

WARRI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY:
**Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo
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Vanguard
Weekender.

A new pull-out, the Vanguard Weekender, debuts. Race to Page 19 for an exciting read!

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Vanguard

...towards a better life for the people

VOL. 41: NO. 10,833

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2026

N300

XENOPHOBIA: FG, evacuees slam S-Africa over documentation claims

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●S'African authorities frustrated paper renewal —EVACUEES ●Say Nigerian embassy complicated our cases ●Govt to activate early warning mechanism to protect Nigerians — FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY ●Next batch due back Monday ●Evacuation to be concluded this month —AG. HIGH COMMISSIONER

S-AFRICA EVACUEES AT MMIA, LAGOS...



Nigerians fleeing xenophobic attacks in South Africa have started arriving the country. Above, one of them praising God for safely returning home. TOP RIGHT: From left, Temitope Alexander-Ajayi, Acting Nigerian High Commissioner to South Africa; Ambassador Sola Enikanolaiye, Minister of State, Foreign Affairs; Mrs Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, NIDCOM and other officials on arrival at the cargo terminal of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja, Lagos to receive Nigerian evacuees from South Africa yesterday. RIGHT: A challenged evacuee being assisted down the boarding stairs. PHOTOS BY LAMIDI BAMIDELE, PHOTO EDITOR.

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Mexico daze S-Africa in World Cup opener; Canada, Bosnia trade tackles today **56**



MR & MRS

DEAR, REMEMBER THAT I DECLINED THE OFFER TO HEAD OUR BRANCH OFFICE IN UGANDA? I'VE ACCEPTED THE OFFER. NEXT WEEK, I'LL BE IN UGANDA.



HA! HONEY! I HOPE THIS IS NOT BECAUSE I SAID THREE OF MY JUNIOR BROTHERS ARE COMING TO LIVE WITH US?

dadadekola@yahoo.com
08052201913



27

Years of Unbroken Democratic Government

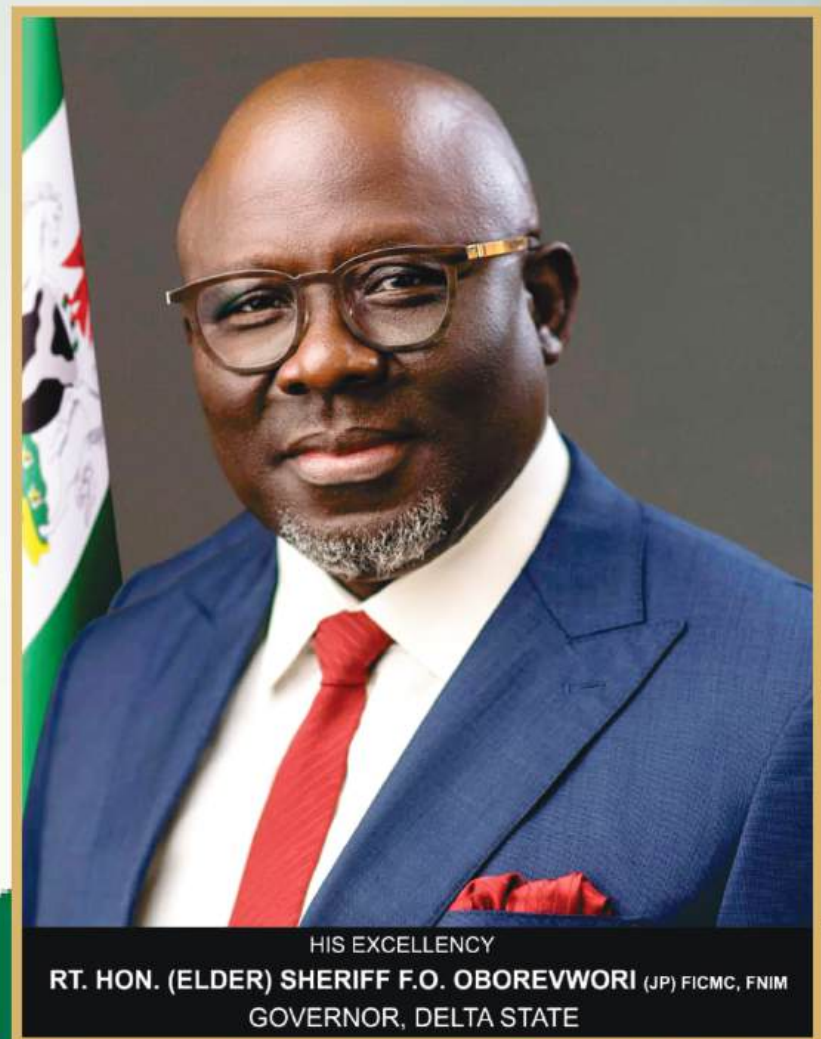
**It has been an amazing run so far.
Huge Expectations.
Diverse and unique experiences.
Growth and renewal.
Expectations for a better and
stronger Nigeria.**

Congratulations Nigerians.

It can only get better.

Let's keep hope alive.

Happy Democracy Day!



HIS EXCELLENCY
RT. HON. (ELDER) SHERIFF F.O. OBOREVWORI (JP) FICMC, FNIM
GOVERNOR, DELTA STATE



DIFFERENT TRIBES, ONE NATION.

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Peace and Strength in our diversity.



HAPPY DEMOCRACY DAY NIGERIA

From all of us at Zenith Bank PLC

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STRONG NATIONS ARE BUILT ON STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Democracy is not the absence of challenges, but the determination to overcome them together. As Nigeria marks another year of democratic governance, we celebrate the resilience, ingenuity and spirit of our people. With hope, unity and purpose, we can continue building a stronger nation and a brighter future.

Happy
Democracy
Day, Nigeria



STATE POLICE: Reps pass Bill, scales second reading in Senate

•Details of constitutional amendments needed

By Henry Umoru & Gift Odekina

ABUJA — The House of Representatives, yesterday, overwhelmingly voted in favour of a constitutional amendment bill seeking to establish state police across the country, marking a major step in efforts to address Nigeria's worsening security challenges.

Also, the bill scaled second reading in the Senate.

In the House of Reps, the bill secured the support of 289 of the 290 lawmakers in attendance, while only one member voted against it during plenary.

The proposed legislation is among the constitution alteration bills currently being considered by the National Assembly and seeks to

amend relevant provisions of the 1999 Constitution to allow states establish and operate their own police services alongside the Nigeria Police Force.

The outcome of the vote reflects growing consensus among lawmakers that the country's centralised policing structure has become inadequate in tackling rising cases of banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, communal clashes and other forms of insecurity across the federation.

For years, proponents of state police have argued that governors, as chief security officers of their respective states, should have greater control over policing and internal security, insisting that locally recruited officers would possess better knowledge of their communities

and respond more effectively to threats.

Opponents, however, have expressed concerns that state police could be abused by state governments for political purposes, particularly during elections and periods of political tension.

Speaking during debates preceding the vote, lawmakers in support of the proposal maintained that sufficient constitutional safeguards can be put in place to prevent abuse to enhance grassroots security.

The approval by the House represents one of the most significant constitutional reforms considered by the 10th National Assembly and aligns with longstanding calls by security experts, traditional rulers, governors and civil society groups for the decentralisa-

tion of policing in Nigeria.

The bill will now proceed through the constitutional amendment process, requiring concurrence by the Senate and approval by at least two-thirds of the Houses of Assembly of the states before it can be transmitted for presidential assent.

Passes second reading in Senate

At the Senate, the bill for the Establishment of State Police and for Related Matters (Sixth Alteration), 2026 (SB. 794), sponsored by the Senate Leader, Senator Opeyemi Bamidele (APC, Ekiti Central), passed second reading.

When it was presented, yesterday, for consideration, the bill enjoyed broad support among all senators across

political divides.

President of the Senator Godswill Akpabio, thereafter, referred it to the Senate Ad-hoc Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution chaired by the Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Jibrin Barau (APC, Kano North) for further consideration, scrutiny and will report back to the Senate.

In his presentation of the general principles of the bill, Bamidele highlighted the national significance of creating a state police among the dwindling power of the Nigeria Police to ensure internal stability.

He noted that the bill was sponsored as one of the measures to strengthen internal security architecture across the Federation, explaining that the bill sought to modernise Nigeria's security architecture by establishing Federal and State Police structures.

Senators, mostly from the North, spoke in favour of the establishment of state police, saying creation of State Police will provide a lasting solution to the insecurity problem in the country.

In his contribution, Chief Whip of the Senate, Senator Tahir Monguno (APC, Borno North) who expressed strong support for the proposed state police Bill, said that its passage will help address the proliferation of various vigilante groups operating across the country.

Details of proposed constitutional amendments for establish-

ment of State Police

1. Establishment of Federal Police and State Police (New Section 214)

• Two distinct police bodies are constitutionally established:

- (a) the Federal Police
- (b) State Police (one per State, established by State law)

The National Assembly must pass an Act prescribing:

- Structure, organisation, administration, and powers of the Federal Police
- Framework and guidelines for the establishment of State Police

• State Police cannot commence operational policing until:

- Established by a Law of the State House of Assembly, and
- Certified as meeting national minimum standards (prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly)

• Transitional provision: Until a State Police becomes operational, the Federal Police continues all policing functions in that State. After commencement, the Federal Police handles federal policing functions and may provide assistance to the State Police.

2. Responsibilities and Non-Interference (Section 214)

Federal Police is responsible for:

- Maintenance of public security, public order, and security of persons/property throughout the Federation (to the extent provided by the

Continues on Page 52



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President Bola Tinubu after an audience with Ekiti State Governor, Abiodun Oyebanji (left) and Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele at the Presidential Villa Abuja, yesterday.

People Talk

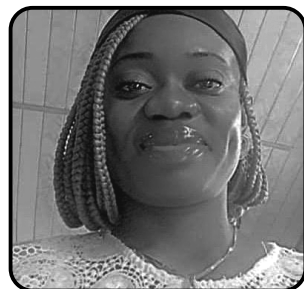
BY YINKA LATONA

On Oyo pupils, teachers kidnap & terrorists' bold move to South-West



Reports of kidnapers and terrorists entering the South-West demand an urgent wake-up call. Security threats escalate if unchallenged. The Oyo State attack directly targets the region's long-standing peace. Government must improve security agency coordination and collaborate closely with local communities to track suspicious movements. We cannot wait for further escalation before responding decisively to this threat.

—Alhaji JO Afolabi, Accountant



Kidnapping vulnerable children is deeply saddening, compounding existing economic hardships for sacrificing parents. This fear destroys education, business, and community development, as insecurity halts movement and investment. To restore confidence, authorities must urgently deploy stronger security patrols, build better intelligence networks, and provide greater support for local security initiatives across the affected regions.

—Mrs. Confidence Uchenna, Businesswoman



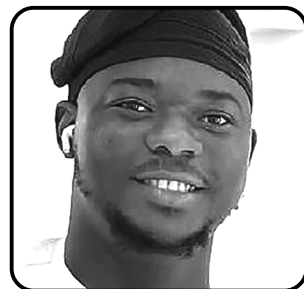
The kidnapping of school children and teachers in Oyo State is deeply disturbing. While the South-West previously felt safe from such insecurity, recent events prove otherwise. If schools become unsafe, parents lose confidence in education. Government must move beyond statements, taking practical steps to secure schools, protect vulnerable communities, and prosecute criminals to deter future attacks.

—Mr. Julius Akuma, Farmer



This troubling development raises serious questions about the future of Nigerian education and security. Schools must be protected environments, not places of fear. Kidnapping's regional spread proves insecurity is a national challenge requiring comprehensive responses. Beyond deploying personnel, government must address unemployment, poverty, weak border controls, and ensure justice. Citizens must feel safe everywhere.

—Miss Blessing Igwe, Businesswoman



Increasingly bold and organised criminal groups are targeting previously safe areas in the South-West. These critical warning signs demand urgent action. While communities must stay vigilant and report suspicious activities, authorities bear the primary duty to eliminate criminal safe havens. Citizens need visible action, not promises—specifically, arrests, successful prosecutions, and clear prevention strategies to restore safety.

—Mr. Yusuf Tijani, Sales manager



As a teacher, this incident hits home because it could happen anywhere. Parents entrust us with their children, expecting their safe return. Armed criminals targeting schools terrify teachers and parents. Operating with increasing confidence, these groups clearly face inadequate challenges. Government must invest heavily in intelligence, surveillance, and school security. Insecurity must not destroy education's future.

—Miss Rose Mba, Teacher



Teacher's security drill sparks bandit attack panic in Lagos

By Evelyn Usman

PANIC swept through parts of Okokomaiko, Ojo, and the Shibiru axis of Lagos State, yesterday, after a security drill, organised by a teacher, sparked rumours of a bandit attack on a school, sending students fleeing and parents scrambling to evacuate their children.

The confusion, which triggered stampede-like scenes within and around the school premises, was later traced to a simulated security exercise that went awry.

Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Fatai Tijani, confirmed that there was no bandit attack, describing the incident as a poorly coordinated demonstration that caused unnecessary fear among students and residents.

According to Vanguard findings, the teacher had organised a practical session to demonstrate how bandits operate. During the exercise, some students dressed in black hooded outfits reportedly acted as bandits and advanced towards the area where the principal was standing.

However, several students who were unaware that the exercise was being staged became alarmed and began running in different directions, shouting that bandits had invaded the school.

Gunmen kill 2 vigilantes in fresh Plateau attack

By Golok Nanmwa

TWO local vigilantes were reportedly killed by gunmen, Wednesday night, in Ta-Hoss community, Riyom Local Government Area of Plateau State, deepening concerns over persistent insecurity in the area.

The incident occurred around 10 p.m. while the victims were said to be on routine security patrol within the community.

The deceased were identified as Davou Dalyop Patu, 48, and Dalyop Zaram, 38, both members of the local vigilante group established to support efforts to protect the community from attacks.

Sources said the vigilantes were keeping watch over the area when they came under attack by yet-to-be-identified assailants.

The killing has thrown the community into mourning and heightened fears among residents over the recurring security challenges confronting rural settlements in Riyom Local Government Area.

Confirming the incident, a

Army contains Cameroonian troops' incursion in C'River border community

By Ike Uchechukwu

THE Nigerian Army has successfully contained an unauthorised incursion by Cameroonian soldiers into Danare community, in Boki LGA of Cross River State, averting a potential escalation that caused panic among residents.

A statement signed by Lieutenant Colonel Olabisi Olalekan Ayeni, Acting Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, 82 Division, said its troops at the Forward Operating Base in Danare promptly responded after receiving reports of foreign military personnel on Nigerian territory on Tuesday.

"Troops of the Nigerian Army deployed at the Forward Operating Base Danare, upon receiving reports of foreign

• CP Tijani warns against false security alerts

The panic spread quickly beyond the school premises, prompting worried parents to rush to the school to pick up their children.

Sources said the principal was also caught off guard, as he was not fully briefed about the details of the simulation before it commenced.

CP Tijani said preliminary investigations revealed that the incident was not a security breach but a case of poor communication and coordination.

He warned that security-related demonstrations must be properly planned and communicated to relevant authorities to avoid creating panic.

The police commissioner also cautioned content creators and members of the public against disseminating false security alerts capable of causing fear and public disorder.

"We are in a very sensitive period. People should be mindful of the kind of content they create. Banditry is not a subject for dramatization in a manner that generates fear and panic. Anybody caught raising a false alarm will face the law," he warned.

Tijani disclosed that the teacher responsible for the exercise had been arrested and was currently in police custody.

• Community mourns victims, seeks improved security

community leader, Mr. Livinus Badung, described the attack as tragic and devastating. He said the deceased were committed and selfless men who dedicated their time and energy to ensuring the safety of residents.

According to him, their deaths have left a huge vacuum in the community, where they were widely respected for their courage and commitment to protecting lives and property.

"The community is deeply saddened by this loss. These were men who stood in defence of their people and paid the ultimate price," he said.

Also reacting, the National Publicity Secretary of the Berom Youth Moulders Association, BYM, Mr. Rwang Tengwong, expressed grief over the incident and commiserated with the families of the victims and the entire Ta-Hoss community.

While about 50 of the students who were taken from their hostels managed to escape, the gunmen

• Incursion emanated from levy collections

military presence, promptly responded and contacted appropriate Cameroonian Armed Forces authority which led to the withdrawal of Cameroonian troops from Nigerian territory in line with established border protocols," the statement said.

The Army added that the situation was "immediately contained without further escalation" and that troops remained vigilant while monitoring border activities.

Preliminary findings attributed the incident to a dispute over levies on farmland between Danare in Nigeria and Dadi in Cameroon.

Residents reported that armed Cameroonian troops advanced into the community and fired warning shots to disperse youths



PROTEST MATCH AGAINST INSECURITY, KIDNAPPING—Members of civil society groups, under the auspices of 'Nigerians Unite Against Terrorism', during a protest match against insecurity and kidnapping in the country, at the Unity Fountain, in Abuja, yesterday. Photo: Peters Oyedele.

By Kingsley Omonobi

TROOPS of Sub-Sector 5, 'Operation Fansan Yamma', have rescued 119 kidnapped victims, neutralised several bandits and destroyed multiple criminal's hideouts, during sustained military operations across parts of Southern Kaduna.

Commander of Sub-Sector 5, Navy Captain Patrick Ali, disclosed this yesterday during an interaction with journalists in Kachia, attributing the successes to intelligence-driven operations, aggressive patrols and collaboration with local communities and other security agencies.

Ali said the formation, activated on January 28, 2024, was established to restore security and stability in Kachia, Kajuru, Chikun, Kagarko and parts of Zangon Katf Local Government Areas of Kaduna State.

Terrorism: 5 sentenced to 25 years for roles in Papiri school abduction

By Ikechukwu Nnochiri

ABUJA—THE Federal High Court, sitting in Abuja, yesterday, convicted and sentenced five persons to 25 years in prison for the roles they played in the November 21, 2025 attack on St. Mary's Catholic School, in Papiri village, Niger State.

The convicts, among whom are two Nigeriens, admitted that they rendered assistance to terrorists who stormed the school on motorcycles and abducted students and teachers at gunpoint.

While about 50 of the students who were taken from their hostels managed to escape, the gunmen

who challenged them. Boki Local Government Chairman, Beatrice Nyiam, urged residents to remain calm, saying relevant security agencies and government authorities were handling the matter.

The Army reassured the public that the situation was calm and under control. It warned against spreading unverified information capable of causing unnecessary tension.

"The General Officer Commanding 82 Division had directed the Commander, 13 Brigade, to visit his Cameroonian counterpart to strengthen border coordination, clarify operating procedures along the boundary, and prevent future occurrences," the statement added.

Specifically, the convicts

Troops rescue 119 kidnap victims in Kaduna

....Destroy bandits' hideouts

According to him, the operational structure comprises the 312 Artillery Regiment, 305 Artillery Regiment, Maritime Component and the Department of State Services, DSS, Special Operations Force.

He identified kidnapping, armed robbery, cattle rustling and attacks on farming communities as the major security challenges confronting the area, but noted that troops had continued to maintain pressure on criminal elements through sustained clearance operations and intelligence-led missions.

Ali said one of the earliest breakthroughs came between

January 31 and February 1, 2026, when troops destroyed several bandit camps across different locations within the operational area, disrupting criminal activities and restricting the movement of armed groups.

He said on February 4, troops deployed from Kachia responded to reports of kidnapping and motorcycle theft in Angwan Wahala.

"During the operation, security forces engaged fleeing bandits, neutralised one suspect, rescued seven kidnapped victims and recovered three stolen motorcycles," he said.

The commander described the

rescue of 88 kidnapped worshippers in Kurmin-Risga as one of the most significant achievements recorded by the formation.

The victims were abducted during a church service before troops, working with other security agencies, launched a coordinated operation that led to their safe rescue.

Ali further disclosed that troops conducting clearance operations in the Kajuru axis between February 12 and 13 rescued 24 kidnapped victims who escaped from a bandit enclave in Rijana Forest.

He said the victims were subsequently handed over to the appropriate authorities and reunited with their families.

The commander also revealed that four suspected bandits were arrested in March and transferred to the Headquarters of 1 Division Nigerian Army for further investigation and possible prosecution.

According to him, troops have sustained a strong security presence through Forward Operating Bases across the area, carrying out stop-and-search operations, fighting patrols and community protection missions aimed at preventing kidnappings, attacks on schools and other criminal activities.

Ali cited a recent intervention in Makyali community, where troops acted on intelligence reports of a planned attack on farmers by bandits.

The swift deployment, he said, thwarted the attack and restored confidence among residents.

He commended traditional rulers, youth leaders, local government officials and residents for providing credible intelligence that has enhanced operational effectiveness.

admitted that they were arms couriers to the gunmen. The prosecution told the court that some of the arms they conveyed included 15 AK-103 rifles as well as about 1,434 rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition from the Diffa region, Republic of Niger, to one Malam Ahmad, a member of the Boko Haram terrorist group based in Borgu LGA of Niger State.

Security operatives discovered the arms tucked in sacks hidden inside a Volkswagen Golf car. By that action, they committed an offence contrary to Section 26(1) of the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022. The court ordered that the car, which was tendered in evidence alongside the recovered arms and ammunition, be forfeited to the federal government.



PROTEST AGAINST INTIMIDATION—The people of Erhioke community, in Kokori, Ethiope East Local Govt. Area of Delta State, during their protest against what they described as intimidation and unlawful arrest of some of their members, on Tuesday.



By Kingsley Omonobi & Ozioruva Aliu

NDLEA secures conviction of 11 Indian sailors, vessel

....Over 315kg cocaine
....As Edo command destroys N2.8bn illicit drugs

THE National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, has intensified its offensive against drug trafficking, securing the conviction of 11 Indian sailors and their merchant vessel, MV Aruna Hulya, over the importation of 315 kilogrammes of cocaine into Nigeria, while simultaneously destroying illicit drugs worth N2.8 billion in Edo State.

The Federal High Court in Lagos convicted the Indian crew members and their vessel, imposing fines and restitution totalling about \$6 million, barely six months after their arrest at the Apapa Port in Lagos.

NDLEA spokesman, Femi Babafemi, said the vessel and its crew were arrested on January 2, 2026, after operatives discovered 315 kilograms of cocaine concealed in Hatch 3 of the ship at the GDNL Terminal, Apapa.

According to him, the ship's master, Sharma Shashi Bhushan, and 10 other crew members were arraigned before Justice Joseph Chukwujekwu Aneke of the Federal High Court, Lagos, on a two-count charge.

Babafemi said the court, after considering plea bargain agreements entered into by both parties, convicted all 12 defendants, including the vessel, under Section 25 of the NDLEA Act and imposed a fine of N100,000 on each.

The court also ordered MV Aruna Hulya to pay restitution of \$5.3 million to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Three principal officers of the vessel were directed to pay \$100,000 each, while the remaining crew members were ordered to pay \$50,000 each as restitution.



•The convicted vessel.

Reacting to the judgment, NDLEA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Brig.-Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (ret'd), said the conviction sent a strong warning to international drug trafficking syndicates.

"This judgment is the third of its kind in recent times involving foreign nationals and vessels. It is a clear message that Nigeria is no

longer a safe corridor for cocaine or any other illicit substance," Marwa stated.

He attributed the success to intelligence-led operations and vowed that the agency would continue to pursue traffickers regardless of nationality.

Meanwhile, in Benin City, the Edo State Command of the NDLEA publicly destroyed

73,463.21 kilograms of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances with an estimated street value of N2.8 billion.

Speaking during the exercise, Edo State Commander of the Agency, Dr. Mitchell Ofoyeju, said the destruction was carried out pursuant to an order of the Federal High Court in Benin and underscored government's determination to dismantle drug cartels and protect communities from the devastating effects of drug abuse.

According to him, cannabis accounted for the largest quantity destroyed at 73,210.23 kilograms, while psychotropic substances, including Tramadol, Diazepam and Codeine-based cough syrups, amounted to 246.36 kilograms.

Other substances destroyed included 2.662 kilograms of methamphetamine, 3.7441 kilograms of cocaine and 0.2168 kilograms of heroin.

Ofoyeju said the drugs were recovered through sustained intelligence-driven operations across the state, including the destruction of cannabis plantations, raids on illicit drug warehouses and the interception of vehicles used for transporting narcotics.

"We have faced attacks, including armed assaults, while carrying out our duties, but we remain undeterred. We will continue to work towards a safer, healthier and drug-free society," he said.

Chairman of the Senate Committee on Narcotics and Senator representing Edo Central, Senator Joe Ikpea, pledged continued legislative support for the agency through improved funding, equipment and enabling laws.

Also speaking, NDLEA Chairman, represented by Deputy Controller of Narcotics, Ahmed Ningi, commended security agencies, local communities and other stakeholders for their support in the fight against drug trafficking.

Representing Governor Monday Okpebholo, the Coordinator of the Office of the First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo-Anani, assured the agency of the Edo State Government's continued support in combating drug abuse and trafficking.

The twin developments underscore NDLEA's sustained crackdown on drug trafficking networks and efforts to curb the circulation of illicit substances across the country.

SOFTCUTS

Social Media Conversation



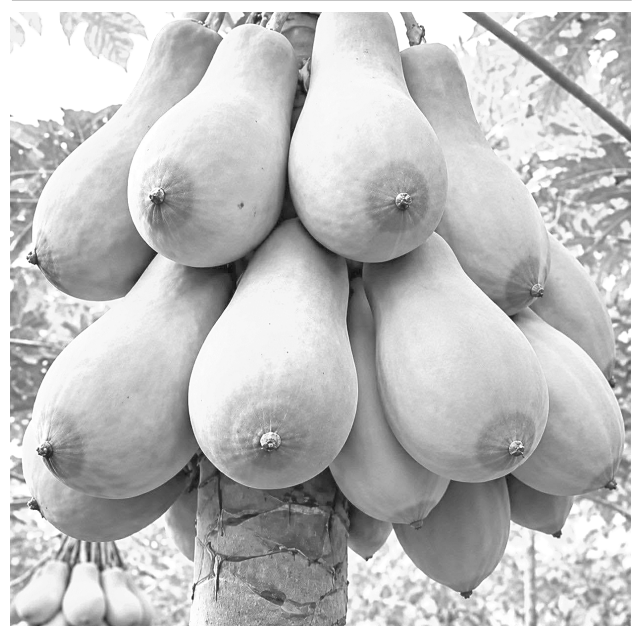
Guys, help me out where this leads to. I'm confused about this road sign

Way back home...!

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She's surely salivating!



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NOTICE OF 5TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 5th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of DOLPHIN MICRO FINANCE BANK LIMITED will be held at Jubilee Retreat & Conference Center, No. 5 Enerhen Road, Behind Mother of Redeemer Catholic Church, Effurun, Delta State, on 3rd of July 2026 at 9.00am to transact the following business:

ORDINARY BUSINESS:

- 1. To Receive Audited Financial Statements:**
The Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 together with the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Profit and Loss, report of the Directors, Auditors, and the Statutory Audit Committee thereon shall be received.
- 2. To Approve the Expiration of the Tenure of Directors**
To approve the expiration of the tenure of the following Directors: Mr. James Agarivbie, Mrs. Mercy Amroma, Chief Douglas Ariole, Chief Oshoavwota Ariole, Chief Oletu Chapele (JP), Mrs. Helen Demesi, Mrs. Florence Dobri, Mr. Francis Ebiwriere, Chief David Edileh, Enerhen Young Ladies Club, Enerhen Dev. Association, Chief Richard Oge, Mr. Bayo Odibo, Chief (Barr.) Palmer O. K Munu, Engr. Moses Kragha, Chief (Sir) Samuel E. Odibo, Hon. Aaron Jarikre Diamreyan, Mrs. Agatha Salami, Enerhen Dev. Association as Directors of the Company.
- 3. To Appoint/Ratify the Appointment of Directors:**
To appoint/ratify the appointment of Oghenekaro Akpososo, Osita Ajuluchukwu, Orunor Abohwo, Francis Chavwuko Okoro and Othuke Akpososo as Directors.
- 4. To Appoint Auditors:**
To appoint Messrs. Ubaha Edet & Co (Chartered Accountants) as External Auditors.
- 5. To Authorize Directors:**
To authorize the Directors to fix the remuneration of the External Auditors.
- 6. To Elect Members of the Statutory Audit**

Committee:
To elect members of the Audit Committee representing the Shareholders.

SPECIAL BUSINESS:

- 7. To approve the increase of the Bank's Authorized Share Capital from N28,253,536 to N250,000,000.00.**
- 8. To amend the Company's Articles of Association as follows:**
That Article 5 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company be amended by replacing the extant provision with the following clause: "The Company may allot any new share or unissued shares by offering in the first instance where necessary, to all the existing shareholders or to all the shareholders of the class or classes being issued in proportion as nearly as may be to their existing holdings".
- 9. That Article 7 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company be amended to read: "Regulations 5 and 6 may be amended by simple majority of all the members present and voting at the Annual General Meeting".**

NOTES:

- 10. Proxies:** A member entitled to attend and vote at the General Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his/her stead. A proxy need not be a member of the bank.
- 11. Questions:** Shareholders reserve the right to ask questions not only at the meeting but also in writing prior to the meeting. Written questions must be submitted to the Company Secretary at least 7 days before the AGM.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Oseghale L. Obaga Esq,
Company Secretary/Legal Adviser,
Dated this 11th day of June 2026.
Email: dolphinfmfbank@gmail.com
oseghaleobaga@gmail.com.



Senate asks security agencies to arrest criminals flaunting ransom on Social Media

By Henry Umoru

ABUJA- WORRIED that attack on schools and abduction of school children is fast becoming one of the mainstream strategies of terrorists, the Senate has asked the Department of State Services, DSS Cybercrime Unit to track and arrest bandits flaunting ransom proceeds on social media.

It also called on the Federal Executive Council and the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, to immediately come up with Financial Circulars and Regulations that will compel regulated cash policy that encourages cashless transactions in Nigeria in order to stifle cash payments for kidnapping for ransom.

Resolutions of the Senate, yesterday, were sequel to a motion sponsored by Senator Sunday Karimi (APC, Kogi West).

The Senate also mandated the Federal Ministry of Interior and the Nigerian Immigration Service to step up efforts at curtailing Border Security in order to reduce movements of terrorist and arms into the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

It urged the sub-national governments to stop negotiations and peace

accords with terrorists and armed bandits, who often renege on these accords and turnaround to fund terrorism with the proceeds of such peace deals.

The Senate further resolved to invite the Commander of the National Centre for Control of Arms and Small Weapons, NCCSALW, to explain the incidents and challenges of arms proliferation in the country.

Earlier in his presentation, Senator Karimi noted that Kogi West senatorial district was one of the areas of growing security concern in the country, as "On June 10, 2026, terrorists attacked Iluke-Bunnu, Kabba/Bunnu Local Government Area of Kogi State, and a community within Kogi West Senatorial District.

"The terrorist invaded a secondary school and attempted to kidnap students writing their Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations, SSCE. During the attack, the Vice Principal of the School, a school teacher and an indigene were killed on the spot. This happened just a day, after a similar attack on the private property of a constituent in Odo Ere, Yagba West Local Government Area of Kogi State on June 8, 2026.



CENTRAL BANKING AWARDS 2026 —From left: Michelle Godwin, Global Brand Director, Central Banking; Chris Jeffery, Editor-in-Chief, Central Banking; Mr. Olayemi Cardoso, Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Mr. Lamido Yuguda, Deputy Governor, Financial System Stability (FSS, CBN), shortly after Mr. Cardoso formally received the 2026 Central Bank of the Year award conferred by Central Banking in London, Wednesday.

Again, Senate extends 2025 Budget implementation to Sept 30

By Henry Umoru

ABUJA- THE Senate has again extended the 2025 budget Implementation of the Capital component, this time by three months, with the deadline shifted to September 30, 2026.

The deadline was shifted from June 30, to September 30, to allow Ministries, Departments, and Agencies, MDAs, more time to complete ongoing infrastructure projects.

Senate's resolution was sequel to a motion by the Senate Chief Whip, Tahir Monguno (APC, Borno North), yesterday.

The action is to prevent the abandonment of critical public investments, safeguard public funds, and ensure full capital budget utilisation, just as the move is attributed to the slow pace of budget performance to procurement bottlenecks, project execution challenges, and administrative constraints,

even though significant funds had already been released to MDAs.

The latest extension is the third for the capital component of the 2025 Appropriation Act. The implementation period was first extended by the National Assembly from December 31, 2025, to March 31, 2026, and subsequently from March 31 to June 30, 2026, before, yesterday's decision to move the deadline to September 30, 2026.

With this development, the MDAs have an additional three months to complete ongoing capital projects and fully utilise funds already released under the 2025 budget.

According to the Chief Whip, the extension became imperative against the backdrop that a significant portion of funds released to MDAs for approved projects and programmes had yet to be utilised due to procurement timelines, project execution challenges

and other administrative bottlenecks.

Monguno who noted that several strategic capital projects across critical sectors were already at advanced stages of completion and required additional time for execution, certification and payment, however, warned that failure to extend the implementation period could lead to the abandonment of key projects, wastage of public resources already committed to them and disruption of ongoing government interventions.

In his contribution, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Olamilekan Adeola (APC, Ogun West), who urged his colleagues to support the motion, explained that though payments for capital projects have commenced, there were still many outstanding ones yet to be done.

In his remarks, the

Ezekwesili warns against politicising school abductions

FORMER Minister of Education, Dr. Oby Ezekwesili, has warned the government and public office holders against politicising the recent abduction of school children across the country.

Speaking at News Central's Town Hall meeting held in Oyo State, yesterday, Ezekwesili lamented the current state of the country.

She said: "People started talking politics with the Chibok girls; the role of the government is to make sure that when our children go to school, they are safe."

She criticised the Nigerian populace, citing their docility, saying, "Until

Nigerians speak up, nothing will be done," emphasising that she would not stop talking about the failure of the government.

The town hall in Oyo State was convened to address the challenge of insecurity, particularly in the state and the broader South West region. It is set against the backdrop of the recent school kidnapping in the Oriire community, where armed bandits attacked on May 15, 2026, and 46 persons were abducted. Among the hostages were 39 children, the youngest being just two years old. Seven teachers were also taken, and one of them was later executed.

Access to gas, key to Nigeria's industrial devt — MINISTER EKPO

By Sebastine Obasi

NIGERIA must take decisive action to unlock its vast natural gas resources into accessible energy solutions that drive industrialisation, economic growth, job creation, and improved living standards for its citizenry.

Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Ekperikpe Ekpo stated this at the Association of Local Distributors of Gas, ALDG, Business Forum 2026 held in Abuja. The Minister, represented by Mrs. Ikenma Irene, Director, Midstream and Downstream, emphasised that while Nigeria possesses over 209 trillion cubic feet of proven natural gas reserves, making it one of the most gas-endowed nations globally, the country's true challenge lies in ensuring widespread access and utilisation of this strategic resource.

"Nigeria's development will not be measured by the

volume of gas beneath our soil, but by the extent to which that gas powers industries, supports households, creates jobs, and fuels sustainable economic growth," he said.

He commended ALDG for providing a strategic platform for collaboration and dialogue among key stakeholders, noting that the Forum comes at a critical period in Nigeria's energy transition journey. He also highlighted the Federal Government's continued commitment to deepen domestic gas utilisation through the Decade of Gas initiative and other transformative reforms designed to position Nigeria as a gas-powered economy.

The Petroleum Industry Act, PIA, 2021, he noted, has strengthened the legal and regulatory framework necessary to attract investment, encourage private sector participation, expand infrastructure, and promote market efficiency throughout the gas sector.

Road-landed aircraft under probe as NSIB examines flight recorder

By Dickson Omobola

THE Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau, NSIB, yesterday, recovered and secured the Cockpit Voice Recorder, CVR, and Flight Data Recorder, FDR, from the Bombardier Challenger CL-601 aircraft, registration N989BC, that landed and subsequently departed from a roadway during a flight from Lagos to Asaba on Wednesday.

NSIB, which disclosed that the flight was operated by VMO Aero Limited, said investigative activities were ongoing and would include analysis of the recovered flight recorders, examination of technical and operational records and interviews.

Director of Public Affairs and Family Assistance, NSIB, Mrs. Funke Adebayo-Arowojobe, in a statement, urged members of the public who witnessed the occurrence to contact the bureau.

She stated: "Following notification of the occurrence on June 10, 2026, the NSIB immediately activated its emergency response procedures, deployed a Go Team (investigative team) to the site near Asaba, Delta State, and commenced investigation into the incident involving the private aircraft that landed

and subsequently departed from a roadway during a flight from Lagos to Asaba.

"As part of this rapid response, the aircraft's CVR and FDR have been successfully retrieved and secured for detailed analysis. Investigators are also obtaining relevant operational, maintenance, and air traffic control records.

"The NSIB is coordinating with all relevant stakeholders and authorities in line with the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and

Incidents) Regulations and ICAO Annex 13. Appropriate notifications have been made to the relevant state authorities.

"Investigative activities are ongoing and will include analysis of the recovered flight recorders, examination of technical and operational records, interviews with relevant personnel, and review of additional evidence.

"The bureau urges members of the public who witnessed the occurrence or possess photographs, videos, CCTV footage, or other

relevant information to contact NSIB via our official website or our official social media channels.

"The objective of the investigation is to determine the circumstances and contributing factors and to issue safety recommendations to prevent recurrence. The investigation is conducted solely for the advancement of transportation safety and does not seek to apportion blame or determine liability."

Iran shuts Strait of Hormuz to all vessels

By Nkiruka Nnorom with agency report

IRAN'S state television, yesterday reported that the country's joint military command has declared the Strait of Hormuz closed "to the passage of all vessels, including oil tankers and commercial ships."

It also warned that any transit through the strait "will be targeted" according to the statement read out by a State TV newsreader.

The statement came after the US military began another round of strikes against Iran and President Donald Trump warned that Tehran would "pay the price" for stalled negotiations.

The escalating attacks threatened to derail efforts to end the war.

United States Central Command said in a social media post that the military was striking "multiple targets in Iran," attacks that were "in response to Iran's unwarranted and continued aggression."

The second day of American strikes came hours after Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan, all of which host US troops came under Iranian fire.

It was the third time this week that back-and-forth strikes have tested a two-month ceasefire.

They also came a day after the US struck Iran following

the crash of an Army helicopter near the Strait of Hormuz that Trump blamed on the Islamic Republic.

Trump has urged Iran to sign a deal to end the war and suggested earlier this week that an agreement could be reached in a matter of days.

Iranian media reported that explosions were heard in Bandar Abbas, Sirik and Minab in the south of the country.

Iran has proved resilient despite weeks of heavy bombing.

It is betting that its ability to effectively close the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial passageway for oil and natural gas - gives it a strong bargaining chip.

LEISURE

SAYINGS OF OUR ELDERS

Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly

TAKE HEART — ELLA RANDLE

"Not everyone deserves access to your peace." — Unknown
Some people only appear when they want to benefit from your hard work. Protect your boundaries wisely. Let go of relationships built on manipulation, envy, or disrespect. Your energy is valuable. Surround yourself with honest people who celebrate your growth and support your vision genuinely. — Ella Randle



COMMISSIONING — Vice President Kashim Shettima (3rd from right); FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike (3rd left); Minister of State, FCT, Dr. Mariya Mahmoud (2nd right); Minister of Petroleum, Heineken Lokpobiri (right); MD Arab Contractors, Mohammed Eladoros, (2nd left) and Chairman, PDP Board of Trustees, Mao Ohuabunwa (left), cutting the tape to commission the newly-reconstructed six-lane dual carriageway from the Airport Expressway to Kuje township in the FCT..yesterday.

Warri Federal Constituency: Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo leaders meet Tinubu, agree to end protests

LEADERS of the warring parties over the constituency delineation in Warri Federal Constituency in Delta State, have agreed to end the ongoing protests and occupation of oil facilities following an intervention by President Bola Tinubu.

A statement by leaders of Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo in Warri, and endorsed on their behalf by the trio of Chief Godspower Gbenekama, Olorogun Victor Okumagba, and Chief Westham Adehor, confirmed that the three ethnic groups in Warri met with President Tinubu, yesterday and resolved to end the crisis.

The statement urged the protesters in Warri to

demobilise and embrace peace.

It reads, "The Ijaw and Urhobo Leaders of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State note that aggrieved women, youths, and other stakeholders in Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State have been protesting at oil facilities and other parts of the constituency since June 8, 2026, till now.

"We also note that these protests lead to growing tensions in the Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State.

"The rising tensions led to the intervention of the Governor of Delta State, who called for an emergency meeting with leaders of Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo ethnic

nationalities of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State at the Government House, Asaba, on June 8, 2026."

The statement indicated that after a meeting with President Tinubu, leaders of the ethnic nationalities agreed to call on the protesters to cease their protests.

It further read: "The spread of the protest and tension led to the intervention of Chief Government Ekpemupolo (alias Tompolo), who met with community leaders across Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo communities in the Warri Federal Constituency on June 9, 2026, at Oporoza,

Gbaramatu Kingdom, and called for calm to allow Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to address their grievances and protect critical national oil and gas assets.

"We also note that, the protests caught the attention of the President Tinubu, who called for an emergency meeting on June 11, 2026, with representatives of Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

"At the meeting, Mr. President called for compromise, understanding and the need for the Ijaws, Itsekiris and Urhobos to live together as Nigerians. Drawing inspiration from the national anthem, Mr. President appealed to the ethnic leaders to live as one, though tongue and tribe may differ, but in brotherhood we stand.

"President Tinubu then directed the leaders of the different ethnic groups to agree on power sharing formula to ensure fair and just sharing of positions among the different ethnic groups in Warri North, Warri South and Warri South West Local Government Area constituting the Warri Federal Constituency of

Delta State.

"Mr. President further appealed to the ethnic nationality leaders to prevail on the protesters to discontinue their protest.

"In the light of the foregoing, we the Leaders of Ijaw and Urhobo ethnic nationalities of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State after consultation with other stakeholders hereby call on protesting women, youths and other stakeholders in Ijaw and Urhobo communities of Delta State to demobilise and vacate all oil and gas facilities occupied in the different parts of the Warri Federal Constituency and the escravos river.

"This is a demonstration of respect to the office of the President and to give stakeholders the opportunity to finalise the resolution of a few outstanding issues arising from the Supreme Court ordered fresh delineation and allow for full and final implementation of the fresh delineation by INEC.

"We express our profound appreciation to President Tinubu, Governor Oborevwoori and Chief Ekpemupolo for their timely intervention which led to the cessation of the protest."

Reps Minority caucus elect Agbedi as Leader, Dasuki deputy

By Gift ChapiOdekina

ABUJA - The House of Representatives yesterday, completed the composition of its minority leadership following the nomination and endorsement of three lawmakers to fill vacant principal officer positions in the opposition caucus.

The announcement was made on the floor of the House during plenary,

where the minority members of the 10th House of Representatives presented a consensus list for the positions of Minority Leader, Deputy Minority Leader and Minority Whip.

According to the nomination, Frederick Agbedi was endorsed as the new Minority Leader, while Abdulsamad Dasuki was nominated to serve as Deputy Minority Leader. Mansur Soro was named Minority Whip.

Presiding over the session,

Speaker of the House, Tajudeen Abbas, formally announced the nominations and declared the minority leadership positions filled.

He said the development completed the composition of the House's principal officers and expressed confidence in the ability of the newly appointed leaders to contribute to the legislative work of the 10th Assembly.

"Today, the body of principal officers is complete," Abbas said.

The Speaker congratulated the three lawmakers on their emergence and assured them of the support and cooperation of the House leadership.

"I want to seize this opportunity, on behalf of the entire House, to congratulate the three persons and wish them all the best in their new positions.

"Let them be assured that the leadership of the House will work with them assiduously in ensuring that we achieve the legislative agenda and objectives of this very important 10th Assembly," he stated.

The appointments followed consultations among opposition parties in the House aimed at filling the vacant positions and ensuring effective representation of the minority caucus in the leadership structure of the chamber.

Democracy Day: FG declares Friday public holiday

ABUJA: The Federal Government has declared today, June 12, a public holiday in commemoration of Democracy Day.

Minister of Interior, Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, made the announcement in a statement, yesterday in Abuja on behalf of the Federal Government.

In the statement by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Dr. Magdalene Ajani, the government said: "June 12 remains a significant day in Nigeria's history in honour of the courage, resilience and sacrifices of Nigerians whose efforts made democratic governance possible in this country. Their legacy continues to inform the values and responsibilities of the

Nigerian state."

The minister reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to the preservation of democratic ideals, including the rule of law, transparency, accountability and inclusive governance.

"The administration has pledged to uphold these principles without compromise.

"The Ministry of Interior, in coordination with relevant security agencies, will continue to maintain and strengthen internal security measures to protect lives and property across the country. A secure and stable environment," the Minister noted, is essential to the health of any democracy and to the broader project of national development.

Ethiopian Airlines congratulates Keyamo on AfDB appointment

GROUP Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines, Mr. Mesfin Tasew, has congratulated the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, SAN, on his recent appointment by the African Development Bank, AfDB, as the Champion of the landmark \$7 billion Integrated Aviation Transformation Programme for Africa, IATP.

In a congratulatory message addressed to the Minister, the Ethiopian Airlines Chief described the appointment as a fitting recognition of Keyamo's "visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to advancing aviation in Nigeria and across the African continent."

According to Mr. Tasew, the confidence reposed in the Nigerian Aviation Minister by the AfDB underscores Africa's collective belief in his capacity to drive a transformative agenda that would modernise the continent's aviation ecosystem and mobilise strategic investments for sustainable growth.

"On behalf of Ethiopian Airlines Group and myself, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on your appointment by the AfDB as the champion of the \$7 billion Integrated Aviation Transformation Programme for Africa. This recognition is a testament to your visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to advancing aviation in Nigeria and across the continent," the message read.

Reaffirming Ethiopian Airlines' longstanding commitment to the growth and integration of African aviation, Tasew noted that the appointment comes at a defining moment in the continent's developmental journey, when African nations must leverage aviation as a critical enabler of trade, tourism, investment, and people-to-people connectivity.

Further, he said: "We are confident that under your stewardship, the Integrated Aviation Transformation Programme will unlock new opportunities for African airlines, airports and aviation stakeholders."

Labour Party to field 1,211 candidates for 1,491 seats nationwide

By John Alechenu

ABUJA - The Labour Party, LP, has set the stage for the 2027 election battle, as it lines up 1,211 candidates to contest 1,491 executive and legislative seats nationwide.

The party ratified the list, yesterday during a hybrid meeting of its National Executive Committee, NEC, at the LP National Secretariat in Abuja.

Dr. Sunday Okereke was confirmed as the presidential flagbearer to lead the charge.

National Secretary and Secretary of NEC, Iheanacho Obioma, presented the report of primaries conducted on May 30, 2026, across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, FCT.

He explained that the

exercises complied with the Constitution, Electoral Act 2026, LP Constitution and INEC guidelines.

"Before the primaries we carried out, digital membership registration nationwide carried out, we submitted our register to INEC, issued statutory notices, published guidelines and sold nomination forms," Obioma told NEC members and stakeholders.

He said aspirants were screened by national and state committees, with appeal panels handling petitions. Only cleared aspirants received Certificates of Clearance before voting.

NEC according to him, constituted electoral committees that supervised the polls using consensus and direct primary methods as allowed by law. INEC

officials, party stakeholders, accredited observers and international monitors, including the European Union Observation Mission through the Kukuh Center in Abia and Anambra, witnessed the process.

"The reports from Electoral Committees show the primaries were conducted peacefully, transparently and in substantial compliance with all extant laws and guidelines for candidate nomination," Obioma said.

For governorship, the party produced candidates for all 28 states, giving it 100 percent coverage. Key names include: Dr. Alex Chioma Otti for Abia, Gaza Gbafwi for Nasarawa, Senator Elisha Ishaku for Adamawa, Byuan Tewease for Benue, and Dr. Halilu Zubairu for Gombe, plus 23 others.

Politics

33 YEARS AFTER:

Can Nigeria ever have another election like June 12?

By Clifford Ndujihe, *Politics Editor*

THE process was crude but transparent. The organisers called it Option A4. Only two candidates stood for the election. No thumb-printing was required. Voting was done by queuing behind the candidate/party of your choice. Those on the queues were properly counted separately and figures entered into the result sheets against the respective candidates or parties.

It was as clear as daylight who won or lost. Welcome to the June 12, 1993 presidential election won by late Business tycoon and politician, Chief MKO Abiola.

Conducted by then National Electoral Commission, NEC, as the electoral umpire was called, led by late Professor Humphrey Nwosu, the June 12 election has, arguably, remained the freest and fairest poll in the history of electioneering in Nigeria, 33 years after.

It was also one of the keenest. Of the over 14 million voters that took part, Chief MKO Abiola of the Social Democratic Party, SDP, got over eight million while his challenger, Bashir Othman Tofa, of the National Republican Convention, NRC, garnered about six million.

Controversial annulment

Results of most of the states had been tallied before the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida annulled the election and flung the nation into bloody political crisis that took another six years to be partially resolved in 1999 with the election of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo also from South-West as Abiola, as president.

Ever since that election, Nigeria has not had another comparable poll in terms of conduct and credibility.

In last month's primaries, some parties tried to replicate the June 12 model but ended up counting those on the queues geometrically instead of arithmetically as shamefully displayed in an avalanche of trending videos.

That is why today is a unique day in Nigeria's electioneering history.

It is the 33rd anniversary of the June 12, 1993 presidential poll. Today is also the 8th anniversary of the Federal Government's recognition of June 12 as Democracy Day, and the third that will be marked by President Bola Tinubu.

While marking June 12 in 2018, President Muhammadu Buhari apologized to the family of Chief M.K.O Abiola, the

presumed winner of the 1993 presidential election, and conferred a posthumous award on him as the Grand Commander of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, GCFR.

In 2019, President Buhari took a step further by assenting a bill into law and officially recognised the date as the nation's day for commemorating the return to civil rule.

By the Act, May 29 gave way to June 12 as the country's Democracy Day.

Cloud of challenges

As the nation marks June 12 amid a cloud of insecurity and a salad of unity-threatening challenges, forthcoming polls beginning with June 20 governorship election in Ekiti and bye-elections in six constituencies in four states, as well January 2027 general polls, many questions are begging for answers.

Abiola's aborted welfare programme

Late Chief M.K.O Abiola's campaign was anchored on welfare of the people with "Farewell to Poverty" as the theme. His campaign theme was Hope 93.

Thirty-three years after, has Nigeria waved poverty farewell? If Abiola had been allowed to exercise his mandate would things have been different?

Few months before the 1993 election, according to the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, NBS, 1992 data, no fewer than 39.2 million Nigerians were living below the poverty line, that is 42.7 percent of the then 91.5 million population.

