of any threat.

He said the APC does not need to be afraid because it can depend on its achievements to seek re-election from the electorate in 2027.

"We will depend on our achievements to ask Nigerians for their votes again. We have something to show," Shu'aibu said.

He added that unlike the opposition, the APC is not making empty promises but presenting verifiable projects and programmes.

Shu'aibu declared that "I can even brag that the APC is unshakable and not afraid of losing elections to any opposition political party.

"APC is unshakable. We are not afraid of opposition. No opposition party can threaten us," he explained.

He urged party members and supporters to remain united and continue to mobilise more voters for the party, as he called on the people of Jigawa to continue to support the APC for more development and progress.

He expressed confidence that the party "will win all elective positions in Jigawa and retain power at the national level in 2027."

Kaduna varsity unions suspend strike, insist on demands

KADUNA

The Joint Action Committee of Kaduna State University has suspended its one-week warning strike following discussions with key stakeholders in the Kaduna State Government and the university management.

The JAC Chairperson, Sa'adiyya Mustapha, announced the suspension while addressing journalists on Monday, saying the decision was taken to allow ongoing negotiations over the unions' grievances to continue.

The committee comprises the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities, the Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions and the National Association of Academic Technologists.

Mustapha stressed that the suspension did not mean the unions had surrendered or abandoned their demands but demonstrated their willingness to resolve the dispute through dialogue.

"We have gone on a one-week strike and have now decided to suspend it, not because we are surrendering, but for the good of this university.

"Several key stakeholders in this administration have made efforts to dialogue with us, and we have seen reason in those discussions. We have therefore decided to suspend the strike to show that we are willing to support the government and give dialogue a chance," she said.

ASUP strike: Students seek Abiodun's intervention, issue 48-hour notice

ABEOKUTA

The National Association of Polytechnic Students, Ogun State Liaison Council, has renewed its 48-hour notice to the Ogun State Government, demanding urgent intervention in the ongoing industrial action by the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics in state-owned polytechnics.

The association, which described the prolonged disruption of academic activities as increasingly unbearable for students, called on Governor Dapo Abiodun to personally intervene in the dispute and ensure a peaceful resolution that would facilitate the immediate resumption of academic activities.

Chairman of NAPS, Ogun State Liaison Council, Joshua Opatunmibi, made the appeal on Monday during a press conference at Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta.

Opatunmibi announced that the association had renewed its 48-hour notice, which would commence at 12 noon on Monday, November 16, and expire at 12 noon on Wednesday, November 18, 2026.

He explained that the renewed notice was intended to compel the relevant authorities to demonstrate tangible commitment towards resolving the disagreement between the state government and ASUP, stressing that students could no longer afford to lose valuable academic time.

The NAPS chairman lamented that the industrial action had disrupted academic activities across Ogun State-owned polytechnics, leaving students uncertain about their academic futures while affecting institutional calendars and opportunities for learning and personal development.

He said, "We are here today because we can no longer overlook the consequences of the ongoing industrial action by the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) in our state.

"The academic activities of students across Ogun State-owned polytechnics have been disrupted. Academic calendars are being affected, students are uncertain about their academic future, and the time that should be invested in learning and personal development is gradually being lost.

"As the representative body of polytechnic students in Ogun State, we consider it our responsibility to speak up. Let me state our position clearly: We stand for the interest of the students.

"We are not here to fight ASUP. We are not here to fight the Ogun State Government. We are not here to create political tension or encourage violence. We are here to appeal for a solution.

"We believe lecturers deserve their legitimate welfare and entitlements. We believe our institutions deserve adequate funding. But we equally believe that students deserve uninterrupted education. These interests should not be in conflict. They should be protected together".

The student leader expressed concern over the increasing financial burden of education on parents, guardians and students, arguing that the growing cost of accessing tertiary education should be accompanied by improved institutional stability and uninterrupted academic activities.

He observed that many political leaders occupying positions of authority today benefited from free or relatively affordable education, which provided them with opportunities to acquire qualifications, build careers and eventually attain positions of leadership.

According to him, it was unfair for the present generation to face increasing educational expenses while continuing to experience disruptions in the public institutions they depend on.

NEWS

All 36 state assemblies approve state police bill

ABUJA

All 36 state Houses of Assembly have approved the proposed constitutional amendment to establish state police, clearing the way for the National Assembly to transmit the bill to President Bola Tinubu for assent.

The Clerk to the National Assembly, Kamoru Ogunlana, disclosed this in a statement issued on Monday, describing the unanimous endorsement as an unprecedented demonstration of cooperation between the federal and state legislatures.

The development means the bill has secured 100 per cent approval from the state assemblies, exceeding the constitutional requirement of at least 24 states under Section 9(2) of the 1999 Constitution.

Ogunlana said the bill had satisfied all constitutional and administrative requirements for transmission but that the National Assembly leadership delayed the process briefly to allow for broader national consensus and engagement with all states.

He said, "Following the completion of the verification process by my Office, the Bill is set for transmission to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for His Excellency's assent."

