



CBN “resets” interest rate to 23%, retains CRR at 45% for DMBs

● We have done well at CBN in 3 years, says Cardoso

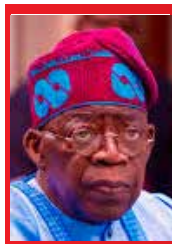
The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has announced a resetting of the baseline interest rate, the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR), to 23 per cent from 26.5 per cent. The Governor of the CBN, Mr Olayemi Cardoso, made the an-

CONTINUES ON P2 ➔

The Daily Monitor

...Monitoring the present, shaping the future

www.thedailymonitorng.com TheDailyMonitorNGR the dailymonitor nigeria thedailymonitorng N200



Tinubu pledges stronger grassroots development, urges LGs to deliver
4



Alleged phone-tapping: Court to rule in El-Rufai's No-case submission Oct 26
P4



Dangote Foundation to support two million women with Refinery IPO share ownership
P2



Ex-SGF, Babachir Lawal, joins NDC, backs Obi-Kwankwaso for 2027
P14

Tinubu’s fuel policy has caused far more harm than good –Atiku

● Says President removed subsidy with a slogan, not a strategy



Engr. Babachir Lawal being formally received into the NDC by its Leader, Senator Seriake Dickson, members of the National Working Committee, and other NDC officials...om Tuesday

Former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar has said President Bola Tinubu’s fuel policy has caused far more harm than good for Nigerians.

Atiku, the presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), spoke in a statement issued on Tuesday by Phrank Shaibu, his senior special assistant on public communication, adding that responsible leadership must listen to the plight of citizens.

He stated that Nigerians favour the restoration of petrol subsidy and want relief from the hardship caused by rising fuel and transportation costs.

The ADC presidential candidate cited a survey by SBM Intelligence which, according to him, found that 67.4 percent of respondents rejected the federal government’s current petrol pricing policy, with 19.2 supporting it.

He said the finding represented widespread dissatisfaction with the federal government’s fuel policy and should prompt President Bola Tinubu to reconsider his administration’s approach.

“This survey is no longer merely about economic policy. It has become a democratic question.

“When an overwhelming majority of Nigerians declare that a government policy is destroying their lives, responsible leadership

CONTINUES ON P2 ➔

Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde, has dismissed as false a claim by the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, that the Federal Government gave Oyo State N50 billion for the upgrade of the Ladoke Akintola International Airport, Ibadan. Recall that during a live appearance on TVC’s Journalists’

CONTINUES ON P2 ➔

Ibadan airport upgrade: Makinde counters Wike’s claim, says ‘Tinubu didn’t give Oyo N50bn’

● ‘Ibadan Airport upgrade project being undertaken 100% with funds of Oyo State’

Ibadan airport upgrade: Makinde counters Wike's claim, says 'Tinubu didn't give Oyo N50bn'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hangout on Monday, the FCT minister had said he was not the sole beneficiary of the Tinubu administration among the G5 governors of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), a group which Makinde previously belonged to.

"President Tinubu provided N50 billion to support Oyo Governor Seyi Makinde's plan to upgrade Oyo Airport into an international airport. So, it's not correct to say I'm the only G5 governor benefiting from Tinubu's government," Wike said.

But speaking at the Makinde/Daura 2027 Presidential Town Hall meeting in Katsina on Tuesday, the Oyo State governor said his attention was drawn to Wike's comments during an appearance on TVC's Journalists' Hangout programme on Monday.

Makinde said the airport project was being funded entirely by Oyo State, directly contradicting Wike's claim that the President Bola Tinubu-led administration supported the state with N50 billion for the upgrade.

"I want to say that claim is false," Makinde said. "The President did not give me or Oyo State N50 billion to upgrade the Ibadan Airport. The Ibadan Airport upgrade project is being undertaken 100 per cent with the funds of Oyo State."

Makinde, however, said he decided to address the claim before proceeding with other issues at the Northwest consultative meeting.

"Before I go into say a few things, let me start by saying that, my attention was drawn to an interview granted yesterday by the minister of the FCT minister, Nyesom Wike, where he said that the president gave N50 billion to Oyo State or to me to upgrade the Oyo airport in Ibadan to international standard. I want to say that that claim is false."

"The president did not give N50 billion to me or N50 billion to Oyo State to upgrade the Ibadan airport. Ibadan airport upgrade project is being undertaken 100 percent with the money of Oyo State", he said.

The governor said the Katsina meeting was part of the Northwest consultative engagement, during which he met with the presidential can-

didate and stakeholders and listened to their concerns.

"We are here at the Northwest Consultative Meeting. We met with our candidate, stakeholders, and listened to you," Makinde said.

The APM candidate also used the Katsina engagement to present the party's "Reset Nigeria Agenda", a policy framework he said was designed to address the country's economic, educational, security and governance challenges.

Makinde, who is seeking to contest the 2027 presidential election, said the North-West town hall was part of the party's nationwide consultations aimed at engaging Nigerians ahead of the polls.

He said his proposed administration would focus on building a productive economy through investment in entrepreneurship, skills development, knowledge and large-scale production, arguing that Nigeria must move beyond dependence on natural resources.

According to him, a competitive economy must be driven by innovation and productivity capable of sustaining businesses and creating opportunities for citizens.

On education, Makinde promised to prioritise accurate data collection on out-of-school children and implement programmes to return them to classrooms.

Addressing security challenges, he cited the deaths of 37 young Nigerians linked to illegal mining in Niger State, stressing the need for government to tackle the root causes of insecurity by creating legitimate economic opportunities.

He advocated greater involvement of state governments in mining activities while allowing the Federal Government to maintain regulatory oversight.

The APM National Chairman, Yusuf Mamman Dantalle, said the party was presenting Nigerians with an alternative political direction, lamenting that insecurity had affected farming, education, businesses and freedom of movement.

Dantalle called for collective efforts to restore security, reduce poverty and improve access to education across the country.

Tinubu's fuel policy has caused far more harm than good -Atiku

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

must listen," Atiku said.

The former vice-president said the survey identified petrol as the second-most cited national problem and the Tinubu administration's worst-rated policy issue, with a score of 1.69 out of four.

He said the findings reflected the difficulties faced by families, workers, farmers and businesses as fuel and transportation costs continue to rise.

"This survey is not merely about percentages. It is the collective cry of Nigerian families who can no longer afford food, workers whose salaries disappear on transportation, farmers who cannot move their produce to market and

businesses collapsing under the weight of fuel and energy costs," he said.

Atiku said Nigerians had endured higher transportation costs, rising food prices, declining purchasing power and deeper economic hardship since the removal of petrol subsidy.

"The survey simply confirms what Nigerians already know: Tinubu's fuel policy has caused far more harm than good," he stated.

The ADC presidential candidate also cited regional figures from the survey, saying 32.4 percent of rural respondents identified petrol as their primary concern, compared with 11.7 percent of urban respondents.

He said petrol was also

the leading concern in the south-west, at 30.5 percent, and the south-south, at 29.1 percent.

According to Atiku, the figures showed that concerns over fuel prices extend across different parts of the country.

"President Tinubu removed subsidy with a slogan, not a strategy. He had no credible plan for domestic refining, mass transportation, wage protection or the millions of small businesses that depend on affordable energy," he said.

Atiku said the government had ignored warnings about the likely effects of higher petrol prices on purchasing power, transportation costs and food inflation.

Atiku reiterated his proposal for a transparent production subsidy tied specifically to petroleum products refined in Nigeria and sold to Nigerians.

"If elected, from May 29, 2027, I will introduce a transparent production subsidy for petroleum products refined in Nigeria and sold to Nigerians. Imports will not qualify," he said.

He said the proposed programme would have a fixed spending limit, national assembly approval and independent audits.

According to him, the policy would be aimed at reducing petrol prices, strengthening domestic refining, creating jobs and restoring purchasing power.

CBN "resets" interest rate to 23%, retains CRR at 45% for DMBs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

announcement on Tuesday in Abuja, while presenting a communiqué from the 307th meeting of the MPC.

According to Cardoso, the committee also recalibrated the Standing Facilities Corridor (SFR) at +50/-300 basis points around the MPR, from +50/-450 basis points.

He, however, said that the Cash Reserve Requirement (CRR) was retained 45 per cent for deposit money banks, 16 per cent for merchant banks and 75 per cent for non-TSA public sector deposits.

"The committee decided to reset the MPR and recalibrate the policy corridor as an important operational realignment."

"It is aimed at strengthening monetary policy transmission and reinforcing the primacy of the monetary policy rate," he said.

He said that the recalibration of the corridor did not constitute a change in the current monetary policy stance.

He described the step as an operational reset to enhance the effectiveness of monetary policy and support the transition to an inflation-targeting framework.

"Members are of the view that the current macroeconomic environment remains supportive of such a recalibration without undermining the disinflation process," Cardoso said.

He said that in arriving at the decision, the committee took note that the divergence between the MPR and the prevailing market rates had weakened the effectiveness of monetary policy transmission.

"Members noted that the bank's ongoing repair of the monetary policy implementation framework,

including the adoption of Nigerian Overnight Financing Rate (NOFR) as a transaction-based operational benchmark, has improved the transparency of money market operations.

"The committee, therefore, considered a reset of the MPR and recalibration of the corridor appropriate to better align the monetary policy implementation framework with market realignment."

"This will strengthen policy transmission and restore the MPR as a principal signal of monetary policy," he said.

The CBN governor said the recalibration represented an operational realignment of the framework and should not in itself be construed as a change in the underlying policy stance.

He said that the MPC broadly observed the increasing resilience demon-

strated by the Nigerian economy.

He said that the resilience was reflected by the moderating inflation, robust external reserve buffers, improved external sector fundamentals, and strengthened investor confidence.

"The committee acknowledged the considerable improvement in the balance of payment surplus of 3.51 billion dollars in the second quarter of 2026, compared with 2.38 billion dollars in first quarter."

"Similarly, the current account surplus increased by 67.92 per cent to 7.54 billion dollars in the second quarter, from 4.49 billion dollars in the first quarter."

"The committee particularly noted with satisfaction the progress of the disinflation process, evidenced by three consecutive months of decline in headline inflation."

Dangote Foundation to support two million women with Refinery IPO share ownership -Aliko Dangote

President and Chief Executive of Dangote Industries Limited, Aliko Dangote, has announced plans for the Aliko Dangote Foundation to collaborate with state governments to empower vulnerable women across Nigeria through participation in the Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited Initial Public Offering (IPO).

Dangote made the announcement in New York during the 81st United Nations General Assembly while responding to a question from the Secretary to the Yobe State Government, Dr. Goje Mohammed. The discussion focused on how partnerships between government and the private sector can help conflict-affected communities, particularly widows, build sustainable financial futures

through investment opportunities.

According to Dangote, the Foundation will work closely with state governments to ensure that women from vulnerable groups, including widows and victims of conflict, can take advantage of the refinery's share offering and begin building long-term wealth through equity ownership.

The initiative is designed to expand access to Nigeria's capital market by giving women who might otherwise be excluded the opportunity to become shareholders in one of Africa's largest industrial enterprises.

Speaking on the programme, Dangote revealed that the Foundation plans to provide additional support to participating women by donating shares to complement their investments.

"We are partnering with state governments to ensure that widows and other vulnerable women are able to buy shares in the refinery," he said.

He explained that women who purchase shares under the IPO will receive an additional allotment of shares from the Foundation, helping them establish a long-term financial asset.

"Beyond enabling them to buy shares, the Foundation will also support them by donating additional shares that they can hold as savings for the future," Dangote noted.

The programme targets up to two million women nationwide, making it one of the largest financial inclusion and women's empowerment initiatives linked to Nigeria's capital market.

"We are looking at reach-

ing about two million women through this initiative," he added.

The proposed intervention forms part of the broader objectives of the Dangote Refinery "People's IPO," which seeks to democratise ownership of the landmark refinery and enable more Nigerians to share in the value created by one of the country's most significant private-sector investments.

The initiative is expected to have particular significance for conflict-affected states such as Yobe, where many widows and vulnerable households continue to face economic challenges resulting from years of insecurity. By facilitating access to investment opportunities, the partnership aims to provide a pathway to sustainable wealth creation and long-term financial security.



Brands You Love. Rewards You'll Cherish
...the *Exquisite World of Ruby*



Being a Ruby Customer comes with benefits. Get discounts and exclusive offers from our Partners across Nigeria and join the league of discerning women who are already enjoying the Ruby advantage.



Nigeria will not be a soft target for predatory litigation, arbitration -Fagbemi

The Attorney-General of the Federation, Mr La-teef Fagbemi, SAN, has said that Nigeria will not be a soft target for predatory litigation and arbitration.

Fagbemi made this known in a statement in Abuja on Tuesday, while reacting to Nigeria's victory in the International Arbitration instituted by Sunrise Power and Transmission Company Limited (Sunrise) and its principal, Mr Leno Adesanya.

He noted that the verdict was a complete and resounding vindication of Nigeria's position that Sunrise's entire claim should be totally rejected.

The News Agency of Nigeria recalls that on September 17, a Tribunal of the International Chamber of Commerce, Paris the landmark victory for Nigeria against Sunrise.

The arbitration was about the 3,050 megawatt Mambilla Hydroelectric Power Project (Mambilla Project), one of the largest and most strategically important infrastructure projects in the history of the Nigerian State.

In the arbitration, Sunrise demanded \$400 million (comprising a settlement sum and a default sum of \$200 million each) and interest at ten per cent per annum compounded daily in addition to its pending claim of over \$2.7 billion in a separate, parallel arbitration.

Fagbemi noted that for over two decades, the progress of the vital project has been held hostage by Sunrise's relentless litigation and arbitration against Nigeria.

"It began with the claim of an alleged Build-Operate-Transfer contract in 2003, followed by court proceedings in 2007, and continuing through further arbitrations.

"The financing of the Mambilla Project by the China Export-Import Bank was expressly conditioned on the resolution of these disputes. As a result, the Project has been unable to achieve financial close, depriving Nigeria and its people of the enormous economic benefits of 3,050 megawatts of clean, renewable hydroelectric power.

"The cost of this delay measured in lost power generation, foregone industrial output, and continued energy poverty is incalculable," he added.

He said that the tribunal found that the Settlement Agreement and the Addendum thereto, were not

binding on Nigeria, as the former Nigerian Ministers who signed them lacked the requisite authority to commit and bind the Federal Government without presidential approval.

"In addition, the settlement agreement was found to be a product of corruption and a violation of Nigerian public policy which made it unenforceable.

"The tribunal also found that Adesanya had engaged in a decades long campaign of bribery and corruption often involving very large payments to several senior Nigerian government officials connected to the Mambilla Project.

"The corrupt scheme, orchestrated by Adesanya extended to the settlement agreements with the tribunal specifically finding that a corrupt deal was in fact reached between Adesanya and the erstwhile senior Nigerian officials who signed the settlement agreement which formed the basis of the present arbitration against Nigeria."

He said the tribunal noted that Adesanya's pattern of corrupt dealings extended back to the very origins of the Mambilla dispute.

"This pattern forms what the tribunal described as an established modus operandi of engaging with influential Nigerian government officials through financial incentives.

"Consequently, Sunrise and Adesanya were ordered to bear the overwhelming majority of costs of 75 per cent of Nigeria's legal fees and expenses, plus interest at 10 per cent per annum compounded annually.

"The tribunal expressed the hope that this would deter Adesanya and his companies from bringing further frivolous legal proceedings against Nigeria."

He acknowledged the leadership efforts of President Bola Tinubu who has consistently maintained the position that under no guise should Nigeria succumb to fraudulently contrived contractual agreements and any adverse claims arising therefrom.

"I also wish to express my immense appreciation to the president for ensuring the provision of necessary financial and logistic support for the effective defence of this matter.

"We shall continue to provide sound legal advice and effective representation on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, ensuring that justice is served and the integrity of our nation upheld".

Death in custody: Tunji-Ojo charges committee to uncover

The Minister of Interior, Dr Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, has charged the 10-member independent committee investigating the deaths of 37 suspected illegal miners to ensure transparency and integrity.

Tunji-Ojo who gave the charge on Tuesday in Abuja, while inaugurating the committee in his office, also urged them to uncover the truth with a view to ensuring that justice prevailed.

He said the Federal Government was determined to uncover the truth, stressing that the committee was expected to work transparently, independently and without interference.

He therefore urged the committee members to uphold their longstanding integrity, saying their performance should justify the confidence reposed in them by the federal government.

The noted that the committee's responsibility was not merely to investigate the incident, but to ensure justice for the deceased and prevent similar occurrences.

He mandated the committee to therefore identify the deceased, establish the immediate and remote causes, determine the time and place of their deaths as well as circumstances surrounding their arrest.

"Examine the legality and conditions of detention, compliance with relevant laws and human rights standards, allegations of torture, denial of medical care, and negligence or misconduct.