Following the truncation of the 1993 transition programme, the number of those living below the poverty line (less than \$1a day as of then) jumped to 67.1 million, representing 65.6 per cent of the

102.3 million population, NBS data showed.

In 2018, a report by Brookings's Institution said at the end of May 2018, Nigeria had about 87 million people living in extreme poverty, compared with India's 73 million. And extreme poverty in Nigeria was growing by six people every minute, while poverty in India continued to fall.

Today, no fewer than 131 million Nigerians are multi-dimensionally poor.

Another question is: When will Nigeria have free and fair polls like that of June 12, 1993? It was an election that the results were known to all parties – Social Democratic Party, SDP; and National Republican Convention, NRC's agents without disputation before being officially announced by the electoral commission.

There were no incidents of ballot box-snatching, and falsification of election results at collation centres among other electoral infringements.

Beginning from the first series of elections on December 5, 1998 when the first local council polls of the Fourth Republic were



•MKO Abiola

1999 but did not pursue it to the Supreme Court. Buhari and other candidates challenged the victories of Obasanjo, late Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and President Goodluck Jonathan in 2003, 2007 and 2011 respectively.

After the 2019 general polls, focus immediately shifted to the judiciary where 77 election tribunals constituted by President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa, addressed 786 petitions.

The 786 petitions were the second highest since the return to democratic rule in 1999. The highest was in 2007 when 1,291 petitions heralded the infamous "do-or-die" elections held that year. The winner of the 2007 presidential election, late Dr Umaru Musa Yar'Adua admitted that the election that brought him to power was flawed. Consequently, he set up the Justice Mohammed Uwais Election Reform Committee to hammer out solutions.

Indeed, the Uwais panel made far-reaching recommendations that have been implemented in breach or piece meal hence the country is still mired in controversial elections.

Disputed elections

Year Petitions
1999—No Data

2003—574

2007—1291

2011—732

2015—611

2019—786

2023—1196

Uwais committee's work

Following the work of the Uwais' committee, noticeable improvements were witnessed in the 2011 general elections when the number of petitions went down to 732. More improvements were recorded in 2015 as the figure further went down to 611 petitions.

However, the gains of 2015 appeared to have been eroded in 2019 as the number of petitions rose to 786. And in the "go to court" elections of 2023 1196 petitions were filed.

According to data released by Engr Iro Gambo, director Voter Registry of the Independent National Election Commission, INEC, dated April 19, 2017, the electoral body conducted 167 elections after the 2015 electoral cycle and most of them by the Professor Yakubu Mahmood regime.

Three types of elections conducted since 2015 were: Re-run elections by court order following nullification of 80 elections; End of tenure (four governorship, and 68 Area Council, Abuja), 72; and Bye elections caused by death or resignation of lawmakers, 16. Of this number, 123 were concluded at first ballot and 44 were inconclusive.

And at the law courts, 80 of the 167 elections were nullified of which Rivers State accounted for 37 of the 80 annulled polls. Also, of 44 polls concluded with supplementary elections, two happened in Rivers Of the re-run election ordered by the Court of Appeal in 2015, the North-Central had 14; North-East six, North-West, one; South-East 13; South-South, 46. And upturned elections for which certificates of return were issued by court order were as follows, North-Central, five; North-East, three; North-West, one; South-East, four; South-South, eight; and South-West, two.

Disputed polls

After the 1999 general elections, outcomes of most polls were decided by the courts as attention shifts to the courts after every poll. Apart from 2015, when out-going President Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, refused to challenge the victory of Major General Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress, APC, other presidential polls had been subjects of litigation.

In 1999, Chief Olu Falae, who flew the Alliance for Democracy/All Peoples Party joint ticket challenged former President Olusegun Obasanjo's victory in

In last month's primaries, some parties tried to replicate the June 12 model but ended up counting those on the queues geometrically instead of arithmetically as shamefully displayed in an avalanche of trending videos



Politics

TINUBU'S THIRD DEMOCRACY DAY CELEBRATION: Three years of hard choices, navigating economic challenges, recovery

By Johnbosco Agbakwuru

President Bola Tinubu assumed office on May 29, 2023, amid huge expectations. Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, he was the stalwart of the National Democratic Coalition, NADECO, which spearheaded the battle against military rule to lead the nation.

He marked his first Democracy Day on June 12, 2023 with aplomb.

Although the national economy was in poor condition when he took office, three years in the saddle, the tide has been turbulent; there have been lamentations from the citizenry, but the ship of administration appears to be sailing despite the bumps and storms.

The storm before the government is the result of the administration's deliberate choice between "reform over ruin" and "decisiveness over hesitation"—a framing that captures both the ambition and the controversy surrounding his economic agenda.

Marking the third anniversary of his administration on May 29, 2026, President Tinubu addressed Nigerians not merely as their leader but as "a fellow citizen who understands the sacrifices many families have made in recent years."

The address laid out a comprehensive account of the challenges that confronted Nigeria when he took office in May 2023, the difficult reforms his government implemented, and the progress he says Nigeria has now achieved. The President acknowledged that "we have not solved every problem, and we are not yet where we want to be."

Tinubu said that Nigeria faced "profound economic and structural difficulties" at the inception of his administration. He enumerated several interconnected challenges: mounting fiscal pressures, unsustainable fuel subsidies, declining revenues, exchange-rate distortions, rising debt-servicing costs, insecurity across several regions, energy supply constraints, and declining public confidence in institutions.

Breaking point

On one of the issues that has affected the economy, which is the subsidy regime, Tinubu noted that the country had reached a breaking point. "At the height of the subsidy regime, Nigeria was spending as much as \$18.4 billion daily to sustain petrol subsidies—over \$4 trillion in 2022 alone," he said. These resources, he argued, "could have been invested in roads, healthcare, education, housing, and critical infrastructure."

Equally troubling, the President said, was the forex system. "Multiple exchange rate windows

and forex arbitrage created massive distortions, with Nigeria losing more than \$8 trillion over three years to rent-seeking and speculative practices."

"The situation demanded urgent and courageous action," Tinubu stated. "Difficult but necessary decisions had to be taken to stabilise the economy and prevent a deeper national crisis. The easy choices would have been politically convenient. But leadership demands courage, especially when the right decisions are difficult."

Human cost

On the sacrifice of his reforms, the President acknowledged the human cost. "These decisions came with sacrifice," he said. "The rising cost of living triggered by our measures placed enormous pressure on families, workers, and businesses. Young people searching for jobs felt discouraged. Many questioned whether these difficult decisions would lead to a better future."

Tinubu expressed personal awareness of these sacrifices: "I remain deeply conscious of those sacrifices, and I assure you: your sacrifice has not been in vain." He then made a bold claim: "And today, I can say with confidence that Nigeria has stabilised and is moving forward again. Across the country, visible progress is taking shape."

Despite the hardship, the President said there is light at the end of the tunnel with economic growth and a market boom. The administration's most striking claim concerns the stock market. Tinubu reported that "the All Share Index rose from 53,000 and market capitalisation of N30 trillion in 2023 to a record All Share Index of 250,000 and market capitalisation of N160 trillion this year." He added that "companies are declaring record profits and dividends."

The President also asserted that "our economy is now more competitive and better positioned for sustainable growth than it was in 2023. Public finances are improving. States and local

governments have greater resources to invest in their people. Investor confidence is growing."

Yet these macroeconomic gains exist alongside persistent concerns about the cost of living, job availability, and whether ordinary Nigerians are

experiencing the benefits of this growth. In the midst of the government's efforts, Tinubu acknowledged that there is still a gap: "We have not solved every problem... The task before us now is clear: we must ensure that the benefits of reform are felt more directly in the daily lives of ordinary Nigerians."

On infrastructure, Tinubu presented what he called "unprecedented scale" development. "Over 2,700 kilometres of highways and major roads are under construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation," he said. The projects include the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway, the Sokoto-Badagry Super Highway, the Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Road, the East-West Road, and many rural access roads.

"Significant sections are already

completed or nearing completion," the President claimed, noting these projects are "improving transportation, reducing travel time, boosting regional trade, and creating thousands of jobs."

Rail modernisation projects are also "ongoing to improve connectivity, logistics, and economic integration across the federation," Tinubu added.

In the oil and gas sector, Tinubu credited his reforms with attracting "billions of dollars in fresh investment from the international oil companies that had shunned our country." The "\$5 billion NLNG Train 7 project is nearing completion to boost LNG production capacity, exports, and dividends," he said. Domestic gas utilisation is expanding, and "local refining capacity has improved our energy security." With "large-scale domestic and modular refineries operational," Nigeria is "reducing its dependence on imported petroleum products and conserving foreign exchange," according to the President.

One sector that has continued to pose problems for successive administrations is the power sector. Tinubu acknowledged that the sector "suffered from debt, underinvestment, and uncertainty, which weakened generation capacity and limited growth." But he said his administration is now "clearing legacy obligations, expanding transmission infrastructure, investing in renewable energy, and strengthening the national grid because no modern economy can grow in darkness."

Tinubu's statement also

highlighted social interventions. He said agricultural programs have "supported millions of farmers by improving seedlings, fertilisers, mechanisation, and irrigation and by expanding access to finance and markets." The government is "opening new agricultural corridors to create jobs, strengthen supply chains, and reduce pressure on household incomes."

He further stated that access to education has expanded through the Nigerian Education Loan Fund, which "has provided over 1.5 million students with access to higher education, disbursing more than \$282 billion to ensure that no willing student is denied access due to financial hardship."

President Tinubu said the "Renewed Hope Housing Programme, along with that of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), is delivering over 10,000 housing units across 14 states and the FCT, creating over 300,000 jobs and expanding access to affordable housing." Major "Renewed Hope Cities in Abuja, Lagos, and Kano are progressing steadily," he said. The consumer credit initiative "CREDICORP is opening up new economic opportunities for workers and families."

The President said "thousands of primary healthcare centres are being revitalised, while health insurance coverage is expanding for vulnerable Nigerians."

He also highlighted his administration's efforts in telecoms stabilisation and digital transformation. According to him, the telecommunications sector,

"one of the most important drivers of modern economic growth," received "decisive action to stabilise" after "years of severe operational pressures and declining investment." Now, "confidence is gradually returning to the sector. Telecom operators are expanding networks, investing in infrastructure, recruiting Nigerian talent, and widening digital access across the country."

Tinubu recognized the importance of youth in socio-economic development. He said: "To our young people, I want you to know this nation believes in you. You are not a problem to be managed. You are the engine of Nigeria's future." He said the administration is investing "in digital skills, technical education, innovation, student financing, and enterprise support because the future must be driven by Nigerian talent, creativity, and productivity."

Insecurity challenge

The greatest challenge before the government, which requires collective and urgent attention, is insecurity. There has been a worsening security situation in the country, but Tinubu said security remains "central to our national mission. Our Armed Forces and security agencies have intensified operations against terrorists, bandits, kidnappers, oil thieves, and criminal networks." He acknowledged that "while challenges remain, many communities and highways are becoming safer and more economically active."

According to him, the government is "continuing to invest in intelligence, surveillance, logistics, technology, and inter-agency coordination," improving "the capabilities of our armed forces and security agencies, and reclaiming the authority of the Nigerian state wherever criminality threatens peace and order."

Continues on
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•Tinubu

Business



VISIT— From left: Group Vice President, Oil & Gas, Dangote Industries Limited, Devakumar Edwin; Chairman, Stanbic IBTC Holdings, Sola David Borha; Chief Executive Officer, Standard Bank Group, Sim Tshabalala; Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Dangote Petroleum Refinery & Petrochemicals, David Bird; and Chief Executive, Stanbic IBTC Holdings, Chuma Nwokocha, during a strategic visit by Standard Bank Group executives to the Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Dangote Fertiliser complex in Ibeju Lekki, Lagos.

CBN bans linked financial entities from extending loans to each other

By Elizabeth Adegbesan

THE Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, has banned closely linked financial entities from extending loans or guaranteeing the obligations of one another without the bank's prior approval.

The apex bank disclosed this, yesterday, in its Exposure Draft on ring-fencing operations of closely linked entities in the Nigerian financial system.

The apex bank stated: "Except with the prior written approval of the CBN, no closely linked entity shall extend a loan to, or guarantee the obligations of another."

The guidelines also outlines measures to address different licence categories; mitigate risks from the co-mingling of customer funds with those of closely linked entities; provide additional governance requirements for closely linked entities; and support orderly resolution of distressed closely linked entities.

The guidelines stated, among other key principles, that closely linked entities shall operate independently and shall maintain adequate level of capital and liquidity resources sufficient to operate independently.

On other ring-fencing measures, CBN said: "The board of a closely linked entity shall ensure that the entity is legally,

structurally and operationally independent of other entities that it is closely linked to.

"Each closely linked entity shall maintain its own governance, risk-management and control framework,

including a dedicated Board.

"The boards of closely linked entities shall ensure that transactions between such entities are conducted at arm's length and are properly documented."

The apex bank warned that

breach or failure to comply with the provisions of the guidelines shall attract appropriate sanctions, including penalties, replacement of management, and or revocation of licence in line with Bank and Other Financial Institutions Act, BOFIA 2020, and other relevant extant regulations.

TCN seeks stronger legal protection for electricity infrastructure

By Mariam Eko

THE Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has called on the Federal Government and the National Assembly to strengthen legal protection for critical electricity infrastructure, saying vandalism, sabotage and encroachment on transmission corridors continue to threaten power supply and investments in the sector.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of TCN, Engr. Sule Ahmed Abdulaziz, made the call at a four-day Parliamentary/Stakeholders' Engagement Summit on Power Sector Reforms in Nigeria.

According to him, attacks on transmission facilities have continued to disrupt electricity supply, increase repair costs and undermine efforts to improve service delivery nationwide.

"Vandalism and sabotage

of transmission infrastructure continue to disrupt power supply, increase repair costs and undermine investments in the sector," he added.

Abdulaziz also identified encroachment on transmission Right-of-Way (RoW) as a major challenge affecting grid operations and expansion.

"Persistent encroachment on transmission Rights-of-Way creates safety

risks, hinders maintenance activities and constrains future network expansion. This calls for coordinated action among federal, state and local authorities, supported by a stronger legal framework," he stated.

The TCN boss therefore urged lawmakers to provide stronger legal protection for electricity infrastructure and establish a nationally consistent Right-of-Way protection framework.

Abdulaziz also challenged the notion that transmission remains the biggest bottleneck in Nigeria's electricity value chain.

Citing data from the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Abdulaziz noted that Nigeria's installed generation capacity stands at 13,625 megawatts (MW), while the highest power ever generated and delivered to the national grid was 5,801.84MW.

He explained that TCN's transmission wheeling capacity currently stands at 8,700MW, well above the highest power generated on the grid.

He stated: "The implication is clear: the national grid can currently transmit significantly more power than has ever been generated and supplied to it. TCN has consistently wheeled all available generation, demonstrating that the transmission network is ready to support higher levels of electricity delivery".

Highlighting the company's achievements, Abdulaziz disclosed that TCN expanded the nation's wheeling capacity from about 7,000MW to 8,700MW through strategic investments supported by the Federal Government and development partners.

He added that between

Nigeria's monthly oil output rises 2.2% • Meets OPEC quota first time in 2026

By Obas Esiedesa, Abuja

NIGERIA's total oil production, comprising crude oil and condensates, increased by 2.2 per cent in May to 1.70 million barrels per day (bpd), while crude oil output exceeded the country's OPEC production quota for the first time this year.

Data released by the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) on Thursday showed that combined oil production rose from 1.66 million bpd in April to 1.70 million bpd in May, consolidating Nigeria's position as Africa's largest oil producer.

The commission reported that crude oil production averaged 1.53 million bpd during the month, surpassing Nigeria's OPEC quota of 1.5 million bpd by two per cent and marking the first time the country has met and exceeded its allocation in 2026.

The May production figures represent the highest combined crude oil and condensate output since July 2025, when production reached 1.71 million bpd. In crude oil terms alone, the 1.53 million bpd recorded in May is the highest level since January 2025 and a 15-month high.

NUPRC also reported that production peaked at 1.86 million bpd during the month, while the lowest daily output stood at 1.51 million bpd.

The commission, in a statement by its Head of Media and

Corporate Communications, Eniola Akinkuotu, said production performance remained robust throughout the review period.

"Production performance during the review period remained robust, with combined crude oil and condensate output ranging between a low of 1.51 million bpd and a peak of 1.86 million bpd," it stated.

According to the commission, the broader production trend over the past five months has remained positive.

"Combined crude oil and condensate output increased from 1.48 million bpd in February to 1.54 million bpd in March, 1.66 million bpd in April and then 1.70 million bpd in May, underscoring sustained growth in Nigeria's hydrocarbon production levels.

"Among production streams, Bonny Terminal led the pack with a total blend of 293,870 bpd, closely followed by Forcados Terminal at 289,900 bpd. Qua Iboe ranked third with 173,360 bpd, while Escravos Oil Terminal contributed 135,470 bpd.

"Odudu (Amenam Blend) completed the top five production streams, accounting for 63,250 bpd during the month under review."

The NUPRC attributed the increase in output to sustained operational stability, noting that there were no significant pipeline or production facility outages during the reporting period.

Lekki Port Phase 2 construction set for kick-off, says Lagos govt

By Godwin Oritse

LAGOS State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has announced that work on Phase 2 of the Lekki Port project will commence soon, a move aimed at strengthening the state's position as West Africa's leading maritime and logistics hub.

Speaking at the Invest Lagos Summit 3.0 held in Lagos earlier in this week, Sanwo-Olu highlighted the State's commitment to expanding critical infrastructure and attracting investment.

He explained that the expansion of the Port will significantly enhance cargo handling capacity, strengthen maritime trade, and deepen Lagos' role as a gateway to the

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) market of over 1.4 billion people.

He stated: "With AfCFTA creating a market of over 1.4 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding \$3 trillion, Lagos occupies a uniquely strategic position.

"The Lekki Deep Sea Port, within five years, is moving to phase two because it is almost reaching the full potential of its installed capacity. And just within five years, it is moving to phase two. These are not just aspirations but projects that have been implemented and are under implementation. They have been funded, progressing, and transforming the investment landscape of our State".

In his remark, the Managing Director, Lekki Port, Wang Qiang, commended the Lagos State Government for maintaining a stable and investment-friendly environment.

He noted that the next phase of development will play a key role in expanding the port's operational and cargo-handling capacity, improving logistics efficiency along the Lekki corridor, and attracting additional global shipping and logistics investments.

Qiang noted that the expansion aligns with Nigeria's broader trade facilitation agenda and the increasing demands of regional and international shipping networks.

He stated: "We are deeply encouraged by the continued support of the Lagos State Government, whose infrastructure-led policies have created a stable and forward-looking environment for long-term maritime investment.

"The commencement of the next phase of development represents a significant milestone in our journey to expand capacity, enhance operational efficiency, and strengthen Lekki Port's position as a premier gateway for West African trade under the AfCFTA framework."

January 2024 and November 2025, the company commissioned 82 transformers, adding approximately 8,500MVA of transmission capacity nationwide.

The TCN chief also revealed that the company has mobilised over \$1.4 billion in development financing from international partners to support transmission expansion and modernisation projects.

Despite the progress, he acknowledged that challenges remain across the electricity value chain, including financing constraints, foreign exchange pressures, gas supply issues and weaknesses in the distribution segment.

Brevity Anderson, EICBI partner across Africa, Europe, India

By Sebastine Obasi

BREVITY Anderson UK and the Europe-India Centre for Business and Industry (EICBI) have formally executed a strategic Collaboration and Services Agreement establishing a framework for long-term cooperation in trade facilitation, investment promotion, stakeholder engagement, and international commercial development across Africa, the European Union, and India.

The Agreement provides for collaborative activities including trade delegations, business matchmaking initiatives, consultancy and advisory services, institutional engagement, and market access support designed to strengthen bilateral and multilateral commercial relations between the participating regions.

"This Agreement represents a significant strategic milestone in advancing commercial diplomacy and international business cooperation between Africa, Europe, and India. Through this partnership with EICBI", James Shindi, Chief

Executive Officer of Brevity Anderson, stated adding that the company intend to strengthen institutional engagement, facilitate investment opportunities, and support sustainable cross-border economic collaboration through coordinated trade and policy initiatives.

A key component of the collaboration includes the strategic coordination of lobbying and advocacy activities intended to support policy dialogue, investment facilitation, regulatory engagement, and enhanced public-private sector cooperation between African and European stakeholders, while simultaneously expanding commercial collaboration opportunities with India.

"We are therefore delighted to formalize this collaboration with Brevity Anderson, which reflects our shared ambition to build stronger economic and institutional linkages between Africa, Europe, and India. We look forward to working closely with Brevity Anderson to support meaningful and long-term economic engagement", Sujit S. Nair, Chairman of EICBI, stated.

| AGRIC COMMODITIES | | |
|-------------------|---------|--------|
| Coffee | 254.25 | +5.85 |
| Cocoa | 3713.00 | -44.00 |
| Sugar | 13.86 | -0.06 |

| ENERGY & OIL | | |
|--------------|-------|-------|
| Brent Crude | 93.82 | +0.72 |
| Light Crude | 91.28 | +1.25 |

| CURRENCY | BUYING | SELLING |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| USD DOLLAR | 1360.0497 | 1360.5497 |
| POUNDS | 1850.9143 | 1851.5877 |
| EURO | 1583.2339 | 1583.8159 |
| SWISS | 1739.1331 | 1739.7665 |
| YEN | 8.5072 | 8.5104 |
| CFA | 2.4057 | 2.4157 |
| WAUA | 1869.4249 | 1870.1122 |
| RYIAL | 362.3514 | 362.4846 |
| RAND | 83.7366 | 83.7674 |
| Danish | 211.7831 | 211.8609 |

CBN Exchange rate as at 11/06/2026



PRESENTATIONS — From left: Mr. Michael Ajayi, Country Director, Enactus; Miss Kalu Blessing, 3rd position, 2026 grand prize winner, essay writing competition; Lillian Amah-Aluko, Co-Founder and Director, Tribe Nation Theatrical Distribution Limited; Chijioko Blessing, 2nd position, 2026 grand prize winner, essay writing competition; Mrs Uwa Osa-Oboh, Head, Corporate Development Africa Capital Alliance and Monu Abodunrin, 1st position, 2026 grand prize winner, essay writing competition, during the Ethical Living Initiative final competition prize presentations for overall winners in Lagos.

Textile importation rises 17% to N267.7bn • As MAN queries Senate's proposed import ban

By Yinka Kolawole

THE value of textile materials imported into Nigeria rose by 17 per cent year-on-year, YoY, to N267.7 billion in the first quarter of 2026 (Q1'26), highlighting the country's continued reliance on imported textile products despite efforts to revive local production.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, showed that textile imports increased from N228.83 billion in Q1'25. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, imports also rose by 8.94 per cent from N245.73 billion recorded in Q4'25.

The development comes amid renewed calls to revive Nigeria's struggling textile industry following a Senate resolution urging the Federal Government (FG) to ban textile imports and promote local manufacturing.

However, the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, MAN, has urged the Federal Government to tread cautiously, warning that a blanket import ban without adequate preparation could undermine the intended objective.

Speaking in a television interview, Director-General of MAN, Segun Ajayi-Kadir, said Nigeria has the capacity to meet a significant portion of its textile needs, but stressed that reviving the sector requires more than legislative resolutions.

According to him, the government must first demonstrate commitment to patronising locally produced textiles and fully enforce policies that encourage the use of made-in-Nigeria products.

"For instance, are we going to enforce the patronage of

made-in-Nigeria textiles within the government? When the National Assembly passed this resolution, how many of them were wearing made-in-Nigeria garments?" he asked.

Ajayi-Kadir noted that any import ban should be accompanied by diligent

implementation of Executive Order 003 and a broader "Nigeria First" policy that prioritises local products across government institutions, including the Presidency, National Assembly, military, uniformed agencies and schools.

Businesses' confidence in macroeconomy rises to 7.9 index points — CBN • Express mixed feelings over inflation

By Elizabeth Adegbesan

BUSINESSES' confidence in the macro economy rose significantly to 7.9 index points in May 2026 from 3.9 index points in the preceding month of April 2026, even as insecurity, multiple taxation, and high interest rates continued to pose major operational challenges to businesses during the period.

This was contained in the latest Central Bank of Nigeria's Business Expectation Report, which showed that the respondents' sentiment on the economy reflected a mixed outlook.

The improvement in sentiment was largely supported by perceived easing in governance and policy-related concerns (15.7 per cent), and continued progress in economic diversification (15.6 per cent).

"More cautious sentiments reflect ongoing energy-related challenges (26.7 per cent) and elevated geopolitical uncertainties (7.7 per cent)", CBN added.

The report showed that all the sectors expressed optimism about the macroeconomy and anticipated an increase in business activity in the next month but employment expectations remained negative across sectors.

In the case of consumers, they were pessimistic about the macro economy as the Overall Consumer Sentiments in May 2026 stood at -16.8 index points compared to -15.1 index points recorded in April 2026.

The latest Consumer Expectation Survey report of the CBN showed that the Economic Conditions index recorded -19.5 points in May 2026, indicating a pessimistic outlook on

current economic conditions among households.

Likewise, Family Financial Situation Index stood at -22.7 points in May 2026, reflecting respondents' pessimistic views about their finances. The Family Income Sentiments recorded -8.3 index points in May 2026, indicating moderate pessimism on Family income.

"Over the next six months, the Consumer Confidence Index was optimistic at 6.8 points, reflecting optimism driven by positive outlook on family income and economic conditions," CBN added.

In another light, CBN, in its latest Inflation Survey Report, said the inflation expectations index stood at 44.8 points in May 2026, adding however that Nigerians expect moderation to 26.2 index points over the next 6 months.

"Among businesses, large businesses reported the highest perception of high inflation (72.5 per cent), while medium businesses reported the lowest (64 per cent)".

Cardoso receives Central Bank of the Year Award

By Elizabeth Adegbesan

THE Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr. Olayemi Cardoso, has received the Central Bank of the Year Award at the Central Banking Awards ceremony held in London recently.

Accepting the Award, Cardoso expressed appreciation to Central Banking Publications and the award judges for the recognition.

He dedicated the honour to the Board, management, and staff of the Bank for their steadfast commitment to institutional reform and economic stability.

He stressed that the award was not a personal achievement but a testament to the collective efforts of the entire Central Bank of Nigeria,

particularly the professionals whose dedication, integrity, and expertise - often exercised away from public attention - have strengthened the Bank and reinforced confidence in Nigeria's economy.

Cardoso said: "I accept this award on behalf of the Board, Management and staff of the CBN.

"Above all, it belongs to the many dedicated professionals who serve our institution with integrity, expertise, and an unwavering commitment to the public good."

Reflecting on the global economic landscape, Cardoso noted that recent years had presented significant challenges for central banks worldwide, with Nigeria facing its own share of economic pressures and policy tests.

He highlighted several

difficult but necessary measures undertaken by the CBN, including efforts to address elevated inflation, implement major reforms in the foreign exchange market, and invest in critical digital and financial infrastructure to support the country's long-term economic development.

According to him, the Bank's reform agenda has been guided by a clear objective: restoring confidence, strengthening institutional resilience and policy credibility, and laying a solid foundation for sustainable economic growth.

Cardoso reaffirmed the CBN's commitment to preserving public confidence, safeguarding financial and monetary stability, and fulfilling its mandate with integrity, professionalism, and accountability.

Access Holdings affirms Long-Term Value Strategy at 4th AGM

ACCESS Holdings Plc, yesterday, its 4th Annual General Meeting, AGM, reaffirming its strategic transition towards long-term value creation, balance sheet resilience, and disciplined growth, even as it navigates a dynamic and evolving operating environment.

Speaking at the AGM, the Chairman, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, emphasised that the defining test of a financial institution is not merely its capacity for growth, but its ability to grow profitably, sustainably, and with discipline over time.

He noted that Access Holdings' performance in 2025 reflects a deliberate approach to strengthening the institution's long-term fundamentals while maintaining strong financial performance.

The Group delivered Profit Before Tax of N1.007 trillion, underscoring the strength of its diversified platform and expanding earnings base across key markets. Total assets increased to N51.56 trillion, while customer deposits grew strongly, reflecting sustained franchise momentum and deepening customer trust.

The Chairman, however, stressed that these results must be viewed within the context of the Group's prudent risk management actions during the year. Access Holdings accelerated provisions on legacy and regulatory forbearance credit exposures, resulting in elevated impairment charges.

He explained that the Group consciously prioritised balance sheet strength and long-term resilience over short-term earnings optimisation.

"Periods of economic uncertainty often reveal more about an institution than periods of uninterrupted growth. Our focus remains on building a business that is not only growing, but improving in the quality, resilience, and sustainability of its earnings," he stated.

The AGM highlighted the Group's continued evolution beyond traditional banking into a diversified financial services ecosystem, with growing contributions from investment management, insurance, pensions, consumer finance, and payments.

While banking remains the Group's core earnings engine, emerging growth platforms, including Access ARM Pensions, Access Insurance Brokers, Oxygen X Finance, and Hydrogen Payments, are

expanding its footprint across digital finance, consumer lending, retirement services, and payments, thereby strengthening the Group's long-term earnings mix and scalability.

Looking ahead, the Chairman reiterated the strategic imperative underpinning the Group's next phase of growth:

"Our strategy, From Scale to Value, reflects the natural evolution of our journey. Scale created opportunity; value creation is how we fully realise it."

He noted that while the Group continues to generate strong returns, ensuring that earnings per share consistently exceed the cost of capital remains central to unlocking sustainable shareholder value. He also acknowledged the significant unrealised value embedded within the Group's international subsidiaries and reiterated management's focus on improving market recognition of that intrinsic value over time.

The Board also addressed shareholders' concerns regarding dividend payments, clarifying that the temporary suspension of dividend distributions was a consequence of regulatory compliance requirements rather than any deterioration in the Group's financial performance.

Aig-Imoukhuede reaffirmed that the Group's earnings capacity remains strong and that the Board's position reflects adherence to supervisory expectations and prudent capital management principles. He assured shareholders of the Board's commitment to resuming dividend payments as soon as the relevant regulatory conditions are satisfied.

"Our approach is clear: capital retained today must translate into greater value tomorrow and sustainable returns for our shareholders."

Access Holdings further highlighted progress in strengthening governance and leadership continuity. During the year, Mr. Innocent Ike was appointed Group Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, while the Board was reinforced through the appointment of Ibronke Adeyemi as an Independent Non-Executive Director.

Shareholders also expressed appreciation for the outstanding contributions of Bolaji Agbede, Executive Director, Business Development, who successfully led the management team as Acting Group Chief Executive Officer prior to the appointment of Mr. Ike.

MTN Nigeria committed to transparency, consumer education — CEO

By Peter Egwuatu

MTN Nigeria, MTNN Plc, has expressed its commitment to transparency and consumer education in its drive to strengthen trust, and promote greater digital literacy as data continues to play a central role in everyday life.

Dr Karl Toriola, Chief Executive Officer, MTNN, stated this at its public engagement platform code-named Data on Trial designed to address consumer concerns about

mobile data usage, billing transparency, and digital consumption, stressing that the organisation is committed to transparency in both its financial performance and operations since it is a quoted company on Nigerian Exchange Limited, NGX.

He stated: "Data on Trial was created based on a simple belief. Trust, with our customer, grows when they are given access to the information and they are allowed to make up their mind about it. Today's event

is an opportunity for everyone to understand the facts, understand the technology behind what delivers technology in real time, and to ask the most difficult questions and hear different perspectives".

Throughout the event, MTN's technical experts responded to questions frequently raised by consumers, including concerns around data depletion, billing accuracy, background application activity, automatic updates, cloud synchronisation, video streaming, and multi-device connectivity.



DEMOCRACY DAY: Tinubu honours top journalists, generals, others for roles in struggle

By Clifford Ndujhe,
Politics Editor

LAGOS—IN commemoration of the 2026 Democracy Day, President Bola Tinubu, has given national awards to 51 eminent Nigerians including media icons, pro-democracy activists, and retired military officers who fought against military dictatorship during the historic June 12 struggle.

In a nationwide broadcast marking 27 years of unbroken civilian rule, the President paid glowing tributes to the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the winner of the annulled June 12, 1993 presidential election, and other icons, stating that while Nigeria's democracy is not perfect, it remains the ultimate vehicle for national development.

Honours list

Prominent among those listed for national awards are National Democratic Coalition, NADECO, chieftains Chief Ayo Opadokun, Chief Ralph Obioha and Dr. Arthur Nwankwo (posthumous); media veterans Lade Bonuola, Femi Kusa, Sir Ademola Osinubi, and Dele Alake; alongside activists Dr. Joe Okei-Odumakin, Richard Akinnola, and Prof. Sylvester Odion-Akhaine.

Significantly, the President recognised "soldier-democrats" who opposed military junta regimes, including Col. Sambo Dasuki, ret'd; Col. Lawan Gwadabe (ret'd), Major-General Ishola Williams, ret'd, and the Etsu Nupe, Brigadier Yahaya Abubakar (ret'd). In a major institutional honour, the President approved the renaming of the Institute of Petroleum Studies, Kaduna, as the General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua University of Geological Sciences and Engineering Technology.

Security, economic verdict

Addressing the nation's security challenges, particularly recent student abductions in Oyo and Borno states, Tinubu declared that "democracy without security is a mirage." He revealed that the 2026 budget commits a record N5.41 trillion to defence, alongside the recruitment of over 50,000 police officers.

"To bandits, kidnappers, and sponsors of terror: Surrender or face the full force of the Nigerian State. These windows of surrender will not remain open forever," Tinubu warned, noting that terror-related deaths have dropped by 81% since 2015, while over 13,000 terrorists were neutralised in the past year.

On the economic front, President Tinubu defended his administration's aggressive reforms, noting they were born out of necessity to salvage public finances. He stated that the next phase of his administration is to ensure that "democracy is felt in the pocket" of everyday citizens by tackling inflation and boosting local production.

N4trn energy lifeline, council autonomy

To resolve the chronic electricity crisis, the President announced that the Presidential Power Sector Task Force has been authorized to raise a N4 trillion bond to clear legacy debts drowning the power value chain. He stated that the Electricity Act, which decentralizes power generation to states, is already yielding results.

Reaffirming his commitment to grassroots development, Tinubu emphasized his administration's push for full financial autonomy for the 774 local government areas,

•Says we must continue to defend, strengthen democracy •Obioha, Opadokun, Ishola Williams, Dasuki, Gwadabe, Bonuola, Kusa, Alake, Akinnola, others honoured •Floats N4trn bond to wipe out electricity legacy debts •Vows total crush of bandits, ISWAP as security budget hits N5.41trn

attributing the rise in rural insecurity to the collapse of local governance.

Urging the political class and institutions to protect democratic guardrails ahead of the upcoming Ekiti and Osun governorship elections, Tinubu concluded: "The generation of our founding fathers secured independence—the generation of June 12 secured democracy. Our generation must secure prosperity."

Full text of address

Fellow Nigerians,

Today, we celebrate not only democracy but also the enduring Nigerian spirit. For 27 unbroken years, since May 29, 1999, Nigerians have chosen their leaders through the ballot, witnessed peaceful transitions of power, and resolved disagreements in courtrooms and legislative chambers—not through violence. We have experienced the longest stretch of civilian rule in our history. Our democracy is not perfect, but it is ours, and we must continue to defend and strengthen it.

In the coming days, Ekiti and Osun States will hold elections. I urge INEC, security agencies, and all parties to ensure these polls are peaceful and credible. Democracy fails when citizens doubt the process. To our National Assembly, Judiciary, the Press, and Civil Society: you are the guardrails of our republic. Criticise me, disagree with me, but never stop believing in Nigeria.

To our young people: Nigeria is your home and your future. Build here, code here, work here, and vote here. Every great nation was built by those who stayed to solve problems, not by those who abandoned ship.

To our armed forces, police, and intelligence services: Nigeria salutes your sacrifice. To our traditional rulers, faith leaders, and community heads: thank you for your support of peace and reconciliation. The government cannot do it alone.

Today, we honour the resilience of Nigerians who refused to surrender their faith in freedom, and the courage of those who stood firm against intimidation. We pay tribute to patriots who endured persecution, imprisonment, exile, and even death so that future generations could enjoy democracy. I salute labour leaders, journalists, activists, students, women, professionals, political leaders, and soldiers—both those who have passed and those still with us—for their patriotic contributions.

Though this year's mood is dampened by the abduction of our children in Oyo and Borno, we remain hopeful for their safe return. Democracy without security is a mirage. That is why this administration declared a security emergency and approved the recruitment of more than 50,000 new police officers and thousands of military recruits. Our 2026 budget commits N5.41 trillion—our largest ever—to defence and security. Our administration is ever ready to do much more to secure our people.

We have moved from training with our allies, the United States, France and other European countries, to precision targeting. In Arege, Borno State, we degraded ISWAP's command centre. Terror-related deaths are down by 81% since 2015. Over 13,000 terrorists have been neutralised in the past year. But we also keep the door of surrender open. Over 124,000 fighters and dependents have laid down their arms since 2023 through Operation Safe Corridor.

To bandits, kidnappers, and sponsors of terror: Surrender or face the full force of the Nigerian State. These windows of surrender will not remain open forever. No mercy will be shown to those who trade in the blood of Nigerians.

At a time like this, let us not assign blame or point fingers. Crime has no



•President Bola Tinubu

ethnicity. We must stand united and be assured that the enemies of our nation shall soon be history. We will triumph over terror and continue to build a more prosperous nation.

June 12 occupies a sacred place in our national memory. It represents more than an election; it is a defining chapter in our story. We remember Chief M.K.O. Abiola, who won a pan-Nigerian mandate transcending ethnicity and religion. We remember Alhaja Kudirat Abiola.

We also remember Chief Gani Fawehinmi, Chief Bola Ige, Chief Alfred Rewane, Pa Abraham Adesanya, Chief Anthony Enahoro, Alhaji Balarabe Musa, Commodore Dan Suleiman, Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, Frank Kokori, Arthur Nwankwo, Chima Ubani, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, and the many other heroes and heroines of democracy whose sacrifices helped secure the freedoms we enjoy today.

As beneficiaries of their struggle, we have a duty to strengthen and deepen the democratic institutions for which they fought. The greatest tribute we can pay is to build a Nigeria where freedom is protected, justice is upheld, opportunity is expanded, and government is accountable.

June 12, 1993, revealed the possibility of a true Nigerian nation. The heroes of June 12 secured political freedom. Our challenge is to secure economic freedom. Democracy must be felt in the quality of people's lives—in opportunities for youth, in prosperous farmers, successful entrepreneurs, and the dignity of our workers.

The reforms we are undertaking were not chosen for ease, but for necessity. Three years ago, our public finances were under severe strain, investment was discouraged, and economic uncertainty threatened our future. We chose to act, embracing reforms to advance Nigeria's economic freedom.

Since 2023, our reforms have restored stability and credibility to economic management. Federation revenues have risen, providing states and local governments with more resources for infrastructure, education, healthcare, and security. Fiscal transparency has improved, leakage has been reduced, and public funds are better directed to national priorities. Investor confidence has returned, with investments in agriculture, energy, manufacturing, technology, mining, transportation, and the creative industries growing.

Domestic refining capacity has increased, strengthening energy security and reducing our reliance on imported petroleum products.

By 2023, when we came on board,

the electricity sector was characterised by chronic generation shortfalls, an unreliable gas supply, and transmission infrastructure so fragile that it could not evacuate available power. Distribution companies were burdened by massive losses and a metering deficit of over four million. Worst of all, the value chain was drowning in legacy debt. The result was a sector that generated less than the 13,500 Megawatts installed capacity, a sector that transmitted less than it generated, distributed less than it transmitted and collected revenue far below what it needed to sustain itself.

To address the problems besetting the sector, I signed the Electricity Act, which grants states authority to generate, transmit, and distribute power. The Presidential Power Sector Task Force is working hard to reduce the metering deficit. It has also been authorised to raise N4 trillion bond to settle verified legacy debts. The Rural Electrification Agency, supported by the World Bank and the African Development Bank, has deployed off-grid and mini-grid power to underserved communities, universities, markets, and hospitals. Electricity is a democratic dividend we owe every Nigerian. We intend to deliver it.

Across the country, infrastructure projects are connecting producers to markets and creating opportunities for enterprise and employment. The National Agricultural Development Fund is deploying 10,000 tractors over five years. Over 1,000 SMEs have been certified for export. Non-oil exports grew by 21% last year.

Yet, many Nigerians still face economic hardship. We remain focused on reducing inflation, expanding food production, creating jobs, improving living standards, rebuilding confidence in our economy, and creating conditions for sustainable prosperity.

We are moving from uncertainty to stability. The next phase is about accelerating growth and ensuring the benefits are felt in every home, every community, and every region. We believe that Democracy must be felt in the pocket.

Recognising that democracy is undermined when people do not feel its impact, my administration has sought financial autonomy for our 774 local councils. A fundamental challenge to our nation's advancement has been ineffective local government administration. The insecurity we are addressing is partly due to the collapse of grassroots governance. The Renewed Hope Agenda is about ensuring that all Nigerians benefit from

governance.

Every generation has a defining responsibility. The generation of our founding fathers secured independence—the generation of June 12 secured democracy. Our generation must secure prosperity.

Let us move forward together—rejecting division, cynicism, and despair; embracing unity, hope, and confidence. Let us build a Nigeria united by a common purpose, strengthened by diversity, where justice is accessible, liberty is secure, and opportunity is abundant.

Among the architects of modern democratic Nigeria, we honour General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua for his vision of national partnership. In recognition of his contributions, the Federal Government has approved the revitalisation and renaming of the completed Institute of Petroleum Studies, Kaduna, as the General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua University of Geological Sciences and Engineering Technology.

I am also pleased to announce national awards to the following Nigerians, who suffered persecution, endured indignities, exile, incarceration, and, at times, solitary confinement, so that we have democracy today.

- Barrister Ayoka Lawani
- Tunde Fagbenle
- Oladele Alake
- Olatunji Bello
- Louis Odion
- Segun Babatope
- Sam Omatseye
- Sir Ademola Osinubi
- Bola Bolawole
- Lade Bonuola
- Femi Kusa
- Debo Adeniran
- Chief Ayo Opadokun
- Chief Ralph Obioha
- Ose Osayande
- Barrister Osa Director
- Prof. Sylvester Odion-Akhaine
- Dr Arthur Nwankwo (Posthumous)
- Dr Osagie Obayuwana
- Dr Joe Okei-Odumakin
- Barrister Titus Mann
- Joe Igbokwe
- Richard Akinnola
- Ben Charles-Obi (Posthumous)
- George Mbah
- Dr Niran Malaolu
- Major-General Ishola Williams (ret'd)
- Femi Aborisade
- Jenkins Alumona
- Gbemiga Ogunleye
- Muyiwa Adekeye
- Babajide Kolade-Otitoju
- Ike Okonta

We also recognise the soldier-democrats of the June 12 struggle:

- Major General MA Garba
- Brigadier General Lawal Jaafaru Isa
- Col Umar Farouk Ahmed;
- Col Sambo Dasuki;
- Col Lawan Gwadabe;
- Brigadier Jonathan
- Ndiam Temlong
- Col Musa Shehu;
- Major General Chris Eze;
- Major General Harris Dzarma;
- Col Isa Jibrin;
- Maj. General Joseph Oshanupin;
- Col Olusegun Olorunfoba, (Olugbede of Gbede Kingdom)
- Lieutenant Colonel Happy Kefas Bulus

- Col J Okai;
- Col Emmanuel Ndubueze;
- Lt Col Yakubu Muazu
- Brigadier Yahaya Abubakar, the Current Etsu Nupe, who is already the holder of the CFR title.

The honours list will be released in the next few days.

Fellow Nigerians, 27 years ago, many doubted democracy would survive here because of our diversity. Today, our diversity sustains our democracy. The road ahead is steep. But June 12 reminds us: Nigerians do not break. We bend, we bleed, but we do not break.

Let us renew our covenant: That the labours of our heroes past shall never be in vain, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from this land.

May God bless the heroes of our democracy. May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria. May God continue to bless us all.

PHOTOSCOPE

NDC: You looked insecure, in competition with Obi, Aisha Yesufu tackles Dickson

ACTIVIST and member of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Aisha Yesufu, has criticised the party's national leader, Senator Seriake Dickson, saying he appeared "insecure" and was acting as though he was in competition with the party's presidential candidate, Peter Obi.

Yesufu stated this in a post on X yesterday while responding to comments made by Dickson during an interview on ARISE NEWS, where he defended the party's leadership and addressed criticisms from some Obi supporters following the NDC primaries.

Reacting to Dickson's remarks, Yesufu said she found a portion of the interview "painfully appalling" to watch, arguing that his first major media appearance after the primaries should have focused on reassuring party members and promoting the party's candidates ahead of the 2027 election.

"This part of the interview was so painfully appalling to watch. It looked as if you were insecure and in competition with your presidential candidate," she wrote.

"Your first one-on-one interview after the primaries, and instead of selling your candidates and giving confidence to people on how set the road to winning the 2027 election was, you made it about yourself."

Yesufu also rejected

Dickson's suggestion that some party members may have been unwilling to follow internal rules because of their popularity.

While acknowledging that she would address the allegation more fully later, she maintained that she had complied with the party's processes during the primaries and had worked to calm supporters who felt aggrieved by developments in the Federal Capital Territory.

"While I took my time to properly address your allusion to me not playing by the rules, which I consider very disingenuous seeing how I followed the process, and even when you had insisted there would be no primaries for the Senate, I let things go and asked my teeming supporters to focus on the bigger picture," she said.

According to her, she toured parts of the FCT to pacify supporters and party members who felt disrespected after waiting for primaries that did not take place.

The activist further argued that Dickson appeared to view the NDC as a "special purpose vehicle" whose objective had been achieved with its registration rather than as a political party focused on winning the 2027 general election.

"With all due respect, sir, it looks as if you consider the

NDC a special purpose vehicle whose aim has been achieved just by being registered instead of a political party whose aim is to win the 2027 general election decisively," she wrote.

She said Dickson's primary responsibility as party leader during the interview should have been to pacify aggrieved aspirants and encourage supporters to remain committed to the party.

"As a leader of a political party, your number one job in that interview was to pacify aspirants, many of whom are rightfully aggrieved, and secondly to call on supporters to bear with the party and support it, but you ended up antagonising the very people you would need to win an election. Every vote counts! A leader must stoop to conquer!"

Yesufu stressed that no one was challenging Dickson's leadership of the party, insisting that the focus should be on securing victory in the 2027 elections and addressing Nigeria's challenges.

"There is a whole battle ahead of us. Rescuing Nigeria from the current state it is in should be the main focus, not people's fragile ego!" she said.

Dickson had earlier defended the party against criticisms from some Obi supporters, describing attacks on the NDC and its leadership as counterproductive to the presidential candidate's ambition.



AWARD: Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Eko Tourism Foundation, Alhaji Lai Mohammed (left) receiving the Certificate of Membership awarded to Eko Tourism Foundation as a new Affiliate Member of UNTOURISM from Shaikha Al Nuwais (right), the UN Tourism Secretary General, in Toledo, Spain



CMOS CIRCLE: From left, Onyinye Emeka, Chief Marketing Officer, MTN Nigeria; Lolu Akinwunmi, CEO, Prima Garnet Africa; Iquo Ukoh, CEO, Entod Marketing; Dr. Victor Afolabi, Convener, CMOs' Circle/MarkHack; Bolajoko Ajaiyi, President, National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN) and Idoreyen Enang, CEO, Corporate Shepherd, at the inaugural edition of the CMOs Circle organised as part of this year's MarkHack 5.0, in Lagos.



TOWN HALL: From left, Dr. Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, Lawyer & Civil Rights Activist; Dr. Oby Ezekwesili, Founder, School of Politics, Policy and Governance and former Minister of Education, Mr. Kayode Akintemi, Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief, News Central TV and Mr. Abiodun Aikomo, Esq, Oyo State Attorney-General at the News Central Town Hall on abducted students in Oyo State, in Ibadan



UNVEILING: From left, Mrs. Adeyoyin Adesina, CEO, Corona Schools; Mr. Adedotun Sulaiman, Member, Corona Board of Trustees; Chief Odunayo Olagundoye, Member, Corona Board of Trustees; Dr. Myma Belo-Osagie, President, Corona Board of Trustees; Mr Olaniyi Yusuf, Chairman, Corona Schools Governing Board and Mr. IK Mbagwu, Corona Alumni Trustee at the unveiling of the school's Tech Hub in Lagos.



The NNPC E&P Limited (NEPL) joined the global community in celebrating World Environment Day 2026 under the theme "Urbanization and Climate Change: Building Resilient Cities for a Sustainable Future."

With a strong focus on emission reduction and climate action, the event emphasized the importance of sustainable urban development, responsible resource use, eco-driving practices, and collective efforts toward building a more resilient and sustainable future.

The programme featured insightful contributions from stakeholders, including the Commissioner of Edo State Ministry of Transport, Hon. Uwilekhue Saturday Idehen JP, who spoke on sustainable transportation and urban resilience.

As part of the celebration, awards were presented to the top three best-performing markets from our 2025 "Beat Plastic Pollution" campaign, in recognition of their outstanding commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.

As a responsible energy company, NEPL remains committed to reducing emissions, promoting environmental sustainability, and contributing to a low-carbon future for our communities and generations to come.

Happy World Environment Day 2026
 #worldenvironmentday2026 #urbanizationandclimatechange #climateaction #sustainability #nepl

Sweet & Sour

Donu Kogbara



•President Bola Tinubu

•Gov Siminalayi Fubara

Unhappy democracy day!

LAST year, on this very same date, I pointed out that there was nothing happy or authentic about Naija style democracy; and I'm still searching for evidence that we are enjoying government of the people, for the people and by the people... on some important levels at least.

Sadly, such evidence continues to elude me and Nigerians continue to suffer endless indignities and deprivations and risks to life, limb and property; and I don't understand why an essentially totalitarian country that is only democratic on paper should have a Democracy Day.

Public holidays always impact negatively on the economy; and the question I keep asking myself is this: Why take time off work to celebrate something that barely exists?!

Let me share something I wrote on this page exactly 12 months ago:

CRY ME A RIVERS!

Another unhappy aspect of Democracy Day is the president's failure to restore democracy in Rivers, my home state. We have been unfairly subjected to a state of emergency since March when our governor, Sim Fubara, was suspended and replaced by a military administrator who is not an indigene and is spending our money anyhow. Fubara is not my favourite person right now, for reasons you will understand if you check out recent "Nigeria Unfiltered" podcasts on my YouTube channel (titled Donu's World).