The bill, known as the Constitution (Sixth Alteration) Bill to provide for the establishment of State Police Services and related matters, is designed to amend the 1999 Constitution to provide a legal framework for the establishment of state-controlled police formations.

Ogunlana said the unanimous approval reflected cooperation between the National Assembly and state legislatures, as well as constructive engagement between the executive arms of government at both federal and state levels.

He commended the 36 state governors, speakers and members of the state assemblies, as well as other stakeholders, for their contributions to the process.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY:
From left: Chairperson, African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC), Hon. Kwami Senanu; Chairman of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Dr Musa Aliyu; Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federation,Chief Lateef Fagbemi; Executive Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mr Olanipekun Olukoyede; and the Executive Chairman, Nigeria Revenue Service (NRS), Dr Zacch Adedeji, during the opening ceremony of the Maiden General Assembly of the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum (AARP-F) in Abuja on Tuesday

New Plateau CP resumes

JOS

The Plateau State Command has a new Commissioner of Police, Sunday Aisebiogun Okoebor, who has officially taken over the leadership of the command as its 48th Commissioner of Police.

In a statement released to members of the public on Monday and signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, Alfred Alabo, the command said the new CP, who holds a PhD, formally assumed duty on November 14, 2026.

"The Plateau State Police Command is pleased to formally announce the assumption of duty of its new Commissioner of Police, CP Sunday Aisebiogun Okoebor, fsi, PhD, who officially took over the leadership of the Command as the 48th Commissioner of Police today, 14th November, 2026," the statement said.

According to the statement, "CP Okoebor was enlisted into the Nigeria Police Force on 10th June, 1994. He brings to Plateau State over three decades of distinguished, meritorious and exemplary service.

"A consummate law enforcement professional and accomplished academic, he possesses a B.A. (Hons) in English, a Master's Degree in Criminology and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Criminology, reflecting his commitment to intellectual development and the continuous advancement of professional policing," it added.

The command described the new commissioner as "widely distinguished by his detribalised disposition, impartiality, fairness and unwavering commitment to equity."

"Over the course of his illustrious policing career, CP Okoebor has occupied several strategic Command, operational and administrative positions, through which he has acquired extensive institutional knowledge and leadership experience," the statement said.

His previous appointments include Area Commander, Gwagwalada; Deputy Commissioner of Police, Administration, DFA; and Commissioner of Police, Police Accounts and Budget (PAB), Force Headquarters, Abuja.

"He attained the rank of Commissioner of Police on 6th March, 2025," the statement said.

The statement also highlighted his international experience, noting that his professional accomplishments extended to the international law enforcement arena, where he distinguished himself through contributions to multilateral security cooperation.

"He served with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as an Instructor and subsequently as an INTERPOL Regional Specialised Officer, with responsibilities spanning Cybercrime, Fake and Counterfeit Drugs, Intellectual Property Crime and Maritime Piracy between 2009 and 2018.

"Of particular significance was his historic appointment in 2014 as the first West African to lead the INTERPOL Major Event Support Team (IMEST) deployed to the Cricket World Cup in Bangladesh, an achievement that underscores his professional competence, international recognition and capacity for strategic leadership," the statement added.

It further stated that "in recognition of his outstanding contributions to international policing and security cooperation, he has received several distinguished honours, including the United Nations Medal, INTERPOL Plaque and Certificate (2018), alongside commendations and recognitions from Ghana, Turkey, India, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), India, and the Inspector-General of Police, Bangladesh."

Upon assumption of duty, CP Okoebor reaffirmed his commitment to entrenching a policing philosophy characterised by professionalism, discipline, accountability, operational efficiency and a people-centred approach to law enforcement.

"He emphasised that the protection of fundamental human rights, the preservation of public order and the safeguarding of lives and property would remain cardinal priorities of his administration," the statement said.

2027: Oluremi Tinubu empowers 5,000 Zamfara women, bags traditional title

GUSAU

Nigeria's First Lady, Oluremi Tinubu, has empowered over 5,000 women in Zamfara State, as her visit also marked the historic moment of the first First Lady's official visit to the North-Western state.

The empowerment was held at the APC North-West Women's Mega Rally and Empowerment Programme, which she hosted in person at the Trade Fair Complex last Thursday in Gusau.

According to a statement made available to PUNCH Online on Monday, the First Lady was welcomed by thousands of residents and supporters at the venue.

Ahead of the rally, the Co-Director, All Progressives Congress Presidential Campaign Council Women Mobilisation Directorate, Betta Edu, and the other leaders of the directorate, on behalf of the First Lady, empowered women at a town hall stakeholders engagement meeting and supported businesses at the market with a humanitarian outreach for women and children at the hospitals.

Tinubu said that the empowerment has been part of the Renewed Hope Initiative since its inception, adding that it was borne out of love for the people and not politically motivated.

She was also conferred with the title of 'Jagaban Matan Arewa' by the Zamfara State Council of Chiefs.

The event was led by Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal; his wife, Huriyya Lawal; former governors; First Ladies from the North-West; among others.