"Review medical and autopsy reports, interview

relevant stakeholders, determine culpability, recommend sanctions or compensation where applicable and propose measures to prevent future occurrences," he said.

Tunji-Ojo noted that the federal government owed Nigerians the truth, hence, the need for the committee to unravel the truth.

According to him, no officer irrespective of how high, will be shielded if found culpable.

He further charged the committee to ascertain the time and place of death, determine responsibility and examine all available evidence to establish the authenticity of reported details.

According to him, the government has received

different figures concerning the incident, making it necessary for the committee to establish the facts independently.

He emphasised that the committee had just two weeks to complete its assignment, adding that an extension could be considered if necessary to ensure a thorough investigation.

"This report will not be swept under the carpet. Whoever needs to be prosecuted and dealt with in line with the law will face it," he said.

The minister described the deaths as deeply disturbing, stressing that government institutions should remain places of safety, confidence and security, rather than sites of preventable deaths.

Alleged phone-tapping: Court to rule in El-Rufai's No-case submission Oct 26

The Federal High Court in Abuja on Tuesday fixed October 26 for ruling in a no-case submission filed by former Gov. Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna State in the alleged phone-tapping filed against him by the Department of State Services (DSS).

El-Rufai is being prosecuted on allegations bordering on breach of national security, following his alleged admission of wiretapping phone conversations of Mr Nuhu Ribadu, the National Security Adviser (NSA).

Justice Joyce Abdulmalik fixed the date after the ex-governor's lawyer, Akinyemi Aremu, and the DSS' counsel, Oluwole Aladedoye, SAN, adopted their processes and presented their arguments for and against the no-case submission.

Earlier, Aremu, who appeared for El-Rufai, adopted their pricesses.

He urged the court to hold that the prosecution had failed to establish a case requiring the former governor to enter a defence.

In response, the DSS counsel adopted their counter affidavit in opposition to the no-case submission.

Aladedoye argued that the defence failed to address Exhibit "B", which the prosecution said contained El-Rufai's alleged admission concerning the tapping of Ribadu's phone.

He submitted that since the prosecution had established a prima facie case against El-Rufai, the defendant is required by law to enter his defence.

The senior lawyer prayed the court to dismiss the application and order El-Rufai to enter his defence.

After listening to the lawyers' arguments, Justice Abdulmalik adjourned the matter until Oct. 26 for ruling.

NAN recalls that the DSS had called two witnesses; an operative of the service and a legal practitioner, Deji Adeyanju, to established their case against El-Rufai.

Adeyanju, who testified as a subpoenaed witness, had told the court that the ex-governor allegedly admitted on a

national television interview that he wiretapped the phone lines belonging to the NSA.

After the prosecution closed its case, the defendant opted for a no-case submission.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the DSS sued El-Rufai after he claimed during a TV interview that he intercepted a telephone conversation involving Mr Ribadu.

The ex-governor had alleged that the conversation, on the telephone, revealed instructions to security operatives to arrest him.

He linked the alleged directive to an incident at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport on Feb. 12 after his return from Cairo, Egypt.

Ohanaeze at 50: Otti urges Ndigbo to preserve history, renew institutions

Governor Alex Otti of Abia State, on Tuesday, urged Igbo people to preserve their history while continuously renewing institutions created to advance their collective interests.

Otti gave the advice at the public presentation of a book: Ohanaeze at 50: The Burden of Memory, The Politics of Relevance.

It was authored by Mr Kalu Onuma.

Otti served as the event's chief host.

He said the 50th anniversary of Ohanaeze Ndigbo provided an opportunity not only to celebrate its longevity but also to examine its relevance to present and future generations.

He said the book's emphasis on memory and relevance was significant because institutions must learn from their history while adapting to changing social realities.

"Memory tells us where we are coming from. Relevance challenges us to ask where we are going.

"An organisation that forgets its history will struggle to understand its present, but an organisation that becomes too attached to its history without responding to the demands of the present may gradually loses its relevance," Otti said.

He said Ohanaeze emerged in 1976 from the need to provide a platform for Igbo people at a difficult period in Nigeria's history.

He said that the circumstances that produced the organisation had changed significantly.

Otti said the new realities required institutions representing Igbo people to create a greater space for young people, women, professionals and the growing Igbo diaspora.

He commended Onuma for undertaking what he described as an important examination of the history, experiences and future of Ohanaeze.

The governor urged members of the public to read the book, saying that its value

would be measured by the conversations and actions it would generate.

"You cannot correct what you refuse to acknowledge. You cannot improve what you refuse to examine, and you cannot build the future if you are afraid to learn from the past," he said.

The author, Onuma, said the book was not written to praise or condemn Ohanaeze, but to examine what the organisation had achieved, where it had struggled and what it could become in the next 50 years.

Onuma said the book was an independent work and not a commissioned history of Ohanaeze.

He said: "If it provokes questions, then it has done something useful.

"If it generates debate, then the conversation has begun.

"If the conversation leads to renewal, then the purpose of the book would have been achieved."

The royal father of the occasion and Obi of Onitsha

and Agbogidi, Nnaemeka Achebe, performed the traditional breaking of Kola at the event.

Achebe said the breaking of Kola symbolised fellowship and goodwill, urging Igbo people to strengthen their bonds while preserving their cultural heritage.

The reviewer of the book, Prof. Okey Anueyiagu, described the publication as an attempt to interrogate an institution rather than merely celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Anueyiagu said the book examined Ohanaeze's history, leadership, internal dynamics and relevance to contemporary society.

He urged the public to read the book critically and note the questions it raised about the future of the organisation.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Ohanaeze Ndigbo, established in 1976, is an apex Igbo socio-cultural organisation representing the collective interests, unity and cultural heritage of Igbo people.

Tinubu pledges stronger grassroots development, urges LGs to deliver

President Bola Tinubu has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to ensuring that development is felt across Nigeria's grassroots communities.

Tinubu made the commitment on Tuesday in Abuja at the National Conference of 774 Local Government Council Chairmen.

The conference was organised by the Federal Ministry of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs (FMSDIGA), in collaboration with the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON).

Represented by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Akume, Tinubu said the conference theme was timely.

The theme was: "Cascading President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda to the Grassroots."

He said the true test of government policy was not what was announced in Abuja, but the changes experienced in villages, towns and communities.

Tinubu said Nigeria's rapidly growing population required government to move closer to the people through stronger grassroots development.

"Our vision and mission is shortening the distance between government and the government, widening access to services and creating more centres of local development."

"Development must

Army foils terrorists' attacks, rescues 23 kidnapped victims in Sokoto

The Nigerian Army says its troops have successfully foiled attacks by the Lakurawa terrorist group targeting civilians across Sokoto State.

Lt.-Col. Aliyu Danja, spokesperson for Sector 2, Joint Task Force North West, Operation Fansan Yamma (OPFY), disclosed this in a statement issued on Monday in Sokoto.

Danja said troops rescued 23 kidnapped victims and arrested four suspected members of the group in separate operations.

He said troops responded on Sept. 20 to a distress alert on the invasion of Sabon Gari, Wurno Local Government Area (LGA).

According to him, the terrorists fired sporadically, forcing civilians to flee their homes.

Danja said troops engaged the terrorists in a gun battle, forcing them to withdraw from the area.

"Troops rescued six kidnapped victims during the operation, while a civilian who sustained a gunshot wound was evacuated to a medical facility," he said.

come from the bottom up," Tinubu said

He said his administration, since 2023, had pursued national development based on the belief that Nigeria could not evolve from the centre alone.

The President also stressed the need for communities across the country to experience tangible improvements.

He said such improvements should include better primary healthcare, basic education, rural roads, safe water and stronger food systems.

The President also identified support for small businesses and opportunities for women and young people as important components of grassroots development.

Tinubu urged local government chairmen, councilors and management teams to use their autonomy to deliver impactful governance and measurable development.

He said the Supreme Court judgment affirming local government autonomy placed a huge responsibility on councils to provide effective services.

The President recalled that his administration had demonstrated political will by approaching the Supreme Court to affirm the constitutional rights and financial autonomy of local governments.

He described the July 11, 2024 judgment as historic,

stressing that local government autonomy should serve as an instrument for development.

"Local Government autonomy is not an end in itself, rather, it is an instrument for

service and development," he said.

Tinubu urged councils to become centres of planning, service delivery, early warning and measurable results in their respective commu-

nities.

He also unveiled the conference compendium titled: "Snapshots of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Achievements under his Renewed Hope Agenda."

Earlier, the Minister of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs, Mr Zaphaniah Jisalo, said the Renewed Hope Agenda was focused on improving the lives of Nigerians.



Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar meeting with Yazid Aliyu, the teenage miner, who explained the circumstances behind the arrest of the miners who died in NSCDC custody in a viral video.

FG woos investors, targets new markets for Nigeria's gas

The Federal Government says it is intensifying efforts to attract investment, technology and strategic partnerships into Nigeria's gas sector while expanding access to new export markets.

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Mr Ekperikpe Ekpo, said this at Gastech 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Ekpo spoke during high-level engagements with global energy companies and investors on gas production, infrastructure development, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) expansion, industrialisation and market diversification.

The minister, in a statement made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Monday night by his spokesperson, Mr Louis Ibah, said that the engagements were aimed at translating Nigeria's 215.19 trillion cubic feet of proven gas reserves into economic growth, industrial development and job creation.

He said the reforms and investor-friendly policies of President Bola Tinubu's administration had strengthened investor confidence and enhanced Nigeria's attractiveness as an energy investment destination.

According to him, NNPC Ltd. will drive Nigeria's bilateral energy partnerships by translating government engagements into commercially viable projects, strategic investments and sustainable development.

"Nigeria is open for business. We have put in place the right fiscal policies and operating environment, and the security of investors and their investments is guaranteed," Ekpo said.

A key outcome of the

engagements was renewed momentum on the proposed Nigeria-Libya Gas Pipeline, which could provide an additional route for transporting Nigerian gas through North Africa to European markets.

During discussions with Libya's Minister of Oil and Gas, Dr Khalifa Abdulsadek, both sides agreed to advance the initiative towards a structured project framework.

The two countries will explore the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and establish a joint technical team, with NNPC Ltd. expected to spearhead Nigeria's efforts under the bilateral cooperation framework.

The team will assess the project's feasibility, financing options, infrastructure requirements, security considerations and commercial

viability.

On the domestic front, Seplat Energy Plc outlined plans to significantly increase gas production.

Its Chief Executive Officer, Mr Effiong Okon, said the company was implementing initiatives that could raise output to as much as two billion standard cubic feet per day through its assets across the ANOH project, western operations and offshore fields.

Okon also highlighted strategic gas infrastructure projects, including Oso Floating LNG, UTM FLNG and Ibom LNG, as well as financing partnerships and plans to develop an industrial park around the Qua Iboe Terminal corridor.

He said the initiatives would stimulate gas-based industries, manufacturing and broader economic activities.

Humanitarian service, key to peace-building, NBM tells ECOWAS

TITUS AKHIGBE, BENIN

The NBM of Africa Worldwide has called on ECOWAS and other regional stakeholders to give greater recognition to humanitarian intervention, community support and public education as tools for preventing conflict in strengthening peace across West Africa.

The President of the organisation, Dr Charles Chimezie, made the call in Abuja while delivering NBM's World Peace Day address at the ECOWAS Secretariat, Asokoro, stressing

that peace could not be sustained through security measures alone.

Chimezie said humanitarian organisations had an important role to play in addressing social conditions that could make vulnerable communities susceptible to crime, violence, hopelessness and other forms of insecurity.

He said NBM had, over the years, used humanitarian service as part of its contribution to peacebuilding, with interventions covering healthcare, education, disaster relief, welfare assistance, environmental sanitation and support for vulnerable

families and communities.

The NBM president disclosed that members of the organisation had donated blood during the month to hospitals in Benin City, Abuja, Kuje, Lafia, Delta and Jos, describing the initiative as a practical demonstration of how saving lives could contribute to building more compassionate communities.

He also disclosed that the organisation had supported displaced persons and disaster victims with food, financial assistance and relief materials, including recent intervention in Borno State in partnership with the state

government.

According to him, NBM's educational interventions were equally designed to reduce vulnerability among young people, stressing that access to education and opportunities could help protect children and youths from exploitation, criminal activities and hopelessness.

Chimezie said the organisation had also intensified public education on social justice, equality, human rights, peaceful coexistence and responsible citizenship, urging young people not to allow anger and differences to degenerate into violence.

BENIPA facilitates N6.04 trn investment commitments in Benue — ES

Benue Investment Promotion Agency (BENIPA) says it facilitated approximately \$4.55 billion (N6.04 trillion) investment commitments across 12 major Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and structured investment transactions by the end of 2025.

Dr Terhemem Johnpaul Kpenkaan, BENIPA Executive Secretary(ES) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), made the disclosure at a press briefing on Tuesday in Makurdi.

Kpenkaan said the agency, which commenced operations in September 2024, had built an investment reform architecture and moved selected projects from proposals and agreements towards implementation.

He, however, clarified that the figure represented the estimated value of facilitated commitments and not cash received by the state.

He said the 12 transactions were at different stages, with some having signed agreements, others undergoing feasibility studies or due diligence, while some remained at earlier preparation stages.

According to him, the portfolio covers agro-processing, energy, mechanised agriculture, hospitality, community infrastructure and legacy-asset recovery.

He identified the proposed Makurdi Hydro-power Project, valued at about \$4 billion, as the largest project in the pipeline.

Kpenkaan said the project was conceived to generate 1,650 megawatts of electricity and provide irrigation capabilities, adding that it was undergoing technical, financial, legal, environmental, social and fiscal scrutiny.

He said BENIPA had engaged eight relevant ministries, departments and agencies and trained 28 director-cadre civil servants to work with the project's controlled digital data repository.

He said the National Food City Complex, a proposed \$250 million (N331.1 billion) integrated agro-industrial project in the Otukpo

axis, had progressed from proposal to implementation milestones.

According to him, the state executed the public-private partnership agreement with Rextodeneh Group Ltd on May 9, 2025, describing it as the first formal agreement of its kind in Benue's 50-year history.

He said the project site was formally handed over to the investor in January 2026, while the State Executive Council approved a relevant implementation step on September 2.

Kpenkaan added that the parties executed the Financial Close Agreement on September 7, while the contract for the proposed 12-kilometre access road was awarded on September 18.

He said the contractor had mobilised and preparatory work was advancing, with formal groundbreaking planned.

The executive secretary said the Food City, at full planned capacity, was expected to generate more than 20,000 direct jobs and integrate over 40,000 small-holder farmers through structured market access and offtake.

He stressed, however, that the projected jobs, farmer integration and processing capacity remained expected outcomes that depended on successful construction, operation and enforcement of commitments.

Kpenkaan also said BENIPA had negotiated an out-of-court settlement that removed a legacy lease encumbrance affecting Tarku Mills, enabling the Benue Investment and Property Company to subsequently bring in investors and revive the factory.

The executive secretary said the agency, in collaboration with the National Automotive Design and Development Council, had also delivered mechatronics and compressed natural gas training to 60 young people.

He added that two sites had been handed over to the council for an automotive training centre and a CNG conversion centre, alongside an electric vehicle charging facility.

Kaduna: Gov Sani approves N3.659bn for retirees, pays N21.455bn in three years

GABRIEL UDEH, KADUNA

Kaduna State Governor, Uba Sani, has approved N3.659 billion for the payment of pension, gratuities and death benefits to retirees and families of deceased public servants across Kaduna State and Local Government Services.

Disclosing the approval in a statement signed by the Commissioner for Information and Culture, Malam Ahmed Maiyaki, the Governor said the latest approval covers 1,339 beneficiaries including retirees and eligible families of deceased public servants under the Defined Benefit Scheme (DBS) and Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS).

Maiyaki said the ap-

proved N3.659 billion brings the cumulative pension payments by the Uba Sani administration to N21.455 billion, covering 9,683 beneficiaries since it assumed office in May 2023.

Giving a breakdown of the 1,339 beneficiaries in the latest release, the Commissioner said 210 Local Government retirees will receive N515 million under the Defined Benefit Scheme.

Under the Contributory Pension Scheme, a combined N3.144 billion has been approved for 1,129 beneficiaries, comprising 402 retirees from the State Service and 727 retirees from the Local Government Councils, he added.

According to the Commissioner, out of the 1,339

beneficiaries covered by the latest N3.659 billion approval, 210 are under the Defined Benefit Scheme, while 1,129 are under the Contributory Pension Scheme.

Maiyaki further said the latest intervention underscores the administration's sustained commitment to systematically address outstanding pension liabilities while strengthening the integrity and long-term sustainability of Kaduna State's pension system.

He added that the intervention forms part of broader public financial management reforms aimed at strengthening fiscal discipline, transparency and accountability, while establishing a more predictable and sustain-

able framework for meeting pension obligations.