In a nutshell, I regard him as too timid, too weak and too reluctant to thank those who have stood by him since he was tossed onto the political scrapheap. And if he stands for election today, I will definitely not vote for him. Bluntly put, I prefer his deputy, Dr Ngozi Odu.

But as much as Sim annoys me, I still think he should be reinstated! Tinubu was a pro-democracy NADECO activist in his younger days. Democracy Day would have been a

perfect opportunity for him to backtrack, re-embrace the liberal side of his personality and show Rivers people that he has not become an irredeemable dictator in old age.

Fubara was eventually reinstated in September last year, but his hands were tied and his days are numbered because Tinubu and Wike, his local enforcer in Rivers, have decreed that he cannot seek re-election. Wike is now imposing a Tinubu-backed APC governorship candidate who is from his Ikwerre ethnic group (even though it is not their "tum") and totally unwanted by most Riverians. So much for democracy!!!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ELDERS TWEAK THE TRUTH FOR USURY

Someone sent me this. Author unknown but very wise. Let me share it with you:

A SOCIETY does not collapse in one loud day. It collapses quietly, when those entrusted with wisdom begin to auction truth to the highest bidder. The tragedy is not merely that young people lie. Youth has always struggled with temptation. *The real tragedy begins when ELDERS—the CUSTODIANS of values, the GUARDIANS of INSTITUTIONAL memory, the supposed REFEREES of morality—begin to edit truth for profit.*

When ELDERS start twisting facts for personal gain, something dangerous happens: *The moral compass of an entire generation begins to malfunction.* Because whether we admit it or not, younger people do not learn primarily from sermons *They learn from observation*. They watch. They observe who gets rewarded. They observe who gets protected. They observe who gets celebrated despite obvious compromise.

And when they repeatedly see respected Elders manipulating narratives, DEFENDING NONSENSE, rewriting history, justifying corruption AND IMPUNITY, and selling integrity for access, influence, contracts, APPOINTMENTS, or applause

They quietly conclude: "Perhaps truth itself is negotiable." That is how civilizations decay. Not first through poverty. Not first through war. *But through the COMMERCIALIZATION of CONSCIENCE.* A young man who watches Elders manipulate truth for financial or political gain soon stops believing in honor. A young woman who sees respected figures defend evil because of tribe, friendship, religion, or benefit begins to distrust integrity itself.

Soon, everyone becomes a trader. Truth becomes merchandise. Wisdom becomes pro-

paganda. Leadership becomes performance. And morality becomes seasonal. The frightening part is this: *When Elders corrupt truth, they do not merely damage the present—they contaminate the future.* Because the next generation inherits not only wealth and infrastructure, they inherit behavioral patterns. And once dishonesty becomes institutionalized among Elders, younger people stop aspiring to character and start aspiring to SUCCESSFUL MANIPULATION. *That is when Society begins producing INTELLIGENT OPPORTUNISTS instead of PRINCIPLED LEADERS.*

A community can survive economic hardship. It can survive political instability. It can

even survive external enemies. But once its Elders begin monetizing truth, the foundation itself starts cracking from beneath. The ancient role of an Elder was sacred. An Elder was supposed to be: a stabilizer during confusion, a voice of fairness during conflict, a protector of truth during chaos, and a moral compass during uncertainty. *But when Elders become MERCHANTS of DISTORTION, they transform from CUSTODIANS into CORRUPTORS.* And sadly, the damage multiplies because people naturally trust experienced voices. One dishonest youth can mislead a few people. *But one compromised Elder can mislead an entire generation.* This is why Societies must never normalize intellectual dishonesty from respected figures.

Not because Elders must be perfect, nobody is. *But because when maturity loses integrity, younger people lose direction.* And a generation without direction becomes easy prey for manipulation, division, and destruction. *The painful irony is that many Elders who tweak truth for temporary gain eventually leave behind weakened institutions, confused youths, divided communities, and broken trust.* And history is merciless with such legacies. Because influence is not measured merely by titles held or speeches delivered. True influence is measured by whether your presence strengthened truth, or weakened it. At the end of life, the most dangerous poverty is not lack of money. It is the *poverty of credibility*. May we never become Elders whose mouths are respected while their consciences are bankrupt.

When ELDERS start twisting facts for personal gain, something dangerous happens: *The moral compass of an entire generation begins to malfunction

DONU'S WORLD

I have a YouTube channel. It's called DONU'S WORLD. https://youtube.com/@donukogbara?si=bBm_IPdFZ_wUyKYq NIGERIA UNFILTERED – spicy commentaries on Naija issues - appears every Wednesday, while DONU'S WEEK appears on Fridays and is international as well as local and covers a mish-mash of soft and tough issues around my personal life, my work and my worldview. Two days ago, in this week's Nigeria Unfiltered video, I urged President Tinubu to ignore fantasists who think that most religiously motivated terrorists can be deradicalized and rehabilitated. Please check out my Donu's World library (dating back to early 2024) on YouTube, plus the new videos I produce every week. I would love to hear your opinions and any constructive criticisms you may have to offer. And I will be very grateful if you "like", subscribe and share!

RESPONSES TO donzol2002@yahoo.co.uk or to 0805 404 6887. (TEXT ONLY). PLEASE NOTE THAT UNLESS YOU REQUEST ANONYMITY, YOUR EMAIL OR TEXT MAY BE PUBLISHED WITH YOUR NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS ATTACHED

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CONVERSATION

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Ona Judge: Preferred suffering in freedom than plenty in US Presidency

STORIES like that of David and Goliath teach moral lessons especially about victory not necessarily going to the mighty and powerful. The freedom battles between a sitting United States President and a slave girl he owned, are no less intriguing.

Such a true life story is usually tucked away as they tell of the humiliation and humbling of a privilege class. The story of the young lady, Ona Judge who at 22 fled the US Presidential mansion, abandoning the good life and comfort it offered and, the strenuous efforts of the then 64-year old George Washington, the founding President of the US, also exposed the hypocrisy of the establishment.

The US establishment, making pretensions to being champions of fundamental human rights had in its 1776 Declaration of Independence proclaimed: "We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable; that all men are created equal and independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and inalienable, among which are

the preservation of life, and liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

This Declaration was without qualifications, but in practice, they did not apply to Blacks and Non-Whites who were not considered full human beings.

When the Declaration was made, Washington was the Commander-in-Chief of the US military fighting British colonialism. On July 9, 1776, he ordered that the Declaration be read aloud to all soldiers in New York. But like nine of his successors, he was a slave owner that refused to release the captives.

He referred to slaves as "a Species of Property" Even when he publicly announced: "Not only do I pray for it, on the score of human dignity, but I can clearly foresee that nothing but the rooting out of slavery can perpetuate the existence of our union, by consolidating it in a common bond of principle." he held down scores of slave as his private property.

Washington at a point, boasted publicly: "I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more

sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery." But they were mere words that had no ring of sincerity.

On the other hand, Judge was the daughter of a slave seamstress of First Lady Martha Washington who had inherited three hundred slaves from her late husband, Daniel Parke Custis. Judge was twelve

years old when she began fully working for Marta. When Washington became President, she was one of seven slaves picked to work for the First Family in their new home in New York. She also moved with them when the President relocated to Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania.

In 1780, Pennsylvania had passed a law under which slaves of long-term visitors who stay for more than six months automatically became free.

I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery

To beat this law, President Washington moved his slaves out each time any of them was about to stay up to six months. He also preferred short term stay for his slaves in the vibrant city because as he wrote in 1791: "The idea of freedom might be too great a temptation for them to resist."

As the preferred maid of the First Lady, Judge had privileges including new wardrobe periodically which

reflected her special status. But such ephemeral things did not appeal to her; freedom was on her mind.

Also, Judge had learnt that the Washingtons had decided to package her as a wedding gift to the First Lady's granddaughter, Elizabeth Parke Custis, who was not known for courtesies.

So, on May 21, 1796 as the First Family was having dinner at the President's House in Philadelphia, Judge slipped out of the Presidential Mansion into freedom. She recalled: "Whilst they were packing up to go to Virginia, I was packing up to go, I didn't know where... For I knew that if I went back to Virginia, I never should get my liberty."

She fled North on a ship to Portsmouth. An angry President Washington began a relentless search and attempts to get her back. Two days after her escape, his steward, Frederick Kitt, placed an advertisement in the Philadelphia Gazette which stated: "Absconded from the household of the President of the United States. Oney Judge, a light mulatto girl, much freckled, with very black eyes and bushy black hair, she is of middle stature, slender, and delicately, about 20 years of age. She has many changes of good clothes, of all sorts..."

Washington's anger was visible in the runaway advertisement. He did not see any reason she would flee: "As there was no suspicion of her going off, nor no provocation to do so, it is not easy to conjecture whether she has gone or, fully, what her design is."

In Portsmouth, she found work as a domestic labourer, undoubtedly a punishing and physically draining job, but at least, she was free.

A Senator's daughter who knew Judge, spotted her in Portsmouth. Washington then got a negotiator, the Portsmouth Custom Collector, Joseph Whipple who tried to negotiate her return. In her 2017 book 'Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona

Judge' historian Erica Armstrong Dunbar wrote that the negotiator, in an October 1796 letter to Washington told him that, Judge said she would: "rather suffer death than return to slavery and [be] liable to be sold or given to any other persons." He added that Judge gave a condition if she were to return; that Washington would agree to her eventual freedom.

To this, Washington responded: "To enter into such a compromise, as she suggested to you, is totally inadmissible, for reasons that must strike at first view: For however well disposed I might be to a gradual abolition, or even to an entire emancipation of that description of people (if the latter was in itself practicable at this moment), it would neither be politic or just to reward unfaithfulness with a premature preference."

President Washington urged the negotiator to find ways of re-enslaving Judge. Apparently this failed as Judge remained free for the rest of her life, raising her independent family.

In August 1799, Washington got Burwell Bassett Jr., Martha's nephew, to persuade Judge to return to slavery. When he failed, Bassett Jr decided to use force. But the Governor of New Hampshire got wind of the plot and assisted her to escape to a safe home outside the city.

John Langdon

JOHN LANGDON, a four-term governor (then called president) of New Hampshire, was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire...

Four months later, President Washington passed away on December 14, 1799 without realizing his ambition of re-enslaving Judge. His wife Martha, followed on May 22, 1802. On the other hand, Judge passed away on February 25, 1848, that is 49 years after President Washington's death. She was an example of the poor and powerless overcoming the rich and the powerful.

Honouring heroes of June 12

By HANNATU MUSAWA

On a Tuesday, 4th of June, 1996, around 3:05 pm, something unbelievable happened that shook the core of the struggle for democracy in Nigeria. Kudirat Abiola was gunned down as her car slowed down around 7-Up Depot/Bus Stop in Ikeja, Lagos State. She was instantly killed along with her chauffeur and assistant.

Many people who knew her opined that her death brought a beautiful, brilliant and bold life, which she was generally believed to have lived, to an untimely end. With her death, a new chapter was opened in Nigeria's political history, as the deceased became one of the prominent martyrs in the struggle for a truly democratic nation.

The outspoken wife of Chief M.K.O Abiola gave her life for this country and, even in death, she remains a symbol of Nigeria's struggle for democracy. She is one of several Nigerians that paid the supreme price in their quest for a better, freer, and democratic Nigeria.

Another of such martyrs was Gen. Shehu Musa Yar'Adua. After serving in the military and as the Third Republic beckoned, Yar'Adua and his group formed the People's Front of Nigeria. Its members included current President Bola Tinubu, Babagana Kingibe, Atiku Abubakar, Magaji Abdullahi, Ango Abdullahi, Ahmadu Rufa'i, Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, Tony Anenih, Chuba Okadigbo among other great Nigerians. The People's Front later merged to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP). About two years after the 1993 elections, he alongside Olusegun Obasanjo, Lawan Gwadab and others, were arrested on allegations of plotting a coup to overthrow the military regime. He was sentenced to death by a military tribunal in the same year after calling

for the military government and the Provisional Ruling Council to re-establish civilian rule. The sentence was commuted to life in prison but he died in captivity on 8 December 1997.

Just five days after Nigeria celebrated her independence on 1st October 1995, a prominent pro-democracy activist and business man was murdered at his Ikeja residence in Lagos State. He was Alfred Rewane, a major financier of the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) and close associate of Obafemi Awolowo. In the 1990s, his residence was the venue of political meetings that led to the formation of NADECO which was quite vocal in its opposition to the military regime. He was one of the few Pro-Democracy activists who fought against the military but sadly, he paid the ultimate price. This pro-democracy advocate is one of the great Nigerians that "gave their yesterday for the liberty that is ours today."

Crystallised to be celebrated annually on June 12 by former President Muhammadu Buhari in 2018, Democracy Day remains entrenched in our minds to honour the heroes who championed the struggle and made extra-ordinary sacrifices for the enthronement of democratic rule in Nigeria.

Back in history, on June 12th, an estimated 14 million Nigerians set aside ethnic, religious, class, and regional affiliations to elect their president with the hope of ending several years of military dictatorship. In the Third Republic, there were only two political parties, the SDP and the National Republican Convention (NRC). The candidates were two of the most patriotic and greatest people our nation has ever produced; MKO Abiola of the SDP and Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the NRC.

Consequently, at the end of the

election, MKO Abiola was believed to have won the majority of votes and in more states, including Kano, Alhaji Bashir Tofa's state. But alas, the election was annulled before the results were declared, breaking the hearts of millions of Nigerians and splintering the veil of trust and our ability to rise above sectional loyalties and place national interest above ethnic considerations. Like the name of Fela's 1977 album, June 12 and its victories no doubt, came with "Sorrow, Tears, and Blood."

Something was lost on that day.

The right to be part of our democracy is not merely a privilege; it is a responsibility that gives each of us the power to influence the direction of our country

Something that went above ethno-religious sentiments. Something that shunned any differences. It was one of the most significant moments in Nigeria's democratic history because it transcended our divisions.

Nigerians from different regions, religions, and cultural backgrounds overwhelmingly supported the presumed winner, Chief Moshood Abiola, not because of his ethnicity, but because they believed in his vision and leadership. June 12 offered a powerful glimpse of a united Nigeria where competence, hope, and shared aspirations mattered more than tribe or religion. Although the election was annulled, its legacy endures as a reminder that the Nigerian people have the capacity to reject division,



•Hannatu Musawa

embrace inclusiveness, and strengthen democracy through unity of purpose.

June 12 brought everyone's democratic sentiments together across Nigeria with a single purpose and in the spirit of actually using their power to have their democratic say devoid of ethnic, religious and tribal sentiment.

In light of the example of the heroes of democracy, each and every Nigerian can also contribute their quota in advancing our democracy. Each one of us has a constitutional right to do so. Our democracy will only thrive when citizens participate actively and directly in moving democracy forward. And even if each of our sacrifices does not resemble that of those who died for June 12 or for democracy itself, it is about participation in the process. And, no, it is not about party affiliation, it is about the fact that each and every citizen has both a voice and a vote, and our democracy depends on how willing we are to use them. The right to be part of our democracy is not merely a privilege; it is a responsibility that gives each of us the power to influence the direction of our country.

We must rise above ethnic, religious and regional divisions and recognise that our shared identity as Nigerians is greater than the

differences that seek to separate us. We have seen that through the sacrifices of the heroes that fought for our democracy.

The future of Nigeria is not something that simply happens to us. It is something we build together; one responsible citizen at a time. This is exactly what the heroes of democracy did. Through courage, resilience, sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to this nation, they fought for a Nigeria where the voice of every citizen matters.

Our democracy will continue to flourish when we honour the sacrifices and embrace the values exemplified by the likes of Kudirat Abiola, Mallam Aminu Kano, Alfred Rewane, Alex Ekwueme, Solomon Lar, Chuba Okadigbo, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, Prof Wole Soyinka, Chief Ayo Adebajo, Frank Kokori, Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti, Gani Fawehinmi and so many of our great democratic heroes. Men and women that were vigilant, responsible, and willing to make sacrifices for the progress of Nigeria.

On a Tuesday, 4th of June, 1996, around 3:05 pm something unbelievable happened that shook the core of the struggle for democracy in Nigeria. We lost a great Nigerian heroine as she fought for the spirit of June 12. May the loss of Kudirat Abiola serve as a continuous reminder to Nigerians on the imperative of improving our democracy. And despite our challenges, we can improve our democracy by honouring her legacy, not merely with words, but by emulating the dedication to the pursuit of the common good above personal, ethnic, or partisan interests.

•Musawa, Minister of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy, wrote from Abuja.

Today, Friday 12th of June 2026, marks the 33rd anniversary of the historic "June 12" phenomenon of Nigerian democracy. On that day in 1993, Nigerians elected a new president under General Ibrahim Babangida's decreed two-party system. The parties on the presidential ballot were the Social Democratic Party (SDP), with Chief Moshood Abiola as the candidate, and the National Republican Convention (NRC), which had Alhaji Bashir Tofa, as its flagbearer. The Electoral Umpire then was the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with Prof Humphrey Nwosu, as the Chairman.

The NEC had rolled out its "Option A4" open ballot strategy, whereby voters queued in front of the photos/parties of their preferred candidates and were counted. It was a transparent system that left very little room for rancour, ballot snatching and result falsification during collation. What made June 12 a milestone was that for the first time, Nigerians forgot their ethnic, religious and regional biases

Vanguard

COMMENT

Diminishing impetus of June 12

and voted for the Muslim/Muslim ticket of Abiola and his running mate, Ambassador Babagana Kingibe. It was a power shift that ended regional dominance and witnessed the first ever emergence of a Southerner as president of Nigeria.

Unfortunately, President Babangida annulled the election on 23rd June. Nigeria was plunged into a six-year political impasse, during which we saw the rise and fall of the General Sani Abacha military regime, a Constitutional Conference that enacted compromises for future

political cohabitation, the death of Abiola and Abacha and the deliberate shift of power to the South-West through the election of President Olusegun Obasanjo. A major, enduring outcome of the June 12 and its aftermath is the rotation of power between the North and South. Unfortunately, it has only benefited the North-West and South-West, with the South-South inheriting the Umaru Yar' Adua regime through his erstwhile Deputy, Dr Goodluck Jonathan.

Another fallout was the enactment

of the Federal Character Principle in Section 14 (3) of the 1999 Constitution to ensure national equity and avoid sectional domination. However, failure to faithfully implement the rotation and federal character principles have contributed to the general weakening of Nigeria, especially in the security and economic fronts. It is a sad irony that the political parties that recently adopted the "direct primaries" system perfected on June 12 1993, shamelessly abused it by roguishly jumping numbers during the counting, thus demonstrating that rigging has become part of their political DNAs. Unlike Prof Nwosu's fiercely assertive independent NEC which led the crusade for the credible June 12 election, today's electoral umpire is generally perceived as a "department of the presidency".

The impetus of June 12 has been lost. Nigeria's democracy is in need of a new beginning, starting with the total reform of the INEC and the Judiciary to restore their independence from Executive manipulations. Who will bell the cat?



ONE long week of horror. That is how I think I can best describe the working week ending today. Just imagine! The week opened with news of terrorists killing three officers of the Federal Road Safety Commission in Kebbi State. Down in Delta State, soldiers and policemen clashed with youths in Emede community in Isoko South Local Government Area of the state, and by the time what went up came down, people had been killed with houses razed. The following day, 50 elders of Zamfara State got kidnapped in an ironical twist. Irony, because the 50 elders of Magamin Diddi village in the Magami/Faru ward of Maradun Local Government, Zamfara State decided to embark on a mission to broker peace with a notorious gang leader who has been terrorising the area. Unfortunately, another terror kingpin, called Jammo, opted to abduct the missionaries of peace. Meanwhile, 416 captives of Ngoshe regained freedom after a rescue operation. 11 more of them also regained freedom.

But Wednesday's event sent more shock waves across the nation. Terrorists attacked a school in Iluke Bunu in Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of the state, and when the tally was taken, the vice principal of the school had been killed alongside two others. It could have been worse if the DPO in charge of the area had not been proactive. It was another sad day in Nigeria, which further depressed the government's efforts in

PICTURES & PATTERNS

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What else can we do about insecurity?

securing lives and property of the peoples under its care.

The repeated attacks by terrorists keep fueling conversations everywhere — in buses, at newsstands, drinking joints, or anywhere two or three people gather. One question that keeps coming up in these discussions is: What else can we do that we have not done?

Let's start with government. We all know, worldwide, that governments are powerful institutions. Governments running the affairs of a state are supposed to have exclusive use of the power of coercion, including the use of armed force. That is why countries have armed forces on land (Army), in the air (Air Force), and on water (Navy). Recent Nigerian experience, and by recent I mean nearly 20 years, indicate that non-state actors have competed and are still competing effectively with our government on whose firepower has greater reach and wider influence. Nevertheless, it still befuddles the mind how the

government of a country that rescued Liberia and Sierra Leone from insurgent instability, and extraordinarily rendered Nnamdi Kanu from Kenya back to Nigeria to face trial is finding it extremely difficult to deal with the Boko Haram insurgency and the spate of kidnap attacks and herdsman

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bloodbaths.

It makes one ask again: Are we doing all we should? Are we using all resources available? One mind-boggling aspect of the kidnap business is the ease with which ransom is demanded, paid, and received, while using mobile lines. What happened to tracking? Every smart phone can be used to track the location of a call, using Google Earth, Google Location Services, and scores of other location apps available on the internet. That is why the question is germane: Are we using all available resources? The US/Israel-Iran conflict saw technology playing a major role in the attacks. Cyber warfare dominated the conflict as targeted assassinations were made possible by state-of-the-art telecommunications and informatics technology. I know where we are regarding technology, but we are not so backward we can't integrate location software into the battle against terrorists and bandits. Or are we?

Which brings me again to the words ascribed to late General Sani Abacha, our former Head of State and maximum ruler. He was once said to have remarked that if insurgency lasts more than 24 hours, then people in authority know about it. He may be right, after all. We have heard many stories, in beer parlours, inside molue buses, wherever people gather that troops on the trail of bandits have received orders to hold or pull back from their positions. In addition, those

negotiating ransom with kidnapers have been suspected of benefiting from the ransom. So, we have created a cyclical industry in which people get kidnapped, ransom is demanded, negotiators are involved, ransom is paid, captives are released, and everyone is smiling, until the next kidnap. Of course, people have been arrested and tried for colluding with bandits. Even in areas where terror attacks are pronounced, people have been apprehended for being informants to terrorists, suppliers to terrorists, and women for being their paramours. There are parents who know that some of their children are into bad acts; yet they have kept mum. Remember the case of the Sarkin Fulani in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State? He knew his son was into kidnapping. Indeed, the son had been prosecuted and jailed for kidnapping, but after coming out, the dog went back to its vomit. The father is now in trouble when a bag used to load ransom money was found in his house. So, are we helping ourselves? To rout terrorists from our lands, we must do more than we are doing at the moment. As the Ooni Ife said, we can burrow into the recesses of our culture for solutions. That is one way. Afenifere has asked residents of the South-West region to mobilise for self-defence. That is another way. Will these work? One thing is clear: we must find sustainable solutions to this problem as we cannot continue to hope the problem will solve itself. TGIF.

Vanguard Weekender.

2026 World Cup Begins...

Lamentation galore



as Nigeria misses out again

- How NFF ruined nation's chances
- Why Super Eagles players are complicit
- The huge loss to a football-loving nation

Insecurity and fifth columnists



AMOTEKUN AT A CROSSROADS

Funding, welfare challenges threaten regional security outfit



A flicker of light at the end of the tunnel?

2026 World Cup Begins...

Lamentation galore

THE football world stood still as the 2026 FIFA World Cup kicked off in Mexico, Canada and USA, yesterday. Forty eight nations are participating in the quadrennial global showpiece. Out of that number, ten nations are representing Africa. Unfortunately, Nigeria is not among them. It is the second consecutive edition that Africa's most populous nation has failed to qualify for the World Cup. A general sense of frustration pervades the land. The fans are despondent and stakeholders are wondering what dragged Nigeria's football to this level of continental and global insignificance. It's unthinkable that Cape Verde, ranked 69th in the world, is at the World Cup. DR Congo is also at the World Cup at the expense of 26th ranked Nigeria. It might interest one to also know that Nigeria is the undisputed leader in African football player exports and ranks among the top 10 globally. According to experts, the country consistently places between 8th and 10th worldwide, standing as the only African nation in the global top 10.

For Nigeria, a country that had built a frightening reputation in global football to miss two successive World Cup tournaments, even with the expanded format, leaves much to be desired.

Little wonder therefore that calls for a total overhaul of the Nigeria Football Federation are growing louder by the day as the Super Eagles performance in the qualifiers was a direct index of the amount of professionalism – or lack of it – put in by those running football in the country. After an indifferent campaign in the qualifiers, Nigeria got a lifeline when CAF invoked its rules that ended up making Nigeria qualify for the continental playoff. Despite that respite, the Super Eagles failed to beat DR Congo after a nerve-wrecking penalty shootout in the final of the playoff. Congo deservedly went ahead to qualify after beating Jamaica in the intercontinental playoff in April.

Where did Nigeria get it wrong?

Most observers believe that the officials of the Nigeria Football Federation should own up and admit that they failed the nation again, after being absent at the Qatar World Cup in 2022. It must be remembered that the Super Eagles prosecuted the World Cup qualifiers under three coaches. They began with Portuguese journey man Jose Peseiro, Finidi George then Chelle. The level of instability in the technical crew alone could have worked against the team. They say too many cooks spoil the broth. Nothing could be truer than this.

Appointment of coaches and the opaque selection process

Veteran sports journalist, Ejio Omonode said, "When Peseiro left, a Finidi came and didn't get the required support. He was called for a meeting with the NFF in Abuja and was promised everything. But before he arrived at Port Harcourt airport, news broke that he had been relegated to the position of ceremonial head coach and a German was coming to boss him. When the qualifiers were almost over we brought out calculators to create imaginary chances. Those who are serious about the World Cup set out early. Imagine Nigeria struggled with the likes of the Republic of Benin, Rwanda, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and so forth. The process for the recruitment of coaches by the NFF has been a very close secret. Each recruitment exercise is fraught with deception as the public is made to believe everything is okay. After asking qualified individuals to apply, the interviews and eventual engagement are top secrets. From the recruitment of Gernot Rohr to Jose Peseiro and now Eric Chelle it has been clear that each of them came to satisfy vested interests of some powerful members of the NFF board," Omonode said, "This still boils down to administration.

There are allegations that two ex-internationals high up in the system brought Eric Chelle as their preferred candidate whether on merit or not.

Midway into the qualifying series, the Chairman of the National Sports Commission, Malam Shehu Dikko, defended Chelle and gave him a clean bill of health. He said Chelle had done well. Explaining how the Malian

● **How NFF ruined nation's chances** ● **Why Super Eagles players are complicit** ● **The huge loss to a football-loving nation**

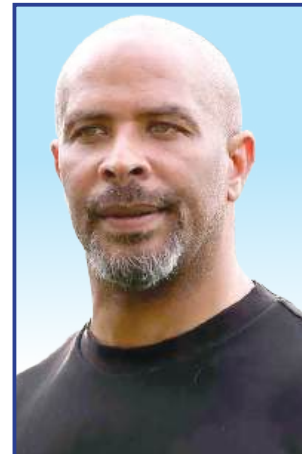
We've missed two World Cups now.

It's devastating for the fans, but even more so for us, the players

had been able to turn around the fortunes of the Super Eagles, Dikko said, "As for the World Cup, we all know where we are. When we came on board, we only had three points out of 12, but now with Eric Chelle in charge, we have eight points in another four games. If we had these results before, probably, we could have qualified for the World Cup." With his position as the number one sports administrator in the country, Dikko should be the one asking questions. He should not be engaging in what has been described as an image laundering expedition for Chelle. He should be the one to ask for the scorecard of the NFF.

A tardy NFF

Apart from the random recruitment of who handles the Super Eagles, the Nigerian Football Federation has



also been the bane of the team's effort at performing well, particularly at away matches. Nigeria was taken to the Toyota stadium in Bloemfontein, a traditional rugby pitch. In what appears conspiratorial, the pitch was approved for the dicey match between South Africa and the Super Eagles.

The NFF sat back, no advance team was sent to South Africa to inspect that pitch, no complaint and the Eagles were hosted there. A week after the match which ended 1-1, a FIFA official reportedly told a Nigerian journalist that had the NFF raised any objection to the poor state of the pitch, FIFA would have done something about it. A change of venue would have been the probable option.. "We, as FIFA, do not have the capacity to inspect every stadium hosting World Cup qualifiers," the official said. "We rely on the confederations in this case, CAF, to organise and oversee these games. If

they fail to carry out their duties properly, as may have happened here, then the Nigeria Football Federation can submit a formal complaint for further review." FIFA's response puts the spotlight on CAF's role in ensuring that playing surfaces for World Cup qualifiers meet international standards, the report stated..

An angry Super Eagles fan raised another salient point, while counting the sins of the NFF and their contributions to Nigeria's worst World Cup qualifying campaign ever. He asked, "When Lesotho and Zimbabwe chose to play their home matches in South Africa, didn't the NFF see any danger in that?" he asked. Couldn't they have raised an eyebrow? How can they take that without a whimper?" Indeed, it is clear, as it has turned out, that the NFF literally handed the 2026 FIFA World Cup ticket to South Africa, even before a ball was kicked. The Bafana Bafana travelled only thrice to Rwanda, Nigeria and Benin while the rest of their qualifiers were played in South Africa.

Sports Manager with Nigeria Info, Abuja, Olubunmi Haruna, believes Nigeria lost the ticket because the NFF was not organised. "The officials of the NFF were not organised. They took many things for granted, and that is why we lost the ticket."

Haruna also urged the NFF to pay attention to the Flying Eagles and the Golden Eaglets. "This failure is partly because we have failed recently with the age grade teams. The effect will continue if we don't do better. We have to start now," he said.

Late preparations

On his part Godwin Bammigboye, the Chairman of the FCT Coaches Association attributed Nigeria's failure to qualify for the World Cup to late preparations and lack of commitment.

"We hardly qualify because we don't prepare. How can you spend a few days preparing to qualify for the World Cup? We need to be serious. What you garbage in is what



Vanguard Weekender

you get in return."

He urged the NFF to make the Super Eagles more competitive if they want Nigeria to qualify for the next World Cup.

"The NFF should fund the team well. We need to give more players opportunities to encourage competition in the team. That way you will get the best players to play the World Cup qualification.

Chasing out impostors

1980 AFCON winner, Segun Odegbami, was unequivocal at the recently organised 10th memorial lecture of late Stephen Keshi, when he said the present board of the NFF should be chased out. Odegbami regretted that Nigeria's flag will not be hoisted in "the easiest World Cup with 10 qualification slots for Africa. And the people who did not take us there are scheming and planning that they are going to come back again to lead us through this same hell we're going through. That will be the ultimate slap in the face if Nigerians allow them to come back. People have failed and we're bamboozled into accepting that they should come and continue and disregard all people who are the victims of their failure. It is a shame. The ignorance level of our so-called leaders is atrocious".

Looking at the empty hall of the NIIA where the memorial lecture was being held, Odegbami said that he would have been shocked if NFF officials honored the invitation. "Look at the hall. It's near empty. We're talking of Stephen Keshi who gave everything to this country. Time has come for us to stand up and chase away these impostors from our football. You'll be shocked to know that as great as this country is, we do not have one standard stadium in Nigeria. I mean one, not two. Go to the Godswill Akpabio Stadium and see what we have turned it to. It's pitiable. We can no longer watch them destroy our beautiful game that gives Nigerians joy.

"There's no accountability, no resignations after failure. No remorse. We cannot continue with this impunity", Odegbami said.

Commitment of players

Another factor that worked against Nigeria in the World Cup qualifiers was the quality of playing personnel. A team that parades an all-foreign based squad should not be struggling with the likes of Republic of Benin, Lesotho and Rwanda. Even the Bafana Bafana should not pose a problem to a typical Nigeria squad.



Lamentation galore

Jide Oloyede, a former player of the defunct First Bank Football Club of Lagos, told Sports Vanguard that Nigerian players are overrated. Said he, "Our players are over hyped. You could see the way the South Africans were playing. They exhibited hunger and thirst for the World Cup. They were playing behind the ball and fell back to fight for the ball when they lost it. I don't think we were prepared for what we met."

He questioned Super Eagles players' commitment to their country. "You and I were in this country when we had the likes of Jay Jay Okocha, Rashied Yekini, Finidi George, Sunday Oliseh among others. These were players who wanted to write their names in gold and went the hard way for success. But the current squad does not have serious-minded players. The moment they land and you see them, you will know that they are not serious people. It's not a coaching problem but the players'. They were well motivated. I have observed that these players don't put much effort in their play like we see them do for their clubs in Europe. When they play for the national team, they don't show the zeal of wanting to win matches like they show in their clubs' colours. That is the reality."

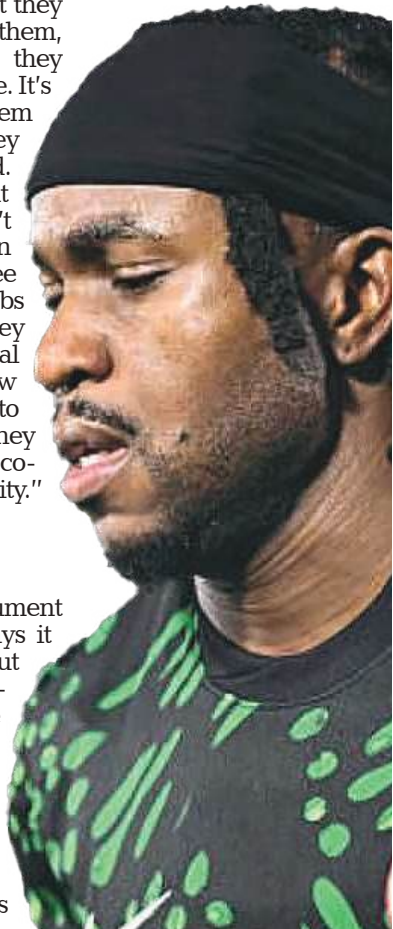
Non-payment of allowances

But another argument put by Omonode says it all. He talked about NFF's lack of commitment to these players. He mentioned owed bonuses, non-payment of or delayed camp allowances and poor welfare as some of the disincentives

militating against camp harmony. Players feel they are being used without commensurate appreciation. The former Sports editor of Guardian said, "Administration flows into the players. The players are the end products. For instance, he mentioned when players who got injured while on international duties were abandoned to their fates.

"From when these fixtures were made, you call these players, engage them in a heart to heart discussion on how you intend to prosecute the qualifiers. But again, you can't be calling on these players when you are owing them past allowances and bonuses. So, sometimes they don't have the moral standing to call on them."

As the nation continues to lick its wounds and brood over missed op-



Corporate endorsements, merchandising, and media rights associated with the Super Eagles have dried up, impacting local advertising agencies and businesses

portunities it is incumbent on stakeholders of Nigerian football to effect the changes required to fix Nigeria football.

There are always consequences

Nigeria's failure to qualify for the 2026 FIFA World Cup—the second consecutive absence—is a national sporting and economic crisis. It costs the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) an estimated \$10.5 million (over N15.5 billion) in direct prize money, harms the international transfer market value of top players, and deprives youth programs of crucial funding.

Financial and commercial loss:

By failing to reach the expanded 48-team tournament, the Nigeria Football Federation missed out on a guaranteed \$10.5 million (about N15 billion) in participation fees and prize money, which represents roughly 87 percent of the federation's annual budget. Decreased Sponsorships: Corporate endorsements, merchan-

World Cup is every four years, and not everyone gets to be a part of that," the ex-Lorient striker said in an interview with AY Suga.

"We've missed two World Cups now. It's devastating for the fans, but even more so for us, the players.

"I'm 27 now, in the next World Cup I'll be 31, and most of the squad will be in their 30's as well. It's almost impossible for us to be there if we're being totally honest.

"Young players will come in. The oldest in the squad right now is Semi [32], so, going by that, it'll be quite difficult.

"For some of us, we might have to watch from home. How do we tell our children that we had two chances to be at the World Cup and we didn't take it?

"It's horrible to think about," Terem Moffi concluded.

Squad Rebuilding

The extended absence has forced the team to bring in younger, less experienced squads for rebuilding and friendly fixtures, shifting the immediate focus to attitude and squad development rather than immediate tournament glory.

Administrative and Structural Reforms/Wake-Up Call on Management

The failure highlights deep-seated governance, structural, and administrative issues. Constant changes in the technical crew, late arrivals to camps, and player bonus disputes have plagued the qualifying campaigns.

Push for private sector involvement

There is mounting pressure to transition Nigerian football into a more profit-driven, capitalist enterprise, urging the government to step back and let private stakeholders manage the game with better strategic discipline.

The "Miracle Mindset" folly

Experts have criticised the national reliance on the "last-minute miracle mindset", pointing out that consistent success requires systematic, long-term planning instead of reacting to failures after the fact, or calculating based on possible failures of other teams.

Psychological and emotional impact

Missing out for the second time in a row has created widespread muted enthusiasm and heartbreak for millions of passionate Nigerian supporters.



dising, and media rights associated with the Super Eagles have dried up, impacting local advertising agencies and businesses.

Danger to grassroots football development

The lack of revenue severely limits the federation's ability to fund domestic league infrastructure and youth tournaments, threatening future talent pipelines.

Player profiles and market value missed global showcase: Stars in their prime like Victor Osimhen and Ademola Lookman have been denied the ultimate shop window to elevate their global reputations.

Career Timelines: The World Cup operates on a four-year cycle and this missed opportunity could mean an entire generation of players will go a significant portion of their careers without experiencing football's biggest global stage.

Terem Moffi featured in five of Nigeria's ten 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Of the five games the Portugal Liga winner played, Nigeria sealed one win.

The FC Porto loanee believes that most of the current crop of players will not be around to witness the next tournament.

With an average age of 26.8, most of the Nigerian players will be in the latter part of their careers when the 2030 World Cup kicks off, and Moffi believes it'll be almost impossible for them to be a part of that squad.

"That's what the fans don't understand. The

A humiliating ordeal

— Odegbami

By Enemoh Collins



IN a stinging critique following the Super Eagles' failure to qualify for the ongoing World Cup, legendary Nigerian footballer, Segun Odegbami, has decried the national team's absence as a "humiliating" ordeal that has left the country's football community in a state of profound despair.

Speaking in a recent interview with Sports Vanguard, the former national team captain, affectionately known as "Mathematical," did not mince words regarding the missed opportunity, which he described as a severe blow to both national pride and the local economy.

For many stakeholders in the Nigerian football fraternity, the World Cup is not merely a sporting spectacle but a vital economic engine. Odegbami highlighted the stark reality faced by those whose livelihoods depend on the global tournament.

"Instead of me making money - you know those of us in the football business make our money during the Nations Cup and the World Cup - for eight years now, I have not made any money," Odegbami noted. "I have been living in poverty, and now we are not going to the World Cup. The World Cup should have been a food basket for us."

The 1980 AFCON winner expressed utter disbelief that Nigeria, a nation with a rich football pedigree, failed to emerge from what he termed "the easiest group to qualify." With Africa granted an expanded number of slots in the tournament, the non-qualification of Nigeria among the continent's representatives is a source of deep national embarrassment. "It is a shame that out of 10 countries from Africa, Nigeria is not one of them," he said. "It is very, very painful. It is humiliating. It is a shame for us as a country."

In an act of solidarity with fellow dejected fans, Odegbami revealed his personal plans to host his own "village World Cup" in Wasimi, near Abeokuta, Ogun state, where his radio station is located. He promised to gather the local community to witness the rest of the world compete on football's biggest stage, while collectively processing the misery of the Super Eagles' absence.

The veteran star's comments serve as a clarion call for the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF) and government authorities to up their game.

According to Odegbami, the status quo is unsustainable. "We must not allow it to happen again," he insisted. "We must do something about it." As the football world turns its eyes to the upcoming tournament, the conversation in Nigeria has shifted from celebration to an urgent demand for structural reform, strategic planning, and an end to the administrative failures that have kept the Super Eagles on



A flicker of light at the end of the tunnel?

• How to make things work

By Julius Okorie

WHEN Nigeria failed to qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar after losing two-legged play-offs against Ghana, Nigerians were disappointed and some die-hard fans who did not see any reason why a country that boasts of players that feature week in week out in the EPL and other top leagues in Europe should miss a World Cup slot, caused massive destruction of properties at the Moshood Abiola National stadium, Abuja. As days turned into weeks and weeks into months, hope took over that the next World Cup in 2026 would be another opportunity to remedy the situation.

But that was not to be, as the country again failed to qualify, missing out via the same pattern of losing in the play-offs, this time to DR Con-

go. At this point those who opined that thunder never strikes twice at the same spot, began to take a second look at that age-long submission. You can't keep doing the same thing and expect a different result. The Super Eagles have been to a record six World Cups after their debut in 1994 in the United States. The last of those outings was the 2018 edition in Russia where the team crashed out in the first round but at least emerged the best dressed team of that edition. But to have missed back to back editions of the World Cup 2022 and 2026 many Nigerians say, is not a sign of progress but retrogression. So where did we get it wrong?

Analysts and fans alike point accusing fingers at the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) for failure of the Super Eagles to qualify for this all important tournament citing their fire brigade approach to engaging

Obi Mikel put the blame squarely on the Glass House and practically called for a total overhaul of the Federation. He is not alone in that submission as former Super Eagles coach Sunday Oliseh echoed the same submission and pointed out the danger and implication of missing a third World Cup.

"If we do not act today, we will be the next Italy of world football; believe me, that will happen. Make no mistake. A third consecutive failure to qualify for the World Cup will kill Nigerian football."

"It is a mathematical proof. A 12-year absence from the World Cup destroys sponsorship, kills the dream of the next generation, and erases a nation from the global scouting map," he said.

One sign of un-seriousness those who point accusing fingers at the NFF also point to, was the scenario that played out after the departure of Jose Peseiro shortly after leading Super Eagles to a second place finish at the 2023 AFCON.

While former international Finidi George who was part of the Peseiro technical team took charge, his tenure continued to be overshadowed by insinuations over the coming of a foreign coach. When eventually the Federation settled for one, they went for German coach Bruno Labbadia who eventually failed to show up. All these amounted to time wasting for a country that should be shaping up to ensure it qualified for the world cup.

The players themselves are beginning to feel the impact of not being at the World Cup and have started taking encounters against strong teams and weak

teams seriously.

Hitherto we had cases of players picking which match to play and which to stylishly avoid. The Eagles performance at the last AFCON in Morocco where they finished 3rd, their performance at the Unity Cup where they won back to back against Jamaica and the synergy among old and new players is an indication that there is a genuine effort to remedy the situation and return to the enviable position.

Chelle's experiment of infusing new players into the team and their readiness to prove their mettle raises hope that better days are coming. Aside from that, there is no way to explain that a team that boasts the likes of Victor Osimhen, Ademola Lookman, Paul Onuachu, Alex Iwobi, Akor Adams to mention just five who have been fantastic in form since the last AFCON and who have been in super form for their clubs cannot not qualify for the World Cup.

Hopefully we can afford to avoid going the way of the Azzurris of Italy who have surprisingly missed a record three consecutive World Cups viz 2018, 2022 and 2026. Ironically Italy lost play-offs to Bosnia and Herzegovina who in terms football pedigree cannot be placed at par with Italy who, lest we forget, are four time World Cup champions with the last win coming at 2006 edition in Germany.

A flash of hope

If we are to be on track to remedying the situations that caused us two World Cups, the NFF must be proactive and plan ahead. Every FIFA window from now through to the 2027 AFCON, to the next World Cup in Portugal, Morocco and Spain in 2030 should be utilised to bring the players together in friendly matches and continue the blend between the old and the new. The usual squabbles over payment of allowances which has hitherto served as distractions should be a thing of the past. As for the players, they must understand that the World Cup is the highest credential every player can add to his resume.

The Super Eagles played the best football at the AFCON 2025 and lost only to the host in the semi-final, via penalty shootout. The Malian has made the team competitive by introducing new talents.

Nigerians will hope that the NFF will consolidate on this to ensure the Super Eagles come back better in 2030.



Insecurity and fifth columnists

- Network of collaborators exposed
- Highly placed individuals fund kidnap for survival, politics - Rear Admiral Olisemelgor
- Efforts of security agencies

By Evelyn Usman

EVERY year, June 12 serves as a reminder of Nigeria's democratic journey, a symbol of the people's struggle for freedom, justice, accountability and representative governance. It is a day that celebrates the triumph of the popular will and the resilience of democratic ideals.

Yet, as Nigerians commemorate another Democracy Day, the significance of the occasion is being overshadowed by a troubling reality: the persistence of insecurity across several parts of the country.

From insurgency in the North-East to banditry in the North-West and mass kidnappings in the North-Central, insecurity continues to cast a dark shadow across the country.

More worrying is the gradual spread of kidnapping and banditry to parts of the South, particularly the South-West region, raising fears that criminal networks are expanding beyond their traditional strongholds.

A recent example was the discovery of a suspected criminal enclave in a forest in Ogun State by security operatives, leading to the arrest of suspects believed to be linked to kidnapping and other violent crimes.

As these threats continue to evolve and spread, millions of Nigerians grapple daily with fear and uncertainty, while for many communities, the democratic ideals of security, dignity and freedom of movement remain aspirations rather than lived realities.

The situation raises a fundamental question: how secure is democracy when citizens cannot safely travel on highways, cultivate their farms, send their children to school or sleep peacefully in their homes?

Efforts of security agents

Despite these challenges, the Nigerian military, Police and other security agencies continue to intensify their efforts and sustain pressure in the fight against criminal and terrorist groups across the country.

This is evident in the recent rescue of 427 residents of Ngoshe and Dille communities in Borno State by troops of Operation HADIN KAI, alongside other successful operations involving the rescue of hostages, dismantling of terrorist camps, recovery of weap-

ons and neutralisation of criminal elements. Defence Headquarters recently disclosed that troops neutralised 317 terrorists and criminals in May alone, arrested 314 suspects and rescued 221 kidnapped victims.

These achievements highlight the sacrifices being made daily by military personnel operating under difficult and often dangerous conditions. They also demonstrate that despite the enormity of the challenge, security forces remain committed to restoring peace and stability.

The situation is disturbing — Rear Admiral Olisemelgor

The growing insecurity has prompted concern among security experts, including retired naval officer, Rear Admiral Dickson Olisemelgor, who described the situation as both disturbing and potentially dangerous for the country's democratic stability.

According to him, the persistence of kidnapping across the country is gradually creating conditions that could undermine public confidence in governance and law enforcement.

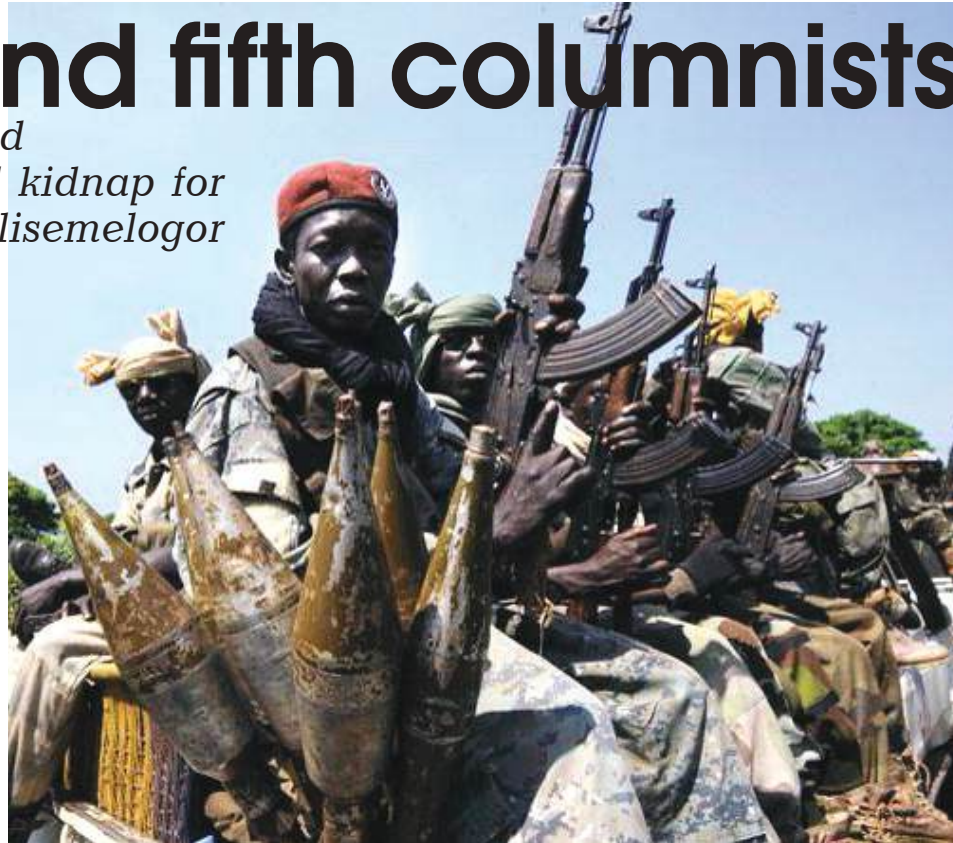
He said: "The situation is worrisome and sets the stage for anarchy if allowed to continue. Kidnapping has become very attractive because it is now a major source of free income and one of the easiest ways to embarrass perceived enemies. Highly placed individuals are now investing in it to generate money for survival, political campaign purposes and to create room for illegal mining of mineral resources.

"Some young and educated people are also abandoning internet fraud and engaging in kidnapping because it pays more.

"Security agencies are doing their best based on available material and human resources. I suspect they are also constrained by the body language of political authorities.

"All hands must be on deck to stop the madness. In addition to strict enforcement of anti-terrorism and anti-kidnapping laws, government agencies such as the National Orientation Agency and the media should embark on aggressive public enlightenment campaigns.

"Content creators, community leaders and religious leaders should also



•Olisemelgor

be encouraged to preach against kidnapping and criminality. We must make society reject these crimes instead of glorifying the proceeds.

"Communication service providers should be mandated to deepen their collaboration with security agencies in tracking the movement of kidnapped persons and assisting investigations," he added.

Network of collaborators

Beyond the gunmen operating in forests and remote hideouts, security analysts say another major challenge confronting

Though such cases, according to the military, represent a tiny fraction of the patriotic men and women serving the nation, their impact can be devastating

the country is the network of collaborators working quietly from within society.

Commonly referred to in security circles as fifth columnists, these individuals are believed to provide critical support to criminal groups through intelligence leaks, logistics assistance, information sharing and other forms of collaboration.