"Before the rally, Senator Tinubu met with traditional rulers in the state to seek their blessings. She was subsequently conferred with the title of 'Jagaban Matan Arewa' by the Chairman of the Zamfara State Council of Chiefs and Emir of Anka, Alhaji Attahiru Muhammad Ahmad," the statement partly read.

She expressed her delight at visiting the state as she described her visit as a demonstration of solidarity and compassion, particularly towards women affected by insecurity, poverty and limited economic opportunities.

"This is the happiest day of my life. Except for Zamfara, I have been in all 36 states of Nigeria, including the FCT. I have always wanted to come to Zamfara, and today I have fulfilled that," she said.

Tinubu also expressed condolences to families who had lost loved ones to insecurity in the state, praying for the repose of the deceased.

The statement continued, "She said the Renewed Hope Initiative had continued to empower women since its inception, insisting that its interventions went beyond political campaigns.

"The only party that empowers during the campaign, and it is not about the campaign; we have been empowering from day one. And that is why it is not politics but love for our people."

Tinubu grants clemency to 78 suspects arrested over convoy attack

ABUJA

The Federal Capital Territory Police Command has said 78 suspects arrested over the attack on President Bola Tinubu's motorcade in Abuja are to be released following the President's extension of clemency to them.

In a statement released on Monday by the command spokesperson, Josephine Adeh, the suspects were arrested after the attack on the President's convoy on Friday, November 13, at a mosque in Garki District.

The incident happened shortly after Tinubu observed Jumu'ah prayers.

"The FCT Police Command wishes to inform the public that 78 suspects were arrested following the attack on the motorcade of President Bola Tinubu, GCFR, on Friday, November 13, 2026, at a mosque in Garki District, Abuja.

"The incident occurred shortly after the President observed Jumu'ah prayers at a mosque in Garki, when some individuals attacked the departing convoy with stones and other dangerous objects, damaging several vehicles and causing injuries to some security operatives," the statement partly read.

She said a joint security team led by the Police responded to the incident, adding that intelligence-led raids in the area subsequently led to more arrests, bringing the total number of suspects to 78.

"A joint security team, led by the Police, swiftly responded to the incident, while subsequent intelligence-led raids within the area led to further arrests, bringing the total number of suspects arrested in connection with the incident to seventy-eight, " she said.

Adeh added that following the clemency, the Presidency directed that the suspects be warned and released.

"Following the extension of presidential clemency to the individuals involved in the attack, the Presidency directed that the suspects arrested in connection with the incident be warned and released. In compliance with the directive, the Command wishes to inform the public that the suspects are currently undergoing the necessary release processes.," the statement said.

FEATURE

Okpe's Baby: The Governor who is familiar with the street

Dr. Patrick Akhere Ebojele

Two years ago, precisely 12th of November, 2024, Senator Monday Okpebholo took the oath as Governor of Edo State. Anyone who has followed him closely, since he took office, will know he rarely stays long in his office. He turns up at roadworks, hospital wards, school compounds, and markets, sometimes before the people in charge expect him. Some critics find this untidy. Many Edo people find it reassuring.

That habit is the best way to understand why he accepted the name "Okpe's baby," a name that began as he inspected some projects. The name sounds playful, and it is. It also says something about how people see him: as someone close to them, not a distant figure behind tinted glass in an air-conditioned SUV. It belongs with other street names he has collected, including "Waka Waka Governor," which some circles gave him alongside "Akpako-messiah, "Akpakorescue","Akpako bulldozer" among several others.

> Sport has been a quiet success. Team Edo won 302 medals at the 22nd National Sports Festival in Abeokuta and finished third at the maiden Niger Delta Sports Festival in Uyo.

As governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo acceptance of these names is telling the public that he is not afraid of familiarity.

Across the state today, nobody can discuss the governor fairly without starting from security. Here is a governor who inherited a state close to a war zone, with more than 300 cult-related killings recorded in 2024 alone. His response was to replace the weak anti-cultism law with a stronger one, give security agencies new Hilux vans and motorcycles, in their hundreds, and recruit 2,500 officers into the Edo State Security Corps. He went further by recruiting 1000 forest guards to make the forests safe.

Is Edo now free of crime? No, and he has never claimed so, but crime has reduced drastically. The bloodbath that cultism foisted on the dead has been reduced to a dramatic extent. He once told worshippers in Auchi that insecurity remains on his mind and that criminal elements would be driven out. That honesty matters. A state does not heal in 24 months, but the direction of travel counts.

Some of the governor's most telling work outside security has been his healthcare agenda. He met the Anegbette General Hospital closed for 19 years and reopened it. Obayantor General Hospital was also reopened after 22 years. The Central Hospital Annex in Benin City now runs 24-hour services with an accident and emergency unit. The administration recruited 1,376 health workers, supplied equipment to all 36 secondary health facilities, and enrolled more than 600,000 residents in the Edo State Health Insurance Scheme and has builtand renovatedwell over 70 Primary healthcare centres across the threesenatorial districts.

The personal gestures fit the same pattern. In March, the governor visited Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital and settled the bills of a burned couple from Ekpoma, whose wife had delivered a baby by caesarean section, along with those of other patients on the wards. No policy paper produces that. It comes from a man standing at a hospital bed.