"Governor Uba Sani remains committed to ensuring that those who devoted their productive years to the service of Kaduna State receive their legitimate entitlements with dignity.

"Pension payment is not a favour; it is an obligation to our retirees and the families of deceased public servants," Maiyaki clarified.

The Commissioner reaffirmed Governor Uba Sani's commitment to sustaining pension reforms, progressively addressing outstanding liabilities and ensuring that public servants can look forward to retirement with greater financial security, dignity and peace of mind.

Taraba College students' protest: Provost calls for calm

OKERAFOR ATHANATIUS, JALINGO

The Provost of the Taraba State College of Nursing Sciences, Jalingo, Dr. (Mrs) Dorcas Dugule, has called on the students of the college who were protesting over an alleged attack and rape on fellow students by hoodlums to be patient and remain calm.

Dr. (Mrs) Dugule, who said the management of the institution in collaboration with security agencies and State Ministry of Education was on top of the situation, stated this while briefing Journalists in Jalingo the State capital.

Represented by the Deputy Provost, Mr. Khikanda Agyo Yavini, Dugule assured the students that the issues that led to such a dastardly

act would soon be sorted out.

"The management is on top of the matter and is working to prevent further occurrence. We are appealing to you to remain calm and allow security agencies to carry out their investigations," she said.

On the call by the protesting students for the Provost Dr. Dugule to resign from being the college's Provost, adding that she is not capable of piloting the affairs of the college, Yavini used his position as the Deputy Provost to defend her boss saying she's capable of running the affairs of the college.

"She is trying her best. I am learning under her," he said.

Refuting media reports that the lady was raped inside the premises of the

college, Mr. Yavini said the lady was raped outside the hostel late at night when she was walking late at night, she was attacked and raped.

Yavini emphasized that the students were demanding security in their temporary hostels, pending completion of the permanent site and their movement to it.

"Police have agreed to deploy their men to the hostels."

Addressing the students, the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, DCP Didango Shehu, said the command had received a report of the invasion in which suspected hoodlums attacked a female hostel located outside the main campus of the institution and dispossessed students of their belongings.

He said the police were aware that one of the female

students was allegedly raped during the attack, adding that investigation had commenced to arrest the perpetrators.

According to him, the Commissioner of Police had directed the immediate deployment of more patrol teams to the affected community and other student-dominated areas to forestall further occurrences.

He assured students and the general public that the police would not relent in their constitutional responsibility of protecting lives and property in the state.

The Daily Monitor Correspondent gathered that the protest followed reports that an 18-year-old girl was raped at about 8:00 p.m. outside the institution's premises as she was returning to her hostel from the school.

Etsu Nupe urges residents to fear God, uphold law amid 37 miners' deaths

The Etsu Nupe and Chairman, Niger State Council of Traditional Rulers, Alhaji (Dr.) Yahaya Abubakar CFR, has urged residents of the state to remain law-abiding and allow the fear of God to guide their actions and conduct.

Etsu Nupe made the call on Tuesday in Minna when he led members of the Niger State Council of Traditional Rulers on a condolence visit to Gov. Mohammed Umaru-Bago over the deaths of 37 suspected illegal miners while in the custody of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the deaths, which occurred in Minna, have prompted investigations

by state and federal authorities into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The traditional ruler described the incident as tragic and unfortunate, expressing sadness over the loss of lives while commiserating with the families of the deceased.

He said traditional rulers have a responsibility to continue to educate and guide the people on the need to live according to the dictates of God and uphold the laws of the land.

"It is our duty as traditional leaders to continue to let our people know that this life is simply as created by Almighty Allah.

"We urge our people to continue to have the fear of God in them and perform their duties dil-

igently," he said.

Abubakar commended Umaru-Bago for his efforts toward restoring calm following the incident and prayed that Almighty Allah would continue to grant him wisdom, strength and guidance in the administration of the state.

Responding, Umaru-Bago appreciated the council members for the visit and for the fatherly role they continue to play in promoting peace and stability in their respective domains.

The governor stressed the need for the Federal Government to ensure continuous training and retraining of personnel of security agencies to strengthen professionalism and prevent recurrence of such incidents.

He said that where in-

vestigations established professional lapses, appropriate measures should be taken, adding that the circumstances surrounding the deaths were still being investigated.

"To families, it is a call to please desist from illegal mining, and if you are going to do that, don't expose your children to that.

"Encourage children to go to school; that will help the society in the future," he said.

NAN reports that President Bola Tinubu has directed a full and transparent investigation into the deaths, while the Federal Government has constituted a 10-member independent committee to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Nigerians demand accountability, not political rhetoric

MATTHEW MA

At times, I grow weary of our government's rhetoric, especially after a tragedy. Each time an event of this nature occurs, we hear familiar phrases such as "We will bring those responsible to justice," "We must ensure that justice is served," and "We will establish a panel to investigate." Yet despite these assurances, I have seldom witnessed true justice. When the government fails to address citizens' pressing concerns, frustration inevitably builds. In such moments, condolences, reassurances, and carefully crafted press releases fall short of answering the urgent questions weighing on the public. The recent deaths of 37 detainees in the custody of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) in Minna, Niger State, raise significant concerns that demand immediate attention. These tragic deaths have sparked widespread protests, a curfew, the suspension of 24 security personnel, and multiple high-level investigations initiated by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. However, for the families of the deceased—many of whom were teenagers—the fundamental question remains achingly clear: How did 37 individuals die while in state custody, and who will be held accountable for this tragedy?

The detainees were reportedly arrested in connection with illegal mining. The cause of death remains a topic of intense debate, with official accounts, preliminary intelligence (which is not legally binding on any individual or authority), and survivor testimonies pointing in different directions. The NSCDC's initial stance indicated that the detainees

appeared to have died following a suspected outbreak of disease, emphasizing the need for a medical examination to determine the exact cause. Preliminary intelligence from AFP and the governor's statements suggest that the 37 individuals died due to overcrowding and inadequate ventilation within the detention facility. Governor Bago publicly stated that possible suffocation from overcrowding, along with exposure to hazardous substances (potentially inhaled at the mining site), are among the factors currently under investigation. He also reported concerning signs observed on the bodies, such as skin peeling, foam emerging from their mouths, and blood around their noses, mouths, and ears—which imply exposure to chemicals or highly toxic substances.

Survivor accounts describe widespread panic in the cell, which they called "crammed" and poorly ventilated. One survivor, Dauda Shehu, told journalists that they were screaming for help as people died one after another, yet their pleas were not believed. Another survivor alleged that a substance was sprayed inside the cell just before some detainees began to collapse—a claim that Governor Bago said "cannot be ruled out" pending further investigations. Regardless of the legal implications of these allegations, detention fundamentally alters the state's obligations toward individuals. When citizens are deprived of their liberty, the institution responsible for their custody assumes a duty to protect their lives and ensure humane detention conditions.

This principle lies at the heart of the rule of law. The state holds legitimate coercive powers to arrest, detain,

and prosecute people within the bounds set by law. However, these powers come with corresponding duties and constraints. Detention does not negate personhood, nor does an accusation of criminal behavior diminish an individual's rights. Therefore, the deaths in Niger State necessitate an investigation that considers not only the immediate medical causes but also the institutional circumstances surrounding these incidents. The most pressing questions are empirical: What were the detention conditions? How many detainees were at the facility? Were any detainees unwell or injured before their arrest? What medical screening and treatment were available? What measures were in place for ventilation, water supply, sanitation, and emergency procedures? Had there been prior complaints about illness or overcrowding? Were medical personnel summoned, and when did they arrive? What procedures governed detainee admission, monitoring, and release? Were any of the detainees minors, and did the NSCDC adhere to child protection protocols? Were arrest warrants issued, and did they arrange legal counsel, notify families, and arrange court appearances? How many days did those arrested remain in detention before they died?

The answers to these complex questions stem from the need to provide a credible, thorough explanation of custodial deaths. Determining that a detainee succumbed to a specific disease does not necessarily address whether adequate preventive and medical measures were in place. Likewise, establishing overcrowding does not automatically imply individual criminal liability. Thus, the investigation must meticulously reconstruct the

sequence of events to determine whether identifiable failures of duty contributed to the deaths. The Federal Government's decision to establish an independent investigative committee and to suspend personnel associated with the detention facility exemplifies an institutional response to the incident. However, the response's effectiveness hinges on transparency, procedural independence, evidentiary integrity, and the dissemination of findings. This matters because delays, limited transparency, or uncertainty about implementing recommendations can erode public trust in government investigations.

The incident in Niger State highlights a broader issue within detention systems: the relative invisibility of people once they enter institutional custody. Arrests remove individuals from their usual social environments and place them within an administrative framework that is often inaccessible to family members and the broader public, significantly increasing their vulnerability. This underscores the need for independent oversight. Custodial institutions should not be evaluated solely on their ability to detain people. Instead, they must also be assessed on their capacity to preserve life, provide adequate healthcare, maintain humane conditions, ensure access to legal protections, and facilitate effective complaint mechanisms and external monitoring.

The issue at hand goes beyond the fact that 37 detainees died from illness, environmental conditions, or other causes. It raises a deeper institutional question about whether the systems established to protect individuals in custody are functioning as intended.

This distinction is vital. A rights-based approach to detention does not require reducing law enforcement capabilities. On the contrary, clearly defined custodial standards can strengthen legitimate enforcement by setting boundaries on how coercive power may be exercised. Security and human rights need not be mutually exclusive. For institutions to function effectively, both are essential.

This tragedy should prompt a thorough evaluation in two key areas. First, we must reassess detention practices, particularly overcrowding, medical screening, emergency response, record-keeping, communication with families, access to legal counsel, and independent oversight. Second, this unfortunate incident highlights the need for accountability that extends beyond identifying individual officers. When systemic issues—such as institutional procedures, inadequate resources, insufficient oversight, or administrative failures—contribute to harm, focusing solely on individual responsibility may leave the underlying problems unaddressed. Therefore, the appropriate response must be both immediate and structural: we need to establish the facts surrounding the 37 deaths, determine accountability for leadership and those responsible for detention, deliver justice, support the affected families, and evaluate whether institutional reforms are necessary to prevent future incidents.

Above all, this incident should reaffirm a fundamental principle of democratic governance: the state's authority over detained individuals entails a corresponding duty of care. The credibility of Nigeria's justice and security institu-

tions will ultimately be measured not by the number of official statements issued after this tragedy, but by whether the investigation uncovers the truth, assigns responsibility fairly, ensures affected families receive justice, and translates lessons learned into meaningful reform. The public deserves more than reassurances; it deserves a substantive, evidence-based account of what happened to the 37 individuals who entered state custody and did not emerge alive. This demand goes beyond a request for information; it calls for institutional accountability.

Finally, the deaths of 37 individuals in state custody are more than a tragedy for Niger State; they signal a national reckoning. If 37 suspected illegal miners can lose their lives in a cell with no independent witness, the promise of justice for every Nigerian held by security forces becomes meaningless. Thus, Nigerians demand accountability, not political statements.

Rev. Ma, S.J., is a Jesuit priest and public policy analyst. He currently writes from Abuja, Nigeria.



Matthew Ma

Anti-democratic blues in Benue

KENE OBIEZU

Everyone but Peter Obi. Yes, Fulani herds-men are welcome to Benue, and their cattle too. All but Obi.

Nigeria's eccentric democratic experiment and farcical federalism are finding expression at just the right time.

The beginnings are in Benue.

Campaigns for 2027 have started, and an early warning sign is flashing.

Some politicians will get a frosty reception in Benue State. Others will not even be allowed to make an entrance at all.

Paranoia is now a policy.

The struggle to check the state borders has sud-

denly disappeared.

On 8th September, Peter Obi, the NDC candidate for the 2027 election, was stopped by thugs from visiting an IDP camp. It was always coming.

The government will blame the man who disregarded its stark warning. After all, it was he who gave the drug-addled, state-sponsored attack dogs a reason to chase and almost bite.

Others have been warned. Benue State and the APC won't be bound by any outdated rulebook. The state is an APC playground that is not a level playing field. Only players of APC allegiance can play freely.

All is fair in war.

Governor Alia is only acting out what President Tinubu advocates.

It is an incredible irony that a party that benefited from the most level playing field ever is heaping stones.

Power is at stake.

Powerlessness is on the cards. There is a conspiracy to enfeeble.

A decision has been taken at the highest level that Nigerians can no longer be allowed to decide their fate and future.

A party failed.

This once, failure will not be punished but pretified until it putrefies.

Dangerous precedents are wildly unpredictable in that no one knows who will be caught in their

webs tomorrow.

Nigeria has a constitution.

The constitution is a law that dictates the extent of all other laws.

Freedom of movement is constitutional. So is political participation and the ancillary rights to associate and identify.

By the electoral timetable drawn up by law, campaigns have started.

Consequently, even if Peter Obi were on his way to Yelewata to campaign, he was well within his rights to do so.

The denial rings hollow.

A witch cried in the night, and the child died in the morning.

For all its denial, the Benue State government has its fingerprints

all over this. It was not the first time either.

There is some vindication Politics

Peter Obi has been saying Nigerian politicians are too idle for their own good.

The Benue State Government is proving him true. A state with a host of problems should have no time for frivolities.

But in Benue, they do.

Frivolities are a staple there. Just that Peter Obi won't stand for it.

It is like wildfire. He has become a symbol of a new Nigeria and is quickly becoming a way of thinking.

Democracy is opposition. Africans & Diaspora While it leans on the

majority, it rides on opposition for fortification.

As the race for 2027 heats up, political leaders at all levels must embrace opposition, without which democracy will die.



Kene Obiezu

Plateau attacks: Nigerians must not get used to ordinary citizens killings –NCA

GABRIEL UDEH, KADUNA

The Northern Christian Association (NCA) has condemned the persistent killings in Plateau State, warning that Nigerians must not become so accustomed to violence that the death of innocent citizens is gradually treated as an ordinary occurrence.

The association said the latest attacks across communities in the state, which reportedly claimed at least nine lives, including that of a pastor on his way to church, further underscored the urgent need for the government and security agencies to move beyond reactive responses and adopt more proactive measures capable of preventing attacks before they occur.

In a statement signed and made available to journalists in Kaduna on Tuesday by the NCA Chairman, Rev. Joseph John Hayab, the association expressed concern over the recurring violence and its devastating consequences for families, communities and livelihoods, stressing that the situation must not be allowed to continue.

According to the NCA, every life lost represents a human tragedy that should command the attention of government and the wider society. It stressed that the repeated nature of such attacks should concern every Nigerian, irrespective of ethnic, religious or political differences, because the sanctity of human life must remain a shared national value.

“Recent attacks reportedly occurred between Saturday night and Sunday morning across parts of Barkin Ladi, Riyom and neighbouring communities. Five people travelling towards Gana-Ropp in Barkin Ladi were reportedly killed when their vehicle came under attack, while a pastor and another person were killed on their way to church at Dorowa Babuje. Separate attacks were also

reported at Baten Wereng and Ratyidi.

“Is that how lives have become so cheap that they can now be taken at will?

“Nigerians must not get used to killings. Every life matters. We cannot continue to wake up to reports of innocent people being killed and gradually accept such incidents as part of our normal existence.

Kebbi Govt begins World Bank-backed works to tame gullies, floods in Birnin Kebbi

The Kebbi State Government says it will soon begin major erosion control and bio-engineering works in Badariya and Dukku Malala communities in Birnin Kebbi metropolis.

The Commissioner for Environment, Alhaji Musa Tungulawa, disclosed this at a news conference in Birnin Kebbi on Tuesday.

He said the ministry was executing the projects in collaboration with the Kebbi Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project, with support from the World Bank.

He added that the projects were expected to benefit more than 50,000 people directly and indirectly within the affected communities and surrounding areas.

Tungulawa said the packages comprised two erosion control and bio-engineering sites at Badariya Community under Lot 1, and another two at Dukku Malala Community under Lot 2.

Both contracts, he said, were awarded to A.G. Vision Construction Nigeria Ltd.

“The commencement of these projects represents a major relief and a significant milestone in our efforts to protect communities, save lives, restore degraded lands, reclaim lost productive areas and safeguard the livelihoods of our people,” Tungulawa said.

According to him, the intervention will check the expanding gullies, flooding and soil degradation that have battered homes, farmlands, roads, businesses and other community assets over the years.

The commissioner said the works would restore and reclaim degraded lands, especially agricultural and Fadama areas, through improved storm-water management, water harvesting and controlled channelling.

He said the projects would boost water availability and farm productivity, restore livelihoods, protect infrastructure and strengthen the communities’ resilience to flooding, erosion and other climate-related challenges.

Tungulawa added that the intervention would create safer living conditions and support sustainable socio-economic activities by restoring productive lands and reducing environmental risks.