Unlike insurgents carrying weapons, fifth columnists often operate unnoticed. They may be found within communities, institutions and, in some cases, places entrusted with sensitive information.

Their weapon is information. And in modern warfare, information can be as destructive as bullets.

Recent reports of intelligence leaks have once again brought this concern to the forefront.

Security sources disclosed that intelligence was intercepted indicating plans by terrorists to attack schools in parts of Kogi, Edo, Ondo and Nasarawa states and carry out mass abductions of students.

As expected, the intelligence was shared with relevant security agencies to enable preventive measures. But before operational responses could be fully implemented, details of the intelligence reportedly leaked into the public domain.

For security professionals, such breaches are deeply troubling. Once terrorists become aware that their plans have been uncovered, they can change targets, alter strategies, relocate operatives or postpone attacks.

In essence, the element of surprise, often crucial to successful counter-terrorism operations, is lost.

Security analysts often point to past incidents where planned operations were allegedly compromised by leaks, enabling insurgents to evade capture and frustrate military efforts.

During the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan, reports circulated within security circles about a foreign-assisted operation against Boko Haram that was allegedly compromised after sensitive information leaked ahead of execution. Though details remain disputed, the episode is still cited by security insiders as a warning of the devastating consequences of operational compromise.

More troubling findings Even more disturbing are allegations that some fifth columnists now provide kidnappers and insurgents with personal details of potential targets, including telephone numbers and movement patterns.

Security sources say criminal groups increasingly rely on such information to monitor and track victims before striking.

A recent example frequently cited in security circles is the abduction of former Director of Defence Information, Maj. Gen. Rabe Abubakar and his wife in Katsina State.

Military sources familiar with the incident believe the retired General may have been trailed over a considerable distance before the abduction occurred, raising concerns about the possibility of insider-enabled surveillance.

As of the time of writing, the couple was still in captivity, with kidnappers reportedly demanding the release of detained associates and the return of confiscated livestock in exchange.

While investigations continue, the incident has reinforced fears that criminal groups are benefiting from information supplied by individuals operating from within.

The challenge extends beyond intelligence leaks. Over the years, security agencies have arrested

ed individuals accused of supplying food, fuel, medicines and other logistics to insurgents. Communities have sometimes been accused of warning terrorists about troop movements, while isolated cases of compromised security personnel have occasionally surfaced.

The danger

Though such cases, according to the military, represent a tiny fraction of the patriotic men and women serving the nation, their impact can be devastating.

A serving senior Army officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity, warned that even isolated breaches of trust within the system can have fatal consequences for ongoing operations.

He said: "A single leak can expose an operation. A single informant can compromise months of planning. A single act of betrayal can cost lives. We have lost troops in avoidable situations because of compromised intelligence.

"Defeating insecurity requires more than military action. It demands a whole-of-society approach in which citizens actively support law enforcement, protect sensitive information and place national interest above personal or political considerations".

Corroborating this concern, a senior Air Force officer, also said internal sabotage and the activities of fifth columnists continue to undermine both operations and logistics across various theatres of engagement.

He explained that "the danger is not only in direct confrontation with adversaries but also in the silent compromise of intelligence and operational plans from within.

"The impact of internal breaches is often underestimated. It affects mission planning, logistics, timing, and in some cases, directly exposes personnel to danger in the field. These informants are also among politicians and highly placed Nigerians.

"While the Armed Forces, Police and other security agencies continue to demonstrate courage and resilience, sustained success against insecurity will depend on stronger internal safeguards and a broader national commitment to protecting sensitive security information," he stated.

Ultimately, Nigeria's security challenge demands collective resolve beyond military action. While security forces continue to record gains, lasting peace will depend on citizens, institutions and leaders working together to deny criminals support, protect sensitive information and strengthen trust. Only then can democracy fully deliver safety, dignity and freedom for all Nigerians.

THERE were grand designs to frustrate the realisation of that day. From the Federal Government, which did not give any go ahead for the launching, while the then Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN, declared that it was illegal; to the boycott by the Police and military authorities; pushback from northern political elites; restricted firearms usage; to subterranean moves by a section of the political leadership of the self-same South West geo-political zone to ensure that the launch did not hold, Thursday, January 9, 2020, held with gusto. It was the day the Western Nigeria Security Network, codenamed Amotekun, was launched.

In its early days, the people welcomed it because of some local interventions it carried out in the security space within the region.

Indeed, the roles of Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, late Ondo State governor, and Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, to withstand all the pressures and still go ahead remain remarkable.

No longer at ease

Today, there are fears that all is no longer at ease with Amotekun

Despite growing concerns over the sustainability of the Western Nigeria Security Network, codenamed Amotekun, investigations across South-West states reveal a mixed picture of expansion, operational resilience and persistent challenges.

While Oyo and Ogun states appear to be strengthening their security architecture through increased manpower and government support, concerns over funding, welfare, logistics and limitations on weaponry continue to hamper operations in some other states.

A Vanguard assessment of the corps across South-West states shows that Oyo State has 2,500 personnel; Ogun State is currently recruiting 1,000 additional operatives; Ondo State has over 2,000 personnel (500 new recruits approved); Ekiti State has over 1,500 personnel and Osun State has 1,450 personnel.

2,500 Personnel, strong govt backing in Oyo

Findings indicate that Oyo State currently operates one of the



AMOTEKUN AT A CROSSROADS

Funding, welfare challenges threaten regional security outfit

- Personnel paid N75, 000 salary
- Why we established Amotekun — South-West Govs

By Dayo Johnson, Dapo Akinrefon, Rotimi Ojomoyela, Shina Abubarka, James Ogunnaike & Adeola Badru

largest and most active Amotekun formations in the South-West, with 2,500 personnel, including newly recruited forest rangers deployed to strengthen surveillance in forests, border communities and rural areas.

Sources familiar with the operations of the corps said the administration of Governor Seyi Makinde has consistently prioritised security funding through regular budgetary allocations covering personnel welfare, logistics, equipment procurement and operational activities.

The corps has become a critical component of

the state's security architecture, supporting conventional security agencies in intelligence gathering, anti-kidnapping operations and community policing initiatives.

An assessment of its operational outlook suggests that Oyo Amotekun remains sustainable in the near term, largely due to strong political support, public acceptance and continued government investment.

The 2025 approved budget provides N2.72 billion for the corps, covering personnel and operational expenses.

However, the invasion of Orire Local Govern-



Late Akeredolu



Gov Makinde

ment Area by terrorists on May 15 appears to have poured cold water on all these support activities.

Questions continue to arise regarding the lack of intelligence which should have alerted the state authorities about the presence of terrorists in forests in the state.

Whereas Orire LG has a landmass of 2,116 sq km, its "vast, rural, and dispersed territory presents distinct administrative and security challenges.

Ogun: Expansion, not decline

In Ogun State, the Commander of the Amotekun Corps, Brigadier General Alade Adedigba (retd), dismissed suggestions that the agency is underfunded.

According to him, the corps currently possesses adequate personnel, vehicles and logistics to execute its mandate effectively across the state.

Adedigba pointed to the ongoing recruitment of 1,000 new operatives as evidence of government's commitment and institutional growth.

He argued that the scale of the recruitment exercise, with its attendant costs covering sal-

aries, uniforms, insurance, healthcare and logistics, demonstrates that the agency cannot be described as underfunded.

The commander also defended existing restrictions on weapon use, noting that the corps operates strictly within the legal framework establishing the agency.

Ekiti: Over 1,500 operatives, but firepower concerns persist

Ekiti State currently has over 1,500 personnel deployed across the state, including Agro-Marshals and members of the Anti-Grazing Task Force.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Security, Brig. Gen. Ebenezer Ogundana (retd), commended the achievements of the corps and emphasized collaboration with security agencies such as the Army, Police, DSS, NSCDC and local vigilante groups.

However, concerns remain over the operational limitations facing personnel.

Amotekun Commander in the State, Brig. Gen. Olu Adewa (retd), recently lamented constitutional restrictions that prevent the corps from matching the firepower of criminal gangs armed with AK-47 rifles and other sophisticated weapons.

Sources within the agency also identified poor funding, inadequate logistics, limited welfare packages and the absence of a clear career progression structure as factors af-

fecting morale among operatives.

Ondo: Over 2,000 personnel, welfare debate rages

Findings show that Ondo State has more than 2,000 Amotekun personnel following multiple recruitment exercises since the corps was established by the late Governor Rotimi Akeredolu.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa recently approved the recruitment and training of 500 additional operatives to strengthen security across the state.

While sources said government allocation to the agency may have increased from about N40 million monthly under the previous administration to N50 million, this could not be independently verified.

However, senior officials within the corps insist funding remains inadequate. The issue has also become a subject of political debate. The Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, accused the state government of neglecting welfare concerns, including allegations of unpaid salaries, lack of appointment letters, delayed promotions and job insecurity.

The All Progressives Congress, APC, dismissed the allegations, maintaining that the administration is addressing welfare and structural concerns while prioritising security and operational efficiency.

Osun: 1,450 personnel battle low morale, logistics challenges

In Osun State, investigations revealed that the Amotekun Corps currently has 1,450 active personnel spread across all local government areas and the Modakeke Area Office.

Despite its presence across the state, the corps is reportedly grappling with welfare and operational challenges. Findings showed that operatives earn a flat salary of N75,000 and allegedly lack comprehensive health and life insurance coverage. The corps is also said to face logistic constraints, relying largely on vehicles supplied at inception, many of which are reportedly no longer operational.

Observers further cited concerns over leadership transitions, recruitment controversies and declining public confidence following allegations of misconduct involving personnel in parts of the state.

AMOTEKUN PERSONNEL IN S-WEST

- * Oyo 2,500 personnel
- * Ogun expands with 1,000 new recruits
- * Ondo boosts strength to over 2,000
- * Ekiti maintains over 1,500 personnel
- * Osun 1,450 active personnel

EVACUEES

XENOPHOBIA: FG, evacuees slam S'Africa over documentation claims

● S'African authority frustrated paper renewal —Evacuees ● say Nigerian embassy complicated our cases ● Govt. to activate Early Warning mechanism to protect Nigerians —Ministry of Foreign Affairs ● Next batch due back Monday ● Evacuation to be concluded this month —Ag High Commissioner

By Nkiruka Nnorom & Dickson Omobola

The Federal Government and 268 Nigerians repatriated from South Africa have rejected claims by Pretoria that all those returned to the country, yesterday, were undocumented, blaming delays on South Africa's Home Affairs system for pushing many illegal status.

The evacuees accused the South African government of deliberately delaying renewing their work permits and other documents, to have a reason to clampdown on Nigerians, while their security agencies extort them.

The Federal Government, has, meanwhile, pledged to activate the Nigeria-South Africa Binational Commission and the newly established Early Warning mechanism in order to respond faster to future threats against Nigerians in South Africa.

Also, some of the evacuees put the blame of their irregular status on the Nigerian Mission in Pretoria, saying that bureaucratic bottlenecks within the Commission further frustrated efforts to regularise their stay in South Africa.

Recall that the South African authorities had shortly before the departure of the evacuees from OR Tambo International Airport on Wednesday, claimed that all the 268 Nigerians cleared for repatriation were undocumented and were residing illegally in the country and slammed a five-year travel ban on them.

"The 268 departing first were all undocumented. None of the 268 Nigerian nationals who arrived at OR Tambo International Airport for repatriation on Wednesday are in South Africa legally. Not a single person of the 268 is legal," South Africa's Head of Immigration Enforcement, Stephen van Neel, said.

But pushing back on the claims, yesterday, at the reception of the first batch of the evacuees, in Lagos, Nigeria's acting High Commissioner to Pretoria, Ambassador Temitope Ajayi, who led the evacuees, back to Nigeria, said the undocumented label was false and misleading.

"Many of these people you are seeing here, Minister, are not undocumented persons. Many of them became undocumented because of systemic failures of South African Home Service. Some have submitted requests for the extension of their resident permits for years. It takes two years, three years, five years, some are still lying down there. So, in the process, they were caught up in this."

He described the S'Africa

Home Affairs as a transactional section where backlogs and delays had left legitimate applicants stranded.

"So, because of this delay, and the general problem in the system itself, it made many people become undocumented. So, it is false and totally misleading for a body of officials to mention, to put it in the news before we landed, that 268 Nigerians that came back were undocumented in South Africa," he added.

Tinubu ordered evacuation despite pressure

Speaking further, Ajayi said that President Bola Tinubu initiated the evacuation in April after xenophobic violence erupted, setting up a hotline with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the mission in Pretoria for daily updates.

"Mr President was so agitated and he wanted his people to return to Nigeria. Every day he was on the phone asking the Minister and us what was happening on the ground and what he could immediately do to intervene."

According to him, Tinubu faced pressure from world leaders and the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa, to halt the repatriation over the "bad optics" it had given to South Africa.

"But Mr. President was always very consistent, because he knew where he was going. And he said, any attack on my people in South Africa is an attack on me, and you must bring my people back," Ajayi said.

Five flights planned for June

Ajayi further explained that the government arranged five Air Peace flights to bring Nigerians home. Wednesday's arrival was the first batch of 268 evacuees, including women, men and children. The next flights, according to him, have been scheduled for June 15, 18, 22 and 24, with the exercise expected to conclude within the month.

Ajayi said the process involved a three-stage screening coordinated with South Africa's Foreign Ministry, Home Affairs, Immigration Service, Border Management Office and Intelligence Service involving biometric identification, immigration clearance, and issuance of emergency travel certificates for those without documents.

He lamented that despite agreement with the South African authorities not to speak to the press until the operation was completed, S'African officials broke the protocol.

"I don't want them to politicise this kind of operation because it's beyond politics. It's not something we should take the vulnerability of people to turn into spectacle," he said.

We will activate early warning, binational Commission to protect



● First batch of Nigerians returnees from South Africa on arrival at the Cargo terminal of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja. Photo; Lamidi Bamidele, Photo Editor



● First batch of Nigerians returnees from South Africa on arrival at the Cargo terminal of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja. Photo; Lamidi Bamidele, Photo Editor

Nigerians in S'Africa —Foreign Ministry

In his remarks, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Sola Enikanolaiye, assured that the Federal Government would activate the Nigeria-South Africa Binational Commission and the newly established Early Warning Mechanism to respond faster to future threats against Nigerians in South Africa.

He said President Tinubu sent him to assure the evacuees, that the government was undertaking reforms to make Nigeria livable so that citizens would only travel abroad for holidays.

"It is with mixed feelings that I address you this afternoon, happy to welcome you. I'm a little bit not so happy because I know the kind of trauma that

Mr. President has asked me to welcome you back home; home is home and to assure you that he is doing everything possible by way of various reforms to make the home good for all of us

my people went through. "Mr. President has asked me to welcome you back home. Home is home and to assure you that he is doing everything possible by way of various reforms to make the home

good for all of us," he said. On Nigeria's diplomatic response, the minister said engagement and dialogue remained the government's approach, even under difficult circumstances.

"Our job is to manage relations. Even under the most difficult circumstances. We believe in diplomacy. We believe in engagement. We believe in dialogue," he said.

To make that engagement more effective, he said two mechanisms would be activated and listed the Binational Commission, which covers economic, political, defence and humanitarian relations between both countries, and the Early Warning Mechanism set up to address specific security concerns.

"I'm aware of some of the

issues that have been raised with the latter, but I want to assure you, we are going to activate these mechanisms, so that we can respond more quickly, in a more proactive manner to situations that may occur in the future," he told the returnees.

He said the government would continue to engage Pretoria to ensure Nigerians receive better treatment going forward.

FG pledges dignified reintegration for evacuees

The Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Dr. Bernard Doro, said the Federal Government was handling the return of 268

Continues on page 26

EVACUEES

XENOPHOBIA: FG, evacuees slam S'Africa over documentation claims



• First batch of Nigerians returnees from South Africa on arrival at the Cargo terminal of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja. Photo; Lamidi Bamidele, Photo Editor



• First batch of Nigerians returnees from South Africa on arrival at the Cargo terminal of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja. photo Lamidi Bamidele, Photo Editor

Continues from page 25

Nigerians from South Africa in a coordinated and dignified manner, adding that the healing and reintegration process had already begun.

He explained that the immediate priorities were safe reception, attending to basic needs, and profiling returnees to understand their skills, vulnerabilities, family situation and support needs.

The profiling, he explained, would guide referrals to government agencies, international organisations and partners for psychological support, skills development, livelihood linkages, medical referrals, family reunification, and documentation assistance.

The minister thanked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for facilitating the return and said President Tinubu had committed significant resources to the effort.

MTN, Uzodimma pledge cash, phones as FG rallies support for evacuees

Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, NiDCOM, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, said the Federal Government had secured immediate relief packages from private firms and state governments for the returnees as part of efforts to help them reintegrate back home.

The NiDCOM boss said the Commission was working with sub-national governments and private sector operators across various sectors to secure relief and support reintegration.

She stated that Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State, MTN Nigeria Communication Plc and other private companies had pledged relief packages, ranging from cash transfers to mobile phones.

Dabiri-Erewa said Governor Uzodimma had specifically pledged N1 million for each returnee.

"MTN is here, and we've been working with them. They are going to transfer N100,000 each to your accounts. And that's not all, they are going to give you N50,000 airtime and they will also be giving you starter packs, so you can have phones to use when you get home," she told the returnees.

She noted that beverage company, Crockstone was on ground to hand out envelopes to the returnees "for you to be able to buy some drinks or whatever."

Nigeria High Commission also sabotaged efforts to regularise our stay in S'Africa —Evacuees

Meanwhile, most of the returnees who spoke with Vanguard at the airport also rejected the claims that they

MTN is here, and we've been working with them; they are going to transfer N100,000 each to your accounts; and that's not all, they are going to give you N50,000 airtime and they will also be giving you starter packs, so you can have phones to use when you get home

were illegal migrants, saying that Nigeria High Commission in South Africa complicated their problem by making it difficult for them to renew their papers.

They recounted harrowing experiences of xenophobia, including extortion, discrimination and intimidation, urging fellow Nigerians still residing in the country to consider returning home.

One of the evacuees, who simply identified herself as Peace, said the Nigeria High Commission in Pretoria also made it difficult for citizens to renew their documents, worsening the illegal status many found themselves in.

Peace, who said she lived in

South Africa for 13 years and worked legally until her permit expired, claimed South African authorities deliberately refused to renew permits to force foreigners out.

She added that the Nigeria High Commission compounded the problem.

Peace alleged that in 2023, during the election campaign, commission officials collected R2,700 each from over 9,000 Nigerians in Johannesburg for passport booklets, demanding cash instead of bank transfers. According to her, only 500 passports were delivered from Nigeria, and officials later advised applicants to "go and apply for another passport" if they had money.

"I blame the Nigerian government. They are frustrating us, both in foreign land and also here," she said.

Peace also questioned the relief package process promised them, saying she had no Nigerian bank account or internet access after 13 years abroad, and did not know what account to provide for transfers.

"My heart is really bleeding. I owe my children an apology for making them Nigerians," she said, adding that her children were treated better in South Africa than in Nigeria.

Another evacuee named Emmanuel Nwachukwu, alleged that hostility towards foreigners, particularly Nigerians, had intensified in parts of South Africa, claiming that some groups

had threatened violence against African migrants who refused to leave the country.

"They said they will start shooting at the remaining people who do not want to go home," he said.

According to him, many Nigerians living in South Africa face frequent harassment from law enforcement officials and other security agencies and even extorted.

"Once they know you are a Nigerian, police and other security agencies will come to extort you. Day in and day out they are doing that," he alleged.

Responding to questions about the legal status of many Nigerians in South Africa, Nwachukwu acknowledged that a significant number of migrants lack valid documentation but argued that bureaucratic obstacles make it difficult for foreigners to regularise their status.

"They say we are staying illegally, but they are not giving people documents. How can you not document people and then start tagging them as illegal immigrants?" he asked.

He further alleged that undocumented migrants are routinely targeted for extortion and intimidation.

"They know people do not have papers, so they go after them, frustrate them and take money from them every day. As long as you are a Nigerian, you are a target," he claimed.

Nwachukwu also accused immigration authorities of creating obstacles for foreigners seeking to leave the country.

"When you get to the international airport and want to go home, they will tell you your documents are not complete and find reasons to send you back to prison. They are recycling people as slaves in that country," he alleged.

I decided to leave after my clothing business was shut down

Another evacuee, who refused to give his name, said he left South Africa after his clothing business was shut down by locals who accused foreigners of "taking their jobs." He stressed that he and other Nigerians were not working in government or formal offices, yet still faced hostility and jealousy from locals.

He denied claims that returnees were illegal immigrants, stating he had been in South Africa since 1998 and had valid documents. "There is nothing like that. That's what they use to chase us away," he said. He also cited an incident at Victoria Airport where 12 people were reportedly shot the previous morning, and said such attacks were why he chose to leave.

The evacuee noted that his wife and two children remain in South Africa, but he decided to return first to secure his life and start over in Nigeria. "I am not planning to go back there. This is the second half, I have already played my first life there. I am coming back home to play the second half," he said.

Attacks going to get worst

Sandra Omotola-Adeniyi, a 26-year-old evacuee who spent 11 years in South Africa, said she came back home to continue her education after finishing high school in 2024.

She explained that advancing her studies in South Africa was difficult because foreign students were rarely granted study permits and bursaries require a South African ID. "I have been wanting to come home for a very long time. This is a great opportunity for me

to come home," she said.

Omotola-Adeniyi said she did not personally face much discrimination in Kempton Park, where she lived, but witnessed it as a high school prefect. Students often reported being called "foreigners," and she said she saw attacks on foreigners on social media.

Citing fears of renewed violence ahead of June 15, she urged other Nigerians in South Africa to return. "Guys, just come home, it's going to get worse. They are going to keep on looting, attacking and molesting our people. They do it almost every four years," she warned.

Another evacuee, Mr. Chukwuemeka Chris Okeke, expressed gratitude to the Nigerian government and individuals who facilitated their return, saying the situation in South Africa had become unbearable for many African migrants.

"There is no place like home. We are passing through a lot in South Africa. I really appreciate our President and others who supported in bringing us back home. I thank our government so much. May God bless Nigerians," he said.

Despite the challenges he experienced abroad, Okeke expressed optimism about Nigeria's future and called on citizens to work together to improve the country.

"I am so happy to be here. I appeal to Nigerians, let's join hands together to make Nigeria great," he added.

Offering advice to Nigerians still residing abroad, Okeke urged them not to allow pride or fear of embarrassment to prevent them from returning home.

"There are many Nigerians who don't want to come back because of shame. They have been there for years and don't have money. I told my friends to forget the shame and let's go home. No place like home," he said.

He also claimed that many foreigners struggle to renew immigration documents, leaving them vulnerable to arrest and harassment.

"I have papers, but they have expired. I went for renewal, but they could not renew them. That's why when you see police or immigration officers, you are running. Our lives are not safe there," he said.

Air Peace laments xenophobic attacks, backs evacuation of Nigerians

Meanwhile, West Africa's largest airline, Air Peace, has expressed sadness over the circumstances that necessitated the evacuation of Nigerian citizens in South Africa, describing the situation as unfortunate and deeply concerning.

Air Peace's Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. Nowel Ngala, in a statement by the Spokesperson for the airline, Efe Osifo-Whiskey, reaffirmed the airline's commitment to humanitarian service.

He said airline's flying the returnees back to Nigeria aligned with the patriotic vision of Air Peace Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Allen Onyema, whose philosophy has consistently placed national interest, compassion and service above commercial considerations.

Ngala said that Air Peace remained ready to support Federal Government in safeguarding Nigerians wherever they might be and disclosed that discussions were ongoing regarding additional evacuation flights should the need arise.



CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC RC163170 | Lagos, 12 June 2026

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO UNBUNDLE/SEPARATE COMPOSITE BUSINESS OF CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC

Unbundling/Separation of Composite Business

Cornerstone Insurance Plc ("**Cornerstone Insurance**") hereby informs policyholders, regulators, stakeholders and the general public of the intention to unbundle/separate its general insurance and life insurance businesses pursuant to the provisions of the Nigeria Insurance Industry Reform Act 2025, which has abolished composite insurance businesses in Nigeria and requires all existing composite insurers to separate their life and non-life businesses.

Under the terms of the unbundling/separation, the eligible assets and existing policies of the general insurance business will be transferred to **FIN Insurance Company Limited ("FIN Insurance")**, an existing subsidiary of Cornerstone Insurance. The eligible assets and policies of Cornerstone Insurance's life business will be transferred to **Cornerstone Life Assurance Limited ("Cornerstone Life Assurance")**.

The unbundling/separation of Cornerstone Insurance's composite business will be executed by way of a Scheme of Arrangement under the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020 ("the Scheme"). Following the implementation of the Scheme, **FIN Insurance and Cornerstone Life Assurance** will be subsidiaries of Cornerstone Insurance.

The Scheme is subject to regulatory and shareholder approval. The unbundling/separation process is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2026. **All Cornerstone Insurance policyholders are also notified that the terms and conditions of existing policies will remain valid and in force.** Further details of the Scheme will be communicated to shareholders of **Cornerstone Insurance, FIN Insurance, and Cornerstone Life Assurance** as regulatory and judicial approvals are obtained.

Policyholders' Inspection of Corporate Information and Scheme Document

Cornerstone Insurance policyholders are invited to inspect the agreement under which the Scheme is proposed to be implemented, which shall be available for inspection by the policyholders without payment of any fees, from **Friday June 12, 2026 to Friday July 3, 2026** at the principal and branch offices of Cornerstone Insurance on business days between the hours of 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (this excludes weekends and public holidays).

This notice is published in fulfilment of the requirements of the Nigerian Insurance Industry Reform Act 2025 and is made particularly to the policyholders of Cornerstone Insurance and all applicable regulatory authorities.

For more information, policyholders should please contact:

Cornerstone Insurance Plc

enquiries@cornerstone.com.ng

Tel: 020 1280 6500

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For SA B. O. T. O. S.

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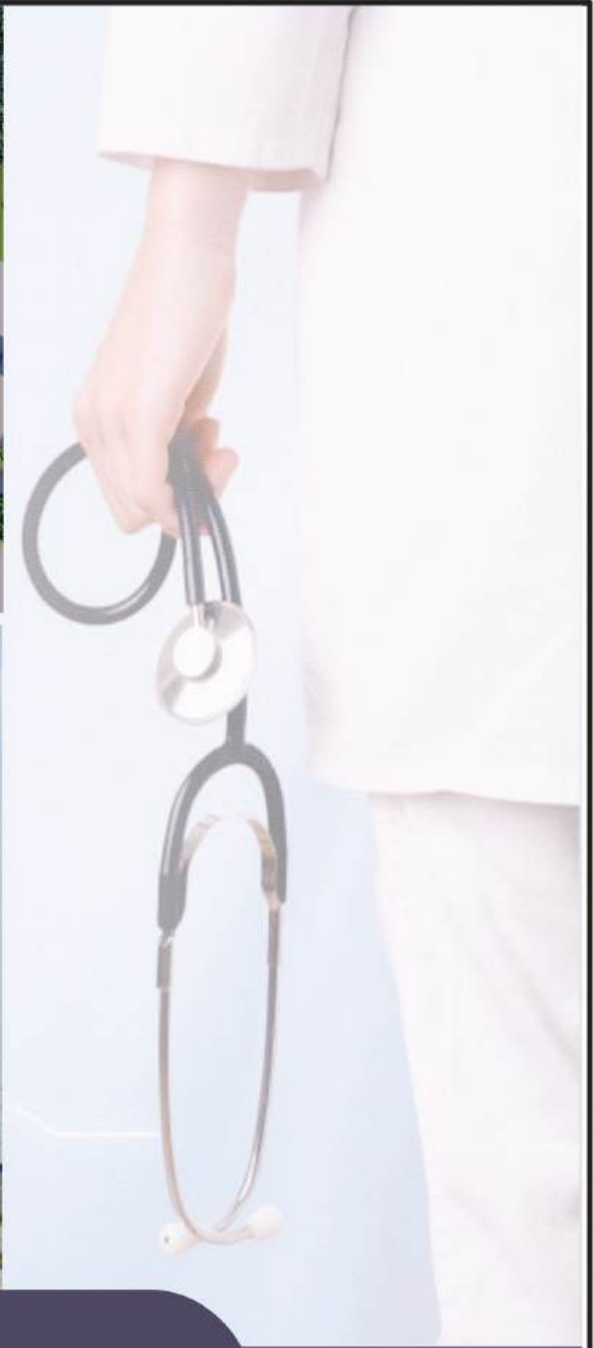
QUALITY HEALTHCARE

SCORECARD & MILESTONES

- The new Massey Street Children's Hospital is estimated to be 70% completed.
- As of late 2025, the construction of the 280-bed Iba-Ojo General Hospital with staff quarters was at 70% completion.
- Construction of the Mental Health Institute, Ketu Ejirin in Epe is at 65% completion stage.
- 5 Mother and Child Centres (MCCs) commissioned at Epe, Ajah, Badagry, Surulere, and Igando.
- More than 250,000 Lagosians benefit from the relaunch of Jigi Bola (eyeglasses).
- Over 1 million Lagosians are covered under the Health Insurance Scheme



•The Greater Lagos journey... S



REMAINS OUR PRIORITY

■ Comprehensive renovation of public health facilities is ongoing at:

- Harvey Road Health Centre
- General Hospital, Odan, Lagos.
- General Hospital, Isolo
- Ketu-Ejirin Health Centre.

ONGOING HEALTH PROJECTS:

- Permanent 300-bed Isolation Centre, Yaba,
- Infectious Diseases Research Institute, Yaba.
- Doctors' Quarters at Yaba and Gbagada



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HAMZAT

Strong • Steady • Sure



Hon Lateef Ashimi, the Executive Chairman of Somolu Local Government Area, is one individual that can aptly be described as the 'son of the soil'. Born and bred in Somolu, he graduated from Yaba College of Technology. Having been recognized as one of "Nigeria's Ten Leading Result-Oriented Local Government Chairmen

of Excellence With Impactful Dividends of Democracy To The Grassroots". Hon Ashimi spoke with Vanguard on his personal background, political career journey, his people-oriented programmes, remarkable accomplishments amidst daunting challenges, and enduring legacies, amongst sundry issues. Excerpts...

MY PASSION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE, SELFLESS SERVICE, DRIVING FORCE FOR REMARKABLE SUCCESS AT SOMOLU LGA - ASHIMI

Q: Can you give us an insight into your political background and what shaped your political orientation?

Ans: First and foremost, I give all glory to Almighty God for the privilege and opportunity to serve the good people of Somolu Local Government Area as their Executive Chairman.

I was born and raised in Somolu, and from an early age, I developed a passion for community service and grassroots development. Growing up within the community provided me with opportunities to participate in various initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of residents and contributing to societal growth.

My leadership journey began during my days as a Statistics student at Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH). While in school, I contested for and won the position of Assistant Social Director in the Department of Statistics. Upon the completion of my tenure, I subsequently contested for and was elected as Social Director by my fellow students.

These experiences helped me discover my leadership potential and ignited my passion for public service. Student unionism provided an invaluable platform for engaging with people, advocating for their interests, and contributing meaningfully to the development of my immediate environment.

Another significant factor that shaped my political orientation was my experience in the banking sector after graduation. Working in that industry exposed me to people from diverse backgrounds and gave me a deeper understanding of their challenges, aspirations, and everyday realities.

At the time, I had no intention of venturing into politics. However, my passion for helping people, supporting the less privileged, and championing humanitarian causes naturally drew me towards public service. The encouragement and confidence reposed in me by members of my community further strengthened my resolve to contribute more directly to societal development.

In 2017, I contested for the position of Councillor representing Ward B during the Local Government primaries. Although I enjoyed overwhelming support from delegates, circumstances beyond my control resulted in my name being omitted from the final list shortly before the general election. The development generated concern among my supporters, but the party leadership intervened and appealed for calm.

As a loyal party member who places collective interest above personal ambition, I accepted the decision in the interest of party unity and progress. Following the elections, I was appointed Special Adviser on Education by the elected Chairman.

That experience taught me valuable lessons in perseverance, patience, and political maturity. It strengthened my determination to continue serving my people and contributing to the development of my community.

At the expiration of that administration, I once again contested for the position of Councillor representing Ward B. By the grace of God and with the overwhelming support of the people, I emerged victorious.

Looking back, I can confidently say that my political journey has been defined by service, resilience, and divine providence. Every stage of the journey has prepared me for the responsibilities I shoulder today, and I remain grateful for the trust and confidence the people of Somolu have placed in me.

Q: Can you describe your experience since assuming office as Chairman of Somolu Local Government Area?

Ans: Serving as the Chairman of Somolu Local Government Area has been both challenging and rewarding. It is a responsibility that demands commitment, patience, and an unwavering dedication to the welfare of the people.

One of the greatest advantages I brought into office was my experience at the grassroots level. Having previously served as a Councillor, I possessed a clear understanding of the needs, expectations, and aspirations of our people. This experience proved invaluable following my emergence as Chairman in 2025.

As is often the case in political contests, some of my co-contestants were initially dissatisfied with the outcome of the election. However, I was determined to build an inclusive administration. I reached out to stakeholders across the political spectrum, encouraged participation, and ensured that everyone felt a sense of belonging regardless of political differences.

This approach helped foster unity, eliminate unnecessary divisions, and create an atmosphere where individuals could contribute their ideas and expertise towards the development of the local government.

Being a grassroots politician comes with unique challenges. I operate an open-door policy, which gives residents direct access to me. On a daily basis, people approach me with various concerns, ranging from financial and social issues to emotional and personal challenges.

Many of these issues fall outside the constitutional responsibilities of local government, yet the people look to us for guidance, support, and reassurance. Consequently, I devote considerable time to listening to residents, offering counsel, and providing assistance wherever possible.

While these demands can sometimes be overwhelming, they serve as a constant reminder of the trust the people have placed in our administration. For me, governance goes beyond infrastructure and public services; it also involves giving hope, inspiring confidence, and improving the overall wellbeing of our people.

Despite the challenges, the experience has been deeply fulfilling and continues to motivate me to work harder in the service of the people of Somolu.

Q: Can you share your administration's blueprint and the measures being implemented to achieve your developmental goals?

Ans: Before assuming the office as Chairman, I identified what I considered one of the major challenges confronting governance at the grassroots level, the disconnect between government and the people.

My experiences over the years shaped my understanding of this reality and informed the vision and priorities of my administration. I came into office with a firm commitment to bringing governance closer to the people and ensuring that the dividends of democracy are felt by every resident of Somolu.

To achieve this objective, my administration developed a strategic framework anchored on six cardinal pillars known as SHEEWI:

- * Security
- * Health
- * Education
- * Environment
- * Welfare
- * Infrastructure

These six pillars form the foundation of our development agenda and guide all our programmes, policies, and projects.

Security

Security remains one of the primary responsibilities of government because sustainable development can only thrive in a peaceful and secure environment.

Upon assumption of office, we immediately prioritised initiatives aimed at improving security across the local government area. Having grown up within the community, I understood the longstanding challenges associated with youth restiveness and activities capable of disrupting social and economic life.

Rather than relying solely on enforcement, we adopted a strategy of engagement and inclusion. We held consultations with community stakeholders, youth groups, and local leaders to promote peaceful coexistence and collective responsibility for security.

In collaboration with the Police, community security stakeholders, and the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps, we invested in security infrastructure and strengthened community policing initiatives.

We also recognised that unemployment often contributes to insecurity. Consequently, we created opportunities for young people through employment initiatives, empowerment programmes, and continuous engagement.

Health

We firmly believe that health is wealth. A healthy population is essential for productivity, economic growth, and social development.

Accordingly, our administration has continued to strengthen healthcare delivery at the grassroots level through our Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs). We provided a new ambulance for the Primary Health Centre and regularly organise free medical outreach programmes for residents.

Several PHCs are currently undergoing rehabilitation and upgrades to improve service delivery. In addition, the administration provides monthly subventions of ₦3 million to support their operations and ensure residents have access to quality healthcare services.

Education

Education remains one of the most powerful tools for sustainable development and social transformation.

Our administration places a high premium on educational development because we recognise that no society can achieve meaningful progress without an educated and enlightened citizenry.

To this end, we have renovated classrooms across several schools and embarked on the construction of new classroom blocks where necessary. We have also provided free GCE and JAMB registration forms for students within the Somolu community.

Additionally, we distribute educational support materials, including school bags, to pupils across the eighteen primary schools within the local government area. To ensure a conducive learning environment, all public schools are fumigated before resumption after every holiday period.

Furthermore, this administration continues to provide free school uniforms to pupils in public primary schools, thereby reducing the financial burden on parents and encouraging school attendance. We have also introduced free coaching classes and ICT skills acquisition programmes for students.

Environment

A clean and healthy environment is essential for sustainable development and an improved quality of life.

To promote environmental sanitation, we have intensified efforts to eliminate indiscriminate refuse disposal and illegal dumping sites across the local government area.

The reintroduction of the monthly environmental sanitation exercise by the Lagos State Government has further strengthened these efforts. Prior to this development, the council had already been collaborating with Private Sector Participation (PSP) operators to maintain environmental cleanliness.

As Chairman, I believe in leading by example. During environmental sanitation exercises, I often participate alongside council staff and sanitation officials in community clean-up activities.

Our administration remains committed to creating a cleaner, healthier, and more environmentally sustainable Somolu.

Welfare

The welfare of our people remains at the heart of our administration's agenda.

Since assuming office, we have implemented several palliative and social intervention programmes targeted at vulnerable members of society. Notably, we distributed ₦50 million in financial support to 500 small-scale business owners, with each beneficiary receiving ₦100,000 to strengthen and sustain their businesses.

In addition, we operate a monthly food support programme for elderly residents and continue to provide assistance to the less privileged through various empowerment and support initiatives.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure development remains a major focus of this administration.

Since the commencement of our tenure, we have constructed and rehabilitated twenty-two roads using both asphalt and interlocking paving solutions to improve accessibility and mobility within the community.

We are also nearing the completion of the Council Area Office at Bajulaye, which will soon be commissioned.

Furthermore, we are working towards the establishment of recreational and vocational centres aimed at empowering young people, promoting skills acquisition, and creating opportunities for economic advancement.

We have also provided culverts and drainage infrastructure in various parts of the local government area to mitigate flooding and improve environmental resilience.

Despite the challenge of limited available land within the community, we remain committed to identifying innovative solutions that will enable us to deliver additional infrastructure and public facilities for the benefit of residents.

Q: Considering the scale of these laudable projects, how have you been able to generate the revenue required to fund them?

Ans: Our administration has remained prudent and disciplined in the management of public resources. We have adopted a strategy of strengthening our internally generated revenue to complement allocations received from the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).

Before embarking on any project, we carefully assess its viability, urgency, and impact. This enables us to prioritise projects.

Funding for our projects is derived primarily from internally generated revenue and statutory allocations from FAAC. Our internal revenue comes from taxes, permits, licenses, and registration fees within the local government area.

I must commend the Federal Government for the increase in allocations to local governments following the removal of fuel subsidy. This development has enhanced our capacity to execute projects that directly impact the grassroots.

In addition, we have successfully leveraged Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to mobilise additional resources and accelerate development within the local government area.

Q: Can you share your views on the recently concluded APC primaries?

Ans: In my view, the primaries were successful. I commend the leadership of our great party for fostering unity and cooperation among aspirants and stakeholders.

All contestants were members of the same political family, and the overall interest of the party must always take precedence.

As the Chief Security Officer of the Local Government Area, I maintained neutrality throughout the exercise. My primary responsibility was to ensure a peaceful and secure environment for all participants.

I am pleased that there was no breakdown of law and order before, during, or after the exercise. Now that the primaries have been concluded, any aggrieved person has access to established party mechanisms through which concerns may be addressed.

Our focus should now be on the general elections, and I remain optimistic that the party will record overwhelming success.

Q: What level of support does your administration receive from the State Government?

Ans: The Lagos State Government has been highly supportive of our administration. We enjoy a cordial working relationship and continue to collaborate on initiatives that promote development and improve the welfare of our residents.

The synergy between the state and local governments has contributed significantly to the successful implementation of many developmental programmes and projects across the local government area.

Q: Is President Bola Ahmed Tinubu your mentor?

Ans: Without any hesitation, my answer is yes. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is a statesman whose political journey, achievements, and leadership style continue to inspire me. One of the qualities I admire most about him is his ability to build bridges, nurture leaders,

and create opportunities for people to contribute meaningfully to governance. I have followed and admired his political career since his tenure as Governor of Lagos State. His strategic thinking, inclusiveness, and commitment to leadership development remain worthy of study. He continues to serve as an inspiration not only to me but also to countless others who aspire to make a positive impact through public service.

Q: What measures are you putting in place to increase the revenue base of the Local Government Area?

Ans: Revenue generation remains critical to sustainable development. To this end, we have intensified stakeholder engagement and public sensitisation on the importance of

tax compliance.

We continuously educate residents and business owners on the need to view themselves as partners in development because their contributions enable government to deliver essential services and infrastructure.

Furthermore, we have embraced technology by deploying a digital revenue management system designed to improve efficiency, expand the tax net, and eliminate leakages.

In addition, we continue to train and retrain revenue personnel, upgrade equipment, improve logistics, and deploy modern tools that will enhance operational effectiveness.

Q: What measures are being put in place to sustain the policies and legacies of your administration?

Ans: Sustainability remains a key consideration in all our programmes and initiatives.

To ensure continuity, the executive arm is working closely with the legislative arm of government. The Legislative Council has been proactive in enacting policies and by-laws that provide institutional backing for many of our developmental initiatives.

We are also promoting a strong culture of maintenance across all sectors. Beyond constructing infrastructure, we are committed to ensuring that public assets are properly maintained and preserved.

Q: What are your projections for the future?

Ans: The future holds immense opportunities for Somolu Local Government Area. While some plans and initiatives will be unveiled at the appropriate time, I can confidently assure residents that this administration remains committed to delivering sustainable development and improving their quality of life.

We will continue to prioritise initiatives that promote economic growth, youth empowerment, healthcare delivery, educational development, environmental sustainability, security, welfare, and infrastructure development.

Our vision is to build a more prosperous, secure, inclusive, and progressive Somolu for present and future generations.

Thank you.



BREAKING NEWS
ROOTSWATCH NAMES LAGOS' SOMOLU LG BOSS ASHIMI' BEST PERFORMING CHAIRMAN AT NATIONAL MERIT AWARDS CEREMONY IN ABUJA



Cars purchased for the legislature



DISTRIBUTION OF CARS TO BAALES FOR MOBILITY



COMMUNITY

EDUCATION



ICT TRAINING FOR PUPILS



BACK TO SCHOOL MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION

JAMB FORMS DISTRIBUTION AND TUTORIAL



WATER (BOREHOLES)

OLU AJISEGBEDE



ANUOLUWAPO



SPORTS

RECONSTRUCTION OF SOMOLU TABLE TENNIS BUILDING (ON-GOING)



2025 SPEAKER GAMES



LOCAL GOVT STAFF WELFARE

STAFF BUS



TRAINING OF JUNIOR AND SENIOR STAFF



RETIREEES RELIEF



MARKET

NEW BUS DONATION TO SOMOLU MARKETS



RECONSTRUCTION OF ALADE MARKET (ON-GOING)



SOMOLU FARMERS DAY CELEBRATION (MARKET SALES)



MONTHLY RENEWED HOPE PALLIATIVES (X9)



WELFARE

EMPOWERMENT



50M FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (X2)

HEALTH



WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY SENSITISATION AND MEDICAL OUTREACH

SECURITY



ROAD RECONSTRUCTION



ABIMBOLA LANE

SHIRO



"THE NEED FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC GOVERNANCE, DESIRE TO SERVE PEOPLE, TRIGGERED MY INTEREST IN POLITICS" - ODUNMBAKU

Soft-spoken, humble, and unassuming in appearance, Hon. David Odunmbaku possesses a remarkable depth of intellect and political acumen that becomes evident the moment he speaks. A seasoned politician and grassroots leader, he is far from a newcomer to public service; politics has long been an integral part of his life, shaped in part by the influence of his father, a committed progressive and dedicated party stalwart. As the Executive Chairman of Ojodu Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Hon. Odunmbaku has distinguished himself through a leadership style anchored on humility, accessibility, and an unwavering commitment to service. Known for approaching every responsibility with a strong sense of urgency and purpose, he has continued to earn the trust and admiration of his constituents.

Now serving his second term as Chairman, he has consistently

delivered meaningful developmental projects and people-oriented programmes at the grassroots level. He firmly believes that the true measure of governance is felt most directly at the local government level, where citizens experience the impact of public policies and initiatives firsthand.

As Nigeria marks its 27th anniversary of uninterrupted democratic governance, Hon. Odunmbaku is commemorating the occasion through the commissioning of several landmark projects across the council area. These initiatives not only underscore his administration's commitment to sustainable development but also align with the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, reflecting a shared vision for progress, inclusive growth, and improved quality of life for the people.



In fulfilment of his administration's commitment to transforming Ojodu Local Council Development Area through Infrastructure captured under his HEYSRELOADED Agenda, the Chairman, Hon. David Olusegun Odunmbaku, will be commissioning a state-of-the-art Council Secretariat Complex, newly built Primary Health Centers, and network of roads to commemorate the occasion of nation's democracy anniversary.

The new council complex features: remodeled administrative blocks, the new excos building, marriage registry, legislative building, council chapel and mosque and a modern security office.

The brand new Primary Health Centers located at Gbadamosi, Powerline and Akiode areas of the council are fully equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and boast of qualified medical personnel. These centres will bring quality and affordable health care to the people.

On the network of roads, the newly constructed Adeshina -Adeniyi Oke road is designed to ease traffic, reduce flooding challenges, and provide a durable link for pedestrians and motorists within both communities.

With the commissioning of these projects, Hon. David Odunmbaku reinforces his reputation as a grassroots builder committed to sustainable development.

Hon. David Odunmbaku possesses a remarkable depth of intellect and political acumen that becomes evident the moment he speaks. A seasoned politician and grassroots leader, he is far from a newcomer to public service; politics has long been an integral part of his life, shaped in part by the influence of his father, a committed progressive and dedicated party stalwart. As the Executive Chairman of Ojodu Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Hon. Odunmbaku has distinguished himself through a leadership style anchored on humility, accessibility, and an unwavering commitment to service.

Known for approaching every responsibility with a strong sense of urgency and purpose, he has continued to earn the trust and admiration of his constituents. Now serving his second term as Chairman, he has consistently delivered meaningful developmental projects and people-oriented programmes at the grassroots level. He firmly believes that the true measure of governance is felt most directly at the grassroots where citizens experience the impact of public policies and initiatives firsthand.

As Nigeria marks its 27th anniversary of uninterrupted democratic governance, Hon. Odunmbaku's giant strides have placed him among politicians who have delivered good governance to his people.

The true impact of democracy which is defined as the government of the people, by the people and for the people could be seen in several projects which Odunmbaku's administration has executed in Ojodu.

For the record, that Odunmbaku has achieved a lot both in his first and now second term in office is an understatement.

In health, Odunmbaku embarked on rebuilding and rehabilitation of Primary Health Centres, PHC, at Oluwole, Powerline, Akiode, Apata, Gbadamosi and Agidingbi and equipped them with state-of-the-art facilities. Over 600 surgeries have been successfully conducted in Oluwole. His administration also provided free medical tests for Ojodu residents in partnership with a non-governmental organization.

In road infrastructure, Odunmbaku's administration has opened up the road network within Ojodu LCDA through the construction of new roads and rehabilitation of dilapidated ones which has improved connectivity and linking previously isolated communities. One of such critical roads is the Adesina/Adeniyi Oke road which links Akiode with the Oke-Ira axis of the council.

In education, his Back-to-School initiative, building of ICT hubs, construction of digital containerised secondary schools in Ogba, renovation and construction of classrooms, distribution of desks and benches, bursary awards, and the provision of GCE and JAMB forms are some of his achievements in the education sector.

Agriculture is not left out as Odunmbaku sponsored youths for

training in Soilless and Hydroponics Farming at the renowned Soilless FarmLab. A N5 million grant was provided for graduates of the training to establish their farms.

A welfareist par excellence, Odunmbaku has shown his empathetic quality with the distribution of empowerment tools to the vulnerable in the council.

While marking his 100days in office, Odunmbaku distributed poultry and fish feeds, grinding machines, industrial freezers and ovens, generators, solar panels, laptops, welding machines, hair dryers, weaving machines, gas cookers and desktop computers as well as cheques running into millions of naira to market women to enhance their trade.

Aligning with the federal government's Renewed Hope Agenda especially in agriculture, Odunmbaku sponsored the training of youths in the council in Soilless and Hydroponics Farming Programme at the renowned Soilless FarmLab.

Graduates of the training were given N5million grants by the chairman to start their farm underscoring his commitment to driving innovation, food security and economic opportunities.

For Odunmbaku democracy is more than elections. Democracy is about service. It is about accountability. It is about the government listening to the people and delivering on its promises.

To the Chairman of Ojodu LCDA, democracy is worth defending because only in democracy can people demand better governance and vote out non-performance and vote in progress.

He recognises that the celebration of Democracy Day reminds us of the sacrifices made by our heroes in the past, a day that reminds us that power truly belongs to the people.

Government agencies and private organizations have recognised Odunmbaku's performance with several awards.

Some of them are the 2025 Digital Local Government Chairman of the Year, conferred by the Federal Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) and presented by its Director-General, Mr D.I. Arabi, Grassroots Governance Excellence Award at the 10th Lagos Public Relations Industry Gala Awards and a Merit Award for Community Service by the Lagos State Community Development Advisory Council (LSCDAC).

Key Achievements and Impact Report

Welfare and Social Support

In line with the Administration's commitment to inclusive governance and social protection, cash grants, wheelchairs, and food items valued at over ₦1.2 million were distributed to widows, senior citizens, and persons living with disabilities. These interventions provided much-needed relief to vulnerable groups and reinforced our commitment to improving the welfare and dignity of residents.

Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA)

As part of efforts to promote economic empowerment and poverty reduction, the Administration disbursed ₦20 million in interest-free loans to market women and Point-of-Sale (POS) operators, enabling beneficiaries to expand their businesses and improve their livelihoods. In addition, empowerment packages comprising industrial sewing machines, deep freezers, and cash grants of ₦100,000 each were distributed to widows, single mothers, artisans, and youths. These initiatives have enhanced self-reliance, stimulated entrepreneurship, and strengthened household incomes across the community.

Education and Digital Innovation

Recognizing the importance of technology-driven education, the Administration successfully trained 1,240 pupils aged 8 to 13 years in digital literacy and emerging technologies. The programme covered Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Robotics, Website Development, and Safe Internet Usage, equipping participants with future-ready skills and positioning them for success in the digital age.