Edo people have, over time, judged governments by their roads, and the governor knows it. He has said plainly that bad roads were among the things he inherited. His administration has listed the Ramat Park flyover and a second flyover at Adesuwa junction in Benin City among its flagship projects. Motorists and residents in Benin City have commended the rehabilitation of inner-city roads. Local councils also received 54 units of heavy-duty equipment, including graders, excavators, and rollers, shared among all 18 councils to rehabilitate rural communities.

Not every road is finished, and flooding still threatens communities. Only this week, he inspected projects in Benin City and pledged to tackle flooding and erosion and to complete critical road and drainage works. The work is real, and so is the unfinished part. But the governor is committed.

In the classroom, Governor Monday Okpebholo has recruited 5,000 permanent teachers and upgraded 63 schools to modern standards. At the reopening of the renovated Oredo Girls School, the governor said better staffing and infrastructure were showing results. This is one of the many schools that have been turned around.

On the farm side, the state now has farms, warehouses, and tractors for mechanized agriculture. The state farms at Udomi is a beacon, a step meant to raise standards and give young farmers a firmer footing. Agriculture sits in the SHINE Agenda for a reason: a state that feeds itself is harder to push around.

Sport has been a quiet success. Team Edo won 302 medals at the 22nd National Sports Festival in Abeokuta and finished third at the maiden Niger Delta Sports Festival in Uyo. The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria named him Distinguished Governor of the Year. Young athletes are among the people who feel the change most directly.

Employment has come through recruitment as well as support for small businesses. Beyond the teachers and health workers, the government approved N1 billion in soft loans for market women and revitalised the Uromi and Igarra skills acquisition centers, which produced over 140 graduates in 2025. When 41 Edo citizens fled xenophobic attacks in South Africa, he gave 1 million to each returnee. The government has also paid salaries regularly and kept the 75,000 minimum wage.



EDO STATE GOVERNOR, SENATOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO:

The 2026 budget of 939.85 billion, he christened the Budget of Hope and Growth, rests on the SHINE Agenda: Security, Healthcare, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Agriculture, and Education.

"Okpe's baby," the alias works well with the governor because his policies agree with it. A government that reopens a hospital shut for 19 years, pays a stranger's medical bill, inspects a flooded street in person, and loans money to market women is not governing from a distance. It meets people where they are.

Recognition has followed.New TELEGRAPH gave him an award following his tremendous interventions in education, LEADERSHIP named him Governor of the Year 2026, SILVERBIRD also named him as Governor of the Year 2026,while still counting and the SHINE Agenda has drawn praise from several quarters. Honors are pleasant, but the governor himself would say the real test is a mother in Ekpoma, a trader in Benin, or a farmer in Etsako asking whether life is better than it was two years ago.

On that question, Edo people will decide, as they should. The roads must be finished, the floods tamed, and insecurity pushed back further. Two years is a beginning. Okpe's baby has shown he can walk the streets.

The next two years will definitely, by the grace of God, be one that will ursher in more development and progress to Edo State.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Ebojele, PhD. in public administration, is Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.



EDO STATE GOVERNOR. SENATOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO:



GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO INSPECTING PROJECTS:

Tinubu's reforms painful but necessary – Abbas

ABUJA

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, has acknowledged the economic hardship confronting Nigerians, describing the ongoing reforms of President Bola Tinubu's administration as difficult but necessary to address longstanding structural weaknesses in the economy.

Abbas, however, said the Federal Government must ensure that the benefits of the reforms translate into tangible improvements in the living conditions of ordinary Nigerians.

The Speaker spoke on Monday during a panel session titled "Misinformation and Social Cohesion: Rebuilding Trust through Responsible Public Relations" at the Global Alliance World Public Relations Forum in Abuja.

He was represented at the event by the House Majority Leader, Prof. Julius Ihonvbere.

The forum brought together communication experts, public relations practitioners and global industry leaders to examine the changing responsibilities of the profession amid the growing influence of digital technology and the spread of misinformation.

Acknowledging the economic difficulties facing the country, Abbas said the challenges confronting households and businesses were real and deserved serious attention.

According to him, the economic situation should also be understood against the backdrop of global economic pressures and longstanding structural weaknesses in Nigeria's economy.

He said, "The difficulties confronting households and businesses are real and deserve serious attention. These difficulties must also be understood within the wider context of global economic pressures and long-standing structural weaknesses in our national economy.

"The reforms being pursued by the administration of President Bola Tinubu are aimed at addressing some of these weaknesses, restoring economic stability, and laying the foundation for sustainable growth.

"These reforms are neither easy nor without immediate costs. The challenge before government is to ensure that their benefits translate into tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary Nigerians."

Tinubu announced the removal of the petrol subsidy in his inaugural address on May 29, 2023, shortly after taking office.

The government subsequently harmonised and floated the foreign exchange market, triggering significant adjustments in petrol prices and exchange rates, with consequential effects on the cost of living and doing business.