On the contract award, he said the contractor emerged from a procurement process conducted in line with World Bank procurement regulations, and was selected based on its compliance, technical expertise, experience and capacity to deliver the projects to approved designs, specifications and quality standards.

“The projects are scheduled for completion within 15 months, but the government has urged the contractor to mobilise adequate equipment and personnel to deliver the works substantially ahead of schedule, given the urgency of the environmental challenges.

“However, the government will not compromise quality, safety or the required technical standards in the execution of the projects,” he assured.

Tungulawa also assured Project Affected Persons (PAPs) that adequate arrangements had been made for the implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP).

He said all eligible affected persons would be identified, assessed and compensated in line with the approved RAP provisions and safeguards requirements before the commencement of the relevant project activities.

“The government remains committed to ensuring that the resettlement and compensation process is transparent, fair and carried out in a manner that protects the rights, livelihoods and interests of all affected persons,” he said.

The commissioner called on residents and other stakeholders in the project areas to cooperate with the contractor, technical personnel and project teams to guarantee the success and sustainability of the intervention.



Vice President Kashim Shettima in New York, United States, declaring open the Africa Minerals Strategy Group High-Level Roundtable on Critical Minerals Development in Africa.

Kaduna Journalist vs Hotelier: Drama as Police IPO fails twice to appear in court

GABRIEL UDEH, KADUNA

It was suspicious and dramatic at the Upper Customary Court, Sabon Tasha, Kaduna State, when Investigative Police Officer (IPO), Inspector A. Bulus attached to Sabon Tasha Divisional Police Headquarters, failed twice to appear in court.

The police inspector was expected to be in court to give police side of a case of alleged criminal intimidation involving a Journalist, Mr. Achadu Gabriel and an hotelier, Victor Balogun, as an IPO.

Our correspondent, who was in court, reported that the IPO was expected to testify as a witness in the case of alleged criminal intimidation between journalist Achadu and the owner of De Jay's Guest-In located at Ungwan Boro, Kaduna.

The case stemmed from alleged threats to life and intimidation of the Kaduna-based journalist by a hotelier, Victor Balogun over his reports on a raid by combined security operatives on hotel.

When contacted on phone prior before court sitting, the IPO Inspector A. Bulus was said to have told the Journalist that he was going to the hospital.

“This is the second time the officer has failed to appear. He was also absent at the court in previous session including that of September 14, 2026, consecutive” creating suspicion.

The officer was also absent during the July/August 2026 sitting, claiming that he was deployed to Osun State on special duty for election which was later discovered to be false.

The Chief Magistrate was said to have expressed displeasure over the repeated absence and threatened to foreclose the Journalist witness case.

Efforts to get clarification from the Police Public Relations Officer, (PPRO), Kaduna State Police Command, DSP Mansir Hassan, were unsuccessful as he did not respond to messages sent to him until press time.

According to records of messages made available, the journalist, Mr. Achadu, had on September 14, 2026, appealed to the PPRO to intervene.

“PPRO good day. I'm appealing to you to help me reach out to Inspector A Bulus of Sabon Tasha police station. This is the second time he failed to appear in Sabon Tasha court to testify as witness on the case of criminal intimidation between me and the hotelier, Victor Balogun.

“The Chief Magistrate was not happy today and wanted to foreclose my case,” the message read.

In a follow-up message, the journalist added: “Were you able to reach out to the IPO who absented from appearing in court to testify on a criminal intimidation involving me, journalist and a big size pocket hotelier in Sabon Tasha?”

Troops hand over 9 suspected drug peddlers to NDLEA in Yobe

Troops of the 27 Brigade, Sector 2, North East Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), have handed over nine suspected drug peddlers to the Yobe State command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Maj. Augustine Balogun, who represented the Brigade Commander, Brig.-Gen. MS Mukhtar, handed over the suspects to Mr Garba Yakubu, NDLEA Deputy Commander, Operations, in the state.

Speaking at the event in Damaturu on Tuesday, Mukhtar noted that the operation was part of the troops efforts at strangulating terrorists and denying them access to illicit drugs.

He said the suspects were arrested by troops of the 27 Brigade Garison, Buni Gari, on Sept. 20, following a raid in the area.

The Commander said the suspects, aged between 17 and 42, were allegedly arrested in possession of cannabis, 20 litres of formaldehyde, 30 sachets of tramadol, cigarettes and two Iitel phones.

Other items recovered from the suspects included sexual enhancement drugs, cash sums of N85,900, pocket lighters, a wallet, among others.

The Commander said the suspects, aged between 17 and 42, were allegedly

Abia set to host 2026 World Igbo celebration, to commence distribution of mosquito nets

EMEKA OKAFOR, UMUAHIA

Abia State Government has announced that arrangements have been concluded to host the 2026 edition of World Igbo Day on September 28 and 29, which he said would provide a platform for Ndigbo to come together and reflect on their unity of purpose, shared identity and contributions to the development of Alaigbo.

The Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu, disclosed this on Monday, September 21, 2026, while briefing newsmen at Government House, Umuahia, on the outcome of the State Executive Council meeting presided over by Governor Alex Otti.

According to him, the event which has its theme as "Njiko Aka" has activities lined up that includes; a keynote lecture titled "Igbo Charter and the Development of Alaigbo," the laying of wreaths in honour of fallen Igbo heroes and heroines, an interdenominational church service, a march-past by participating state delegations, traditional dances, as well as speeches by South-East Governors and notable Igbo leaders are expected at the event.

The State information commissioner disclosed that government would soon commence the Statewide distribution of insecticide treated mosquito nets within the first and second week of October,

2026, as part of measures to strengthen malaria prevention and control in the state.

Prince Kanu said the mosquito nets had started arriving in the State, adding that Governor Otti would officially launch the distribution once a definite date had been confirmed.

He explained that consultations were ongoing with relevant stakeholders across the 17 Local Government Areas to ensure a seamless and effective distribution of the treated nets.

The Commissioner also announced that the State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the National Malaria Elimination Programme, would commence larvae source management activities before the end of September, with focus on Isuikwuato and Aba South Local Government Areas.

According to him, the intervention is based on available data indicating that the two Local Government Areas have significant mosquito larvae breeding activities, hence the need to eliminate the larvae at source.

Prince Kanu further disclosed that the State Ministry of Health recently hosted the Optometrists and Opticians Regulatory Council of Nigeria on an accreditation visit, as well as the National Board for Technical Education on accreditation for the training programmes in optometry and nursing sciences.

Enugu youths laud Igbo-Etiti LG chairman over Ogbede cottage hospital upgrade

CHINELO KODILI-CHUKWU, ENUGU

Youths in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area in Enugu State have lauded the Chairman of the council, Dr Eric Odo, for interventions and upgrade of Ogbede Cottage Hospital in the council area.

The upgrade of the health facility included: provision of 24-hour solar power, emergency ambulance and medical equipment for various departments and units of the facility.

Speaking to newsmen after youths inspection tour of the facility on Tuesday, the Coordinator of Igbo-Etiti Youth Council, Engr. Stephen Ejiofor, described the improvement as a significant contribution to

grassroots healthcare delivery.

Ejiofor said that dependable power remained essential for maintaining critical hospital operations, including lightning, laboratory services, refrigeration and the use of medical equipment.

"The combination of reliable power, emergency transportation and functional medical equipment strengthens the hospital's capacity to provide essential services to residents without requiring patients to travel unnecessarily far for basic healthcare.

"As organised youth body, we consider it appropriate to acknowledge projects that have a direct impact on residents and communities across Igbo-Etiti council area.

Delta: Oborevwoiri approves new salary structure for tertiary institution workers

NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwoiri, on Tuesday, said he has approved a new salary structure for academic staff of the four state-owned universities effective from August 2026, while that of non-academic staff and other tertiary institutions would take effect from September.

Oborevwoiri spoke in Asaba at the swearing-in of the newly appointed Auditor-General of the state, Mr Emasogbe Matthew Oghene, and the inauguration of the Governing Councils of the University of Delta, Agbor; Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba; and Southern Delta University, Ozoro.

He said the four state-owned universities now

offer professional courses including medicine, law, nursing and accounting, adding that student enrolment had risen from about 50,000 in 2023 to more than 100,000 in 2026. The enrolment figure has also been reported by the state government in recent education-sector briefings.

He further noted that the academic calendar of the universities had not been disrupted by staff strikes or student unrest in 17 years, describing the development as evidence of the state government's commitment to stable academic activities.

Speaking further, he described the state as an emerging education hub in Nigeria, saying his administration is committed to repositioning the

state-owned universities as centres of excellence and charged the newly inaugurated councils to pursue policies that would strengthen corporate governance, improve institutional efficiency and position the universities for sustainable growth.

He said the councils, as the highest policy-making bodies of the institutions, must ensure regular meetings, collective responsibility, transparency and accountability, while ensuring that the universities operated strictly in accordance with their enabling laws.

Oborevwoiri also tasked the councils to maintain zero tolerance for sexual harassment, examination malpractice, cultism, favouritism and corruption, urging them to apply disciplinary measures whenever

rules were breached.

Saying that the state government would continue to support tertiary education within the limits of available resources, he said; "It is unrealistic and unsustainable for a university to rely solely on government funding".

While urging the councils to devote substantial time and resources to marketing their institutions and attracting private-sector investments, he said his administration had continued to invest heavily in infrastructure and staff welfare. He disclosed that he had approved the construction of two hostels for each of the nine state-owned tertiary institutions, with each hostel designed to accommodate 480 students.



Scene at the sixth edition of the Conference and Retreat for Senior Police Officers, CARSPPO 2026, holding in Owerri, Imo State, which featured strategic lectures, discussions and an interactive session on Tuesday, 22nd September 2026.

Idowa PDP rally crisis: Ogun community demands police probe into alleged shooting, arrests, N170,000 venue payment

ABIODUN TAIWO, ABEOKUTA

The Sobaloju of Idowa, Chief Yusuf Olusanya Olatunji, has challenged the police to unravel the circumstances surrounding the September 16 Peoples Democratic Party campaign crisis in Idowa, insisting that the Dagburewe of Idowa, Oba Sikiru Okuribido, neither stopped the campaign nor participated in the alleged destruction of property.

Olatunji, who spoke at a press conference in Idowa, Odogbolu Local Government Area of Ogun State, on Tuesday, said the traditional ruler had been unfairly dragged into the political

controversy and urged security agencies to determine the facts through eyewitness accounts, police records, financial documents, photographs and video evidence.

He said there was no instruction from the monarch, government or any government agency stopping the PDP campaign train from entering Idowa.

The community leader also questioned whether the traditional institution or the community was formally notified of the proposed campaign, saying he was not aware of any notification letter sent to either the palace or the community ahead of the visit.

According to him, the controversy should not be

settled through social media claims and counterclaims, particularly where allegations of shooting, arrests, destruction of vehicles and looting of shops have been made.

Olatunji said the police should establish what happened, who was responsible and the circumstances that led to the confrontation.

He disclosed that Idowa had, earlier that day, hosted a multi-religious prayer session involving Christians, Muslims and traditional worshippers at the town's traditional prayer centre, an open area in front of the Idowa Central Mosque and Idowa Health Centre.

He said the prayer session began at about 10am

and lasted until a few minutes before 5pm, adding that the reported arrival of the PDP campaign train and the ensuing confrontation occurred against that background.

The Sobaloju also questioned the planning of the campaign, particularly the choice of Idowa for an event initially described as an Ogun East Mega campaign flag-off before it was reportedly changed to an Odogbolu Local Government campaign flag-off.

He argued that Idowa was neither the largest town nor the most spacious location for an event expected to attract supporters from the nine local government areas of Ogun East.

Gov Diri charges permanent secretaries on stronger bureaucracy, better governance in Bayelsa

WARIYAI DANIELS,
YENAGOA

Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, has stressed the importance of a strong and professional civil service to effective governance, saying permanent secretaries must serve as a critical bridge between political leaders and the bureaucracy.

Governor Diri, represented by his deputy, Dr Peter Akpe, stated this on Monday while declaring open a three-day executive training programme for permanent secretaries in Yenagoa. The training, organised by the Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with the Nigeria Institute of Management (Chartered), has the theme, "Strategic Leadership and Public-Sec-

tor Governance for Effective Service Delivery." The Governor said his administration holds the civil service and bureaucracy in high esteem, maintaining that the "bureaucracy is expected to promote order, efficiency, fairness, accountability, proper record-keeping and institutional continuity." While urging permanent secretaries to provide professional advice to political leaders and work closely with directors and other professionals within their ministries, Governor Diri stressed the need for continuous learning.

Making reference to the managerial principles of the German political economist, Max Weber, the Bayelsa Chief Executive warned that public servants who failed to update their knowledge could become disconnected from current realities. He equally urged the permanent secretaries to also recognise the contributions

of directors and other officials in their ministries, saying effective administration could not be left to commissioners and permanent secretaries alone.

His words: "Until you have a strong bureaucracy, you can't run a good government. We should ensure that we are intentional and conscious of that particular role. You are a bridge."

"There are people that are permanent secretaries today. They joined service maybe about 30 years ago, and they are still working with the old knowledge, you can't fit in now. So, you really have to update through learning."

"Most of the times, you see that activities and decisions in some ministry are between the commissioner and the permanent secretary, or sometimes they add the DFA. You don't assume you know it all. You must carry your directors and other officers along."

In his welcome address,

the Head of Service, Dr. Ebeye Wisdom Sawyer, said the training was coming at a time when citizens expected government institutions to be more responsive, transparent and efficient.

Dr Sawyer noted that permanent secretaries occupy a strategic position in the machinery of government, with responsibility for policy implementation, strengthening institutional systems and promoting professionalism in the public service.

He also urged the participants to embrace digital transformation and improve administrative processes, data management and access to government services.

According to Dr Sawyer, "Citizens expect government institutions to be responsive, transparent, efficient and capable of delivering quality services that positively affect their lives."

"Strategic leadership

requires more than the ability to manage routine administrative responsibilities. It demands vision, sound judgement, innovation, effective communication, accountability and the capacity to inspire officers towards achieving clearly defined institutional goals."

In his goodwill message, the Chairman of the Bayelsa State Civil Service Commission, Hon. Perekiye Buruboyefe, urged the participants to open their minds and hearts to the knowledge to be offered during the programme, wishing them a successful training.

Also speaking, the Chairman of the Nigeria Institute of Management (Chartered), Dr. Sani Abubakar, expressed the institute's commitment to ensuring that the training achieved its objectives, assuring the state government and participants of the institute's support.

Gov Okpebholo celebrates Remi Tinubu at birthday, hails contributions to women's development

JONATHAN IDIAHI –
BENIN

Governor Monday Okpebholo has congratulated Nigeria's First Lady, Sen. Oluremi Tinubu, on her birthday, describing her as a strong advocate for women's development and inclusive governance.

Okpebholo commended her years of public service, particularly her contributions to women's economic empowerment and increased participation of women in public affairs.

Describing Tinubu as a politician who had distinguished herself through her legislative experience and commitment to issues affecting women, children and vulnerable groups, the governor said:

"Senator Remi Tinubu is that rare political figure – someone who has earned her place not through proximity to power, but through the sheer force of her convictions and the quality of her work," Okpebholo said.

He noted that her years in the Senate provided a platform for her to contribute to debates and legislative initiatives on social policy, education, women's economic participation and financial inclusion.

"In a Senate chamber that has historically been dom-

inated by men, she did not merely occupy a seat, she did so with ideas, with presence, with moral authority," he said.

Okpebholo also commended Tinubu's advocacy for greater participation of women in politics, describing her as an encouragement to younger women seeking careers in public service.

"She has modeled what it means to balance the demands of high office with authentic concern for the welfare of ordinary Nigerians. This is not easy work. It requires not just intelligence, but character," the governor said.

He further acknowledged her support for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration, particularly its economic reform programme and efforts to address poverty and improve social welfare.

"Senator Remi Tinubu is not merely a supporter of Mr President's agenda - she is an active participant in its advancement," he said.

The governor also highlighted the First Lady's public engagements in areas including women's welfare, youth development and community support, saying her work had provided an example for younger Nigerians interested in leadership and public service.

Okpebholo wished the



Engr. Babachir Lawal being formally received into the NDC by its Leader, Senator Seriake Dickson, members of the National Working Committee, and other NDC officials...om Tuesday

School admission: Alfa in Ondo forces parents to pay N8,000 for blood sampling of pupils

ADETOKUNBO ABIOLA,
AKURE

The Ondo State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps has arrested a man identified as Alfa in connection with forcing students to undergo blood-sampling exercises at the cost of N8,000 as a condition for their admission into the Junior Secondary Schools for the 2026/2027 academic session.

The image maker of the Nigerian Civil Defence Corps in Ondo State, David Dan gave newsmen the information after the arrest of the cleric.