Healthcare

Advancement

The Administration recorded significant progress in healthcare delivery through the implementation of the See-A-Doctor Programme, which expanded access to quality and affordable healthcare services for residents.

A total of 1,269 surgical procedures were successfully carried out across Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs), including hernia repairs, breast lump removals, and other minor surgical interventions.

To further strengthen the health sector, 173 healthcare professionals were recruited, including Medical Doctors, Dental Doctors, Optometrists, Nurses, and other critical healthcare personnel. Additionally, two fully equipped ambulances were procured to enhance emergency medical response and patient transportation services.

Youth Empowerment and Skills Development

The Administration remains committed to preparing young people for opportunities in the digital economy. Through the Digital Literacy and Technology Skills Programme, over 150 youths successfully completed intensive training in Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Social Media Marketing, and other high-demand technology fields.

This initiative has empowered participants with marketable skills, improved employability prospects, and encouraged innovation and entrepreneurship among young people.

Major Milestone Achievements

Strengthening Healthcare Delivery

One of the Administration's most notable achievements has been the strategic enhancement of healthcare services through the recruitment of 173 healthcare professionals, including Medical Doctors, Dental Doctors, Optometrists, Nurses, and other allied healthcare workers. This investment has significantly improved service delivery, expanded access to care, and strengthened the overall capacity of our healthcare facilities.

Weekly See-A-Doctor Programme

Through the flagship Weekly See-A-Doctor Programme, implemented in partnership with specialist consultants from LASUTH, residents have benefited from free medical consultations, diagnoses, and life-changing surgical interventions at the Ogba Primary Health Care Centre.

Under this initiative, a total of 1,269 minor surgical procedures were successfully conducted, including:

65 Hernia Surgeries

30 Lipoma Surgeries

18 Keloid Surgeries

12 Breast Lump Surgeries

11 Lumpectomy Procedures

6 Hydrocele Surgeries

Fibroid Surgeries and other specialized medical interventions

The programme has continued to bridge healthcare gaps, reduce the burden of medical expenses on residents, and improve health outcomes within the community.

Conclusion

These achievements reflect the Administration's unwavering commitment to delivering people-centered governance through impactful investments in healthcare, education, economic empowerment, youth development, and social welfare. Together, these initiatives have improved the quality of life of residents, strengthened community resilience, and laid a solid foundation for sustainable growth and development.



IKEJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Comrade Akeem Olalekan Dauda (AKOD)

Executive Chairman,
Ikeja Local Government Area

Comrade Akeem Olalekan Dauda:

STEERING IKEJA'S TRANSFORMATION THROUGH VISIONARY AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

The story of modern Ikeja's continued growth and transformation is increasingly intertwined with the leadership of Comrade Akeem Olalekan Dauda (AKOD), the Executive Chairman of Ikeja Local Government.

A dynamic grassroots leader, accomplished administrator, and passionate advocate of people-centred governance, he has distinguished himself through a leadership philosophy anchored on service, accountability, innovation, and sustainable development.

Since assuming office, Comrade Dauda has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to strengthening local governance and improving the quality of life of residents across the local government area. With a keen understanding of the unique position of Ikeja as the capital and commercial nerve centre of Lagos State, he has championed policies and programmes aimed at enhancing infrastructure, promoting environmental sustainability, improving public health outcomes, expanding educational opportunities, empowering young people, and stimulating economic growth.

A firm believer in participatory democracy and community engagement, Comrade Dauda has fostered strong partnerships with traditional institutions, community development associations, market leaders, professional bodies, youth groups, religious organisations, and other critical stakeholders. Through this collaborative approach, his administration has strengthened public trust, encouraged citizen participation, and deepened the culture of accountability in governance.

Recognising that sustainable development is rooted in human capital advancement, his administration has continued to invest in programmes that support education, entrepreneurship, vocational development, and youth empowerment. By creating opportunities for skills acquisition and economic inclusion, he has reinforced the foundation for a more productive and self-reliant population. These interventions have contributed significantly to enhancing the livability, safety, and attractiveness of Ikeja as a destination for residents, investors, and businesses.

Beyond policy and projects, Comrade Dauda's leadership is defined by accessibility, humility, diligence, and a genuine commitment to public service. Today, as Ikeja continues to consolidate its position as a model of grassroots administration and urban development, Comrade Akeem Olalekan Dauda remains steadfast in his pursuit of excellence, driven by the conviction that effective leadership must ultimately translate into tangible improvements in the lives of the people.

His tenure stands as a compelling example of how visionary leadership, strategic governance, and an enduring commitment to the public good can serve as powerful catalysts for sustainable development and community transformation.



•Distribution of 30,000 notebooks, 10,000 mathematical sets, waterbottles and schoolbags to pupils



•Distribution of 30,000 notebooks, 10,000 mathematical sets, waterbottles and schoolbags to pupils



•Presentation of N100,000 cheque to beneficiaries



•Distribution of palliatives to beneficiaries



•Notebooks for distribution



•Construction of drainages



•Presentation of 500 GCE forms to indigent students



•Construction of link bridge between two communities (Onilekere and Onipetes)



•Schoolbags for distribution



•Books for distribution



•Hon Adedamola Kasunmu, Deputy Majority Leader, Lagos State House of Assembly, with APC State Chairman, Pastor Cornelius Ojelabi and the Chairman Ikeja LG, AKOD at the Commissioning of Shanu and Balogun Street, Ikeja.

Igbega Ipinle Eko, Ajumose Ni



MY PROMISE TO OPERATE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES, EXECUTE IMPACTFUL PEOPLE-ORIENTED PROJECTS, CREATE JOBS FOR THE YOUTHS, IS BINDING" - ABUBAKAR

HON. ADUNNI ADETOLA ABUBAKAR

Executive Chairman, Agboyi-Ketu Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Lagos State.

Hon. Adunni Adetola Abubakar is an accomplished public servant, visionary leader, and passionate advocate for grassroots development who currently serves as the Executive Chairman of Agboyi-Ketu Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Lagos State. Her emergence as Chairman is a testament to the confidence, trust, and overwhelming support she enjoys among the people, stemming from her longstanding dedication to public service, community empowerment, and inclusive governance.

With a distinguished record of service and a deep understanding of local governance, Hon. Abubakar has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of residents through people-oriented policies and sustainable development initiatives. Prior to her election as Executive Chairman, she served as Supervisor for Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA), where she championed impactful programmes focused on women empowerment, poverty reduction, social welfare, and support for vulnerable members of the community.

As Chairman, Hon. Abubakar has continued to build on this legacy by promoting a governance agenda anchored on infrastructural development, youth and women empowerment, quality education, accessible healthcare, economic growth, social inclusion, and citizen participation. Her



administration is guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, compassion, and service excellence, ensuring that governance remains responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people.

Since assuming office, she has distinguished herself through proactive leadership and strategic interventions across critical sectors. Her

administration has implemented numerous initiatives aimed at enhancing educational opportunities, improving healthcare delivery, expanding social welfare programmes, strengthening community engagement, and promoting digital inclusion for residents.

One of the most remarkable achievements of her administration is its unprecedented commitment to infrastructural development. Within the first year in office, the administration successfully commenced and executed fifteen road projects across Agboyi-Ketu LCDA, significantly improving accessibility, connectivity, and the overall quality of life within the community. This milestone reflects her administration's determination to bridge infrastructural gaps, stimulate economic activities, and create an enabling environment for sustainable growth and development.

Widely admired for her integrity, resilience, and results-driven leadership, Hon. Adunni Adetola Abubakar remains steadfast in her vision of building a more prosperous, inclusive, and progressive Agboyi-Ketu. Through purposeful governance, innovative policies, and a genuine passion for service, she continues to inspire confidence among residents while laying a solid foundation for future generations.

Her leadership stands as a shining example of effective grassroots governance, demonstrating how dedication, competence, and people-centered administration can drive meaningful transformation and lasting development within local communities.

1. INFRASTRUCTURAL AND GRASSROOTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- CONSTRUCTION OF ADEKANBI STREET MILE 12 (COMPLETED)
- CONSTRUCTION OF DADA AGA STREET ERUNKAN MILE 12 (COMPLETED)
- CONSTRUCTION OF BALOGUN ILAWE STREET ALAPERERE (COMPLETED)
- RECONSTRUCTION OF DRAIN AND RESURFACING OF KAWONISE STREET MILE 12 (COMPLETED)
- RECONSTRUCTION OF DRAIN AND RESURFACING OF ALLI STREET MILE 12 (COMPLETED)
- RESURFACING OF OGUNJOBI ORIWU STREET ALAPERERE (COMPLETED)
- RESURFACING OF SERIKI STREET ALAPERERE (COMPLETED)
- RESURFACING OF IJAGUN STREET ALAPERERE (COMPLETED)
- ROAD CONSTRUCTION OF OGUNYINKA STREET MILE 12 (COMPLETED)
- SECTIONAL RESURFACING OF ADEDOYIN STREET (ONGOING)
- RESURFACING OF OMOTAYO OYELAJA STREET (ONGOING)
- RESURFACING OF IBADAN STREET ALAPERERE (ONGOING)
- RESURFACING OF IFODO STREET ALAPERERE (ONGOING)
- RESURFACING OF IFODO LINK ROAD ALAPERERE (ONGOING)

2. SOCIAL WELFARE AND FOOD SECURITY:

- WE CARE WELFARE SCHEME
- ADETOLA FOOD BANK
- RENEWED HOPE CASH INTERVENTION N100,000 FOR 500 CITIZENS OF AGBOYI-KETU

3. EDUCATION

- Free 300 GCE forms
- Free 1000 Jamb Forms
- Agboyi- ketu Tech Hub (200 certified Trainees through our Tech Programs)
- Back to School Boost

4. SECURITY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS

- Provision of Patrol vehicles
- Mini Buses for revenue Drive

5. MEDICAL OUTREACH

- Free surgeries
- Eye checks
- Free Medications

6. LEGACY PROJECT

- Project she

WE CARE WELFARE SCHEME:

A special welfare purse created by the Chairman to take care of the truly most vulnerable citizens of Agboyi-Ketu. Every genuinely dire need is met under the "We-Care Welfare Scheme!



ADETOLA FOOD BANK

During the yuletide of 2025 and subsequently after, no citizen of Agboyi-Ketu was poor enough to lack food to celebrate the season! The Food Bank remains vibrant and well-stocked to take care of the needs of those who cannot afford to buy food. Nobody lives in extreme poverty of hunger under the watch of Hon. Adetola Adunni Abubakar!



The Renewed Hope Initiative Cash Intervention of N100,000 for 500 citizens of Agboyi-Ketu: Taking a cue from the Renewed Hope Initiative of Mr. President, Hon. Adetola Abubakar provided the cash sum of N100,000 for 500 citizens of Agboyi-Ketu in one mega empowerment to close the year in grand style!

FREE 300 GCE FORMS



FREE 1000 JAMB FORMS



BACK TO SCHOOL BOOST: This is a creative humanitarian project which Hon. Abubakar carries out at the beginning of a new school session. Under the Back-to-School Boost, the Chairman provides substantial cash aids to parents of school children to prepare them for the new academic session. This cash aid, which is aimed at providing school books, stationeries, school uniforms, school bags & shoes and even feeding is priced at N50,000 per school child across various schools in Agboyi-Ketu. A given family could get a maximum of N200,000 per household, depending on number of school children in that family.



Agboyi-Ketu Tech Hub: Tech is the core of modern-day profession and Hon. Adetola Abubakar is very passionate about it! The Agboyi-Ketu Tech Hub is a Tech Training Centre owned by the Agboyi-Ketu LCDA. The administration of Hon. Adetola Abubakar within 10 months in office has graduated & Certified 200 Trainees at least 2 Cohorts in various Tech Courses from the Tech Hub. The Chairman has gifted a minimum of 50 laptop computers to outstanding graduands of the Tech School. The curriculum of Agboyi-Ketu Tech Hub is dynamic and moves with the tides in the Tech World... all courses taught free of charge!



Presentation of Utility Vehicles to Relevant Agencies And Offices: During this occasion, Madam Chairman cut the tape over a large fleet of various vehicles such as Staff Buses, Security Patrol Vans, Revenue Buses, Utility Vehicles for CAN and League of Imams, etc



Medical Outreaches: The health of the people of Agboyi-Ketu LCDA is a priority to Hon. Adetola Adunni Abubakar... within the period under review, not less than seven major free medical outreaches had been carried out by her administration! This included free surgeries, free eye checks with eye glasses, free medications for all detected ailments, screening for tuberculosis and much more!



Project S.H.E: This is an excellent and well-executed creation of the brilliant Chairman of Agboyi-Ketu. As a female citizen and a mother, Hon. Mrs. Abubakar pays particular attention to the girl child and connects with them in a special way! Launched on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child, Project S.H.E means:

- o Safety
- o Hygiene
- o Education



INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT
CONSTRUCTION OF BALOGUN ILAWE STREET ALAPERE



RESURFACING OF SERIKI STREET ALAPERE



CONSTRUCTION OF ADEKANBI STREET MILE 12



RESURFACING OF OGUNJOBI ORIWU STREET ALAPERE



CONSTRUCTION OF DADA AGA STREET ERUNKAN MILE 17



CONSTRUCTION OF ADEKAWONISHE STREET MILE 12



CONSTRUCTION OF ALI CLOSE





TotalEnergies EP Nigeria Limited

Operator of the NNPC/ TOTALENERGIES Joint Venture



TENDER OPPORTUNITY FOR PROVISION OF INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT FORWARDING SERVICES

NipeX TENDER REF: SR3119436325

TENDER ID: CTR115419

1. Introduction

TotalEnergies EP Nigeria Limited (TEPNG) operator of OML58, 99, 100, 102), invites interested and reputable Contractors with competent and skilled personnel, equipment and relevant experience to apply for pre-qualification for consideration to tender for the Provision of International Freight Forwarding Services for the support of TEPNG operations.

2. Brief description of Work Scope and Specifications

This Contract is for the provision of Freight Forwarding Services for International Materials to support TotalEnergies day-to-day operations.

The objective of the CFT shall be to award contracts to multiple technically qualified bidders with the best competitive commercial offers for the provision of International Freight Forwarding Services for materials on a continuous basis as the need arises.

The Scope to be covered under the contract is to provide Freight Forwarding Services for international materials. The Services to be provided shall include as a minimum international shipment of equipment and materials via Air and Sea originating from Africa, America, Europe & Asia to Nigeria; Port-Harcourt Onne Sea port, Lagos ports and vice versa including pick-up expedition with suppliers/manufacturers, inland transportation, tracking, warehousing, regional hub consolidation, packaging as per SEI4C, containerizing, markings, provision of statutory documentations, customs clearance, freight booking, authorities liaisons etc. as may be required.

Project Delivery Schedule

The schedule requirement is to have a contract in place by Q3 2026. The Call for Tender will detail the provisions necessary for the Service. Contract duration is estimated at 5 years firm and an annual option of extension for a further period of two (2) years

HSE Considerations

The greatest importance is placed on prospecting Contractor's Safety performance and past records. The Tenderers will be required to complete at the technical stage, a HSE Questionnaire and submit with his Technical Tender, a comprehensive HSE Management System manual among other documents. The analysis of the HSE requirement will contribute to progressing selected Tenderers in the CFT process. Any Tenderer that scores below 60% in the HSE/QA/QC & Tech Main Evaluation would not be allowed to progress to the Commercial Stage

3. Mandatory Requirements

- To be eligible for this tender exercise, interested suppliers are required to be pre-qualified and have a "LIVE" subscription status in the following NJQS service/product group categories: **(3.08.10 - Freight Forwarding Services Air, Haulage, Sea, Secure, Road, Customs ETC)** by the CFT advert closing date. All successfully pre-qualified suppliers in these categories will receive an invitation to submit their Tender for the services.
- To determine if you are pre-qualified and view the product/services category you are listed for: visit <https://vms.nipex.org/login> and access NJQS with your log in details. Click on 'Subscription' tab on the left-hand side of the dashboard to view your status and, click "Product Code" tab to view registered product codes.
- If you are not listed in the product/service category mentioned above but you have registered with the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) to do business in the Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry in those areas, please contact the NipeX administration office at Post Square Towers (Building B), 1,3 Ologun Agbaje Street Off Adeola Odeku Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria with your NUPRC (formally DPR) certificate as evidence for verification and necessary update.
- To initiate the NJQS pre-qualification process, access <http://www.nipex-ng.com>, click on the Registration tab, and select NipeX SAP Ariba Vendor Registration.
- To be eligible, all tenders must comply with the Nigerian content requirements in the NipeX system.
- Only Nigerian indigenous service companies having verifiable Nigerian equity shareholding of 51% and above shall submit bids for this tender.

4. Nigerian Content Requirements

TEPNG is committed to the development of the Nigerian Oil and gas business in compliance with the Nigerian Content Act 2010 for Nigerian Content Development.

Tenderer shall:

- Demonstrate that the entity is a Nigerian-registered company with 51% or more shareholding capacity and evidence of certified true copies of CAC

forms 10, 02 & 07 (or its equivalent; CAC 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, etc.) including company memorandum & article of association and/or evidence of entity's incorporation, shareholding & ownership structure in Nigeria. Provide evidence of registration with NCDMB NOGIC JQS and NUPRC.

- Provide a detailed description of the location of in-country committed facilities & infrastructure not limited to administrative office, bonded warehouse in proximity to the port of entry of freight into Nigeria, storage workshop having packaging and un-packaging area in Nigeria to support this contract.
- Provide evidence of having a binding Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with its technical partner capable of assisting the tenderer handle the work scope at international Locations
- Comply with the latest approved version of NCDMB HCD guidelines by committing (via a letter of undertaking) to providing Project-Specific training, man-hour, budget, skill development, technology transfer plan, and understudy plan for Nigerian personnel utilizing OGTAN registered trainer(s) or other approved NCDMB training institution(s).
- Develop a Nigerian Content Plan (NCP), which shall explain the methodology of how it intends to comply with the requirements of the Act and how to achieve the set target(s) in the Schedule of Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry Content Development Act and any targets set by The Board.
- Submit tenderer's corporate organization's overall human resource structure (management, supervisors, senior & junior skilled officers, etc.) identifying positions manned/occupied.
- Provide evidence of what percentage of your key management positions is held by Nigerians and what percentage of the total workforce are Nigerians. Also, show the overall percentage of work to be performed in Nigeria and those by Nigerian resources relative to total work volume
- Tenderer shall provide evidence of Category 1,2,3,4 or 5 non-moveable assets (DA) demonstrating capacity and capability to carry out logistics services in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

NOTE: Failure to comply with the provision of the Nigerian Content Act 2010 or to demonstrate commitment to the development of the Nigerian Content Policy shall result in the disqualification of the tenderer from the bidding process.

5. Additional Information

- Failure to provide any of the listed documents or information may automatically disqualify the tenderer.
- All costs incurred in registering and prequalifying for this and other service categories in NJQS shall be borne solely by the suppliers.
- This advertisement shall neither be construed as any form of commitment on the part of TEPNG to award any contract to any Supplier and/or associated Vendors, sub-contractors or agents, nor shall it entitle pre-qualified companies to make any claims whatsoever, and/or seek any indemnity from TEPNG and/or any of its partners by virtue of such companies having been pre-qualified in NJQS.
- The ITT and any further progression of this tender shall be via NipeX portal. Interested suppliers are therefore advised to ensure that their profiles in NipeX are active with a valid official email address accessible by their organization as this shall be the only means to transmit the ITT.
- Tendering process will be the NNPC contracting process (Double Envelope Tenders (DET) requiring pre-qualified companies to submit technical and commercial tender at the same time. Following a technical review, commercial tenders of technically and financially qualified contractors will be evaluated
- Manhour figures for Capital Project Portfolios are estimates to provide definition to the scope and do not constitute guaranteed quantities.
- TotalEnergies Upstream Companies in Nigeria (TEPNG) will only recognize and correspond with duly authorized officers of the pre-qualified tenderers and NOT through individuals or agents acting on their behalf.
- Interested Tenderer(s) should note that TEPNG has very cordial relationship with the host communities of the sites where these services may be performed based on existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Prospective Tenderer(s) will be required to implement the obligations of the MOU as part of their contract.
- COMPANY reserves the right to award one or more contracts from this Call for Tender Process

6. Submission Deadline

Only suppliers, who are registered and have a "LIVE" subscription status in NJQS service category **(3.08.10 Freight Forwarding Services Air, Haulage, Sea, Secure, Road, Customs ETC)** at **16:00 hrs** (Nigerian Time) on **Friday, 26 June 2026**, being the advert closing date, shall be invited to submit technical and commercial tenders.

NCDMB Advert Certification Authorization No.: ES/NCDMB/UPD/TEPNG-DA-100875/130526

Please visit NipeX portal at www.nipex-ng.com for this advert and other information



TENDER OPPORTUNITY FOR PROVISION OF INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT FORWARDING SERVICES

NipeX TENDER REF: SR3119207176

TENDER ID: CTR111942

1. Introduction

TotalEnergies Upstream Nigeria Limited (TUPNI) operator of PML 2/3/4 (formally OML 130) invites interested and reputable Contractors with competent and skilled personnel, equipment and relevant experience to apply for pre-qualification for consideration to tender for the Provision of International Freight Forwarding Services for the support of TUPNI operations.

2. Brief description of Work Scope and Specifications

This Contract is for the provision of Freight Forwarding Services for International Materials to support TotalEnergies day-to-day operations.

The objective of the CFT shall be to award contracts to multiple technically qualified bidders with the best competitive commercial offers for the provision of International Freight Forwarding Services for materials on a continuous basis as the need arises.

The Scope to be covered under the contract is to provide Freight Forwarding Services for international materials. The Services to be provided shall include as a minimum international shipment of equipment and materials via Air and Sea originating from Africa, America, Europe & Asia to Nigeria; Port-Harcourt Onne Sea port, Lagos ports and vice versa including pick-up expedition with suppliers/manufacturers, inland transportation, tracking, warehousing, regional hub consolidation, packaging as per SEI4C, containerizing, markings, provision of statutory documentations, customs clearance, freight booking, authorities liaisons etc. as may be required.

Project Delivery Schedule

The schedule requirement is to have a contract in place by Q3 2026. The Call for Tender will detail the provisions necessary for the Service. Contract duration is estimated at 5 years firm and an annual option of extension for a further period of two (2) years

HSE Considerations

The greatest importance is placed on prospecting Contractor's Safety performance and past records. The Tenderers will be required to complete at the technical stage, a HSE Questionnaire and submit with his Technical Tender, a comprehensive HSE Management System manual among other documents. The analysis of the HSE requirement will contribute to progressing selected Tenderers in the CFT process. Any Tenderer that scores below 60% in the HSE/QA/QC & Tech Main Evaluation would not be allowed to progress to the Commercial Stage

3. Mandatory Requirements

- To be eligible for this tender exercise, interested suppliers are required to be pre-qualified and have a "LIVE" subscription status in the following NJQS service/product group categories: **(3.08.10 - Freight Forwarding Services Air, Haulage, Sea, Secure, Road, Customs ETC)** by the CFT advert closing date. All successfully pre-qualified suppliers in these categories will receive an invitation to submit their Tender for the services.
- To determine if you are pre-qualified and view the product/services category you are listed for: visit <https://vms.nipex.org/login> and access NJQS with your log in details. Click on 'Subscription' tab on the left-hand side of the dashboard to view your status and, click "Product Code" tab to view registered product codes.
- If you are not listed in the product/service category mentioned above but you have registered with the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) to do business in the Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry in those areas, please contact the NipeX administration office at Post Square Towers (Building B), 1,3 Ologun Agbaje Street Off Adeola Odeku Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria with your NUPRC (formally DPR) certificate as evidence for verification and necessary update.
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- Only Nigerian indigenous service companies having verifiable Nigerian equity shareholding of 51% and above shall submit bids for this tender.

4. Nigerian Content Requirements

TUPNI is committed to the development of the Nigerian Oil and gas business in compliance with the Nigerian Content Act 2010 for Nigerian Content Development.

Tenderer shall:

- Demonstrate that the entity is a Nigerian-registered company with 51% or more shareholding capacity and evidence of certified true copies of CAC forms 10, 02 & 07 (or its equivalent; CAC 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, etc.) including company memorandum & article of association and/or evidence of entity's incorporation, shareholding & ownership structure in Nigeria. Provide evidence of registration with NCDMB NOGIC JQS and NUPRC
- Provide a detailed description of the location of in-country committed facilities & infrastructure not limited to administrative office, bonded warehouse in proximity to the port of entry of freight into Nigeria, storage workshop having packaging and un-packaging area in Nigeria to support this contract.
- Provide evidence of having a binding Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with its technical partner capable of assisting the tenderer handle the work scope at international Locations
- Comply with the latest approved version of NCDMB HCD guidelines by committing (via a letter of undertaking) to providing Project-Specific training, man-hour, budget, skill development, technology transfer plan, and understudy plan for Nigerian personnel utilizing OGTAN registered trainer(s) or other approved NCDMB training institution(s).
- Develop a Nigerian Content Plan (NCP), which shall explain the methodology of how it intends to comply with the requirements of the Act and how to achieve the set target(s) in the Schedule of Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry Content Development Act and any targets set by The Board.
- Submit tenderer's corporate organization's overall human resource structure (management, supervisors, senior & junior skilled officers, etc.) identifying positions manned/occupied.
- Provide evidence of what percentage of your key management positions is held by Nigerians and what percentage of the total workforce are Nigerians. Also, show the overall percentage of work to be performed in Nigeria and those by Nigerian resources relative to total work volume
- Tenderer shall provide evidence of Category 1,2,3,4 or 5 non-moveable assets (DA) demonstrating capacity and capability to carry out logistics services in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

NOTE: Failure to comply with the provision of the Nigerian Content Act 2010 or to demonstrate commitment to the development of the Nigerian Content Policy shall result in the disqualification of the tenderer from the bidding process.

5. Additional Information

- Failure to provide any of the listed documents or information may automatically disqualify the tenderer.
- All costs incurred in registering and prequalifying for this and other service categories in NJQS shall be borne solely by the suppliers.
- This advertisement shall neither be construed as any form of commitment on the part of TUPNI to award any contract to any Supplier and/or associated Vendors, sub-contractors or agents, nor shall it entitle pre-qualified companies to make any claims whatsoever, and/or seek any indemnity from TUPNI and/or any of its partners by virtue of such companies having been pre-qualified in NJQS.
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- Interested Tenderer(s) should note that TUPNI has very cordial relationship with the host communities of the sites where these services may be performed based on existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Prospective Tenderer(s) will be required to implement the obligations of the MOU as part of their contract.
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NCC: How Telecoms Is Powering The Nation's Digital Economy

For tens of millions of Nigerians, telecommunications services have evolved far beyond mere communication; they now underpin the very fabric of daily life. From enabling banking transactions and facilitating access to education and healthcare, to supporting business operations, governance, and social interaction and entertainment, connectivity has become indispensable in an increasingly digital society.

Nigeria has gone from fewer than 500,000 active telephone lines to over 185 million active connections that are powering entire sectors, creating jobs and enabling industries. From 2G connections to 3G, 4G, and the emerging frontier of 5G technologies, Nigeria's telecommunications story is one of relentless forward motion. Each of these generational leaps has rewired the possibilities available to millions of Nigerians: collapsing distances, opening markets, and placing the tools of the global economy into the hands of everyday citizens.

Statistics show that internet subscribers in Nigeria are consuming more data than ever before. In March 2026 alone, over 1.42 million terabytes of data were consumed—an average of about 45,800 terabytes daily. To put this in perspective, that volume is equivalent to streaming approximately 61 billion hours of TikTok videos every day.

Nigeria's digital era is flourishing, and it is reshaping the country's economic and social future. Behind every mobile transaction in shops and businesses; every e-learning platform through which students stream lectures and conduct research across the country; and every streamer, content creator, and entertainer sharing talent and creativity with the world from homes and studios, lies the invisible architecture of a telecommunications sector that has refused to stand still.

That architecture—built on policy reforms, sustained investment, and relentless innovation—has become the backbone of Nigeria's economic ambition to build a \$1 trillion economy by 2030. Nigeria's rapid digital transformation has not come without challenges. As the demand for voice and mostly data services grow exponentially, networks often face congestion, causing dropped calls and slow internet speeds. Yet the industry is unrelenting in increasing network capacity and coverage that will continue to deliver quality telecommunications services to consumers.

In 2025, after an adjustment to telecom tariffs to align with current economic realities, operators pledged to upgrade their networks to serve Nigerians even better. In that year, over \$1 billion was invested in network upgrades alone, following a prolonged period of under-investments in the sector. A total of 2,866 sites were deployed to address coverage and capacity gaps in several locations in that year.

In 2026, operators have committed to continuing these investments, with a plan to deploy over 12,000 new sites in this year alone. They have deployed over 3,000 of these new sites already. This wave of infrastructure upgrades is taking place after a period during which the industry did not experience such a scale of deployment.

With improved coverage and capacity, Nigerians can be assured of quality connectivity and improved services.

And indeed, our Quality of Service and Quality of Experience assessments show that network quality is improving across many parts of the country. As migration to faster 4G networks continue, with 4G penetration now at 54%, national median speeds have increased to 20Mbps from 16.5Mbps two years ago.

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), as regulator for the industry is ensuring that the right environment is in place for the telecommunications sector to continue to thrive. We have also intensified our commitment to repositioning consumer welfare, transparency and accountability at the core of our regulatory approach.

Consumers are being empowered with more information to help them make better choices and gain a deeper understanding of telecommunications services. Through our National Coverage Maps, consumers can easily identify which networks perform best in different parts of the country and which services are most suited to their digital lifestyles. Similarly, our quarterly Network



Performance Reports provide a comprehensive overview of the progress being made in network capacity, coverage, technology adoption, and industry trends, while also identifying existing gaps and how they can be addressed.

Our emphasis on transparency, is reflected in the directive we have given requiring Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and major Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to proactively inform consumers about significant network outages and planned service disruptions. Operators are now mandated to disclose the causes of outages, affected locations, estimated timelines for service restoration, and, where applicable, compensation measures when disruptions exceed acceptable thresholds.

Complementing this directive is the establishment of the Major Network Outage Incident Reporting Portal—a platform designed to enhance regulatory oversight, and where the public can monitor disruptions while ensuring that operators are held accountable for service failures that impact consumers.

In reinforcing our position on consumer protection, we have recently directed Mobile Network Operators to pay compensation to consumers in areas where they failed to meet their expected Quality of Service Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), in lieu of fines. This approach signals our broader regulatory philosophy that places consumer rights firmly at the centre of industry governance.

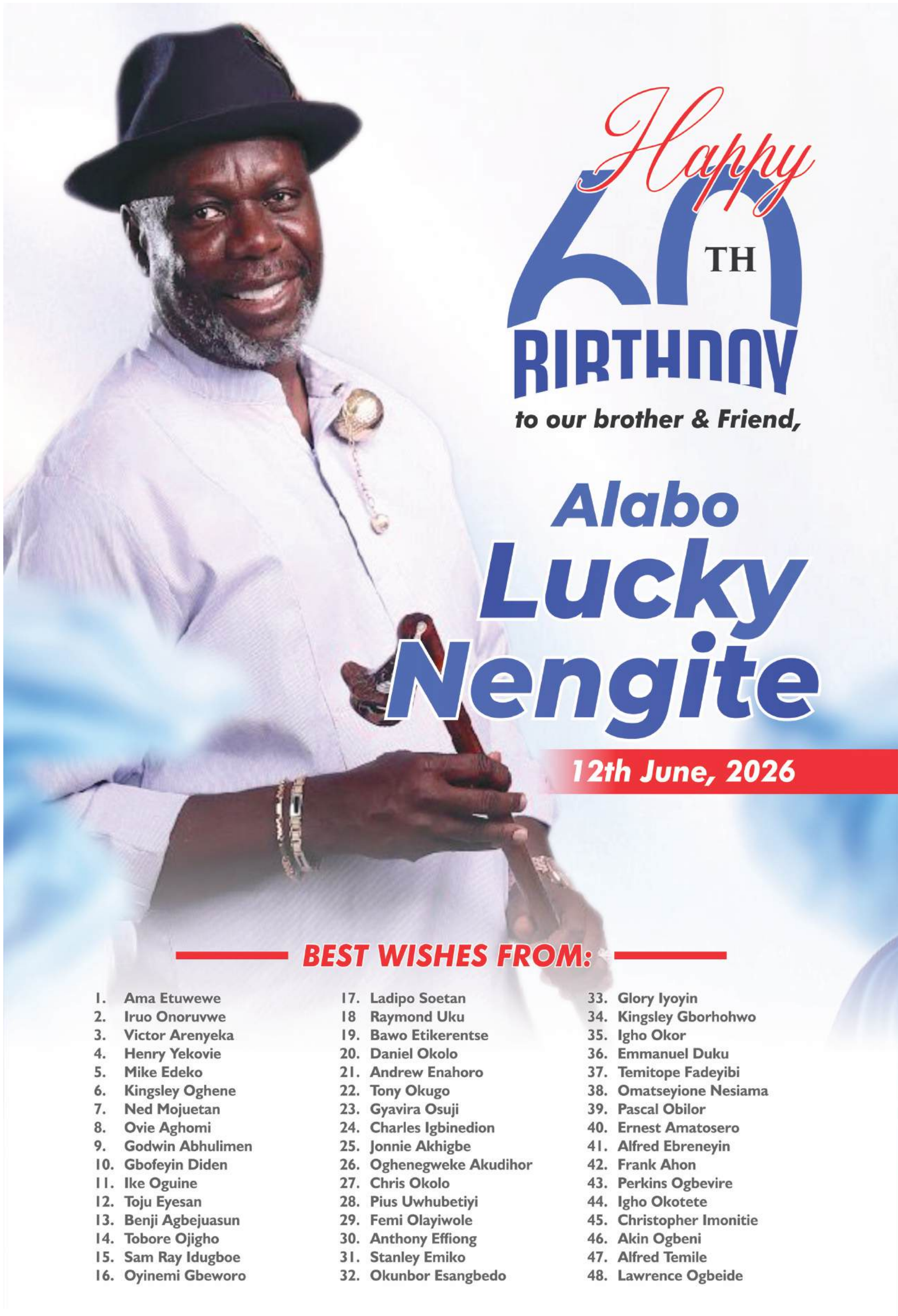
Recognizing that service quality challenges are often rooted in systemic and ecosystem-wide constraints, the NCC has also expanded its engagement with key stakeholders, including telecom operators, infrastructure providers, state governments, and security agencies. These collaborations are aimed at addressing the structural impediments affecting

network performance across the country, including the protection of telecommunications infrastructure.

The designation of telecommunications infrastructure as the Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII) by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has provided a stronger framework for the Commission to collaborate more effectively with the Office of the National Security Adviser and other stakeholders to protect this critical infrastructure. Through these collaborations, criminal syndicates involved in the theft and resale of telecommunications equipment have been disrupted, while improved coordination between road construction companies and telecommunications service providers has helped reduce incidents of fibre cuts caused by construction activities.

In a forward-looking measure to ensure effective modernisation of the telecommunications industry, the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy has caused the Commission to undertake a comprehensive review of the National Telecommunications Policy of 2000. Telecommunications services today touch every segment of society—from commerce and healthcare to education and governance—and the policy framework that guides it must be such that reflects the evolving developments in the current digital ecosystem, which is the basis for the ongoing review.

This review will provide the foundational blueprint for a sector ready to confront both contemporary and emerging challenges: broadband infrastructure, cybersecurity, digital trust, regulatory coordination and convergence, artificial intelligence, internet governance, data protection, investment sustainability, quality of service, and meaningful connectivity for every Nigerian.



Happy
40TH
BIRTHDAY

to our brother & Friend,

Alabo
Lucky
Nengite

12th June, 2026

BEST WISHES FROM:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Ama Etuwewe | 17. Ladipo Soetan | 33. Glory Iyoyin |
| 2. Iruo Onoruvwe | 18. Raymond Uku | 34. Kingsley Gborhohwo |
| 3. Victor Arenyeka | 19. Bawo Etikerentse | 35. Igho Okor |
| 4. Henry Yekovie | 20. Daniel Okolo | 36. Emmanuel Duku |
| 5. Mike Edeko | 21. Andrew Enahoro | 37. Temitope Fadeyibi |
| 6. Kingsley Oghene | 22. Tony Okugo | 38. Omatseyione Nesiama |
| 7. Ned Mojuetan | 23. Gyavira Osuji | 39. Pascal Obilor |
| 8. Ovie Aghomi | 24. Charles Igbinedion | 40. Ernest Amatosero |
| 9. Godwin Abhulimen | 25. Jonnie Akhigbe | 41. Alfred Ebrenyin |
| 10. Gbofeyin Diden | 26. Oghenegweke Akudihor | 42. Frank Ahon |
| 11. Ike Oguine | 27. Chris Okolo | 43. Perkins Ogbevire |
| 12. Toju Eyesan | 28. Pius Uwhubetiyi | 44. Igho Okotete |
| 13. Benji Agbejuasun | 29. Femi Olayiwole | 45. Christopher Imonitie |
| 14. Tobore Ojigho | 30. Anthony Effiong | 46. Akin Ogbeni |
| 15. Sam Ray Idugboe | 31. Stanley Emiko | 47. Alfred Temile |
| 16. Oyinemi Gbeworo | 32. Okunbor Esangbedo | 48. Lawrence Ogbeide |



Towers of strength

HAPPY DEMOCRACY DAY, NIGERIA.

Today, we salute the enduring spirit of Nigeria, the resilience of our people, and the promise the future holds.

May our democracy continue to flourish and bring prosperity to all Nigerians.



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**The Inspector-General of Police
Nigeria Police Force Headquarters
Louis Edet House
Abuja, FCT
Sir**

**PETITION AGAINST ENGR. SAM MORAH, GOLDEN AZIKIWE, IKECHUKWU NWENYI, MR. PAUL OBUROTHA, ORJI MARTINS CHINEDU, AND OTHERS
FOR CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY, FORGERY, MALICIOUS DAMAGE, BREACH OF PUBLIC PEACE, OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE, DISOBEDIENCE TO
LAWFUL COURT ORDERS, AND UNLAWFUL EXECUTION IN RESPECT OF AMACHAI COMMUNITY LAND, OKPANAM, DELTA STATE**

1. INTRODUCTION:

We are Solicitors to Diokpa Patrick Obiora, the Diokpa (Head) of Umungbala Quarters and the Diokpa Isi (Most Senior Head) of the entire Amachai Community of Okpanam; Diokpa Raymond Eguogu, the Diokpa (Head) of Umuezegbe Quarters; Diakpa Ndihi, the Diokpa (Head) of Umuolie Quarters; and other principal members of Amachai Community of Okpanam in Oshimili North Local Government Area of Delta State, hereinafter collectively referred to as "our clients", on whose firm instructions we write this petition.

This petition is brought to your urgent attention against Engr. Sam Morah, Golden Azikiwe, Ikechukwu Nwenyi, Mr. Paul Oburotha, Orji Martins Chinedu, Joe Okolie, Celestine Okolie, Felix Oburotha, Nonso Agala, Ogbueshi Patrick Ndihi, Ogbueshi Peter Okeleke, and several others presently at large, for their persistent acts of criminal conspiracy, forgery, malicious damage, abuse of police process, unlawful execution, intimidation, and conduct capable of causing a breakdown of law and order in Amachai Community of Okpanam, Delta State.

2. BACKGROUND FACTS:

Sometimes in 2012, some members of Amachai Community of Okpanam instituted an action at the High Court of Justice, Delta State, Akwukwu-Igbo Judicial Division, in Suit No. AKU/23/2012: Friday Okonkwo & Anor v. Mr. Joseph Obiora & Anor, in respect of communal land belonging to Amachai Community.

At the conclusion of trial, the learned trial Judge, Hon. Justice M.C. Okoh, in a considered judgment delivered on 3rd February 2020, held, inter alia, that the land which formed the subject matter of the action is the communal property of the entire Amachai Community of Okpanam and is to be held in trust by the Diokpa (Head) of the community for the collective benefit and overall interest of the community. **A copy of the judgment is attached herewith as annexure 1.**

Following the delivery of the said judgment, the suspects who is not even a party to the suit made repeated attempts to execute same in a manner not sanctioned by law. It is important to state that the judgment did not vest exclusive ownership or possessory rights in any faction of the community. The committal proceedings initiated in the matter were dismissed, with the Court affirming that both parties are joint owners of the land in dispute.

3. FRAUDULENT PROCUREMENT OF WRIT OF POSSESSION.

Having failed to obtain a proper writ of possession from the Court that delivered the judgment, the suspects reportedly approached another court in Asaba, Delta State, and misled the registry into issuing a purported writ of possession dated 5th August 2024.

Our clients state that the writ was fraudulently and unlawfully obtained by misrepresentation of facts and concealment of material facts, as the judgment of the Court never conferred exclusive rights of possession on the suspects or any faction of the community. The parties in the writ of possession was materially altered, forged and increased number than the parties in the original suit for sinister reason, the writ of possession was obtained the period within which the High Court 4 Delta State presided over by Hon. Justices Azinge was on vacation and his Lordship was not a vacation court. The writ of Possession is attached herewith as **annexure 2.**

Our clients have already approached the court by filing a motion on notice seeking to set aside the said writ of possession on the ground of fraud and misrepresentation. A copy of the motion on notice is attached as **annexure 3.**

4. UNLAWFUL DEMOLITION AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTIES

Notwithstanding the pendency of the application challenging the validity of the writ, the suspects, relying on the defective and fraudulently obtained writ, unlawfully invaded the communal land with thugs and armed persons and commenced forceful execution.

During the course of this unlawful execution, several buildings, residential structures, business premises, and properties worth several billions of naira were maliciously demolished and destroyed without lawful authority, consent, or approval of the Diokpa of Amachai Community, who remains the lawful trustee and custodian of the communal land by virtue of the subsisting judgment. The Picture of the colossal damages inflicted on the community is attached as **annexure 4.**

These acts caused widespread panic, chaos, violent tension, and grave threat to peace and public safety in the community.

5. COURT ORDERS AND PENDING CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

In order to forestall a total breakdown of law and order, our clients approached the court for urgent intervention. Consequently, the High Court of Justice, Delta State, in the same Suit No. AKU/23/2012, on 24th November 2025, granted an interim order restraining the Defendants, their servants, agents, privies, assigns, and all persons acting through them, including the above-named suspects, from further executing or acting upon the purported writ of possession pending the determination of the substantive application challenging same. **A copy of the enrolled order is attached as annexure 5.**

Similarly, the criminal acts arising from the unlawful execution and destruction of properties were reported to the Commissioner of Police, Delta State Police Command, Asaba, who commenced investigation. Several suspects were arrested, and the case file was forwarded to the Delta State Ministry of Justice for legal advice.

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), upon review of the duplicate case file, issued a legal advice stating that a prima facie criminal case had been established against the suspects and recommended prosecution. **A copy of the legal advice is attached annexure 6.**

Pursuant to the above, some of the suspects, including Golden Azikiwe and Ikechukwu Nwenyi, were charged before the High Court of Justice, Delta State, Akwukwu-Igbo Judicial Division in Charge No. AKU/30/2025: State v. Golden Azikiwe & Anor in respect of offences bordering on malicious damage, assault, conspiracy, and related offences. The said Charge is attached as **annexure 7.**

6. FURTHER ACTS OF OBSTRUCTION AND DISOBEDIENCE TO COURT ORDERS

Rather than submit themselves to lawful investigation and prosecution, some of the suspects resorted to filing multiple frivolous and vexatious fundamental rights enforcement actions aimed at frustrating police investigation and obstructing the course of justice.

In particular, Ikechukwu Nwenyi, Orji Martins Chinedu, and Engr. Sam Morah instituted Suit No. HCO/20M/2024: Ikechukwu Nwenyi & Ors v. Friday Okonkwo & Ors before the High Court of Justice, Delta State, Owa-Oyibu Judicial Division, which suit was dismissed in its entirety by the Court in a judgment delivered on 23rd July 2025. The Judgment of the said suit is attached as **annexure 8.**

Still dissatisfied, Engr. Sam Morah instituted another fundamental rights action in Suit No. DTHC/ASB/155/2025: Engr. Sam Morah v. Commissioner of Police, Delta State & Anor before the High Court of Justice, Delta State, Asaba Judicial Division. In a considered judgment delivered on 11th May 2026, Hon. Justice Omome Marshal-Umukoro dismissed the suit and awarded N2, 000,000.00 costs against Engr. Sam Morah. The Court further ordered as follows:

"The Applicant is hereby ordered to immediately surrender himself in the company of his counsel or legal practitioner/representative to the Nigeria Police Force for necessary and required investigation with section 71(4), (5) & (6) and 73(1), (2) & (3) of the Delta State Administration of Criminal Justice Law, 2022." A copy of the judgment is attached as annexure 9.

7. ILLEGAL ENTRY OF ARMED POLICE OFFICERS AND CONTINUED DESTRUCTION.

Shockingly, despite the subsisting orders of court, the pending criminal charge, the DPP's legal advice, and ongoing police investigation, Engr. Sam Morah, acting in concert with the other suspects, unlawfully mobilized armed police officers purportedly from Anambra State Police Command into Delta State on 12th May 2026 with the sole aim of forcefully re-entering the disputed communal land and executing the same writ of possession already challenged before court and expressly restrained by a subsisting order.

This action was unlawful, provocative, and contemptuous, and it triggered violent tension and communal unrest.

Further, despite the petition earlier submitted to the Commissioner of Police, Delta State Command on 14th May 2026 and to your good office on 26th May 2026 following the above act, some officers of the Delta police command through the commissioner of police Delta State purportedly acting through your directives, again entered the property on 3rd June 2026 with the suspects and continued the destruction of properties and infrastructure. Police personnel have reportedly been stationed on the land alongside bulldozers and other equipment, with ongoing destruction of buildings and developments as the point of filing this petition. Petition for 14th May, 2026 and 26th May, 2026 are annexure **10&11 respectively.**

When members of the community peacefully questioned the destruction, they were asked to produce three representatives, who are: **MR. AMAKA OKONKWO, MR. EZIFA ODEH, MR. CHUKWUDI ODEH.** Upon doing so, those three representatives were arrested, while the crowd was tear-gassed. Those arrested have since been remanded on charges of terrorism on the 5th day of June 2026.

8. OUR COMPLAINT

The acts complained of disclose the following offences, among others:

- Criminal conspiracy
- Forgery
- Criminal trespass
- Forcible entry
- Malicious damage to property
- Conduct likely to cause breach of public peace
- Obstruction of justice
- Perversion of the course of justice
- False information and misrepresentation to public officers
- Abuse of police process

- Unlawful execution of a court judgment
- Disobedience to lawful orders of court
- Intimidation and threats to public peace and security

9. ISSUES REQUIRING URGENT POLICE ATTENTION

The following issues arise for urgent investigation and action:

1. Whether the police are entitled to execute or aid the execution of a court judgment without first investigating the validity of the writ of possession relied upon.
2. Whether the police may lawfully take over the role of the Sheriff/Bailiff in execution of judgment contrary to the Sheriffs and Civil Process Act.
3. Whether the police can proceed with execution where there is a subsisting order of court restraining further action pending determination of a motion challenging the writ.
4. Whether the Nigeria Police Force has the Constitutional Mandate to enforce matter pending and subsisting before a competent Court in Nigeria.
5. Whether persons who were not parties to the original suit can lawfully be forced into execution of the judgment without being joined.
6. Whether a writ of possession can validly issue by mere act of a registrar without judicial authorization.
7. Whether the police can legally rely on a defective or fraudulently procured writ to justify destruction of property and arrest of community members.
8. Whether the arrest and detention of peaceful community members who only questioned the unlawful demolition is not an abuse of power.

10. OUR REQUESTS

In the circumstances, we respectfully urge your good office to:

1. Order an immediate and comprehensive investigation into the activities of Engr. Sam Morah, Golden Azikiwe, Ikechukwu Nwenyi, Mr. Paul Oburotha, Orji Martins Chinedu, and all other persons connected with the unlawful acts complained of.
2. Cause the immediate arrest and prosecution of Engr. Sam Morah, Mr. Paul Oburotha, and Orji Martins Chinedu, who are presently at large, together with all other accomplices.
3. Review the conduct of the police officers who allegedly aided or participated in the unlawful invasion and destruction of the communal land.
4. Ensure strict compliance with the subsisting judgments and orders of court in respect of the land dispute.
5. Direct the immediate cessation of all unlawful execution activities on the land pending the final determination of all pending matters before the court.
6. Order an investigation into the circumstances under which the purported writ of possession was issued and the role of any public officer involved in its procurement.
7. Direct the release or proper review of the arrest and detention of the community members who were arrested while peacefully protesting the destruction of their properties.
8. Prevent further breakdown of law and order in Amachai Community of Okpanam.
9. Ensure that no police formation or officer acts outside the scope of the law or in disregard of subsisting court orders in this matter.
10. Take any further steps necessary to restore peace, protect lives and property, and uphold the rule of law.

11. CONCLUSION

Our clients remain committed to peace, lawful resolution of disputes, and respect for the authority of the courts. However, the continued unlawful invasion, demolition, intimidation, and arrests have created grave concern and imminent danger to public peace.

We therefore respectfully request your urgent intervention in the interest of justice, public safety, and the rule of law.

Kindly accept the assurances of our highest esteem.

Yours faithfully,

UGOCHUKWU PAUL OGARAKU
For: MCBONE ATTORNEYS
Solicitors to the Petitioners

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Copy of judgment in Suit No. AKU/23/2012
2. Copy of motion on notice to set aside writ of possession
3. Copy of interim order of court dated 24th November 2025
4. Copy of DPP legal advice
5. Copy of Charge No. AKU/30/2025
6. Copy of judgment in Suit No. HCO/20M/2024
7. Copy of judgment in Suit No. DTHC/ASB/155/2025
8. Copy of earlier petitions to the Commissioner of Police and IG
9. Photographs and other supporting documents
10. Any other relevant documents

PRESS STATEMENT

IJAW AND URHOBO LEADERS CALL ON PROTESTERS IN THE WARRI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY TO DEMOBILISE FROM OIL AND GAS FACILITIES AND RIVER BLOCKADE

The Ijaw and Urhobo Leaders of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State note that aggrieved Women, Youths and other stakeholders in Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State has been protesting at oil facilities and other parts of the constituency since Monday, the 8th of June, 2026 till now.

We also note that, these protests lead to growing tensions in the Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State.

The rising tensions led to the intervention of the Governor of Delta State, who called for an emergency meeting with leaders of Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo ethnic nationalities of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State at the Government House, Asaba on the 8th of June, 2026.