Abbas said the government must also address the country's security challenges through sustained action, accountability and stronger security institutions.

"Our security challenges equally demand decisive and sustained action. Every innocent life lost today is a tragedy that calls for justice and accountability.

"We must remain resolute in confronting those responsible, strengthening our security institutions, and protecting every Nigerian, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or place of origin," he said.



President Bola Tinubu (right) and Alhaji Abdul Samad Rabiu, Chairman of BUA

Abaribe urges leaders to embrace Azikiwe's ideals

AWKA

The Senator representing Abia South Senatorial Zone, Enyinnaya Abaribe, has said towering leadership, radical change of mindset backed by a clear philosophy and re-orientation can lead to sustainable development in Nigeria and across Africa.

Abaribe said 30 years after the death of Nigeria's first President and nationalist, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, many countries in Africa, especially Nigeria, were still in an unending search for leadership anchored on firm principles which Azikiwe had championed over 50 years ago.

He stated this on Monday at the 14th Annual Zik Lecture Series with the theme, 'Zik's vision for Renaissance: Lessons from emerging economies in Africa', held at the Secretariat Complex of the Academic Staff Union of Universities, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

The annual Zik's lecture series is in honour of Nigeria's first President and nationalist, the late Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe.

In the series, Zik's virtues, leadership, legacies and love for the development of Nigeria and Africa are highlighted.

Abaribe, who gave the keynote address at the event, noted that the greatest problem facing Nigeria was leadership, adding that the late Azikiwe was a great nationalist, whose virtues, leadership and legacies should be imbibed for sustainable growth in the country.

He also listed uncensored exposure to social media, breakdown of family structure, unilateral focus of schools on grades and glorification of ill-gotten wealth as some of the key factors responsible for moral decadence in the country today.

He said, "For many people from my generation, Zik represents what towering leadership backed by a clear philosophy is about.

"For Zik, leadership was not just about political power, but mainly about using every available arsenal such as education, re-orientation, call for freedom, infrastructural development and precocious vision to direct the trajectory of the people.

"This, for me, is what leadership should be about. It is to our disadvantage that decades after the great Zik left this world, many countries in Africa, especially Nigeria, are still in an unending search for leadership anchored on the firm principles which Zik had championed over half a century ago.

"One critical thing which framed Zik's vision and which became the motto of his West Africa Pilot was Dante Alighieri's 'show the light, and the people will find the way.

"Some of the things that have led us to where we are today are uncensored exposure to social media, breakdown of family structure, unilateral focus of schools on grades and glorification of ill-gotten wealth. Today, we glorify ill-gotten wealth.

"A society that applauds sudden wealth without questioning is losing its moral values. This is the greatest danger that Nigeria is facing today. If you reward integrity, you will produce statesmen."

Addressing the students, the Senator advised them that the purpose of education is for them to have the value so that when they are given their certificate, they would be found to be worthy in character and learning.

"This was what the great Zik propounded many years ago, but today, education doesn't seem to translate into moral values. We can lament how our young ones are drifting away, but we ought to know that what is happening today is a manner by which the young ones are learning from their leaders.

"State capture is a systematic capture of the institution of the state, not towards a public interest, but the interest of a few. The Nigerian state is gradually becoming an enterprise for a few. Policies, justice and interventions cannot be for a few, it must be for all.

Showunmi urges NSA to act against politicians threatening national security

ABEOKUTA

A chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party in Ogun State and convener of The Alternative Movement, Segun Showunmi, has urged the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, to take action against politicians whose conduct threatens national security and unity.

In an open letter addressed to Ribadu in Abuja and made available to journalists on Monday, Showunmi expressed concern over what he described as the growing toxicity of political conduct, reckless political communication and the increasingly dangerous behaviour of politicians, their supporters and influential individuals.

Titled "An Open Letter to the National Security Adviser: On the Urgent Need to Establish Firm Boundaries for Political Conduct and Hold Those Who Threaten National Security Accountable," the letter urged the Office of the National Security Adviser to work with relevant security and law enforcement agencies to address political behaviour capable of undermining public peace and national stability.

Showunmi also copied President Bola Tinubu; the Minister of Defence, General Christopher Gwabin Musa (retd.); the Special Adviser to the President on Homeland Security, Major General Adeyinka A. Famadewa (retd.); the Inspector-General of Police, Mr Olatunji Rilwan Disu; the Director-General of the Department of State Services, Mr Oluwatosin Ajayi; and the Minister of State for Defence, Alhaji Bello Muhammad Matawalle.

He argued that Nigeria's existing security challenges should not be compounded by political competition, personal ambition and partisan disagreements.

"The country is navigating a delicate security environment requiring vigilance, institutional coordination, intelligence gathering and responsible leadership.

"At such a time, it is difficult to understand why we should allow political competition, personal ambition and partisan disagreements to become additional threats to our national stability.

"There is a difference between robust political engagement and conduct that deliberately or recklessly threatens public peace. There is a difference between criticising government and deliberately inciting citizens against one another".