The Daily Monitor learnt

that the blood-sampling exercises took place at a small retail shop opposite the CAC Adu Memorial Grammar School, Oke-Aro, Akure, the Ondo State capital.

According to the image-maker of the civil defence corps, the said Alfa admitted that the exercise took place in the shop at the instigation of another person, who is now at large.

Meanwhile, the Ondo State Government disowned the principal of CAC Adu Memorial Grammar School, Oke-Aro, Akure, over the alleged blood-testing of students as part of the admission process, declaring that the exercise was neither authorised nor approved by

the government.

The state Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, in a statement signed by Bisi Lawani, said no school principal had the authority to organise such an exercise or impose any financial charge on students without approval from the appropriate authorities.

Reacting to the development, the Ministry said categorically that it "did not authorise, approve or direct the said blood-testing exercise."

It added that "no school principal is empowered to organise such an exercise or impose any related financial charge on students without the requisite approval from the appropriate authorities."

The ministry said it was particularly concerned by the allegation that students were required to pay ₦8,000 for the exercise, stressing that it had "not approved any policy requiring students in public schools to pay such an amount for blood testing."

It also assured that "where the allegations are established after due investigation, appropriate administrative and legal action will be taken against any officer found culpable."

The latest development is coming amid wider concerns over alleged unofficial levies and other practices imposed on parents during admission into some public schools in the state.

Sachet Gin ban: Edo Consumer Protection Committee begins enforcement

TITUS AKHIGBE,
BENIN

The Edo State Consumer Protection Committee has announced that full enforcement of the ban on sachet gin and others commenced on Tuesday, September 22, 2026.

The committee in a press statement dated September 21, 2026, and signed by its Chairman, Mr. Iyamu Osaro Culture said the extension granted on the ban expired on Sunday, September 20,

2026.

According to the statement, anyone caught selling, hawking or hoarding sachet gin and Agbo will be made to pay a prescribed fine into the Edo State Government Single Account, while the products will be seized and confiscated.

The committee said the announcement was to prepare the minds of the public ahead of its operation.

"Let's save our health from fake and adulterated products," it added.

The Daily Monitor

...Monitoring the present, shaping the future

ADVERT RATES

	COLOUR			BLACK & WHITE		
SIZES	RATE	VAT	TOTAL	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
F/PAGE	550,000.00	27,500.00	577,500.00	442,402.65	22,120.13	464,522.78
H/PAGE	303,439.60	15,171.98	318,611.58	229,476.11	11,473.81	240,949.92
Q/PAGE	163,431.45	8,171.57	171,603.02	124,895.04	6,244.75	131,139.79
14" x 5	341,320.00	17,056.00	358,386.00	258,000.40	12,900.02	270,900.42
14" x 4	273,056.00	13,652.80	286,708.80	206,400.32	10,320.02	216,720.34
14" x 2	136,528.00	6,826.40	143,354.40	103,200.16	5,160.01	108,360.17
FPS 6"x3	873,388.02	43,669.40	917,057.42	873,388.02	43,669.40	917,057.42
FPS 6"x2	582,257.82	29,113.39	611,381.20	582,267.81	29,113.40	611,381.20
BPS 6"x3	861,432.81	43,071.64	904,504.45	861,432.81	43,071.64	904,504.45
BPS 6"x2	565,621.87	28,281.09	593,902.96	565,621.87	28,281.09	593,902.96
ROP 2"x6	198,096.61	9,904.83	208,001.44	198,096.61	9,904.83	208,001.44
FPS 2"x6	582,257.82	29,112.89	611,370.71	582,257.82	29,112.89	611,370.71
BPS 2"x6	565,621.87	28,281.09	593,902.96	565,621.87	28,281.09	593,902.96
BPS 2"x2	349,354.69	17,467.73	366,822.42	349,354.69	17,467.73	966,822.42
13" x 5	316,940.00	15,847.00	332,787.00	239,571.80	11,978.59	251,550.39
13" x 2	126,776.00	6,338.80	133,114.80	95,828.72	4,791.44	100,620.16
11" x 5	268,180.00	13,409.00	281,589.00	202,714.50	10,135.73	212,850.33
11" x 4	214,544.00	10,727.20	225,271.20	162,171.68	8,103.58	170,280.26
11" x 2	107,272.00	5,363.60	112,635.60	81,085.84	4,054.29	85,140.13
10" x 6	292,560.00	14,628.00	307,188.00	221,143.20	11,057.16	232,200.36
10" x 5	243,800.00	12,190.00	255,990.00	184,286.00	9,214.30	193,500.30
10" x 4	195,040.00	9,752.00	204,792.00	17,428.80	7,371.44	154,800.24
10" x 3	146,280.00	7,314.00	153,594.00	110,571.60	5,528.58	166,100.18
10" x 2	97,520.00	4,876.00	102,396.00	73,714.40	3,685.72	77,400.12
9" x 6	263,304.00	13,165.20	276,469.20	199,028.88	9,951.44	208,980.32
9" x 5	219,420.00	10,971.00	230,391.00	165,857.40	8,292.87	174,150.27
9" x 4	175,536.00	8,776.80	184,312.80	132,685.92	6,634.30	139,320.22
9" x 3	131,652.00	6,582.60	138,234.60	99,514.44	4,975.72	104,490.16
8" x 6	234,048.00	11,702.40	245,750.40	175,914.56	8,845.73	185,760.29
8" x 5	195,040.00	9,752.00	204,792.00	17,428.80	7,371.44	154,800.24
8" x 4	156,040.00	7,801.60	163,833.60	117,943.04	5,897.15	123,840.19
8" x 3	117,024.00	5,851.20	122,875.20	88,457.28	4,422.86	92,880.14
8" x 2	78,015.00	3,900.80	81,916.80	58,971.52	2,948.58	61,920.10
7" x 5	170,660.00	8,533.00	179,193.00	129,000.20	6,450.01	135,450.21
7" x 4	136,528.00	6,826.40	143,354.40	103,200.16	5,160.01	108,306.17
7" x 2	68,264.00	3,413.20	71,677.20	51,600.08	2,580.00	54,180.08
6" x 4	97,520.00	4,876.00	102,396.00	73,714.40	3,685.72	77,400.12
6" x 3	87,750.00	4,388.40	92,156.40	66,342.96	3,317.15	69,660.11
6" x 2	58,512.00	2,925.60	61,437.60	44,228.64	2,211.43	45,440.07
5" x 5	121,900.00	6,095.00	127,995.00	92,143.00	,607.15	96,750.15
5" x 4	97,520.00	4,876.00	102,396.00	73,714.40	3,685.72	77,400.12
5" x 3	73,140.00	3,657.00	76,797.00	55,285.80	2,764.29	58,050.09
5" x 2	48,760.00	2,430.00	51,198.00	36,857.20	1,842.86	38,700.06
4" x 2	39,008.00	1,950.40	40,958.40	29,485.76	1,474.29	30,960.05
3" x 3	43,884.00	2,194.20	46,078.20	33,171.48	1,658.57	34,830.05
3" x 2	29,256.00	1,462.80	30,718.80	22,114.32	1,105.72	23,220.04
2" x 5	48,760.00	2,438.00	51,198.00	36,857.20	1,842.86	38,700.06
2" x 2	19,504.00	975.20	20,479.20	14,742.88	737.14	15,480.02
1" x 2	9,752.00	487.50	10,239.60	7,371.44	368.57	7,740.01
1" x 1	4,876.00	243.80	5,119.80	3,685.72	184,284	3,870.01
POLITICAL			SPECIAL POSITION			
SIZES	COLOUR	BLACK & WHITE	SIZES	COLOUR	BLACK & WHITE	
F/PAGE	675,675.00	510,974.00	FULL WRAP	20,000,000.00		
H/PAGE	350,475.00	265,045.00	EARPIECE 2x2	300,952.55		
Q/PAGE	100,765.00	144,255.00	CENTER SPREAD	1,564,061.75		
PHOTO SPLASH	165,250.00	120,050.00	DOUBLE SPREAD	1,395,076.76	874,810.85	
			HALF DOUBLE SPREAD	705,210.97	450,451.98	

COMPUTER & IT EDUCATIONAL, PROPERTY, VACANCY, HOME DECOR		
SIZES	COLOUR	BLACK & WHITE
F/PAGE	676,264.17	757,667.79
H/PAGE	206,232.41	216,232.41
Q/PAGE	154,153.75	113,151.35
10"x 2		57,833.73
8" x 2		46,766.03
7" x 2		40,483.39
6" x 2		34,696.60
5" x 2		20,916.22
4" x 2		23,130.84
3" x 2		17,347.40
2" x 6		34,37.18
2" x 2		11,565.50
1" x 2		5,784.35
1" x 1		2,831.68

OTHER CATEGORIES		
CATEGORY	F/PAGE	1,500,000.00
PICTURES AND CAPTIONS		
CLASSIFIED ADVERT		3,000.00
LOOSE INSERT	FOR 1,000 COPIES	25,541.25
	HANDLING CHARGE FOR 1ST 50,000 COPIES	71,662.60

Terms and Conditions	
1. All Adverts are expected to be prepared in cash or draft in favor of SAMLIBE COMMUNICATIONS LTD.	
2. Discount is subject to the stipulated number of insertions, and it is payable ONLY at the end of a campaign.	
3. Cancellation of advert placement in less than 24 hours to publication date will attract 30% surcharge.	
4. Advertisers/Agencies are to supply their camera ready artworks in electronic copies and in (PDF 1x) via email or flash.	
5. Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the production.	
16. SAMLIBE COMMUNICATIONS LTD. reserves the right to refuse any advertisement at its sole discretion for any reason whatever, including without limitation for offensive or inappropriate content.	

ADVERT CONTACT NUMBERS

08034197567 & 07063852329

Economy

94.2m Nigerians use financial products, formal inclusion hits 73% — EFInA

A survey by Enhancing Financial Inclusion and Advancement (EFInA) says 79 per cent of Nigerian adults, about 94.2 million people, use financial products or services.

EFInA said this in its report on the 9th Access to Financial Services in Nigeria (A2F) Survey, made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Tuesday in Abuja.

The report said formal financial inclusion had reached 73 per cent, exceeding the 70 per cent target under the National Financial Inclusion Strategy.

The Board Chairman of EFInA, Dr Agnes Martins, described the survey as providing insight that administrative data could not capture.

Martins said administrative data could show accounts, transactions, infrastructure and providers, while the A2F Survey showed the people behind the numbers.

She cautioned against designing financial services around national averages, noting that needs differed by income, gender, geography, age and economic activity.

The report quoted Dr Aisha Isa-Olatinwo, Director, Consumer Protection and

Financial Inclusion, Central Bank of Nigeria, as saying the survey's evidence was indispensable to policy design.

She said the evidence was also important for market development, consumer protection and effective targeting of financial sector reforms.

Isa-Olatinwo said the survey had shifted the focus of the sector towards achieving meaningful outcomes beyond access.

"The policy challenge before us is therefore no longer simply to open accounts or expand access points.

"It is to ensure meaningful usage, affordability, reliability, safety, trust and measurable improvement in financial health," Isa-Olatinwo said.

Ms Omolola Oloworaran, the Director-General, National Pension Commission, welcomed the increase in pension participation from eight per cent of adults in 2023 to 9.1 per cent.

"Roughly nine out of every 10 Nigerians are not covered for the day they can no longer work," she said.

She called on EFInA to work with the commission to develop a dedicated pension inclusion model.

Free Trade Zones: NEPZA tightens enforcement against illegal importation

The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) has tightened enforcement against illegal importation and other regulatory breaches in Free Trade Zones (FTZs).

The Managing Director of NEPZA, Dr Olufemi Ogunyemi, announced this in a statement by the Authority's Head of Corporate Communications, Dr Martins Odeh on Tuesday in Abuja.

Ogunyemi said strict compliance with regulations guiding transactions within the secured marketplace was mandatory for all Free Trade Zone operators.

He said the operating licence was a legal instrument of obligation and foundation for maintaining a fair and transparent global marketplace.

"Effective immediately, the Authority is tightening its enforcement posture against the allegations of illegal importation of containers into our controlled spaces," he said.

He said the measures would include intensified inspections, closer scrutiny of documentation and coordinated action with partner enforcement agencies.

Ogunyemi said NEPZA would also apply penalties provided under the law against operators found violating established procedures.

He warned operators against circumventing lawful import and export procedures, mis-declaration of goods or moving containers through unauthorised channels.

"Operators who circumvent lawful import and export procedures, mis-declare goods, or attempt to move containers through unauthorised channels would be in no doubt that

such conduct shall be identified," he said.

The managing director said the measures were aimed at protecting the integrity of NEPZA's systems, safeguarding public interest and ensuring a level playing field.

Ogunyemi said illegal importation undermined lawful commerce, exposed communities to unregulated goods and eroded public confidence.

"Illegal importation undermines lawful commerce, exposes communities to unregulated goods, and erodes public confidence. We will not permit it to continue unchecked.

"The Authority will continue handling regulatory issues with fairness, justice and transparency.

"Operators found culpable will face the consequences of Nigerian law, while uninvolved entities will be allowed to continue their operations," he said.

According to Ogunyemi, majority of operators conducted their businesses honestly, met their obligations and contributed meaningfully to a well-regulated trade environment.

"The unlawful actions of a small minority must not be allowed to overshadow, discredit, or obstruct the achievements of the compliant majority.

"The strengthened enforcement is directed at operators who violate regulations, rather than businesses operating within the law," he said.

The NEPZA boss urged operators and their associations to strengthen self-policing within the Free Trade Zones.

MAN seeks measurable gains from Nigeria Industrial Policy

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) has urged effective implementation of the Nigeria Industrial Policy 2025 to drive tangible gains in industrial performance, investment, productivity and job creation.

MAN President, Mr Francis Meshioye, made the call on Tuesday in Lagos at a news conference on the association's 54th Annual General Meeting (AGM), scheduled for Oct. 5 to Oct. 7.

Meshioye said the policy, formally launched by the Federal Government in February, provides a framework for strengthening Nigeria's industrial base and deepening domestic value chains.

He said the policy placed production, competitiveness and job creation at the centre of the country's economic strategy.

The MAN president, however, said the critical issue was to ensure that the framework translated into tangible outcomes for manufacturers and the wider economy.

"Effective implementation must be reflected in factories operating more competitively, stronger local supply chains, increased investment, improved productivity, sustainable jobs and greater access to domestic and export markets," he said.

He said the manufacturing



sector continues to contend with high production and energy costs, limited access to affordable finance, infrastructure deficits, inflationary and exchange-rate pressures, among other structural constraints.

He said developments in the global economy and continuing geopolitical tensions had further highlighted the need for Nigeria to strengthen its domestic productive capacity and reduce vulnerabilities arising from excessive dependence on external supply chains.

According to him, MAN actively participated in the stakeholder consultation process leading to the development of the industrial policy, contributing the

practical perspectives and experiences of manufacturers.

He said the association welcomed the policy's renewed emphasis on industrialisation and indigenous entrepreneurship, but stressed that implementation should remain the defining priority.

He said Nigeria's large market, abundant resources, entrepreneurial capacity and human capital offered significant opportunities to build a productive and competitive industrial economy.

He said this informed the theme of the 54th AGM: "Leveraging National Industrial Policy to Position Nigeria as Africa's Industrial Hub".

He said the AGM would provide a platform for manufacturers, government,

policymakers, development partners and other stakeholders to examine how the industrial policy could move from aspiration to measurable industrial outcomes.

He said the three-day programme would begin with the opening ceremony of the Made in Nigeria Exhibition (MiNE 2026), which would showcase the quality, diversity, innovation and capabilities of Nigerian manufacturers.

"The Oct. 6 public session will feature the 6th Adeola Odutola Lecture and Presidential Luncheon, with Dr Kandeh Yumkella, former Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), as guest speaker," he said.

MAN Director-General, Mr Segun Ajayi-Kadir, urged the media to sustain its scrutiny of the implementation of industrial policies and their impact on manufacturers.

Ajayi-Kadir said the media had remained a longstanding partner of the manufacturing sector by reporting its concerns and bringing the voice of the factory floor to the public and policymakers.

He urged journalists to continue asking difficult questions, reporting accurately and independently, and giving Nigerian manufacturers a fair hearing.

CPPE calls for lower lending rates after CBN MPR cut

The Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE) has called on banks to lower their lending rates following the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) 350-basis-point cut in the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR).

Dr Muda Yusuf, Chief Executive Officer, CPPE, made the call in a policy brief on the outcome of the 307th Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting held on Tuesday.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the MPC reduced the MPR from 26.5 per cent to 23 per cent and reviewed the asymmetric corridor from +50/-450 basis points to +50/-300 basis points.

Yusuf described the

decision as a significant shift from the prolonged restrictive monetary policy regime and a timely response to improving inflation and the high cost of financing businesses.