We note that, the protests continued and spread to more parts of the Warri Federal Constituency and additional oil and gas facilities occupied by the protesters.

The spread of the protest and tension led to the intervention of High Chief Government Ekpemupolo (alias Tompolo) who met with Community Leaders across Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo Communities in the Warri Federal Constituency on the 9th of June, 2026 at Oporoza, Gbaramatu Kingdom and called for calm to give INEC the opportunity to address their grievances and protect critical national oil and gas assets.

We also note that, the protests caught the attention of the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR who called for an emergency meeting on Thursday, the 11th of June, 2026 with representatives of Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

At the meeting, Mr. President called for compromise, understanding and the need for the Ijaws, Itsekeris and Urhobos to live together as Nigerians. Drawing inspiration from the national anthem, Mr. President appealed to the ethnic leaders to live as one, though tongue and tribe may differ, but in brotherhood we stand.

President Tinubu then directed the leaders of the different ethnic groups to agree on power sharing formular to ensure fair and just sharing of positions among the different ethnic groups in Warri North, Warri South and Warri South West Local Government Area constituting the Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State.

Mr. President further appealed to the ethnic nationality leaders to prevail on the protesters to discontinue their protest.

In the light of the foregoing, we the Leaders of Ijaw and Urhobo ethnic nationalities of Warri Federal Constituency of Delta State after consultation with other stakeholders hereby call on protesting women, youths and other stakeholders in Ijaw and Urhobo Communities of Delta State to demobilise and vacant all oil and gas facilities occupied in the different parts of the Warri Federal Constituency and the escravos river.

This is a demonstration of respect to the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to give stakeholders the opportunity to finalise the resolution of a few outstanding issues arising from the Supreme Court ordered fresh delineation and allow for full and final implementation of the fresh delineation by INEC.

We express our profound appreciation to His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, the Governor of Delta State, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborewori and High Chief Government Ekpemupolo (alias Tompolo) for their timely intervention which led to the cessation of the protest.

**SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE IJAW AND URHOBO LEADERS
OF WARRI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY OF DELTA STATE: E-SIGNATURE**

**HIGH CHIEF GODSPOWER GBENEKAMA
OLOROGUN VICTOR OKUMAGBA
ALAOWEI DENBO-DENBOFA OWEIKPODOR
CHIEF WESTHAM ADEHOR**



INAUGURATION —From left: Deputy Consul General, German Consulate in Lagos, Mr. Gerald Wolf; Consul General, German Consulate in Lagos, Daniel Krull; Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu; Head of German Desk at Access Bank, Mr. Fabian Bracher and Consul, Head of Corporate Services, Mr. Jorg Steckhan, during a courtesy visit of the Consul General and his delegation to the Governor at Lagos House, Marina

Davido protests Oyo school kidnappings at World Cup Concert

By Ayo Onikoyi & Adeola Badru

NIGERIAN music star Davido used the FIFA World Cup 2026 Countdown Concert in Los Angeles to call for the release of dozens of schoolchildren and teachers abducted in Oyo State, turning a global entertainment event into a platform for advocacy.

The Afrobeats singer took to the stage at the Crypto.com Arena wearing a custom-made black leather jacket bearing the

names of 39 pupils and seven teachers reportedly kidnapped during attacks on schools in Oriire Local Government Area of Oyo State. Emblazoned across the jacket was the message, "Bring Them Home."

Davido's appearance was one of the highlights of the FIFA Countdown Concert, organised as part of activities marking one year to the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico.

While delivering an

energetic performance before a global audience, the singer also drew attention to the plight of the abducted children and teachers, urging that efforts be intensified to secure their release.

The gesture reflected Davido's earlier reaction to the incident. The singer had previously expressed concern over the abductions, describing the situation as heartbreaking and calling for urgent

action from relevant authorities. His decision to spotlight the issue at an internationally televised event attracted widespread attention from fans and observers, many of whom praised him for using his platform to raise awareness about insecurity and the growing incidents of kidnappings in parts of Nigeria.

The Los Angeles concert featured performances by Davido and electronic music group Major Lazer as part of FIFA's global countdown celebrations ahead of the 2026 tournament. The event was broadcast to audiences across different parts of the world and combined football, music and culture in anticipation of the competition.

However, beyond the performances and festivities, Davido's message about the abducted schoolchildren emerged as one of the night's most talked-about moments. The singer's appearance also reinforced his longstanding association with FIFA events. Davido was among the artists featured on the official soundtrack of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and performed during activities surrounding the tournament.

By using one of football's biggest global platforms to campaign against the abduction of pupils and teachers, Davido ensured that the issue received international visibility, while renewing calls for the victims' safe return.

His message remained clear throughout the event: the children and their teachers should not be forgotten, and every effort must be made to bring them home safely.

They said that the Senate remains committed to the constitutional principles of fair hearing, due process, parliamentary objectivity, institutional neutrality and the presumption of innocence and that any determination of criminal liability against any individual or institution can only be made by a court of competent jurisdiction.

An additional prayer by Oshiomhole was that the "Senate, through its leadership, should ensure that all those who appear before any Senate committee conduct themselves in a manner that reflects respect for the honour and dignity of every senator who represents this institution."

8 days to Ekiti guber: SDP rejoins race as INEC extends PVC collection to June 14

By Rotimi Ojomoyela

THE Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, has included the Social Democratic Party, SDP, and its candidate, Peter Obafemi in the June 20, 2026 Ekiti State governorship election.

This follows a Supreme Court judgment, bringing the total number of participating political parties to 14, which includes: All Progressive Congress, APC; Accord Party; African Action Congress, AAC; African Democratic Congress, ADC; Action Democratic Party, ADP; Action Peoples Party, APP; Allied Peoples Movement, APM; Labour Party, LP; New Nigeria Peoples Party, NNPP; Peoples Democratic Party, PDP; Peoples Redemption Party, PRP; Young Progressives Party, YPP; and Zenith Labour Party, ZLP.

The National Chairman of the Commission, Professor Joash Amupitan, disclosed this during a stakeholders' meeting held in Ado-Ekiti as part of activities leading to the governorship election.

Amupitan also announced the extension of the collection of Permanent Voter Cards, PVCs, to June 14, urging eligible voters to take advantage of the opportunity and participate in the democratic process.

According to him, "Until now, there were 14 political parties published as participating in the election. In view of the Supreme Court decision in SDP's case, the Commission has reviewed its stand on the participation of the candidacy of SDP and has therefore decided to bring the candidate of the SDP onto the ballot for this election.

"We are determined to do

everything possible to ensure that voting starts on time in all the 2,445 polling units. If elections start early, voting will close early, counting will be done in daylight, results will be declared in daylight, and uploads will also be completed in good time."

The Resident Electoral Commissioner, REC, for Ekiti State, Dr. Bunmi Omoseyindemi, said non-sensitive election materials have already been received and properly secured in line with established procedures, while the deployment of sensitive materials is expected to commence next week.

The Ekiti State Commissioner of Police, Michael Falade, restated that the command is committed to deploying maximum security, in ensuring that there's a violence-free and credible poll.

Unaccounted N210trn: Senate reverses arrest order on ex-NNPCL GMD Mele Kyari

By Henry Umoru

ABUJA- THE Senate has made a U-turn as it distanced itself from the warrant of arrest issued against Mallam Mele Kyari, former Group Chief Executive Officer, GCEO, of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, NNPC, by its Committee on Public Accounts.

The Senate resolved to reaffirm that pursuant to Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act, the authority to issue a warrant compelling the attendance of any witness before the Senate or any of its committees is vested exclusively in the President

of the Senate and not in any committee acting independently.

The Senate disassociated itself from comments attributed to Senator Adams Oshiomhole (APC, Edo North), describing NNPC Limited as "a bunch of criminals and thieves" and clarified that such remarks do not constitute the official position, finding, resolution, opinion or determination of the Senate.

It further declared that none of its committees shall purport to issue, authorise or execute a warrant of arrest except in strict compliance with the provisions of the Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act and with the approval and authority of the President of the Senate.

They said that the Senate remains committed to the constitutional principles of fair hearing, due process, parliamentary objectivity, institutional neutrality and the presumption of innocence and that any determination of criminal liability against any individual or institution can only be made by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Olofun stool: Ondo court restrains Odimayo, warns against contempt

By Dayo Johnson

AN Ondo State High Court sitting in Okitipupa, has renewed an interim order restraining Mr Samuel Odimayo from parading himself as the Olofun of Irele, pending the determination of a suit challenging his selection and approval.

The suit was filed by Prince Ademola Olowoyiribi, a candidate for the throne, through his legal team led by Femi Emmanuel Emodamori.

He asked the court to set aside the Ondo State Executive Council's June 2, 2026 approval of Odimayo's appointment, saying it violated a subsisting interim injunction granted on May 6, 2026.

Olowoyiribi also filed a Form 49 application seeking to commit Odimayo to prison for contempt, alleging he presented himself for approval despite the court's order.

He further sought interim injunctions restraining Odimayo from parading himself, performing rites, or

presenting himself for installation.

The application also seeks to bar Irele Local Government, the Commissioner for Local Government, the State Governor, and Kingmakers from recognising or installing Odimayo.

He prayed the court to order a maintenance of status quo ante bellum, directing that the stool remains vacant and no installation rites be performed until the motion for interlocutory injunction is heard.

At the resumed hearing on June 10, 2026, Emodamori told the court that the state government's action was contemptuous. Counsel to the state government, Helen Falowo, was absent. Odimayo was also not represented.

The court adjourned to June 18, 2026, and ordered hearing notices served on all defendants, who must respond within five working days. The court renewed the May 6 ex-parte order and adjourned further hearing to June 18, 2026.

Igboho offers to secure Oyo public schools

• Urges immediate preventive measures against rising insecurity

By Adeola Badru

A MID growing concerns over insecurity in Oyo State, and 24 days after the abduction of teachers and pupils in Oriire Local Government Area, Yoruba nation activist, Chief Sunday Adeyemo, popularly known as Sunday Igboho, has formally written to Governor Seyi Makinde, expressing his readiness to provide security for public schools across the state.

Igboho, founder of Iru Ekun Private Security Limited, conveyed the proposal through a letter submitted by the security organisation to the Oyo State Commissioner for Education, with a copy forwarded to Governor Makinde.

The correspondence dated June 9, 2026 and obtained by journalists in Ibadan on Thursday, requested comprehensive data from the state government on the number and locations of public schools across Oyo State as part of plans to strengthen security around educational institutions.

The letter read in part: "Sir, Iru Ekun Security Network's plan, upon receipt of the requested information, is to ensure that at least two trained members of the outfit are stationed at each public school identified across Oyo State."

"Their mandate will be to guard school environments, monitor access points, liaise with principals and

community vigilantes, and prevent unlawful incursion by criminal elements."

Signed by Sunday Igboho and the Legal Adviser of the Iru Ekun Security Network, Junaid Sanusi, the letter stressed the organisation's commitment to constructive collaboration with government authorities, traditional institutions and local communities in safeguarding schools and ending the recurring threat of abductions targeting students and teachers.

The organisation also advised the state government to strengthen physical security infrastructure around schools.

"We equally advise Oyo State Government to consider the possibility of raising fences around all public schools within Oyo State in order to make the school environment easy to guard by the members of Iru Ekun Security Network stationed at such schools."

The organisation further warned that delays in implementing preventive security measures could expose pupils and teachers to unnecessary danger.

"Time is of the essence. Every day without preventive deployment exposes our children and teachers to avoidable risk. With proper data and perimeter security, we can create a protective shield around every public school in Oyo State," it stated.

Security concerns: Lagos CP orders seizure of vehicles without number plates

By Evelyn Usman

Lagos State Commissioner of Police, CP Fatai Tijani, has ordered a statewide clampdown on vehicles plying Lagos roads without number plates or with concealed registration marks, warning that offenders would be arrested and their vehicles impounded with immediate effect.

The directive according to Fatai, formed part of measures to strengthen

security architecture and prevent criminal elements from infiltrating the state through unregistered vehicles.

Tijani gave the order during a strategic meeting with Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers, DPOs, and Commanders of Tactical Units, at the Officers Mess, Ikeja, yesterday.

He briefed the officers on resolutions from a recent conference with the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Olatunji Disu, and

outlined new security measures to tighten security across Lagos.

According to Tijani, "The Inspector-General of Police, stressed the need to ensure that all vehicles plying the roads in the country have their plate numbers on them. On no occasion should anybody put a vehicle on the road without a plate number or with a covered plate number. If anybody is found driving such a vehicle, that vehicle will have to be impounded."



MEETING—*Ijaw, Urhobo and Itsekiri leaders at a meeting with President Bola Tinubu, in Abuja.*

ESCALATING INSECURITY: Igbo leaders urge communities to be vigilant

- Train, equip your vigilantes—ASITU
- SE Govs' must take security issues seriously—Retd Gen
- Youths should be mobilised to monitor their forests, bushes

By Steve Oko, Ugochukwu Alaribe, Chinedu Adonu & Emmanuel Iheaka

ENUGU—IN the face of the frightening escalation of insecurity across the country, especially kidnappings and mass abduction of school children, the main Igbo grassroots union, Association of Igbo Town Unions, ASITU, has called on all Igbo communities to fortify their vigilante outfits and ensure they all monitor their forests and bushes.

ASITU also urged the communities to equip the vigilante groups with sophisticated weapons and ensure they are properly cared for to face the invading criminals.

National President of ASITU, Chief Emeka Diwe, stated that such drastic measures should be adopted to enable the communities to combat the rising cases of kidnapping and banditry in the country. He said: "The vigilance group in each community should be empowered with sophisticated weapons to match the ones paraded by the bandits. There should be good welfare packages for the vigilance groups.

"The vigilance groups should be able to parade along and move deep into forest areas to dislodge the bandits. Every

community knows its forest, and the best way to secure it is to ensure that bandits don't use it as a safe haven for criminal activity.

"The vigilance group will be patrolling all the forests and suspected areas. If anybody is attacked or kidnapped, the vigilantes will comb the area to free the victim. Our forests should no longer be used as a place for hiding kidnap victims and the negotiation of ransom.

"Yes, there's a need for state police in Nigeria. ASITU is in support of the state police, but the empowerment of the vigilance groups is the immediate solution to the problem of kidnapping and banditry. While state police is being canvassed, let us have the vigilance groups to combat the menace of kidnapping and banditry before the South East is fully affected.

"The South East has experienced this insecurity and should learn from what is happening in other regions. We must be well prepared to take the game to the bandits. An Igbo adage says that a stranger cannot be bigger than his host. Bandits and terrorists by any name must be chased out of Igbo territories."

In his contribution, a retired military officer, Major General Nwokoro Ijioma, blamed insecurity on the failure of Southeast governors to take decisive and coordinated action against the growing insecurity in the region. He therefore urged them to immediately evolve a robust self-defence architecture to protect lives and property.

The retired General expressed concern over rising incidents of kidnapping and attacks on communities, warning that the security challenge confronting the Southeast was no longer a distant threat but also one already affecting the region.

Gen. Ijioma argued that while the President, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, bears the constitutional responsibility for the overall security of the country, state governors also have a direct obligation to safeguard residents within their respective states.

According to him, governors in the Southeast have enormous resources, including humongous security votes, which should be deployed effectively to tackle the menace of criminal activities.

"If the governors are collecting huge security votes, the people have the right to ask what impact those resources are making on security," he said.

Ijioma particularly stressed that the five Southeast governors should put aside individual approaches and work collectively to establish a regional security framework capable of responding to emerging threats.

He faulted what he described as the failure of the governors to sufficiently engage retired military officers and security experts from the region who could provide strategic advice on how to confront the challenges.

"Ndigbo must organise for their own protection. The first law of nature is self-preservation, and the governors must lead the process by putting in place lawful and effective measures for the defence

of the people," he stated.

The retired General maintained that insecurity would continue to worsen if political leaders failed to demonstrate the required commitment, adding that the time had come for the Southeast governors to collaborate, consult experienced security hands, and adopt proactive measures to secure the region.

He called on the governors to treat the protection of lives and property as their foremost responsibility and move beyond rhetoric to practical and coordinated action.

President General of Nzuko-Ukwu, Ngwa Ukwu cultural organisation in Isiala Ngwa North council area of Abia State, Chief Victor Azumara, on his part, called on traditional rulers to set up vigilance groups in their communities to boost security and stop the menace of bandits who abduct and kill people in the country.

"It is no longer a hidden secret that the current escalating insecurity in Nigeria is a carefully written script, which is being sponsored and supported by many highly placed individuals, from a certain part of our country.

"It's also obvious that the escalation has a religious and political undertone. In view of the invasion of the South West and drawing from the experience of the people of Benue, Plateau, Kwara, Zamfara, Yobe, Katsina, Borno, Adamawa, and other states, it has become absolutely necessary for the entire Igbo race to respond decisively, before the insecurity challenge takes a wider dimension."

He called on the traditional rulers to devise strategic measures to secure lives and property across the state, insisting that "proactive measures should be taken by the state governments and the communities, to secure lives and heritage.

"For a start, all strange people involved in Okada riding, shoe shining, household security (gatekeepers), water vendors, and other menial jobs should be properly screened,

profiled, and documented.

"Those who are unable to provide satisfactory answers should be sent back to where they came from.

"Secondly, the state

governments should strengthen the security committees in all the local government areas and direct them to hold weekly meetings and to deal with security challenges within their areas."

APOLOGY, RETRACTION, AND UNDERTAKING

I, Okwubido Joshua, do hereby make this public apology:

1. Retraction: I unequivocally and unreservedly retract all statements and post made by me on Facebook on the 28th of March, 2026, alleging that Mr. Obioma Ezeogu is a serial woman beater and a chronic womanizer. I acknowledge that the said statements are false, baseless, defamatory, and without any factual foundation.

2. Apology: I sincerely apologize to Mr. Obioma Ezeogu for the said false and defamatory Facebook post. I regret the harm, injury to reputation, distress, and embarrassment caused to him as a result of my actions.

3. Undertaking: I undertake never to repeat, post, or cause to be published any further defamatory statements of a similar nature against Mr. Obioma Ezeogu on any platform, whether online or offline.

Signed:
Okwubido Joshua

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
OSUN STATE OF NIGERIA
(PROBATE DIVISION)

WHEREAS the person's whose names are set out in the second Column of the said schedule date and the place mentioned therein.

AND WHEREAS the person's whose names and address set out in the second Column of the said schedule along (wherever found necessary or expedient) with the particulars of their relationship to the deceased have applied to the High Court of Justice, Osun State of Nigeria for the grant unto them of letters of administration in respect of the and/or personal property of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said Letters of Administration will be granted to the said Applicants unless a notice of prohibit such grant is filed in the Registry of the High Court of Justice, Osogbo, Osun State of Nigeria within twenty-one (21) days from today.

SCHEDULE

DECEASED

1. PRISCILLA OLANIKE AYANBAMIJI
Late of Zone 6 No. 10, Agara Odo Eja, Along Akala Express Way, Ibadan, Oyo State who died on the 15th day of July, 2016 at Osogbo

2. ALAKE ADEWUMI OLAYINKA
Late of No 9, Ogbon Egbe, Ibokun, Osun State who died on the 7th day of May, 2026 at Ibokun

3. EMMANUEL ABIODUN AFOLABI
Late of No 14, Ago Ayo street, Ilesa, Garage Osogbo, Osun state who died on 21st day of March 2025 at Osogbo.

4. MATHEW OLADEJO OJO
Late of No 7, Fayemi Street Ogo Oluwa, Igboya Area, Ile-Ife, Osun State who died on the 23rd day of October, 2024 at London.

APPLICANT FOR GRANT

1. Ayanbamiji Mighty Oluwatomisin & Ayanbamiji Excellent Paul both of Zone 6, No 10, Agara odo Eja, Along Akala Express way, Ibadan, Children of the said Deceased.

2. Olayinka Anuoluwapo Adenike of NO 9 Ogbon Egbe Ibokun, Daughter of the Said Deceased

3. Bolanle Elizabeth Afolabi of No 14, Ago Ayo Street, Ilesa Garage, Osogbo, Widow of the said Deceased.

4. Ojo Esther Olufunke of No. 7 Fayemi street, Ogo Oluwa, Igboya Area, Ile-Ife, Widow of the said Deceased.

Dated 12th day of JUNE 2026.

OMISADE F.I.
OMISADE F.I.
PROBATE REGISTRAR

Nigeria, now country of general confusion — Bishop

By Chimaobi Nwaiwu

NNEWI—THE Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion Diocese of Amichi, yesterday, said Nigeria is no more a country of particular concern, but has woefully graduated to a country of total concern and general confusion that has not only collapsed security wise, but has failed in governance.

The Diocese also took a swipe at Nigerian politicians, accusing them of complacency on things that affect the masses, while selfishly supporting the incumbent President and only concerned about clinching power and positions in the 2027 general elections.

The Diocese disclosed this through its Bishop, Rt. Rev. Ephraim Ikeakor, during the final

inspection and press briefing as part of activities of the forthcoming Third Session of the Sixth Synod of the Diocese of Amichi, held at St. James Anglican Church, Azigbo, Nnewi South Local Government Area, Anambra State.

According to Bishop Ikeakor, "Anybody who is sensible and is in his right mind cannot be comfortable with what is currently happening in Nigeria. The truth of the matter is that security has collapsed in Nigeria. The government has failed. This is the time to tell the people the truth about the security situation in Nigeria. What is happening here in Nigeria can never happen in any society that is normal.

"It is unbelievable that in broad daylight, armed terrorists and kidnapers will go to a school and

carry up to 43 schoolchildren with their teachers and move through the roads unchecked, possibly pass Police check points, I don't know, but I keep on asking if they carried the children in their stomachs or in vehicles.

"Children of three years and above, who knows what it will take them to trek, which means they carried them with vehicles, and where did the vehicles head to, where were the police men and other security agents. This country is no more a country of particular concern like US President Donald Trump said; it is rather a country of total concern and a country of general confusion."

"What makes me wonder whether our politicians are still human beings or animals is that they don't care about what is happening, they are blindly and selfishly supporting

the incumbent President, and they are only concerned about primary elections for 2027. We hear every day is "on your mandate we stand," and you ask, "Which mandate? Mandate of kidnapping, mandate of stealing? Mandate of borrowing without a tangible project? Mandate of corruption without description? Which mandate are they standing on?"

"No politician condemned outright what has happened recently in Oyo and other States, because they do not want to lose the support of the president. Their mind seem to be telling them that if we come out as governors, senators, and members of the House of Representatives to say that things that are not working well, this is not good for the country, the presidency will come after them and they will lose their seats."



UBTH, NNPC E&P explore healthcare partnership

UNIVERSITY of Benin Teaching Hospital, UBTH, and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Exploration and Production Limited, NNPC E&P, have commenced discussions on a possible partnership, aimed at enhancing healthcare services for the company's workforce.

The Chief Medical Director of UBTH, Prof. Idia Ize-Iyamu, disclosed this during a visit to the NNPC E&P office in Benin City, Edo State.

Speaking during the meeting, Prof. Ize-Iyamu highlighted the hospital's capacity to provide timely, specialised and patient-centred healthcare services to corporate organisations and their employees.

She said the visit underscored UBTH's commitment to building strategic partnerships with key corporate stakeholders to improve access to efficient and quality healthcare services in the South-South region.

The CMD also outlined some of the hospital's achievements and milestones over the years, stressing

UBTH's readiness to collaborate with NNPC E&P in delivering quality healthcare solutions.

According to her, such partnerships would contribute to improved healthcare access and better health outcomes for workers and their families.

Responding, the Executive Director, Business Services, NNPC E&P, Mr. Tosin Olakiigbe, commended the hospital's management for the initiative and expressed appreciation for the visit.

Olakiigbe noted that collaboration between healthcare institutions and corporate organisations plays a critical role in promoting employee welfare and ensuring access to quality medical services.

He described the proposed partnership as a positive step towards strengthening healthcare delivery and enhancing the wellbeing of employees.

Both organisations expressed optimism about future areas of collaboration that would be mutually beneficial and contribute to improved healthcare service delivery.



VISIT—From left: Dep. Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, MAC (Research and Ethics), Prof. Adebola Ehiziele; Chairman, MAC, Dr. Emmanuel Osaigbovo; CMD, University of Benin Teaching Hospital, UBTH, Prof. Idia Ize-Iyamu; Mr. Tosin Olakiigbe, ED, Business Services, NNPC (E&P); Head, Human Resources, UBTH, Mrs. Joy Oyakhilome, and Dep. Chairman, MAC (Clinical), Dr. Philip Osho, during a courtesy visit by UBTH management to the Nigerian National Petroleum Company, in Benin.

Benin leaders fault Osagie's comments on Oba's role

By Etop Ekanem

A socio-cultural group, Benin Leaders of Thought, has criticised comments allegedly made by former Governor Godwin Obaseki's media aide, Mr. Cruse Osagie, on the role and responsibilities of the Oba of Benin, describing the remarks as disrespectful to the revered Benin monarchy.

The group was reacting to comments reportedly made by Osagie during a discussion on CTNaija, an online platform, while addressing issues relating to the Museum of West African Art, MOWAA, and the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo.

In a statement signed by its Secretary, Chief Roland Osauwagie, the group said Osagie's alleged assertion that the Oba of Benin bears no responsibility to the people was inconsistent with history, tradition and the established role of the Benin monarchy.

According to the group, the comments reflected a poor

understanding of the place of traditional institutions in society, particularly the role of the Oba of Benin as custodian of the customs, traditions and cultural heritage of the Benin Kingdom.

"The Oba of Benin occupies a revered position in the history and cultural identity of the Benin people. To suggest that the monarch has no responsibility to the people is to ignore centuries of history and the enduring relevance of traditional institutions in promoting peace, unity and social cohesion," the statement said.

The group maintained that traditional rulers, although operating within the framework of constitutional democracy, continue to play important roles in conflict resolution, cultural preservation, community development and the promotion of peaceful coexistence.

It described Osagie's comments as "unfortunate, provocative and ill-informed," stressing that public figures should demonstrate greater appreciation of the historical significance and cultural importance of the Benin throne.

Russia forum: Analysts seek greater protection for African citizens

RUSSIA's first International Security Forum, held from May 26 to 29, 2026, in the Moscow region, has triggered debate among African policy analysts over issues of security cooperation, sovereignty and citizen protection.

Obsequies

MR. Anthony Akele, 86, is dead. He died on May 9, 2026.

A statement by his son, Mr. Ambrose Akele, said funeral arrangements will start with a vigil mass, today, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Iboere Irua, in Esan Central Local Government, Edo State, while interment follows at his home town, Udowo-Eidenu, at 1pm.

Entertainment of guests is at Iboere Primary School field, on Saturday, while thanksgiving holds at same venue on Sunday.



•Late Akele

The forum, organised by the Russian Security Council, attracted more than 150 delegations from over 120 countries, including representatives from nearly all African nations.

Discussions at the event focused on terrorism, cybercrime, nuclear security, countering what organisers described as neocolonialism, and the protection of traditional values.

Russian officials presented the gathering as part of efforts to build a new global security framework centred on what they termed the "Global Majority."

"We are shaping a new architecture of international security for the Global Majority," a senior Russian official told participants.

Several African countries were represented by high-level delegations, reflecting growing engagement between the continent and Russia on security and geopolitical issues.

However, analysts and independent observers noted that discussions on non-governmental organisations and Western influence featured prominently during the forum, raising questions about the broader implications of such engagements.

The event has also reignited concerns over reports of African nationals being recruited into the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

We gave Obi, Kwankwaso free hands to pick candidates — Dickson

By Soni Daniel

NATIONAL Leader of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, NDC, Senator Seriake Dickson, yesterday, said the party gave its presidential candidate, Mr. Peter Obi, and vice-presidential candidate, Rabiu Kwankwaso, a free hand to nominate candidates and party officials in their respective states and zones.

Speaking at a news conference

....Dismisses claims of rift, defends party's candidate selection process

in Abuja, Dickson dismissed allegations of a conflict between the party leadership and the two candidates, insisting that all parties had worked together in harmony.

"There is absolutely no dispute between me as the party leader and Kwankwaso or Obi because we all agreed to work together to

move Nigeria forward," Dickson said.

The Bayelsa senator explained that Obi and Kwankwaso were consulted at every stage of the party's activities before, during and after the primaries. According to him, both men were also allowed to nominate individuals for key positions as part of efforts

to build consensus within the party.

He said the leadership decided to concede certain positions to them because they were better acquainted with the political realities in their respective areas.

"We cannot sit in Abuja and determine the dynamics of every state and region in the country. That was why we allowed elders and stakeholders in the various states to determine who emerged as candidates because we are focused on providing Nigerians with an alternative platform," he said.

Dickson expressed confidence in the party's candidates, saying they were well-positioned to perform strongly in future elections.

"We are satisfied with the quality of our candidates. It does not make sense for anyone to claim to love the NDC more than those of us who built the party and entrusted them with tickets to represent us," he added.

He further stated that the party leadership did not interfere in the emergence of candidates and that the final list would be published after the appeal panel concludes its work and the names are submitted to the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC.

Responding to allegations that aspirants paid money to secure party tickets, Dickson denied any wrongdoing, insisting that neither Obi nor Kwankwaso paid for their

INEC fixes date for primaries in new Delta constituencies

•Itsekiri group rejects ward delineation report

By Jimitota Onoyume

THE Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, has fixed June 16 to June 25, 2026, for political parties to conduct primaries in the newly created constituencies in Delta State, ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The constituencies were Warri South-West II, Warri North II, Aniocha North II, Ika North-East II, Sapele II and Ethiope West II.

INEC disclosed this in a statement issued by its National Commissioner and Chairman of the Information and Voter Education Committee, Mohammed Kudu Haruna.

According to the commission, the primaries are intended to facilitate the participation of the restored constituencies in the 2027

general elections, particularly with regard to the nomination of candidates by political parties.

"To facilitate the participation of the restored constituencies in the 2027 General Election, particularly with respect to the nomination of candidates by political parties, the Commission has fixed June 16-25, 2026, for the conduct of political party primaries in the restored constituencies," Haruna stated.

He added that all other timelines and activities contained in the already published revised timetable and schedule of activities for the 2027 general election would remain applicable to the affected constituencies.

"For the avoidance of doubt, all other timelines and activities contained in the already published revised timetable and schedule of

activities for the 2027 General Election shall apply to the restored constituencies," he said.

Meanwhile, an Itsekiri group has sustained its opposition to the ward delineation exercise in the Warri Federal Constituency, insisting that the report recently released by INEC was based on inaccurate data.

President of the Concerned Delta Forum for Accountability, CODAFA, Mr. Diden Diden, urged the Federal Government to intervene and ensure that the alleged anomalies in the report are corrected.

Diden said while the group was not opposed to the implementation of the Supreme Court judgment that necessitated the delineation exercise, it believed that the new proposal failed to address longstanding concerns raised by the Itsekiri people.

Itsekiri communities reject Olero oil field occupation

LEADERS of seven Itsekiri host communities in the Olero Oil Field, Warri North Local Government Area of Delta State, have called on Governor Sheriff Oborevwo to investigate the alleged violation of a peace accord signed by Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo leaders during a stakeholders' meeting held on June 8.

The communities—Ebrohimi, Obaghoru, Tebu, Gbokoda, Aja-Amita, Udo and Jakpa—also urged the governor to facilitate the immediate evacuation of what they described as illegal occupiers

of the Olero Flow Station.

Speaking at a media briefing in Warri, the Secretary of Olero Oil Field Communities, Samson Ogboduwa, said the facility remained a critical national asset whose occupation by external parties should not be tolerated.

The community leaders alleged that the occupation of the Olero Flow Station by persons claiming to represent the Ijaw communities of Egbema and Gbaramatu was contrary to the terms of the peace accord reached in the presence of the governor.

The leaders also urged Chevron Nigeria Limited to remain steadfast and refrain from recognising or negotiating with groups they described as non-host communities.

"We call on Chevron Nigeria Limited to remain resolute and refuse to recognise, negotiate with or yield to pressure from external actors who are not recognised host communities," Ogboduwa said.

According to the communities, they do not share boundaries with the Ijaw communities of Egbema and Gbaramatu, which they accused of laying claim to the

facility.

The leaders further alleged that those occupying the flow station were transported in speedboats belonging to Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited.

"It is on record that the Ijaw aggressors were transported in Tantita speedboats. The same Tantita, which was awarded contracts to secure Federal Government pipeline infrastructure, is equally alleged to be sponsoring and mobilising protests that are impacting national revenue generation," they claimed.

Reliable data critical to mining growth — Shinkafi

By Gabriel Ewepu

ABUJA—EXECUTIVE Secretary of the Solid Minerals Development Fund, SMDF, Fatima Shinkafi, has said reliable geological data remains critical to the growth and development of Nigeria's mining industry.

Shinkafi spoke in Abuja during the launch of the Early-Stage

Mineral Exploration and Research Grant Endowment, EMERGE, Programme by the Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr. Dele Alake.

She described the initiative as a major component of ongoing reforms in the solid minerals sector and expressed optimism that it would attract investment, strengthen geological data generation and promote value

addition across the mining value chain.

According to her, the programme is designed to support indigenous operators, improve investor confidence and position Nigeria as a preferred destination for critical minerals required for the global energy transition.

She explained that EMERGE would support activities ranging

from early-stage mineral exploration and research to project development, construction, production and mineral processing.

"EMERGE targets the early stages of mineral exploration and research, project development, advanced project execution, construction and production, as well as initiatives that promote value addition and responsible sourcing."

FORUM OF COMMISSIONERS IN PLATEAU STATE CELEBRATES DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA, APPLAUDS GOVERNOR CALEB MANASSEH MUTFWANG FOR SUSTAINING GOOD GOVERNANCE AGAINST ALL ODDS



His Excellency
**BARR. CALEB MANASSEH
MUTFWANG**
Executive Governor, Plateau State

The Forum of Commissioners in Plateau State joins millions of citizens across the nation in celebrating the President of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, for his Renewed Hope leadership, which has upheld the values of democratic governance, accountability, inclusion, and service to the people over the past three years in office, while keeping democratic governance a priority.

For Plateau State, this occasion presents an opportunity to reflect on a remarkable journey of restoration, renewal, and responsible leadership under the stewardship of His Excellency, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, Executive Governor of Plateau State.

When Governor Mutfwang assumed office in May 2023, he inherited a state burdened by economic challenges, infrastructure deficits, security concerns, and diminished public confidence.

Guided by a compelling vision and an unwavering commitment to the common good, he embarked on a mission to rebuild institutions, restore hope, and reposition Plateau State for sustainable growth.

Today, three years later, the evidence of purposeful leadership is visible across the state.

Governor Mutfwang's administration has demonstrated that democracy is not merely about elections; it is about delivering tangible benefits to the people.

Through prudent management of resources, people-centered policies, and inclusive governance, the administration is transforming lives and communities.

Against all odds, His Excellency, Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, is restoring peace and strengthening security.

Recognizing the importance of security, the Mutfwang

administration prioritized the restoration of security and social cohesion across the state.

Through the revitalization of Operation Rainbow, the deployment of modern surveillance technology, and the training of community-based security volunteers, the "Time Is Now" administration has significantly strengthened the local security architecture.

Equally important, the government has put mechanisms in place to support victims displaced from their communities by insecurity.

Today, Plateau is steadily reclaiming its identity as the Home of Peace and Tourism.

Under Governor Mutfwang's leadership, workers have regained confidence in government through the regular payment of salaries, prompt implementation of promotions, and enhanced welfare packages for retirees and the families of deceased civil servants.

The administration has also taken decisive steps to clear longstanding pension arrears dating back to 1986. These efforts have restored dignity to public service.

Through strategic investments in transportation, agriculture, commerce, and enterprise development, the government is creating opportunities for economic participation and shared prosperity.

Across Plateau State, roads are opening up communities, stimulating commerce, and connecting citizens to opportunities.

From urban renewal projects within the Jos metropolis to major road networks linking rural communities, the administration's infrastructure drive is improving mobility and supporting economic growth.

The introduction of the Tin City Metro transport system has further eased transportation challenges for residents while reducing the financial burden on families.

The revitalization of rail and aviation infrastructure reflects a broader vision of transforming Plateau into a strategic hub for trade, tourism, and investment.

As an agrarian state, Plateau's prosperity is closely linked to agriculture. The administration of Governor Mutfwang has made substantial investments in mechanized farming, fertilizer distribution, improved seedlings, and agricultural extension services.

The establishment of Agro-Processing and Industrial Zones across key agricultural corridors is creating value chains that will boost productivity, generate employment, and enhance food security.

These interventions are empowering farmers, supporting rural economies, and positioning Plateau as a major contributor to Nigeria's agricultural development.

Governor Mutfwang firmly believes that the future of Plateau lies in its people. Investments in education have resulted in the construction and renovation of classrooms, improved learning environments, a 50% reduction in tuition for indigenous students in state-owned tertiary institutions, and a scholarship programme sponsoring over 200 students to study medicine, engineering, and IT-related courses in India.

In healthcare, the expansion of access through the Plateau State Contributory Healthcare Management Agency (PLASHEMA), the upgrade of medical facilities, and the solarization of primary healthcare centres are improving healthcare delivery and strengthening public health outcomes.

These investments are laying the foundation for a healthier, more educated, and more productive population.

Plateau State is rising again. Its unique natural beauty and cultural diversity remain among its greatest assets.

Through strategic investments in tourism infrastructure and cultural promotion, the administration is restoring iconic attractions and reviving the sector as a catalyst for economic growth.

Projects at the Jos Wildlife Park, Hill Station Resort, and other tourism assets are attracting renewed attention while reinforcing Plateau's status as one of Nigeria's most attractive destinations.

Perhaps the most defining characteristic of Governor Mutfwang's administration is its commitment to servant leadership.

His governance style is marked by humility, accessibility, inclusiveness, and an unwavering dedication to the welfare of the people.

His leadership continues to inspire confidence among citizens, development partners, investors, and stakeholders within and beyond Plateau State.

As we celebrate Democracy Day, we recognize that the true strength of democracy lies not only in the ballot but also in the quality of leadership it produces.

Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang has demonstrated that democratic leadership can be compassionate, visionary, accountable, and transformative.

The progress recorded across Plateau State over the past three years reflects what is possible when leadership is driven by integrity, competence, and genuine concern for the people.

On this historic occasion, we salute His Excellency for his steadfast commitment to the ideals of democracy and his tireless efforts in building a peaceful, prosperous, and united Plateau State.

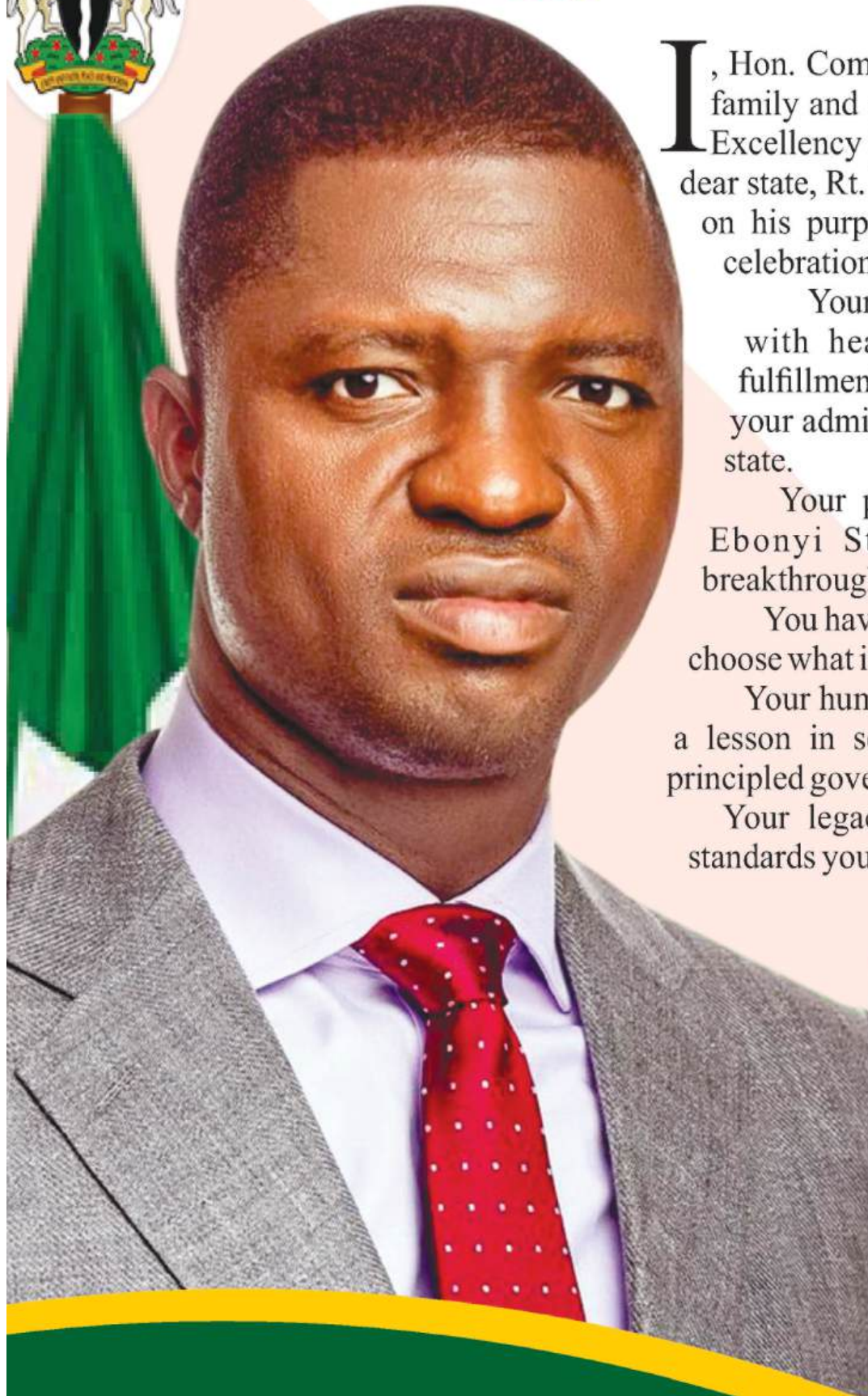
Happy Democracy Day, Nigeria.

Happy Democracy Day, Plateau State.



Signed:
Dr. Kachollom Pyam Gang
Chairman, Forum of Commissioners
Plateau State

Congratulations YOUR EXCELLENCY



I, Hon. Commissioner Ministry of Works Ebonyi State, my family and staff of the Ministry heartily felicitate with His Excellency the pragmatic and democratic Governor of our dear state, Rt. Hon. Bldr Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru GGCEHF on his purposeful 3rd year in office and democracy day celebration.

Your Excellency, it is yet another time to celebrate with heartfelt gratitude to God Almighty for the fulfillment of the People's Charter of Needs Mandate of your administration which has impacted positively on the state.

Your progressive stewardship in the governance of Ebonyi State is marked by uncommon courage, breakthroughs and humility.

You have steered the ship of the state with firm resolve to choose what is right over what is merely convenient.

Your humanitarian, leadership style and prowess became a lesson in service, accountability in office, and practical principled governance.

Your legacy endures in the lives you shaped and the standards you set.



**HIS EXCELLENCY, RT. HON.
FRANCIS OGBONNA NWIFURU,
FNIOB, FCAI, GGCEHF
Governor, Ebonyi State**

**ENGR. STANLEY LEBECHI MBAM,
Hon. Commissioner**



TAJBank's success and the case for Islamic Banking in Nigeria

THE remarkable financial performance posted by TAJBank in its 2025 regulatory-approved financial statements is more than a corporate success story. It is a powerful validation of the principles of Islamic banking and the broader non-interest financial system as a viable, resilient and socially responsible alternative within Nigeria's financial architecture.

For years, non-interest banking in Nigeria was misunderstood, often viewed narrowly through a religious lens rather than appreciated for its economic and developmental value. Today, the numbers tell a different story. TAJBank's growth from ₦953 billion in assets to ₦1.34 trillion, its 74 percent increase in profit before tax, and the extraordinary 144 percent growth in shareholders' funds demonstrate that ethical banking is not merely an idealistic concept—it is a profitable and sustainable business model.

At its core, Islamic banking is founded on principles that promote fairness, transparency, risk-sharing and asset-backed financing. Unlike conventional systems that largely depend on interest-based transactions, non-interest finance seeks to connect financial activities with the real economy. Funds are channelled into productive ventures, trade, manufacturing, agriculture and entrepreneurship rather than speculative activities that often create economic distortions.

The success of TAJBank provides compelling evidence that these principles are not only compatible with modern banking but can thrive within one of Africa's largest and most competitive financial markets.

Nigeria today faces a multitude of economic challenges. Rising inflation, unemployment, foreign exchange volatility, widening poverty levels and limited access to finance continue to constrain economic growth. In such circumstances, a banking system that prioritises productive investments, responsible financing and financial inclusion deserves serious attention from policymakers and regulators.

The Islamic finance model offers exactly that.

One of the most important contributions of non-interest banking is its ability to expand financial inclusion. Millions of Nigerians remain outside the formal banking sector for various reasons, including distrust of conventional banking products, lack of suitable financial services and limited access to credit. Islamic banking provides an alternative pathway that accommodates individuals and businesses seeking ethical financial solutions.

TAJBank's growth suggests that Nigerians are increasingly embracing this alternative, not necessarily because of religion, but because of its value proposition. Customers are

...Islamic banking and non-interest finance are no longer fringe concepts. They are practical tools capable of mobilising capital, expanding financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable development

discovering that non-interest banking offers competitive products, robust digital services and financing structures aligned with responsible business practices.

This trend should encourage regulators to deepen support for the sector. The Central Bank of Nigeria, Securities and Exchange Commission and other stakeholders must continue to strengthen frameworks that support non-interest financial institutions, Sukuk issuance, Islamic investment funds and other ethical finance instruments.

The success of Sukuk bonds in funding critical infrastructure projects across Nigeria already demonstrates the enormous potential of Islamic finance beyond banking. Roads, schools and public facilities financed through Sukuk have shown that non-interest financial instruments can play a significant role in national development.

Another lesson from

TAJBank's performance is the importance of trust and governance. The bank's 30 percent capital adequacy ratio, well above regulatory requirements, signals prudence and financial discipline. In an era where confidence remains the most valuable currency in banking, institutions that demonstrate transparency, accountability and strong risk management are more likely to earn lasting customer loyalty.

This is particularly important because Islamic banking is not simply about avoiding interest. It is about promoting ethical conduct in financial transactions. It seeks to create a system where profits are earned through legitimate economic activity and where financial institutions share in both opportunities and risks.

Such values resonate strongly

Emir names Muhammad Dasuki 13th Chief Imam of Ilorin *Gov lauds appointment

By Demola Akinyemi

FIVE Months after the passing of Chief Imam of Ilorin, the Emir of Ilorin and Chairman of Kwara State Traditional Rulers, Mai-Martaba Alhaji (Dr.) Ibrahim Sulu-Gambari, has approved the appointment of Sheikh Muhammad Bashir Dasuki Imam Fulani as the 13th Chief Imam of Ilorin Emirate.

Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has commended the choice, describing the young scholar as a fitting leader and urging the people of Ilorin to rally around him.

This was contained in a statement issued Wednesday evening by the Emir's spokesman, Dr. Abdulazeez Arowona.

According to the statement, the appointment followed a rigorous selection process in which Sheikh Muhammad Bashir Dasuki Imam Fulani emerged as the preferred candidate among several

in a society seeking greater accountability in both public and private sectors.

Critics have often argued that non-interest banking occupies only a niche segment of the financial market. TAJBank's latest results challenge that assumption. A bank with over ₦1.34 trillion in assets and consistent profitability can no longer be regarded as peripheral. The sector has moved beyond experimentation and is now proving its commercial relevance.

Yet, the future potential remains even greater. Nigeria has one of the largest untapped Islamic finance markets in the world. With a population exceeding 200 million people, a significant infrastructure deficit and growing demand for alternative financing models, the opportunities are immense.

To unlock this potential, there must be greater public education about what Islamic banking truly represents. Non-interest banking is not exclusive to Muslims. Around the world, ethical banking products attract customers from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds because they emphasise transparency, social responsibility and real-sector investment.

Indeed, the growing global interest in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investing reflects many of the same values

that have long underpinned Islamic finance.

TAJBank's achievement should therefore be viewed as a signal to the entire financial industry. It demonstrates that profitability and ethics are not mutually exclusive. A bank can grow rapidly, reward shareholders, support businesses and contribute to national development while adhering to principles of fairness and social responsibility.

As Nigeria searches for innovative solutions to its economic challenges, policymakers should recognise that Islamic banking and non-interest finance are no longer fringe concepts. They are practical tools capable of mobilising capital, expanding financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable development.

TAJBank's impressive performance is not merely a triumph for one institution. It is a testament to the growing maturity of Nigeria's non-interest financial sector and a reminder that the future of banking may well lie in models that place ethics, inclusion and real economic value at the centre of finance.

The message from TAJBank's 2025 results is clear: Islamic banking has come of age in Nigeria, and its best days may still lie ahead.

distinguished scholars vying for the prestigious spiritual leadership position.

The appointment comes five months after the passing of the revered Chief Imam, Alhaji (Dr.) Muhammad Bashir Imam, OON, who died on January 19, 2026.

Sheikh Muhammad Bashir Dasuki, 42, is a grandson of the 8th Chief Imam of Ilorin, Sheikh Ibrahim Dasuki Imam Fulani Agaka, and son of the 10th Chief Imam, Sheikh Maliki bn Dasuki Agaka.

Before his appointment, Sheikh Dasuki founded and managed Darul Bisharah Arabic and Islamic Studies, Airport Egbejila, Ilorin. He also served as Imam at Afusat Oloriege Memorial Mosque, Oko Olowo, Ilorin, and presented the Al-Bisharah Islamic Foundation Radio Program on Radio Kwara during Ramadan. He teaches at Darul Kitab College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Gaa Akanbi, Ilorin.

Academically, Sheikh Dasuki



**The new Chief Imam of Ilorin, Sheikh Muhammad Bashir Dasuki Imam Fulani*

holds a Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Shari'ah from Al-Azhar University, Cairo (2014), a Diploma in Arabic Islamic Education from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Islamic Studies at Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

The Emir offered prayers for the new Chief Imam's successful reign, wishing him long life, sound health, and divine wisdom to lead the Muslim Ummah effectively.

In a related development, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq congratulated Sheikh Dasuki on his appointment. In a statement issued by his Deputy Chief Press Secretary, Moshood Agboola, the Governor praised the Emir's choice of a "young and vibrant Azhari scholar" to assume such a significant responsibility.