He further warned against what he described as the apparent normalisation of provocative statements, ethnic and religious insinuations, threats, inflammatory public performances and the manipulation of sensitive national issues for political advantage.

According to him, some politicians, political loyalists and influential supporters appeared to believe that their positions or connections conferred immunity from the consequences of their public statements and actions.

Obi says his Anambra governance model can work in Nigeria

ABUJA

The 2027 presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, Peter Obi, has said that the development model adopted during his tenure as Anambra State governor, which was anchored on leadership principles, institutional reforms, strategic planning and sectoral development, can be replicated across Nigeria.

The model, he said, prioritised several sectors, including health, education, infrastructure and security, among others.

The NDC presidential candidate stated this on his X handle on Monday as part of a 10-day account of his achievements as Anambra governor, titled 'Record of Service'. He noted that the first series hinged on "Governance as a Public Trust".

Obi stated that the progress recorded during his time in office was "neither a one-time occurrence nor an experiment that cannot be repeated. It reflected a proven model of governance that we are ready to extend to the national level.

"What we accomplished in Anambra can also be accomplished in Nigeria. With capable leadership, effective planning, responsible management and accountable institutions, Nigeria, too, can work for all its citizens."

The former Anambra governor recounted that when he took office as Anambra governor in 2006, the state was at a "critical juncture," where he claimed that the people had been "disconnected" from the state's leadership while some institutions which were critical to the state's development had become "ineffective."

Determined to change the narrative, Obi said his administration's philosophy was anchored on "four principles: character, competence, capacity, and compassion."

The tweet read in part, "When I took office as Governor of Anambra State, our beloved state was at a critical juncture. Leadership had become increasingly disconnected from the people, and many of the essential institutions needed to support a modern society were weak, ineffective, or absent altogether.

"We understood that governance could not continue according to established habits. It needed to be reconceived as a solemn public trust founded on transparency, prudence, accountability, and demonstrable results. Our governing philosophy rested on four principles: character, competence, capacity, and compassion.

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INSIDE DELTA STATE

Oborevwori approves special allowances for Delta health workers

ASABA

STORIES BY AJUWA VICTOR

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has approved special and professional allowances for clinical health workers as well as uniform allowances for thousands of health personnel across the state.

The approvals, which are aimed at improving workers' welfare and strengthening healthcare delivery, cover 3,537 members of the Nigerian Union of Allied Health Professionals and more than 2,900 members of the Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria.

The Commissioner for Health, Dr. Joseph Onojaeme, who disclosed this during a press briefing, said the governor had also approved an adjustment of professional and special allowances for medical doctors to bring the state's remuneration structure in line with applicable Federal Government standards.

He explained that the adjustment would eliminate existing disparities between the allowances paid to doctors in the state and their counterparts in the federal public service, noting that the state had already domesticated the relevant federal framework.

"With this, there will be no discrepancy between what the state is paying and what the Federal Government is paying," Onojaeme said.

Giving details of the uniform allowance, the commissioner said members of the Nigerian Union of Allied Health Professionals on Grade Level 8 and above would receive N100,000 each, while those below Grade Level 8 would receive N50,000.

For members of the Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria, he said workers on Grade Level 13 and above would receive N100,000 each, while those on Grade Level 12 and below would get N25,000 each.

Onojaeme expressed appreciation to Oborevwori for approving the allowances, describing the decision as a significant intervention in the welfare of personnel who play critical roles in sustaining healthcare services across the state.

He said the approvals would boost workers' morale, promote industrial harmony and help Delta State attract and retain qualified medical and allied health professionals.

"I want to thank His Excellency, especially for this approval for our health workers in the state. This will help stabilise the health system and also help attract qualified workforce to Delta State," he said.

The latest approvals reflect the Oborevwori administration's recognition that improving healthcare delivery goes beyond building hospitals and providing modern medical equipment. It also requires a motivated workforce, improved conditions of service and a working environment capable of retaining experienced professionals.

With the intervention, the state government is seeking to strengthen its healthcare workforce and ensure that health personnel remain motivated to provide quality services to residents across Delta State.



MATRICULATION CEREMONY:
3rd from right sited, the Vice Chancellor of Admiralty University of Nigeria (ADUN), Professor Christopher Ogbogbo and others shortly after the 9th matriculation ceremony of the Institution at Ibusa, Delta State.

2027: Governor's wife mobilizes Delta women Ffr Tinubu, Oborevwori

ASABA

Wife of the Governor of Delta State, Deaconess Tobore Oborevwori, has called on women across the state to collect their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) and embark on door-to-door mobilisation to deliver two million votes for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, in the 2027 general elections.

Speaking at the Delta Women Mega Rally and Empowerment Programme held in Kwale, Ndokwa West Local Government Area, with the theme, "One Voice, One Purpose and One Direction," Deaconess Oborevwori described the gathering as the flag-off of grassroots mobilisation in support of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

Urging women not to limit their participation to attending rallies, the Governor's wife stressed that voter registration and PVC collection were critical to translating political support into votes in the presidential election scheduled for January 16 and the governorship election on February 6.