He said the adjustment could reduce the cost of capital, improve business cash flows, stimulate investment and strengthen productive capacity, particularly in manufacturing, agriculture, construction and logistics.

He, however, said the impact would depend on effective transmission, urging banks to progressively reduce lending rates on new and existing facilities.

Yusuf also said sustained moderation in interest rates

could lower the Federal Government's domestic borrowing costs and debt-service burden, creating more fiscal space for infrastructure and other development priorities.

On the foreign-exchange market, he acknowledged that the rate cut could affect interest-rate differentials and the attractiveness of naira assets, potentially creating portfolio-flow and exchange-rate risks.

He, however, said higher foreign reserves, improved stability in the foreign-exchange market and more robust external-sector buffers provided the CBN with additional room to manage the transition.

Yusuf urged the CBN to remain vigilant and

deploy monetary policy instruments, including open-market operations, when necessary to manage volatility and preserve exchange-rate stability.

He added that monetary easing should be complemented by fiscal and structural reforms to address energy costs, logistics bottlenecks, insecurity, food-production constraints, infrastructure deficits and regulatory costs.

Yusuf said the success of the policy would ultimately depend on lower commercial lending rates, increased private investment and productive-sector credit, sustained moderation in inflation and stability in the foreign-exchange market.

Emirates airlifts over eight million passengers in two months

Between July and August, Emirates carried more than 8.6 million passengers, maintaining healthy seat load factors across its network. The airline is currently operating at around 93% of its pre-disruption capacity, with demand continuing to build as the winter travel season approaches.

According to the airline, bookings for winter, beginning in late October, are tracking positively despite a broader shift where customers are making travel decisions closer to departure. South Africa, Brazil, India, Portugal, Egypt, Ghana, Colombia, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are among the markets where demand is currently tracking ahead of last year, alongside Nepal through Emirates' partnership with flydubai.

Emirates services to and from West Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the Americas and Africa all recorded seat load factors well above 75% during the summer, with particularly strong performance on routes to and from Indonesia, Côte d'Ivoire and across the UK.

Demand for Premium Economy grew across the network, with the Americas recording the strongest growth in demand for this cabin.

Dubai also continued to attract strong inbound traffic. In late August alone, more than half a million customers arrived in Dubai on Emirates flights, up 7% on the same period last year. Travellers included residents returning ahead of the new school year, new residents relocating to Dubai to live and work, and visitors choosing the city for a late-summer break.

Over the summer, customers had more reasons choose Emirates. The airline boosted its flexibility proposition with one free date change anywhere across the network, and unlimited free date changes to Dubai. It also reduced

refund fees on Dubai journeys and introduced Comprehensive Travel Cover, a first-of-its-kind policy which includes medical cover protecting against conflict and airspace disruption, backed by airline-managed accommodation, ground support and rebooking where needed.

Fleet upgrades and product investments gather pace

Since January 2026, the airline has welcomed 18 aircraft – 11 new A350s and seven Boeing 777s and 51 A380s. This brings the number of aircraft offering Premium Economy and Emirates' latest cabin products to 137. By the end of December, that number will have risen to 155 aircraft.

To date, 104 aircraft have completed Emirates' retrofit programme, including 53 Boeing 777s and 51 A380s. This brings the number of aircraft offering Premium Economy and Emirates' latest cabin products to 137. By the end of December, that number will have risen to 155 aircraft.

This expanding product footprint gives customers significantly more opportunities to experience Emirates' latest cabins. Premium Economy is now available on services to 90 destinations, with another 6 destinations set to receive the product before end of this year, including Paris, Delhi, Stockholm, and others.

Connectivity is also being upgraded. Close to 50 Emirates aircraft are now fitted with Starlink, with installations progressing alongside the retrofit programme to bring high-speed inflight internet to more customers.

This year, Emirates also launched the innovative U-dream headrests onboard its A350 Economy Class, the industry's first Premium Economy seat with privacy dividers, and its next generation signature lounges – with new facilities already welcoming guests in Munich, Frankfurt and Manchester

Enugu Air launches direct Enugu-Douala flights September today

Enugu Air has announced the launch of its regional flights between Akanu Ibiam International Airport Enugu in Enugu and Douala International Airport in Cameroon beginning September 23, 2026.

Enugu Air Chief Operating Officer Mr Ugonna Agubuokwu announced the development in a statement on Sunday saying the new route is designed to connect businesses, families, and opportunities in the West African region.

"This is more than the introduction of a new route; it is about creating stronger connections between Nigeria and Cameroon and making regional travel more accessible, convenient, and seamless for

our passengers," he said.

He said the airline will operate two weekly frequencies on Mondays and Wednesdays, adding that passengers from Lagos and Abuja can connect the flights via Enugu.

Reeling out the flight schedules, Agubuokwu said flights from Enugu will depart at 12:45 PM, arriving in Douala at 1:45 PM. The return leg from Douala is scheduled to leave at 2:30 PM and touch down in Enugu at 3:30 PM.

He said the timing of the schedules has been well thought out so that passengers can connect from Lagos and Abuja 'for business, for opportunity, and for the connections that matter, Africa is closer than you think'.



L-R: Mr Yinka Adeoye, Mr Allen Onyema, Chairman of Air Peace, Mr Amos Edino, President Nigeria Air Traffic Controllers Association and Mr Muri Akinsoji at a recent meeting.

Nigeria's Aviation market ranks Africa's fourth largest, records 18.8m passengers

STORIES BY CHUKWUEMEKE IWELUNMO

Nigeria's aviation market now ranks as the fourth-largest in Africa, with over 18.8 million domestic and international passengers recorded in 2025, representing a year-on-year increase of 11.9 per cent.

This was disclosed by the Managing Director/Chief Executive of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and Vice President of Airports Council International Africa (ACI-Africa), Mrs Olubunmi Onabanjo-Kuku, while delivering the welcome address at the ACI Africa Regional Conference & Exhibition 2026 held at the Abuja Continental Hotel, Abuja.

Mrs Onabanjo-Kuku told delegates that African airlines

recorded a 6.4 per cent year-on-year rise in international passenger demand in July 2026, according to the latest International Air Transport Association (IATA) data. The figure stood in contrast to a 0.1 per cent decline in global international demand over the same period. Overall passenger demand across the continent grew by 5.2 per cent, placing Africa second only to Latin America and the Caribbean and well above the global average of 0.2 per cent.

She noted that the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos recorded the fastest growth in scheduled seat capacity among Africa's ten largest airports in September, with a 24.1 per cent increase. OAG data showed Nigeria's total scheduled airline capacity for

September 2026 reached 1.19 million seats, a 37.4 per cent rise from the previous year—the fastest growth among the continent's top ten aviation markets. The expansion, she said, has been driven by currency reforms, new aircraft leasing agreements and renewed confidence among international carriers.

Despite the positive trajectory, Mrs Onabanjo-Kuku cautioned that Africa still accounts for only about one per cent of global air traffic despite having 18 per cent of the world's population. Load factors remain below global averages and the financial viability of many African airlines is fragile.

"In Nigeria, a nation of more than 220 million people, annual passenger numbers stand at approximately 19.5

million across 28 airports. The gap between current performance and potential demands deliberate and strategic action."

Highlighting FAAN's transformation since 2023, the FAAN chief said the authority has rehabilitated a major runway at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, upgraded terminals and improved airfield lighting while keeping operations running. A Passenger Experience Hub has been established to prioritise speed, predictability, comfort and human assistance. Digital systems including fast check-in, automated e-passport gates and enhanced security have been deployed, while the organisation secured dual ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 certifications in January 2026.

Ethiopian Airlines expands in Nigeria with increased frequencies

Ethiopian Airlines (ET) has further strengthened its presence in Nigeria with increased flight frequencies and the introduction of a new service to Port Harcourt (PHC), reinforcing the airline's long-term commitment to one of its most important African markets.

Under the expansion, Ethiopian Airlines has increased its Lagos operation to 21 weekly flights, offering up to three daily services, while also increasing frequencies to Kano by 4 bringing the total to 11 flights a week.

The airline will additionally commence four weekly flights to Port Harcourt, complementing its existing services to Lagos, Abuja, Kano and Enugu. With the PH flight, ET would be operating 53 weekly flights to Nigeria.

Speaking on the expansion, Firiehiwot

Mekonnen, General Manager of Ethiopian Airlines in Nigeria, said the increased capacity reflects the airline's confidence in Nigeria's aviation market and its wider economic potential.

"Nigeria remains a very important market for Ethiopian Airlines. By increasing our frequencies and adding Port Harcourt, we are giving passengers more flexibility, greater seat availability, better connectivity, and access to more attractive and competitive fares," Mekonnen said.

She further explained that the expansion goes beyond passenger convenience and will contribute to Nigeria's tourism, trade, investment, and employment while creating additional business opportunities for local service providers.

"Every additional flight creates economic

activity. It means more business for Nigerian ground handling companies, airports, travel agencies, hotels, transport providers, catering, and other local service providers, while also creating direct and indirect employment opportunities," she explained.

Mekonnen also highlighted Ethiopian Airlines' commitment to supporting Nigeria's inbound tourism, using its extensive global network to connect international visitors to the country.

"Our objective is not only to connect Nigerians to the world, but also to bring more of the world to Nigeria. Better air connectivity can support tourism, facilitate trade and investment, and contribute to Nigeria's wider economic growth."

The introduction of Port Harcourt will particularly strengthen

international connectivity for the South-South region, providing businesses and travellers with easier access to Ethiopian Airlines' extensive network across Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas through Addis Ababa.

Mekonnen expressed appreciation to the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Aviation and Aerospace Development, the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority, airport authorities, and other stakeholders for their continued support.

"As Ethiopian Airlines grows in Nigeria, we want our growth to create value for Nigeria — through better connectivity, more tourism, more business opportunities, and more jobs. We remain committed to being a long-term aviation partner to the country," she added.

Ex-SGF, Babachir Lawal, joins NDC, backs Obi-Kwankwaso for 2027

Former Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Babachir Lawal, has joined the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), months after leaving the African Democratic Congress (ADC).

Lawal also expressed support for the party's presidential candidate, Peter Obi, and running mate, Rabiu Kwankwaso, ahead of the 2027 general elections.

He announced his decision during a visit to NDC National Leader, Sen. Seriake Dickson and the National Working Committee (NWC) of the party, in Abuja on Tuesday, saying he wanted to contribute to addressing Nigeria's security and economic challenges.

Lawal said Nigerians concerned about insecurity, economic hardship, hunger, ignorance and disease should support a political platform committed to changing the country's circumstances.

He said: "Anybody at all in Nigeria who has the interest of our country at heart and sympathises with the suffering going on in our country will have no choice."

According to him, such Nigerians should support a party presenting Obi and Kwankwaso as potential candidates, adding that he looked forward to a successful outcome in



2027.

"By the grace of God and with the support of our leaders and Nigerians at large, we look forward to May 29, 2027, when we will celebrate," he said.

The former SGF said he had decided to come out of political retirement to support Obi and Kwankwaso, whom he described as leaders with records of service.

According to Lawal, both men demonstrated commitment to their people and left what he described as

indelible marks during their respective tenures as governors of their states.

Lawal said his political journey through different parties was based on his search for a platform and candidates that could contribute to building a better Nigeria.

He recalled joining the All Progressives Congress (APC) to support the late President Muhammadu Buhari, whom he described as a man of integrity.

Lawal, however, said he later

became dissatisfied with the direction of the APC and subsequently moved to the African Democratic Congress before joining the NDC.

He said his decision to join the NDC followed his conviction that Obi and Kwankwaso offered a platform through which he could continue contributing to Nigeria's political process.

Earlier, Dickson welcomed Lawal to the party and described him as an experienced politician, organiser and mobiliser with considerable knowledge of Nigeria's political landscape.

Dickson said Lawal would play leadership roles in coordinating the party's activities and campaigns across the North-East and North-Central geopolitical zones ahead of the elections.

"We have a lot of roles for him to play as we move forward. But the one that is very clear is that he will lead our activities," Dickson said.

He said Lawal's experience would be particularly deployed in the North-East, where he would direct and guide the party's mobilisation and campaign activities.

Dickson said the NDC expected Lawal to contribute to its efforts to consolidate support across the region and strengthen the party's structures ahead of 2027.

Enugu Assembly charges state govt, SEMA, NEMA, Ecological Fund to intervene on Ugwueme, Nenwenta landslide

BY CHINELO KODILICHUKWU, ENUGU

Members of the Enugu State House of Assembly, on Monday, made a clarion to the Enugu State Ministry of Works, Enugu State Emergency Management Authority as well as the Ecological Fund, to with dispatch, interne in the landslide that cut off two communities from the rest of the state.

On September 18, 2026, following torrential rains, there was a landslide at Ugwueme and Nenwenta in Awgu local government area of the state which cut of the road leading to the communities thereby cutting off from the rest of the state.

As a result, the trapped residents resort to Abia State and Imo States before they could access the rest of the state.

To open the road and make it accessible to the people as well as motorists, therefore the House called on relevant government agencies to rescue the communities from the throes of despondency.

Member of the House representing Awgu South State Constituency at the Enugu State House of Assembly, Hon. Anthony Nwankwo, who moved a pathetic motion of public importance before the Assembly painted a gory picture of how a family of four perished when a head tank collapsed and crushed the family to death leaving only a survivor, a four-year old child who was later rescued from the accident.

Nwankwo lamented that the family would have been rescued alive but because there was no access road to the communities, rescue work became difficult.

Touched by the loss of his constituents, Nwankwo therefore appealed that relevant government agencies be sought to intervene and save the communities from the disaster.

"I move that the House do write the relevant authorities to intervene to open the road leading to Ugwueme and Nenwenta," he appealed.

Contributing to motion, members sympathised with Hon. Nwankwo and his constituency and agreed that they will write the relevant authorities for immediate and urgent intervention.

The members representing Ezeagu, Nkanu East and Oji Rivers, Chima Obieze, Okey Mba and Osita Eze respectively, described the gory incident as a natural disaster and called on communities to avoid building near hills and excavating soil and stones reckless, saying that they precipitate landslide.

They however called on government to urgently come to the aid of the communities to open up to cut road.

Osun APC accuses Adeleke govt of victimising LG workers over political affiliation

BY MIKE DIKE, OSOGBO

The Osun State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has accused the administration of Governor Ademola Adeleke of allegedly victimising, intimidating and dehumanising some local government workers over their perceived political affiliations.

The party, in a statement signed by its Director of Media and Information, Mogaji Kola Olabisi, on Tuesday, alleged that the State Local Government Service Commission had constituted a committee to investigate council workers suspected of supporting the APC during the August 15, 2026 governorship election.

The APC described the alleged action as "inhuman, barbaric and unconstitutional", and called on Governor Adeleke to immediately disband the committee.

According to the party, the committee, chaired by Mr Tunji Adeleke Jnr, had begun inviting some local government employees to appear before an investigative and disciplinary

panel at the Local Government Service Commission complex in the state Secretariat, Abere, Osogbo.

The party alleged that some of the affected workers were asked to produce their mobile phones, which it claimed were subjected to searches for communications with APC members before and during the governorship election.

The APC further alleged that the committee was examining issues relating to banking transactions and seeking information about workers who might have accounts with United Bank for Africa (UBA), amid the ongoing dispute between the state government and local government officials over council allocations.

"Tongues are wagging across the state and beyond among the right-thinking members of the society as to the justification behind the action of any arm of government to have subjected its staff to victimisation, dehumanisation and oppression because of their political belief," the party said.

The opposition party also alleged

that some council workers had been questioned about their political activities, whether they voted for the APC in the August 15 election and their alleged relationships with APC-backed local government officials.

It further claimed that some workers had been threatened with dismissal, suspension or other disciplinary measures because of their perceived political affiliations.

The APC said such actions, if established, would raise questions about the distinction between legitimate administrative investigations and what it described as political surveillance.

"It is beyond the constitutional authority of any tier of government to punish its staff for exercising their political choice at the ballot box as Nigeria's electoral system is based on the principle of secret voting," the statement said.

The party argued that determining how an individual voted could not ordinarily be established simply by examining a person's mobile phone or bank statement.

Osun Assembly passes resolution on state police

BY MIKE DIKE, OSOGBO

The Osun State House of Assembly has approved the establishment of State Police following extensive deliberations on the matter during Tuesday's plenary.

The resolution followed the transmission of the proposed constitutional amendment on State

Police by the National Assembly to the various State Houses of Assembly for consideration and approval.

It would be recalled that the National Assembly passed the constitutional amendment bill on June 24, 2026, paving the way for State Houses of Assembly across the country to deliberate on the

proposal.

Moving the motion for the approval and passage of the proposed State Police in Osun, the Majority Leader of the House, Hon. Babajide Kofoworola, said the measure would strengthen security arrangements in the state.