"The choice reflects our community's commitment, under His Royal Highness, to mobilise different demographics of the Muslim Ummah for greater good and development," the Governor said. He prayed for Allah's guidance and protection for the new Chief Imam and urged the community to support him in the service of the Ummah.



The Chairman/CEO, National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON), Ambassador Ismail Abba Yusuf received a delegation from Indonesia's Hajj Financial Management Agency (BPKH), led by Prof. Arif Mufraini, on a courtesy and collaboration visit at the Commission's office in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, recently.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Interim Forfeiture

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
 IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
 HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT
 ON MONDAY THE 25TH DAY OF MAY, 2026
 BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP HONOURABLE JUSTICE ADAMU TURAKI MOHAMMED
 (JUDGE)
 SUIT NO: FHC/PH/MISC/248/2026

BETWEEN:

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE EFCC

= APPLICANT

AND

- 1. THANKGOD PROPERTY
- 2. VICTOR CHISOM AGOMUO

RESPONDENTS

ORDER

UPON THE EX-PARTE ORIGINATING SUMMONS dated 11th day of May and filed on the 12th day of May, 2026 on behalf of the Applicant praying this Honourable Court for the following:

1. AN ORDER of this Honourable Court granting an interim forfeiture of the properties (pieces/parcels of land set out in the schedule attached herein, to the Federal Government of Nigeria.
2. AN ORDER of this Honourable Court directing the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to make publication in any national Newspaper and/or the EFCC website the enrolled order of interim forfeiture giving any person, body corporate who may have interest in the properties (pieces/parcels of land listed in the schedule to this application to show cause within 14 days of the publication why the properties should not be forfeited finally/absolutely to the Federal Government of Nigeria.

MUSA NURAH-B

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
 FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIG.
 DIVISION
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
 PORT HARCOURT DIVISION
 CASHIER'S OFFICE
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26
 NWACHUKWU PROGRESS N.

SCHEDULE

| S/N | DESCRIPTION | QUANTITY | LOCATION |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 1. | A piece/parcel of Land known as TPL-AV Plot No. 004 Aviva Estate, Rumuekini, with Survey Beacon No. SC/CP 7910, SC/CP 7911, SC/CP 7912 & SC/CP 7913 in a Survey Plan No. CAA/RS/2024/SP251 dated 03/09/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Chimeka A. Amadi of Adison Surveys & Engr. Services Nig. Ltd | 1 (one) piece/parcel of land measuring 450.00 sq. mtrs | Rumuekini, Obio/Akpor LGA, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. |
| 2. | A piece/parcel of Land known as TPL-HE Plot No. 044 Hallel Estate, Ohia Egbelu, Abara, with Survey Beacon No. SC/CC 7696, SC/CC 7695, SC/CC 7687 & SC/CC 7688 in a Survey plan No. RV/4087/2024/003A/034 dated 09/08/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Emma-Wele J.C of Godiam Global Ltd. | 1 (one) piece/parcel of land measuring 719.71 sq. mtrs | Ohia Egbelu, Abara, Etche LGA, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. |
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FEDERAL HIGH COURT
 PORT HARCOURT DIVISION
 CASHIER'S OFFICE
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26
 NWACHUKWU PROGRESS N.

| | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| | 1409 & SP/JE 1410 in a Survey Plan No. RV/4087/2024/TPL-BC/003 dated 20/08/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Emma-Wele J.C of Godiam Global Ltd | | |
| 4. | A piece/parcel of Land known as TPL-he Plots No. 046 Hallel Estate, Ohia Egbelu, Abara, with Survey Beacon No. SC/CC 7693, SC/CC 7694, SC/CC 7694 & SC/CC 7697 in a Survey plan No. RV/4087/2024/003A/036 dated 06/09/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Emma-Wele J.C of Godiam Global Ltd. | 1 (one) piece/parcel of land measuring 465.00 sq. mtrs | Ohia Egbelu, Abara, Etche LGA, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. |
| 5. | A piece/parcel of Land known as TPL-CL Plot No. 096-101 Campus-Layout, Ohia Uzor-Nmesu umunwaku-Umuekweku with Survey Beacon No. SC/CP 7898, SC/CP 7899, SC/CP 7900 & SC/CP 7901 in a Survey Plan No. CAA/RS/2024/003A/036 dated 02/09/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Chimeka A. Amadi of Adison Surveys * Engr. Services Nig. Ltd. | 1 (one) piece/parcel of land measuring 2675.02 sq. mtrs | Ohia Uzor-Nmesu Umunwaku LGA, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. |

3. AND for such further or other Orders as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances of this case.

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 FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIG.
 DIVISION
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26
MUSA NURAH-B

UPON READING the 4 paragraph affidavit deposited to by ANAS FARUK and filed at the Court Registry.

AND AFTER HEARING KHADIJEH ABDULSADAM YUNUS ESQ. appears for the Applicant moved the motion paper and urge the Honourable Court to grant same.

Parties absent

IT IS ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

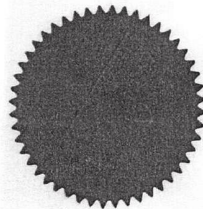
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SCHEDULE

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[Signature]

HON. JUSTICE A. T MOHAMMED
 (PRESIDING JUDGE)



CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
 FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIG.
 DIVISION
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26
MUSA NURAH-B

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
 PORT HARCOURT DIVISION
 CASHIER'S OFFICE
 Sign: *[Signature]*
 Date: 3/6/26
 NWACHUKWU PROGRESS N.

Winners emerge at Rexona consumer promotion

Get tickets to watch FIFA World Cup 2026 matches

By Efe Onodjaj

UNILEVER Nigeria Plc has officially announced the winners of the Rexona FIFA World Cup 2026™ Consumer promotion, giving loyal consumers of its leading deodorant brand, Rexona, the chance to experience the

excitement of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ live in Vancouver, Canada.

The ticket presentation ceremony, held at Prince Ebeano Supermarket, Ikeja, marked the successful conclusion of the consumer promotion designed to

reward loyal customers who purchased Rexona products. Under the campaign structure, consumers who purchased three Rexona aerosol products were eligible for the grand prize, while all participating shoppers also received guaranteed rewards.

Winners emerged from the promotional draw after meeting the purchase criteria, with their prize packages fully sponsored by Rexona. The rewards included return flight tickets, accommodation, match tickets and other travel arrangements, offering them a memorable FIFA World Cup 2026™ experience.

Speaking at the event, Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Sustainability, Unilever Nigeria Plc, Zainab Obagun, stated that the FIFA World Cup 2026™ Consumer promotion sponsored by Rexona reflects Unilever's commitment to building stronger connections with consumers through initiatives that reward loyalty and create memorable experiences.

Obagun noted that the promotion underscores the importance of partnerships within the retail ecosystem, emphasizing that collaborations with trade partners remain essential for delivering value to consumers nationwide.

"At Unilever, we believe our relationship with consumers goes beyond providing quality products. It is about creating meaningful experiences and rewarding the trust they place in our brands every day. This presentation demonstrates that when we make a promise to our consumers, we fulfill it. We remain committed to creating value for Nigerian consumers while strengthening our partnerships with retailers and trade partners across the country," she said.

Also speaking, Brand Manager, Rexona, Olaide Olumide, explained that the campaign was inspired by the success of previous football-focused consumer activations and forms part of Rexona's broader strategy to deepen engagement with consumers through passion points that resonate strongly with them. Olumide added that the emergence of winners and the presentation of prizes validate the integrity of the campaign and encourage continued participation with future brand initiatives and promotions.

"Rexona is a performance-focused brand globally, and football provides the perfect platform to demonstrate what performance means. Following our successful partnerships with CAF during AFCON and WAFCON, where we rewarded consumers with unique football experiences, this promotion around the FIFA World Cup 2026 represents an even bigger opportunity to celebrate and reward our loyal consumers.

CLASSIFIED

CORRECTION OF NAME/DATE OF BIRTH
OJIEH - I formerly known and addressed as Godspower Ojeh Ojeh now wish to be known and addressed as Ojeh Godspower. My date of birth which was written as 11th day of April 1957 should be corrected as 15th day of March 1957. All documents bearing my former name and date of birth remain valid. The general public to please take note.

CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH
I, FESTUS ELIZABETH hereby attest that my correct date of birth is 15th day of December 1980 but was wrongly captured as 10th day of June 1968. All documents remain valid, general public take note.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Charity Chibuzor Daigbe, now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs. **Charity Chibuzor Aniemeke**. All former documents remain valid. General public, authorities, institutions, Please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME
I FORMERLY KNOWN AS JOHN CAROLINE NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AS LALA TRAORE. MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 12TH APRIL 1983 NOT 24TH NOVEMBER 1979. FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE

LOSS OF PROPERTY DOCUMENT

I, OLUGBENGA ADENUBI, male, Christian, Nigerian and a businessman of No 31 Jones Waribi Street/No. 20 Alhaji Yusuf Street, Olodi Apapa, Lagos do make oath and state that, my landed property in the above address was purchased from the Oluwa Chieftaincy family sometime in the year 1977 and I later built a one (1) storey building on it. At the time of purchasing the said property, we executed a deed of Lease for 99 (Ninety Nine) years which instrument is registered as No. 40 at page 40 in volume 1600 of the Lagos Land Registry in the office at Lagos. That the said original document got lost in transit and all efforts put in place to locate it proved abortive, that the general public should please take note.

PBAT DOOR-TO-DOOR MOVEMENT FELICITATES PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU, GCFR, AND ALL NIGERIANS ON DEMOCRACY DAY 2026

On behalf of the Patron of the PBAT Door-to-Door Movement, High Chief Government Owezide Ekpemupolo (Tompolo), the National Coordinator, Comrade Sunday Adekanbi Asuku, and our members across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, I heartily congratulate His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, and all Nigerians on the occasion of the Democracy day.

June 12 reminds us of the sacrifices made by our heroes and heroines who stood firmly for justice, freedom, and the preservation of democratic values. As we commemorate this historic day, we honour their legacy and recommit ourselves to the ideals of democracy, good governance, national unity, and inclusive development.

As a grassroots movement dedicated to citizen engagement and democratic participation, the PBAT Door-to-Door Movement calls on all Nigerians to continue supporting the democratic process, uphold peace and unity, and work together towards building a nation that guarantees opportunity, security, and prosperity for all.

On this special occasion, we pray for God's continued guidance, wisdom, and strength upon President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR and all leaders at every level of government. We also pray for lasting peace, stability, and progress of our dear nation.

Signed:
Comrade Oluwatosin Daniel
National Secretary
PBAT Door-to-Door Movement

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--|
| | CAA/RS/2024/SP251 dated 03/09/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Chimeka A. Amadi of Adison Surveys & Engr. Services Nig. Ltd | | |
| 2. | A piece/parcel of Land known as TPL-HE Plot No. 044 Hallel Estate, Ohia Egbelu, Abara, with Survey Beacon No. SC/CC 7696, SC/CC 7695, SC/CC 7687 & SC/CC 7688 in a Survey plan No. RV/4087/2024/003A/034 dated 09/08/2024 prepared by Surveyor, Emma-Wele J.C of Godiam Global Ltd. | 1 (one) piece/parcel of land measuring 719.71 sq. mtrs | Ohia Egbelu, Abara, Etche LGA, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. |
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MMSAW/HA-B-P

 CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
 FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIG.
 DIVISION
 Sign: Nwachukwu C. Umeh
 Date: 25/05/2026

| | | | |
|----|---|---|--|
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- Hearing Notice to issue.
- Case is adjourned to 7 - 7 - 2026 for report.

ISSUED AT PORT HARCOURT under the Seal of the Court and the Hand of the Presiding Judge, this 25th day of May, 2026.

NWACHUKWU C. UMEH
 REGISTRAR

MMSAW/HA-B-P

 CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
 FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIG.
 DIVISION
 Sign: Nwachukwu C. Umeh
 Date: 25/05/2026

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
 PORT HARCOURT DIVISION
 CASHIER'S OFFICE

 NWACHUKWU PROGRESS N.



STATE POLICE: Reps pass Bill, scales second reading in Senate

Continues from Page 5

Constitution or National Assembly Act).

• Similar functions within a State to the extent the State has legislative power under the Constitution.

Key safeguard against federal overreach (Section 214(6)):

The Federal Police shall not interfere with State Police operations or a State's internal security affairs except in these limited cases:

• To contain serious threats where there is a complete breakdown of law and order and the State Police is unable to respond.

When the Governor requests intervention

• When a State Police is unable to function due to administrative, financial, or other problems.

Any such intervention requires prior approval by the National Police Council.

Federal Capital Territory (FCT): Fully under the jurisdiction and operational control of the Federal Police.

3. Leadership and Command (New Section 215)

• Federal Police: Headed by the Inspector-General of Police (IGP).

• Appointed by the President on the advice of the National Police Council, from serving members of the Federal Police.

• Subject to confirmation by the National Assembly.

• The IGP has command over the entire Federal Police, including contingents in States.

• The President (or authorised Minister) may give lawful directions on public safety and order; the IGP must comply.

• State Police: Headed by a Commissioner of Police (CP).

• Appointed by the Governor on the advice of the National Police Council, from serving members of the State Police.

• Subject to confirmation by the State House of Assembly.

• The Governor (or authorised Commissioner) may give lawful directions on public safety and order; the CP must comply.

• If the CP believes a direction is unlawful or contradicts general policing standards, the matter can be referred to the National Police Council (whose decision is final).

4. Removal of Top Officers (New Section 216)

• IGP: Removed only by the President on the recommendation of the National Police Council for specified grounds (grave misconduct, breach of Police Act/Regulations/Code of Conduct, con-

viction for fraud/dishonesty, bankruptcy, or mental incapacity). Requires two-thirds majority approval of the National Assembly.

• State Commissioner of Police: Removed only by the Governor on the recommendation of the National Police Council for similar grounds. Requires two-thirds majority approval of the State House of Assembly.

5. Funding Support (New Section 216A)

The Federal Government shall provide grants or aids to State Police on the recommendation of the National Police Council, subject to approval by the National Assembly.

6. Oversight Bodies

National Police Council (restructured and renamed from the old Nigeria Police Council; new composition and expanded functions in Third Schedule):

• Broad membership including: Chairman (Presidential appointee confirmed by NA), Attorney-General of the Federation, serving senior Federal Police officer, Attorneys-General of all States, retired Commissioners of Police (one per geopolitical zone), representatives of NHRC, Public Complaints Commission, NLC, NBA, NUJ, and Traditional Rulers' Councils.

• Key functions: Appointment and discipline of Federal Police officers (except IGP); recommending State top officers (CP, DCP, ACP) to Governors based on State PSC lists; supervising Federal and State Police activities (within constitutional limits); setting standards for training, intelligence, forensics; assisting State Police on request.

State Police Service Commission (new body established for each State in Third Schedule, Part II):

• Composition: Chairman (appointed by Governor, confirmed by State HA), representatives of NHRC, Public Complaints Commission, NLC, NBA, NUJ, retired Assistant Commissioners of Police (one per senatorial district), and Traditional Rulers' Council.

• Functions: Recommending three qualified candidates for CP/DCP/ACP to the National Police Council; appointment, discipline, and removal of State Police officers below the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police; other functions as prescribed by Constitution or National Assembly Act.

7. Legislative Framework (Second Schedule – Concurrent Legislative List)



From left, Representative of WHO Country Representative in Nigeria, Dr Oluwafunke Odunlade; Director-General of National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), Dr Temitope Ilori; President Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (NEPWHAN), Mr Abdulkadir Ibrahim and representative of the Chief Executives of the States Agencies for the Control of AIDS, Dr Doris John, during the unveiling of the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (NSP) 2026-2030, in Abuja, yesterday. NAN PHOTO.

• National Assembly may make laws on: establishment/organisation/administration/powers/duties of Federal Police; powers/duties of State Police; national minimum standards for both; policing standards, inspection, certification, complaints mechanisms, criminal information systems, inter-governmental cooperation, federal intervention, use of force, fire-

arms, grants, and accountability.

• State Houses of Assembly may make laws for the establishment, organisation, administration, funding, and oversight of their State Police — but must comply with the Constitution and valid National Assembly Acts.

• States may set higher standards than national minimums but not lower.

• National Assembly laws cannot give federal authorities routine command, deployment, appointment, promotion, transfer, discipline, or control over State Police personnel (except for explicitly authorised federal intervention).

8. Other related changes

• Updates to various constitutional provisions (e.g., Sections 34, 35, 39, 42, 84, 89, 129, 153) to replace ref-

erences to "Nigeria Police Force" with appropriate "Police", "Federal Police", or "State Police" terminology.

• Exclusive Legislative List adjustments (e.g., light arms for policing purposes; fingerprints/biometrics/forensics shared with State Police; Federal Police listed separately).

• Consequential amendments to the Third Schedule for the new bodies and their compositions/powers.

JUNE 12: Fubara, Oborewori hail Nigerians on Democracy Day

● **Democracy not delivering for Nigerians, ADC says**

By Daniel Abia & Luminous Jannamike

Governors Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers State and Sheriff Oborewori of Delta State, have congratulated Nigerians on the occasion of the 2026 Democracy Day celebration, expressing optimism that the nation's democratic journey would usher in greater prosperity and development of the country and all citizens.

This came as the African Democratic Congress, ADC, said Nigeria's democracy was failing to deliver security, economic relief and accountable governance, arguing that many Nigerians were worse off despite 27 years of uninterrupted civilian rule and three years into the administration of President Bola Tinubu.

Fubara in a goodwill message to Nigerians said: "June

12 is a reminder of the price paid for the democracy we enjoy today. The sacrifices made by Chief MKO Abiola, Kudirat Abiola, and many other patriots who laid the foundation for the democratic journey we continue to enjoy today. Their commitment to the principle that power must ultimately reside with the people remains a source of inspiration for every generation of Nigerians.

"Our democratic journey has not been without difficulties, but the resilience of our institutions and the determination of our people have kept the nation moving forward. The ability to express differing opinions, engage in constructive debate, and peacefully choose leaders through the ballot remains one of the greatest achievements of our nation," he said.

Oborewori in a statement, yesterday by his Chief Press Sec-

retary, Sir Festus Ahon, commended Nigerians for their unwavering commitment to democratic ideals and constitutional governance despite the challenges confronting the nation.

According to him, Democracy Day provides an opportunity for reflection on the nation's progress, strengthening of democratic institutions and collective responsibility of citizens and leaders in building a more united and prosperous country.

He urged Nigerians to continue supporting democratic institutions and leaders at all levels, while embracing peace, tolerance and national unity as essential ingredients for sustainable development.

Democracy not delivering for Nigerians, ADC says

ADC in an open letter to Nige-

YILWATDA TO NIGERIANS: Protect democracy, support Tinubu's reforms

ABUJA — The National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, APC, Prof Nentawe Yilwatda, has called on Nigerians to safeguard the country's democratic gains and support the ongoing reforms of President Bola Tinubu, saying they are critical to building a stronger and more prosperous nation.

In a Democracy Day message, Yilwatda urged citizens to reflect on the significance of June 12 and recommit themselves to the ideals of unity, patriotism, good governance and national development.

Describing June 12 as a landmark in Nigeria's democratic history, the APC chairman said the date symbolizes the courage and sacrifices of patriots who fought for justice, electoral integrity and the sovereignty of the

Nigerian people.

According to him, Democracy Day serves as a reminder of the nation's collective struggle for freedom, representative government and the right of citizens to determine their future through democratic means.

"Democracy Day is not merely another public holiday; it is a solemn reminder of our collective struggle for freedom, representative government, and the right of every Nigerian to determine the destiny of our nation through democratic means," he said.

Yilwatda noted that the annual observance provides an opportunity for Nigerians to assess the country's democratic journey and renew their commitment to protecting institutions that sustain constitutional governance.

He said democracy has cre-

ated avenues for peaceful political participation, accountability, protection of fundamental rights and citizen involvement in nation-building.

The APC chairman stressed that the sacrifices made by pro-democracy activists and other democratic heroes must not be forgotten, warning against actions capable of undermining the nation's constitutional order.

"Every generation has a responsibility to defend democracy. The sacrifices made by our democratic heroes should never be forgotten, nor should we allow actions capable of undermining our constitutional order," he stated.

He called on political leaders, civil society organisations, the media, religious bodies, youth groups and other stakeholders to promote dialogue, tolerance, respect for the rule of law and peaceful participation in the democratic process.

AIRWATCH

Naira appreciates to N1,390 /\$ in parallel market

By Elizabeth Adegbesan

The Naira yesterday appreciated to N1,390 per dollar in the parallel market from N1,400 per dollar on Wednesday. However, the naira depreciated to N1,365.4 per dollar in the Nigerian Foreign Exchange Market, NFEM. Data from the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, showed that the indicative exchange rate for the market rose to N1,365.4 per dollar from N1,363 per dollar on Wednesday, indicating N2.4 depreciation for the naira.

Consequently, the margin between the parallel and official markets narrowed to N24.6 per dollar from N37 per dollar on Wednesday.

The turnover in the interbank foreign exchange fell by 6.63 percent to N70.4 million from N75.4 million recorded the previous day.

CHANGE OF NAME

| AJISOLA | EGABOR | ODOKOR | AZATA |
|---|--|--|---|
| My name was wrongly written on my WAEC as AJISOLA OLUWANIFEMI. My correct name is AJISOLA OLUWANIFEMI MARY. All former documents remain valid. General public, Schools should take note. | Formerly known as EGABOR WINIFRED OTSELU. Now wish to be known called and addressed as UNOKHOGIE WINIFRED OTSELU. All former documents remain valid general public take note. | I, formerly known as ODOKOR PATIENCE DEBORAH and ODOKOR DEBORAH UTEME, now wish to be known and addressed as ODOKOR PATIENCE. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | I, formerly known and addressed as AZATA GODSTIME but now wish to be known, called and addressed as AZATA GODSTIME IRUOGHENE. All former documents remain valid, General Public notice. |
| NGOZI | OLATUNDE | AGUOKURHOB | MMEZE |
| I formerly known as OKECHUKWU NGOZI NJIDEKA now wish to be known as UCHE NGOZI NJIDEKA former documents remain valid. General public take note | My name was captured in my BVN as Oikpo Olatunde Ayama instead of Oikpo Olatunde Ayama Lincoln. All former documents remain valid. General public and to whom it may concern to please take note. | I, formerly known as AGUOKURHOB CHRISTINA, now wish to be known and addressed as AGUOKORHOB CHRISTIANA. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | I, formerly known and addressed as MMEZE MBANEFO LINUS, now wish to be known and addressed as MMEZE LINUS MBANEFO. All former documents remain valid, general public take note. |
| CHIBUIKE | ODUAH | LAURA | OKOLI |
| I, formerly called chibuike Anyigor now wish to be known and addressed as CHIBUIKE JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. General public take note. | I, formerly known, called and addressed as ODUAH SARAH OBIANULO, now wish to be known, called and addressed as MRS JOHN SARAH henceforth. All documents bearing my former name remains valid. I depose to this affidavit for record purposes and for the information of the general public and any authority it may concern to please take note. | I, formerly known as MISS OMASAJOGHO LAURA ONOME and MISS ONOME OMASAJOGHO, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. ERHIMA ONOME LAURA. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | I, formerly known as MISS. OKOLI KOSISOCHUKWU PEACE. Now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. OKONKWO KOSISOCHUKWU PEACE. All former documents remain valid. General Public Take Note. |
| VERONICA | ELISHA | ANYANWU | YAHTIM |
| I formerly known and addressed as MISS. OLUWATOSIN VERONICA OYATOGUN, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. OLUWATOSIN ALIYAH FATAI. All other documents bearing my former name - MISS. OLUWATOSIN VERONICA OYATOGUN shall remain valid, general public take note. | I formerly known, called and addressed as CHAYA AMAKA ELISHA, now wish to be known, called and addressed as ATIGA AMAKAHINO ELISHA. All documents bearing my former name remains valid. General public should please take note. | I, formerly known as MISS ANYANWU MIRACLE CHINONSO AND ANYANWU ANIACHINONSO, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS OKECHUKWU MIRACLE CHINONSO. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | My name appeared in Account/BVN as MAMTUR YAHTIM MAMJI. Now wish to remove MAMJI and correct YAHTIM as YAKTIM to be known as MAMTUR YAKTIM in my bank details. All former documents remain valid. General Public Take Note. |
| ANOZIE | PEGGY | AYODELE | OGUN |
| I was formally known as: Miss. ANOZIE QUEEN OBIAGERI, BUT NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS: MRS. OYIBOJOBA QUEEN OBIAGERI. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID, THE GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE. | I formerly known as MRS. ENAMHANYE PEGGY ALINA, now wish to be known and addressed as MS. BOTRAND PEGGY ALINE. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and general public should please take note | I, formerly known and addressed as AYODELE GRACE IYABO. Now wish to be known, called and addressed as AYODELE GRACE YETUNDE. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | I, FORMERLY CALLED MISS OGUN PRISCILLIA OKERICHA NOW WISH TO BE CALLED MRS UDUEBHOLO PRISCILLIA OKERICHA. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. CONCERNED AUTHORITIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE. |
| ABEDNEGO | OKORO | SARAH | BARRY |
| I wish to confirm that the correct arrangement of my names is GUWAKUMOR ABEDNEGO WILLIAM which was wrongly Arranged in My BVN as GUWAKUMOR WILLIAM ABEDNEGO instead of the correct arrangement of my names GUWAKUMOR ABEDNEGO WILLIAM. general public take note. | I, formally known and addressed as OKORO JONATHAN OBIANURI, OKORO JONATHAN UCHE and OKORO JONATHAN U, now wish to be known and addressed as OKORO JONATHAN. All formal documents remain valid. General public pls take note | I, formerly known and addressed as MRS SARAH EDOROR now wish to be known and addressed as MISS SARAH AGHO ORONSAYE. All former documents remain valid. General public take note | I, formerly known, called and addressed as BARRY JESSICA, I now wish to be known, called and addressed as BARRY ISIOMA JESSICA, all former documents remain valid general public please take note. |
| OLADIPO | IYAGUADE | AISHATU | ONYIA |
| I, formerly known called and addressed as. OLADIPO AFEZ ADEMOLA. But now wish to be known called and address as. OLADIPO AFEZ ADEMOLA ORITSEMEYIWA. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public and AUTHORITIES concerned please take note. | That my surname was wrongly captured on my Bvn platform and account as IYAGUADE instead IYAGUADE. I now wish to be known and addressed as IYAGUADE ODOGU. That IYAGUADE is my surname while ODOGU is my first name. All former documents remain valid, general public should please take note | I, formerly known as WUSHISHI AISHATU INUWA now wish to be known and addressed as WUSHISHI AISHA LARAI. All former documents remain valid. General public and concerned authority take note. | That in my BVN DETAILS and BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS, my name was wrongly captured as, ONYIA OWAH MARTINS instead of, ONYIA OWA. That my true and correct name is, ONYIA OWA. former documents remain valid, general public and whom it may concern to please take note. |
| SALAMI | CHARITY | OSUKOYA | ONYEKACHI |
| I, formerly known called and addressed as. SALAMI ABIDEMI MUJIDAT But now wish to be known called and address as. SALAMI ABIDEMI ORISTEMAJEMITE MUJIDAT. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public and AUTHORITIES concerned please take note. | That during my account opening and Bvn Registration exercise i used the name ANIEFUNA CHARITY omitting my middle name UJU. I wish to add my middle name to my account/Bvn. I now wish to be known, and addressed as ANIEFUNA CHARITY UJU. All former documents remain valid, general public should please take note | I, formerly known as OSUKOYA OLUWASEGUN OLUWASEGUN now wish to be known and addressed as OLUWASEGUN OLUWASEGUN MARCUS. All former documents remain valid. General public and concerned authority take note. | That in my BVN DETAILS and BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS, my name was wrongly spelled as, ONYEKACHI CHIMA OBI GODSTIME instead of, ONYEKACHUKWU CHIMAOBI GODSTIME. That my true and correct name is, ONYEKACHUKWU CHIMAOBI GODSTIME. former documents remain valid, general public please take note. |
| THERESA | DENNIS | CHIEMERIE | OKORO |
| My name was wrongly written as Imarhiagbe Theresa Olehemem, instead of my correct name as Imarhiagbe Theresa Olehemem. All documents remain valid. General public take note. | That I was formerly known, called and addressed as FAVOUR DENNIS. I now wish to be known, called and addressed as BASSEY FAVOUR DENNIS. All former documents remain valid, general public should please take note | I, formerly known as CHIMECHEFULAM CHIEMERIE JOANNES now wish to be known and addressed as OBIAKO CHIEMERIE JOANNES. All former documents remain valid. General public and concerned authority take note. | I, formerly known, called and addressed as MISS OKORO JOY EVELYN, I now wish to be known, called and addressed as MRS. IYOHIA JOY EVELYN, all former documents remain valid general public please take note. |
| HOPE | AMOS | EBUDOLA | JULIET |
| I, formerly known, called and addressed as ASUQUO HOPE now wish to be known, called, and addressed as ASUQUO HOPE INNOCENT. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The public should take note, please. | I FORMERLY KNOWN AS MISS AMOS LOVETH. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AS MRS OGHENEBRORHIE LOVETH. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE | I, formerly known, called and addressed as BANKOLE OYEWOLE RIAIKAT and EBUDOLA RISIKATU OYEWOLU now wish to be known, called and addressed as BANKOLE RISIKATU OYEWOLU. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and the general public should please take note. | In my Bank Account and BVN details, my name was wrongly captured as IFEANYI JULIET IBETEM instead of IFEANYI JULIET EBITE, my true and correct name is IFEANYI JULIET EBITE, all former documents remain valid general public please take note. |
| JULIET | OKEIYI | JOEL | EMEGHA |
| I, formerly known as Miss Juliet Okpe now wish to be known as Mrs Juliet Ada Adu. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note. | I, formerly known as OKEIYI CHIDINMA EUNICE, now wish to be known and addressed as ONUH CHIDINMA EUNICE. All former documents remain valid, general public should please take note. | I, formerly known, called and addressed as Mallaum Joel Buba now wish to be known, called and addressed as Joel Prince. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and the general public should please take note. | I formerly known, called and addressed as, EMEGHA JOSEPHINE, now wish to be known, called and addressed as, EBOMAH JOSEPHINE. All former documents remain valid, the general public and whom it may concern to please take note. |
| MABEL | JOY | OGUNYINKA | CHIMA |
| The name, Okitikpi Mabel on my credentials and other official documents is the same person as Ughwubrusi Okitikpi Mabel. All documents remain valid, General public should please take note. | I was formerly known and addressed as Miss Oseuke Joy Chinonyerem now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs: Ndukwe Joy Chinonyerem. All former documents remain valid. General public take note. | I, formerly known, called and addressed as OGUNYINKA EMMANUEL AYOMIDE now wish to be known, called and addressed as OLUDELE EMMANUEL AYOMIDE. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and the general public should please take note. | In my BVN details, my name was wrongly captured and arranged as ONUOHA CHIMA INNOCENT instead of CHIMA ONUOHA INNOCENT. True and correct arrangement of my name is CHIMA ONUOHA INNOCENT, all former documents remain valid general public please take note. |
| CHINASA | MERCY | OGUNYINKA | OKECHUKWU |
| I formerly known, called and addressed as JOSEPH CHINASA RUTH, now wish to be known, called and addressed as IBE CHINASA RUTH. All former documents remain valid Banks and general public please take note. | I, formerly known and addressed as BASSEY MERCY DESTINY, now wish to be known and addressed as THOMPSON MERCY DESTINY. All former documents remain valid, general public please take note. | I, formerly known, called and addressed as OGUNYINKA DAMILOLA OLUWATOYIN now wish to be known, called and addressed as OLUDELE DAMILOLA OLUWATOYIN. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and the general public should please take note. | I formerly known, called and addressed as, OKECHUKWU JULIET NKEM, now wish to be known, called and addressed as, EMMANUEL JULIET OVIA. All former documents remain valid, the general public and whom it may concern to please take note. |
| KELECHI | ROSE | EUNICE | YISA |
| I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS MISS ANIGBOGUE KELECHI MARY CYNTHIA NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS MRS OKOLIE KELECHI MARY CYNTHIA THAT ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE | I, formerly known and addressed as OKOLIE ROSE MARY, now wish to be known and addressed as OKOLIE ROSE-MARY ADAEKE. All former documents remain valid, general public please take note. | Formerly known and addressed as IHENAGWAM EUNICE CHIKAOADI, Now wish to be known and addressed as UGWU EUNICE NNENNA CHIKAOADI. All former documents remain valid general public take note. | I was formally known called and addressed as Miss. Yisa Odunayo Blessing, now wish to be known called and addressed as Mrs. Uloka Odunayo Blessing. All former documents remain valid, general public take note. |
| GEORGE | NWOKOLO | OWOLABI | GIFT |
| I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS GEORGE OLAOLUWATUNDUN MODUPE NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS EZEGO OLAOLUWATUNDUN MODUPE ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE | I, formerly known and addressed as MISS. NWOKOLO BLESSING IFEYINWA. Now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. OKOYE TREASURE IFEYINWA. All former documents remain valid. Concerned Authorities and General public should please take note. | This is to notify that on my BVN my name was wrongly captured as OWOLABI ABIDEMI instead of my correct name as OWOLABI LATI BIDEMI as correctly captured on my NIN. All former documents remain valid general public take note. | I was formally known called and addressed as Miss. Gift kwokori Oghenebukome, now wish to be known called and addressed as Mrs. Gift Stephen Awiniiki. All former documents remain valid, general public take note. |
| JANE | ANN | EDET | SOLOMON |
| I, Formerly known and addressed as NKWOCHA AKUNNA JANE, Now Wish to be known and addressed as FABIAN AKUNNA JANEFRANCES. All former documents remain valid, general public take note | I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Egbune Ann Ekene, now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs. Egim Ann Winter. All former documents remain valid. General public take note. | That on my NIN, my name was captured as EDET MARIADONATUS while in my LEE ENGINEERING documents as DONATUS MARIA EMEDIONG and in my BVN and Account as DONATUS MARIA Now wish to be known and addressed as EDET MARIADONATUS. All former documents remain valid. Banks and the general public take note. | My Bank Account/BVN details and some of my documents were wrongly captured as AKPOKOHIRE SOLOMON BUT HER NAME CHANGED TO AKPOKOHIRE OKIEMUTE SOLOMON. Public notice |
| OKOSUWEI | BLESSING | MOSES | SPACE FOR SALE |
| I FORMERLY KNOWN AS OKOSUWEI GODGIFT NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AS OKOSUWEI TAMARAEMI GODGIFT ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE | I, formerly known and addressed as Okuwepusu Blessing Ngozi, now wish to be known and addressed as Dele Blessing Chiamanda. All former documents remain valid. General public take note. | I formerly known and addressed as MOSES JEREMIAH EMUREH NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS EMUREH MOSES. All former documents remain valid. Banks and the general public please take note. | |

Insecurity: Strengthen efforts to reunite missing children with families, NBM tells govt

By Ochuko Akuopha

ASABA — THE Body of Founders, Neo Black Movement of Africa, NBM, has called on the government and relevant authorities to strengthen effort aimed at ensuring that children separated from their families through insecurity and conflict are protected and safely reunited with their families.

It also called for greater investment in educational security, stronger child protection systems and improved community vigilance.

NBM body of founders at a press conference in Asaba, Delta State, noted that no society could truly progress if it abandons its most vulnerable members.

Addressing newsmen at the press conference organised under the theme 'Bring Back Our Children and teachers', Coordinator, BOF Akpo Bodunrin

Diejomaoh said the campaign was a solemn call to conscience.

He said: "It is a humanitarian appeal born out of compassion, responsibility, and an unwavering belief that every child matters to the future of our great nation, Nigeria, and to humanity."

"Children are the greatest gift entrusted to any society. They are the carriers of our hopes, the custodians of our future, and the embodiment of tomorrow's possibilities. Yet, across our nation and indeed in many parts of the world, countless children continue to face threats that no child should ever experience."

"Some have been separated from their families through insecurity and conflict. Some have been denied the comfort of safe learning environments. Others have become victims of trafficking, exploitation, violence, neglect, and abuse."

Jobberman equips Ondo youths with skills at Career Clinic in Akure

By Esther Onyegbula

THE need to equip young people with relevant skills for a rapidly changing job market took centre stage in Akure as Jobberman, in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, hosted the Ondo edition of its Career Clinic.

The event, held at the FMT Event Centre, brought together students, graduates, job seekers, and career development experts to explore opportunities, gain practical career insights, and prepare for the future of work.

With the theme, "Blueprint for Success: Building Skills for the Future of Work," the Career Clinic provided participants with career guidance, employability training, and practical skills development to help them navigate evolving workplace realities.

In his welcome address, Country Head of Programmes at Jobberman Nigeria, Olamide Adeyeye, emphasized that achieving career success in the evolving world of work requires intentionality and strategic planning. He urged young people to be purposeful in pursuing their

aspirations and to take deliberate steps toward realizing their goals.

Adeyeye also challenged the youth to reassess their ambitions and develop clear, actionable blueprints for their future. According to him, the growth, prosperity, and sustainability of any successful nation largely depend on the vision, preparedness, and contributions of its younger population.

In a keynote address, Senior Human Resources Professional at Johnvents Industries, Pamela Elekwachi, who spoke on the theme "Blueprint for success: Building Skills for the future of work," urged youths and job seekers to be honest with themselves when developing their personal career plans, noting that a well-defined blueprint serves as a compass for effective decision-making.

According to her, "Financial instability does not affect only the individual; its impact often extends to family, friends, communities and the wider society. This is why young people must intentionally position themselves for growth and sustainability."

We're working to ensure laws passed 're effective

—Delta Speaker

By Ochuko Akuopha

ASABA — SPEAKER of the Delta State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Emomotimi Guwor, yesterday, said the House was working to ensure that laws passed are effective.

Speaking at a press conference to mark the third anniversary of the State's eight Assembly, Guwor said the House received a total of 11 Bills comprising five Executive Bills and six Private Members' Bills in the third Session of the 8th Assembly.

He said five of the Bills had been passed by the House, adding that four had received the assent of the State Governor, while one was currently being processed for assent.

He listed the Bills received during the period include: Delta State Gaming Board Bill, 2025 – Ongoing Consideration; Delta State Landlord and Ten-

ant Bill, 2025 – Ongoing Consideration; Appropriation (Amendment) Bill, 2024

– Passed and Assented to; Delta State Anti-Terrorism and Anti-Cultism (Amendment) Bill, 2025 – Passed and Assented to and Violence Against Persons (Amendment) Bill, 2025

– Ongoing Consideration. Others, according to him are: HIV/AIDS Hepatitis B/C Anti-Discrimination, Prevention and Protection Bill, 2025— Ongoing Consideration; Delta State Cybercrime Prohibition and Prevention Bill, 2025 – Ongoing Consideration; Delta State Public Health and Hygiene Bill, 2025 – Ongoing Consideration; Delta State Appropriation Bill, 2026– Passed and Assented to; Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2025 – Passed and Assented to and Delta State Revenue Service Bill, 2026 – Passed and currently being processed for Assent.



FIFA Ranking: Super Eagles retain 3rd spot in Africa, 26th in the world

World football governing body, FIFA yesterday, a few hours before the 2026 World Cup in North America, released its latest men's world rankings.

Despite not making it to the World Cup, Nigeria's Super Eagles maintain their position as the third-highest-ranked team in Africa and 26th in the world.

Eric Chelle's side remain behind only Morocco and Senegal on the African continent, while traditional rivals South Africa and Ghana continue to trail significantly.

Nigeria's current position can be traced back to their impressive campaign at the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations, which concluded in mid January. The three-time African champions climbed from 38th to 26th in the

UEFA appoints Artan to referee Super Cup

Somali referee Omar Artan, who was denied entry to the United States to officiate at the World Cup, has been appointed to take charge of the Uefa Super Cup match between Paris St-Germain and Aston Villa later this summer.

The contest between PSG, who won the Champions League last term and Aston Villa, who triumphed in the Europa League, is scheduled to take place on 12 August in Salzburg. In a statement, European football's governing body said that decision had been taken after discussions with the Confederation of African Football (Caf).

Uefa president Aleksander Ceferin said: "Omar Artan is an excellent young but already experienced referee, who has proven himself at the highest competition level of the Confederation of African Football."



world rankings on January 19 after a strong tournament run.

The Super Eagles began that AFCON campaign with three consecutive group-stage victories against Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda. Their momentum continued in the knockout

rounds as they comfortably defeated Mozambique before producing one of their most complete performances of the tournament to eliminate Algeria in the quarter-finals.

Nigeria's hopes of reaching the final were ended by Morocco in a tense semi-final that was eventually decided on penalties. However, Chelle's men bounced back strongly to defeat Egypt in the third-place playoff and secure the bronze medal.

That AFCON performance lifted Nigeria to their highest FIFA ranking in five years, and they have managed to preserve that position through a series of encouraging results in 2026. During the March international window, the Super Eagles defeated Jordan and drew with Iraq to remain among Africa's elite teams.

2026 World Cup: Owen tips France as favourites for trophy

Former England striker, Michael Owen, has tipped France to win the 2026 World Cup.

This year's edition of the tournament kicked off yesterday night.

Most bookmakers have Spain as their favourites to be world champions, adding to the European Championship they won two years ago.

But Owen, who played in three World Cups during his career, believes



Les Bleus are "miles better" than the rest of the competition.

He also predicted that the Three Lions will make it to the semi-final at best, while Germany will be dark horses.

"I think England will be a quarter-final or a semi-final at best would be my guess, but I have a sneaky feeling that Germany could do well," Owen told Metro.

"I think they could do well. So France would be my pick, England to get to the quarters or semis and Germany to be the dark horses."

PFL Africa: Adeshina, Ocheme promise opponents hell in Lagos

By Jacob Ajom

Twenty six fighters will feature in the Professional Fighters League Africa card slated for tomorrow at the Eko Hotel in Lagos. Apart from eleven bouts involving men, there will also be two bouts featuring female fighters. In the mix is a Nigerian fighter and Police woman, Juliet Ukah who will take on Liberia's Ferreira in the women's strawweight class.

Top on the bill is a featherweight clash between African champion Wasi Adeshina of Nigeria and Nacho Campos (Spain). The fighters were presented to the media at an elaborate press conference at the same venue yesterday, where they talked about their missions and targets for tomorrow. Adeshina who was born in Lagos said for the first time in his career, his mother will be at the cage side to witness him fight. "I don't want to disappoint my mother. That's why I must beat my opponent."

He insisted, "as a champion, I am going to fight like a champion. I won't

talk much. I will do the talking in the cage tomorrow." On his part Campos who will be fighting in Africa for the first time said he was not bothered that he will be fighting away from home. According to him, "a cage is a cage, whether in Spain or in Africa. It will be the two of us and no one will help anyone in the fight."

The two fighters promised Martial

Eagles scramble for Ronaldo's jersey after 2-1 defeat to Portugal

There was a demand for the jersey of Portugal captain, Cristiano Ronaldo, following their 2-1 win over the Super Eagles in an international friendly on Wednesday night. But it was defender Bruno Onyemaechi who was the lucky Super Eagles player to take it home.

Onyemaechi posted Ronaldo's shirt on his social media hours after the game.

Ronaldo himself had posted a picture of him and the right-



back on Instagram, with the caption: "The preparation is done. Eyes on the World Cup."

The five-time Ballon d'Or was the centre of attention from Nigerian players and coaches, as they jostled

to take pictures with him at full-time. Ronaldo played for 64 minutes and missed a couple of chances to score against the Eagles.

FIFA orders Haiti to change kits over political symbol

Haiti have agreed to change both their home and away kits for the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers after FIFA ruled that the designs contained political imagery.

The Caribbean nation's jerseys featured an illustration depicting several freedom fighters raising the Haitian flag, inspired by the final battle of the Haitian Revolution that led to the country's independence from French colonial rule and the abolition of slavery on the island.

According to reports, FIFA determined that the artwork violated its regulations prohibiting political, religious, or personal messages on official team equipment.

As a result, the Haitian Foot-



ball Federation has accepted the directive to redesign the kits to comply with the governing body's guidelines.

The original design had been praised by many supporters for celebrating Haiti's rich history and the bravery

of the revolutionaries who fought for the nation's freedom.

However, FIFA's stance on maintaining political neutrality in football competitions ultimately led to the decision.

Haiti are now expected to unveil new home and away kits ahead of their upcoming World Cup engagements as they continue their quest to secure qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Serena's Queen's campaign ends as partner, Mboko withdraws

Serena Williams' doubles campaign at Queen's has been curtailed as her playing partner Victoria Mboko has withdrawn with a left knee injury.

The 23-time Grand Slam singles champion, 44, made her return to tennis on Tuesday after almost four years away from the sport. The pair had been scheduled to play their quarter-final on Thursday but Mboko, 19, suffered a nasty fall in her singles match on Wednesday, which forced her to retire from the match. Trail-



ing 6-2 3-4 against Karolina Pliskova, the Canadian teenager cried out in pain as she went down clutching her knee and she limped off the court in tears. It means her compatriot Leylah Fernandez and Germany's Laura Siegemund, who they were scheduled to face in the doubles on Thursday, advance to the semi-finals.

"What a fun and memorable week at the HSBC Championships. Thank you to everyone who made it so special," Williams posted on Instagram.

"Vicky Mboko, you're an incredible talent and you'll be back out there in no time."

"Wishing you a speedy recovery."

Mourinho confirmed R/Madrid coach

Real Madrid have confirmed the appointment of José Mourinho for a second spell as the club's coach after ratifying the departure of Álvaro Arbeloa. The Spanish club confirmed in a statement Thursday that Mourinho has signed a three-year contract at the Bernabéu. Mourinho, 63, returns to the Spanish club after a season in charge of Benfica, who con-

firmed Wednesday that Madrid were willing to pay the €15 million compensation to release him from his contract in Portugal.

Madrid president Florentino Pérez had made bringing back Mourinho, who left the club in 2013, one of his reelection promises ahead of his victory in last weekend's vote of club

members. Pérez also pledged the signings of Ibrahima Konaté and Denzel Dumfries, as well as vowing to make a €150 million bid for a 'galáctico' signing. To honor that vow, Madrid announced earlier this week they had offered €150m for Atlético Madrid striker Julián Álvarez, which was subsequently knocked back.

A Decade Without You, A Lifetime With Your Legacy

Ten years have passed since you answered the call to glory, yet your presence remains woven into every part of our lives. A decade without your voice, your laughter, your counsel, your gentle strength — but never a day without your memory.

Time has moved, but our hearts still pause for you. The pain has softened, but the love has only deepened. Your absence is felt, yet your legacy continues to light our path — truly, as **Proverbs 10:7** reminds us, “*the memory of the righteous is blessed.*”

We remember the man you were — A devoted husband, an exceptional father, a doting granddad, a true friend, a man of unwavering faith. You lived with purpose, gave with joy, led with humility, and loved with a fullness that still sustains us.

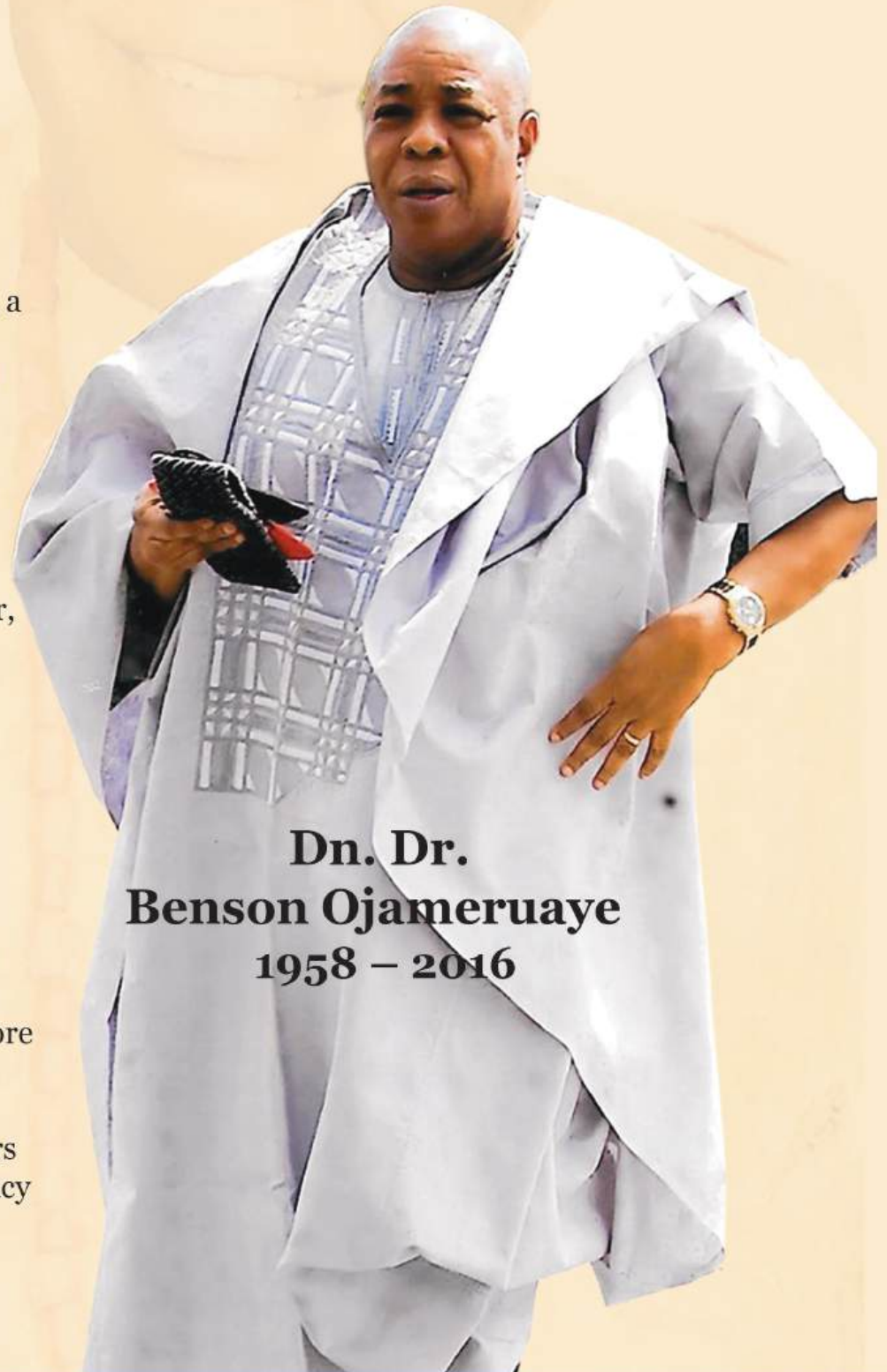
Your teachings continue to guide us. Your prayers still cover us. Your laughter still echoes in our memories. Your wisdom still shapes our decisions. Your life still inspires us to be better, to love deeper, to walk faithfully.