"Without your PVC, you cannot vote. Go to the appropriate centres and collect your PVC. Your PVC is your weapon; it is your confidence," she stated, charging market women to mobilise their customers and work towards delivering an APC victory "from top to bottom."

Deaconess Oborevwori also highlighted key projects and welfare programmes implemented by Governor Oborevwori's administration across Delta State. On social welfare and pensions, she cited the widow's welfare scheme, which includes monthly stipends and free medical care, the timely payment of pension entitlements, and the 13th-month salary for state workers, which was recently signed into law in October.

On infrastructure and education, the First Lady highlighted the execution of road and bridge projects, as well as the development of educational facilities at both tertiary and basic levels. She also listed healthcare interventions, including the installation of three MRI machines in major hospitals across the three senatorial districts, the provision of ultrasound machines in health facilities across the state, and the reduction of dialysis fees in government hospitals.

2027: Olejeme predicts victory for Tinubu, Oborevwori in Delta

AJUWA VICTOR /AKAHOMEN MIRACLE

OSHIMILI

A chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Dr. Ngozi Olejeme, has expressed confidence that President Bola Tinubu, Delta State Governor Sheriff Oborevwori and other APC candidates will win the 2027 general elections.

Olejeme, the Zonal Director, South-South Election Planning, Coordination, Monitoring and Mobilisation of the APC Presidential Campaign Council (PCC), attributed the optimisim to the party's growing grassroots mobilization across Delta State.

She spoke at the Oshimili South Arcade, Asaba, during a political rally attended by Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori; his Deputy, Sir Monday Onyeme; former Delta State Governor, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa; and other party leaders.

The former Managing Director of the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) assured the governor that her team was committed to mobilising massive support for all APC candidates ahead of the elections.

Olejeme expressed confidence that the party's mobilization efforts in Oshimili South Local Government Area would translate into overwhelming electoral support

She however urged residents and party supporters to obtain their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs), stressing that active participation in the electoral process was essential to achieving the party's political ambition.

She also commended Oborevwori for his performance in office and called on Nigerians to support Tinubu's re-election bid in 2027.

Olejeme maintained that sustained grassroots engagement would strengthened the party's chances of securing victory in the forthcoming elections.

ADUN matriculates 1,060 students, urges focus

IBUSA

Admiralty University of Nigeria (ADUN) has matriculated 1,060 students, urging them to remain focused, acquire relevant skills and cultivate good character.

The Vice-Chancellor (VC), Professor Christopher Ogbogbo, gave the advice during the university's 9th matriculation ceremony in Ibusa, Delta State.

He said the university primarily existed to produce graduates with sound minds, excellent character and academic excellence.

According to him, ADUN is committed to shaping students into responsible individuals, stressing that its certificates reflect both character and learning.

Professor Ogbogbo said the institution was expected to lay a solid foundation for students' greatness through honest toil and commitment.

He described matriculation as more than a ceremonial event, but a covenant between students and the university.

He said by taking the matriculation oath, students had pledged to obey university rules, respect constituted authorities and protect the institution's reputation.

The Vice-Chancellor said the management was proud of the university's disciplined student population.

He urged the new students to avoid distractions, remain purposeful and take their academic responsibilities seriously.

Ogbogbo stressed that freedom within the university did not mean doing whatever one pleased, but making responsible choices.

He advised students to attend lectures, complete assignments and shun examination malpractice and other forms of misconduct.

The Vice-Chancellor warned that the university maintained zero tolerance for indiscipline and would enforce its regulations accordingly.



MATRICULATING STUDENTS

FEATURE

Rural Sustainability: The promise for Africa's projected population of 2.5bn by 2050

BY DR ISHMAEL OAEKO IWARA



Africa's demographic transition presents both a historic opportunity and a profound development challenge. According to projections by the United Nations, the continent's population is expected to increase from approximately 1.5 billion people in 2024 to about 2.5 billion by 2050, accounting for more than one-quarter of the global population. At the same time, Africa will experience the world's fastest growth in its working-age population, with hundreds of millions of young people entering labour markets over the next three decades. However, rapid population growth and accelerating rural-to-urban migration are intensifying pressure on its cities that already face significant housing shortages, inadequate infrastructure, transport congestion, and overstretched public services.

While technological change, automation, and artificial intelligence are reshaping global labour markets, most African economies continue to struggle to generate sufficient high-productivity and formal-sector employment opportunities. Compounding this challenge are increasingly restrictive immigration policies in many traditional destination countries, limiting opportunities for African migrants and reducing labour mobility. Consequently, a growing mismatch between labour supply and employment demand has contributed to persistent youth unemployment, underemployment, informality, poverty, and inequality across the continent. Against this backdrop, the Africa Careers Network (2023) contended that "Africa's high population growth is met with insufficient creation of decent jobs."

An estimated 10-12 million young Africans enter the labour market annually, yet only a fraction of the required jobs are created, forcing many into low-productivity informal activities. Unless African governments implement transformative and inclusive economic policies, the continent's anticipated demographic dividend could become a demographic liability. Strategic investment in rural economies therefore represents not merely a development option but a demographic and economic imperative. Based on the preceding arguments, key policy imperatives for the African Union, the African Development Bank, Regional Economic Communities, and other development actors centre on reforming education, strengthening rural infrastructure, enhancing institutional and human capacities, ethical governance and fostering resilient security frameworks to address the complexities of contemporary development.