The motion was seconded by Hon. Tajudeen Adeyemi,

representing Ifelodun State Constituency.

Speaking after the resolution was adopted, the Speaker of the House, Rt. Hon. Adewale Egbedun, directed that the approved amendments and resolutions of the Osun State House of Assembly be forwarded to the National Assembly for further consideration.

2027: INEC harps on proper documentation, archiving of operational, electoral documents

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has stressed the need for proper archiving, cataloguing and documentation of operational and electoral records ahead of the 2027 general elections.

These, according to the commission, are critical measures for sustaining public trust and institutional credibility.

INEC's Director of Voter Education (VEP), Mrs Victoria Eta-Messi, gave the task on Tuesday in Abuja during a two-day capacity-building workshop for INEC staff members in the Graphics, Library, and Documentation (GLD) division from across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the theme for the workshop organised by the VEP department was "Preserving Institutional Memory Through Effective Archiving and Documentation."

Eta-Messi, while describing archiving and documentation as a key aspect of the electoral process, cautioned against the practice where historical electoral materials in state offices were stored improperly, leading to loss of critical institutional knowledge.

She identified the GLD as a "key



leg" in the VEP department, entrusted with proper archiving for posterity, for reference and for lesson learning.

"A lot of times, we go to the states and things are in boxes, packed away somewhere and they rot. That does not allow us to do a comparative analysis and to learn from what existed in previous cycles of election.

"So, it is important that we begin to do the right thing; we begin to preserve knowledge and preserve our processes so that we can compare and learn, and consolidate on what existed, and then improve on what we had before then," she said.

Eta-Messi said that the training

was designed to strengthen the capacity of officers under the GLD division, which she described as the youngest yet vital division in the publicity department.

"GLD is the youngest division in the department, and coincidentally, there is a lot that the division needs to do.

"This is why we are trying to ensure that we build capacity in the respective states so that we begin to do what we are expected to do," Eta-Messi said.

She urged PAOs, who double as GLD desk officers in their respective states, to take advantage of the training to be better prepared and

positioned to do the work upon return to their various states.

"Let us try to help the department to help the commission to succeed in its archiving and documentation responsibilities," she said.

Dwelling on the workshop's overview and objectives, the GLD Deputy Director, Mrs Perpetual Aligwara, said that the commission's credibility depended as much on its memory as on its neutrality.

According to Aligwara, every election cycle generates decisions, residues and lessons that are critical to the commission's continuity, hence the need for the workshop ahead of 2027 polls.

She warned that without structured records management, the commission faces severe operational and legal risks.

Aligwara said that with proper documentation the commission would not only be able to explain its decisions better, but speak with authority.

"Without careful record management, the commission faces a big danger of losing the procedural knowledge of the commission's activities, such as electoral activities, when staff or commissioners exit at the end of tenure and many others," she stated.

She highlighted others challenges to include: inconsistent application of guidelines across state and local offices due to undocumented practice and

Beyond political rallies: What Warri South residents really want

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

As political activities gather momentum in Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State, some residents are calling for a shift in attention from political rivalry to issues that directly affect their daily lives.

The call followed political rallies held in the area, with residents expressing concerns about the possible effect of heightened political activities on the peace and stability of the Warri metropolis.

For many residents, politics should be more than rallies, slogans and the mobilization of supporters. They want political parties and government at all levels to focus on issues such as employment, security, infrastructure and opportunities for young people.

Speaking on the development, a resident, Mrs. Grace Umokoro, said the rivalry between the APC and NDC over political rallies was unnecessary, stressing that her major concern was how government could provide jobs and meaningful opportunities for youths.

According to her, fixing roads alone was not enough to address the challenges confronting the people.

"What I am interested in is how the government can provide jobs for the youths. Fixing roads is not enough," she said.

For Umokoro, the attention given to political activities should equally be matched by efforts to address the economic difficulties facing ordinary residents, particularly young people who are seeking employment and sustainable means of livelihood.

Another resident, Mr. Dominic Irayomaron, expressed concern about the possible effect of political rallies on the fragile peace in Warri.

He called for the cancellation of rallies in the Warri metropolis, saying such gatherings could provide an opportunity for tensions to escalate.

According to him, preserving peace should be given priority, particularly in a city where residents from different political, ethnic and social backgrounds live and conduct their businesses.

The views of the residents point to a broader concern beyond the activities of individual political parties: the desire for a political environment where competition does not come at the expense of peace and economic activities.

For traders, artisans, transport workers and other residents whose livelihoods depend on daily activities, stability remains important. Any disruption to movement or business can have an immediate effect on household income.

The concerns also highlight the expectations of young people, many of whom are looking beyond political promises for practical opportunities to earn a living and build sustainable futures.

While political rallies remain an important part of democratic participation, residents say the exercise should be conducted in a manner that protects the peace of the community and allows people with different political preferences to coexist.

APC, NDC rally tension: Police rescue mobbed man, recover AK-47 in Delta

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

The Delta State Police Command has recovered an AK-47 rifle after rescuing a man, identified as Collins Egbara, from an angry mob during a politically charged rally in Uvwie Local Government Area of the state.

The incident occurred around 11:30 a.m. on September 18, 2026, at Orumarho community, Effurun, where police patrol teams conducting a "show of force" operation reportedly found Egbara being beaten by a group of youths close to an old building.

According to a statement issued on Tuesday by the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Bright Edafe, the officers rescued Egbara "in order to save his life" and rushed him to a hospital for treatment.

A search of the premises where he was found subsequently led to the discovery of an AK-47 rifle.

The police said it had not established whether Egbara belonged to either the APC or NDC, adding that he had not been able to make a statement because of his medical condition.

"He is presently receiving treatment and statements will be recorded from him when he is stable," the command said.

The Command also dismissed reports that the rifle was handed over to the police by some individuals, describing the claim as false. It said the ownership, possession and circumstances surrounding the recovery of the weapon remained subjects of an ongoing investigation.

2027: NDC to inaugurate Presidential Campaign Council soon - Director

The Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) says it is consulting stakeholders toward the inauguration of its Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) for the 2027 general elections.

The party disclosed this in a statement signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Osa Director, on Tuesday, in Abuja.

According to Director, the Presidential Candidate, Peter Obi and his running mate, Rabi Kwankwaso, have held meetings with the party's National Leader and other leaders on the proposed campaign structure.

He said Obi and Kwankwaso had been given the opportunity to nominate key campaign officials, including the Director-General, Deputy Director-General (North), spokesperson, deputy spokesperson, Head of New Media and Finance Director.

Director said, the nominees would be selected in consultation with its leadership, adding that a

comprehensive organogram for the campaign structure had been developed since August.

He said the structure had been made available to Obi and Kwankwaso for their input, while nominations had also been received from stakeholders across the country.

The national publicity secretary said the inauguration, earlier scheduled for the first week of September, was postponed because of the presidential candidate's travel schedule.

He added that a proposed campaign timetable had also been developed, while arrangements were being concluded on funding and fundraising for the campaign.

Director said campaign funds would be managed by designated campaign officials and the National Treasurer in accordance with transparency and accountability requirements, including the party's

obligation to render accounts to INEC.

He urged its candidates and supporters at all levels to focus on the 2027 elections and avoid internal disagreements.

Director said its leadership had directed state and LGA chairmen to convene meetings with candidates and stakeholders to collate and harmonise lists of agents for the forthcoming elections.

He said two categories of agents would be identified, comprising those for National Assembly elections and those for governorship and State Assembly elections.

According to him, the lists would be scrutinised and ratified by the party leadership, including the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, before training.

He said the party directed that the exercise be completed and the final lists submitted within two weeks of the directive.

Nigeria's doctor deficit and surplus unplaced medical graduates

BY ABUJAH RACHEAL

Every morning, Dr Adamu Inusa checks his phone, hoping to find the email that will define the next phase of his medical career.

For 18 months, he has scanned the recruitment portals of federal teaching hospitals for a residency position, but the offer he worked for years to secure has yet to arrive.

He spent six gruelling years in medical school, endured prolonged strike, and completed the one-year housemanship. After taking the Hippocratic Oath, he expected to begin building a career in Nigeria.

Instead, he works 12-hour night shifts as a locum doctor in a private clinic in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), while struggling to meet his financial obligations.

"To keep from starving, I work 12-hour night shifts as a locum doctor at a makeshift private clinic in the FCT, earning less per hour than a rideshare driver, while treating complex cases without basic equipment," he said.

Inusa's experience is shared, to varying degrees, by other young doctors seeking specialist training after housemanship.

It exposes a less-discussed dimension of Nigeria's health workforce crisis: the country is losing doctors to migration, while some qualified doctors who want to remain are unable to find a clear pathway into specialist training.

Data from the Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) indicates the severity of the country's doctor shortage, with the doctor-to-patient ratio remaining far below what is required to adequately serve the population.

Yet alongside the shortage is another contradiction: Nigeria has doctors who are qualified and available to work, but many face fierce competition for limited residency positions.

After medical school and housemanship, doctors can practise as general practitioners. Those seeking specialisation in paediatrics, surgery, oncology, orthopaedics, or anaesthesia must secure residency positions at accredited tertiary hospitals.

Residency is a critical stage in the medical career pathway. But passing the necessary examinations does not guarantee admission.

According to registry data from recent examination cycles, more than 900 Nigerian candidates sat for the West African College of Surgeons (WACS) primary examinations across major centres including Ibadan, Abuja and Enugu, with about 73 per cent recorded as successful.

Similarly, the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria (NPMCN) regularly clears hundreds of general practitioners who are academically and professionally qualified to proceed with specialist training.

At major training institutions such as the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) and University College Hospital (UCH),



Ibadan, hundreds of doctors compete for positions across numerous specialities.

LUTH, for instance, opens applications across several specialised fields, including anaesthesia and maxillofacial surgery.

In highly competitive recruitment cycles, a single teaching hospital can receive between 400 and 600 applications from qualified doctors seeking residency positions.

However, experts say the number of available places could be dramatically smaller.

Because of budget ceilings, structural underfunding and stagnant departmental quotas, funded positions across specialities may be between 30 and 50.

In some departments, including paediatrics and orthopaedics, only two or three doctors may be admitted in an entire recruitment cycle.

Dr Judith Nalukwago, a dental surgeon who advocates for young medical professionals affected by health-sector funding cuts, said hundreds of qualified applicants could be turned away because there were simply not enough training places.

"The country needs more specialists, yet its major training institutions are often unable to absorb the doctors seeking to become those specialists," she said.

Dr Mohammad Suleiman, National President of NARD, said the situation had created a serious mismatch between demand for healthcare and opportunities for young doctors to progress professionally.

"We have a situation where the demand for care is astronomical, yet young doctors are being locked out of training.

"When the system creates administrative bottlenecks around the Medical Residency Training Fund (MRTF) and slot allocations, it leaves brilliant minds completely stranded," he said.

Doctors waiting outside the residency system must keep applying, paying examination

and application fees, and looking for ways to survive while their professional progression remains uncertain.

A doctor may complete years of training, housemanship and professional examinations, yet access to postgraduate training can ultimately depend on whether a hospital has an accredited and funded vacancy.

Doctors may be qualified to practise as general practitioners while remaining unable to enter the specialist programmes they need to advance their careers.

The problem is therefore larger than unemployment in the conventional sense. It is a question of whether Nigeria's medical education system, postgraduate training capacity and workforce planning are moving in the same direction.

Medical schools produce graduates; housemanship prepares them for independent practice; residency develops the specialists Nigeria needs.

But when residency places fail to keep pace with the number of qualified doctors seeking them, a gap opens between graduation and professional advancement.

The Federal Government says it is investing in healthcare infrastructure, recruitment and workforce development.

The Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Izaq Salako, announced a N43 billion release for health-sector reforms, including N10.6 billion earmarked for the 2025/2026 MRTF.

Under the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative, the government granted special recruitment waivers that added more than 20,000 healthcare personnel to the public-sector payroll.

Funding doctors already admitted into residency is different from creating additional accredited positions for doctors waiting outside the system.

With limited access to residency, some doctors turn to private facilities for locum work.

Stakeholders estimate that

doctors working in parts of Lagos and Abuja may be earning between N80,000 and N150,000 monthly, depending on the facility, workload and number of shifts.

A clinical psychologist, Mr Phillip Dimka, said some private hospitals, aware of the desperation among young doctors, employed them on poor terms.

"Private hospitals, acutely aware of the desperation brewing in the medical community, recruit these overqualified general practitioners to run their entire facilities for a fraction of standard pay."

Dimka said some doctors worked long shifts with inadequate equipment and limited access to consultant supervision.

"In these underregulated settings, young doctors face immense medical and legal risks," he said.

Behind the statistics are graduates who invested years of their lives and significant family resources in becoming doctors.

Mr John Umoh, a civil servant and father of a 200-level medical student, said parents often sacrificed savings and other opportunities in the belief that their children would eventually become financially independent professionals.

"For some graduates, that expectation is delayed indefinitely. They continue to depend on ageing parents, struggle with rent and transportation, and accept whatever locum work is available," Umoh said.

Mrs Martha Yohanna, a human resources manager, said the impact was also professional.

"Doctors who remain outside residency may continue to gain clinical experience through locum work, but they lack the structured progression, supervision and specialist development provided by formal training programmes.

"The longer they remain outside the system, the more difficult it can become to plan their careers. For a country already struggling to retain doctors, which

represents another form of loss," she said.

Stakeholders say the situation is worrisome as doctors continue leaving for the UK, the U.S., Canada and other countries in search of better opportunities.

Records indicate that more than 10,000 Nigerian-trained doctors are registered with the UK General Medical Council, while NARD has documented the continuing departure of resident doctors from Nigeria.

A doctor who cannot secure residency may eventually look abroad not because the desire to build a career has disappeared, but because the opportunity to build one at home has.

NARD has repeatedly linked migration to poor remuneration, difficult working conditions, manpower shortages and inadequate career prospects.

Dr Augustine Uchenna, a health entrepreneur, said the country needed accurate workforce projections showing how many doctors were graduating, entering housemanship and seeking residency, as well as how many specialists would be required.

"Recruitment processes must be transparent and predictable so that doctors understand how positions are allocated and why applications succeed or fail."

He said private hospitals that depended heavily on locum doctors also needed stronger oversight to ensure temporary employment did not become a substitute for safe staffing and fair professional conditions.

"The objective should not be to force every doctor to remain in Nigeria. Rather, it should be to ensure that leaving is a choice, not the consequence of a system that has left qualified professionals with no viable route forward," he said.

Recently, Inusa received information about registering for the Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board (PLAB) examination, a key requirement for doctors seeking to practise in the UK.

He said the message was not the residency offer he had been waiting for. It represented a different future.

It is about whether Nigeria can provide a professional future for someone it has spent years training.

For outside observers, Inusa's departure from Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport would likely be categorised as just another statistic in the country's medical brain drain.

However, that label oversimplifies his journey. Leaving wasn't his initial goal; his first instinct was to find a reason to remain in Nigeria.

This highlights the true gravity of the nation's healthcare workforce crisis.

Analysts say Nigeria is not just losing doctors to only active emigration—it is losing them because systemic delays leave them waiting so long that departure becomes their only viable path forward. Courtesy: NAN



EXPERIENCE
THE POWER OF STARLINK
WITH KONGA

G E N 3



₦590,000



Free Delivery Nationwide

Anywhere you are in Nigeria
Starlink is the best internet for you!

SHOP NOW



www.konga.com

Mbappe

I Was Close to Joining Liverpool in 2016

Kylian Mbappe has revealed how “close” he came to joining Liverpool in 2016, saying he went against the advice of his mother who “fell in love” with Anfield.

The France and Real Madrid striker said the Reds tried to sign him at 18, while he was playing for Monaco in Ligue 1.

Former Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp said the club laid on a private jet and food for Mbappe and his family in an attempt to sign him, before he eventually joined Paris St-Germain.

Speaking to the Athletic, Mbappe said his mum was a “big fan” of Klopp and wanted her son to move to Merseyside.

“I was close to [joining] Liverpool. The favourite destination for my mum was Liverpool. She wanted me to go there,” he said.

“I didn’t listen because I wanted to play in my city, Paris. I didn’t want to leave my country before I was someone.”



Cyclist Who Dressed as Man to Avoid Taliban Wins Silver Medal at Asian Games

A female cyclist from Afghanistan who previously disguised herself as a man when chasing a career in the sport has won a silver medal at the Asian Games.

Fariba Hashimi fled her country after the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

She said she trained in disguise out of necessity before then in an effort to avoid being attacked, in a country where women’s rights are heavily restricted.

She earned her medal in the women’s road race near Nagoya in Japan yesterday.

The 23-year-old’s achievement follows her seventh-place finish in the women’s individual time trial on Sunday.

Describing her medal as “something special”, Hashimi hopes it can inspire other women in Afghanistan to follow their dreams.