Though we cannot hold your hands or hear your voice, we feel you in every milestone, every celebration, every quiet moment. You remain our hero, our covering, our example of strength and grace.

We take solace in God’s promises — that you rest in his bosom, that you rejoice in glory, and that we will meet again where there is no more pain, no more sorrow, no more parting.

Ten years later, our hearts still honor you. Ten years later, our love still grows. Ten years later, your legacy still lives through us.

We love you forever and a day more



**Dn. Dr.
Benson Ojameruaye**
1958 – 2016

Dr. Bendra Ojameruaye
FOR THE CHILDREN

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Ojameruaye
WIFE

Dr. Emmanuel Ojameruaye
FOR THE FAMILY

Vanguard SPORTS

2026 World Cup: Owen tips France as favourites for trophy



UEFA appoints Artan to referee Super Cup

FIFA Ranking:

Super Eagles retain 3rd spot in Africa, 26th in the world

Serena's Queen's campaign ends as partner, Mboko withdraws

Eagles scramble for Ronaldo's jersey after 2-1 defeat to Portugal

DETAILS INSIDE



FOOTBALL
TODAY'S MATCHES
WORLD CUP

Canada v Bosnia 8pm

RESULTS

WORLD CUP
Mexico 2 South Africa 0

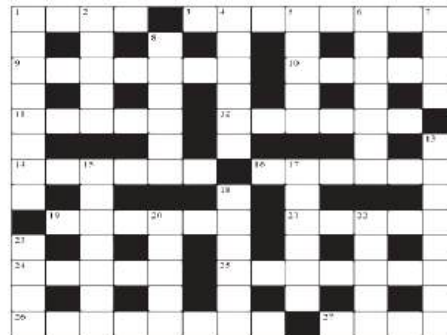
2026 World Cup: Mexico daze S/Africa in opener • As Burna Boy, Shakira dazzle

The controversial 2026 World Cup got underway with co-host Mexico dazing Bafana Bafana 2-0 with Julian Quinones getting the first goal of the competition in the 9th minute. This was after global music stars, Nigeria's Burna Boy and Colombia goddess Shakira thrilled their global spectators, turning the opening ceremony into a dazzling celebration of football, culture and entertainment as they performed 'Dai Dai, the official tune

of the World Cup. Four minutes into the second half, the South Africans were reduced to 10 men as Yaya Sithole was shown the red card for tripping a Mexican player. Backed by a vociferous crowd inside the 87,000 capacity Estadio Banorte in Mexico City, Mexico consolidated their lead with Raul Jimenez scoring the second in the 67th minute.

QUICK CROSSWORD

TODAY'S CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



- ACROSS**
- Easily yielding to pressure-(4)
 - Waterfall(8)
 - Open grassland in the USA-(7)
 - Bestowed(5)
 - Relative magnitudes of two quantities(5)
 - Become smaller(6)
 - Academy awards(6)
 - Drinker's toast(6)
 - Natural tooth covering(6)
 - Vigilant(5)
 - Hunting dog(5)
 - Eminent(7)
 - Remiss(8)
 - Tool for cutting and shaping wood(4)

- DOWN**
- Higher-ranking(8)
 - Banquet(5)
 - Relaxed(2,4)
 - Ire(5)
 - Make progress(7)
 - Very small(4)
 - Fervour(6)
 - So to speak(2,2,4)
 - Vanquish(7)
 - Card suit(6)
 - Aircraft(6)
 - Mannequin(5)
 - Receded(5)
 - Elegantly stylish(4)

SUDOKU

TODAY'S PUZZLE

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 6 | 7 | 2 | | 8 | 5 | |
| 2 | 7 | 5 | | | 3 | 9 | 6 |
| | 8 | | | | | | |
| 5 | 9 | 1 | 6 | | 2 | 3 | |
| | | | | | 9 | | 8 |
| 3 | 6 | | 9 | | 1 | 5 | |
| | 3 | | | | | 7 | |
| 1 | 4 | | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | | 3 | 2 | | | | 1 |

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 4 |
| 9 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| 4 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 2 |
| 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| 6 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 7 |
| 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| 7 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 1 |
| 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 2 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 5 |

How to Play Sudoku

Place a number (1-9) in each blank cell. (No line can have two of the same number). Each row (nine lines from left to right), column, (also nine lines from top to bottom) and 3 X 3 block within a bold block (nine blocks) contains number from 1 through 9. This means that no number can appear twice in any block, column or row. No mathematics is involved – no adding, subtraction, division or multiplication, just plain logic and your imagination.





Pg6

Quinones scores 1st goal of the World Cup



Pg6

Terry laments Eagles' World Cup absence

Mexico 2 South Africa 0 Mexico beat S/Africa in World Cup opener after 3 red cards



Co-host Mexico got off to a victorious start, beating South Africa 2-0 as the largest World Cup in history kicked off Thursday at Mexico City's famed Estadio Azteca. While a joyous occasion for Mexico, the match was marred by three red cards -- two for South Africa and one for Mexico -- the most ever in an opening World Cup match. It was Mexico's first win in World Cup opener, having previously lost five and drawn two -- including against then-host South Africa at the 2010 World Cup.



Pg3

Nnadozie plans dinner date with Zadok in Brighton



Pg2

Ronaldo declares Portugal 'ready' after victory against Nigeria

SEE PREDICTIONS ON PG 7

sporting

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TODAY'S MATCHES

| WORLD CUP | | | |
|-----------|---|--------|-----|
| Canada | v | Bosnia | 8pm |

RESULTS

| WORLD CUP | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|---|
| Mexico | 2 | South Africa | 0 |



Pg6

Mourinho named Real Madrid coach 13 years after first stint

Shakira, Burna Boy

open tournament with dazzling performance

Pg7

2 Reds, 2 Goals: S/Africa stumble in opener



Pg3

Belgium teams scramble for Bewene



Pg3

Remo Stars, Enyimba to benefit from FIFA's \$355m windfall



Pg2

Nottingham Forest reject City's record £120m Anderson bid



Pg3

Onyemachi celebrates getting Ronaldo shirt



Pg2

FIFA Rankings: Super Eagles are 26th in the World, 3rd in Africa

Ronaldo declares Portugal 'ready' after victory against Nigeria

The forward led his team to a 2-1 friendly win against Nigeria's Super Eagles on Wednesday night in Lisbon. The match, held at the Estádio Dr. Magalhães Pessoa, was the final preparatory fixture for both nations before they head to the global tournament. The two countries had met in 2022 before the World Cup, with Portugal handing the Super Eagles a 4-0 defeat.

The home side opened the scoring in the 23rd minute with a goal from Pedro Neto after Ronaldo missed a sitter.

However, Akor Adams drew level before halftime for Nigeria, before Francisco Conceição netted the decisive goal that gave his team a narrow win over the Super Eagles.

After the game, Ronaldo posted a message on Instagram expressing his confidence in the team's preparations.

"The preparation is done. Eyes on the World Cup," Ronaldo wrote, accompanying the text with a photo from the match.

With their final preparation now complete, Portugal will shift their focus on their World Cup campaign.

They are set to compete in Group K, where they will face the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, and Uzbekistan.



Haaland seals Dubai schoolboy's World Cup dream

A Manchester City Football Schools player based in Dubai has gone viral online after a heartfelt Instagram post that has now surpassed 123,000 likes, capturing the attention of Manchester City striker Erling Haaland.

Qasim Qadir, who plays for the U9 Elite Boys at City Football Schools, originally posted a video saying that if Haaland simply liked his post, his father would take him to the World Cup to watch the Norwegian striker in his debut match at the tournament.

The clip quickly gained traction across social media, but it went far beyond what Qasim had hoped for.

Not only did Haaland respond directly in the comments with a simple but powerful message, "See you there," but Manchester City's official account also reacted to the video, amplifying the moment even further.

Qasim, one of Haaland's biggest fans, has also become known within the City Football Schools community for maintaining the same

hairstyle as the striker for the past three years.



SuperSport appoints Iwobi, Ekong among its World Cup analysts

SuperSport yesterday announced that Super Eagles and Fulham midfielder Alex Iwobi as well as former Super Eagles captain, William Troost-Ekong will be part of an extraordinary line-up of football analysts assembled for the biggest FIFA World Cup in history. According to SuperSport, Iwobi has become one of the most respected and consistent performers in English football, transforming himself from a precocious Arsenal academy graduate into a seasoned Premier League leader and one of Nigeria's most influential footballers.

Adding that the Nigerian star is renowned for his tactical intelligence, relentless work ethic and ability to influence games in multiple positions, it said Iwobi will provide viewers with unique insight into the modern game from someone still competing against the world's best players every week. His appointment forms part of SuperSport's commitment to delivering world-class analysis for a tournament that promises to redefine football's global landscape. And if Iwobi represents African football's present, then the rest of SuperSport's stellar panel embodies its rich past and enduring legacy.

It said that Iwobi would be joined by Troost-Ekong whom it described as one of the continent's most respected defensive leaders and the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations Player of the Tournament. Fresh off a distinguished international career, Troost-Ekong officially retired from international football in December 2025, closing the chapter on a remarkable journey that saw him captain the Super Eagles and represent Nigeria on football's biggest stages.



2026 World Cup: Owen names favourites to win trophy



Former England striker, Michael Owen, has tipped France to win the 2026 World Cup. This year's edition of the tournament kicked off yesterday night.

Most bookmakers have Spain as their favourites to be world champions, adding to the European Championship they won two years ago.

But Owen, who played in three World Cups during his career, believes Les Bleus are "miles better" than the rest of the competition.

He also predicted that the Three Lions will make it to the semi-final at best, while Germany will be dark horses.

"I think England will be a quarter-final or a semi-final at best would be my guess, but I have a sneaky feeling that Germany could do well," Owen told Metro.

"I think they could do well. So France would be my pick, England to get to the quarters or semis and Germany to be the dark horses."

FIFA Rankings: Super Eagles are 26th in the World, 3rd in Africa

Nigeria's Super Eagles have maintained their 26th position in the latest FIFA Men's World Rankings released on Thursday, Completesports.com reports.

The three-time African champions were in action four times since the previous rankings.

Eric Chelle's side defeated Zimbabwe's Warriors 2-0 and thrashed Jamaica's Reggae Boyz 3-0 at the Unity Cup invitational tournament in London.

The West Africans also played two international friendlies, drawing 2-2 with Poland in Warsaw before suffering a 2-1 defeat to Portugal in Leiria on Wednesday night.

Despite the mixed results, the Super Eagles remain the third-highest ranked team in Africa, behind Morocco's Atlas Lions and Senegal's Teranga

Lions. Algeria and Egypt complete the continent's top five ranked teams.

On the global stage, the top five remain unchanged, with reigning world champions Argentina retaining first place ahead of Spain, France, England and Portugal.

The next FIFA Men's World Rankings will be published on July 20.



Thunderstorm could extend duration of match



whenever lightning is detected within eight miles of a stadium.

Under the guidelines used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), play cannot resume until 30 minutes have passed since the last lightning strike. If another strike is detected during that period, the countdown starts again.

In simple terms, a World Cup match could be delayed for hours if a thunderstorm refuses to move away.

FIFA has confirmed that there is no fixed maximum delay time. Instead, every situation will be assessed individually, leaving open the possibility of lengthy interruptions during the tournament.

The concern is particularly relevant in Florida, widely regarded as the lightning capital of the United States. Miami's Hard Rock Stadium will host seven World Cup matches, including Brazil's group stage clash against Scotland, a quarter final and the third place playoff.

Imagine Lionel Messi lining up a free kick in the 89th minute of a World Cup match, only for the referee to stop play and send everyone off the pitch because of a thunderstorm miles away.

That scenario is a very real possibility at the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

While fans usually worry about injuries, tactics and controversial refereeing decisions, weather could become an unexpected headline throughout the tournament. FIFA will be required to follow United States lightning safety protocols, meaning matches can be suspended

Nottingham Forest reject City's record £120m Anderson bid

MANCHESTER CITY have had a record bid of £120million for Elliot Anderson rejected by Nottingham Forest.

Anderson, 23, is one of the most in-demand names of the summer transfer window and he has become of City's main targets.

City have already had an offer turned down by Forest boss Evangelos Marinakis earlier this month.

The midfielder is currently in the US with the England team ahead of the World Cup.

The ongoing uncertainty over his future won't be ideal preparation for the tournament, where he is set to be a key man for Thomas Tuchel.

City's initial bid of £106m with add-ons taking it past £120m would break the transfer record for a British player, eclipsing the £105m Arsenal splashed out on Declan Rice.

It is understood Forest are looking for a British transfer record of £130m to part ways with Anderson.

That fee alone would go beyond the £125m Liverpool spent to sign Alexander Isak from Newcastle.

And it would smash the record fee City paid to bring Jack Grealish to the Etihad from Aston Villa in 2021.

Manchester United were also linked with Anderson but are not considered to be in the race.



Onyemachi celebrates getting Ronaldo shirt

Super Eagles defender, Bruno Onyemachi was the one who swapped shirts with the legendary Cristiano Ronaldo, saying it was a dream come true for him. Onyemachi has previously played in Portugal with Boavista and his partner is Portuguese. Four years ago, coach Finidi George and Moses Simon were caught on camera trying to get this prized jersey. Ronaldo will lead Portugal to the 2026 World Cup, which will be his sixth appearance at the global stage.



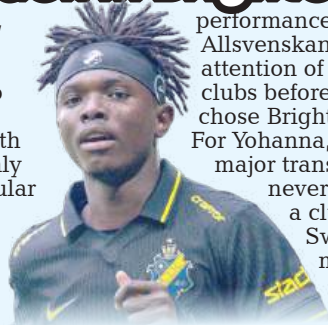
Belgium teams scramble for Bewene

Newly capped Nigeria international defender Abdullahi Bewene has become a huge subject of interest from top teams in Belgium after his exploits with the Super Eagles. The Banik Ostrava of Czech Republic defender who was handed a late call up to the team by head coach Eric Chelle held his own in the game against Poland and Portugal respectively. On Wednesday, he came off the bench to show that his performance from the start against Portugal isn't a fluke. A performance that drew applause and praises from his teammates. His representative revealed that the 21 year old has received around six enquiries from teams in Belgium, and one from a team in the French Ligue 1. He said a decision will be made in the coming days, and it will be a move to a team that he is sure to get playing time to continue his development, and also cement his current status as a senior national team player of Nigeria. His representative revealed that the 21 year old has received around six enquiries from teams in Belgium, and one from a team in the French Ligue 1.

He said a decision will be made in the coming days, and it will be a move to a team that he is sure to get playing time to continue his development, and also cement his current status as a senior national team player of Nigeria.

Nnadozie plans dinner date with Zadok in Brighton

Super Falcons goalkeeper, Chiamaka Nnadozie has expressed her delight at Zadok Yohanna's transfer to Brighton. Nnadozie, who has been with Brighton for a year, has firmly established herself as a regular starter. Last season, she featured in 19 English Women's Super League games, helping the team secure a 7th-place finish. She was the club's only Nigerian player until last week, when Brighton confirmed the signing of Zadok Yohanna from AIK for a Swedish record fee of €28 million. Though the youngster only moved to Europe from Nigeria last year, his standout



performances in the Allsvenskan caught the attention of several top clubs before he ultimately chose Brighton. For Yohanna, this is a major transition. Having never played for a club outside Sweden, he must now acclimatize to both a new style of football and the culture of England. Following the transfer, there are now two Nigerians in Brighton's senior setup. Nnadozie, 26, is seven years Yohanna's senior. Given her experience navigating the English football landscape, she has promised to help her compatriot settle in. "When I first saw the news online, I was really happy for him," Nnadozie told ESPN. "I was happy because, as he mentioned, he has been through a lot and he knows where he came from. It's also just really nice to have a Nigerian teammate."

Remo Stars, Enyimba to benefit from FIFA's \$355m windfall

World football governing body FIFA has included the Nigeria Premier Football League duo of Enyimba and Remo Stars in the list of beneficiaries of their financial largesse for the 2026 World Cup. FIFA will give out a total of \$355m as payments to teams who release their players during the qualifying series for the tournament. It is called FIFA Club Benefits Programme. According to FIFA, each club that released players during the qualifiers will receive at least \$2,360 per player for each match for which the player was released. A new high which the president of the body Gianni Infantino said is due to the increase in the number of teams at the tournament. "Through the FIFA World Cup 2026 Club Benefits Programme, and thanks to the inclusion of all qualifying matches for the first time, more clubs than ever before will receive a share of the financial benefits generated by the FIFA World Cup, recognising their essential contribution to the success of international football."



Iwobi, Bassey to get former R/Madrid manager as boss

Fulham have initiated formal contact with former Real Madrid head coach, Alvaro Arbeloa as they look to fill their managerial vacancy ahead of the upcoming Premier League campaign. The dramatic structural development comes as an unexpected twist for the West London club following a chaotic chain of managerial movements across Europe. The sudden search for a new leader was triggered after Marco Silva elected to leave Craven Cottage at the conclusion of the domestic season. Silva has officially migrated to Portugal to take the reins at Benfica, succeeding José Mourinho. In a fascinating twist of fate, Mourinho has unceremoniously returned to the Santiago Bernabéu to take over the hot seat from Arbeloa. According to The Athletic, Fulham's directors have wasted no time in exploring the market, holding preliminary discussions with Arbeloa to assess his interest in making a swift jump to the English top flight. The prospective appointment represents a highly intriguing gamble for Fulham's key personnel, including international Super Eagles duo Iwobi and Bassey. The Nigerian stars currently find themselves without an active head coach, and Arbeloa would arrive with an incredibly unique pedagogical profile. The 43-year-old tactician has only amassed a brief six months of experience coaching at the absolute highest level, having stepped in to replace Xabi Alonso at Real Madrid in January after spending several developmental years working within the Spanish club's youth academy.

Alebiosu agrees personal terms with Rangers

Scottish giants, Rangers who were beaten to the League and Cup title by arch rivals Celtic have started preparations in earnest for next season. The team are on the look out to strengthen key areas in their team, and have already start by identifying and looking at targets who will improve their defence. According to Sportsboom, the 24 year old who is also a target of relegated English Premier League side West Ham and Italian Serie A side Genoa will command a fee of around £3m-£5m. The report say despite the interests from other teams Rangers look the most likely to clinch his signing, and personal terms have already been agreed with his camp leaving just an agreement with Blackburn Rovers for a transfer fee. He isn't new to Scottish football as he had a spell with fellow league side St. Mirren a few seasons ago.

100 caps for Nigeria is not easy - Iwobi

Super Eagles midfielder Alex Iwobi has expressed gratitude to supporters, his family, teammates, and coaches after reaching the milestone of 100 appearances for the national team. Iwobi made the centurion appearances in Nigeria's 2-1 defeat to Portugal at the Estádio Dr. Magalhães Pessoa in Leiria on Wednesday night. Speaking after the game, Iwobi described the achievement as a difficult feat and said he was honoured to become one of only a few players to reach the landmark for Nigeria "Thank you for the appreciation, the love, and recognition," Iwobi said via the Ugo Amadi Channel. "It goes a long way. Obviously, a hundred caps for Nigeria is not easy but I am grateful to say I am one of four to have made it here." The Fulham star thanked the Nigerian coaching staff and his former and current teammates for their support throughout his international career.





Celtic confirm O'Neill as permanent manager

Martin O'Neill has been confirmed as Celtic's permanent manager after a very successful interim spell.

The 74-year-old took over on an interim basis from Brendan Rodgers and then replaced Wilfried Nancy until the end of last season as he turned the club around.

O'Neill led the Hoops to a Premiership and Scottish Cup double in what was an incredible end to the season for the side who looked down and out half way through the campaign.

Delighted to be agreeing this new contract with the club, O'Neill said: "It is once again a great privilege for me to continue as Celtic manager. Last season will live long in all our memories and to be part of that success has in a big way whetted the appetite to work again for more days like those and bring our supporters those moments.

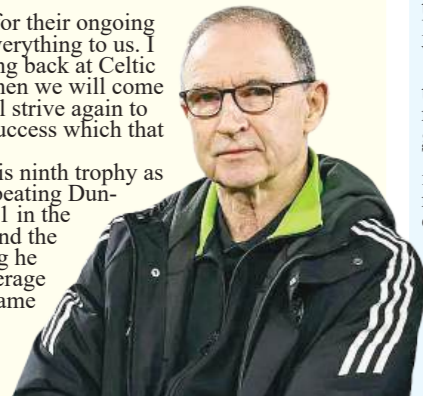
"Of course, none of this could have been achieved without the players and staff and I want to take this opportunity to thank them for bringing that level of focus, determination and talent to bear at the conclusion of the season to deliver the league and Cup double.

"I would particularly like to thank the Board for asking me back and giving me this opportunity again.

"We know of course that Celtic can never rest on past success so we are now aiming to drive forward together in the coming season as we aim to deliver again for the club and our fans.

"I thank our fans for their ongoing support, it means everything to us. I look forward to being back at Celtic Park next season when we will come together and we will strive again to bring our fans the success which that support deserves."

O'Neill claimed his ninth trophy as Celtic manager by beating Dunfermline Athletic 3-1 in the Scottish Cup final and the board will be hoping he can continue his average of 2.56 points per game in the league next season in what will be another intense title defence.



Tottenham seal Senesi switch

Tottenham have officially announced the signing of Argentina international defender Marcos Senesi on a free transfer following the expiration of his contract with Bournemouth. The left-footed centre-half will join the London club on July 1, adding top-flight experience to Roberto De Zerbi's squad as they prepare for the upcoming campaign.

Tottenham have confirmed that Senesi will officially join their ranks on July 1, subject to international clearance. The experienced defender arrives after four impressive seasons with Bournemouth, whom he joined for £15 million from Feyenoord in 2022.

Expressing his excitement about the move, the Argentine stated: "It's a very special feeling to be a Tottenham Hotspur player. From the first moment, the Club has shown why they want me and how much they want me to be a part of what they are building. It's exciting and something I can't wait to be involved in."

The central defender brings a proven track record to the capital, having made 128 appearances and scored six goals during his time at Bournemouth. This followed a highly successful stint in the Netherlands, where he played 116 matches and found the net on nine occasions for Feyenoord. Regarding his ambitions, he added: "Every time I step on the pitch, I will do my best to make the fans proud and to take the Club back to the place it belongs. I want to win things with Tottenham and will do everything I can to make that happen." Sporting Director Johan Lange praised the acquisition, stating: "Marcos is a defender who brings a combination of quality, intelligence and leadership to our squad.



Man Utd exit 'bidding war' for 'dream target'

Manchester United have no plans to embark on a bidding war with Manchester City for Elliot Anderson and are happy to let the Cityzens slug it out with Nottingham Forest over an increasingly eye-popping British record transfer, and with a journalist now naming the three players that INEOS are to put their energies into signing.

The Nottingham Forest midfielder is emerging as one of the most talked-about stories of the summer window after both Man Utd and Man City targeted a deal to sign the England man.

But after sources confirmed way back in March that the Tricky Trees would likely try and push his price up to unprecedented heights this summer, it is City who have emerged as the chief suitors for Anderson.

United's refusal to make a firm drive to sealing his transfer comes off the back of an understanding that Anderson had long been leaning towards a move to the Etihad, with the Red Devils not wanting to get embroiled in what looked an increasingly expensive deal.



Gvardiol to snub Kane link-up at Bayern

Josko Gvardiol is reportedly set to commit his long-term future to Manchester City, dealing a significant blow to Bayern Munich's summer transfer plans. Despite firm interest from the Bavarian giants, the Croatian international is leaning towards extending his stay at the Etihad Stadium as the club prepares for life under new management.

City are working hard to ensure Gvardiol remains a cornerstone of their defence for years to come. The 24-year-old, whose current deal at the Etihad runs through 2028, has emerged as a top target for European heavyweights looking to exploit any uncertainty during the club's transition period. However, the club is eager to reward his progress with even more improved terms.

The defender has reportedly been considering his options as he mulls a new contract offer from Manchester City. According to a report by The Athletic, the internal feeling within the club remains one of confidence; Gvardiol has become a vital component of the first team since his arrival from RB Leipzig in the summer of 2023. Consequently, the hierarchy views him as an "untouchable" asset that they simply cannot afford to lose to a direct Champions League rival.

Bayern Munich have been monitoring the situation closely as they look to overhaul their own defensive line. With transfer chief Max Eberl reportedly placing several high-profile names on a "sale list" to balance the books, the Bundesliga side had identified Gvardiol as an ideal candidate to lead their backline, joining former Spurs man Harry Kane.



Silva leaves Barca in limbo amid Madrid interest

Incoming Real Madrid head coach Jose Mourinho has dramatically altered the race for Bernardo Silva, making the high-profile free agent his primary summer target. The Portuguese midfielder has reportedly halted advanced talks with Barcelona and Atletico Madrid following direct assurances from his compatriot, completely shifting the landscape of La Liga's transfer window.

According to AS, the former Manchester United and Chelsea manager has firmly placed Silva at the top of his Bernabeu wishlist. The 31-year-old playmaker, available on a free transfer after ending a trophy-laden nine-year tenure at Manchester City, had been heavily negotiating a move to Barcelona. Silva has long been associated with a move to Barcelona, with reports of a possible transfer surfacing several times over the years.

However, Florentino Perez and the Madrid hierarchy have aggressively sanctioned a financial push for the veteran midfielder following the presidential election and the arrival of Mourinho in the Spanish capital.

Silva's commitment to his team and his individual quality make him the type of player Mourinho is desperate to add to his squad. Meanwhile, the versatile midfielder is determined to join an ambitious project where his experience is fully utilised on and off the pitch. Speaking in the mixed zone following Portugal's international clash with Chile, Silva dismissed reports that an agreement with Barcelona had been made.

"I haven't made a decision yet. I want to be at a club that wants me, that's for sure," he said. "A club where I feel I will be useful. Is it a dream? I'm not going to answer that because I don't know where I'll end up. [Barcelona] is an option I have, but I haven't made that decision yet. We don't know what will happen."



Chelsea, Arsenal go head to head in pursuit of Rogers

Chelsea are very interested in Morgan Rogers, with Arsenal currently viewed as their main rivals in any race for his signature.

Rogers, 23, is currently away on England duty at the World Cup, but speculation surrounding his future is expected to continue throughout the tournament.

Aston Villa boss Unai Emery does not want to lose Rogers this summer, but the weight of any offer is going to dictate whether the club can turn down bids. Chelsea are looking for a new threat and proven quality in their attack, and sources have told Flashscore that they are very keen on trying to convince him to move to Stamford Bridge.

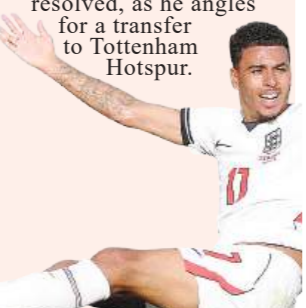
We reported earlier this week how Alejandro Garnacho could be among the club's departures, and an exit like that would help pave the way for an upgrade signing.

However, it is clear from insiders that Arsenal are also in the picture at this stage and very much admire Rogers.

The player has five years remaining on his current contract - so a valuation towards £100 million is very much a reality from an Aston Villa position. It remains to be seen whether offers at that level arrive, but Arsenal are certainly being kept informed on how the situation unfolds regarding his future.

Outside of the two London rivals, there is interest at varying levels from Manchester City, Manchester United and Liverpool.

The interest from City could become particularly intriguing once Savinho's future is resolved, as he angles for a transfer to Tottenham Hotspur.



Pedro linked with move to Barcelona

Joao Pedro has 'already agreed to join' Barcelona in the summer transfer window if the Catalan giants can convince Chelsea to sell.

The Blues had a nightmare season in which Enzo Maresca and Liam Rosenior were both sacked and Calum McFarlane came in as interim head coach until the end of the season. Chelsea could only finish tenth in the Premier League as they dropped down the table towards the end of the season and finished outside of the European qualification spots.

That has led to rumours several of their top players could seek a move away from Stamford Bridge in the summer as they look for European football elsewhere.

Pedro was one of Chelsea's top performers last term with the Brazil international contributing 23 goals and six assists in 53 matches in all competitions.

And now Spanish newspaper AS claims that with Barcelona refusing to budge on their £100m (£86m) valuation of Atletico Madrid striker Julian Alvarez, the Catalan giants could now turn to Pedro, who has 'already agreed to join' the La Liga champions.

Despite interest from Barcelona, Fabrizio Romano recently revealed that Chelsea see the Brazilian as a "crucial part of the project" for next season.



Bournemouth slap £80M price tag on Scott

Bournemouth star Alex Scott is a target for Liverpool boss Andoni Iraola as his price tag is revealed.

Iraola, who led the Cherries to their best-ever top-flight placement in the 2025-26 season, is reportedly lining up a move to raid his former club as he rebuilds a Liverpool side who finished just 3 points above him last season.

Scott, just 22 years old, has emerged as a favourite to make his way to Merseyside alongside the likes of Rayan and Kroupi Junior who are top targets for the Spaniard during the summer transfer window.

Scott has gone on to make 80 Premier League appearances for the club, scoring four goals during that time which helped him snatch an England call up with the Three Lions squad at their pre-World Cup camp in Florida despite missing out on the full side.

Now, as Iraola weighs up his options, The Mirror report that Bournemouth will seek around £80M for Scott as they stand firm on a bold asking price for the young midfielder.

Under Iraola, Scott was instrumental as he showed a high work rate and deep ball progression which was exactly what Liverpool are missing in the middle of the park under former manager Arne Slot.



Salah hints on joining new club after World Cup

Mohamed Salah has given the green light to join a new club after the World Cup following his departure from Liverpool, it has been claimed. Salah left Liverpool by mutual consent following the final game of the 2025/26 Premier League season.

He signed a two-year contract last April but both parties agreed to end it a season early.

The Egypt winger told beIN Sports after his final match for the Reds that he was 'still assessing things', and would make his decision prior to the World Cup unless a 'good opportunity' emerged prior to then. Salah has heavily linked with moving to a club based in the Saudi Pro League, which attempted to sign him in the summer of 2024.

But he has now given the 'green light' to make the move to a surprise club in Europe instead.

Fenerbahce presidential candidate Aziz Yildirim claimed that he would make a move to sign Salah if he got re-elected last week. He stated to reporters: "He would ask for a three-year contract, and the total cost would be €90 million. If he is our urgent need, we will sign him! Our football committee will decide on these matters."

Yildirim ultimately won the presidential race and was appointed as Fenerbahce president for a second time on June 7. He was previously in charge of the club between 1998 and 2018 before being replaced by Ali Koc.

His Salah comments were backed up by Ertan Torunogullari, who worked under the previous board at Fenerbahce under the outgoing Sadedtin Saran. He revealed that Salah was "very keen" to move to Turkey and that he had held "extremely positive meetings" with the now former Liverpool star.



Monaco's Akliouche to exit club amid PSG, Liverpool interest

Monaco playmaker Maghnes Akliouche has confirmed he will likely leave the club this summer with PSG and Liverpool said to be interested. The 24-year-old has been a key player for Monaco for the past three seasons, scoring seven goals and providing 10 assists in 43 games in 2025-26.

Akliouche's fine form has made him one of the most sought after young players in French football and earned him a place in Didier Deschamps's squad for the World Cup.

Speaking to Nice-Matin before making the trip to the US, the playmaker admitted that this summer will likely be his last as a Monaco player.

"Will the next step be a transfer this summer? Yes, but frankly, I'm really focused on this World Cup," he said.

Both Liverpool and PSG have previously been linked with a move for Akliouche.



Newcastle sure of signing €30m Munoz

Newcastle are sure of signing Spanish youngster Victor Munoz despite former club Real Madrid's buy-back clause.

The 22-year-old left Real Madrid in search of first team football last summer, winding up with Osasuna, who narrowly avoided relegation.

Munoz was a rare bright spark for the strugglers, scoring seven goals and providing five assists in his 36 games across all competitions.

According to Fabrizio Romano, Newcastle look like the winger's next club despite Real Madrid having a buy-back clause in his contract.

Newcastle sent in an official €30 million bid for Munoz and are 'confident' they'll get it over the line. Real also have a 50% sell-on clause.



RB Salzburg pushing to appoint Rohl as new manager

RB Salzburg are reportedly pushing for Rangers manager Danny Rohl to take over.

Rohl, 37, joined Rangers last October following the disastrous tenure of Russell Martin and managed to turn them into title contenders.

Rangers ultimately finished third in the Scottish Premiership due to four defeats in their final five games of the campaign.

According to journalist Florian Plettenberg, RB Salzburg are now pushing to make Rohl their new manager and are in talks with Rangers.

The German has a history with Red Bull having previously been part of RB Leipzig's coaching set-up, and was a candidate to take over at Salzburg last summer.



Liverpool urged to "break bank" for £121m Kvaratskhelia

Liverpool should be 'breaking the bank' to sign Paris Saint-Germain wing wizard Khvicha Kvaratskhelia rather than targeting Yan Diomande as Mohamed Salah's successor.

The Reds are firmly in planning mode for the summer transfer window after confirming the appointment of new head coach Andoni Iraola, who has arrived at a time when Salah is packing his Merseyside bags.

As the latter's backup Federico Chiesa has struggled to make his mark in England, Liverpool are expected to target a big-money replacement for Salah, and RB Leipzig's Diomande appears to have emerged as the front-runner.

Diomande will reportedly join Liverpool or one Premier League rival during the summer transfer window, although the 2024-25 champions would have to fork out at least £100m to bring him to Anfield.

If Liverpool are to cough up such an amount for a Salah successor, ex-Red Murphy believes that their money would be better spent on Kvaratskhelia, who would be a less risky signing than his Ivorian counterpart.



Gvardiol halts renewal talk amid Madrid interest

Manchester City have halted renewal talks with Josko Gvardiol over increasing interest from Real Madrid it has been revealed.

Manchester City will face a task this summer to limit the impact of Pep Guardiola's departure. It has been suggested that a number of key players will consider their future after the exit of the iconic Catalan manager.

That is the case for Josko Gvardiol. The Croatian star has just two years left on his contract, and thus was due to negotiate a renewal this summer. City have been pushing to secure a new deal with the 24-year-old, but if they do not manage to get one done, will have to consider the idea of cashing in on Gvardiol, as his value will decline next summer.

One of the sides that has been frequently linked with Gvardiol are Real Madrid, who are looking to rebuild this summer. Now it seems they have been given an opening to pursue his signing.

As per both Diario AS and Florian Plettenberg of Sky Sports DE, Gvardiol has decided to halt his contract talks with City.



Bayern reach 'breakthrough' in €65m pursuit of Brown

Bayern Munich are on the verge of completing their first major transfer coup of the summer window after making a significant breakthrough with Eintracht Frankfurt. The Bavarian giants have agreed a deal in principle to sign highly-rated German international defender Nathaniel Brown, a player heavily requested by head coach Vincent Kompany.

Negotiations between Bayern board member for sport Max Eberl and Frankfurt sporting director Markus Kroschke have progressed rapidly following weeks of intense talks. According to BILD, the two Bundesliga clubs have found common ground on a total package worth up to €65m (£56m), including potential performance-related add-ons. The substantial fee will elevate the 22-year-old into one of the most expensive signings in the illustrious history of the German record champions.

The structural framework of the deal is currently the only minor point of discussion separating the two sides before a formal announcement is made.





Serena's Queen's campaign ends as partner, Mboko withdraws

Serena Williams' doubles campaign at Queen's has been curtailed as her playing partner Victoria Mboko has withdrawn with a left knee injury. The 23-time Grand Slam singles champion, 44, made her return to tennis on Tuesday after almost four years away from the sport. The pair had been scheduled to play their quarter-final on Thursday but Mboko, 19, suffered a nasty fall in her singles match on Wednesday, which forced her to retire from the match. Trailing 6-2 3-4 against Karolina Pliskova, the Canadian teenager cried out in pain as she went down clutching her knee and she limped off the court in tears. It means her compatriot Leylah Fernandez and Germany's Laura Siegemund, who they were scheduled to face in the doubles on Thursday, advance to the semi-finals. "What a fun and memorable week at the HSBC Championships. Thank you to everyone who made it so special," Williams posted on Instagram. "Vicky Mboko, you're an incredible talent and you'll be back out there in no time. "Wishing you a speedy recovery." Williams returned with a winning performance on Tuesday as she and Mboko won 7-6 (7-2) 6-2 to upset third seeds Erin Routliffe and Nicole Melichar-Martinez.



2026 World Cup: Terry laments Eagles' World Cup absence

Former England captain John Terry has expressed deep disappointment over Nigeria's failure to qualify for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, calling the Super Eagles' absence a major miss for the global tournament. Terry noted that a football tournament of this magnitude loses some of its flair and pedigree without a nation as culturally rich and historically talented as Nigeria in the competition. Speaking during a virtual roundtable session organised by SuperSport, he pointed out that Nigeria consistently brings exciting players, vibrant fans, and a rich football heritage to the world stage.

"Nigeria will be a big miss. This is a World Cup for participants who haven't had the opportunity to play in the tournament. "I would have loved to see a top team like Nigeria there because they've got some great individuals. They're a great nation. So, yeah, they fall under that category for me. "I think they are a big miss because Nigeria probably would have gone further in the competition, but unfortunately, one side's loss is another's gain. "I know Mikel Obi is very upset that they're not there. It means he can't do more commentating on the World Cup. That's why he was upset."

Quinones scores first goal of the 2026 FIFA World Cup



Julian Quiñones scored the historic first goal of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, hitting the back of the net in the 8th minute for co-hosts Mexico against South Africa. The breakthrough electrified the capacity crowd of over 80,000 fans packed inside Mexico City's legendary Estadio Azteca. The goal that has catapulted him to fame, however, came against South Africa's Bafana Bafana who played in the same group with Nigeria's Super Eagles during the qualifying series of the World Cup. The South African despite being punished by World soccer-governing body, FIFA who deducted three points from them still went ahead to qualify automatically ahead of the Nigerian team that got kicked out by DR Congo.

Okoronkwo returns from injury, boosts Super Falcons' WAFCON hopes

Super Falcons forward Esther Okoronkwo has returned from injury and could make her comeback for AFC Toronto when they face Montreal Roses on Saturday, June 13, at York Lions Stadium. Okoronkwo suffered a meniscus tear during her second appearance of the Northern Super League season against Halifax Tides FC. The Nigerian international was forced off in the 39th minute of the encounter, which ended in a goalless draw.



The 28-year-old recently confirmed her recovery via social media after spending several weeks on the sidelines. She missed five league matches and was also unavailable for Nigeria's recent international friendly against Senegal's Teranga Lionesses due to the injury. "Back on my feet, mission enroute," she wrote on Instagram with pictures of her in training. Her return comes as a major boost for Nigeria ahead of the 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON), scheduled to take place in Morocco in July. Okoronkwo played a key role for the Super Falcons at the last WAFCON, helping the nine-time African champions secure their historic 10th continental title. At club level, she has also been a standout performer for AFC Toronto. The forward was instrumental in the club's successful campaign that saw them claim the inaugural 2025 Northern Super League Supporters' Shield. She also helped guide the team to the NSL Championship Final, where they suffered a narrow 2-1 defeat to Vancouver Rise FC.

Mourinho named Real Madrid coach 13 years after first stint

Real Madrid have confirmed the appointment of José Mourinho for a second spell as the club's coach after ratifying the departure of Álvaro Arbeloa. The Spanish club confirmed in a statement Thursday that Mourinho has signed a three-year contract at the Bernabéu. Mourinho, 63, returns to the Spanish club after a season in charge of Benfica, who confirmed Wednesday that Madrid were willing to pay the €15 million compensation to release him from his contract in Portugal. Madrid president Florentino Pérez had made bringing back Mourinho, who left the club in 2013, one of his reelection promises ahead of his victory in last weekend's vote of club members. Pérez also pledged the signings of Ibrahima Konaté and Denzel Dumfries, as well as vowing to make a €150 million bid for a 'galáctico' signing.



Women's Super League celebrates Super Falcons goalkeeper Nnadozie

The English Women's Super League has praised Super Falcons goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie following her impressive performances for Brighton & Hove Albion Women during the just-concluded season. Nnadozie joined Brighton last summer from French club Paris FC and quickly established herself as one of the key players in the squad with a series of outstanding displays between the sticks. The Nigerian international enjoyed an excellent debut campaign in England, making 62 saves and recording six clean sheets to help Brighton in the Women's Super League. Poland vs Nigeria Her consistent performances earned recognition from the Women's Super League, which celebrated the Super Falcons shot-stopper for her contributions throughout the season.

Cricket: Key may impose alcohol ban on England team

Director of cricket Rob Key is considering imposing an alcohol ban on the England team and has given no assurances Ben Stokes will remain Test captain. All-rounder Stokes and pace bowler Gus Atkinson will not play in the second Test against New Zealand after being involved in an incident in a London nightclub in the early hours of Monday morning. It is the latest alcohol-related controversy to hit the England team in the past six months. Six of the XI who played in the first-Test win over the Black Caps at Lord's have been caught in late-night misdemeanours. Following allegations of a drinking culture that dogged the winter, England introduced a midnight curfew, which was broken by Stokes and Atkinson. And Key admitted he may need to take further steps for England to regain the trust of the public. "Do we need to look at have we been strict enough?" said Key. "Even when they win a game of cricket, is it now a time when there's just no alcohol at any time and at any stage? "I need to think through these things because I don't want to make a rash decision that hinders the team and creates a situation where they don't feel they can do anything. "But the players now have to show the public they can be trusted. At this point it's hard to say they can."





Burna Boy, Shakira dazzle in W/Cup opener

The 23rd FIFA World Cup got underway yesterday in spectacular fashion as global music stars turned the opening ceremony into a dazzling celebration of football, culture and entertainment. Nigeria's musical super star Burna Boy did not disappoint as he and Colombia goddess Shakira thrilled their global spectators at the show

at Mexico City's iconic Estadio Azteca, performing 'Dai Dai', the official tune of the 2026 World Cup. The energy performance by the duo and the scintillating dance steps had fans on their feet, creating one of the standout moments of the ceremony. Mexican rock legends Maná received a thunderous reception from the home crowd, while Mexican

singer and actress Belinda and acclaimed Mexican artist Lila Downs added local flavour to the celebrations.

The performances showcased the cultural diversity of the three host nations and set the tone for what promises to be a month-long football festival. With music, colour and passionate fans filling the stadium, the World Cup began on a fittingly grand note before attention turned to the action on the pitch.

As players prepared for the tournament opener, it was Shakira and Burna Boy who left an early mark on the competition, delivering a performance that instantly became one of the defining moments of the World Cup's opening day.

Sporting Vanguard brings you refreshing pictures from the glitzy opening ceremony in Mexico City last night.

Messi gets new look days before his World Cup debut

Just days before his highly anticipated debut at the 2026 World Cup, Lionel Messi once again captured fans' attention—though this time it wasn't for a play, a goal, or a soccer-related statement.

The Argentine captain surprised his fans with a striking makeover powered by artificial intelligence, as part of a promotional campaign with ChatGPT. And he took the result in stride.

On his official Instagram account, Leo shared a video with his 506 million followers in collaboration with ChatGPT, in which he appears sitting in an armchair and makes a curious request:

"Watch this: Hey Chat, Can you

dye my hair the colors of the Argentine national team? But make it natural, eh?," Messi asks.

The AI returned an image with all his hair dyed sky blue and white, forming the Argentine flag. Upon seeing the result, the Inter Miami captain couldn't help but laugh and imagine his teammates' reactions to seeing him with that extravagant hairstyle:

"The guys are going to laugh," he said. "Now I'd love to see all the players with their hair like this," he concluded.



TODAYS PREDICTIONS

WORLD CUP

Canada vs Bosnia and Herzegovina — 1X & U4.5
USA vs Paraguay — Home Win

COPA LIBERTADORES

Platense vs Coquimbo — 1X
Palmeiras vs Cerro Porteno — 1
Cruzeiro vs Flamengo — U2.5

NIGERIA WOMEN PREMIER LEAGUE

FC Robo vs Bayelsa Queens — X2
Abia Angels vs Nasarawa Amazons — X2

AUSTRIA WIENER STADTLIGA

Vienna Amateur vs Star Penzing — 1X
Gerasdorf vs Wienerberg — 2
SV Schwechat vs LAC Inter — X2

BELARUS

FC Isloch vs Naftan — 1
FC Belshina vs BATE — 2-4 Goals

BOLIVIA

Bulo Bulo vs Academia del Balompie — 1
CA Nacional vs Real Oruro — 1

IRELAND PREMIER LEAGUE

Derry City vs Bohemian Dublin — X2
Galway United vs Dundalk — X2

Saint Patrick's Athletic vs Drogheda United — 1

Waterford v s Sligo Rovers — Over 1.5 Goals

Shelbourne vs Shamrock Rovers — X2

IRELAND FIRST DIVISION

Treaty United vs Bray Wanderers — X2
Kerry FC vs Athlone Town — 1X

Finn Harps vs University College Dublin

— Away 1-2 Goals
Wexford vs Cork City — Away Win

GREECE SUPER CUP

AEK Athens vs OFI Crete — 1

FINLAND YKKOSLIIGA

Inter Turku II vs Jazz Pori — 1X & Over 1.5 Goals
SalPa vs KuPS Akatemia — 1

GEORGIA

FC Iberia 1999 vs Speari — 1

Dinamo Batumi vs Dila Gori — X2

LATVIA

Tukums 2000 vs BFC Daugavpils — X2

Liepaja vs SK Super Nova — 1

SWEDEN DIVISION 2 NORRA GÖTALAND

Stenungsunds IF vs Ahlafors IF — X2

Skövde AIK vs Grebbestads IF — 1

MOROCCO

FUS Rabat vs Maghreb de Fès — X2 & U3.5

Olympique de Safi vs Kawkab Athletic — 1X

Difaa Hassani vs Olympique Dcheira — 1X



Artan to ref Uefa Super Cup after losing World Cup spot

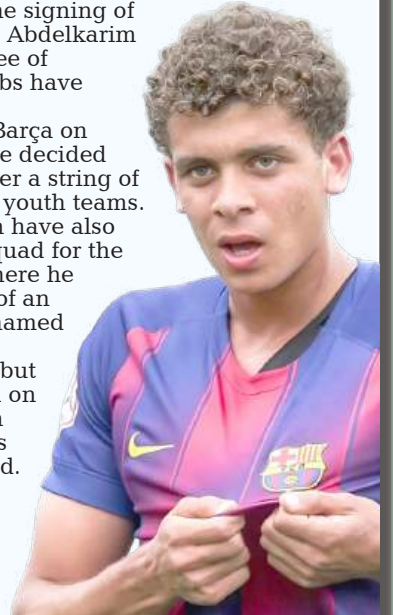
• **CAF president Motsepe hails him**

Somali referee Omar Artan, who was denied entry to the United States to officiate at the World Cup, has been appointed to take charge of the Uefa Super Cup match between Paris St-Germain and Aston Villa later this summer. The contest between PSG, who won the Champions League last term and Aston Villa, who triumphed in the Europa League, is scheduled to take place on 12 August in Salzburg. In a statement, European football's governing body said that decision had been taken after discussions with the Confederation of African Football (Caf). Uefa president Aleksander Ceferin said: "Omar Artan is an excellent young but already experienced referee, who has proven himself at the highest competition level of the Confederation of African Football. "Football is made to connect people, and

Uefa wants to show its respect to Omar and his outstanding officiating skills, which had earned him such a prestigious nomination. "I am grateful to my friend Caf president Patrice Motsepe for supporting enthusiastically our initiative." Artan, the 2025 Caf men's referee of the year, who has been on Fifa's international list since 2018, was set to be the first Somali to referee at the World Cup finals. However, he was turned away by border officials in Miami despite holding a diplomatic passport and a single-entry US visa. On Wednesday, a US government official said Artan had not been allowed to enter the country because of his "association with suspected members of terror organisations". Somalia is one of several countries on a travel ban list introduced by President Donald Trump and after speaking to the US authorities, world governing body Fifa said Artan would miss the tournament.

Barça sign Egypt's teenage World Cup striker

Barcelona have completed the signing of Egypt international Hamza Abdelkarim from Al Ahly for an initial fee of €1.5 million (\$1.7m), the two clubs have confirmed. Abdelkarim, 18, initially joined Barça on loan in January but the club have decided to make the move permanent after a string of impressive performances for the youth teams. The teenager's displays in Spain have also catapulted him into the Egypt squad for the World Cup in North America, where he will wear the No. 9 shirt as part of an attack that also includes Mohamed Salah and Omar Marmoush. He made his international debut in Egypt's 1-0 win over Russia on May 28 and came off the bench last weekend as The Pharaohs lost 2-1 to Brazil in Cleveland. Egypt kick off their World Cup campaign on Monday against Belgium in Group G before facing New Zealand and Iran.



Cape Town Marathon becomes Africa's first World Major

The Cape Town Marathon became the eighth Abbott World Marathon Majors race in the world and first in Africa on Wednesday after passing the final stage of assessment as a candidate. The race was nominated as a candidate ahead of the 2021 edition and the 2026 race in May saw the most decorated World Major marathon runner of all-time - 11-time winner Eliud Kipchoge - participate in an effort to help the major bid, finishing 16th. "It gives me huge pleasure to welcome Cape Town to the family," said AbbottWMM CEO Dawna Stone, as per the Cape Town Marathon's website. "After watching the race grow in size and stature during its candidacy and also seeing the resilience and dedication of the team lead so wonderfully by [Cape Town Marathon CEO and race director] Clark Gardner, Africa's first Major has finally arrived. "The unique culture, the welcome from the people of the city and the wonderful setting Cape Town provides will bring a whole new dimension to our series.



Martinez undecided on XI after win over Nigeria

Portugal coach Roberto Martinez has admitted he is still undecided on his starting line up for their World Cup opener against RD Congo on June 17. Portugal wrapped up their preparations for the tournament with a 2-1 win against Nigeria on Wednesday. "We used 26 players across two matches [against Chile and Nigeria] and they're all ready for the World Cup," Martinez said. "I haven't finalised the starting eleven yet. We're very clear about what we want. There are plenty of players performing at a high level who can fulfil the same role and do the same job on the pitch. "The starting eleven is the result of the work we do right up until the last day, and that's how we've operated for the last three and a half years. I have that experience, and it helps a great deal." Portugal have plenty of depth in their roster and Martinez stressed the importance of all 26 players. "The national team doesn't work with a set starting eleven, but rather with players who are fighting for a place in the squad," he said.