Education Reforms

Many young Africans perceive rural communities as spaces of limited economic opportunity, fuelling large-scale migration to urban centres. Yet this migration has intensified pressures on cities, which increasingly face unemployment, housing shortages, expanding informal settlements, crime, overstretched infrastructure, and widening socioeconomic inequalities. In this context, institutions of higher learning, primary education and media have a pivotal role in reshaping perceptions of rural development. Through rural-oriented programmes, research, innovation, teaching, and community engagement, these institutions can demonstrate that rural regions are not merely agricultural production zones but potential career destinations and sustainable communities.

In parallel, the continent's higher education institutions should prioritise the integration of contemporary and future-oriented disciplines, such as artificial intelligence, digital innovation, data analytics, cybersecurity, green entrepreneurship, eco-tourism, climate change science, renewable energy systems, sustainability studies, and Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies, into teaching and learning frameworks, given their transformative implications for economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, workforce development, and societal resilience.

Resilient Security

Rural insecurity represents one of the most significant barriers to sustainable development across Africa, where violent extremism, communal conflicts, organised crime, and competition over natural resources continue to undermine livelihoods, agricultural productivity, economic growth and sustainability. Durable peace in Africa, where rapid population growth, youth unemployment, poverty, marginalisation, and increasing competition over land and water resources continue to fuel localised conflicts and social instability, requires more than military intervention. Sustainable security depends on an integrated approach that combines effective law enforcement, community policing, intelligence-led security operations, and strengthened local governance with investments in education, youth employment, entrepreneurship, social protection, conflict-resolution mechanisms, and equitable access to economic opportunities.

Rural Infrastructure

Africa's rural infrastructure deficit remains one of the most significant constraints to inclusive growth, structural transformation, and sustainable rural development. Although these areas accommodate a substantial share of the continent's population, employ a significant amount of Africa's workforce and account for most agricultural production, inadequate transport networks, unreliable electricity supply, limited digital connectivity, insufficient irrigation systems, weak healthcare infrastructure, and under-resourced educational institutions continue to suppress productivity, investment, and enterprise development. According to the African Development Bank, Africa faces an infrastructure financing gap estimated at between US$68 billion and US$108 billion annually, with rural communities bearing a disproportionate share of these deficits. Given the magnitude of these challenges and the role rural areas play in Africa's sustainability, the need for targeted and sustained investment interventions in this direction cannot be overemphasised.

Human Capacity

A critical impediment to Africa's rural transformation is the persistent underinvestment in emerging skills that increasingly drive modern economies. Rural education systems, vocational institutions, and skills-development centres often lack the resources and technological capacity needed to prepare young people for the demands of a contemporary digital and knowledge-based economy. As a result, rural economies continue to be characterised by low technological adoption, weak innovation ecosystems, limited value addition, and low productivity. This skills deficit is particularly concerning given that Africa is expected to account for a significant share of global labour-force growth in the coming decades. In addition, the benefits of enhanced skills and innovation cannot be fully realised without greater financial inclusion and access to productive assets. In other words, capacity-building initiatives must be accompanied by investments in inclusive financial systems, rural infrastructure, digital connectivity, and innovation ecosystems.

Ethical Governance

Even well-conceived rural development strategies in Africa are unlikely to yield meaningful outcomes without political will and accountability, requiring concrete reforms, regulatory measures and ethical governance. The continent possesses approximately 60% of the world's remaining uncultivated arable land and vast reserves of strategic minerals that underpin the global economy, including about 70% of global cobalt production, significant shares of the world's platinum, manganese, chromium, gold, diamonds, bauxite, uranium, and increasingly critical green-transition minerals such as lithium and rare earth elements. It is endowed with substantial oil and gas reserves, extensive renewable energy potential, and a youthful population.

Historically, African minerals powered the industrial revolutions of Europe and North America. Similarly, Africa exports billions of dollars' worth of crude oil, gas, agricultural commodities, and raw minerals annually; yet, it remains home to some of the highest levels of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and infrastructure deficits, reflecting a persistent governance rather than a resource challenge. Weak governance, corruption, illicit financial flows, political instability, and ineffective public institutions have often prevented resource wealth from translating into broad-based socioeconomic progress.

Author

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Printed and Published by **Bendel Newspaper Corporation**, 24, Airport Road, P.M.B. 1334 Benin City, Edo State.
Editor: Andy Asemota - 08035872075, 09076673265. **Advert Manager:** 08051177163.
Lagos Office: 25A, Alli Street, Off Tinubu Square, Lagos Island. **Abuja Office:** 1st Floor, Edo House, 75 Ralph Shodehinde Street, Central Business District, Abuja.
All correspondence to Bendel Newspaper Corporation, Benin City. Email: nigerianobservernews1@gmail.com - **ISSN 0331-2674**