Keothavong ‘Can’t Fault’ Great Britain After BJK Cup Loss to Czechs

Great Britain captain Anne Keothavong said she “cannot fault” her team’s efforts after they were beaten by a strong Czech Republic side in the Billie Jean King Cup quarter-finals.

Keothavong’s team headed into the tie as underdogs, with all five Czech players placed higher in the singles rankings than any of the British squad.

Sonay Kartal produced a gritty performance as she returned to tennis after six months out with a lower back injury, but fell to a narrow 7-6 (7-2) 4-6 6-4 defeat in a marathon three-hour encounter with Marie Bouzkova.

Katie Boulter could do little to get Britain back into the best-of-three tie as she was outplayed 6-2 7-6 (7-3) by Wimbledon champion Linda Noskova.

Arteta Agrees New Deal With Arsenal

Mikel Arteta has agreed an improved new contract with Premier League champions Arsenal.

The Spaniard’s current deal expires at the end of this season but talks over a new contract have been ongoing for a number of months.

Earlier this month that an agreement between all parties was close.

And it is now understood Arteta has reached a final agreement with the Gunners to extend his stay.

There is no confirmation over the length of his new contract but it is set to take him into at least his 10th year at the club following his arrival in December 2019.



Record Prize Fund for 2028 European Championships

The European Athletics Championships in 2028 will offer a record prize fund worth about £3m when they are staged in Silesia, Poland.

Prize money will be awarded to athletes finishing in the top eight across all 50 events.

Gold medal winners will earn 30,000 euros (£25,720), while silver and bronze medallists will receive 15,000 euros (£12,860) and 10,000 euros (£8,573) respectively.

Athletes finishing fourth to eighth across the 50 disciplines will receive awards of 5,000, 4,000, 3,000, 2,000 and 1,000 euros respectively.

European Athletics has restructured the way in which prize money is awarded, ensuring athletes finishing in the top eight in every discipline receive financial recognition.



Lopez Ordered to Defend World Title Against Catterall

Teofimo Lopez has been ordered to defend his WBA world title against Briton Jack Catterall.

Lopez became the WBA ‘super’ welterweight champion with a points win over Rolando Romero last month.

Catterall, 33, is Lopez’s mandatory challenger but the American has been campaigning to fight WBC champion Ryan Garcia in a unification bout instead.

The WBA has now announced they expect Lopez to fight Catterall next, and the two parties have until 22 October to reach an agreement or there will be a purse bid.

Catterall became the number one challenger and WBA ‘regular’ title-holder after beating Shakhram Giyasov in May.



Peace Cup Football Is Trials Avenue to Discover New Football Stars - Academy Chief

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dominion Excellence Star Football Academy, Ogech Agana, has said that her support for grassroots football is to give emerging players opportunities to prove their abilities.

Agana disclosed this in an interview on the sidelines of the Peace Cup football scouting event she organised on Tuesday in Lagos.

She explained that the scouting event was a faith-based programme designed to provide young players with opportunities to be discovered by top scouts.

According to her, the programme also seeks to guide the players in the principles of Christian living, as well as help in developing them positively.

Agana said scouts from Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey, were at the event to assess the players and identify talents capable of playing in top European leagues.

"We believe everybody deserves the right to be seen. This is why we invited players from various clubs across Nigeria to showcase their qualities.

"We also try to teach them the principles of godly living and hope to impact their lives positively, by helping their faith to grow.

"We invited top scouts from Nigeria and Europe to ensure the success of the event and hopefully, discover the next top star player from Nigeria," Agana said.

Rangers Defender Onyebuchi Undergoes Successful Surgery

Rangers defender, Ifeanyi Onyebuchi, has successfully undergone surgery for anterior cruciate ligament injury.

Onyebuchi sustained the injury during the Flying Antelopes' preparations for the new season.

According to reports, the experienced defender has commenced rehabilitation for a smooth recovery.

Onyebuchi is expected to be out of action for a long time.



Iwobi, Moses, Bassey, 17 Other Super Eagles Players Arrive Camp Ahead of AFCON Qualifiers

No fewer than 20 players have arrived at the Super Eagles' camp in Ikot Ikpeke, Akwa Ibom, ahead of the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

The players include Simon Moses, Akor Adams, Taiwo Awoniyi, Isaac James, Emmanuel Fernandez, Benjamin Fredericks, Moses Uzor and George Ilenikhena.

Others are Arthur Okonkwo, Alex Iwobi, Semi Ajayi, Calvin Bassey, Ola Aina, Ademola Lookman, Bright Osayi-Samuel and Chibuike Nwaiwu.

Tolu Arokodare, Bruno Onyemaechi, Raphael Onyedika and Frank Onyeka complete the 20 players currently in camp.

Super Eagles Media Officer, Promise Efoghe, said that Wilfred Ndidi, Samuel

Chukwueze and goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali were expected to arrive around noon.

"Camp opened today and preparations have commenced for the qualifiers," Efoghe said.

The Super Eagles will begin their qualifying campaign against Madagascar in Uyo on Sept. 25, before travelling to face Guinea-Bissau on Sept. 29.

Nigeria is also scheduled to play Russia in an international friendly on Oct. 6.

Efoghe said the team's first training session would hold today, with the opening 15 minutes available to accredited media.

He added that all players would be available for exclusive interviews on Wednesday at the team's base in Ikot Ikpeke.

Kano HoS Inspects Facilities Ahead of Public Service Games

The Head of Service, Kano State, Hajiya Bilquis Maimota, has inspected selected sports facilities in the state ahead of the Federation of Public Service Games.

Maimota inspected the facilities on Tuesday to assess their readiness and suitability for the successful hosting of the games.

She was accompanied by the Chairman, Kano State Sports Commission, Alhaji Tukur Babangida, Permanent Secretaries and other senior government officials.

The facilities inspected included Kano Club, Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education and Bayero University, Kano, among others.

During the inspection, Maimota stressed the need for adequate preparation, proper coordination and provision of necessary facilities to create a conducive environment for participating athletes and officials.

NFF Welcomes Falconets Back From Poland After World Cup Quarter-final Exit

The Acting General Secretary of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Dr Emmanuel Ikpeke on Tuesday received players and officials of the Under-20 Women's National Team at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.

Ademola Olajire, NFF's Director of Media and Communications, disclosed this in a statement issued yesterday in Abuja.

The team, also known as 'the

Falconets' returned to Nigeria after participating in the 2026 FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup finals in Poland.

The team crashed out of the competition at the quarter-final stage after conceding a stoppage-time goal to Colombia in Łódź on Sunday.

Olajire said Ikpeke was accompanied by some members of the NFF management, including the Director of Legal Services, Okey Obi and the Technical Director, Augustine Eguavoen.



Viewpoint

From G5 to rainbow coalition: Wike's new political calculus

BY EHI BRAIMAH

Nyesom Wike has never been a politician who hides behind ambiguity. When he takes a political position, he usually does so loudly, visibly and with an unmistakable sense of purpose. From the Peoples Democratic Party's G5 governors in 2022–2023 to the Rainbow Coalition now taking shape ahead of the 2027 elections, one thread runs through his politics: the determination to remain relevant, retain political leverage and operate beyond conventional party boundaries.

The latest confrontation between Wike and governors elected on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC) therefore deserves more attention than the headlines it has generated. It is not simply a quarrel over a coalition, but it is a contest over political influence, party structures and, ultimately, who controls the machinery around President Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Nigeria approaches 2027.

The APC Governors' Forum recently rejected political alliances that could create parallel structures or undermine APC candidates. The governors said they would support the party's candidates, while Wike responded that he never approached them for an alliance in the first place. His Rainbow Coalition, he insists, is designed to mobilise support for Tinubu's re-election and is separate from the APC.

This is a needless headache for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu with less than four months to the presidential election, but that distinction is important because Wike is making a proposition that challenges how party politics is usually played: a politician can belong to one party, support another party's presidential candidate and still participate in other elections through his own party.

Wike's position is that he supports Tinubu for president but has never promised that the PDP will withdraw from governorship, National Assembly or State Assembly elections. He argues that Nigerian voters have always been capable of voting differently for different offices on the same ballot, citing the 2023 elections as evidence.

This is the logic behind the Rainbow Coalition, but the APC governors see the matter differently. For them, an election is not divisible so neatly. The same governors expected to deliver votes for Tinubu must also deliver APC senators, members of the House of Representatives, state legislators and, in many cases, successors to themselves. A coalition that mobilises voters for Tinubu while supporting opposition candidates at other levels could therefore weaken the APC's own political machinery.

The governors' concern, in other words, is not necessarily that Wike supports Tinubu; it is that Wike wants to mobilise support for Tinubu outside the formal APC structure while retaining the freedom to support candidates who may be running against APC candidates. That is where the political collision begins.

The G5 was the prototype

To understand today's Rainbow Coalition, it is useful to return to 2022. Wike was one of five PDP governors who formed the G5, or Integrity Group, following the PDP presidential primary won by former vice president Atiku Abubakar. The governors demanded, among other things, the resignation of PDP national chairman Iyorchia Ayu, arguing that the party's presidential candidate and national chairman should not come from the same region. They subsequently refused to support Atiku's presidential campaign.

The G5 was an extraordinary political experiment because its members remained PDP governors while refusing to support the PDP's presidential candidate. Wike eventually became closely associated with Tinubu's presidential campaign in Rivers State. Other members of the G5 made different choices, demonstrating that the group was less a permanent political party than an instrument of political leverage.

The important lesson from the G5 was that party membership did not necessarily determine presidential loyalty. However, the Rainbow Coalition appears to be an expanded version of that political philosophy. The difference is that Wike is no longer merely leading a group of disgruntled governors within the PDP; he is attempting to construct a broader, cross-party network around a presidential candidate who happens to be the incumbent for, perhaps, his future political ambition.



What does Wike really want?

This is the question behind much of the speculation. Wike says he wants Tinubu re-elected. He has repeatedly described his support for the President as unequivocal and says he is mobilising politicians from different parties for that purpose. In August, he spoke of a "larger Rainbow Coalition" emerging around Tinubu. But what happens beyond the immediate election?

Wike's political calculation appears to involve preserving political relevance after 2027, regardless of the position he occupies. He has been a governor and is now a federal minister. When asked recently about his political future after Tinubu's second term, Wike argued that relevance does not necessarily depend on holding public office. It depends, in his words, on how a politician relates with his people and how the people regard him.

That statement should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of a specific future presidential ambition, but it should not be ruled out. There is no basis for asserting that Wike has decided what office he wants next, but it does suggest that he is thinking beyond the present office. That is precisely where his political strategy becomes interesting. A politician who demonstrates that he can mobilise voters across party lines possesses a different kind of political capital from a politician whose influence depends entirely on occupying an elected position.

Why are the APC governors uncomfortable?

The answer may be found in the difference between political influence and institutional authority. The APC governors possess institutional authority as they control state governments and, in many cases, party structures. Wike possesses a different asset: personal political networks built over many years, especially in Rivers since his Obiajor days, together with the visibility and national platform that comes with being FCT Minister.

Wike knows what he is doing and he is bullish about it. He argues that being a governor does not automatically translate into unlimited political influence. He adds that what is important is the ability to deliver votes which is a provocative argument because it challenges the political power of sitting governors.

If Wike can say, in effect, you control the APC structure, but I can mobilise voters for the President outside your structure, then the traditional hierarchy becomes less straightforward. They do not necessarily have to oppose Wike personally, but they are clearly defending the principle that the APC, rather than an individual minister or cross-party coalition, should control the political machinery of an APC presidential campaign – a crucial distinction.

Rivers: the political laboratory

Rivers State provides the clearest example of

why this contest matters. The bitter confrontation between Wike and his successor, Siminalayi Fubara, eventually escalated into a national constitutional crisis. On March 18, 2025, President Tinubu declared a state of emergency in Rivers State, suspended the governor, his deputy and members of the state House of Assembly, and appointed Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas (Rtd) as administrator. The President said the intervention was necessitated by the prolonged political crisis and security concerns in the state.

Whatever one's interpretation of the Rivers crisis, its political significance is difficult to ignore. It demonstrated that the relationship between Wike's political structure in Rivers and the Tinubu presidency had become extraordinarily consequential. Let it be known that I disagree with Wike's methods and his stranglehold on Rivers, leading to how he humiliated Fubara.

Now Wike says he intends to deliver Rivers State – and FCT – for Tinubu in 2027 which I criticised in my previous article. That raises an obvious question: who controls the political machinery that would deliver Rivers for Tinubu – the APC or Wike's political network? The Rainbow Coalition potentially provides Wike with an answer.

And then there is Abuja

The FCT makes Wike's current position even more unusual. He is no longer merely a former governor operating from his home state – he is a federal minister working at the centre of government and overseeing one of the most politically visible territories in the country. The State House currently lists Wike as the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, and he has now publicly claimed that he can mobilise support for Tinubu in the FCT and elsewhere through his political contacts which creates a potential parallel network around the President.

Are you still surprised at the source of the governors' anxiety? If Wike's Rainbow Coalition succeeds, it could demonstrate that President Tinubu does not have to rely exclusively on the APC governors to mobilise presidential support.

Conversely, if the governors prevail in insisting that all presidential mobilisation must run through the APC, Wike's independent political architecture would have less room to operate. This is why the dispute matters.

How is President Tinubu going to dribble around the "obstacle course" like the famous Argentine footballer, Diego Maradona? Can Wike remain in the PDP and support Tinubu? Strictly speaking, Wike can maintain his PDP membership while supporting Tinubu. His political argument is that presidential, governorship and legislative elections are separate contests. But politically, the arrangement is unusual as APC leaders are insisting on a "Top to Bottom" strategy. Why didn't Wike join the APC instead?

A PDP member campaigning for the re-election of an APC president while his party fields candidates

against APC candidates creates an obvious contradiction from the perspective of party loyalty, but Wike does not see it that way and he doesn't care. His position is essentially that his loyalty in the presidential contest is personal and political rather than determined by party affiliation. His PDP loyalists have now defended his right to mobilise for Tinubu while remaining in the party.

The APC governors, however, are looking at the same arrangement from the standpoint of organisational discipline. That is why both sides can look at the same facts and reach different political conclusions.

The Tinubu dilemma

President Tinubu now occupies a delicate position. Wike has become a useful political ally because he can reach politicians and constituencies outside the APC. At the same time, the APC governors are indispensable because they control the formal structures of the governing party across the states.

Tinubu therefore has an obvious incentive to avoid allowing the dispute to become a permanent rupture. The President does not necessarily have to choose between Wike and the governors; he can seek to make both useful to his 2027 project. The more difficult question is whether Wike's political ambitions and the governors' institutional interests can coexist indefinitely.

This is where Reuben Abati's reference to Robert Greene's *The 48 Laws of Power*, particularly the famous admonition about not outshining one's master on *The Morning Show of Arise News*, becomes an interesting metaphor. Wike's visibility is enormous, while his political statements generate headlines. His FCT projects generate substantial publicity for him, and his clashes with political opponents attract national attention. But the political system ultimately revolves around the President.

The question, therefore, is not whether Wike is becoming too powerful in some absolute sense; it is whether his growing visibility and independent network eventually become difficult to accommodate within the formal political structure supporting Tinubu.

From G5 to Rainbow Coalition

This shift is clearly an evolution in Wike's political strategy. The G5 was essentially an internal resistance mechanism created to utilise the influence within the PDP to challenge the party's presidential direction. On the other hand, the Rainbow Coalition is potentially for external mobilisation: build a cross-party network to support a presidential candidate while allowing participating politicians to retain their separate party identities and interests.

The first strategy demonstrated Wike's capacity to disrupt his own party's presidential ambitions, while the second seeks to demonstrate his capacity to mobilise beyond party boundaries. Whether the Rainbow Coalition will become a durable political force remains to be seen. Its effectiveness will depend on organisation, personalities, candidate selection and, most importantly, how much space the APC leadership is prepared to give it which is now most unlikely.

Wike's Rainbow Coalition, in my view, is aimed at mobilising a strong political base for himself and his supporters beyond 2027, positioning him as a kingmaker and influential godfather across party lines. For now, however, the battle lines are becoming clearer. The APC governors are saying support Tinubu through the party and do not create parallel structures that undermine APC candidates. Wike is saying my commitment is to Tinubu's presidency, not necessarily to every APC candidate.

That is a fundamental disagreement over who owns political loyalty in an election – the party, the candidate or the individual politician. It is why the journey from G5 to Rainbow Coalition may tell us considerably more about Wike's new political calculus – and the evolving architecture of power around Tinubu – than the colourful name of the coalition itself suggests.

Wike definitely has a long road to travel.

.Brimah is a PR specialist, marketing strategist, and publisher/editor-in-chief of *Naija Times* (www.ntm.ng) and *Lagos Post* (www.lagospost.ng). He can be reached through: ehi.brimah@neomedia.com.ng